



Dear Friend of Animals,



After a month spent evacuated from New Orleans after Hurricane Ida, our local crew returned home to the city, as rescue and relief efforts continued. The animals of our state and the people who care for them will be impacted by the storm for a long time to come, just as the communities on the western side of our state are still recovering from hurricanes Laura and Delta last summer. Your generosity is deeply appreciated this month.

THE ONGOING CRISIS FOR ANIMALS AFTER IDA

Serious problems continue to impact Louisiana's animals in the wake of Hurricane Ida. Some shelters have closed temporarily or have cut back services. Many rescues are overwhelmed. Families with destroyed homes or changed circumstances are finding it hard to keep their pets. To make matters worse, many of our northern adoption partners are taking in fewer animals than they did previously. Adoptions seem to have slowed down everywhere, after a surge in placements during the Covid lockdowns. Meanwhile, our phone is ringing off the hook with calls for help. At the same time, our costs are rising. Because we move animals so frequently around the state and country, the rising price of fuel significantly impacts our charity. In these unusual times, we truly appreciate the support of our *Defenders Circle* members.

23 DOGS RESCUED IN NORTHEAST LOUISIANA

The Chief of Police of St. Joseph, a small town in Tensas Parish, put out a plea for help recently. 23 dogs had been found in an abandoned house, and there was nowhere to take the poor animals. A squatter had taken up residence in a dilapidated house without electricity or running water, and he had started rounding up and housing the town's stray dogs. (The fact that there was no other option for the dogs underscores the widespread problems in the parish.)

Stacey Alleman, Director of the *Pointe Coupee Animal Shelter*, and our longtime volunteer, Joy Roberson, stepped up to help the Chief relocate the dogs. The animals were all transported to a private boarding facility, more than 2 1/2 hours away from where they were found. Our group is covering the costs of this large rescue operation, and we will ensure the animals get the second chance they deserve.



Even after 33 years on the front lines, our founder, Jeff Dorson, never hesitates to take any action needed to save an animal in distress. Above, Jeff is rescuing a scared black lab, who was trapped in a canal near Jeff's home in Algiers, New Orleans. Animal control and shelter services have been significantly cut in many areas of Louisiana following Hurricane Ida.



Thanks to Erin & Abbey Michel for hosting the meeting and to the St. James parish animal lovers, who showed up to help.

EXPANDING SERVICES FOR ANIMALS ACROSS THE STATE

Even as our disaster relief work continues, we remain focused our goal of expanding our state's animal protection infrastructure. In fact, in times of disaster, the lack of animal protection services in any community is more keenly felt. In the past, we have helped establish several small animal protection groups, in areas of great need. This month, we announced and held a community meeting in St. James parish, in hopes of establishing the area's first animal protection group. We will keep in touch with the local residents who showed up and support their efforts to get a local rescue or shelter up and running.

Livingston Parish Group
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I live on the west end of Hood Road. Would someone with a rescue please come get this dog. She is in really bad shape. She just showed up at our house. Guess someone threw her out.



With so many animals lost, abandoned and displaced after the storm, we're lucky to have volunteers like Debbie Johnston. As you can imagine, we're being tagged on more and more photos of animals in need on Facebook. In the case of one helpless dog in Livingston Parish, Debbie made it her personal mission to save a life. A real canine sleuth, Debbie was able to locate the dog and rescue him. She drove him to nearby vet clinic, where the poor dog is now being treated for a variety of ailments. Debbie named the sweet dog Casper, and we agreed to fund his full recovery.

PET ABANDONMENT DURING IDA: 26 Dogs & Cats Saved Along I-10 West

After Katrina, laws were passed and educational programs established to prevent pets from being left behind in disasters. Public programs were designed to enable residents to evacuate with their pets. Sadly, it appears that many of our communities have still not established legally mandated programs, such as side-by-side animal shelters at evacuation centers. On the other hand, many of our residents continue to display incredible indifference to animal suffering, even when options are available. During the Ida evacuation, the State Police contacted our colleague, Ms. Rita Bingham, of the *Humane Society of West Louisiana*, because motorists were abandoning pets along the I-10, as they headed west towards Texas. Ms. Bingham (who is 84 years old) spent hours along the highway, rescuing frightened animals with her son. The pair rescued 26 cats, dogs and kittens, including one blind, 13 year old cocker spaniel. (We contributed to their care and offered a \$1000 reward in this case.) HSLA also received countless reports of animal abandonment during Hurricane Ida. (Our Director, Jeff Dorson, is fostering one of two rabbits who were left to starve in their cage.) Countless dogs were left chained outside to endure the storm. In Denham Springs, a witness reported that her neighbor left town before the hurricane, leaving two dogs, several cats and kittens. The neighbor who discovered the animals luckily stepped in to provide food and water. HSLA volunteer, Stephanie Passmore, took a day off work to help. She was able to get leashes on the dogs and lift them into her car; she rushed them to an emergency clinic. Before leaving town, Stephanie filed a police report against the previous owner for abandonment and cruelty, and the deputy promised to pursue charges. The neighbor will continue to care for the cats, who will be trapped, neutered and returned. It is heartbreaking to think about how much still remains to be done in our state, just to promote the most basic humane values.



Precious Lee was lucky that a caring person like Jenny Guidry spotted him, as he staggered across a rural highway in Acadia parish. She stopped and followed him into the weeds, where he had collapsed. Jenny was able to pick him up and rush him to Lafayette Animal Care Center, where x-rays showed him to be suffering from three front leg fractures and a jaw injury. Luckily, we were able to find a veterinarian willing to do the expensive surgery at a reduced price. The cute puppy will now get the second chance at life he deserves. (Lee on the mend, below.)



Sweet Huey (below) was saved this month in Avoyelles parish, another area of the state where we soon plan to host a community meeting.

