Pennsylvania
Lawrence County: Jennifer Lynn George, reported to be an animal enforcement officer with the Lawrence County Humane Society, is charged with cruelty for abandoning her German Shepherd when she moved from her mobile home after a tax forfeiture. A prospective buyer found the deceased dog near the front door; police found dog feces throughout the living room. George said she “occasionally” brought her dog food and water, and would leave the dog alone for weeks or months. Animal Enforcement Officer Jennifer Lynn George Accused of Abandoning Dog, Leaving It to Die (newsweek.com).

Wayne County: Shelters, particularly the Dessin Animal Shelter in Honesdale, report an increase in pets being brought in. The Shelter notes that this is common after the Holidays, but has been especially high this year. They opine that it might be due to more people losing their homes and having to move to rentals which do not allow pets. They are seeking donations, adopters and foster parents. Wayne County animal shelters strained by pet surrenders (msn.com); Dessin Animal Shelter - Pet Adoption, Nonprofit (dessinshelters.com).

York County: Police stopped an unidentified 19-year-old driver for suspicion of DUI. They discovered a live deer in the trunk, which she had struck, then, with her 21-year-old passenger, put in the trunk, believing it dead. Officers ordered them to release the deer, which ran off, apparently only stunned by the collision. The driver was arrested for suspicion of DUI of alcohol or drugs. Pennsylvania police find live deer inside car during DUI stop | Fox News; Pennsylvania Cops Find Live Deer in Trunk of Car During Traffic Stop (msn.com).

United States, Federal and National
Michigan, Nevada, New York and Pennsylvania proscribe discriminating against homeowners seeking insurance because of the dog breed they own. However, not all insurers engage in breed discrimination, so prospective customers must “shop around.” Another remedy is to purchase dog-specific or umbrella coverage if the homeowner’s carrier will not insure for the dog. States block insurance companies from discriminating against your dog (msn.com). Nevada’s and New York’s laws are more recent:
➢ Nevada: Governor Steve Sisolak signed SB 103 on June 2, 2021; the bill prohibits denying coverage or charging higher premiums based solely on a dog’s breed. NV SB103 | 2021 | 81st Legislature | LegiScan;
➢ New York: Governor Kathy Hochul signed SB 4254 on October 30, 2021; it prohibits refusing to issue or renew a policy, cancel a policy, or increase premiums based on a dog’s breed. NY State Senate Bill S4254 (nysenate.gov).

Florida: Federal and state officials began a program to feed manatees, which are starving due to algae blooms killing seagrass, their natural food source. In 2021, 1,101 manatees were counted dead, compared to 637 in 2020. Florida sees early success with manatee
Other States:
Florida:
The Hernando County Sheriff’s Office rescued a male Pittie mix, whom they found after 3 days of searching following a report of a dog with a zip-tie tightened around its neck. The victim is recuperating at County Animal Services; the Sheriff seeks information to find who did it. [Sheriff Saves Dog With Swollen Head From Zip-Tie on Its Neck: ‘Sick People’ (msn.com)]. [Note: several Florida Sheriffs’ Offices are very active and outspoken in cruelty cases, working with local media to find suspected abusers and advise of their strict enforcement of cruelty and neglect laws.]

PJ Nilaja Patterson was sentenced to 9 months for torturing and killing an iguana. Security video showed him teasing the iguana, then picking it up. It bit him; he then kicked it and swung it by its tail. The iguana escaped, but he caught it and continued the abuse. Palm Beach County Circuit Judge Jeffry Dana Gillen rejected Patterson’s “stand your ground” defense, under Florida’s self-defense law. [Man who killed iguana, claimed ‘Stand your Ground,’ reaches plea deal (msn.com)]; [Iguana killing: ‘Stand your ground’ defense rejected by judge | CBS 42].

Kirsten Willoughby was charged with child neglect and animal cruelty, after an anonymous tip led law enforcement and humane authorities to the motel room in which she was living with a 6-year old, 4 dogs, 5 cats and 3 “emaciated” puppies kept in a small cage. The room, including the bathroom, was overwhelmed with feces, urine and trash. Persons who know Willoughby advised that she was repeatedly offered help, but refused. [‘A Very Foul Odor’: Authorities Release Alarming Details in Animal Cruelty Case of Hotel Room ‘Covered with Feces, Urine, Trash’ and ‘a Dead Fish’ (msn.com)].

New York: Governor Kathy Hochul signed S.7010CA/A.7735A, providing for motorized boats to be inspected for invasive plant and animal species in Adirondack Park. The legislation creates no new penalties nor burdens, but creates a system for verifying compliance with existing law. The law, passed unanimously, makes permanent the Aquatic Invasive Species Transport Act. [Gov. Hochul signs Invasive species boat inspection bill into law (msn.com)]; [Governor Hochul Signs Legislation to Help Prevent Aquatic Invasive Species in Adirondack Park | Governor Kathy Hochul (ny.gov)].

Oklahoma: Ronald and Cassandra Ainsworth were charged with cruelty for failing to provide proper medical treatment and care. On a tip, an animal control officer found their approximately 10-year-old boxer-looking dog tied to a tree with a cut, on his hip, covered in maggots and flies. Mrs. Ainsworth said the dog appeared fine when she last fed and watered him, but she noticed an odor and planned to take him to a veterinarian. After rescue, the veterinarian recommended euthanasia. [Deputies arrest couple for animal cruelty after dog found ‘barely alive’ (msn.com)].
Texas:
4 juveniles, 16 and under, were charged with cruelty and felony theft for stealing a ewe from the Terry County Stock Show barn, taking her to a cemetery, torturing her and finally shooting her to death; their names were not released. The victim belonged to 6-year-old Daniel Tackitt, who was to participate in the show; Daniel was told that his ewe had gone home to the Lord, to spare the young child. 4 juveniles charged with cruelty to animals after lamb found tortured, shot to death near Terry County Show Barn (msn.com).

Approximately 40 dogs were seized for rescue by HSUS and local law enforcement, who obtained a warrant after a report of neglect. They were kept in outdoor, chain-link kennels, with limited access to water, and water bowls frozen over. The suspect surrendered the dogs; it appears all will recover and be available for adoption. The case comes after Governor Greg Abbott signed SB5, effective January 18, the Safe Outdoor Dogs Act, prohibiting tethering by chains and requiring provision of basic shelter, shade and clean water, and tying with chains attached to a collar or harness, meaning no weighted chains. Dozens of Dogs Kept Chained in Cages With Water Bowls Frozen Over Rescued From Texas Home (msn.com); information on SB5: Texas Gov Abbott Signs Statewide Dog Tethering Bill (nhes.org); Bill Text: TX SB5 | 2021 | 87th Legislature 3rd Special Session | Enrolled | LegiScan.

International
Colombia and Ecuador: MasterChef Ecuador, a cooking-competition TV series, is being investigated by both nations’ environmental ministries after a recent episode featured shark, deer, crocodile, and capybara. The show was filmed in Colombia and shown in Ecuador. It does not appear that any of the species are listed as endangered or threatened, but the show might have violated laws against trafficking, purchasing and/or consuming wildlife. There was also outcry, including from the National Animal Movement of Ecuador, from an ethical as well as legal perspective. MasterChef Under Scrutiny After Allegedly Serving Cooked Capybara Meat During Episode (msn.com); ‘MasterChef’ slammed after cooking showdown features shark, alligator & capybara — RT World News.

Germany: Law enforcement and hunters cooperate to address poaching, with concern that too many incidents are not discovered or reported. Of particular concern are incidents where poachers have shot law enforcement officers who confronted them, and youths who poach on a dare. Under German law, poaching includes accidentally killing game in a vehicle collision, then keeping the carcass. Poaching in Germany: An underestimated problem? (msn.com).

Iran: Deputy Environmental Minister Hassan Akbari reported that only 12 Asiatic cheetahs remain in the wild in his country. Drought, hunters and vehicle collisions remain a threat, despite increased efforts the government has taken to protect them. Iran says only 12 Asiatic cheetahs left in the country (msn.com).

Scotland: Declan Milne pleaded guilty to causing unnecessary suffering for stabbing Max, his girlfriend’s parents’ black Lab, 14 times with a scissors. The parents left Max with the
couple to dog-sit over a weekend. Milne’s girlfriend found Max cowering, surrounded by feces, then discovered the wounds. A veterinarian reported the injuries to humane officials; Milne told his girlfriend he did not know what happened. He was banned from owning animals for 10 years, and sentenced to 4 months restriction of liberty, not allowed to leave his house from 7:30 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., and 200 hours community service. Man Who Stabbed Girlfriend's Dog With Scissors Banned From Owning Animals (newsweek.com).

Vietnam: Tu Do, a bear, was surrendered by her owner after 20 years on a farm and placed at Four Paws’ Ninh Binh sanctuary. World Animal Protection, Education for Nature Vietnam and other local nonprofits have worked for years to halt illegal bear bile trade; in 2005, Vietnam outlawed bear bile farming. Bear Kept in Narrow Cage for 20 Years Moves to Spacious Sanctuary to 'Find Her Bear Friends' (msn.com).

Publications and Other Media
Rachel Fritts, Cloning Gone Wild, Science, January 13, 2022, Elizabeth Ann recently celebrated her first birthday. She is a black-footed ferret, one of the first species protected under the Endangered Species Act, and was cloned from a female ferret who died 35 years ago. She is planned to be mated with a carefully selected “bachelor” in an ongoing effort to restore the species. The Science article provides detail of the history of the black-footed ferret’s decline and of the restoration project. https://www.science.org/content/article/conservation-first-cloned-ferret-could-help-save-her-species.

Non-Legal News
Ohio: Coby, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium's cheetah ambassador dog, was euthanized after developing arthritis which was causing neurological damage; he was 8. Coby was a babysitter for cheetah cubs, helping acclimate them for animal ambassador work, and also mentored other dogs for similar work. The Zoo has received an outpouring of sympathy from visitors and people who saw Coby on TV shows featuring the Zoo. 'Beloved' Zoo Dog Who Helped Raise Cheetahs, Warthogs, Foxes, and Other Animals Euthanized (msn.com).