



January 2025

Dear Animal Defender,

Happy New Year and thank you for your generous support in 2024. Here in New Orleans, all of us began the year shocked and heartbroken by the violence of the Bourbon Street terror attack. Our hearts go out to the victims and to everyone impacted by this devastating event. In the face of such unconscionable violence, we remain hopeful for a new year dedicated to promoting compassion.

FREEZING WEATHER DOWN SOUTH: CRUELTY, NEGLECT REPORTS SURGE



Almost every January in Louisiana, HSLA is flooded with reports of animal mistreatment related to freezing weather conditions. With extremely cold weather happening infrequently down South, residents are generally unprepared for these conditions. In addition to responding to these urgent, life-threatening cruelty and neglect complaints, HSLA takes time to issue public warnings via local media regarding pet protection each winter. We also distribute supplies and equipment to help mitigate the weather hazards. Spring couldn't come quickly enough for local animals in need. Until then, thank you for making this work possible!

ABANDONED BIRDS RESCUED BEFORE THE SNOWSTORM!



An HSLA volunteer team mobilized in New Orleans this weekend to rescue a flock of 12 abandoned turkeys before the season's worst freeze. The shivering birds were abandoned in an empty Mid City lot three months ago. While neighbors fed them occasionally and had attempted to get help, NOLA animal control services do not respond to calls about fowl. When we heard of the plight of these birds, we reached out to our supporters for help. Luckily, we

received multiple kind offers to rehome the animals in a sanctuary setting. Within the hour, volunteers rounded up the turkeys and transported them to happy new lives in Livingston parish. Well done, team! Extra special thanks to Dexter and Karlie Parent for adopting the appreciative flock.

TAKING ON LOUISIANA'S PET OVERPOPULATION CRISIS IN 2025

The crisis of pet overpopulation and animal abandonment in our state continues to escalate, exacerbated by soaring veterinary costs. One alarming example is a recent \$800 bill we received from a long-time veterinary partner - for a routine dog neuter! While the clinic was willing to adjust the price, it highlights the harsh reality: veterinary care is becoming completely unaffordable for many families. As a result, beloved pets are either surrendered to already overwhelmed shelters and rescues, or they face tragic outcomes such as euthanasia or prolonged suffering. Our *Emergency Veterinary Fund* increasingly plays a crucial role in providing essential veterinary care to animals in need, addressing the immediate fallout of this crisis. The rising cost of services, driven in large part by the acquisition of veterinary practices by private equity firms, is a significant factor contributing to the overpopulation issue. This year, we remain committed to exploring solutions and coming up with effective ways to make a difference.

Rescuer-hero Amber Richard successfully worked to help Isabelle this month. The dog's owner, on a fixed income, was simply unable to afford the veterinary surgery needed to remove a large mammary tumor from the beloved pet. We were happy to pitch in to help Amber raise the needed funds for Isabelle.

