

Pet Talk

FALL 2023

LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org / 402.817.1168

Our mission

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

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors 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
(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

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

Spay/Neuter Milestone

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors is proud to announce that from 2010 until now, it has assisted with spaying and neutering a total of 4,147 animals. The total breaks down to 2107 dogs, 2026 cats, 13 rabbits and one rat.

From its conception fifteen years ago, the all-volunteer run non-profit has focused on addressing the root causes of animal homelessness in the Lancaster area. Two years later, LAA board members realized that one essential way to achieve its goal was to provide financial assistance to pet owners in the community to make it more feasible to get their family pets spayed and neutered.

LAA's Spay/Neuter Assistance Program began with a handful of veterinarians signing on to the program by agreeing to accept LAA's vouchers. Vouchers were issued according to how much the client was able to provide toward their pet's spay or neuter.

The program started small, with the board agreeing that the nonprofit wouldn't issue more vouchers than its funds would allow. By obtaining grants, hosting fundraiser events, and making donors aware of its programs, LAA has been able to consistently issue vouchers with rare exceptions.

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Thank you to our pet food donors this year!

LAA's income-based Pet Food Bank is totally donation driven. So that means that we can't do what we do without the generous support of our community, and we need to take this opportunity to show our gratitude and appreciation for EVERYONE'S help this year.

We want to give a special thanks to Instinct Pet Foods. Recently we received a very generous donation of over 13,000 pounds of high-quality dog and cat food from Instinct. This will go a long way to help us support the 400+ families that we help each year to feed their pets. Instinct is not a new donor to LAA's Pet Food Bank. They have been a long-time supporter of LAA and we appreciate them more than we can say.

Continued on page 2

 Nature's
Variety

Instinct



Thank you to our donors!

Ameritas
Andrew & Renee Benson
Arnie's Pet Food
Assurity Life Foundation
Audrey Schneider
Barbara Michael
Capital Humane Society
Carol Miller
Carol Raiter
Deb Defruiter
Diane Cottingham
Food Bank of Lincoln
Gary & Allison Petersen
Heather Ferguson
James Hewitt
John & Diane Huseman
Joyce Poindexter
Kayla Rapp
Larry Rinne
Lincoln Community Foundation
Long Dog Fat Cat
Nature's Variety
Norman West
Paula Einemann
Pet Central Station
Petco
Red Clover
Sam & Pat Boon
Sandra Coatney
Scheels
Sinda Dux
St Matthew's Episcopal Church
Target
Tom & Karen Bassett
Tomorrow's Veterinary Care
Tractor Supply Co.
Walmart
Woodmen of the World Lodge
No. 264-647

Donations in MEMORIAM

Jason Fiese

Continued: Spay/Neuter Milestone

Spaying and neutering reduces the risk of cancer in both males and females. It also curbs undesirable behaviors such as aggression and the insatiable desire to seek attention from the opposite sex. Just as important, according to animal welfare experts, spaying and neutering is one of the best ways to curb pet overpopulation.

This past year, not only LAA revamped its voucher program, it also began collaborating with Capital Humane Society and Nebraska No-Kill Canine Rescue. These collaborations will reduce the amount an

applicant will be required to pay out of pocket for the surgical procedure, which the organizations hope will increase the number of animals spayed or neutered in the community.

Pauline Balta, Vice President and Spay Neuter Assistance Program coordinator said, "Lincoln Animal Ambassadors is very proud, as a small all-volunteer nonprofit organization, to have prevented the number of unwanted litters of kittens and puppies we have in the 15 years of its existence."

Continued: Thank you to our pet food donors this year!

We added a few more donation sites around town this year and we need to give a HUGE thank you to each and every one of you that buys an item or two every time you stop at the grocery store or the pet food store and drop it in our donation barrel. Several Super Saver grocery stores allow us to have donation barrels, Arnie's Pet Food and Hy-Vee Stores even allowed us barrels in their stores for a short time. We've recently added a few new donation sites at Long Dog Fat Cat and Pet Central Station. You might not think that those couple of items you drop in the barrel helps that much, but you'd be surprised how quickly it adds up with lots of people contributing. Keep up the great support!

The LAA Pet Food Bank distributes around 4000 pounds of dry pet food a month, plus canned food, cat litter and other pet related items. LAA is grateful to receive donations from many corporate donors that have reached out and donated to LAA and the pet food bank this year, sometimes just at the time we were running low. So we want to extend our

appreciation to Arnie's Pet Food, Pet Central Station, Long Dog Fat Cat, TSC Stores, Target, Walmart, Food Bank of Lincoln, Petco North, Red Clover Market, Super Saver, Giving Realty, Heather Ferguson/Home Real Estate, Fetch Pet Emporium, Tomorrow's Veterinarian Care, Woodmen of the World Lodge No. 264, Scheels, Canine Consultants, Ameritas and Cause For Paws. We appreciate all of these donors because we cannot do what we do without each and every one of them. Look for our donation sites elsewhere in this newsletter.

LAA volunteers work together to unload a large donation of cat food from local pet food donor, Instinct.



Volunteer Spotlight: Kelly Richter

I was born and raised in Lincoln, NE. When I was little my parents lived out on an acreage just outside of town. I grew up with all different kinds of farm animals.

When we moved into town, even though there were no farm animals there, I was always trying to help animals that I would come across. My parents were not always keen on me bringing home anything I could find that was in need! I remember one time when I was about 12 years old I was riding my bike on the bike path by the Zoo (with all the tunnels under the main roads) I came across a group of kids that were throwing rocks at an injured pigeon and I immediately yelled at the kids and picked up that pigeon and took it home to try to care for it.

I have a bachelor's degree in human services and a masters degree in criminal justice, but most of my work was in human services working with people who were elderly or disabled. I don't think I ever had a time in my life where I was without a dog by my side. I am a huge dog person!

But I also love all types of animals. Over the years I've had birds, reptiles, and probably any animal you could think of.

A big part of my life is volunteering and trying to give back in some way and trying to encourage my three children to do the same. My children and I as a family would volunteer at many organizations. We volunteered at the city mission for many years serving dinners and helping with the cleanup. As the kids got older I tried to encourage them to volunteer for things that were important to them, so we found The Bike Kitchen which helped people who were in need of a bike for transportation or children who needed a bike. We volunteered at Hearts United for Animals walking and playing with the dogs who were looking for a forever home.

When my children, who share my passion for animals, were in their early teens we volunteered with Wildlife Rescue Team Inc which is a group who is dedicated to providing care for injured/ sick or orphaned wild animals. We rehabilitate them and release them back into the wild. I worked with almost every wildlife animal that we have in Nebraska.

We took in 4 baby raccoons one summer and raised them until they were old enough to be released back into the wild. It was an amazing experience for me and my kids!

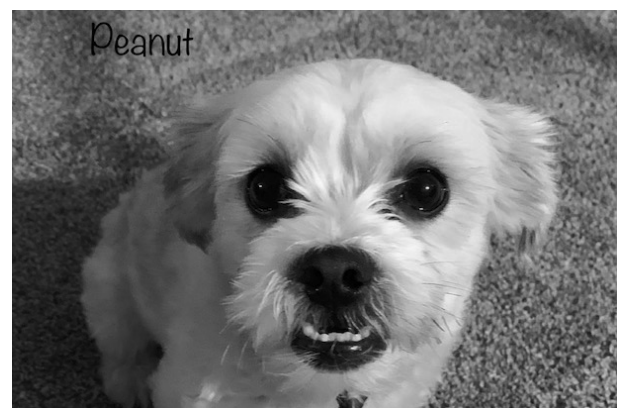
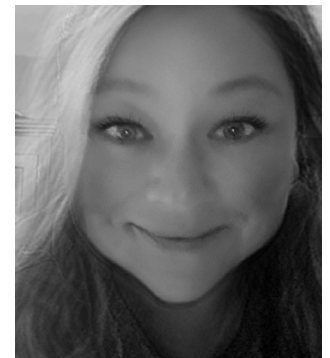
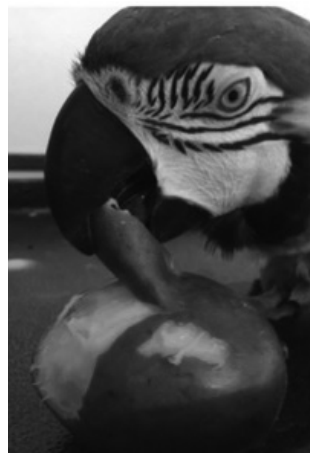
In 2010 I found this amazing organization who helped low-income families get help with spay and neutering their animals as well as helping them with food for their pets. At the time I was a single mother of three children and I was going to school full time and was in need of help. So I contacted Lincoln Animal Ambassadors and they were amazing and I was able to get some help from them to get food for my pets. Many years later I came back to Lincoln Animal Ambassadors and decided to volunteer and started helping with the phone lines and have been doing it ever since.

At this moment I have two dogs, both around three years old. Peanut is a Shitzu and Kota, a Jack Russell. I have a beautiful blue & gold macaw (extra large Parrot) who loves to scream at the top of her lungs when she's hungry, my neighbors or people walking by my house can hear her screaming! She sounds like an older woman who is screaming

for help, I have had many people call the police to do a home check because they think someone is screaming for assistance! Annie, my macaw is 16 years old. I also have a 100 lb tortoise, an African Sulcata Tortoise named Miss Biggins! I got her when she was five pounds and in 10 years she is now 100 pounds. My children hate her (they say) but I think it's only because she's too heavy for me to lift her and so I always need my children's help to lift her when she's being stubborn and refusing to come inside for the night.

I also am caring and rehabbing wildlife animals as well for Wildlife Rescue Team Inc. I currently have three wild injured birds, two baby squirrels and three baby possums as a licensed wildlife rehabber. As soon as they are able to live on their own I will release them all back into the wild.

If you could add one thing to the Lincoln Animal Ambassadors 'Wish List' what would it be? I wish LAA could provide Heartworm medication for cats and dogs, because it's costly for low-income people to purchase.



Spay/neuter numbers

Low Cost Spay/Neuter Program

4,148 total alterations
2,026 cats
2,108 dogs
13 rabbits
1 Fancy Rat

LAA Receives Grants

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors was the recent recipient of a grant for \$2000 from the Lincoln Community Foundation Open Door Grant program to be used for pet food and rent at their pet food bank. LCF Open Door Grants provide flexible operating and program grants to support compelling needs and opportunities to Lancaster County nonprofit partners.

LAA also received two community grants from two local Walmarts. \$1000 from the North 27th Street Walmart store and \$1000 from the South 27th Street Walmart store. Both grants are to be used for LAA's spay and neuter program. Walmart local community grants provide funding directly from Walmart and Sam's Club facilities to local non-profit organizations in the U.S.

"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.

Wine & Howl

SAVE THE DATE
June 9, 2024

Wishing you Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year

We're guessing that your animals have been a welcome source of joy and companionship throughout the year. We hope you can look back on 2023 and remember the joyous times you have spent with your pets during the year.

Thanks to you, LAA has been able to help low-income families enjoy their pets with our distributions at the pet food bank and helping them spay and neuter their pets.

As we look in to 2024, we need your help to continue our work. Here are simple ways you can help us with our mission.

Send an end of year donation to LAA to P.O. Box 67072, Lincoln, NE 68506 or donate on our website at www.lincolnanimalambassadors.org

Organize a pet food drive for LAA at

your work place or school. We will come and pick it up at the end. Contact LAA at (402) 816-1168 or e-mail us at info@lincolnanimalambassadors.org with questions on how to organize a pet food drive.

Purchase from our registry at Walmart's Registry for Good. The easiest way to donate to LAA's pet food bank. Walmart will deliver it to us for you!

Employer charity match program. If your employer does a charity match program, select LAA as your charity.

List LAA as a charitable beneficiary in your estate plan.

Again, WE APPRECIATE OUR COMMUNITY SO MUCH. Thank You for all of your support during 2023.

Walmart 
Registry for Good

Stuff LAA's stocking and shop Walmart Registry for Good

Shop our wish list at walmart.com/registry/registryforgood.

Remember LAA this holiday season while you're shopping online. One of the easiest ways to donate pet food and pet related items to LAA's Pet Food Bank is to order online at Walmart's Registry for Good and search for LAA as your selected charity. They will ship your selected items to LAA for you. How could that be any easier?!



Stuff the Truck Event at Super Saver

Super Saver Pine Lake was the scene on October 8th for LAA's Stuff the Truck event. From 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. LAA volunteers promoted the Pet Food Bank needs as customers came into the store. And those customers came through donating almost 700 pounds of dry pet food, 1,500 ounces of canned pet food, almost 50 pounds of pet treats, almost 300 pounds of cat litter. Plus other pet related products including \$350 in cash. It was a huge success! Thank you to Super Saver Store Manager Matt Kempston, but mostly to all who purchased pet food and donated it at the event. THANK YOU ALL!



WE NEED YOU!

Volunteer and prevent homeless animals

A great project for your organization: Host a pet food drive!

When people are out of work and struggling to feed their families, pets are often one of the first things to be impacted when it comes to trimming the budget. After all, pet food can be expensive. That is why pet food drives are not only a wonderful idea, but also a community necessity for LAA. Our pet food bank is stocked with donated food and pet items (new and gently used). You or your organization, school class or club can help in a big way by hosting a pet food drive. Or ask for pet food and pet items for birthday or holiday gifts. It's a great community service and creates many opportunities for children and adults to give back!

For those interested in launching a pet food drive, here are a few ideas on how to have a successful campaign.

Get your ducks in a row. When is it starting? When is it ending? What are your goals? One day event or several weeks? Those are very important questions that, once you are able to answer them, will help your drive run smoothly.

Organize your materials. How many collection bins will you have and where will you place them? Arrange for food pick-up or delivery and decide how often or how many trips you'll need to take. How will you promote your food drive? Create your flyers or promotional materials.

Decide your collection strategy. One-day events held in prominent locations with colorful signage and manned by enthusiastic volunteers are one approach. Retailers that sell pet food or provide pet services are often eager to host an event, a place where people can easily purchase food to donate will increase collections. On the other hand, an ongoing effort, over several days or weeks, with un-manned collection bins available provides flexibility and allows you to collect food for a longer period of time.

Now that you have a plan, start spreading the word! Put up posters and flyers, use social media, etc. Also, let us know what you are doing for us! We can help you promote it on social media! Take pictures at your event, we'd love to use them to celebrate your success and generosity in our next newsletter!

Wrap it up. Once your pet food drive is finished, be sure to thank people! People love helping good causes, but they also need to know their contributions are appreciated and helping in the community. Contact LAA to arrange for a pickup of your food drive donations.

Questions? Contact us and we can help you with your planning strategies! We love our supporters and would love to be involved!



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



LINCOLN
animal
AMBASSADORS

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LINCOLN COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

Walmart * **HOME**
REAL ESTATE

Nature's Variety **Instinct** nature's **LOGIC**

Employee Owned **SUPERSAVER** Best Friends **SAVE THEM ALL**

HyVee **Eagle**
PRINTING & SIGN

TSC TRACTOR SUPPLY CO. **ARNIE'S PET FOOD STORE**



BISSELL PET FOUNDATION™
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 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!

