



**Dear Animal Defender,**

Thanks so much your ongoing partnership and support. Here's to a great 2026 for animals!

**SAVING ABANDONED AND FORGOTTEN ANIMALS IN THE FREEZE**



When freezing temperatures swept across Louisiana in January, the Humane Society of Louisiana experienced a surge in emergency calls for help. In a short time, we received **more than 100 complaints** involving animals in distress. Thanks to the quick action of our investigators and volunteers, scores of vulnerable animals were brought to safety during the cold snap. Among those rescued were a **mama dog and her seven sweet puppies**, a **baby opossum**, an **abandoned standard poodle named Minnie** and a **lonely, shivering puppy**. We also helped a friendly, **injured orange tabby named Po**, who was in urgent need of vet care. Po had been living under the patio of a seafood restaurant in Denham Springs, where he had become a familiar face to customers and staff. Po was safely trapped by a rescuer and taken to a local vet, along with two other cats who had been sharing the space. We are grateful to the compassionate community members who reported animals in danger and to the volunteers who helped bring them to safety.



*During the freeze: **Po** (left), was trapped and rescued; **Minnie** (right) a frightened standard poodle, was abandoned at a supermarket in Albany. HSLA paid for her vet care, and her rescuer, a dog groomer, gave Minnie some much needed attention. What a makeover!*



**ATTEMPT TO REVIVE COCKFIGHTING IN ST. LANDRY PARISH BLOCKED**



Animal advocates across the state were relieved recently, after discussions about reviving cockfighting in St. Landry Parish were quickly shut down. Parish officials raised the issue after some council members, hoping to raise tax revenue from the bloodsport, noted that cockfights were still taking place regularly in the area, despite the statewide ban. The *Humane Society of Louisiana* spoke out in local media, emphasizing that cockfighting is not only cruel but also closely linked to illegal gambling, weapons and other criminal activity. Following a packed City Council meeting of pro-cockfighting voices, the St. Landry Parish Council voted unanimously to seek an opinion on the constitutionality of Louisiana's cockfighting ban, Liz Murrill, Attorney General of Louisiana, responded that cockfighting remains illegal under state law and that the Department of Justice would not issue opinions challenging the constitutionality of existing statutes.

Illegal or not, it's apparent that this activity is still widespread, due to lax enforcement. Louisiana has the shameful distinction of being the last state in the nation to outlaw cockfighting, in 2008.