

# Pet Talk

**SUMMER 2018**

[LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org](http://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](http://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 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.*

## Lincoln Animal Ambassadors celebrates 10 years

Like many organizations, our story began with a meeting of like-minded individuals who wanted to reduce the number of animals being killed in local shelters. A community of people who wanted to change a terrible outcome for the better. Time, research and a whole lot of dedication to the cause has resulted in programs that directly reduce animal homelessness. The volunteers of the organization have changed—but the spirit of saving lives remains the same.

As we approach the 10 year mark and reflect back on this story of saving lives, we want to acknowledge the enormous support we've received from the community over the years. The heart of a community based non-profit is the local donors and volunteers who give so much to make these programs a success! Your support and time has made an impact on the community and together we should be so proud of these accomplishments! You've helped thousands of people and animals and we know they are so very grateful.

As we look towards the future,

we have never been more filled with hope. The Pet Food Bank has found an amazing home with a partnership at the Center For People in Need. Just a year ago, they allowed us to occupy a part of their warehouse and it has given us an opportunity to help so many more people. At the time when we were facing the difficult decision of ending the program because we could not find an affordable space to house it, it was like a message from the universe that we just couldn't call it quits! Thousands of lives thank their team and all the people who work to help all of these animals and people! Know they would say "Thank You" if they could talk to you!

We would be remiss if we forgot to thank the veterinarians who have participated in our spay/neuter program. They are quickly approaching the mark of 3,000 total operations completed! Without their participation, this program is impossible—so please join me in thanking all of them who have donated their time and clinics to prevent millions of puppies and kittens!

*Continued on page 4*

**Cause for Paws**  **Boutique for Cheap**

2445 S. 48th Street

This "boutique for cheap" turns your donations and purchases into cash for animal charities, including LAA's low-cost spay/neuter program.

[CauseForPawsLincoln.org](http://CauseForPawsLincoln.org)



# by the numbers

## Low Cost Spay/Neuter Program

2,820 total animals  
1,425 dogs  
1,385 cats  
10 rabbits

## Food Bank Numbers

**Dry food**  
19,421 lbs. so far in 2018  
Approximately 3,237 lbs. a month  
(about a 800 lb. increase)  
Since inception: 406,796 lbs.

**Canned food**  
3,918 cans so far in 2018  
Approximately 653 cans a month  
(about a 250 can increase)  
Since inception: 107,390 cans

**Litter**  
3,932 lbs.  
Approximately 655 lbs. a month  
(about a 145 lb. increase)  
Since inception: 64,717 lbs.

**Number of families helped in 2018 (some numerous times):**  
225

## 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](http://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 Organization: Greater Lincoln Obedience Club

It's graduation night. Virginia and her sister brought a tiny mortarboard that should just fit the top of Centi's head. Centi, short for Centenario (Centennial in English) is a 15 week old American Pit Bull Terrier. He was just nine weeks old when he started school at the Greater Lincoln Obedience Club. He's at the top of his class, but then, so are his classmates. Their instructor made sure of it.

Greater Lincoln Obedience Club (GLOC) has been offering dog obedience classes since the mid-1960s. They also promote dog sports of all kinds. From humble beginnings, teaching classes in parks and the National Guard Armory when the club had no resources, they now are renting a facility of about 12,000 square feet near the corner of North 56th Street and Cornhusker Highway. From teaching the occasional obedience class in the 1970s, GLOC now teaches classes in agility, flyball, Treibball, scentwork, barn hunt and others. Classes are offered through Southeast Community College to the general public but many more opportunities are available to club members.

"I never knew dog training could be so fun," Virginia said with a smile. "We're going to miss coming here every Tuesday. And Centi will miss his buddy."

Centi's buddy Bruce the

Beagle is the star of the class. This is a surprise considering Beagles aren't really known for being obedience prodigies. But the way GLOC classes are taught, using positive reinforcement, encouragement, and motivation, makes it easy for dogs of all breeds, backgrounds and mixes to succeed. Even older dogs, like Layla the 12 year old rescue Corgi, have a place in class.

GLOC also offers growth opportunities for humans as well. Most members volunteer to help out with club events like agility and obedience trials but some choose to assist with classes and, eventually, start teaching classes as well. While not a formal apprenticeship, members have to assist with multiple classes then co-teach with an experienced instructor before they are allowed to teach on their own.

While each class has its own learning goals, the overarching goal for every class, event or activity at GLOC is to improve the human-canine bond. As Roger Caras once said, "Dogs are not our whole life but they make our lives whole." Training your canine friend with positive methods with caring instructors and assistants at Greater

Lincoln Obedience Club can make both your lives whole.



[GLOCdogs.org](http://GLOCdogs.org)  
402.464.6529



## Volunteer Spotlight: Jane Nelson

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

Both of my daughters got involved in rescue which led to our first rescue adoption. I think no matter what animal group you are involved with, you will certainly get to know the great work that the Lincoln Animal Ambassadors organization does in the community.

### Tell us a little bit about yourself.

My husband and I moved to Lincoln in 1991. He was with the Nebraska State Patrol and I needed to look for a job. I've held many positions from managing the Baskin Robbins store to auditing tax returns for the Department of Revenue and now owning our own business. Along the way we became involved in beekeeping. We bottle honey for most of the grocery stores in Lincoln and some in Omaha. We order package bees for our customers in the spring and carry a full line of beekeeping equipment for them. My interests lie in needlework and to fill a void in the community I started selling supplies for cross stitch, tatting and other fiber related arts. There are several groups that hold their monthly meetings at our shop.

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

My main focus has been the Spay-Ghetti & No Balls Dinner held each year in March. My son and one of my daughters have a lot of experience in cheffing so we have a good time with this event. And a terrific dessert auction tops off the evening.

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

Fun! Fun! Fun! And meeting new people.

### Do you do other volunteer work in Lincoln?

With our business being a full-time plus gig, we do what we can. And we have five grandchildren that keep us pretty busy.

### What would you recommend to anyone looking to volunteer for Lincoln Animal Ambassadors?

If you are looking for something fun to do that is easy to fit into your schedule, we have phone calling, helping with the pet food bank and many more opportunities to get involved.

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

More volunteers are always necessary. The more we have, the more we are able to do.

### LAA needs volunteers like you!

LAA needs volunteers like you! If you have ever considered volunteering for a worthy cause, we would love to talk to you. You can help pets and their owners by contacting us at [info@lincolnanimalambassadors.org](mailto:info@lincolnanimalambassadors.org) or calling 402.817.1168.



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## Donate while you shop!

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.



# Calendar of events

## Ivanna Cone Fundraiser

**August 28 - percentage of total sales will be donated to LAA**

Signature LAA ice cream flavor at Ivanna Cone will be available all month long.  
701 P Street

## Annual Dog Bowl

**September 2, 5-9 p.m.**

Pinewood Bowl  
Annual fundraiser for Friends of the Dog Park.

## Laugh Your Tails Off Comedy Night

**September 19, 7:30 p.m.**

Rococo Theatre  
Fundraiser for Nebraska No Kill Canine Rescue, featuring comedian, Pete Lee, from *Last Comic Standing* and *The Tonight Show*. Tickets available at [RococoTheatre.com](http://RococoTheatre.com).

## Streets Alive

**September 23**

Belmont Area

## Christ United Methodist Church Blessing of the Animals

**September 30**

4530 A Street

## Project Homeless Connect

**October 16**

Haymarket

## Meow & Chow

**October 27, 5-9 p.m.**

Center for People in Need  
Annual fundraiser with The Cat House.

# Thank you, Lincoln!

## Give To Lincoln Day

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors (LAA) would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our Give To Lincoln Day donors for their generous support during Give To Lincoln Day this year.

As a non-profit 501(c)(3) volunteer-driven organization, we rely on donations, private grants and fundraisers like this to continue our important work in the community. All proceeds from this fundraiser, including our portion of the Lincoln Community Foundation match grant, will go directly toward our low-cost spay and neuter program and our income-based pet food bank.

We are humbled and encouraged by the amount of community support for our mission and daily efforts to help "at risk" companion animals in this area.

## Continued: Celebrating 10 years

Even though we've seen them come and go, their impact will resonate in our local community for a very long time to come. We are always looking for new veterinary clinics to help us expand the program, so please make sure you mention us when you visit your veterinary office. We want them to know that our supporters appreciate them as well!

The future looks so much brighter because of your support, even though there always seems to be another dog or cat that needs a home or at risk of losing the home they have. That is the challenge of rescue and is probably why volunteer burnout is a truth for all rescue organizations. It's impossible to fight the battle forever! If you've volunteered in the past and would like to sign back up - please reach out and let us know. If you know someone who is looking to fight the good fight for a bit—please tell them about us! It is so much easier when you know someone is going to be right behind you to help the fight along! If you can't volunteer, remember that your donation changes someone's life! If you can't donate, just spread the word. When you share our message and tell your friends about the impact of prevention, you make a difference in the lives of thousands of animals near and far!



## Community Cones supports LAA in August with new 'Animal Chow' flavor ice cream

Plan on having LOTS of delicious locally made ice cream in August this year! As part of its community outreach, Ivanna Cone will create a new ice-cream flavor just for Lincoln Animal Ambassadors: Animal Chow! This brand new flavor features a powdered sugar ice cream with birthday cake puppy chow (Chex cereal coated in white chocolate, white-cake mix, and sprinkles). The first batch will be available Friday, August 3rd. LAA will receive a percentage of the proceeds from all Animal Chow cones sold all month long. On August 28th, Ivanna Cone will donate a percentage of everything sold that day to LAA.

## Dairy Queen supports LAA

On July 17 a portion of all sales at the Dairy Queen on N. 48th street were donated to LAA. Thank you to everyone who enjoyed a blizzard and supported LAA! Thank you as well to the Dairy Queen team for their support!





# Fix Me Meow!

Earlier this year, LAA received a grant from the Bissell Pet Foundation to bring back the very successful Fix Me Meow Project, where we spay/neuter 100 owned cats for just \$25 each!

We've received an enormous number of requests for these vouchers and are issuing them, on a first come/first serve basis, as fast as we can.

Grants that target specific projects like this are particularly critical as they help us stretch donations for maximum outcomes.

Thank you to Bissell for making this program possible and helping to spay/neuter more than 100 cats in just 2 months!



## What's hot at Lincoln Animal Control

*By Steve Beal,  
Manager of Lincoln Animal Control*

I want to thank Lincoln Animal Ambassadors for their invitation to write a short story about some of the many good things going on with Lincoln pet owners and Animal Control. My name is Steve Beal and I am the Manager of Lincoln Animal Control. Although I've worked at the Lincoln Lancaster County Health Department nearly 40 years it wasn't until about 10 years ago that I took over as manager of Animal Control. I thought I knew a lot about pets and pet owners, however I quickly found out that I didn't know as much as I thought I did!

Lincoln has over 63,000 licensed dogs and cats. Approximately 87% of all our licensed dogs are spayed and/or neutered. The percentage is even higher for cats at 97%. Income eligible pet owners can get a grant from Lincoln Animal Control to get their pet altered at a local veterinarian. We are thankful for organizations like Lincoln Animal Ambassadors that have implemented very successful spay/neuter programs and have contributed to a healthy and more manageable pet population.

Hot and humid days have become the standard fare for our weather. It's been an especially hot summer and which allows for increases certain types of animal control issues.

### **Animals left in vehicles.**

Unfortunately, Animal Control gets several calls each week of people leaving their pets in their vehicles while they go into a store. These are priority calls, however time is of the essence and a quick response is needed. Nebraska has been looking at passing a state statute that would give immunity to citizens that rescue animal trapped in hot vehicles. This has not yet

passed.

Spread the word and share Lincoln Animal Control's PSA video:  
<https://youtu.be/n30-4Wkk50I>

### **Bats, bats and more bats!**

As of July 10, 2018, Animal Control has tested 106 bats for rabies. Since January 1, 2018 we have had 322 bat calls and we are not even in the peak of the season. Of the 106 bats tested 6 were positive for rabies. High risk exposures can happen to both humans and animals. Bats are also

some very beneficial mammals that eat thousands of mosquitoes.



### **Dogs running at large.**

Make sure your pets have their licenses on their collar. If an Animal Control officer finds a tag on a lost or stray pet they will call the owner and arrange for your pet to get a free ride home. Lincoln does not have a cat leash law; but your outdoor cat is much more likely to make it home if they have a collar with their current license tag.

We also see an increase in the number of calls concerning animal bites and questions regarding wildlife; especially foxes, raccoons, opossums and squirrels.

Wishing you and your pets a safe and healthy summer!

# Thank you to our recent donors!

Allison Hunter-Frederick  
Andrew & Renee Benson  
Anne Cech  
Barbara Nieveen  
Becca DeWitt  
Beverly Anderson  
Brady Rivers  
Bridget Anderson  
Burke Casari  
Carol Klaus  
Catherine Corbet  
Catherine Shade  
Cathy & Chris Sayre  
Charles & Lela Sayward  
Christine Neukirch  
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Gerise Herndon  
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Jami Nelson  
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Karen Hoffman  
Karl Skinner  
Katherine Haskins  
Kathy Northrop  
Kayla Rapp  
Larissa Sazama  
Linda & Dave Uhrich  
Mary Douglas  
Mary Hewitt  
Mary Jo Dykes  
Mary Yager



## Wine & Howl raises \$6,000!

It was a beautiful day at Deer Springs Winery for the 10th annual Wine & Howl event. Lovely weather and great wine brought out the crowd to enjoy visiting with our vendors and enjoying great wine, music and food. Thank you to all the people and dogs who came out to enjoy the event! We'd also like to thank Johnny Johnson and OutLoud for performing at the event. The crowd loved the music and wine in the sunshine!

### Special thank to our Wine & Howl vendors

Blue River Pet Rescue  
Pug Partners of Nebraska  
Lost Pets of Lancaster County  
Smarty Dog Training  
T-Square Movers  
Bailing Out Benji  
Golden Retriever Rescue in Nebraska  
Stubbs Chiropractic, LLC  
Neukirch Glasswerks  
Friends of the Dog Parks, Inc.  
Second Chance Pups

Sassy Stylings Home Boutique  
Nebraska No Kill Canine Rescue  
Hy-Vee Catering  
All Hounds on Deck Rescue  
Family Pet Project  
Morgan's Munchies  
Hearts United For Animals  
Revolution Rescue  
R.u.F.F. Rescue, Inc.  
Sam's Club  
Nature's Logic



# Long live the ratties!

By Misty Christo

Rats live for only a short time by our standards. This means that when we take rats into our homes and hearts, we will grieve. Frequently. As someone who talks about rats every chance I get, I've heard "I can't do rats, they don't live long enough and I can't handle the heartbreak" numerous times. However, when we look at their life spans from their perspective, we see that the 2-3 years they each grace this world is indeed a lifetime of experiences. We should think of those years in terms of quality, not quantity.

What does it mean for a rat to have a good quality of life? Good food, good company, adequate space, and a healthy lifestyle.

In terms of food, rats in my care either at home or in the shelter get Oxbow brand. The adult variety is triangular and thin, fitting perfectly in little ratty hands. Rats can stack several of them in their mouth to carry off for hoarding purposes. My late Jesse Pinkman (who was a hairless guy) would stuff as many as he could in his mouth, stash them in one of his hidey houses, and come back for more. This food is also nutritionally complete—unlike homemade or store-bought mixes. There are plenty of lists of fresh foods that are safe for rats, but among those they should never eat are citrus fruits, mangoes, nutmeg, raw beans, and green potatoes. Generally, these foods contain chemicals that are extremely toxic to rats. Of course, rats need access to fresh water always.

When it comes to enclosures, the bigger the better! Rats need lots of horizontal space and at least two levels. I recommend an enclosure where they can get at least a couple of feet off the ground because in my experience they love to spend most of their time at the highest point. Rat enclosures should have walls made of wire or mesh for ventilation as well as a solid floor. Appropriate spacing between bars depends on the age and size of the rats. Outfit their enclosures with hammocks and hide-aways (plastic or wood), boxes and baskets. Rats love clutter. If you plan to regularly keep rats, I suggest you invest in a Single or Double Critter Nation. It's the best in commercially available ratty accommodations!

Rats need other rats, and rats need you. It's that simple. You should always keep rats in pairs at minimum, and interact with



them daily.

In law school, I would let my guys Tarim and Beezh run around my study room, and every so often they'd

stop their scampering to come get some attention. Make sure there's nothing in the area that they can damage or that can damage them—this includes keeping other pets out of the room. I've had some cats that steer clear of my rats and some cats who have been too interested in them for my comfort. Do not take chances.

Lastly, rats need exercise and vet care. They need out of the cage time for at least an hour every day. Secure a room or a space in a room and let them play! As I mentioned earlier with my study buddy rats, you want to make sure the area is safe for them and keep an eye on what they're chewing or peeing on. Like any other animal, rats need veterinary care as well. Common health issues in rats include respiratory infections and tumors. Research exotic animal vets in your area, and join some online groups where people share knowledge of rat home health care.

Those are the basics! Healthy grub, environmental enrichment, vet care—the kind of things we should give any companion animal in our care. That's how to pack as much living as possible into rats' lives.

In the end, the important thing is that we give our rats all they need to feel loved and stay healthy. When I first meet a rat, the fact that they will only be with me a relatively short time doesn't even enter my mind. Instead, I see the life in them—a whole lifetime. I see the affection, the curiosity, the beady little eyes looking back at me. When I first held my first rat Chibi in my hands, I thought about the life I was going to give him. How he would dine on Oxbow and peas and whole wheat cous cous. How he would have hammocks and boxes and ledges for comfort and enrichment. He had all that. And when I said goodbye to him, I knew that even if he had lived 15 years it would not have been long enough for me. But it was a whole lifetime to him.

# Thank you to our recent donors!

Melissa Money-Beecher  
Misty Engelmeyer  
Mona Podany  
Nancy Shelley  
Pam Starr  
Rebecca Schreiner  
Ruthann Rivers  
Sally Butler  
Sandy Coatney  
Scott Chaffin  
Shannon Poppe  
Shari Bitney  
Sharon Shelley  
Sinda Dux  
Stephanie Scheffler  
Steven Swanson  
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Superior Vet Care  
Target  
The Bissell Pet Foundation  
The Rieke Family Trust  
WalMart

## Donations in memoriam

In memory of our beloved black lab (Zef)  
In memory of LeRoy Shrauger  
In memory of Pepper & Buddy Baumgardner  
In memory of Winnie Beed  
In memory of Sandy Runge  
In memory of Joey Clancy  
In memory of Tigger Hughes  
In memory of Ernie and Stella  
In memory of our cats Bailey and Fauchie



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# 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!