

Pet Talk

FALL 2016

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



#GIVINGTUESDAY™

11.29.2016

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

This season, help the helpers

So long, 2016, and don't let the door hit you on the way out! For so many of us in America, it's been twelve months of discouragement, a year that thought vicious politics and flammable cell phones were

"It came to me that every time I lose a dog, they take a piece of my heart with them; and every new dog who comes into my life gifts me with a piece of their heart. If I live long enough, all the components of my heart will be dog, and I will become as generous and loving as they are."

a fair trade for David Bowie and Gene Wilder. Just when we thought things couldn't get worse, some new tragedy lurked in the shadows like some sinister clown.

Mr. Rogers rarely gave bad advice, and in a time where so many of us feel like powerless, confused children, it's a comfort to remember his wisdom- when the world is scary, "look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping."
Lincoln Animal

Ambassadors strives to be the helper, for the person who just lost their job, who's struggling with medical bills, who's rebuilding their life after escaping domestic violence, all to ensure their financial situation won't result in losing a beloved animal family member.

From that perspective, 2016 looks a little rosier. LAA distributed 23 tons of food and supplies to hundreds of

animals and their families, will have reached a landmark 2,500 spay/neuter surgeries, advocated for the dog breeds most at risk for euthanasia, and found a new location for our Pet Food Bank. Above all, we saw those who have helped us- partnering organizations, donors, and volunteers- and we are humbled.

Changing the world starts at home. Feeding a dog or spaying a cat in Lincoln, Nebraska, won't solve crises across the globe, but it will make all the difference to those animals and their families. Help Lincoln Animal Ambassadors be part of that change. As you plan your end-of-year giving, please support LAA by donating money online or in the enclosed return envelope, by donating pet goods to any of the Pet Food Bank drop-off locations, or by giving your time as a volunteer. It's trite, but we mean it: we can't do this without your help.

Here's to a happier 2017!



A verg BIG thank you to our recent donors!

Assurity Life Foundation
B&R Stores
Barb Biffle
Burke Casari
Capital Humane Society
Carol Siefkes
Cause for Paws
Charles & Lela Sayward
Connie Beckman
Dave & Linda Uhrich
Dell - Silicon Valley Community Foundation
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South Ridge Animal Clinic
St. Matthews Episcopal Church
Tammie Lang
Target
Verizon Foundation
WalMart
Wayne & Kathie Remington

Memorials

Donations in memory of Floyd Firebaugh
Donation in memory of Josephine Anderson
In Memory of Paula Einemann's dog, Truman

Featured Group: Friends of the Dog Parks

Friends of the Dog Parks was founded in the mid-90's by a group of citizens with the foresight and dedication to work toward the establishment and improvement of Lincoln dog parks for all future generations to enjoy. The group gained 501(c)3 status in 2004. In 2015 the group was reorganized to grow an active member base and work closely with Lincoln Parks and Recreation to meet the needs of dogs and dog owners in the city.

In less than a year Friends has grown to close to eighty members and increased our social media reach by over two hundred percent. Clean-up projects organized at both parks in the last two years have generated a thousand volunteer hours. These clean-ups have been extremely beneficial to help ensure that the parks are being properly maintained and well-kept. This has been a great way for supporters of the dog parks to become more involved. Having an involved dog owner community helps increase attention from the city of Lincoln and makes the dog parks a higher priority. We hope to double our all-volunteer organization in the coming year.

We have formed partnerships with community stakeholders and our city's Parks and Recreation Department to help create the city's first comprehensive dog use facilities master plan. That plan provides for the creation of three new dog parks in Lincoln, the relocation of the Oak Lake Dog Run to Roper East Park and improvements to parking at Rickman's Run. That plan was adopted by the city in the spring of 2016. Implementing the

relocation of the Oak Lake Run to Roper East Park as established in the master plan is scheduled to open in early 2017; it will provide users with more amenities, including fresh water. It will be less than a mile away from the current location so it will serve the same geographic area. Parking lot improvements at Rickman's Run are scheduled to be completed in late 2017/early 2018. New dog park facilities at Mahoney Park in 2017/2018 and Peterson Park in 2018/2019. The final dog park in the south Haymarket area will be built at a date determined later. In the last few months we have attended a dozen local pet friendly events to increase awareness of the master plan and raise funds for amenities at the dog parks.

Friends of the Dog Parks is currently raising funds for two projects to be completed in conjunction with the parking lot improvements at Rickman's Run expected in 2017 or 2018. The first is a drinking fountain for people and dogs. The second is a badly needed dog rinsing station. The cost of these projects will be 20,000 dollars of which we have currently allocated 3,000 dollars from our available funds. This is an aggressive goal for our small organization so we could use all the help we can get!

If you are interested in donating to, or becoming a member of Friends of the Dog Parks please visit our website at www.lincolndogparks.org. Membership forms can be also found at the kiosks at the dog parks. Furthermore, we can be contacted at fotdplne@gmail.com.



Volunteer Spotlight: Valerie Stehlik

Where did you first learn about Lincoln Animal Ambassadors?

It has probably been over 5 years ago that I first learned of LAA. I came across the organization's booth when I attended the I Love My Dog Expo.



Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I started volunteering for LAA about 3 1/2 years ago when I switched to a new job and became employed at Firespring in Lincoln. One of the unique benefits the company offers its employees is time-off to volunteer. I had been wanting to get involved with animal welfare again since I had previously volunteered at Hearts United for Animals but had been looking to act more locally. With the encouragement to volunteer from my employer it seemed like a perfect time to see if there was something I could help with for LAA.

I have three fur-kids at home including two rescues. Our most recent addition, a Boston Terrier mix, came to us two years ago as a puppy when he and his litter-mates were saved. Having a puppy along with our two senior dogs has been a lot of fun and has changed the dynamic in our house greatly in the last couple of years but he has been a great addition to our family. Aside from taking care of our three dogs and volunteering I also enjoy horseback riding. I generally enjoy being around animals. I find their unconditional loyalty

and ability to live in the moment to be inspiring.

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

I help to promote and advertise LAA events and services through email. Basically, I design and manage the email campaigns flooding everyone's inbox.

What do you find rewarding in your volunteer activities?

I feel like I am able to have an impact locally. And not just by helping LAA to raise money through event promotion but also letting people in the community know of the great services that LAA offers. Keeping pets at home with their families and reducing the number of homeless pets is critical in solving the problem of crowded animal shelters and I am able to be part of that effort with LAA.

Do you do other volunteer work in Lincoln?

For many years I have volunteered for the Friendship Home through their yearly fundraising events such as Stuff the Bus and Safe Quarters.

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

Get started! Even if you aren't sure how you can help, reach out. You never know how your unique skills might be able to make a difference.

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

A bigger voice. I would love to have more people aware of the services LAA offers to the community. I've heard stories on the news where I think if they just had known there was someone there that was willing and able to offer them the assistance they needed, then I wouldn't be hearing this tragic news story now. Share posts about LAA's services on social media and forward emails to anyone you think might need help. We need more people to know help is available right here in our community.

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 or calling 402.817.1168.

Lincoln's Tour de Brew Raises Money for LAA



Tour de Brew LNK is a fun leisure bike ride and charity pub crawl wrapped into one awesome time—and on August 18th, this amazing organization raised \$1600 for LAA's programs! We owe Moran's Liquor Works Cycle Works and all of the Tour De Brew LNK Sponsors a huge Thank You for organizing a fantastic event and supporting Lincoln Animal Ambassadors. Tour de Brew LNK has raised \$24,000 for some amazing local causes!

For more information about Tour de Brew LNK or its sponsors; or to participate in their monthly summer events—check out Tour de Brew LNK on Facebook. They select a different organization to support each month and ask participants to make a \$5 donation in order to participate. It's a super fun way to make a donation to a great local organization. Participants also receive a raffle ticket at each stop on the tour—so the donation comes with a chance of winning some really cool stuff!

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

You walk your dog anyway, now you can support Lincoln Animal Ambassadors every time you walk your dog! Go to 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.



Take your walk for a dog™
WoofTrax.com

Thank you to our Meow & Chow donors!

Don & Millies	Gaylene Mulherin
Patty's Pub	Clancy Smith
Tico's	Michael Jones
Runza	Pauline Balta
9 South Chargrill	Suzanne Kohmetscher
La Paz	Sara Vanleave
Greenfield's	Deb Pearson
The Venue	Anita Scofield
Butterfly Bakery	Brady Rivers
Le Quartier	Blake Gilmore
The Egg & I	Laura Wong
Culinary Underground	Larry & Ruthann Rivers
The Normandy	Alma Vlasak
Coca Cola Lincoln	Cheryl Johnson
The Cookie Company	Jim Volkmer
Eileen's Colossal Cookies	Norma Peshek
Open Harvest	Norma Patzloff
Dish	Karen Peterson
The Doughnut Hole	Connie Conner-Haeffner
Misty's	Jeannie & John Birdsall
Hy-Vee	Suzie Meierdierks
The Grain Bin	Karen Hardesty
Bread & Cup	Amanda Hatten
Lincoln Espresso	June Niemann
The Parlor Hair & Nail	Padgett Mason
Porch Boards	Heather Swartz
The Canine Consultant	Erin Dempsey
City Clock	Mary Douglas
Wunderosa Winery	Janet Chung
Chocolatier Blue	Cathy Cecava
Lincoln Stars Hockey	Kyndall Bedell
Empower Yourself Yoga	Kelly Brandt
JML Jewelry Appraisals	And especially to all the personal friends of The Cat House & Lincoln Animal Ambassadors
St. James Church Ladies	Sponsored by Nature's Variety

Another successful event: 7th Annual Meow & Chow

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors once again partnered with The Cat House to host the 7th annual Meow & Chow, our annual soup and bingo event. With more than 200 diners and volunteers, we raised just over \$7500 to support our programs.

Without the support of our amazing community this wouldn't have been such a successful event. We owe our success to the local restaurants and volunteers who donated soup, bread, lots of yummy

desserts and some really great bingo and raffle prizes! Year after year, it is these people and businesses that make this kind of event possible. We also have to thank all of you that came to support us! We sincerely hope you had a wonderful evening and want to thank you for helping to prevent animal homelessness.

Thank you to everyone who attended! We hope to see you at next year's Meow & Chow!



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The Mighty and the Tiny

The Mighty and The Tiny project targeted Pit Bulls and Chihuahuas, which are statistically the most populous breeds in shelters today. More often than not, these are also the most likely to be killed because there isn't enough room to house them. The name of the project showed respect for both breeds—although those who know and love Chihuahuas realize these little dogs think they are mighty! On the other hand, those who know and love Pit Bulls can agree that many Pitties think of themselves as tiny as they try to fit themselves in our laps.

The Mighty and The Tiny project provided spaying or neutering of all Pit Bulls and Pit Bulls mixes; and all Chihuahuas and Chihuahua mixes for just \$25 per dog.

Pit Bulls and Chihuahuas—The Mighty and The Tiny—quite fitting descriptions for these two much loved dog breeds. At the end of June 2015, Lincoln Animal

Ambassadors received a grant from Best Friends Animal Society to help us pay for our portion of the costs of this program. We officially ended it on September 15, 2016, with 138 vouchers issued for Pit Bulls and Pit Bull mixes and 150 vouchers issued for Chihuahuas and Chihuahua mixes. The final tally of Pit Bulls and Chihuahuas altered is still being counted as some of the vouchers are still in the process of being used.

Even though this project has ended, Lincoln Animal Ambassadors' low cost spay/neuter program is always available for those needing assistance with getting their pets spayed or neutered. Learn more on our website lincolnanimalambassadors.org or call 402-817-1168.



**SAVE
THEM
ALL™**

Calendar of events

**Giving Tuesday
November 29**

**Spayghetti & No-Balls
Dinner**

March 2016
Details TBA

**Wine & Howl
June 3, 2017**

Deer Springs Winery

**LAA at the 2016
Holiday of Trees Event
December 1-2**

10am - 8pm

Westminster Presbyterian Church
2110 Sheridan Blvd.

Heritage League Lincoln's Holiday of Trees event will include a tree decorated for LAA. Stop in and peruse a spectacular display of holiday trees while listening to gorgeous holiday music. While you are there, grab a delicious bite to eat from the cafe and visit with Santa! There will also be baked goods and crafts for sale, along with a rummage corner. Tickets are available at the door and are just \$1.00!

Proceeds from this event will be presented to Clinic with a Heart, a local organization that provides health care services to low-income families. We would like to thank Sharon and Royce Holtgrewe, who donated the tree for event, as well as Harriet Ruebsamen, who spent hours detailing pet pictures into ornaments. Lastly, we would like to thank Connie Beckman and Kathy Moore for coordinating the tree-decorating committee!

Pet Food Bank gets a new home

We've distributed 364,978 pounds of dry pet food alone since the Pet Food Bank was founded in 2009; helping hundreds of families care for beloved pets when disaster strikes. We recently found a new home for the Pet Food Bank at 1520 Knox Street. Our new space features additional storage areas so we could house more of the supply on-site. One of our challenges in the past was the cost of additional storage units and time and energy of moving the food between storage and distribution.

Thank you to all of the volunteers who came to help us move the Pet Food Bank,

but a particularly huge thank you goes to Ron Stow and Donna Kavanagh for all of their extra effort in moving/sorting/cleaning and just getting things ready for distribution at the new location.



A mobile donation



When the Pet Food Bank moved to a new home, we realized we were

going to need a better way of getting food in and out of the building. Coming to our rescue was the Eidos Ergonomics with a donation of brand new Pet Food Bank cart. We met with Darryl Rivers and simply gave him a picture of the kind of cart we needed. We were very comfortable leaving this project in his hands and he did not

disappoint! We cannot say enough good things about the talents and generosity of EIDOS and Darryl for making this happen.



by the numbers

Low Cost Spay/Neuter Program

Total dogs, cats and rabbits altered: 2,530
1,245 dogs, 1,231 cats, 3 rabbits

Food Bank Numbers

Dry food

43,812 lbs. through Sept. 2016
4,869 lbs. per month
364,978 lbs. since inception

Canned food

10,476 cans through Sept. 2016
1,164 cans per month
87,277 cans since inception

Litter

4,977 lbs. through Sept. 2016
553 lbs. per month
53,831 lbs. since inception

Number of families proposed to be helped through 2016: 463

We're running on E!

Canned dog food & dry kitten food needed!

The pet food bank is running very low on canned dog food and dry kitten food and we could use a boost. Consider buying an extra bag the next time you are at the store. 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.



A visit to SitStay

Good for Your Dog Supplies

By Allison Hunter-Frederick

SitStay just might become a regular shopping stop for my husband and I. We enjoyed its inviting atmosphere and discovered unique treats for our pets. Displayed on the walls are framed photos of personable dogs, while on the floor there's a hefty plush service dog. Above the well-stocked shelves are bone-shaped signs with identifying labels written in colored chalk. From the wide variety of treats, foods, toys, and supplies, we purchased a popular beef tripe-treat, beef snout, venison and chicken jerky, and dried cod skins.

The retailer actually started about twenty years ago as one of the first online sites for dog supplies. Then in 2010 the Lincoln-based company decided to open its first storefront. From the start, explained current CEO, Jill Lilledahl, SitStay decided to focus on high quality products. Not only is everything tested by SitStay, but almost all of SitStay's products are made right here in the United States. The only exceptions are items for which a particular country is well-known such as fish products from Iceland. These guidelines help SitStay ensure that everything it sells is safe and of high quality, a philosophy which the company considers especially important in light of the numerous recent recalls of products from outside America. SitStay also considers the needs of dogs with allergies, offering grain-free foods and single-ingredient treats.

Being a cat lover, I inquired as to whether SitStay would ever sell non-dog products. At one time Sitstay did actually cater to a variety of pets, but then realized they were spreading themselves too thin. They decided to focus on dogs. In particular, they have a history of working with service and

therapy dogs. One customer came into the store to buy a diabetic awareness patch for her new service dog. The dog was proving to be invaluable to the woman, who had been diabetic for twenty-five years, by alerting her to impending low-blood sugar and seizures. SitStay



has also helped parents of children with diabetes. Schools often don't know how to deal with the needs of children with service dogs, and SitStay acquaints these families with the American Disabilities Act and other relevant resources.

Prior to establishing a storefront in Lincoln, SitStay had developed close relationships with local animal welfare groups. One of these groups is Domesti-PUPS, a service dog organization. SitStay employees have donated items to Domesti-PUPS and recently were invited to attend a Domesti-PUPS' graduation. SitStay also works with other animal welfare groups, including Lincoln Animal Ambassadors. The store's employees also love to promote adoptable dogs and will be doing a meet-and-greet with The Star Project on November 26 for Small Business Saturday.

SitStay is located at 4747 Pioneers Boulevard and encourages owners to bring their dogs. Make it one of your next shopping stops!

2016 Sub Sandwich Sale

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors once again hosted a Sub-Sandwich sale at the Super Saver on 27th and Pine Lake Road. Several volunteers helped prepare fresh-made sandwiches. All of the ingredients for the sandwiches and all the proceeds from the sale of sandwiches were donated by Super Saver! We would like to thank all of the volunteers, Super Saver and all of the Super Saver associates, who were incredibly helpful. Thank you as well to everyone who came out to make the event a success.



LAA participates in Project Homeless Connect 2016

Three white tents greeted guests outside the Pinnacle Bank Arena as they arrived at Project Homeless Connect 2016, and inside the tents were services being provided for companion animals. Before the animal services were set up, event guests began asking questions. “I want my cats to get vaccinated, should I go get them now or visit services inside first?” “What are you doing?” “Really, I can get my dogs vaccinated for free?” For the second year, Project Homeless Connect has offered free vaccinations, wellness checks, and nail trims at their event. Lincoln Animal Ambassadors (LAA) assisted with organizing this service and provided information about our needs-based pet food bank and issued vouchers as needed for people’s pets.

This year about 20 animals came to use these services—about 13 dogs, six cats and one bunny. Over and over deep appreciation was expressed, some with tears, for not having to worry about their pets not being vaccinated, and simply for the brand new leashes and collars being handed out. One event guest, who does not have pets, thanked our group for thinking about the pets of the homeless.

Flooding caused by Hurricane Matthew in Louisiana brought a family of two parents, three young children, two dogs and a bunny to Lincoln, where they have been unable to locate housing, partly due to their pets. This family was so relieved to get their dogs and bunny vaccinated, a wellness check, nails trimmed and new leashes and collars for the dogs, as well as information on housing and a host of other services to assist them getting settled in Lincoln.

Project Homeless Connect Lincoln is a one-day, one-stop event where individuals and families who are homeless or at risk for homelessness are able to receive a wide variety of immediate, on-site services and support for unmet needs. This event is organized by the Lincoln Homeless Coalition, a collaborative group of organizations working together to address the issue of homelessness in Lincoln and Lancaster County. Organizations such as People’s City Mission, Matt Talbot Kitchen, Voices of Hope, CenterPointe, Lutheran

Family Services, Clinic with a Heart, Nebraska Department of Corrections, and Veteran’s Affairs are few of the agencies belonging to this Coalition.

In 2012, the Coalition decided to invite agencies to provide information on services available for the pets of those who are homeless or near homeless. LAA was invited to be present for the first time that year, and has been involved every year since 2012.

As every pet parent knows, pets are completely devoted and often the only non-judgmental beings in our lives. Most pet parents will literally go without food themselves to provide food for a beloved pet. Assisting pet parents with pet food and obtaining low cost spays and neuters helps reduce part of the stress involved with the risk of homelessness.



Thank you to Catherine Nixon, DVM of Belmont Veterinary Center; Kristen Westergaard-Bladt, DVM of Animal Clinic of Council Bluffs/Glenwood Animal Clinic; and Katelyn, Licensed Vet Tech of South Ridge Animal Clinic for volunteering their time during the day. Thank you to Wachal Pet Health Center, Vintage Heights Veterinary Hospital and Belmont Veterinary Center for donating flea/tick prevention supplies and animal dewormer with syringes. Thank you to Hearts United for Animals for loaning animal crates for the day as well as leashes and collars to give away.

From our clients

“I want to thank LAA for the wonderful service you all do to help families in need, and their pets. My granddog is such a happier guy! Without Heather, Pauline and all of you my daughter would not have been able to keep him!”

“Thank you so much!! I really appreciate the volunteers at LAA! I had just rescued a female kitten and then lost my job! LAA was extremely helpful to me in getting her microchipped, spayed & vaccinated at a time I needed help the most! THANK YOU!!!!”





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SAVE THEM ALL



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 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.

Name _____

E-mail _____

Address (City, State, Zip) _____

Please select your contribution amount:

\$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other \$ _____

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

Make checks payable to:
Lincoln Animal Ambassadors
Mail to: PO Box 67072
Lincoln, NE 68506



Thank you!