

Topic: Issues in prosecuting Animal Cruelty cases

Speaker:

- Name: Mike Duffey
- Title & Organization: Investigator for the Animal Cruelty Task Force
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Speaker Bio:

Mike Duffey, is an investigator with the Animal Cruelty Task Force (ACT), which is run by the Humane Society of Arizona. The mission of ACT is to increase awareness of animal cruelty laws in southern Arizona, to enhance and coordinate enforcement of animal cruelty laws, and to educate law enforcement, animal care professionals and other interested agencies in aspects of animal cruelty and the relationship of animal cruelty to other forms of assaulting behavior.

Attendance Numbers

- 30 Students (roughly)
- 3 Professors and community members

Review of Topic:

The talk focused on how to effectively prosecute and investigate an animal cruelty case. Mike discussed the applicable statutes and how they are used by investigators and prosecutors alike. He also discussed issues in evidence collection, such as not examining animals who may be victims of sexual abuse. Mike stated that many officers do not take animal cruelty seriously, or simply do not know how to handle investigations and often times do not collect proper evidence. Mike also pointed to issues of shifting the burden to animal control when they are called, yet it is the police who are in fact supposed to investigate. This leaves many calls unanswered, and discourages citizens from calling 911.

Review of Speaker:

I thought the audience was interested in Mike's talk. Many issues he mentioned were unheard of to most of the students, and they seemed both appalled and shocked that these things were happening, such as animal sexual abuse. The audience discussed the issue with Mike for about 15 minutes after his talk. I thought it was an different topic that hadn't been discussed before, and is yet very important topic in criminal law as many of these animal abusers may end up abusing people.