



Georgia Legal Professionals for Animals, Inc.

April - June 2006

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Message from the Legislative Coordinator

GLPA would like to thank everyone who contacted their Representatives and Senators regarding Senate Bill 229, The Animal Fighting and Baiting Act. After two years of hard work by many people, the bill which would have strengthened Georgia's current dog fighting law died in the non-civil judiciary committee. This wonderful piece of legislation sailed through the Senate with only four Senators voting against it. However, it stalled in the judiciary committee and never regained momentum before the legislative session ended. Time, strong opposition, and political blunders were a few of the things that killed the bill.

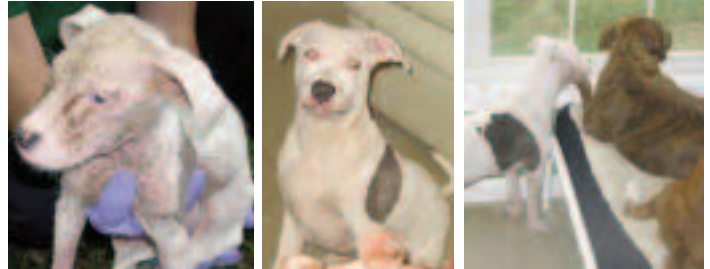
The defeat of this bill should not be forgotten. It would have made it easier for law enforcement to arrest and prosecute people who engage in the dangerous and cruel activity of dog-fighting. We encourage you to write your Representative and let them know of your disappointment in failing to pass this needed legislation.

We also encourage you to remain active in local, state, and federal legislative issues that impact animals. The future for animals depends significantly on legislative improvements, and one individual CAN make a difference! Some of you found this out recently when you learned that making a quick, 30-second phone call to your Representative was an easy and impactful way to help animals! Please educate yourself on who your elected officials are — let them know who you are and build a relationship with them. Become familiar with the legislative process. GLPA is here to help you. Updating county ordinances and passing state-wide animal friendly laws will mean a difference in the lives of hundreds of thousands of animals. But no one person or group can do it alone — we must band together to work most effectively.

Once again, thank you for your interest in GLPA. If you haven't already joined us, please consider doing so. And please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions about how you can be a part of strengthening laws for animals. Our contact information is on our website at www.georgialpa.org.

GLPA looks forward to working with you to make Georgia a better, safer, and happier place for all animals!

For the animals,
Allison Brooksher Cauthen
Legislative Coordinator



Hope (left), prior to recuperation, recovered and smiling Hope is in the middle, and on the right she's watching squirrels with her new sisters and brothers.

The Story of HOPE

Hi! My name is HOPE, and this is my story. I'm a pure bred pit bull. I was born about one year ago into a ring that sold pit bulls to dog fighters. But because I was kind of a runt, the people who owned me didn't think I would be much of a fighter, so they stuck me in a bathroom without food or water and left me there to die. Nobody knows how long I was in that bathroom. It seemed like a really long time to me! It was dark and scary, and I was hungry and frightened.

Then one day, a miracle happened. Some law enforcement officers came to the house and found me. I was so weak from malnutrition that I couldn't even stand up, and I had a terrible infection on my skin.

The kind officers rushed me to Dr. Merck's office, and she treated me for all kinds of problems. I was at Dr. Merck's clinic for a long time recuperating. Happily, I eventually got well enough to go into foster care. For the first time, I found out what a dog's life is really supposed to be like! Not fighting other dogs, but playing with them. Not getting beaten or starved but given love and good food and clean water on a daily basis. Then the good people in the rescue program helped me find my forever home, and now I am living happily ever after with my companions (who are also pit bulls!). We spend our days wrestling, sleeping, and watching out for squirrels!

So that's my story. Even though the Georgia legislature failed to pass new laws recently that would have made it easier for the police to arrest the kind of people who intended to train me to fight other dogs, dog fighting is still a felony in Georgia; thanks to good people like you who care about animals and speak on our behalf, that means there's still HOPE for all of us!

See our website at www.georgialpa.org.

Ahimsa House Wins National Award

Ahimsa House, Georgia's only shelter dedicated to the animal victims of domestic violence, was honored by Pedigree® on February 11, 2006 with the "Rescue Organization of the Year Award" for 2005.

Ahimsa House was founded in 2004 by GLPA volunteer Emily Christie as a support service for the domestic violence shelters in metro-Atlanta and Athens. Pedigree® honored Ahimsa House at a black tie gala hosted at the Museum of Natural History in Manhattan. President and founder Emily Christie and Vice President Rikki Osborne accepted the award on behalf of the organization. "It was a great honor to receive national recognition for Ahimsa House.



Ahimsa House president, Emily Christie, actress Minnie Driver, and Ahimsa House vice-president, Rikki Osbourne at Pedigree® awards ceremony.

Hopefully this award will help bring local and world-wide exposure to the very real problem of animal cruelty and its link to human violence" says Christie.

International film actress Minnie Driver also honored the award winners with a speech given at the event on the importance of animal welfare and rescue. The gala dinner was given in conjunction with the annual Westminster Dog Show by one of its largest sponsors and donors, Pedigree Food for Dogs.

For more information on Ahimsa House, visit www.ahimsahouse.org. Donations are tax deductible.

Be an Animal-Friendly Driver

We don't necessarily think of driving as animal cruelty, but on an average day about a million animals are killed by U.S. drivers like you and me. That isn't really surprising when you consider the number of dead squirrels, birds, possums, raccoons, deer, dogs, cats, turtles, frogs and other animals you alone see along roads.



Frank Brown

Many of these deaths are avoidable. How can you be an animal-friendly driver (AFD)?

n Make a Commitment: First and most importantly, make a conscious commitment to be an AFD.

Otherwise, you'll likely forget as you rush around town. You have places to go, people to see, things to do.

A picture of an animal on your dashboard might be a good reminder of your commitment. The Humane Society of the United States also offers free "Give Wildlife a Brake" bumper stickers that remind you and other drivers to be AFDs.

n Stay Vigilant: Expect animals to be in or near the road. Remember, you really are driving through *their* neighborhoods and they often don't appreciate the deadly danger you pose.

n Reduce Speed: You'll have much more time to avoid hitting animals and they'll have much more time to avoid being hit by you if you're driving slower. Slowing down is tough for many of us, but if you really care about being an AFD, you'll do it.

n Consider Stopping: While stopping to allow animals to cross or leave a highway may not be safe, it may be perfectly safe to stop in a neighborhood. At a minimum, slow down when you see animals in or near the road.

n Don't Tailgate: Tailgating poses two problems for animals. First, your view of animals on or near a road is reduced. Second, drivers in front of you will be less inclined to slow for animals if you're tailgating them.

n Avoid Cell Phones: If you're talking on a cell phone while driving, you aren't paying full attention to driving. That increases your chances of hitting animals.

n Understand Squirrels: Squirrels aren't stupid. They avoid predators by moving quickly and changing directions. They often react the same way to cars. Even when a squirrel is off road, it may dart back onto the road as your car approaches. Slow as you approach them.

n Don't Litter: Animals are attracted by food and wrappers thrown along roadsides. Don't attract them to the road by littering.

n Use Alternatives to Driving: The fewer drivers, the fewer dead animals on the road. Consider walking, biking or riding MARTA when reasonably possible.

n Oppose Sprawl: Suburban sprawl means longer drives and more opportunities for hitting animals. It also means that animal habitats are increasingly invaded and fragmented by roads. Sprawl is not good for humans or animals.

n Encourage "Critter Crossings": Critter crossings, like underpasses, overpasses and tunnels, save animal lives. Encourage governmental entities to design and construct them.

Driving is a fact of life for most of us. But, it doesn't have to lead to so many animal deaths. Consider these and other ways you can be an AFD.

GLPA Fundraiser

GLPA will be hosting a joint fundraiser along with PAWS Atlanta and Ahimsa House. Free beer, food and entertainment! Please join us!

WHERE? Red Brick Brewery

219 Williams Street NW, Atlanta 30309
404-881-0300

WHEN? May 20, 2006

6 p.m.— until

VIP Tickets \$75

VIP wines, fine foods, gifts, beer and entertainment!

General Admission \$40 Advance and \$45 at the door

Free beer, food, and entertainment!

Raffles and prizes awarded throughout the evening.

Your contribution is tax-deductible.

For more information and online ticket purchases, visit: www.pawsatlanta.org

Third Annual Animal Cruelty Seminar

The Georgia Bar is sponsoring the Third Annual Animal Cruelty Seminar. This seminar educates prosecutors, judges, lawyers, police, animal control officers and concerned citizens on matters related to animal cruelty laws in Georgia. This program was so popular last year that it has been extended from one day to two this year.

Scheduled speakers include Dr. Melinda Merck, Dr. Randall Lockwood of the ASPCA, and Eric Sakach of the HSUS. CLE credit is available for attorneys, including Trial Practice Hours. Police officers will receive 9 CEU hours from POST. CEUs for veterinarians applied for with the State Veterinary Board.

WHERE: Georgia Bar Conference Center
State Bar of Georgia Headquarters
104 Marietta Street NW
Atlanta, GA

WHEN: May 18 & 19, 2006

HOW TO REGISTER: Visit our website at www.georgialpa.org to download a registration brochure or visit www.iclega.org to register online.

Questions? Call 770-466-0886 or toll free 1-800-422-0893.

COST: \$150 for a non-attorney
\$195 for an attorney

Scholarships are available for law enforcement and animal control officers. Send an email to glpamembership@gmail.com to request a scholarship.

Please Join Us!

GLPA is a non-profit organization that is funded largely by dues and donations. All contributions are tax deductible. 100% of your money will be used in the direct service of animals. Please mail a check payable to GLPA to:

2451 Cumberland Pkwy
Suite 3212
Atlanta, GA 30339-6157

Please note that you do NOT have to be an attorney to be a member of GLPA. We welcome professionals from all venues as well as concerned citizens and animal advocates.

Veterinary Update



Dr. Merck continues her tireless efforts on behalf of animals. She was recently on Sandy Springs Radio helping to educate the masses about the many facets of animal cruelty. She's been asked to chair an animal cruelty program for the North American Veterinary Conference next January, which will give her an opportunity to train other veterinarians on issues of

animal cruelty they may see in their clinics back home. And she is now a forensics consultant with the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals — she's already teamed up with Dr. Randall Lockwood to start a National Veterinary Forensics Service Center.

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