

Pet Talk

WINTER 2022

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:

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

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.

SAVE THE date!

Spay-ghetti & No Balls Dinner
March 2022

More details to come!

Wine & Howl
June 12, 2022

Spay/neuter is much more than population control

By Allison Hunter-Frederick

In addition to it being the month of Valentine's Day, February is spay/neuter awareness month. The gift of spaying or neutering your pets is one of the greatest ways you can show love to your pets, because of its health and behavioral benefits. It's also a way to help your neighborhood and the issue of pet overpopulation.

Health Benefits

The spay/neuter procedure decreases the risk of diseases. For example, the probability of certain types of cancer and other serious health complications can be reduced as much as 85% for both sexes. Specific health benefits for females include the prevention of mammary tumors and pyometra (infected uterus) and for males includes the prevention of testicular cancer and prostate cancer.

Behavioral Benefits

Females won't experience heat cycles, which will eliminate their incessant crying and nervous behavior. Males will feel less of an urge to spray and mark, which will reduce their aggression. Both sexes will feel less compelled to attract a mate. This will result in fewer females dashing out the door to serenade the neighborhood and fewer males roaming the streets, both of which will reduce fights and injuries.

Neighborhoods

The spay/neuter procedure reduces the number of homeless animals, which can result in fewer traffic accidents, complaints of nuisance animals, and threats to local wildlife. Because spaying

and neutering decreases aggression, the danger of bites and attacks are decreased. All of the above also reduces the demand for animal control resources, which saves taxpayer dollars.

Pet Overpopulation

Animal welfare experts in the United States agree that spaying and neutering animals is one of the best ways to help curb pet overpopulation. The fewer unwanted litters, the fewer pets that are abandoned or relinquished to shelters, and therefore the fewer pets that end up homeless or euthanized.

If you've already spay/neutered your pet, please consider giving a donation instead to Lincoln Animal Ambassadors to help fund its services. LAA's mission is to address the root causes of animal homelessness in the

Lancaster County area by helping pets and their people through income-based programs such as a voucher-based low cost spay and neuter program and a pet food bank.



Thank you to our donors!

Walmart
Hy-Vee N 84
John & Diane Huseman
Wachal Pet Health Center
Haberfeld
Nature's Logic
Nichelson Family Foundation
Sinda Dux
Food Bank of Lincoln
Petco - South
Jim & Marlene Wagner
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Marcia Merboth
Kristin Packett
Capital Humane Society
Dale & Kimberly Johnson
Canine Consultants & Pet Supply



Recipe for a happy cat

*Written by Allison Hunter-Frederick for Lakes Animal Friendship Society.
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A recipe for a happy cat includes environmental resources, socialization, and cognitive enrichment in the form of play and training. Andy and I attempt to give all of these “ingredients” to our own three cats.

First, let's look at environmental resources. All cats need a safe place, which means they need high and low places. A few of our cats' favorite high places are window perches and wall shelves in our dining room, cat towers in the living room and bedroom, and access to the back of our storage shelves in the basement. As for low places, their favorites are: a basket, a cave, a hiding nook, and their carriers.

All cats also need their own feeding station, litter box, and scratching post. Our youngest cat, Rainy, likes to eat quickly and to eat whatever food she can find. For that reason, she has a puzzle feeder and eats in a separate room behind a closed door. We have been transitioning from closed to open litter boxes, as these make cats feel safer when going to the bathroom. For scratching options, our cats' favorites are two tall scratching posts that allow them to stretch the full length of their body when they scratch.

Next, let's look at socialization. The best age for this is between 2-16 weeks, although it's important at any other age. Rainy is the only one of our cats that we adopted as a kitten, and she's the most

outgoing of our three. From the start, we gave her lots of attention and introduced her regularly to people.

When training Rainy to become a therapy cat, I also took her to new places and exposed her to new situations as often as I could. Each time we did anything new, I gave her treats, so that she'd view the experiences in a positive way.

Last, let's look at play and training. For play to be effective, it should imitate the hunting sequence. Cats should be able to stare at their prey, stalk it, pounce on it, and grab it. Interactive toys such as cat wands are best for this purpose. I keep toys fresh for our adult cats by giving them only a few toys to play with, and then switching them every couple of weeks.

Even so, play often becomes routine, which is why I train them too. Some training sessions are practical: Cinder has learned to sit instead of pawing at me for treats; Bootsie will head to the basement when I call her; and Rainy will pose for a photo. Other sessions are for fun: Cinder can twirl; Bootsie can high-five; and Rainy will run an agility course.

Just like a cook will improve on a recipe upon each attempt, so too Andy and I continue to improve in the ways we make our cats happy. I hope this recipe for a happy cat is one that you'll tweak throughout the lives of your cats.

Volunteer Spotlight: Beverly Jimenez

After hearing of Lincoln Animal Ambassadors from conversations and seeing posts on Facebook, I believe I first understood what LAA was about when I picked up a Pet Talk publication.

I have been a professional photographer for over 40 years. It's the only thing I ever wanted to be and I'm so grateful that I got to spend more than half my life doing what I love.

Monday afternoons I answer calls for the LAA Pet Food Bank and Spay/Neuter Program. I can't imagine how broken I would feel if I were in need of help to keep my pets fed and there wasn't an organization like LAA to turn to. I have heard the pet owners voices catch, when they realize LAA is there, when their pets would otherwise go hungry. Not enough can be said for the good LAA's Spay & Neuter Program does on every level, for saving the lives of animals.

In 2008, I received a news clipping from my sister, telling of a

professional photographer in New York that volunteered to photograph every dog in an overcrowded kill shelter. The results were amazing. His work brought attention to shelter pets that were in need of homes and facing euthanasia. The adoptions went through the roof! I knew I had to do that too. I contacted local rescues and shelters, and have since photographed hundreds of animals needing homes. It needs to be said out loud, that I couldn't have accomplished this without my friend and fellow animal lover, Rod Johnson. We have also hosted many fundraisers to benefit animal groups in the area. We are proud to say that we are hosting our 50th Pet Fundraiser (with much support from family) at the end of this month.



If you have a little or a lot of time to give, please give Lincoln Animal Ambassadors a shout. See what they are doing to improve the lives of pets and their owners and discover what you can do to help.

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.



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.

Donations in MEMORIAM

Cooper Cech (Dog)
Bree Hoffman (Cat)
Hammy (Dog)
Barnaby Hunter-Frederick (Dog)
Max Wallman

give
To Lincoln Day
May 26

By the numbers

Low Cost Spay/Neuter Program

3,476 total animals

1791 dogs

1674 cats

11 other small critters

Pet food distributed in 2021

Dry food

26,268 lbs.

Approximately 2,189 lbs. a month

Since inception: 534,929 lbs.

Canned food

19,585 cans

Approximately 1,632 cans a month

Since inception: 183,032 cans

Litter

5,394 lbs.

Approximately 450 lbs. a month

Since inception: 92,091 lbs.

Number of families helped in

2021 (many numerous times throughout the year): 193



Rescue Spotlight: The Farm: Senior Dog Sanctuary

Since The Farm's incorporation in 2019, we have been home to 21 senior dogs. We typically have around eight residents at a given time. Most of our dogs are hand-picked by the kindhearted folks at Capital Humane Society. Residents come to us after proving unadoptable due to advanced age and/or medical issues. We are a husband and wife team: Joshua is employed by a pharmaceutical company, and Shawna is a veterinary technician and lecturer for the veterinary program at UNL. We also have a small but mighty community that we connect with via social media. They not only help pay for The Farm dogs' veterinary expenses, but they also share our joy at the arrival of a new dog, our laughter when someone is being particularly quirky or adorable, and our tears after a loss.

The Farm is a 140 year old farmhouse on a mostly forested ten acre plot near Ceresco. Our dogs receive first-rate veterinary attention with a focus towards preventative care and quality of life. Each dog gets daily massage, stretching, and dental care. We feed excellent food and tailor diets as needed. Every day, we accompany the able-bodied dogs on a stroll down The Farm's forest paths. Those dogs who still enjoy exploring but have limited mobility get the option of hitching a ride in a canine stroller. The Farm house is peppered with squishy dog beds, and the couch is accessible via custom ramp. Thus, there is a multitude of inviting places to nap. Most importantly, the dogs at The Farm are loved. They are treated with the patience, respect, and affection they deserve.

How do senior dogs end up without a home? Often, pet parents pass away or move to assisted living. Furthermore, veterinary care becomes increasingly expensive as dogs age, and pet parents may not be able to afford medications and treatments. Even our awesome local shelter can be a very scary place for dogs, particularly for those who have lived their entire lives in a home.

Follow us on Instagram (the.farm.dogs) and Facebook (The Farm: Senior Dog Sanctuary)

Become a Patreon patron and make a monthly donation of \$1 or more

Donations can also be made via our Facebook page or Paypal

Email us with any questions at thefarmseniorsanctuary@gmail.com



How to read a cat's body language

Written by Allison Hunter-Frederick for Lakes Animal Friendship Society.
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Did you know that cats are talking to you every day with their eyes, ears, whiskers, and tail? Read on to learn the secret language of cats.

EYES

Wide-open eyes are good. Your cat is feeling friendly, curious, or excited. Half-closed eyes mean your cat trusts you enough to relax.

Slit eyes and narrowed pupils are bad. Your cat is feeling stressed, scared, or angry. Stay away!

Stares are the way that your cat shows a desire for control. In contrast, slow blinks are one way that your cat shows affection. If you receive one, return the love with a slow blink.

EARS

Forward ears are good. Your cat is feeling content and could also be inviting you to play.

Straight up ears and twitching ears are signs that your cat is on the alert and perhaps is on a mission. By keeping their ears straight up during play or while on the hunt, cats can hear what they need to make a great pounce.

Sideways and backwards ears are bad. If your cat's ears look like they're in "airplane mode," your cat is ready to "take off in flight." Your cat may be feeling anxious or ready to defend itself. Let your cat find a hiding space and regain its confidence.

WHISKERS

Whiskers to the side mean your cat is happy. If you see your cat with relaxed whiskers, use the opportunity for a petting session.

Fanned forward whiskers is a sign that your cat is on the prowl and is open to play. The cheek pads will also appear to puff up.

Pulled back whiskers are a sign of fear. The flattened whiskers are a defensive reaction that make your cat look smaller.

TAIL

High tails and curved tails are typically good. Your cat is in a friendly mood. A little twitch or a slight curve can mean your cat is actively inviting you to hang out or play.

Loose swishing tails typically means your cat is focused on an object. You might see this tail before your cat pounces on toys or food. In contrast, tight whipping tails indicate that your cat is aroused. Your cat might lash its tail during play, but it also might be saying STOP.

Tucked tails, lowered tails, and puffed tails are bad. Your cat will typically start out by crouching with its tail tucked to signal submission. A lowered tail conveys unhappiness, while a tail that's erect like a pipe cleaner means your cat feels backed into a corner, with no choice but to attack.

Wrapped tails sometimes mean that cats want to be alone or are trying to warm themselves. Most often, your cat will curve its tail around another pet or you to show friendship.

LAA volunteer shares the wealth

Not only is Heather Ferguson an animal lover, but she is also an LAA volunteer. She also just happens to be a real estate agent. Everyone knows how the housing market is these days and Heather wanted to find a way to share the wealth and help the animals along the way. She proposed that every time she sells a house, she will donate to LAA to spay or neuter a pet. Her "Welcome to Your New Home" gift to her new home owners includes information about LAA's spay and neuter program and lets them know that their home purchase has just helped to alter a local pet.

LAA would like to give Heather a big shout out and THANK YOU for this great gesture. Heather is helping to improve our community in more ways than one!

HEATHER FERGUSON

HOME
REAL ESTATE

(402) 499-6653



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.





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LINCOLN COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION



Until every pet has a home.

**ARNIE'S
PET FOOD
STORE**

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!