

Pet Talk

SUMMER 2023

LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org / 402.817.1168

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors (LAA) is addressing the root causes of animal homelessness in Lincoln and the surrounding area.

LAA assist pets and their people through a voucher-based low cost spay/neuter program, an income-based temporary assistance pet food bank and teaching people about being responsible pet guardians at community events.

Donate

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

Mail to: PO Box 67072,
Lincoln, NE 68506

Or donate through our website
LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org

Pet Food Bank drop off locations:

Super Saver; 56th & Hwy 2, 27th & Cornhusker Hwy, 27th & Pine Lake St. Matthews Episcopal Church, 2325 S. 24th St.

Arnie's Pet Food, 56th & Hwy 2
Hy-Vee, barrel on rotation at select Lincoln stores
Long Dog Fat Cat, 8340 Glynoaks Dr.

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

Help feed the need!

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors is currently in need of canned dog food. The nonprofit is running low on other pet food supplies too. Please donate to help keep the income-based pet food bank stocked.

Various pet food banks across the U.S. state that financial hardship accounts for approximately 25% of the pets that are surrendered to shelters. According to LAA's president Mary Douglas, its pet food bank started in 2008 as a way to try to keep pets in their home. Douglas said that sometimes a pet "is the only family some people have and we wanted to do everything we could to keep that family intact."

LAA distributes 2,000 to 3,000 pounds of food each month to pets and their people from its pet food bank, which is

currently located at a warehouse at 300 Oak Creek Drive. The space is 2100 square feet, making it easier to store and distribute pet supplies to those in need. Douglas said, "The pet food bank has become something that many low income households have come to rely on to help feed their pets."

"The pet food bank is a community run project," noted Douglas. "We couldn't do it without the support of our entire community donating to the cause and every little bit helps. Someone giving five cans of food or six pounds of dry food is just as important as a pallet full of food." Pet supplies can be dropped into LAA's donation barrels. Locations are listed to the left and on page 7.

For over 14 years, LAA has been distributing free pet food, cat litter, and pet-related items to low-income families who request help caring for their pets. Help LAA continue fulfilling this great need within our community by donating today!

Pet-related items needed:

- Dry cat & dog food
- Wet cat & dog food
- Cat & dog treats
- Clumping cat litter
- Flea & tick medications for cats & dogs
- Leashes & collars for cats & dogs
- Beds & toys for cats & dogs



**NEW PET
FOOD DROP
OFF SITE!**
Long Dog
Fat Cat

**Thank you
to our Wine &
Howl donors!**

University of Nebraska-Lincoln
(Husker Athletics)
Vala's Pumpkin Patch
Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo
Lincoln Children's Zoo
Raising Cane's
Tito's Vodka
Hop Cat
Chipotle
48 Bowl
Empyrean Brewing Co.
The Amazing Pizza Machine
Omaha Symphony
Omaha Storm Chasers
Tomahawks Axe Throwing
Bob & Willie's Wonderbowl
Urban Air Adventure Park

Wine & Howl

15th
Annual

Thank you to everyone who helped Lincoln Animal Ambassadors celebrate their 15th year with a special Wine & Howl event on June 11th at Deer Springs Winery. Wine & Howl is LAA's largest yearly fundraiser that supports the income-based pet food bank and spay/neuter program. There were over 400 people attending and approximately 100 dogs throughout the day. \$6,300 was raised to support LAA's programs.

Live music by the popular 80's cover band AM/FM Lincoln was absolutely fantastic and enjoyed by everyone, with people and dogs dancing in the winery yard. If you danced to it, sang along to it, cranked it up in your car, and you wanted to hear it... AM/FM played it! It was so much fun!

This dog friendly event offered free pup cakes donated by Paw Bakery and free human cupcakes helped to celebrate this special anniversary event.

Hy-Vee was there with a variety of food options—on and off the grill - including vegetarian choices! Deer Springs, of course, had their wine tent going strong, including their famous wine slushies. There were 95 raffles and a few silent auction items to add to the fun and excitement of the day.

Huge thanks to Karl Skinner and Cole Miller for emceeing the day; Deer Springs Winery for offering such a great venue; and to the Lancaster County community for attending and supporting LAA's programs throughout the year.

Donations in MEMORIAM

Kelly Dorscher
Oscar Jimenez (Pet)

Spay/neuter numbers

Low Cost Spay/Neuter Program

3,990 total alterations
2,044 Dogs
966 male, 1,078 female
1,935 Cats
851 male, 1,083 female
11 Small pets (rabbits, fancy rat)



Volunteer Spotlight: Skeeter Shwochow

Nine years ago, Skeeter Schwochow first learned about Lincoln Animal Ambassadors at a pet store when she met Mary Douglas who was handing out information about how to help LAA. Skeeter signed up to be a volunteer with the intention of helping out for just a year.

She offered to handle a phone line shift, a position she could do from the comfort of her home. Skeeter views the position as valuable to the type of services LAA offers and found her work so rewarding that she continued to do it for several more years. "To know that you helped feed a hungry pet is such a rewarding experience."

Answering phone calls inquiries isn't the only way that Skeeter has helped animal organizations. A life-long animal lover, Skeeter used to buy bulletproof vests for police dogs. "I loved helping them and praying that a vest would save a life of a service dog."



Skeeter & Brodie

Skeeter views LAA as one of the most valuable animal organizations in Lincoln and supports LAA's goal of addressing the root causes of animal homelessness by helping pets and their people through an income-based pet food bank and spay/neuter program. "We help the pets that can't ask for help themselves. Owners get into situations where they don't have extra money to feed their pet."

This past year Skeeter retired from LAA because of health issues, which meant she knew she could not always be relied upon to handle phone inquiries regarding LAA pet's food bank. She now enjoys time with her dogs and can't imagine living without at least one dog.

Skeeter encourages anyone who is considering joining LAA to at least give it a try, because "you will be helping an innocent animal." Her wish for LAA is to have more funds to buy food to help animals in need.

WE NEED YOU!

Volunteer and prevent homeless animals

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors is an all-volunteer organization and part of that is that most of our volunteers are in the work force, so inquiries and requests for pet food and spay/neuter are left on a voicemail. LAA uses volunteers to pick up and answer voicemail shifts (partial days/voicemails each day). You can do this from your own home. Calls would need to be returned within 48 hours of the time it was left on our voicemail line. Training is supplied, of course. Internet/computer and a telephone are required.

LAA currently has several phone line shifts open. LAA is not a hands-on animal group but what we do helps to give companion animals in our community a better quality of life. If you want to feel like you are helping an innocent animal that has no way of asking for help themselves, this might be the volunteer spot for you. To know that you helped feed a hungry pet, or helped to prevent unwanted litters, is such a rewarding experience.

We are also looking for someone who might be interested in helping to write grants for LAA. If you have a couple hours each week to volunteer for this worthy organization and want to help animals, go to our website and fill out a volunteer inquiry.

A full list of volunteer opportunities with LAA is available on our website. LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org

Cat Chat Online

Join Allison Helps Cats for a 50-minute group Zoom discussion about cat behavior

**Saturday
Aug. 26 @ 1 p.m.
Cost: \$20***

Buy your ticket at bit.ly/cats-aug23 or scan the URL code



*Half of the proceeds from this event will be donated to Lincoln Animal Ambassadors

You must follow Allison Helps Cats on social media and sign up for the AHC e-newsletter to register



Kitten Kindergarten

By Allison Hunter-Frederick

Are you the new owner of an 8 to 16-week-old kitten? Then Kitten Kindergarten is for you!

When kittens are 8 to 16 weeks old, their personalities are shaped and they are most open to new experiences. Kittens that are socialized at an early age are more likely to be friendly, confident, and better able to deal with the regular stresses of life. Stronger coping skills means they're much less likely to develop behavior issues and that they're more likely to integrate comfortably into a home.

The idea of Kitten Kindergarten was originally created by Dr. Kersti Seksel, an Australian veterinary behaviorist, in response to students in her puppy classes who wanted equal attention for their kittens. Seksel described Kitten Kindergarten as an important part of kittens learning to tolerate members of their own species and other species. Seksel's idea caught on and spread, and now numerous animal welfare organizations, veterinary clinics, and cat behavior consultants offer their own variations of Kitten Kindergarten.

This past January, Lincoln's only Kitten Kindergarten class was held in the multi-purpose room of the Pieloch Pet Adoption Center, as part of a collaboration between the Capital Humane Society and Allison Helps Cats. The weekly four-session one-hour class met each Saturday in January. Four kittens and their people were in attendance. Pam Hoffman, of Sadie Dog Fund, was on hand to help out during each session.

On their graduation day, Kitten Kindergarten attendees received a certificate of completion. They also received a swag bag filled with cat food, treats, and toys, which were generously donated by Long Dog Fat Cat, as well as handmade toy donated by Gato Taylor of Heimwerker Brothers.

Continued on page 5.



A competitive team sport—for your dog!

Did you know that flyball got its start in the 1960s? Apparently, a group of Southern California dog trainers created hurdle racing with a tennis ball thrown in and the sport was born. Tired throwing arms led to the creation of a tennis ball throwing apparatus and in 1984 the North American Flyball Association (NAFA) was established. From those humble beginnings, flyball tournaments now feature Electronic Judging Systems, which use lights and infrared timing sensors.

In flyball, two teams of four dogs each race against each other on a 51-foot, two-lane course. Each dog travels down the course jumping four hurdles, triggering the flyball box to release a tennis ball, and bringing the ball back over the hurdles to their handler, whereupon the next dog in the relay is released. The first team to have all four dogs finish the course without making a mistake wins. According to the NAFA, many teams run all four dogs through the course in less than 20 seconds. The NAFA Regular World Record is currently 14.433.

One of the great things about flyball is that any dog is eligible to play. Even small dogs have a place since the hurdle height is determined by the height of the smallest dog on the team.

According to the United Flyball League International (UFLI) the top reasons to play flyball are to spend quality time with your dog(s), enjoy the companionship of family and friends, travel to new locations, meet people who share your love of dogs, and enjoy healthy competition. NAFA sanctions over 300 tournaments a year across North America. The UFLI held its 2012 championship in Kearney with 23 teams competing from all across North America.

There are three active clubs in Omaha; the Ball Driven Bandits, Omaha Speed Racers, and On the Flip Side. Omaha Speed Racers offers classes for those who are new to the sport and are looking to learn and develop a fun way to play and interact with their dog(s). Once the fundamentals are established, they offer more advanced options with the goal of running in a lineup with the club. Omaha Speed Racers says "It's so rewarding to see a new dog earn their 'Flyball Dog' title!" Those who are interested can contact the club via their Facebook page, Omaha Speed Racers Flyball Team.

Closer to home, the Greater Lincoln Obedience Club periodically offers flyball classes through Southeast Community College.

To see flyball in action check out videos on a club Facebook page.



Rescue Spotlight: **Sadie Dog Fund**

I saw a need for helping families get veterinary treatment for their dog by providing financial assistance, thus eliminating premature euthanasia, surrender to overcrowded shelters or dog dumping. This is why I founded Sadie Dog Fund in 2007.

Sadie was my cute little Cocker Spaniel with many medical issues. She had calcification of her discs and extreme allergies which began early in her life.

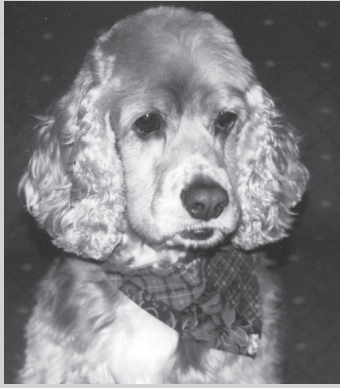
Sadie was family. I always found a way to pay for whatever treatment she needed. We traveled miles to Ralston, NE regularly for acupuncture and nutritional counseling. The last five years of her 13-year life were her best.

I decided that children (and adults) should be aware that your pet isn't disposable just because there is something wrong with it. Don't give up on your pet and don't give your pet up. I wrote a children's picture book, called Sadie Dog, showing Sadie and her antics while teaching readers about alternative veterinary care. Any profits from the book went to Sadie Dog Fund.

Donations to the fund, from my son and daughter, were my Christmas, Mother's Day and Birthday presents. It took a while to build the fund to what it is today. Sadie Dog Fund has helped over 1200 Nebraska dogs since 2007, now averaging 130 dogs per year at an average cost of \$35,000 per year.

Sadie Dog Fund is a Lincoln, NE based 501(c)3 non-profit organization. We are an all-volunteer organization. Every penny donated goes to helping dogs in need.

Sadie Dog Fund helps with emergency surgeries to save the dog's life or treatment to improve the quality of their life. Some examples are; intestinal and stomach



Sadie, 8 years old

blockage surgery, vertebrae surgery, painful bladder or kidney stone removal, pyometra, spleen removal, liver disease, cancer, mammary tumors, ear hematomas, parvo, broken bones, cataract or diseased eye removal, diabetic supplies, auto injuries, ACL and hip surgeries and rehab, physical therapy, acupuncture, chiropractic and wheelchairs to keep

dogs mobile.

We work through veterinarian referral. We have an application process. We verify everything with the veterinarian and decide if we can help. We pay the veterinarian directly.

We also help those who are not low income but have unexpected expensive veterinary bills and are good pet parents.

We are proud of three special funds within Sadie Dog Fund. "Adrian's Wish Canine Cancer Fund" gifts one chemotherapy treatment to patients and helps with tumor removal. Our "Veteran's Dog Assistance Program" helps our U.S. Veterans keep their dog healthy and at home. "Seniors Have Our Hearts" helps those incredibly sweet senior dogs that need medical attention.

We love what we do! We celebrate the successful outcomes and mourn the ones that are not. The families of the dogs we help are so grateful. Sadie Dog Fund is my way of giving back for all of the wonderful pets I have shared my life with.

Donations are accepted at:

PayPal www.sadiedogfund.org

Venmo @sadiedogfund

Check Sadie Dog Fund, 2224 Heather Lane, Lincoln, NE 68512

Calendar of events

Cat Chat Online

August 26/ 1 p.m.

Zoom online discussion about cat behavior. Half proceeds benefit LAA. See ad on page 3.

Spayghetti & No Balls Dinner

November 4

LAA fundraiser

Cherished Images Photo Event

November 18 & 19



Kitten Kindergarten continued from page 4.

A subsequent class was held in July. Topics covered included socialization, introductions, unwanted kitten behavior, husbandry, and enrichment. An adoptable kitten from the Capital Humane Society was used as a demo. Three kittens and their people were in attendance.

Additional Kitten Kindergarten classes are planned, including one in October. The cost for the weekly four-session one-hour class is \$80. A link to the registration form will be available in September, on both the Capital Human Society's website and the Allison Helps Cats website. Thank you Lincoln cat owners for being interested in starting your kitten out on the right paw and giving it skills that will last a lifetime!



Spay-ghetti and NO BALLS

DINNER

& Dessert Auction

NOVEMBER 4 @ 6 P.M.

UNITARIAN CHURCH 6300 A St.

\$25 per ticket Seating is limited.

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



Pet Food Bank donation drop-off sites

Permanent donation barrels are located in Lincoln, Nebraska at:

- Super Saver, North 27th Street
- Super Saver, South 56th Street
- Super Saver, South 27th Street
- Arnie's Pet Food, 56th & Hwy 2
- St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 2325 South 24th Street
- Hy-Vee, rotating barrels at select stores
- Long Dog Fat Cat, 8340 Glynoaks Drive

Amazon.com

You can order pet food and supplies for LAA off Amazon and have it shipped to LAA. Our address is on record for shipment.

Walmart.com/registry/registryforgood

Search for Lincoln Animal Ambassadors as a charity and ordered items can be shipped directly to us. Our address is on file with them.

Thank you to our donors!

Ameritas
Andrew & Renee Benson
Anonymous
Arnie's Pet Food
Audrey Schneider
Blake Gilmore
Canine Consultants & Pet Supply
Capital Humane Society
Fetch Pet Emporium
Food Bank of Lincoln
James Hewitt
Jeanie Imler
Joyce Poindexter
Judy Johnstone
Larry Rinne
Lincoln Community Foundation
Long Dog Fat Cat
Mary Douglas
Network for Good
Paula Einemann
Petco - North
Sandra Coatney
Second Change Pups
Target
Tom & Karen Bassett
Tractor Supply Company
Tyrene Wetzel

City of Lincoln Proclamation Office of the Mayor

Whereas, Lincoln Animal Ambassadors has worked for 15 years addressing the root causes of animal homelessness in the Lincoln/Lancaster County area; and

Whereas, Lincoln Animal Ambassadors offers a low-cost program responsible for the spaying or neutering of over 4,000 companion animals since its inception, reducing unwanted litters of puppies and kittens by millions; and

Whereas, Lincoln Animal Ambassadors operates a pet food bank that has provided over 225 tons of pet food to families in Lancaster County who are financially strained; and

Whereas, Lincoln Animal Ambassadors also offers guidance for medical care and animal rehoming; and

Whereas, Lincoln Animal Ambassadors' programs have helped reduce the workload for Lincoln Animal Control, as well as area shelters and rescue organizations by reducing animal homelessness,

Now, therefore, I, Leirion Gaylor Baird, Mayor of the City of Lincoln, Nebraska, do hereby proclaim June 11, 2023, as

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors Day

to recognize the critical work the Lincoln Animal Ambassadors do to provide the highest possible quality of life for the furriest members of our community.



Leirion Gaylor Baird
Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird

give To Lincoln Day

Thank you to everyone that donated during Give To Lincoln Day this year!



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PO Box 67072
Lincoln, NE 68506



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 and 56th & Hwy 2.

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!