

Pet Talk

WINTER 2025

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!

Furry Fiesta Trivia
Fundraiser / Nacho
Average Trivia Pawty
March 1

5 - 8 p.m., Off Leash Dog Bar

Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Program: LAA spends over \$60,000 altering community's pets in 2024

Fifteen years ago, in 2010, Lincoln Animal Ambassadors realized that pet adoptions alone could not reduce the pet overpopulation, and it became a reality that providing financial assistance for spaying and neutering our community's pets was a very necessary project to be taken on by our newly granted and signed 501c3 organization.

In 2024, LAA spent \$61,477 on spaying and neutering 541 pets in our community by issuing vouchers ranging from \$60 for neutering a male cat to

... 250 vouchers issued for male dogs and male cats, theoretically prevented an unlimited number of litters.

\$175 for spaying a female dog weighing over fifty pounds. LAA vouchers used to spay pets included ninety-one large (50 pounds or more) female dogs who on average have eight puppies per litter. A total of seventy-seven smaller female dogs, which on average produce litters of about four puppies each, were spayed. Math tells us we prevented about 1,036 puppies from being born in Lancaster County during 2024. Female cats spayed totaled 123 and with each litter being an average of five kittens, 615 kittens were prevented from being born by pet guardians using LAA vouchers. The 250 vouchers issued for male dogs and male cats, theoretically prevented an unlimited number of litters.

LAA's Spay Neuter Assistance Program began with little money but with lots of

energy mixed with hopes and dreams. LAA vowed we would never issue more vouchers than for which we had funds. We started out very slowly and kept steadily providing vouchers. Fundraisers were created and successfully completed with over 95% of the funds raised going right back to our community of Lancaster County. We have no "brick and mortar" office, nor do we have any paid staff. All staff are volunteers and all work from our homes.

LAA is very thankful for the collaboration of other community organizations. Capital Humane Society with their Stransky Veterinary Center has worked with LAA's income qualifying spay neuter assistance program to provide spay and neuter procedures at an exceptionally low cost for our community members who meet their income qualifications.



Calendar of events

Furry Fiesta Trivia Fundraiser / Nacho Average Trivia Pawty March 1

Food: 5 - 6:30 p.m.
Trivia: 6:30 - 8 p.m.
Off Leash Dog Bar

Give to Lincoln Day May 29

givetolincoln.com

17th Annual Wine & Howl June 8

Deer Springs Winery



Rescue Spotlight: Max Raven Animal Rescue

Max Raven Animal Rescue is the lifelong dream of its founder, Dee Soflin. Dee has been involved in animal rescue in various capacities since the late 1980s and loved animals her entire childhood. In March of this year, she found herself at a pivotal moment where it was time to turn her dream into reality. Although a friend initially agreed to help her start the rescue, the friend moved on after completing that mission. Fortunately, Dee later found a permanent rescue partner in Holly Hansen, who shared her vision, passion, and had dreams of starting her own rescue. Their like-minded ideas and approaches to running the rescue meshed perfectly.

The rescue is named in honor of Dee's beloved husky, Max, who passed away in 2021 while undergoing surgery to remove a cancerous tumor from his leg.

Once the rescue became established, Dee and Holly followed their instincts in deciding which dogs and cats to take in. Over time, Dee focused on caring for the cats while both partners took in dogs. By the end of 2024, the rescue had successfully taken in over 70 animals, with 36 adoptions for the year. Partnering with the Capital Humane Society to rescue animals that do not thrive in shelter environments has been a significant part of their journey. Collaborating with other rescues has proven essential, especially as the animal population continues to grow in crisis. Sometimes, finding creative solutions to rescue is necessary.

Dee's ultimate dream is to acquire an acreage to ensure they never have to turn away animals. Turning animals away is

truly heartbreaking. Having a sanctuary would enable Max Raven Animal Rescue to provide a safe place for unwanted animals from shelters. It would allow senior dogs and cats to live out their lives in comfort, provide space for special-needs animals to rehabilitate and roam, and offer a safe haven for unadoptable cats—those who test positive for FIV or Feline Leukemia—regardless of whether they are feral or not. Most importantly, it would ensure that dogs and cats can spend their days peacefully without the threat of euthanasia just because they are deemed unadoptable or challenging to rehabilitate.

For now, Max Raven Animal Rescue is committed to taking in the animals that no one else wants and giving them the love and care they deserve as a foster-based rescue. Starting the rescue has come with its fair share of ups and downs. One vital aspect of their success in saving lives has been finding foster homes for animals. The foster families who have joined the Max Raven family have been incredible blessings, and there is always hope to recruit more so they can rescue even more animals.

Without the support of their community and collaboration with several local rescues and shelters, MRAR would not have come this far, and there is still much to learn.

Gratitude is an understatement for the appreciation they feel towards the Max Raven Nation. Every animal they have taken in has been cherished and will hold a special place in their hearts, even after finding their forever homes.



Carl



Zoe

We're available for adoption!

Volunteer Spotlight: Marjie & Dean Buls

How did you first learn about Lincoln Animal Ambassadors (LAA)?

Marjie learned about volunteering for LAA through searching for volunteer positions on the internet. While helping individuals on the LAA voice mail line and speaking to LAA training coordinator, Jamie Bruder, I learned of LAA's pet food bank (PFB). Dean says about his wife, "Yes....she volunteered me!" Now neither one of us can stand being away from the pet food bank or returning calls! Everyone with whom we associate knows Wednesdays and Saturdays are taken!



Tell us a little about yourself.

Dean and I met when I was 17 and we'll just say that was over 35 years ago! We instantly became lifetime friends! We both grew up in Lincoln and over the years we never took our friendship any further than just that! After living many states and years apart we strengthened our friendship! In 1999 Marjie realized this was not only a friend but the love of her life! Needless to say, they've been together since! We raised our three children (Ashley Ann, Brittney, and Joshua) in Imperial, NE. Once all our children began having grown lives of their own, we returned to our old stomping grounds in Lincoln. We have been back for approximately four and one-half years. Two of our three kids live here with three grandkids, and one lives in Illinois with our other two grandkids. We were volunteers in

Imperial, NE, and have been thrilled to be able to continue so here.

We have two dogs! Trick C is a little white Morky (Maltese and Yorkie blend) who is 16 years old. Trick C became Marjie's first service dog. Bailey is what is called an Isabella Dachshund which has long hair that only grows one length and then stops! Bailey is 7 years old and has been trained to be Marjie's second service dog.

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

Marjie volunteers for LAA returning voicemails and both volunteer at the Pet Food Bank. We LOVE what we do for LAA and their PFB!!

What do you find rewarding in your volunteer activities?

We both would like to tell you the absolute most rewarding thing about volunteering is meeting and helping the community, and knowing we are making a difference for the pets that need our help! Volunteering is rewarding but I suppose it is also for selfish reasons because it makes us feel good inside our souls! For that we will be forever grateful!!

Do you do other volunteer work in Lincoln?

Marjie and Dean have helped with fundraisers for LAA. Marjie also volunteers for the Center for People and serves on the Potluck and Reservation Committee in our retirement community.

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

I would recommend anyone that is wanting to volunteer go to lincolnanimalambassadors.org and absorb all the information on that application and apply if still interested!

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

A "wish list" item that we wish we could add would be the option to deliver pet food bank needs to those that absolutely cannot make it to the pet food bank. This is something Dean and I would be willing to do if permitted.



First Plymouth Pet Food Drive

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors would like to send out a huge "Thank You" to First Plymouth Congregational Church for running a pet food drive in October 2024 for our pet food bank. This is the third year in a row that they have done this for LAA and we couldn't be more grateful. LAA assists approximately 500 families each year with feeding and caring for their pets. Community donations and small food drives, such as First Plymouth's efforts, is how we can do what we do. We are so grateful and appreciative of their support.



Thank you to our Spay-ghetti event donors!

Baker's Candies
 Butterfly Bakery
 Cakes by Tiffany
 Capital Humane Society
 Dalia Torres
 Dean and Marjie Buls
 Deer Springs Winery
 Del Gould Meats
 Domesti-Pups
 Eagle Printing & Signs
 Ehlers Animal Care
 Embassy Suites
 Granite City
 Hearts United for Animals
 High Society Cheesecakes
 Hy-Vee
 Insomnia Cookies
 James Arthur Vineyard
 Jane Nelson
 Jeanie Imler
 Instinct
 Kala's Kakes
 Kenl Inn
 Kenzie Lingenfelter
 Laura Wong
 LeQuartier
 Lincoln Cake Lady
 Lulubee Artisinal Chocolates
 Margaret Aahlberg
 Marie's Pastries
 Mary Douglas
 Mary Yager
 Mitzi Graham
 Nadia Postek
 Noonies Homemade Fudge
 Olive Garden
 Pauline Balta
 Paw Bakery
 Paws 4 Fun
 Ramzi J. Hynek
 Rembolt Ludtke LLC
 Sam Matthew
 Sandy Heironymus
 ShelterMe Nebraska
 Sunflower House
 Super Saver
 Sweet Things by Marcy
 The Cookie Company
 The Warm Cookie
 Toast
 Tom Bassett
 Valhalla Bee Farm
 Venue

LAA raises \$8,615 at the 9th annual Spay-ghetti & No Balls event

The 9th annual Spay-ghetti & No Balls Dinner & Dessert Auction was held on November 16 at the Unitarian Church raising \$8,615 to support LAA's programs.

A buffet dinner of spaghetti, salad and bread sticks was served for a \$25 admission price, with the option to purchase meatballs at an additional cost. All ingredients for this dinner were donated by local businesses. Volunteers pitched in for food service and the Girl Scouts from Troop No. 20821 once again did a fabulous job of bussing tables and re-filling water and tea glasses throughout the dinner.

The featured speaker for the night was Laura Wong, the new Executive Director for The Cat House. She spoke about their accomplishments over the years and brought forward some new projects and programs that are coming in the future under her leadership.

The attendees also heard from Nadia Postek, Director of Animal Welfare and Kenzie Lingenfelter, Pet Retention Coordinator & Pet Food Pantry from the Capital Humane Society and Stransky Veterinary Center. They gave an update on their programs including the Pawsitive Impact Program and the opening of the Stransky Veterinary Center.

In her presentation about LAA's mission to always collaborate with other

organizations and businesses to further their animal mission, LAA President Mary Douglas, gave a special tribute to Karl Skinner, Executive Director of Nebraska No Kill Canine Rescue, for his never-ending support of LAA and the collaborative mission to help Nebraska's pets. She reiterated that "Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much - so let's work together."

Wrapping up the event was LAA's ever-popular dessert auction run by auctioneer Tom Bassett, who has volunteered his time and skills for the last nine LAA dessert auctions. Girl Scout Troop 20821 members assisted the auctioneer by displaying each dessert as it was auctioned. A record number of desserts were available to bid on this year with 43 gorgeous options being put on the auction block. Some of these items were literally edible works of art. Whether attendees were bidders or spectators, they enjoyed watching the lively action of the treats being sold. The dessert auction brought in \$4,300 on its own.

A huge shout out to all those who supported LAA by coming out to Spay-ghetti & No Balls and a special thanks to the businesses that donated food, desserts and sponsored tables. And most of all thank you to the great LAA volunteers who made this event happen.





By the numbers

Low Cost Spay/Neuter Program

- 4,789 total spays/neuters
- 2,453 dogs
- 2,322 cats
- 14 rabbits and a fancy rat

Pet Food Bank

- 4,611 families assisted
- 523,391 pounds of dry food distributed
- 124,675 cans of food distributed

LAA collaborates with NNKCR to fight against pet overpopulation

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors (LAA) has been battling the pet overpopulation problem in Lancaster County for over 16 years. We have a philosophy that many hands and hearts can do so much more than just a few so we are always looking for ways to collaborate with others in the community. Over the years we have collaborated with many groups like The Cat House, Joining Forces Saving Lives, The Capital Humane Society, Hearts United for Animals, Beatrice Humane Society, just to name a few.

A few years back, we had the opportunity to collaborate with Nebraska No Kill Canine Rescue (NNKCR) with an outreach project. LAA only works in Lancaster County, but there was a situation outside of our area that we were called upon to help with, which ended with the pets actually staying in their home instead of being turned into a rescue to re-home.

It got both groups thinking about different ways to keep those pets in their home and not filling our local shelters and rescues with pets to re-home – or worse. Both LAA and NNKCR put aside a set amount of funds to use for these type of situations – hoping to keep pets with their families, who they know and love, when they can't afford to spay and neuter their family pets on their own. Some situations we get involved in are about the well-being of the pets by spaying or neutering them, as well as emergency spay and neuter procedures when the pet's health or life is in jeopardy.

LAA has joined forces with NNKCR for a total of 75 pets over the last few years with 31 of those special situation pets



helped in 2024 alone. The most recent project was a home with seven large breed unaltered dogs – three females and four males that were all being transitioned to a relative's home and it was so important that all of these dogs be altered to make this move to a much smaller home and to prevent unwanted litters. Animal Medical Clinic in Grand Island got four of the dogs in for the procedures within a few days and the remaining three dogs the next week. Most of the time, the vet clinics work with us for quick action and at times, discounted prices to get the jobs done.

This was a great outcome for this family, these dogs and for the community. No unwanted litters, no dogs being turned into local shelters and rescues, and the family got to keep their beloved pets and the pets got to stay with the family that they knew and loved. But the real heroes in these stories is our community! Without your financial donations of pet food and pet-related item donations, we could not do these types of projects. We are grateful and appreciative of your continued support. It truly does take a village! Thank you!

Pet Food Bank: Dry dog 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

FURRY FIESTA

NACHO AVERAGE TRIVIA PAW-TY



**OFF LEASH
DOG BAR
1975 M ST**

SEE OFF LEASH DOG
BAR FOR DOG PRE-
ENTRY RULES

**TICKETS
\$20 PRE-EVENT
\$25 AT DOOR**

**MARCH 1ST
FOOD 5PM - 6:30PM
TRIVIA 6:30PM - 8PM**



**NACHO BAR - TRIVIA -
PRIZES - VENDORS
DOG FRIENDLY**

New LAA Furry Fiesta Trivia Fundraiser - Nacho Average Trivia Pawty!

LAA is excited to invite you to attend Furry Fiesta on March 1! Nacho Average Trivia Pawty!

Held at Off Leash Dog Bar, 1975 M Street, Lincoln – this will be a dog friendly event! A nacho and taco bar will be offered at 5 p.m. and the trivia fun starts at 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. There will be prizes, vendors, swag bags, dogs and lots of fun!

Pre-event individual tickets are \$20. Tickets at the door will be \$25. Off Leash Dog Bar's pre-registration entry rules and

dog admission prices apply for your dog(s) if they accompany you. See Off Leash Dog Bar's website for details and directions at www.offleashlnk.com.

Pre-sale tickets are available on LAA's website at LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org

We hope you join us for this fun new adventure. Study up on your trivia! Feel free to contact LAA with questions or inquiries at info@lincolnanimalambassadors.org or 402.817.1168.

Thank you to our donors!

Nancy Mcroft
Norman West
Rick Goldsky
Elizabeth Bloomquist
Jami Nelson
John Baylor
Ronald & Mary Shortridge
Beth Kurpgeweit
Andrew & Renee Benson
Audrey Schneider
Gloria Best
Diane Cottingham
Jeanie Imler
Katherine Clinch
Karen & Ken Jefferson
Kent & Shelley Mattson
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Naida Sanchez
G.M. Bucco
Jeanne Holdren
John & Diane Huseman
Deb Plasek
Kent & Monica Marschman
Donna Helgren
Bonnie Burgeson

WE NEED YOU!

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

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 would love to talk to you. A mindset incorporating LAA values and an interview with Board members would be required.

Events Team Members

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 two-three fundraising events each year and we always need volunteers with good ideas and volunteers to help staff these events. The

fundraising 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 mindset incorporating LAA values would be preferred. If this is your "cup of kibble" we would love to talk with you.

Marketing/Media Promotion

LAA is looking for volunteers with marketing experience to help LAA with any marketing endeavors. This could become a board position.



Donations in MEMORIAM

Norman West for Misty
Nancy Mcroft for Anna Jamrog
Phil Imler (Cat)
M. Kujath for beloved Alaskan
Malamute



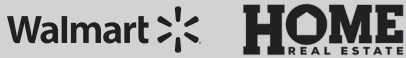
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LINCOLN COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION



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 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!

