Griffo To Host Forum on Animal Abuse

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO   May 26, 2014

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UTICA – State Senator Joseph A. Griffo is hosting an educational forum May 27 for the benefit of police officers in Oneida County who handle incidents of animal abuse and neglect.

Oneida County District Attorney Scott McNamara and Susan McDonough, a retired New York State Police investigator who specialized in animal abuse, will lead the informational sessions. They will discuss ways to identify animal abuse and neglect; how to approach abused animals; how to remove animals from an abusive household and how to ensure a

successful prosecution of individuals who abuse animals.

"As more cases are discovered, it's imperative that officers know exactly what to do to both help the suffering animal and ensure his abuser is punished to the full extent of the law," said Griffo, R-Rome. "I'm pleased to help arrange this forum, because it's a great chance for officers on the front lines to receive the latest in tactics and changes in law that will help them in their investigations."

The event will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Oneida-Herkimer-Madison Board of Cooperative Educational Services, 4747 Middle Settlement Road, New Hartford. The event is being held in cooperation with the Oneida County District Attorney's Office and the New York State Humane Association.

The forum is in response to a spate of incidents involving cruelty toward animals in Oneida County, including:

- Jan. 2011: Apollo, a pitbull, is starved and chained up outside in below zero-temperatures in Utica.

- Aug. 2012: Sapphire, a white pitbull, and Sunday, a husky, are chained outside in Verona without being given food or water. Sapphire's choke collar is so tight, it causes a neck wound.

- May 2013: Lainey, an Australian shepherd, died after being starved for six weeks by a Camden resident.

- Sept. 2013: Autumn, a boxer mix, is neglected, and left wandering the streets of West Utica while becoming emaciated.

Oneida County has contracted with the Central New York SPCA to handle animal cruelty cases. Anyone who suspects an animal is being abused should call (315) 454-3469 or visit

cnyspca.org.

Strays should be reported to local municipal offices or to animal control.