



VetInvestigator

NEWSLETTER



FVI, LLC President named NACA Veterinarian of the Year

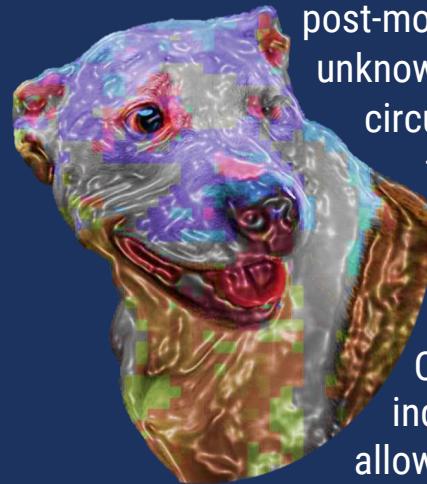
Dr. Martha Smith-Blackmore was named "Veterinarian of the Year" at the National Care & Control Association Award's Gala on October 10, 2019 In Orlando, Florida. Dr. Smith-Blackmore was recognized for her career-long dedication supporting humane care to animals, fighting animal cruelty, and recognizing the importance of people in the animal welfare equation. Dr. Smith-Blackmore works to ensure that animal control and police departments are supplied with the necessary training and resources to provide excellent investigations in suspected criminal animal abuse cases.

*Pictured left: **Scott Giacoppo**, NACA Board President and Best Friends Animal Society Director of National Shelter Outreach; **Misha Goodman** NACA Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient and Bernalillo County (New Mexico) Animal Care Services Director; **Martha Smith-Blackmore, DVM**, NACA Veterinarian of the Year Award Recipient and FVI, LLC President; **John Thompson**, NACA Executive Director.*

OSAC CST VFS-TG work in progress:

- Examination of the live animal encountered at an animal involved crime scene
- Examination of the deceased animal encountered at an animal involved crime scene
- Animal involved crime scene examination, documentation and evidence collection

FVI, LLC's **Animal Doe Project** provides no-fee clinical & post-mortem exams for animals with unknown identities, and questioned circumstances of injury or death at the request of ACOs or law enforcement.



This program is possible because of a collaboration with Chappy and Friends, an independent fiscal sponsor, allowing for tax-deductible donations to support the effort. Click on the dog pic for more info!

About Forensic Veterinary Investigations, LLC

We are an independent consulting firm with unique expertise in the investigation of animal cruelty. We provide analysis and interpretation in legal cases involving animals. We also provide research and training on matters involving animals and the law.

Please visit our website at www.VetInvestigator.com to learn more, and follow us on Twitter @VetInvestigator. Sworn law enforcement, animal control officers, attorneys and veterinarians can reach us through the "contact us" form at the website, or e-mail Dr. Martha Smith-Blackmore directly at marthasmithdvm@gmail.com.

This newsletter is not to be construed as legal, veterinary, or any other professional advice.



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WE KNOW ABOUT "THE LINK"

Offenders who use violence for power & control exercise little discretion in victim choice. Bullies harm those around them - whether partners, elders, the disabled, children and/or animals.

INTERVENTIONS

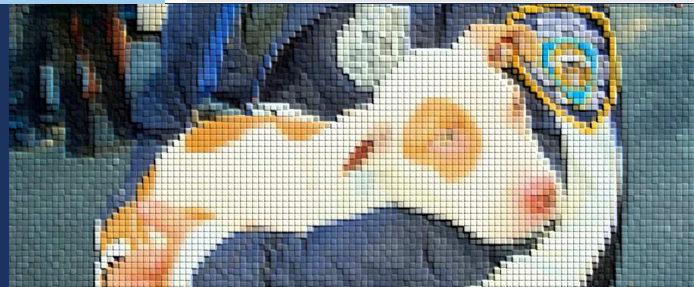
Animal maltreatment (abuse or neglect) may be the first outward sign that a household is in distress. It may also be the first opportunity to stop an abuser before they cause further harm in a community.

EQUIPPING COMMUNITIES

Police may be accustomed to referring investigations to animal control or private animal welfare groups, losing opportunities to know more about risks & offenders in their own city/town.

Encouraging Local Law Enforcement

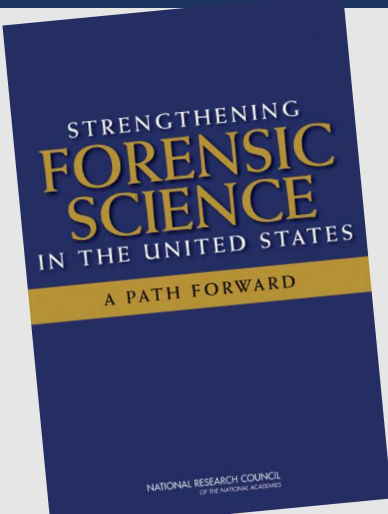
When appropriately trained and resourced, local police do an excellent job of recognizing, documenting, collecting and preserving evidence of animal cruelty crimes.



GETTING FORENSICS RIGHT

In 2009, a highly critical report was released by the National Academy of Sciences condemning the practices of forensic services as often erroneous, not necessarily following proven protocols, and potentially contributing to wrongful convictions. This led to the establishment of the **Organization of Scientific Area Committees for Forensic Science (OSAC)** within the National Institutes of Standards and Technology.

OSAC: Strengthening the nation's use of forensic science by facilitating the development of technically sound standards and guidelines and encouraging their use throughout the forensic science community.



Forensic Veterinary Investigations president, Dr. Martha Smith-Blackmore, has been appointed to the OSAC Crime Scene Investigation Subcommittee and leads the Veterinary Forensic Sciences Task Group. The VFS-TG will develop guidelines and standards for the investigation of animal involved crimes.

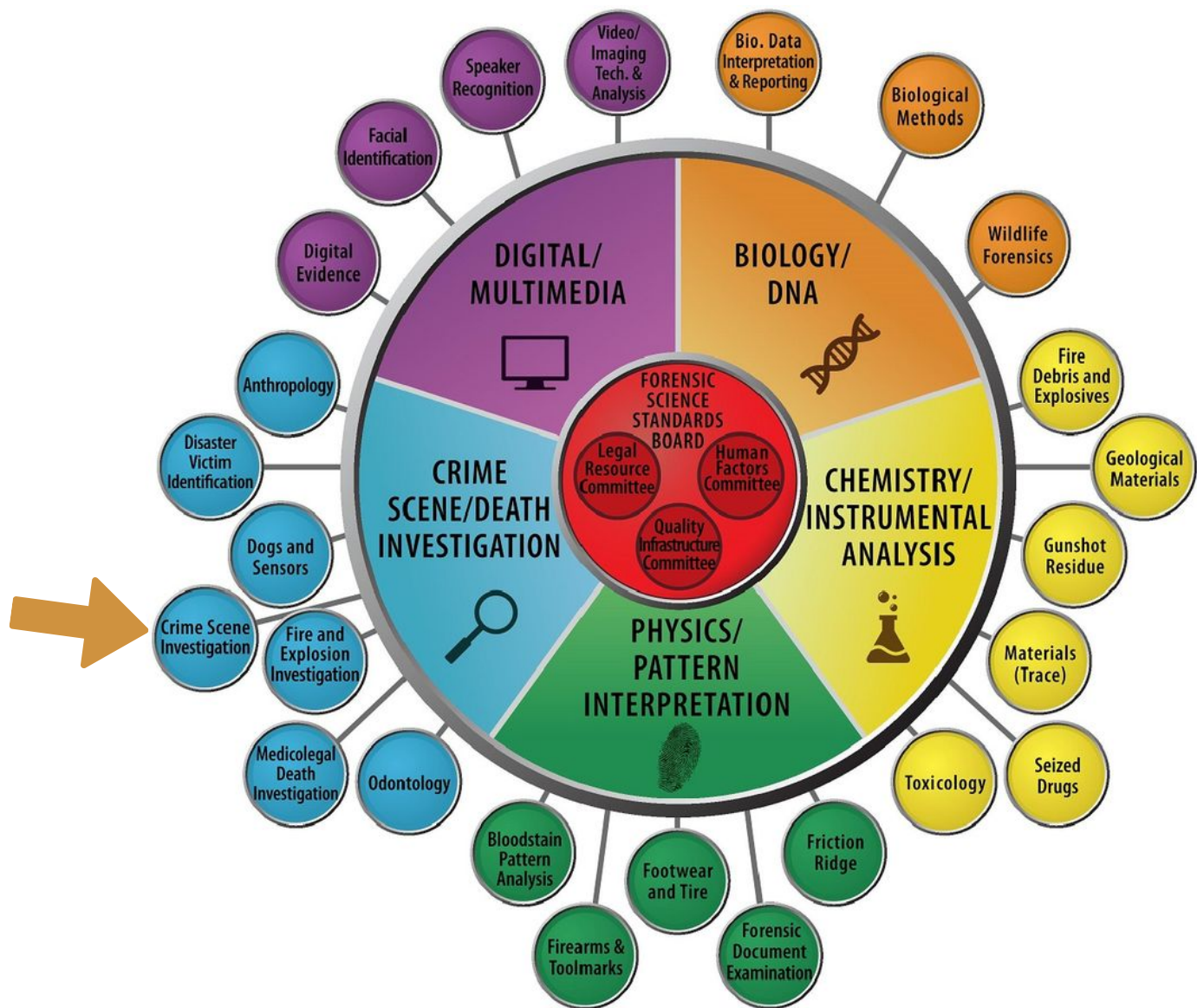


KEEPING THE "JUNK" OUT OF SCIENCE



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OSAC CSI SUBCOMMITTEE TASK GROUPS INCLUDE:



- Crime Scene Reconstruction
- Collision Reconstruction
- Response & ID
- Collection & Preservation
- Documentation & Reporting
- Forensic Nursing
- Veterinary Forensic Sciences
- Forensic Entomology

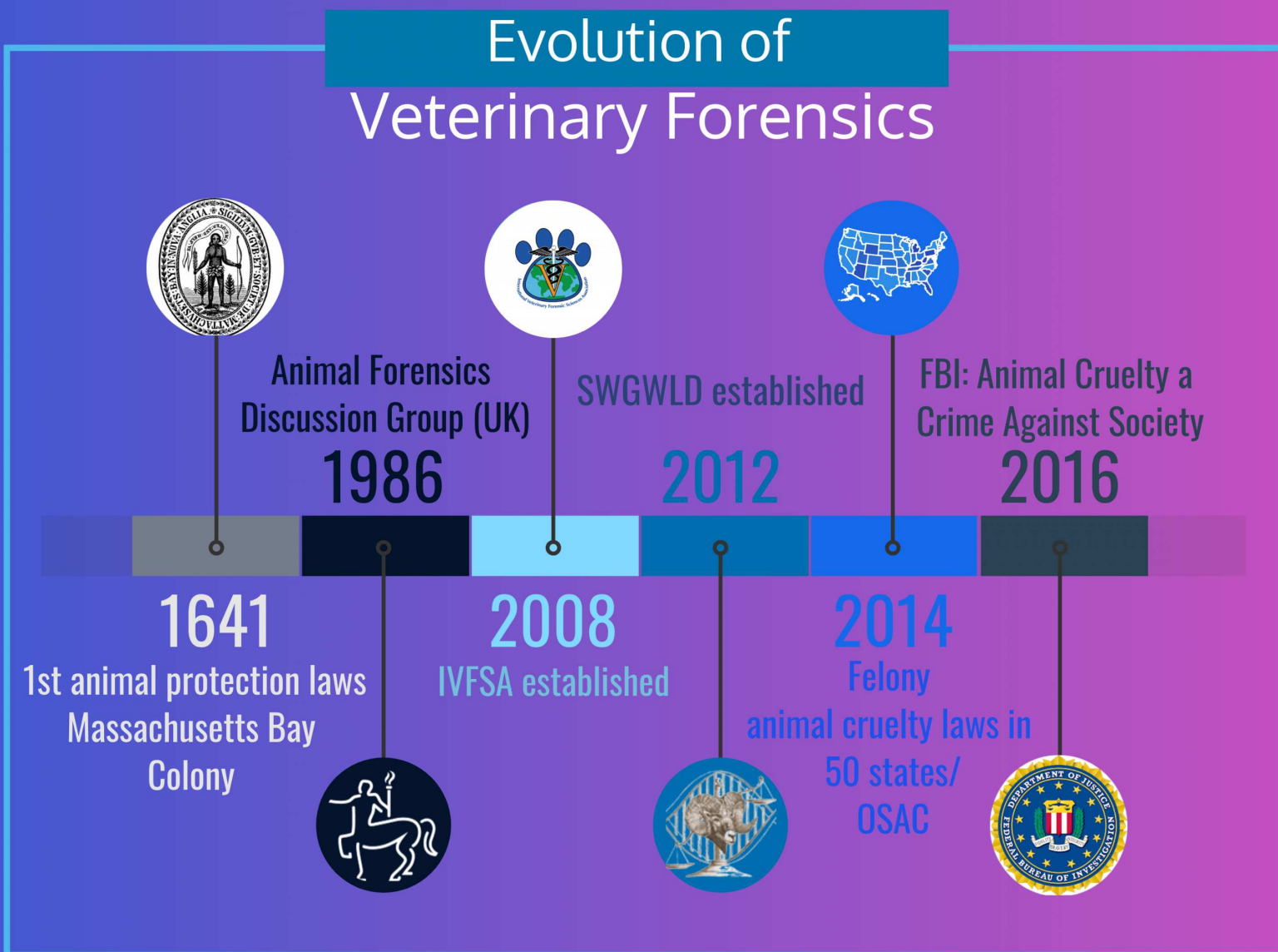
*A list of the planned first guidelines from the VFS-TG can be found on page 4



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Evolution of Veterinary Forensics



The first animal protection laws were in the 1641 "[Body of Liberties](#)." The US animal protection movement gained strength in the late 1800s with the establishment of charities for animal protection & welfare; some organizations gained police powers. In 1986, a British veterinarian (called "Veterinary Surgeons" in the UK), Michael J. Chapman started the *Animal Forensics Discussion Group*. He wrote an article called "The Veterinary Surgeon as a Collector & Presenter of Evidence." Dr. Melinda Merck published [Veterinary Forensics: Animal Cruelty Prosecutions](#) in 2007. In 2008, the [International Veterinary Forensic Sciences Association](#) was established. The [Scientific Working Group for Wildlife Forensics](#) was established in 2012. By 2014, Animal Cruelty was a felony crime in all 50 states & the Organization of Scientific Area Committees for Forensic Science (OSAC) was established. In 2016, the [FBI](#) designated animal cruelty a crime against society.