

New officer is a first step in fight against animal cruelty

Over the past eight years, there have been only 20 entries in the Chautauqua County Animal Abuse registry - though five have been added since December. All came from the city of Jamestown.

Perhaps the creation of a new deputy position in the Chautauqua County Sheriff's Office to focus on animal abuse cases will increase that number. The Chautauqua County Legislature approved funding as part of the 2026 county budget. That deputy - Jim Andin - was introduced recently by Sheriff Jim Quattrone. Quattrone said most of the Sheriff's Office deputies have a brief overview of animal cruelty laws. That training is enough in particularly heinous animal cruelty incidents, but there are some animal cruelty cases that aren't as cut and dried. Andin, who will work with a veterinary technician on investigations, will bring some additional expertise to these investigations, according to Quattrone. Andin will be working with a vet technician, assessing cases, to see if an animal is being given proper food, water and shelter, as well as proper medical treatment.

Quattrone said if someone suspects an animal is being abused, that person can go to the

Chautauqua County Humane Society's website and report potential abuse (under the "Get involved" tab.) Residents are also welcome to call the Sheriff's Office's non-emergency number at 716-753-4231, or 911 if it truly is an emergency.

Ideally, learning there is a deputy with specialized training, working with a veterinary technician on specified cases, would provide a deterrent effect. We hope there will be some cases that may not have been prosecuted in the past that may be prosecuted now.

There have been some stomach-turning instances of animal cruelty in Chautauqua County in recent years that have left many county residents pushing for more action from local government. Those residents will support Quattrone's recent announcement. But we shouldn't be lulled into a false feeling that last week's announcement puts an end to the scourge of animal cruelty cases in Chautauqua County. In fact, we may see more cases with a dedicated investigator working countywide.

Next, the conversation will likely turn to punishment - and that's a conversation that has to take place in Albany.