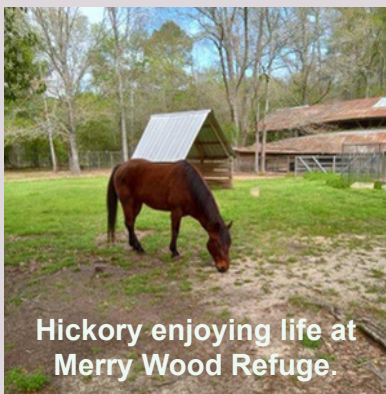


Mardi Gras Horse Program in its 7th Lifesaving Year!

Carnival season means that it's once again time for our Mardi Gras horse adoption program. Ever since the earliest Fat Tuesday traditions emerged in New Orleans, members of carnival royalty have ridden horseback through the streets, in our city's most prestigious parades. In more recent times, to meet the demand for horses, Cascade Stables in Audubon Park has purchased animals from horse brokers, then leased them to various carnival krewes for their parade riders. Purchased by these brokers at auction, the homeless horses arrive at the stables, with an uncertain future. Just a few days later, they are transformed into 'celebrity' horses, carrying costumed Mardi Gras royalty through the city. **About ten years ago, we began receiving reports that some of the parade horses, still dressed for carnival in glitter and feathers, were spotted en route to slaughter in Mexico.** Cascade Stables had simply been selling the horses back to the brokers after Mardi Gras. **Of course, in this situation, there were no guarantees that the animals would not be sold for slaughter.** Once we became aware of the sad reality behind the pageantry, we mobilized our team to ensure that none of the Mardi Gras horses would ever again endure this cruel fate. We forged a partnership with Cascade to facilitate adoptions, rather than selling the horses back to the brokers. **Since this program began in 2017, we have successfully adopted 106 Mardi Gras horses!** This year, with no time to lose, we have been busy taking photographs and videos of the latest group, publicizing their plight and screening applicants. As of this writing, we only have one remaining horse left, with several potential adopters. Thank you for funding this new Mardi Gras tradition, which creates fairy tale endings more suited to the spirit of carnival.



Hickory enjoying life at Merry Wood Refuge.

SAVING HICKORY. One horse that Cascade Stables acquired for Mardi Gras this year wasn't actually walked in parades. As it turned out, Hickory was temperamental and didn't care much for other horses. Cascade decided to sell him, and when we found out what had happened, he was already living in north Alabama. Not surprisingly, the new owner didn't want to deal with Hickory's personality quirks either, and she announced her intention to sell him at auction. Because he came in as part of the Mardi Gras horse group, we just couldn't let this happen, knowing his likely fate. We quickly made arrangements to buy him back and transport him to Merry Wood refuge, the wildlife sanctuary we operate in Tylertown. Hickory is now resting there quite happily - living with pigs and goats and no other bothersome horses.



We recently rescued two Great Danes who were nearly starved to death. We're happy to report that both dogs recovered and found loving homes in New York. Here's sweet **Betty** with her new family!



We were happy to rescue **Mittens** from inside a car engine this month.

It's so sad that even puppies are difficult to place in these trying times for shelters. This little one, who we named **Sweets**, was recently abandoned in a box at our front gate.



Puppy Love-a-thon Raising Funds for Pet Projects

February means Valentine's Day - the time of the year when love is in the air! To share the love with little ones in need, the Humane Society kicked off an ongoing Puppy Love-a-thon. Our goal is to raise 10K for big ticket 'puppy projects' in 2024. Once achieved, we'll be able to construct new outdoor puppy runs and a puppy play yard. We'll also be able to make urgently needed repairs to our adoption transport mini-bus. Want to make a special donation for puppy projects? We'd love the help!



ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE TO THE FULLEST EXTENT ALLOWED BY LAW.

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