

Pet Talk

WINTER 2021

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

Donate through our website
LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org

Ask your employer if they have a
donation matching program

Pet Food Bank drop off locations:

Petco 48th & O Street (*bin in front entry*)

Petco 56th & Old Cheney (*bin in front entry*)

Super Saver 27th & Cornhusker
Hwy (*barrel at Customer Service*)

St. Matthews Episcopal Church,
2325 S. 24th Street (*leave near office*)

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) organization. All donations are tax-deductible.

Like our
newsletter?

**Become a
sponsor!**

Contact us at info@LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org

Accept the challenge: Spay and neuter your pets today

By Allison Hunter-Frederick

In honor of National Spay & Neuter Awareness month, Lincoln Animal Ambassadors challenges every pet owner to have their pet altered this February. No more excuses!

Excuse #1: I don't want to risk my pet's health.

Your pet will be at greater risk if you don't have it altered. Physically, spaying reduces the risk of uterine infections and breast cancer in females and neutering reduces the risk of prostate cancer in males.

Behaviorally, the hormonal changes of intact females during heat cycles makes them nervous and whiny, while the sexual drive of intact males cause them to do almost anything to find a mate: mark territory, mount furniture, and fight. Misbehaving pets are statistically more likely to be relinquished and/or euthanized, and so by altering your pet it's life is at less risk.

Excuse #2: Pets should have one litter for health reasons.

There is no supporting medical evidence for this excuse. In fact, spaying female animals before their first heat, before they are fully grown, is easier on them than waiting until later in their lives. Smaller pets have less body fat, meaning less tissue trauma and less bleeding. Smaller pets also need less anesthesia, meaning they'll wake faster and often go home the same day.

Excuse #3: My male dog's manhood will be destroyed.

A pet's personality is formed more by genetics and home life than by sex hormones. Sterilization doesn't change basic personality. If anything, neutered

males will be less interested in searching for a mate and more interested in pleasing their owner. When combined with right training, sterilization should result in a better-behaved pet.

Excuse #4: My indoor pet has no opportunity to mate.

Any pet can escape its house or yard. In the few minutes that your pet is running loose, it could mate with other wandering intact pets.

Excuse #5: I want another pet like mine.

Breeding your own pet because you want one more for yourself is like making a batch of cookies every time you want to eat a few and then having to find other people who are also in the mood for cookies. It's also actually impossible to create a pet identical to yours. Are you identical to either of your parents? Even professional breeders cannot guarantee what characteristics will be inherited by a litter.

Excuse #6: I want my children to experience the "miracle of birth."

This lesson can be taught in ways that don't come at the expense of your pet and its offspring. Finding homes for the offspring takes a lot of work. Consider too that each home you find means one less for animals desperately waiting in shelters.

Excuse #7: I can't afford it.

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors offers an income-based low-cost spay-neuter voucher program in cooperation with several local vet clinics. Contact LAA to learn more at 402.817.1168 or apply for a spay/neuter voucher at LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org.

Thank you to our 2020 Pet Food Bank donors!

Animal Care Clinic
 Best Friends Animal Society
 Katie Brown
 Canine Consultants
 Capital Humane Society
 Carrot Mountain Dog Treats
 Center for People in Need
 Julie Cole
 Mary Jo Dykes
 Hy-Vee
 LabCorp
 Lincoln Community Foundation
 Nature's Logic
 Nature's Variety
 Pathology Medical Services
 Petco
 Purina Animal Nutrition LLC
 Kayla Rappi
 Rescue Bank
 Brady Rivers
 Larry and Ruthann Rivers
 St. Matthews Episcopal Church
 Super Saver
 Target
 Walmart
 and several anonymous donors



Lincoln knows how to give!

Everyone knows that most people are a little short on money and supplies after the holidays and LAA is no different. After several months with high demand pet food distribution due to COVID-19, the LAA pet food bank was running extremely low on dry adult dog food, with our demand sure to continue to be high in the months to follow. We put out a plea in early January for dry dog food donations and you all came through!

There were several individuals (you all know who you are) who anonymously ordered dog food from Walmart Gives, Chewy.com and Amazon Smile and had it delivered to us! Others dropped dog food in our drop sites around town. Nature's Logic and Arnie's Pet Food were there for us! As well as donors who sent monetary donations to help us stock what was needed. We couldn't have done it without you!

A big shout out to LabCorp and Pathology Medical Services for thinking of us over the holidays. They organized a holiday drive for the pet food bank and had a very large donation of dog and cat food and pet items for us, just when we needed it! Co-workers Cari Zuhlke and Brandy Brion said they had a great time with

this pet food drive. They knew that everyone they worked with were pet people and loved their pets and this was a great way to show that, and to help others in the community that needed help taking care of theirs. We cannot thank them enough!

And we couldn't do this all year long without our community partners, like Petco, Super Saver and St. Matthews Episcopal Church, who allow us to have drop sites for people to donate pet food to us.

Since LAA's income-based pet food bank started in 2009 it has been stocked completely by donations. In order for us to do what we do all year long, we rely on the support of our community. We are so appreciative of those that donated recently during our shortage, but we are

as appreciative of the donors that have supported us over the years. Without all of you, we could not do this. A huge thank you to our 2020 donors!



Above: Cari Zuhlke and Brandy Brion with Pathology Medical Services help load their holiday pet food drive donations.

Left: Pathology Medical Services Holiday Pet Food Drive



Volunteer Spotlight: Jennifer Yaeger

Where did you first learn about Lincoln Animal Ambassadors?

I found out about LAA through Indeed

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I am an animal lover with eight fur babies of my own; two rats, Faith and Hope; two Guinea pigs, Peanut and Lily; Tucker the dog, Finn the rabbit, Hazel the hamster, and Bella the cat I rescued from LAA. I am a teacher. In my free time I like to hangout with friends and family.

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

I assist with pet food bank distributions for LAA.

What do you find rewarding in your volunteer activities?

I find it rewarding to know that animals are being fed and cared for

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

It's rewarding knowing that animals are being cared for and sometimes they bring their pets down and get to see them. :)



DOUBLE your donation

Will your employer match your donation? Some employers offer a match program where they match all or some of your monthly or yearly donations to charitable causes. If they do, it turns your \$50 donation into a \$100 donation. Doubling your gift allows your chosen charity to increase their efforts and means they can continue working toward their goals.

Check with your HR department to find out if your company offers a matching gift program or would be willing to consider implementing one. Every gift we receive is vital to the success of our mission in addressing the root causes of animal homelessness.

WE NEED YOU!

Volunteer and prevent homeless animals

If you have ever considered volunteering for a worthy cause, we would love to talk to you. LAA has no paid employees and relies on volunteers to accomplish its mission.

Fill out a Volunteer Questionnaire on our website at LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org, or call our phone line at 402.817.1168.

You can also email us at info@lincolnanimalambassadors.org

Pet Food Bank Distribution Volunteer

- 2 hours per week
- Must be available during our Wednesday distribution hours, 6-8 p.m.
- Must be able to lift 30 pounds

Pet Food Bank Donation Pick-up Volunteer

- Must have a current drivers license and pickup/truck—preferably without a topper—so pallets can be forklifted on and off;
- Must be free to pick up and unload during the week days, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.;
- Must be able to lift 50 pounds

Newsletter/Event Poster Delivery Volunteer

- 1-2 hours per week, 4 times a year
- Delivering to veterinarian offices and pet related stores



By the numbers

Low Cost Spay/Neuter Program

3,345 total animals

1,709 dogs

1,625 cats

11 bunnies

Pet food distributed in 2020

Dry food

39,263 lbs.

Approximately 3,272 lbs. a month

Since inception: 508,661 lbs.

Canned food

42,805 cans

Approximately 3,567 cans a month

Since inception: 163,447 cans

Litter

8,596 lbs.

Approximately 716 lbs. a month

Since inception: 86,697 lbs.

Number of families helped in 2020 (many numerous times throughout the year): 268

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.

Keeping pets healthy in winter

When our four-footed family members turn up their noses at going outside in the wind and the snow, they may be smarter than us and we'd be wise to listen to them and not make them stay out longer than necessary. On the other, if our furry friends act invincible to the elements, it's they who will need to listen to us. For the sake of their health, follow the tips below this winter.

Keep them inside

The best strategy? Keep your pet inside! If you don't want to be outside, your pet probably doesn't either.

It's a common belief that dogs and cats are more resistant to cold than we are because of their fur, but this isn't so. Like people, they are susceptible to frostbite and hypothermia. Exposed skin on noses, ears, and paw pads can quickly become frostbitten, which may lead to permanent damage. Short-haired dogs, young or old dogs, and all cats should never be left outside in freezing temperatures without supervision. Even those dogs bred for colder climates, namely long-haired and thick-coated dog breeds such as Huskies, should not be left outside when temperatures drop below zero.

Potty time

When it's cold out, our pets might resist going to the bathroom outside. Because there usually isn't a suitable alternative, you will need to find ways to make the outdoors more hospitable.

One of the best strategies is to create an ideal potty area for your dog. Keep an area in his regular potty area as free from snow as possible, large enough for him to sniff and turn around. The smells of previous bathroom breaks will serve as a green light for your dog to do his business in this space, while the uncovered ground will allow him to navigate without his paws slipping or freezing. If that doesn't work, you might need to resort to rewarding him with his favorite treats and praise when he does his business. Do whatever works to generate an enthusiastic response when it's time to go outside.

Walks

There are also times when you'll want to venture outside with your dog or cat for the sake of fresh air and exercise. This should go without saying, but always keep them on a leash. Snow and rain can wipe away familiar scents, causing them to become disoriented and even lost. In addition, whatever

the breed, never shave your pets in winter. A longer coat will provide more warmth. Do you own a short-haired breed? Consider getting them a coat or sweater with a high collar or turtleneck, with coverage from the base of the tail to the belly. Some pet owners also use booties to protect their pet's feet.

Antifreeze

While on walks, you should also take care to avoid antifreeze, a lethal poison which has a sweet taste that animals like. Antifreeze contains ethylene glycol, which is toxic to dogs and cats. The metabolic products of the ethylene glycol cause severe damage to the pet's kidneys, which then produce a toxic exposure to the central nervous system. Even if your dog or cat simply licks her paws after walking through antifreeze, enough antifreeze can be ingested to cause death.

If you suspect your pet has been exposed to antifreeze, immediate veterinary treatment is necessary to prevent the toxin from being absorbed into a pet's liver. Symptoms include sores in the mouth, noticeable bad breath, confusion, vomiting, an increase in thirst and urination, depression, and lethargy.

Dry off

Antifreeze concerns aside, when coming in from a winter walk or play session you should dry your pet off thoroughly and take extra care to wipe her belly, legs, and paws. Salt and other chemicals used to melt snow and ice can irritate the pads of your pet's feet, cause sores in his mouth, and (as already noted) make them deathly ill. Paw pads might also bleed from snow or encrusted ice; an accumulation of either between the toes might also cause lameness.

Continued on the next page.





Calendar of events

I Love My Dog Expo
April 17-18, 2021

Lancaster Event Center

Capital Humane Society
Wine & Whiskers Gala
May 7, 2021

Cornhusker Hotel

Wine & Howl
Summer 2021

LAA fundraiser

Spay-ghetti & No Balls
Dinner
Fall 2021

LAA fundraiser

Rescue Spotlight: The Foster Kitten Project—Saving Kittens One Bottle at a Time

The Foster Kitten Project specializes in orphaned and abandoned neonatal kittens, defined as newborns up until four weeks of age. Many shelters are unable to care for these kittens due to their intensive round the clock care, because of this; they are one of the largest groups euthanized in the United States every year. The Foster Kitten Project rescues these kittens and gives them a fighting chance at life.

Our founder, Jenni Riha, grew up in a rural area of Springfield, Nebraska. She graduated from Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in 2001 with a degree in Veterinary Technology.

In 2004 Jenni found her first kitten, Samantha. Samantha was found right after birth, with the umbilical cord still attached. With no momma cat in sight, Jenni took Samantha in and cared for her. Samantha was Jenni's first foster fail. After continuing to take care of the occasional abandoned farm kitten, Jenni found herself fostering more and more.

In 2014, The Foster Kitten Project was born on Facebook where she could share her happy, and sometimes heart wrenching, stories.

In 2017, Jenni found herself desperately trying to reunite a neonatal foster kitten with the rest of his siblings before they were picked up and euthanized for being too small, expensive, and time-consuming to care for. This was when

the true purpose of The Foster Kitten Project was born. Jenni wanted to focus on orphaned and abandoned neonatal kittens.

In 2018 she earned the not-for-profit 501(c)3 status, and The Foster Kitten Project has been saving neonatal kittens ever since.

From 2018 through 2020 The Project has taken in 205 kittens, with 139 of those coming in 2020.

For more information or to donate contact thefosterkittenproject@gmail.com or 402.651.8507 (text or call).



Continued: **Keeping pets healthy in winter**

You might be able to reduce the chance of ice-ball accumulation by clipping the hair between your pet's toes.

Parked car

What if you take your pet for a ride instead of a walk? Just be aware that winter weather can turn your car into a refrigerator, holding in the cold and causing your pet to freeze to death. For that reason, you should never leave your pet unattended in a car in any weather. Pets that are young, old, ill, or thin are particularly susceptible to cold environments. The best rule of thumb is to limit car travel in winter to only that which is essential.

Visit lincolnpetculture.wordpress.com to read this article in it's entirety.



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LINCOLN COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION



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, 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!