



Dear Animal Defender,

This month, the Chinese Lunar New Year ushered in the *Year of the Fire Horse*, observed in many Asian countries. As it happens, much of our work in February focused on equine rescue. May the year ahead be an auspicious one for horses and all of the animals you generously help us to defend.

CARNIVAL TIME MEANS SAVING THE MARDI GRAS HORSES



When New Orleans celebrates with parades, king cakes and carnival balls, it's time for the *Humane Society of Louisiana's* annual **Mardi Gras Horse Adoption Program**. HSLA introduced the annual adoption campaign in 2017 after learning the sad truth about the fate of many parade horses. Each year before Mardi Gras, around 20 homeless horses are purchased by Cascade Stables from livestock sale barns; there is an increased demand for parade horses each year during carnival season. In the past, after Mardi Gras, the horses were sold back to brokers, with many ending up being shipped to slaughter in Mexico. We knew we had to act to end this practice and its cruel association with our city's signature celebration. Since then, we've successfully adopted 145 former Mardi Gras horses. This year, we adopted and/or took custody of an additional 28 deserving animals, ensuring that they will not end up in the wrong hands. From transport expenses to veterinary care, the costs of this program are considerable - especially since we don't receive adoption fees; those funds go back to Cascade Stables to replace the income they would otherwise recoup by selling the horses back to brokers. The program relies upon volunteers dedicating countless hours to the cause, particularly program all-stars Meredith Burst, Angelica Jacobs, Kelsey Antoon and Karoline Bedell, led by HSLA Board member, Rena Sweeney. We thank you all so much for your critically needed work to save the horses! Very special thanks also go out to The Gumbo Foundation, Elise Schmidt, Stephanie Doughty, Christina Borello and Jennifer Kookan for their very generous support this year.



HUNDREDS OF ANIMALS ON THE ROAD TO HOMES THIS YEAR

More than 400 homeless animals were transported already this year, all headed to loving homes through our adoption partners. These precious shelter kitties are among the lucky ones, who made the trip in time for Valentine's Day. Our transport van needs new tires and servicing this month, which will cost roughly \$2000. Your kind donations will help fund this needed upkeep and help keep our transports on the road.

