

# Pet Talk

**SUMMER 2024**

LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org / 402.817.1168

## Our mission

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors is addressing the root causes of animal homelessness in Lincoln and the surrounding area. LAA assists 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  
listed on page 5.**

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

## SAVE THE date!

**Spay-ghetti  
& No Balls Dinner  
November 6  
6 - 10 p.m.  
Unitarian Church**

## LAA acquires new power pallet jack for Pet Food Bank

Earlier this year, after helping to manually unload several pallets of pet food donations, one of our pet food bank volunteers asked if we had ever considered getting a power jack/lift for unloading and moving pet food pallets in our warehouse. For 16 years, LAA has counted on great volunteers to come and help load and unload pet food manually. As years have gone by, we have all gotten older and most of the volunteers that help with this heavy physical job are women.

Lucky for LAA, that inquiring volunteer, Colleen Kadavy, had connections with WoodmenLife Lincoln, which is a group of people who have policies through WoodmenLife. Colleen asked the WoodmenLife Lincoln Chapter 264 to pledge \$3,700 toward the purchase of a power machine that would alleviate a lot of the physical labor when a truck or trailer of pallets needed to be unloaded. Colleen herself added \$200 to that total.

So, along with Colleen, we were on a mission to find a machine that would work for LAA, but we had some challenges. Our warehouse has a fairly low suspended ceiling and we had a few ramp and door height issues. We worked with Nolan Osburn and Mike Munson, Jr. at Riekes Equipment and after a couple of options we found just the right fit,

but at a price. Riekes Equipment loved our mission and gave us a hefty discount. But, once the suggestion had come to light, we realized we needed this piece of machinery to allow us to continue to do what we do for the pets of low-income families in Lancaster County.

On June 20th, Rieke's Equipment delivered a new Vestil Power Stacker to our warehouse. We can't thank Nolan and Mike at Rieke's enough for their hard work in searching out the machine that would fit our needs.

*Continued on page 5.*



# Calendar of events

## Stuff The Truck October 5

Pet Food Bank fundraiser  
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Super Saver Pine Lake

## CHS Tails & Treats Trunk-or-Treat October 12

4 - 7 p.m.  
Pieloch Adoption Center

## Paws 4 Fun Trunk-or-Treat October

## Spay-ghetti & No Balls Dinner & Dessert Auction November 6

6 - 10 p.m.  
Unitarian Church

# By the numbers

## Low Cost Spay/Neuter Program

4,554 total alterations  
2,322 dogs  
2,218 cats  
14 small critters

## Pet Food Bank

4,257 families assisted  
523,014 lbs of dry food distributed  
123,207 cans of food distributed



## Rescue Spotlight: Voice for Companion Animals

Voice for Companion Animals is an all-volunteer nonprofit located in Grand Island, NE. VCA was originally started in Beatrice by our rescue friend Gayla Hausman. She donated her time and efforts to providing pet food and supplies quarterly to those pet owners in need. In 2014, Voice for Companion Animals moved to Grand Island, under new Director Robyn Mays. Robyn's rescue experience and knowledge of the central Nebraska area, brought the existing mission, to assist pet owners in keeping their pets at home, as well as expanding the resources, and a facility, into an animal rescue that continues today.

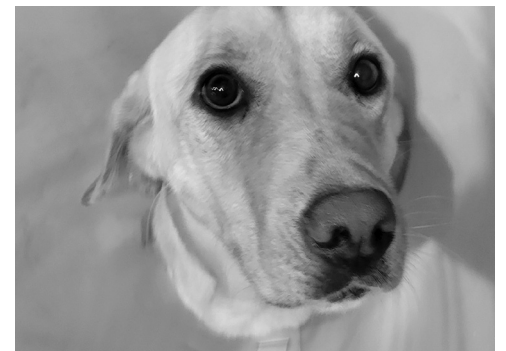
Voice for Companion Animals started in Grand Island by providing food for the pet food pantry at the Salvation Army. In 2015, the AniMeals program was created, in conjunction with the Grand Generation Center. This program provided pet food and supplies for those individuals on the Home Based Meal program. VCA has grown from approximately 18 families to approximately 40 assisted each month, including delivering to other counties. VCA also maintains a pet food pantry at the facility in Grand Island.

On the rescue side, Voice for Companion Animals averages between 20 and 40 animals cared for by volunteers at their facility. These dogs and cats come from veterinary referrals, to owner surrenders, to those from other local and overcrowded

shelters. These companion animals have no other place to go.

In 2022, as the need for assistance continued, the Happy Tails Fund was established. The creation of the Happy Tails Fund, in conjunction with the Greater Grand Island Community Foundation, assists those pet parents in an emergency. To date, the Happy Tails Fund has assisted with over two dozen emergencies ranging from broken limbs, emergency spays, eye removal and parvo treatment.

Volunteers are the key to the success of VCA. VCA's volunteers are the most amazing and dedicated people who give their time and talents each day to ensure the animals are safe and loved until their forever homes are found. And Voice for Companion Animals continues to grow and thrive with the generous donations and sponsorships of our supporters. That is how we continue to be funded today.



## Volunteer Spotlight: Riah Engel

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

I first learned about LAA during a tabling event at my college. I have always had a passion for helping animals and wanted to make a difference locally, so I decided to stop and chat with the representatives. They were incredibly welcoming and informative, sharing details about their volunteer opportunities. Now, after about four months of working with LAA, I can proudly say that I am part of a wonderful organization that is truly making a positive impact in our community.

### Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I am a student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, majoring in psychology and criminal justice. My academic focus is to expand my experiences as an undergraduate student so I will have opportunities in graduate school. I am actively involved in several research labs that explore many topics, such as mental health, rehabilitation, and law and policy. My goal is to enter graduate school and earn a doctorate in psychology, with a particular emphasis on criminal psychology. In addition to my academic pursuits, I am currently working as a crisis counselor on a hotline, helping people with their mental health. This role has further strengthened my desire to help make a difference in the lives of others.

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

I currently volunteer as a phone volunteer for LAA. I take on all calls one day a week, every week. My responsibilities include responding to messages and ensuring clients can get their animals spayed or neutered. Additionally, I help set up arrangements for the pet food bank, making sure that owners can get scheduled for their pets in need to receive the necessary supplies. Through this role, I am able to contribute to the welfare of animals in our community and support pet owners in providing the best care for their furry friends.

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

What I find most rewarding about my volunteer activities is the genuine happiness and fulfillment they bring me. I have a strong desire to help people, and I



firmly believe

in the power of volunteering and giving back to the community. Knowing that my efforts contribute to the well-being of both animals and their owners fills me with a sense of purpose and joy. Each call I handle and each pet I help support reminds me of the positive impact we can have when we come together to support one another.

### What would you recommend to anyone looking to volunteer for LAA?

I would highly recommend volunteering for the LAA. Volunteering is such a rewarding experience, and being part of LAA is an incredible opportunity. The community is welcoming and supportive, and you can make a meaningful impact by helping people and preventing animal homelessness. If you are an animal lover like myself, you'll find great satisfaction in contributing to such a worthwhile cause. So, if you're considering it, go for it—you'll be making a difference and joining a fantastic community.

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

A request for any donations for our pet drive, which primarily serves dog and cat food. However, there are several unique items that could greatly benefit our efforts and the animals we support. Pet beds, durable toys, and grooming supplies would be wonderful additions. Additionally, items like flea and tick preventatives and pet carriers can make a significant difference in the care and comfort of the animals. By expanding our wish list to include these unique items, we can enhance the overall well-being of the pets and provide comprehensive support to their owners, ensuring that every animal has the opportunity to thrive in a loving home.

## Thank you to our donors!

Instinct Pet Food  
Buckingham Asset Management  
Colleen Kadavy  
Woodmen of the World Lodge No 264  
Target  
Long Dog Fat Cat  
Michael Lee Bruns  
Petco North  
Nulo Inc  
Capital Humane Society  
Arnie's Pet Food  
Robyn Uebele  
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Barbara Michael  
Connie Beckman  
Andrew & Renee Benson  
Pam Lander  
Kelle Brandt  
Carol Raiter  
James Hewitt  
Larry Rinne  
Nancy Mcroft  
Morrie & Gale Hadenfeldt

## Donations in MEMORIAM

Steve Tillman  
Clyde Johnson (dog)  
Baby Bauer (cat)

# Thank you Give to Lincoln Day donors!

Anne Cech  
 Michael Schmidt  
 Barbara Michael  
 Janet Chung  
 Julie & Jim Pittenger  
 Marlene & Jim Wagner  
 Matt & Trish Reimer  
 Nikki Thompson  
 Karl Skinner  
 Nikki Roseberry  
 Laurie Martinez  
 Vicki Miller  
 Valerie Stehlik  
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 Cheryl Hackworth  
 David Anderson  
 Julie Pearson Anderson  
 Judith DeGraff

## LAA's 16th Annual Wine & Howl raises \$13,000!

\$13,000 was raised at the 16th annual Wine & Howl to support Lincoln Animal Ambassadors' spay/neuter program and pet food bank. Over 400 people, 150-200 dogs, and one cat (in a pet stroller) attended the fundraising event at Deer Springs Winery. From 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, June 9th, patrons enjoyed shady fresh air and live music. Karl Skinner emceed the event.

For a second year in a row, the AM/FM band entertained crowds. Lead singer Jayden was unable to be there and so her dad Bryan Olesen, straight from his recent appearance and third place win on the national TV show "The Voice", stepped in to take her place. "He was so kind and friendly with everyone there and did a stupendous job," said LAA president Mary Douglas.

As in previous years, Hy-Vee offered a variety of food options and Deer Springs Winery had their wine tent set up, along

with their wine slushies! Free pup cakes were donated by PAW BAKERY.

Attendees had the opportunity to visit with twenty-four vendors, consisting of pet-related and non pet-related companies as well as shelter and rescue groups. Sixty-three themed gift baskets were raffled consisting of pet related raffle baskets, kid activity baskets, small plant gardens, baker related baskets and several wine baskets.

Twenty-five volunteers were on site to help make Wine & Howl a success plus several additional volunteers that helped in preparation behind the scenes.

"LAA is just so appreciative of the community support of our mission year after year attending this event," said Douglas. "We're so grateful that our community believes in our mission enough to continue their support. Thank you Lincoln!"



## Pet Food Bank: Dry cat food and clumping litter needed

The LAA Pet Food Bank has a distribution once a week for qualified families to help feed their pets. We appreciate our communities support! You could help by donating these items at any of the donation sites.

### Pet Food Bank drop off locations:

Super Saver 56th & Hwy 2  
*(barrel at exit door)*

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

Super Saver 27th & Pine Lake  
*(barrel at exit door)*

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

Arnie's Pet Food  
56th & Hwy 2

Pet Central Station  
5591 S. 48th St.

Long Dog Fat Cat  
8340 Glynoaks Dr. #110

## Continued: New pallet jack

A huge thank you to Rieke's for the discounted price, Ron's Rolloff's for delivering our machine to us, Colleen and David Kadavy for their perseverance in finding the right machine and last, but certainly not least, our biggest thank you to WoodmenLife Lincoln Chapter 264 for the seed money to start this venture.

I know that I convey the most sincere "Thank You" from the LAA volunteers, male and female, that were always there to help manually unload pet food donations and litter, bag by bag or case by case. THANK YOU TO ALL INVOLVED...IT IS A TEAM EFFORT! We couldn't do it without you!



## LAA receives Walmart/ Sam's Spark Good Local Grants

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors received support for its low-cost spay and neuter program this spring from two local Walmart/Sam's Club Stores. \$1,000 was contributed between Store #2432 and Store #3823.

Spark Good Local Grants provide funding directly from Walmart and Sam's Club facilities to local non-profit organizations. LAA has assisted in altering over 4,500 pets since the beginning of this income-based spay and neuter program, preventing millions of unwanted puppies and kittens from being born and thereby filling our local shelters and rescues. "LAA depends on our community to do what we do, and having the support of these local organizations makes us very grateful and honored to be rooted in this community" said Mary Douglas, LAA President.

LAA would like to give a huge Thank You to Spark Good Grants for their continued support. We couldn't do what we do without this local support.

## Volunteer with LAA!

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors is an all-volunteer organization. We are always looking for committed, skilled volunteers to help our programs thrive. LAA is not a hands-on animal group. We help pets and their people, but we don't rescue or re-home animals. If you are interested in helping animals in your community and would like to volunteer your time, we'd love to talk to you. Consider our current needs:

### Grant Writer

I know this sounds intimidating. LAA is completely donation driven and we sustain our programs with donations, fundraising events and private grants. Of course we like big grants, but we like small ones too! They all add up to one more pet altered or one more can of food purchased. So if you have some experience writing grants, or want to gain grant writing experience, we'd love to talk to you. A mind set

incorporating LAA values and an interview with Board members would be required.

### Events

LAA is completely donation driven and we sustain our programs with donations, fundraising events and private grants. An important part of our existence are fundraising events. We hold 2-3 fundraising events each year and we always need volunteers with good ideas and volunteers to help staff these events. I have to say, these events are so much fun! If you enjoy party and event planning, decorating or organizing serving on this committee might be the volunteer opportunity for you. You could be help in a big way or a small way, a one time event or several events. A mind set incorporating LAA values would be preferred. If this is your "cup of kibble" we'd love to talk with you.

Walmart 





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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](http://LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org) using PayPal** or mail this form to LAA. Pet Food Bank donation items can be dropped off at various locations throughout Lincoln (see list elsewhere in newsletter).

**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!**

