



Dear Animal Defender,

November 2024

In this month of Thanksgiving, we are filled with gratitude for your kind support all year long. Like you, we're also grateful for the animals, who enrich our lives and world. Thank you for allowing us to be their champion in Louisiana, where help is so urgently needed.

\$20,000 in Grants Awarded to Fight Pet Overpopulation



On November 19th, the Louisiana Pet Overpopulation Advisory Council, chaired by our Executive Director, Jeff Dorson, convened in Baton Rouge. The volunteer state Board distributed \$20,000 in grants supporting spay/ neuter programs across the state. These grants will empower 20 exceptional grassroots organizations working tirelessly to curb Louisiana's pet overpopulation crisis. The *Humane Society of Louisiana* passed legislation to create the **Pet Overpopulation Advisory Council** back in 2002. Grants are funded through the sales of **Animal Friendly License Plates**, which are available at local DMV offices and online. Excitingly, the Council is also planning to launch Commemorative Pet Stamps soon, creating another way for animal advocates to contribute to this life-saving mission.

Your Participation in the Program Makes a Difference: Each Animal Friendly License Plate purchased provides critical resources for spay/neuter initiatives. If you can, visit your nearest DMV or go online to purchase your plate today. Make sure you tell others, too!

Precious Lucia (formerly Sadie) was recently dumped on a rural back road in the Beaver Creek area of Evangeline Parish. (We later learned that her poor sibling had died of starvation before anyone could rescue them.) Luckily, Lucia was spared this cruel fate and was saved by a rescuer, who asked us to share her photo and story. We were delighted that our dear friend, Zoey Bivalacqua, saw her photos and decided to adopt. We couldn't be happier!



Research Chimps Finally Headed to Louisiana for Retirement



After years of languishing in cages and enduring the aftermath of invasive research, 23 retired research chimpanzees from New Mexico are finally heading to Louisiana. They will begin a well-deserved new chapter at Chimp Haven in Keithville, the nation's largest chimpanzee sanctuary, located just outside of Shreveport. This milestone marks the fulfillment of a promise to these chimps—a life of care, dignity and peace after decades of misery and isolation. The National Institutes of Health's (NIH) decision to relocate the chimps this month follows years of advocacy by animal welfare organizations, including the *Humane Society of Louisiana*. HSLA wrote letters to the editor, contacted officials and helped amplify public pressure on behalf of the chimps. Ranging from ages 34 to 62, these resilient chimps were left in Alamogordo after dubious concerns about their health were voiced by NIH. Hundreds of other chimps

have safely retired to Chimp Haven already, after the 2015 decision to end invasive chimpanzee research; the sanctuary is well-prepared to meet the special needs of new residents. Finally, after careful planning and with the expertise of sanctuary staff, the transport is finally happening! Chimp Haven offers the chimpanzees large outdoor spaces, diverse enrichment activities and the opportunity to form strong social bonds—key elements of their rehabilitation. For instance, older chimps like Julius, who arrived at Chimp Haven after decades in labs, have not only recovered but thrived, forging new friendships with other retirees. These outcomes stand as testaments to what sanctuary living can achieve. This moment represents the culmination of efforts by many compassionate individuals and organizations, most notably our colleagues at Animal Protection New Mexico. We thank all of you who wrote letters, circulated petitions and spoke out on behalf of these primates. This holiday season, let's celebrate this significant win for the animals!