

# Pet Talk

WINTER 2017

LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org / 402.817.1168

## Our mission

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors is addressing the root causes of Animal Homelessness in Lincoln and the surrounding communities.

## Donate

Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Program  
Pet Food Bank  
General Funds

Mail to: PO Box 67072,  
Lincoln, NE 68506

As a 501(c)(3), all donations to LAA are tax deductible.

Or donate through our website  
LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org

## Spay-ghetti ~and~ NO BALLS DINNER

**MARCH 25 at 6 P.M.**  
**UNITARIAN CHURCH 6300 A St.**  
**\$25 per ticket**

**Cause  
for  
Paws**  **Boutique  
for  
Cheap**

2445 S. 48th Street  
Don't forget to shop at Cause for Paws. This "boutique for cheap" turns your donations and purchases into cash for animal charities, including LAA's low-cost spay/neuter program.  
CauseForPawsLincoln.org

## Join LAA on March 25 for Spay-ghetti and No-Balls!

Our annual spring fundraiser, Spay-ghetti and No Balls, will once again be held at the Unitarian Church at 6300 A Street. In 2016 we completed a record number of 509 spay/neuter procedures; almost 10 every single week! Our efforts to prevent homeless animals are paid for through fundraisers and donations, so please consider joining us at this event to help save lives. A prevention strategy has an enormous impact on the lives of animals in shelters and rescues. The average cost of spaying 1 animal is less than 1/10 the cost of caring for a homeless pet until it can be placed in a loving home.

Salad, spaghetti and breadsticks will be served for dinner starting at 6:30. A selection of wine will be available for purchase by the glass. Following dinner, LAA is excited to welcome Kim Ostermann and Melissa Ripley from Second Chance Pups Prison Dog Training & Adoption program as the featured speakers at Spay-ghetti and No Balls. We will once again be featuring a number of desserts from local businesses and bakeries for a super sweet dessert auction. Advance tickets can be purchased from our website: LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org/snb.

## February is Spay/Neuter Month

February is designated as Spay/Neuter Awareness Month to shine a light on the fact that spay/neuter is the most effective and humane means of decreasing the number of homeless animals who are either put down in shelters or living on the streets.

### Getting your pet spayed or neutered can:

- Reduce the number of homeless pets killed
- Improve your pet's health
- Reduce unruly behavior
- Save on the cost of pet care

Pets are homeless everywhere. In every community, in every state, there are homeless animals. In the U.S., there are an estimated 6-8 million homeless animals entering animal shelters every year. Barely half of these animals are adopted. Tragically, the rest are euthanized. These are healthy, sweet pets who would have made great companions.

Many people are surprised to learn that nationwide, more than 2.7 million healthy, adoptable cats and dogs are euthanized in shelters annually. Spay/neuter is the only permanent, 100 percent effective method of birth control for dogs and cats.

Contact your veterinarian to schedule an appointment for your pet.



# 2016 by the numbers

## Low Cost Spay/Neuter Program

2641 total spay/neuters  
509 total for 2016  
242 dogs  
258 cats  
9 rabbits

## Food Bank Numbers

**Dry food**  
58,825 lbs. Jan. - Dec. 2016  
4,902 lbs. per month  
330,931 lbs. since inception

**Canned food**  
19,176 cans Jan. - Dec. 2016  
1,598 cans per month  
84,661 cans since inception

**Litter**  
8,592 lbs. Jan. - Dec. 2016  
716 lbs. per month  
51,289 lbs. since inception

**Number of families helped in 2016: 403**

# Memorial donations

In Memory of Gary Smith  
Dog - Truman, Paula Einemann  
Dog - Molly, Mary Douglas  
Dog - Rocky, Karry Pavel  
Dog - Leandro, Pauline Balta  
Sam - Jeanie Imler  
Dog - Nanna, Jody and Terry Workman  
Zimmie Zoo Zoo, Mary Lee Smith

## Featured Rescue: Paws Up of Nebraska



The combination of high numbers of puppy mills, poorly funded animal control facilities, and certain attitudes that view animals as disposable property spells trouble for pets in small communities across the Midwest. Like many rural Americans experience hunger and poverty more keenly than those in urban areas, so too do their companion animals. In 2013, a small group of people in Wymore, Nebraska, banded together to face these challenges, and Paws Up of Nebraska was born.

With the mission to educate future generations regarding responsible animal ownership, help families struggling financially to find resources for their pets, and spread the no-kill philosophy while providing temporary homes for animals at risk of death, Paws Up of Nebraska operates on two fronts: prevention and rescue. To prevent animal homelessness due to financial setbacks, the 100% volunteer group operates pet food pantries in Lincoln, Beatrice, and Wymore, distributing nearly 3,000 pounds of dog and cat food, treats, and litter each month.

For pet guardians with no other options,

Paws Up assists with veterinary costs, including vaccinations, spaying/neutering, and emergency surgery, and maintains a fund to provide temporary boarding or foster care for pets whose guardians are hospitalized. "We'll get calls from people saying they need to surrender their dog because they can't afford vaccinations or surgery," says Paws Up president Kathy Streka. "We ask them, if Paws Up covers the vet bill, would you keep the dog? The answer is almost always yes."

On the rescue side, Paws Up seeks out dogs whose time has run out. Many dogs come from rural communities in southern Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri that have substandard animal control facilities with a high kill rate. These dogs are often heartworm positive. Many are pitbull and pitbull mixes. Paws Up provides all food and veterinary care while a network of foster families provides attention, socialization and, most importantly, love. Before being placed for adoption, all dogs are vaccinated, spayed or neutered, microchipped, and receive training for behavioral concerns when possible. Nearly 100 dogs have found loving homes since Paws Up began- 100 dogs who may not have been so fortunate were it not for a caring group of small-town Nebraskans.

To support its programs, Paws Up hosts a monthly microchipping and nail trimming clinic at alternating locations. Learn more about the clinics and Paws Up of Nebraska's work to help animals in the rural Midwest by visiting their website at [www.pawsupofnebraska.org](http://www.pawsupofnebraska.org).



## 10% off at SitStay.com

SitStay is proud to support LAA's mission to prevent animal homelessness. Mention Lincoln Animal Ambassadors when you shop at SitStay for a 10% discount.



# Volunteer Spotlight: Kathy Moore

## Where did you first learn about Lincoln Animal Ambassadors?

Through Karl Skinner, who was President of Nebraska No Kill Canine Rescue, which I was also involved with at the time. He took me to my first meeting with LAA. I then started to volunteer with events and was asked to start making the spay/neuter program payments. When Tammie Lang resigned as treasurer, I was asked if I would like to do the job and I accepted.



## Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I was born in Lincoln but moved to Denver, Colorado when I was thirteen and spent my growing up years in Colorado. I attended Colorado State University for two years as an Art major. I moved back to Lincoln where I met my ex-husband and we had one child, my daughter Tara. I have always loved animals and my dream was to have a horse. That dream came true when I lived in Grand Junction, Colorado but when I moved back to Lincoln I couldn't

afford the boarding bills so I had to sell her. My family always had dogs and various other pets. Some of which I brought home without my parents prior consent. I also brought home a kitten, a possum and babies, baby rabbits and a snake - much to my mother's dismay. While contemplating retiring I knew I needed something to keep me busy and wanted animals to be part of my plan. I was a founding member of Nebraska No Kill Canine Rescue and served as their Treasurer until right before I started with Lincoln Animal Ambassadors. This volunteer work has helped make my retirement years great!

## What areas do you primarily volunteer for us at this time?

I am a board member and my title is Treasurer. I pay all of LAA's bills and keep track of our spending. I also prepare a budget for the board to approve and do our taxes.

## What do you find rewarding in your volunteer activities?

I have been in the accounting field for quite some time - I was the Financial Officer for the Nebraska Supreme Court for 29 years and worked 7 years prior to that for the State Accounting Office. I love accounting and find working in this area for LAA quite rewarding. I also work at many of the events LAA has throughout the year. I have also done spay/neuter calling and Pet Food Bank applications in the past. All of these jobs are necessary for LAA to continue to do the important work it does.

## Do you do other volunteer work in Lincoln?

I moved from Lincoln to Elkhorn last April to be closer to my grandson and daughter. I decided to remain with LAA at the request of Mary and the rest of the board. Because of the distance I don't come to all events but try to get to all of the major events. I am going to start volunteering here in Elkhorn at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital in the near future.

## What would you recommend to anyone looking to volunteer for Lincoln Animal Ambassadors?

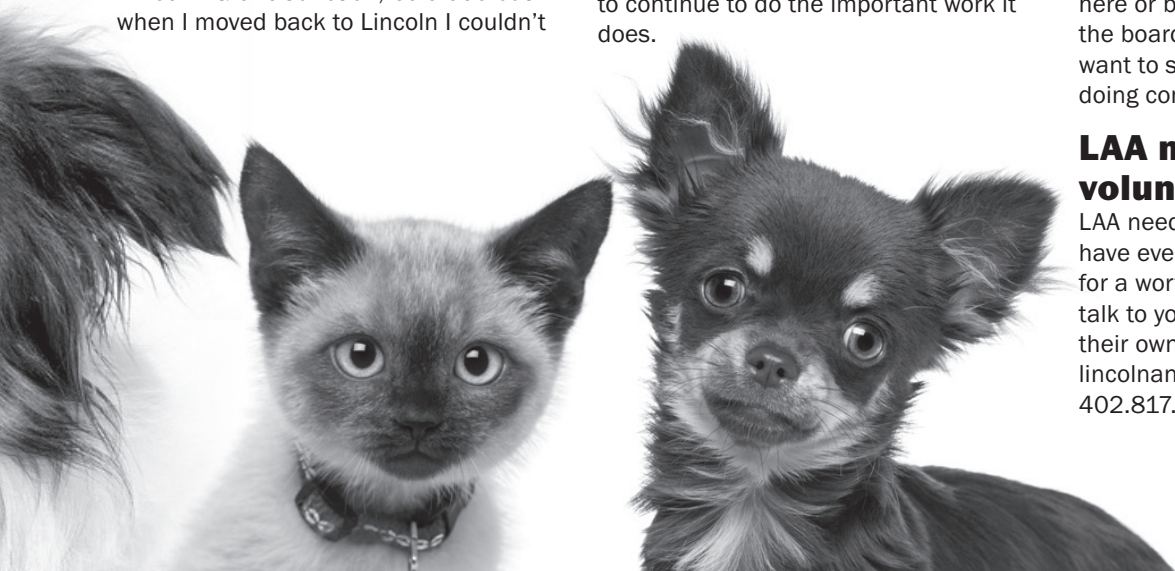
If anyone has a love of animals and really wants to make a difference LAA is a great way to help the animals of Lancaster County. The spay/neuter program is so important to keep the number of animals ending up in shelters from happening. Too many animals are born and then can't find a home. They end up in shelters and many are then euthanized. This program is invaluable. The Pet Food Bank helps pet owners with limited financial resources to be able to keep their pets because LAA helps feed their animals. Many of the people who come to the PFB have only their pets as family and would have a terrible time having to give them up because they couldn't afford to feed them.

## If you could add one thing to the Lincoln Animal Ambassadors "wish list," what would it be?

We need more young people who love animals willing to get involved and wanting to become the future leaders of Lincoln Animal Ambassadors. The people on the current board will not always be here or be able to continue to serve on the board. We need young people who want to see the important work LAA is doing continue.

## LAA needs volunteers like you!

LAA needs volunteers like you! If you have ever considered volunteering for a worthy cause, we would love to talk to you. You can help pets and their owners by contacting us at [info@lincolnanimalambassadors.org](mailto:info@lincolnanimalambassadors.org) or calling 402.817.1168.



## A very BIG thank you to our recent donors!

Beth Kurpgeweit  
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South Ridge Animal Clinic  
St. Matthews Episcopal Church  
Target  
WalMart

## Lincoln Animal Ambassadors receives certificate of recognition

This past November at the Homeless Coalition's 17th annual recognition brunch, Lincoln Animal Ambassadors received a certificate in honor of their contribution to homeless and near homeless individuals and families in the Lincoln community. "We need to feel proud of ourselves. This was not recognition only for participating in the Project Homeless Connect event, but for what we do all year around," said Pauline Balta, LAA's vice-president and spay/neuter coordinator, who accepted the recognition certificate on behalf of LAA.

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors was one of about 20 groups and individuals to be recognized with certificates. Eight groups and individuals were given awards. Award and certificate recipients gathered together at The Bridge Behavioral Health for a morning of presentations and a light brunch.

Since 2012, the Homeless Coalition has invited Lincoln Animal Ambassadors to participate in the Project Homeless Connect Lincoln Day. At this annual event, LAA provides information about its needs-based pet food bank and issues spay/neuter vouchers as needed for people's pets. LAA also assisted with organizing pet services

such as wellness checks, free vaccinations, wellness checks, and nail trims. This past year, 13 dogs, six cats and one bunny received services at the event. Pet owners expressed appreciation over and over, at times with tears. They were relieved to not have to worry about their pets not being vaccinated, and grateful for the new leashes and collars being handed out.



## LAA receives a Sowers Club Grant



In December 2016, LAA was honored with a Grant from the Lincoln Sowers Club. The grant was provided to help pay the rent for the Pet Food Bank's storage & distribution center. The club's board of directors wasn't aware of LAA and this grant application allowed us to illuminate the problem of and solution to animal homelessness in our community.

The Sowers Club supports a diverse range of Nebraska organizations, with a focus on children, the underprivileged, education, community safety, the disabled, medical support and community service organization; but they review each application based on its own merits and they pride themselves in their diverse giving ability. In support of programs with proven longevity, an organization has to have 501(c)(3) status for five years before it is eligible to apply for a Sowers Club grant.



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# Your donations make a huge impact on animal homelessness

Numbers make everything sound more official. Let's take a look at some of the digits LAA has seen over the past year.

## 2,600

The total number of dogs, cats, and occasional rabbit that LAA has helped spay or neuter since our Low-Cost Spay/Neuter voucher program began in 2010.

## 200

The number of vouchers sent to Lincoln cat owners during the "Fix Me Meow" campaign in early 2016.

## 100

The number (each!) of Chihuahuas and pitbulls spayed or neutered through "The Mighty and the Tiny" campaign in 2016.

## 100%

The percentage of our organization that is supported by donations and volunteers.

Not to toot our own horn, but these numbers are better than we ever could have imagined just over six years ago. That's a lot of unwanted litters prevented, a lot of pet parents helped, and a lot of shelter animals who have a better chance of being adopted. And our supporters—those in Lincoln and beyond who care about companion animals and people in need—had a huge part in making these numbers so great.

But here's one number our spay/neuter fund moves toward every day: 0. LAA is faced with cutting back on the number of vouchers we provide to pet parents in need. Because spaying and neutering is

absolutely one of the best solutions to pet overpopulation, we want to avoid this for as long as possible.

Now more than ever, we need your support to keep the spay/neuter program going strong. Here are some more numbers to consider contributing:

- \$25 toward a cat neuter
- \$50 toward a cat spay or small/medium dog neuter
- \$100 toward a large dog neuter or small dog spay
- \$150-\$200 toward a medium/large dog spay

Don't know about all the ways you can donate? Have a look at this handy list:

- Mail a check to our post office box. Why not make use of the delightfully fun-sized return envelope included with this very newsletter?
- Make a secure Paypal donation at [LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org](http://LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org)
- Shop Amazon.com and donate 0.5% of your purchase to LAA through AmazonSmile
- Visit and make a donation at one of our upcoming events, including the I Love My Dog Expo on February 25-26th, Spayghetti and No Balls on March 25th, or Wine and Howl on June 3rd.

Your contributions are making a difference. Thank you for all that you do to help address animal homelessness.

# Calendar of events



## 2017 Annual Domestic-PUPS Fun-Raiser! February 25 & 26

Lancaster Event Center  
Saturday 9am - 4pm  
Sunday 11am - 4pm

## Spayghetti & No-Balls Dinner March 25

## Wine & Howl June 3

Deer Springs Winery

## Meow & Chow October 8

Scottish Rite Temple

**Don't just take your dog for a walk... take your walk for a dog!**



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You walk your dog anyway, now you can support Lincoln Animal Ambassadors every time you walk your dog! Go to [WoofTrax.com](http://WoofTrax.com), download the app on your phone, and get walking! This is a completely FREE way to make a donation, just by doing something you already do.

## Featured at this years Spayghetti & No-Balls Dinner





4<sup>th</sup>  
ANNUAL

# Spay-ghetti and NO BALLS DINNER

*& Dessert Auction*

*Featuring:* Second Chance Pups Prison Dog  
Training & Adoption Program

**MARCH 25 at 6 P.M.**

**UNITARIAN CHURCH 6300 A St.**

**\$25 per ticket** Seating is limited.

Reserve tickets at [LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org/snb](http://LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org/snb) or  
(402) 817-1168. Tickets will be sold at the door.



# Ways to celebrate your pet in February

## February 14: Pet Theft Awareness

It is estimated that about two million pets are stolen each year, and only 10% are returned to their owners. Launched in 1988 by the Last Chance for Animals organization, Pet Theft Awareness Day is aimed at educating animal owners about how to keep their pets safe from thieves.

According to Pet Safe, the top two reasons pets are stolen are for money and for illegal dog fights. In the case of monetary gain, pets are sometimes stolen with the intent of returning it to the owner for a reward. Other times, someone may steal a pet to sell it to a third party (for example, to entities using animals for research). As for illegal animal fights, dogs will either be trained as fighters or used as bait.

Pet Safe offers the following advice:

- Never let your dog wander freely
- Secure your yard with some type of fencing
- Never leave your pet unattended
- Make sure your pet is wearing identification tags
- Get your pet microchipped
- Keep updated pictures of your pet from different angles. This may help prove that your pet is in fact yours if he's stolen
- Some pet insurance plans offer assistance if your pet is lost or stolen and can help you with the cost associated with recovering your pet

## February 20: Love Your Pet Day

There's a National Parents Day, National Grandparents Day, and even a National Children's Day. Why shouldn't there also be the equivalent of a National Pets Day? After all, most households in the United States have at least one pet, and we're often closer to our pets than to most people.

## February 22: Walk Your Dog Day

A daily walking routine keeps both you and your dog healthy. According to Cute Calendar, a study by Michigan State University shows that people who walk their dogs are 34% more likely to meet expected levels of exercise, with a recommended level of 150 minutes of activity such as dog walking per week. In addition, walking provides mental and physical stimulation for your dog. As such, it'll help burn off some of your dog's built-up energy, which will in turn help prevent separation anxiety and destructive behavior.

Walks are a great way to bond with your dog. I Heart Dogs aptly points out that such an activity helps solidify the bond you have by allowing you to experience new environments together. As an added perk, dogs that are walked in new places meet new people and experience new things, which makes them a better socialized and good canine citizens.

A daily walk lets you and your dog get the social interaction you both need. There's an old adage that if a guy wants to catch the attention of a girl, he just needs a baby in a stroller. My experience is that dogs will also attract attention, whether from a neighbor you'd like to get to know better or just random strangers. Going for walks will also help your dog learn how to interact with other animals and people in your neighborhood.

Walking your dog is an excellent training activity. Pet Care RX points out that by using proper methods you can stay in control during the walk, and this will establish you as the alpha dog in the relationship. I personally enjoy the opportunity to practice commands I've learned in obedience classes.

Giving back is as simple as taking a walk. According to I Heart Dogs, there's a Walk for a Dog app that allows you to raise money for shelter pets simply by taking a stroll.

## February 23: International Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day

Every dog has its day—and this is it. Nobody seems to know the origins of Dog Biscuit Day, but every canine in the world knows the best way to celebrate it. Pets will be wagging their tails with glee when their owners serve up unusual or home-made doggy snacks to mark the occasion.

The first dog biscuits were developed in the mid-19th century by American manufacturer James Spratt. He came up with the idea after he visited Liverpool in England, where he observed stray dogs hungrily tucking into ship's biscuits. The first Spratts biscuits were produced in London, with a secret recipe including both meat and vegetables.

Today, dog biscuits are often used in training and as rewards in the show ring. There are even special types of biscuit which clean dogs' teeth – so giving your best friend a treat can help to keep him healthy!

## Myths and facts about spaying and neutering

The most important thing to know about spaying and neutering is that it saves lives. In every community in every U.S. state, there are animals sitting in animal shelters waiting for homes. Only about half of those dogs and cats will ever get one. The other half will be euthanized.

Making the decision to spay or neuter your pet means fewer pets—pets as sweet, loving, healthy, and deserving of companionship as your own—will be euthanized for lack of a home. Here are some convincing facts to consider:

**MYTH: But my pet is a purebred.**

**FACT: So is at least one out of every four pets brought to animal shelters around the country.** There are just too many dogs and cats—mixed breed and purebred. About half of all animals entering shelters are euthanized.

**MYTH: It's expensive to have my pet spayed or neutered.**

**FACT: Many low-cost options exist for spay/neuter services, like LAA's Low-Cost Spay/Neuter program!** Most regions of the U.S. have at least one spay/neuter clinic within driving distance that charge \$100 or less for the procedure, and many veterinary clinics provide discounts through subsidized voucher programs.

**MYTH: I'll find good homes for all the puppies and kittens.**

**FACT: You may find homes for your pet's puppies and kittens. But you can only control what decisions you make with your own pet, not the decisions other people make with theirs.** Your pet's puppies and kittens, or their puppies or kittens, could end up in an animal shelter, as one of the many homeless pets in every community competing for a home. Will they be one of the lucky ones?



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# We need your **support!**

Did you know that you can name Lincoln Animal Ambassadors on your United Way donation? Your donation helps provide services to pets and their people in and around the Lincoln area. We couldn't do it without the support of people like you!

Donate through our website, [LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org](http://LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org) using PayPal or mail this form to LAA. Pet Food Bank donation items can be dropped off at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 2325 S. 24th Street; Super Saver, 56th & Hwy 2 and 27th & Cornhusker; or both Petco Lincoln locations.

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Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Program

Pet Food Bank

General Funds

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Lincoln, NE 68506



## Thank you!