

# Pet Talk

FALL 2020

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

**Or donate through our website**  
**LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org**

### Pet Food Bank drop off locations:

Petco 56th & Hwy 2 *(bin in front entry)*

Petco 48th & O Street *(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.*

## LAA is issuing spay/neuter vouchers again!

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors (LAA) is embarking on a new approach for our Low Cost Spay/Neuter Program. LAA's spay/neuter program is limited to low income individuals with proof of income required from all clients requesting spay/neuter services. The income guideline used to determine eligibility is an adjusted amount based on the Income Eligibility Guidelines for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). All eligible participants of LAA's Pet Food Bank are automatically eligible for the low cost spay/neuter program. The new and improved program is similar to Lincoln Animal Control's voucher program.

Spay/neuter clients will be issued a voucher for the amount LAA will pay toward the alter procedure. Low cost spay/neuter program participants will be able to use any veterinarian clinic they choose, with agreement from the clinic. Once the voucher is issued, the client must then contact the veterinarian clinic

of their choice to verify the chosen clinic will accept the voucher. The client will be responsible for all costs above the voucher amount.

Clients can apply for spay/neuter assistance by completing the Spay/Neuter Assistance application form on our website or leaving a voicemail indicating interest in the low cost spay/neuter program at 402-817-1168. Clients leaving a voice mail will be contacted by a volunteer to obtain the necessary information for completing the voucher. Income verification documents must be provided before voucher will be issued. Once your income verification documents have been received, a voucher will be issued as soon as possible.

Please contact Lincoln Animal Ambassadors at 402-817-1168 or [info@lincolnanimalambassadors.org](mailto:info@lincolnanimalambassadors.org) with further questions about our low cost spay/neuter program or our income-based pet food assistance program.

Like our  
newsletter?

**Become a  
sponsor!**

Contact us at [info@LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org](mailto:info@LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org)



**GIVING  
TUESDAY**  
**December 2, 2020**

Please consider making a donation to Lincoln Animal Ambassadors on this global day of generosity.

# By the numbers

## Pet food distributed in 2020

### Dry food

30,626 lbs.

Approximately 3,403 lbs. a month

Since inception: 500,024 lbs.

### Canned food

38,140 cans

Approximately 4,238 cans a month

Since inception: 158,782 cans

### Litter

6,516 lbs.

Approximately 724 lbs. a month

Since inception: 84,617 lbs.

**Number of families helped in 2020 (many numerous times throughout the year): 254**



## 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.



## Featured Rescue: **Brave Animal Rescue**

Founded in 2020 by a group of animal advocates in Lincoln, Nebraska, Brave Animal Rescue is a nonprofit 501(C)(3) volunteer-based animal welfare organization dedicated to rescuing homeless kittens, cats, dogs, and puppies.

By working with a network of volunteer advocates, foster caregivers, local veterinarians, and shelters, Brave Animal Rescue is able to help animals in need by pulling from high-kill shelters, by working hands-on rescuing orphaned kittens, by aiding in local Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) efforts, and by helping those who are no longer able to care for their pets. We provide these animals with care and temporary homes until we are able to place them in permanent homes.

Brave also aims to serve as a resource to our community by providing information about pet ownership, spaying and neutering, veterinary care, and TNR.

The founders of Brave Animal Rescue are life-long animal advocates who have several years of experience working with other nonprofit animal groups throughout the Midwest. Through these experiences on the forefront of rescue, the founders quickly began to recognize a need in the community for a rescue that will take neonatal animals.

According to The Humane Society of the United States, 80% of kittens are born outside. Without intervention, these kittens go on to procreate, get killed (by disease, vehicles, predators, etc.), or end up in shelters. Furthermore, kittens and puppies under 8 weeks old are the population most at-risk for being euthanized in shelters due to a lack of resources and foster homes. With a passion for newborn kittens and puppies and drive to help the community, the founders of Brave Animal Rescue aim to end the cycle of unwanted companion animals through education, rescue, and spaying and neutering.

If you're interested in learning more about our mission and work, visit [Brave-Animal-Rescue.org](http://Brave-Animal-Rescue.org) and be sure to follow us on Facebook and Instagram @braveanimalrescue to stay up-to-date on our events and adoptable animals! We rescue cats and dogs ranging from infancy to seniors needing hospice care. If you are interested in fostering, please fill out a foster application on our website.



*Title photo: Benji and Scooter (dogs, bonded and available for adoption). Above: Ivan (Tabby, available for adoption), and Zebra Cake (black and white kitten, available for adoption).*

## Volunteer Spotlight: Heather Bauer, thank you for 10+ years of volunteer service!

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors wishes to pay tribute to Heather Bauer for her 10+ years of volunteer service with the non-profit. Bauer started her time with LAA by helping with its pet food bank at St. Matthews Episcopal Church and then switched to being one of LAA's phone volunteer which led to her to processing its pet food bank applications. At the time that she gave up her LAA duties to return to school, Bauer was both volunteering with her husband at the pet food bank and helping to deliver newsletters.

"I first became involved with LAA when they were holding a weekly pet food bank pickup at my church, St. Matthew's," Bauer said. "I'd sit in the church nursery and wait for clients to stop by." When LAA closed that location for pickup, she began helping out at the pet food bank housed in The Cat House back when the latter was still on Q street.

Bauer eventually switched to being a phone volunteer, handling calls for both the pet food bank and the spay/neuter program. "I found this position to be fulfilling because sometimes I was the only person that client might speak to in a day or so. The calls could be lengthy, but I enjoyed the contact," said Bauer.

Supporting the pet food bank was a passion for Bauer and she was eventually asked by Mary Douglas, LAA president, to process pet food applications. Bauer agreed. For a while, she shared this responsibility with another volunteer but then took over the position entirely.

At this time, Bauer and her husband also began volunteering on a weekly basis at the pet food bank. Soon they were volunteering there on both of its open nights. When LAA moved the pet food bank to the Center for People in Need, the couple took charge and ran it together. Bauer said, "We have such amazing volunteers that help every week, that made it a lot of fun."

In the fall of 2019, Bauer began grad school. Her time was suddenly occupied with homework, with that volunteer time became harder to set aside. In July of 2020, Bauer made the tough decision to resign all of her duties with LAA except that of delivering newsletters. "The thing I miss the most is the contact with the clients," Bauer shared. "Quite a few have become special to me and I miss them." Bauer's husband continues to run the pet food bank, which helps maintain the familiarity that the clients had with the Bauers.

Bauer is currently working on a dual master's in divinity and social work. She credits LAA for training her about confidentiality and also for developing "a deeper understanding of empathy for those who are struggling," both of which Bauer views as vital in the social work field.

Bauer loved her time with LAA and hopes to return at some point as a volunteer. She expressed pride in the work she was able to do for LAA and gratitude for the opportunities afforded her by LAA. To future volunteers, Bauer offered the advice, "Have patience with yourself and others. We are all on paths that no one can comprehend, and we must show empathy for others."

## Thank you to our recent donors!

Andrew & Renee Benson  
Arnie's Pet Food  
Burma Kroger  
Capital Humane Society  
Carrot Mountain Dog Treats  
Community Services Fund of NE  
Debra Lenter  
Geanine H Bordogna Charitable Trust  
Hy-Vee  
Jami Nelson  
Jim & Marlene Wagner  
John & Diane Huseman  
Judy Johnstone  
Kim Gilliland  
Laura Fredericks Saf  
Lincoln Community Foundation  
Mary Douglas  
Mary Hewitt  
Nature's Variety  
Paula Einemann  
Petco  
Sinda Dux  
Susan Evans  
Target  
The Bissell Pet Foundation  
United Way of Lincoln & Lancaster County  
Walmart

## In memory of

Barbara Barnes  
Gordy - Dog (Sandy Coatney)  
Tig - Dog (Karen Hoffman)

# 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. You can help pets and their owners by contacting us at [info@lincolnanimalambassadors.org](mailto:info@lincolnanimalambassadors.org).



# Is this the volunteer job for you?

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors is a small grass-roots all-volunteer organization doing BIG THINGS! Our Pet Food Bank is stocked by donations and we distribute over 2 ton of food each month. We are in dire need of a volunteer or volunteers to help pick up donations with specific requirements.

## Requirements for this position:

- 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#;
- Must have the desire to help pets and their people;
- Must have the desire to do something outside of yourself to help your community.

Donations are normally within the City of Lincoln, but periodically might need assistance with pickups outside of Lincoln.

If you are retired or have a schedule that allows for these requirements, and have a desire to volunteer and help others in the community, reach out to us at: [info@lincolnanimalambassadors.org](mailto:info@lincolnanimalambassadors.org) Or fill out a Volunteer Questionnaire on our website at [LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org](http://LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org). Or call our phone line at (402) 817-1168.

# How to recognize fear in dogs and cats

By Allison Hunter-Frederick

If you have ever owned or met an aggressive dog or cat, you're not alone. The Humane Society of United States reports that there are two million dog bites annually, while the Insurance Information Institute says that liability claims related to dog bites and other dog-related injuries cost insurance companies \$797 million in 2019. As for cats, Cornell University of Veterinarian Medicine reports that 27% of cats relinquished to shelters for behavioral reasons are surrendered for aggression, while Healthy Pets says that pet owners believe aggression is the number one behavior issue.

In the first module of Dr. Sophia Lin's Low-Stress Handling course, Dr. Yin says said that the number one cause of aggression is fear. Yin points out that animals cope with fear in three ways: fight, flee, or freeze. Unfortunately, many animals resort to fighting because they've learned that offense is the best defense. Because fear so often leads to aggression, it's important for pet owners to recognize and address the early signs of fear.

Some broad signs of fear include tense muscles, lowered head, averted eyes, flattened ears, and low tail. In addition, some animals will act the opposite of what we expect, in that they'll demonstrate higher levels of energy and goofiness than normal. More specific signs for dogs include furrowed brows, smacking lips, yawning, panting, and slow movements. Anxious dogs might also become hypervigilant, salivate excessively, run away, hide, stop eating, and even urinate or defecate. More specific signs for cats include tucking tail and feet under their body, freezing, and huddling in a corner.

According to Yin, people can unintentionally exacerbate an animal's fear. For example, we might think it's okay to pet a dog or cat we don't know. After all, we love animals and therefore should know how to interact with them. Some of us might at times apply similar logic to children. We'll reason that because a child is good to and kind with animals, it's okay for them to pet animals. In either case, we could be wrong. But just because we love furry creatures doesn't mean that the feeling is mutual. The furry creature that we're trying to pet might see our interactions as "stranger danger."

Yin also contends that even those of us who know that we shouldn't pet a strange dog or cat without permission might

inadvertently worsen an animal's fear. A well-meaning pet lover might sit at the pet's level, hold out their hand, and offer a treat. While this can work for some animals, for others the fact that someone has gotten into their space might be enough to set off their internal radar that alerts them to "stranger danger."

## To greet them, we should follow these guidelines:

- Stay out of the animal's personal space
- Avoid direct eye contact
- Stand/sit sideways
- Start out at a distance; if the animal backs up, you're too close
- Let the animal make the first contact
- Respond with slow and smooth movement
- Monitor the animal's body posture and response
- Stay relaxed

## To interact with nervous animals, we should follow these guidelines:

- Use a happy voice
- Approach sideways or backwards
- Stand/sit and give treats
- Keep in mind that just because the animal accepts you in one position doesn't mean it will accept you in another position; each new position might signal "stranger danger" to them
- Occupy the animal with food before trying to pet them
- Never pet, kiss, or hug an unfamiliar animal
- Just because a dog is comfortable when we're in one position doesn't mean they'll be comfortable with us when we're in another position
- One successful interaction with an animal doesn't mean you're now it's best friend

Something I enjoyed about Yin's lectures is her analogies. When talking about fear, she asked her listeners to consider how they would want their own fears responded to. For example, for those of you who fear spiders, would you want that spider to approach you? How would you feel if it moved quickly or awkwardly towards you? If it started out overhead, would you feel any more comfortable if it moved to the ground? To consider another analogy, for those of you who dislike dentists, would you want that dentist to give you orders? How would you feel if the dentist tried to reassure you with a baby voice?

**Continued on the next page.**

## Continued: How to recognize fear in dogs and cats

Yin gave these examples so that instead of our labeling animals as bad, we might instead empathize with them when they react out of fear and we might work towards finding positive solutions to their fear. She reminded the animal care professionals in her audience that the number one rule is to do NO harm and to send an animal home better rather than worse. For the rest of us, we too should strive to always make our pets happier because of every interaction they have with us. This means we should understand that fear is a natural part of

the animal world and so we should learn to recognize brewing fear and to develop positive strategies for overcoming those fears.

Need help with cat behavior? I offer cat behavior consultations, training in obedience and agility, and support for basic care and enrichment. Email me at [allisontalkspets@gmail.com](mailto:allisontalkspets@gmail.com) or message me at Allison Helps Cats.

*Read the entire article on LAA's blog at [LincolnPetCulture.WordPress.com](http://LincolnPetCulture.WordPress.com).*

## Rachael Ray Save Them All COVID-19 Relief Grant from Best Friends Animal Society helps provide prescription pet food

*By Mary Douglas*

Prior to COVID-19 the Lincoln Animal Ambassadors had worked in the community to help pets and their people with food and other pet related items through our income-based pet food bank and low cost spay and neuter program. Part of that assistance was paying for prescription pet food from local veterinarians when a pet was in need, if we did not have that type of food donated to our pet food bank. When COVID-19 hit, the demand for help at the pet food bank

increased dramatically. The Best Friends Rachel Ray grant was a huge help in allowing us to meet this increased demand, including allowing us to continue to pay for a very expensive hypoallergenic diet for a pet that was in dire need.

Veterinarian Erica Thiel with Pitts Veterinary Hospital wrote us about Caroline Hickey and her little dog Diesel:

"Diesel Hickey has a history of environmental and food allergies. The constant itching was making his life miserable as well as his owners. Starting allergy (immunotherapy) shots and a hypoallergenic diet have really helped to stop his scratching and allow him to get back to enjoying life! Hypoallergenic diets are very expensive and we are grateful LAA is able to continue to help Diesel's owner provide this much needed diet for him that she would not be able to offer him on her own."

Thank you Best Friends and Rachel Ray for making this grant possible.



Shopping online this holiday season? **Donate to LAA while you do!**

Look us up at our custom URL: <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/27-3018037>

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization.

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Until every pet has a home.

# 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.

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!

