

- [TimesReview](#)
- [Suffolk Times](#)
- [Riverhead News-Review](#)
- [Shelter Island Reporter](#)
- [North Shore Sun](#)

[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [RSS](#)  
[Subscribe](#) | [Contact Us](#)



- [home](#)
- [news](#)
- [sports](#)
- [opinion](#)
- [education](#)
- [real estate](#)
- [business](#)
- [community](#)
- [lifestyle](#)

Search for:

## Guest Spot: Animal control officer has got to go

By [Pat Lynch](#) | April 19, 2011 in [Opinion](#)



1

For 30 years I've been a journalist with NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw and before that with Walter Cronkite of CBS News. I've won two Emmys for investigative reporting. My avocation is animal lover and volunteer — not animal activist, which has a negative meaning in Riverhead. For four months since I exposed the lies surrounding the euthanasia of the dog Bruno on Dec. 21 — lies made up by animal control officer Lou Coronesi, who then shared those lies and others about me with Riverhead Supervisor Sean Walter and Police Chief David Hegermiller — I've been banned from being a volunteer or even walking on shelter property.

Mr. Coronesi said Bruno had bitten a child in the face; Councilman Jim Wooten shared the real bite report with me. My own investigation could not even establish if Bruno ever bit anyone in an alleged dog fight. Mr.

Coronesi also said I was disrespectful to him. To avoid him, I made a point of going to the shelter when he wasn't on duty. One day, unfortunately, he was on duty.

With no witnesses around, Mr. Coronesi then defamed me to his bosses. This man, who has been convicted of animal-related crimes, was believed. I was banned just like Linda Mosca of RSVP, who was banned over a year ago.

What's going on here?

Maybe in the movie "Deliverance" Mr. Coronesi would have been kept on the job, but in the real world, I believe it's scandalous that he still is collecting a paycheck from Riverhead taxpayers after criminal convictions dating to 2003 for unlawfully hunting and possessing animals protected by federal law, and then driving with a suspended license. This and the disrespectful way he's treated volunteers and lied about them can't be countenanced any further. The man must go.

What is the union thinking protecting Mr. Coronesi, who has a criminal record? And what is Mr. Walter thinking protecting such a person in an election year? And why did Mr. Walter set me up in a distorted story about a medical situation that I was just reporting about at a town meeting so proper medical attention could be given to shelter animals. To his credit, Mr. Walter says the dogs at the Riverhead Animal Shelter are now being tested regularly for disease.

Well over a year ago I adopted two badly injured pit bull puppies from Riverhead. They were going to be euthanized because of financial reasons, I was told. With the help of Gail Waller, private donations and the badly maligned rescue group RSVP, whose members have saved so many Riverhead shelter dogs, the pit puppies now are well and in great homes. RSVP is the reason why the euthanasia rate in Riverhead — that never has many dogs to start with — seems low.

I also know that authorities have a way of distorting facts and figures. I sued Southampton Town after I was unlawfully banned from its shelter for what I reported firsthand. I know that records can be changed or never turned in. I know that records can be more fiction than fact. I won a jury trial in federal court in Islip and an appellate court decision over this matter and the violation of my First Amendment rights.

The Bruno case is a paradigm of what a lying employee can get away with. In the April 7 issue of the Riverhead News-Review Chief Hegermiller was quoted as saying, "Lou is more by the book, which I don't think they (the animal activists) like." Chief, if Mr. Coronesi's killing of Bruno was "by the book," then you knew Bruno was supposed to be walked finally by volunteers — after isolation since Oct. 7 — because that was all written down. Mr. Wooten learned that Mr. Coronesi had indeed informed his superiors of Bruno's change of status. Nevertheless he was euthanized. Why?

And why, Chief Hegermiller and Supervisor Walter, do you continue to advocate and protect this man who disrespects or bans volunteers and does as little as possible to provide a good life, exercise and homes for the animals in his charge?

*Ms. Lynch is a New York City and Southampton resident.*

Tags: [Guest Spot](#), [Riverhead Town Animal Shelter](#)

**Add New Comment**

Optional: Login below.

Type your comment here.

Post as ...

### Showing 8 comments

Sort by **Newest first**  [Subscribe by email](#)  [Subscribe by RSS](#)



**Mkitcowt** 14 hours ago

Mittabuk, You are missing a very important point. Why is it, with this town employee's criminal record and numerous other offenses - including lying to the Town Supervisor - is he still employed? Can you spell P-A-T-R-O-N-A-G-E? And if that is the name of the game, how can you ever expect to successfully deal with "more pressing issues in the town"?

Like

Reply



**Mittabuk** 3 days ago

Mr Lynch

Why don't you do an expose' on how poorly the middle-class is being treated in this country and how it is becoming more and more difficult for us to survive? There is an old saying (I'm sure you're familiar with, after sharing your vast credentials) that is appropriate for everything that we hear about the Riverhead Shelter: " If you're always yelling, you're never yelling." For God's sake, aren't there more pressing issues in the Town today than a shelter for dogs? So a pit bull was euthanized! How about complaining about the irresponsible owners who buy these pets then dump them on the Town, placing the burden of raising their dog on the taxpayer? Why do we even take-in pets from an owner who just decides he doesn't want one anymore? How about charging the pet owner for its care? Your song is getting old and I am one Riverhead taxpayer who is tired of listening.

Like

Reply



**Benja** 2 days ago [in reply to Mittabuk](#)

Mittabuk, How about euthanizing you! You wouldn't have to pay any more taxes.

Like

Reply



**Mittabuk** 1 day ago [in reply to Benja](#)

Benja, you injured me with words!

Like

Reply



**Teak12** 4 days ago

being involved as a shelter volunteer,I can tell you its not the dogs that stink!

Like Reply



**Dump Walter** 5 days ago

Another cover-up by Sandmine Sean and the Chief of Riverhead's notorious Donut Squad (yes, chief we believe all that graffiti has nothing to do with gangs)?

Like Reply



**Gpeace** 5 days ago

Good story Just the tip of the iceberg.....

1 person liked this. Like Reply



**Animal and People Lover** 5 days ago

Welcome to Riverhead! Any in-depth investigations by your media buddies would be greatly appreciated. There are more problems than the shelter.

3 people liked this. Like Reply

## Reactions



**FoPGCA** 4 days ago

From [Twitter](#)

NY Animal control creates lies about and bans respected shelter volunteer: <http://ow.ly/4DUET>

Trackback URL



**APPLE HONDA.NET**  
Where Value & Great Prices Come Together!  
1375 Route 58 Riverhead, NY 11901  
(631) 727-0555

**FAMILY OWNED & OPERATED**  
**Click, call or stop by!**  
OVER 50 YEARS IN BUSINESS

  
**HONDA**



Scott M. Press, M.D. P.C.

*Click to  
Learn More*

East Setauket • 631.675.2810  
Riverhead • 631.591.3120  
Greenport • 631.477.1885

- [People](#)
- [Recent](#)
- [Popular](#)

## Most Discussed

- [Two arrested on DWI charges on Flanders Road](#)  
8 comments · 3 hours ago
- [Neighbors upset over plan to build huge house in Southold](#)  
91 comments · 15 hours ago
- [State purchases 99 acres for preservation in Middle Island](#)  
10 comments · 1 hour ago
- [Wild Wild East: Mexican-style rodeo planned for Baiting Hollow](#)  
35 comments · 1 hour ago

2011 Explorer, The North American Truck Of The Year

# RIVERHEAD



EVERYONE WANTS IT.  
EVERY FORD HAS IT.



Drive smart.

Route 58, Riverhead, NY  
631.727.2200

## News-Review Newsletters

Daily & Breaking News

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Lyrical Children's**  
Pre-School & Learning Center  
631-208-4003

*Island's End*  
GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB  
CLICK HERE  
FOR TEE TIMES

PAMPERED  
Pets directory



News in your inbox  
**EVERY DAY**  
News in your mailbox  
**THURSDAYS**  
Subscribe today  
▶ Call 298.3200



Check out our  
**Real Estate**  
**SECTION**  
brought to you by  
**TimesReview**  
*Newsgroup*

janice  
robinson  
studio

LEGAL

**Contact Riverhead  
Allstate Agent  
Elizabeth Hanlon  
now.**



**CONTACT ME**

LONG ISLAND  
**WINE PRESS** 

**READ IT NOW**

### Times Review Publications

- [The Suffolk Times](#)

- [Riverhead News-Review](#)
- [Shelter Island Reporter](#)
- [North Shore Sun](#)
- [Wine Press](#)

- [Advertise](#)
- [About Us](#)
- [Archives](#)
- [Classifieds](#)
- [Privacy](#)
- [Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Contact](#)
- [Write the Editor](#)
- [Subscribe](#)

[BlankSlate.com](#)

Copyright 2011 TimesReview Newsgroup All Rights Reserved