



DenverDA

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NEWS RELEASE

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The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) Honors Denver Chief Deputy District Attorney as 2008 Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer

Denver Chief Deputy District Attorney Diane Balkin has been awarded the prestigious 2008 ASPCA Humane Award as the Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer of the Year. She received the honor for her dedicated work to prevent animal cruelty and bring those responsible to justice. A prosecutor in the Denver District Attorney's office since 1979, Diane has been an advocate for both humans and animals, working tirelessly to send a message that animal abuse is against the law and will not be tolerated. As a Deputy District Attorney, Diane ardently prosecutes all types of felony cases but her personal and professional passion lies with promoting animal welfare through prosecution of those who neglect or abuse animals.

Mitch Morrissey, Denver District Attorney: "We are extremely proud of Diane and the work she does on behalf of animals. Her commitment to those who have no voice rises above professional responsibility and serves as an example for us all."

Over the past year, Ms. Balkin successfully prosecuted a South Dakota dog breeder for cruelty to animals and saved 19 of his horribly neglected puppies that were left unattended in a truck. In another cruelty case, she prosecuted a Denver man who killed a Chihuahua with a shovel and then threw the pet's lifeless body in a dumpster. Both defendants were found guilty, and in the Chihuahua case, the defendant was sentenced to six years in prison.

Ms. Balkin, a member of the Colorado State Board of Veterinary Medicine, speaks at conferences nationwide about animal cruelty prosecutions and trains veterinarians, law enforcement officials, students and citizens on the link between cruelty to animals and violence toward humans.

The ASPCA states, "[Diane] has been instrumental in changing Colorado laws to facilitate the prosecution of animal abusers, and her commitment and steadfast determination to raise awareness about animal cruelty have made an immense impact in Colorado, as well as nationwide."