

# Stopping Animal Cruelty

■ **LAPD Animal Cruelty Unit is formed.**

Story by Liz Montes, Club Counselor  
Photos by Angel Gomez, Club Member Services Manager

**POLICE DEPT.** — On May 11, Councilmember Tony Cardenas held a press conference on the steps of City Hall to introduce the LAPD's Animal Cruelty Unit, one of the Community Policing initiatives. The unit is a team effort between City Attorney, District Attorney and the Police Departments to prosecute people for animal cruelty.

Cardenas, who spearheaded the effort, was joined by the newly formed taskforce including the LAPD, Animal Services and the City Attorney's Office. Taskforce officials will investigate "blood-sports," crack down on dog and cock-fighting facilities, and arrest those individuals who starve and abuse animals.

Animal Services receives 8,000 cases of animal cruelty every year and cannot address all cases, so

the unit would help to protect people and animals. The City is thought to be the only major metropolitan area in the United States without a police unit dedicated to stopping animal cruelty.

"Animal cruelty is just plain wrong and will not be tolerated," Councilmember Alex Padilla told the crowd.

The Unit is desperately needed in the City of Los Angeles to save thousands of animals from abuse.

The pilot program was approved by the Board of Police Commissioners in February. Research found that there is increasing evidence of a relationship between violence involving "blood-sport" animal abuse and violent crimes involving human victims. Many major cities have initiatives in place that deal with animal abuse crimes and their relationship to other crimes. Before the pilot program was created in the City, there has only been small interest in this matter here, according to officials.



Councilmember Tony Cardenas shows a picture of an abused animal.



From left: David Diliberto, Wendell Bowers and A.J. Navarrete.



Councilmember Alex Padilla.



Guerdon Stuckey, Animal Services General Manager.



Councilmember Tony Cardenas.



Supporters of the Animal Cruelty Unit.



LAPD Chief William Bratton speaks to the crowd.



City Attorney Bob Ferber.

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