

Pet Talk

FALL 2019

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 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.

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

Project Connect Lincoln 2019: LAA helps provide animal care to Lincoln's homeless

Project Connect Lincoln (formerly Project Homeless Connect) is a one-day, one-stop event where individuals and families who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness are able to receive a wide variety of immediate, on-site services and support for unmet needs. The annual event takes

place at the Pinnacle Bank Arena.

Project Connect Lincoln 2019 provided services to a record 90 animals... vaccinations, microchips, wellness checks, light grooming, nail trims, and lots of love and attention were given.

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors participated for the eighth year in the Lincoln Homeless Coalition's Project Connect Lincoln. For the past five years the Project has provided an Animal Care Area for event guests' pets.

In 2015, the first year the Animal Care Area was provided, about

15 cats and dogs were provided wellness checks, administered vaccinations by a veterinarian, and each pet received free animal licenses from Animal Control. Years 2016, 2017, and 2018 saw the number of participating pets grow to 60 pets in 2018. The varieties of pets grew from cats and dogs only to include ferrets, parrots and rabbits.

Project Connect Lincoln 2019 provided services to a record 90 animals. Free services provided to each animal included a full round of vaccinations, microchips, wellness check, light grooming, nail trims, and lots of love and attention from the

volunteers fortunate enough to be working in the Animal Care Area. Additionally, vouchers for animal licenses were provided to those needing them.

Lincoln Animal Ambassadors serves each year on the Project Connect Lincoln's Animal Care Area planning committee, and provides leashes, collars, harnesses, water bowls, and most importantly, lots of treats for attending pets. Guests were given information on how to access LAA's Pet Food Bank, and information for low cost spay/neuter vouchers was collected for 20 cats and dogs.

Sadie Dog Fund made their medical care assistance program available to any dog who was found to need major medical care. One little dog was found to have mammary tumors and severe dental disease, as well as needed to be spayed so was referred to a local veterinary clinic with Sadie Dog Fund's assistance.

Thank you to local veterinarian clinics; Cotner Pet Care, Superior Vet Care, Clock Tower Animal Clinic, South Ridge Animal Clinic, and ISU/UNL Coop Vet Med Education Program for providing veterinarians and vet techs for the day. Thank you to Hearts United for Animals for providing the crates allowing pet owners to leave their pets while they took advantage of services inside the arena. Thank you to Zoetis, South Ridge Animal Clinic, Petco for providing vaccinations and other medications used during the day.

See pictures from the event on page 4.

by the numbers

Low Cost Spay/Neuter Program 2019 numbers to far

3,153 total animals

1593 dogs

1546 cats

10 bunnies

Food Bank 2019 numbers so far

Dry food

33,068 lbs.

Approximately 3,307 lbs. a month

Since inception: 461,232 lbs.

Canned food

6,869 cans

Approximately 687 cans a month

Since inception: 117,477 cans

Litter

7,044 lbs.

Approximately 704 lbs. a month

Since inception: 75,981 lbs.

Number of families helped in 2019 (many numerous times throughout the year): 285

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: Taysia Blue Rescue

"There's this dog." Those were the words that Jackie Roach said to her husband, Mike, after a volunteer shift at the local shelter. Way in the back, among the rows and rows of kennels and hundreds of dogs, was a scruffy bi-eyed husky with a funny overbite that stopped Jackie in her tracks. This little husky was not going to make it out of the shelter alive, she was a senior dog with some unknown medical concerns and her fate was noted in red sharpie, "PTS".

Not today.

Jackie wasn't sure that her husband would agree to adding another husky to their family, but she knew that this dog needed another chance. Jackie and Mike named this dog, Taysia Blue. Taysia wasn't easy, she had behavior and medical issues that challenged the couple, but they were firm in their commitment to her. Taysia gave them five years of love and laughter. Starting a rescue in her honor was a way to pay it back to Taysia and to pay it forward to other huskies in need.

Taysia Blue Rescue began in 2010 with very naïve assumptions, a goal of saving eight to ten dogs per year in Omaha with two or three foster volunteers; what they hadn't anticipated was the need beyond the city limits. 47 were saved that first year.

This year through September, Taysia Blue Rescue has already saved over 200 dogs from area shelters and estimate that they will end the year with nearly 250 saved lives. This is a significant increase over last year and the requests from owners and shelters to take in a Husky or Malamute continue to mount. As of September, Taysia Blue Rescue had received over 325 requests for help. Each request is read and considered, but with limited foster homes, each with specific requirements and ability, they are not able to help them all.

Some people will point to the television show, Game of Thrones, for the increased demand for this challenging breed and the high relinquishment rates.

There is no data to support the cause, but it appears that the number of Huskies and Malamutes showing up in shelters is on the rise. The number of animals entering shelters, broken out by breed, is not information that is tracked or readily available. Jackie began monitoring the percentage of Huskies and Malamutes to the overall number of dogs on Petfinder each year. Taysia Blue Rescue recognizes that this is point-in-time information, but the numbers show that there has been a 55% increase in Husky and Malamute shelter population over the last six years.

Huskies and Malamutes are beautiful, but they are not for everyone. Huskies and Malamutes can be challenging breeds to own. They have a high prey drive and are often not safe to live with cats or other small animals, they have very high energy and need lots of physical exercise. They get bored easily and will start their own DIY projects if they don't get enough mental stimulation. They are amazing climbers, jumpers and diggers which make them experts in escaping. They were bred to run to the horizon and not look back which makes them frequent flyers on lost and found sites and in shelters. Did we mention that they shed? A lot. For all their antics and shenanigans, they are the breed of choice for many. Huskies do well in packs (they love their dog friends) so most husky owners will have more than one, Malamutes on the other hand, typically prefer a close relationship with their human and aren't fond of sharing with other dogs.

Continued on page 7.



Pictured: Two dogs available for adoption.

Volunteer Spotlight: **Mary Yager**

Where did you first learn about Lincoln Animal Ambassadors?

I first learned about LAA a few years ago when googling to find out who in Lincoln was sponsoring and promoting a spay/neuter program. I was glad to see the low-cost vouchers LAA was providing and also impressed with the pet food bank. Food banks were very familiar but I had never heard of a pet food bank before. I began donating food and money when I could to support the good work. Finally, I made the decision to find the time to volunteer too!

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I've had a companion dog since I was in third grade. I trained my dog as a 4-H project when I was a little older. I married a man who likes dogs as much as I do and three months later had a new puppy for Christmas. Not to long after that I found myself co-owner of a dog grooming and training business and almost before I knew it this city girl was on an acreage and was helping run a boarding business. It was a twenty year animal whirlwind! We've since closed the business but still live in the country with three dogs and one cat.

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

I am currently helping LAA as a volunteer grant writer, which lets me use some of my skills and talents on behalf of the mission to end animal homelessness in Lincoln and Lancaster County.



What do you find rewarding in your volunteer activities?

It's wonderful to volunteer on behalf of animals and my fellow volunteers are great to work with.

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

The top thing on my wish list for Lincoln Animal Ambassadors is that a couple of grant requests come through before the end of the year. That would feel really good!

LAA needs volunteers like you!

See page 4 for our immediate volunteer needs. 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 or calling 402.817.1168.

Calendar of events

I Love My Dog Expo

February 2020

Lancaster Event Center
Annual Domesti-PUPS Fun-Raiser!

Spayghetti & No-Balls Dinner

March 2020

Unitarian Church

Wine & Howl

June 13, 2020

Deer Springs Winery

Meow & Chow

October 2020

Center for People in Need



Thank you all so much for all you do for all of us. It improves the quality of life in a way so magnificent it is priceless.

Thank you.

Linda, Pet Food Bank recipient

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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.



Thank you to our recent donors!

Brittne Morris
 Capital Humane Society
 Christine Neukirch
 Cindy Frye
 Connie Beckman
 Dee Erb
 Diane Cottingham
 Food Bank of Lincoln
 Gayle Sutter
 Heather Crockett
 Janine Rodgers
 Jeanie Imler
 John & Diane Huseman
 Jonna Conlon
 Karl Skinner
 Katie Brown
 Larry Rinne
 Linda Gavin
 Mary Douglas
 Mike and Vicki Valaika
 Mitzi A Graham
 Morans Liquor Works, LLC
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 Patricia Zeleski
 Pauline Balta
 Pet Central Station
 Petco - North
 Petco - South
 Purina Animal Nutrition LLC
 Reuben & Loretta Rieke
 Sarah Gilmour
 Steven & Marisue Wagner
 Target
 Terri Kruse Wheeler
 Walmart

In memoriam

In Memory of Dog Nino
 In Memory of Dog Jackson
 In Memory of Dog Millie
 In Memory of Dog Draven
 Happy Birthday to Dick Flanigan!

LAA Volunteer needs

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. These are our current openings:

Spay/Neuter Interviewer

These interviews can be done in the comfort of your own home, using your own telephone and the hours are flexible. Calls will be assigned to you to return in a reasonable period of time. Having access to a computer with an internet connection is necessary to communicate with other LAA volunteers via e-mail. Training is provided. You can set the amount of time you would like to give.

Events Team

We are in need of volunteers to work on the events team to put on our three large fundraisers each year. If are creative and

like to plan events, call for donations needed for the same, decorating, coordinating volunteer jobs, and working with a team, we would love to hear from you!

Tabling Events

This volunteer position requires the volunteer to attend shows, fairs, and expos. The volunteer will promote LAA and its programs through interaction with show attendees. We have brochures and other printed material available for distribution. Hours vary and usually consist of a shift during the event.

Other Volunteer Opportunities

- Volunteers with fundraising experience.
- Volunteers willing to contact companies to ask for donations for the Food Bank.
- Self motivated and creative volunteers to promote and supervise pet food/litter drives with organizations, companies and schools in the community.

Project Connect Lincoln 2019 in pictures



Over \$7,000 raised at Meow & Chow

Written by Allison Hunter-Frederick

Over \$7,000 was raised by Lincoln Animal Ambassador and The Cat House at their tenth annual Meow and Chow. The fundraiser took place on the evening of October 19 at the Center for People in Need.

LAA and TCH are grateful to the numerous businesses and individuals that donated food and prizes. Attendees dined on a selection of eighteen soups along with several breads and desserts from almost 50 restaurants and chefs. More than 50 bingo and 40 raffle prizes were won.

Appreciation from LAA and TCH goes to Nature's Variety for once again sponsoring the fundraiser, and to various media outlets for promotion including KLKN, KOLN and KZUM. Also invaluable were

the approximately 60 volunteers working behind the scenes.

150 diners attended the event, with four to eight diners per table. The large room was decorated with Halloween-themed balloon bouquets and the numerous tables were decorated with black tablecloths and Halloween-themed stickers. In addition, a list of available soups and an illustrated sheet of Bingo games were placed on each table.

After the meal, TCH volunteer Gene Gillam served as bingo caller, with Amber Nieman as his assistant. The evening culminated in a raffle that featured a \$475 Brahmin leather purse and wallet set, a \$250 Target gift card, and a \$125 Visa gift card.

Thank you to our Meow & Chow donors and sponsors!



LOVE YOUR PAWS

pet care with
the personal touch



- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| A Novel Idea Bookstore | La Paz |
| Jess Albertz | Le Quartier |
| Pauline Balta | Sara Laney |
| Kyndall Bedell | Jeanné Lillich |
| Billy's | Kate Manuel |
| Bimbo Bakery | McAlister's Deli |
| Keli Blackstock | Suzie Meierdierks |
| Braeda | Modafino Salon |
| Katie Brown | Jane Nelson |
| Butterfly Bakery | Amber Nieman |
| Cathy Cecava | June Niemann |
| Church Pie Ladies | Normandy |
| Cookie Company | Open Harvest |
| Cornhusker Marriott | Patty's Pub |
| Jennifer Damon | Deb Pearson |
| Don & Millies | Piedmont Bistro |
| Mary Douglas | Brady Rivers |
| Eileen's | Ardyth Rost |
| Heather Ferguson | Runza |
| Amy Gilchrist | Sasha Russell |
| Gene Gillam | Karrie Sanderson |
| Blake Gilmore | Scratch |
| Mitzi Graham | Wayne & April Skoda |
| Granite City | Clancy Smith |
| Karen Hardesty | The Still |
| Cindy Heiter | Super Saver |
| Joyce Howe | Tico's |
| Allison Hunter-Frederick | Alma Vlasak |
| Hy-Vee | Whole Foods |
| JML Jewelry Appraisals | Laura Wong |
| Cheryl Johnson | Kellie Wulf |
| Suzanne Kometcher | Mary Yager |
| | Megan Yank, Realtor |



Thank you SO much for the wonderful voucher for Holley to get spayed! That was so kind of you and you have a great organization! Thanks!

Jennifer, Low Cost Spay/Neuter Program recipient

Ameritas employees hold pet food drive for LAA

Jamie Bruder and Donna Kavanagh, Ameritas employees and LAA volunteers, collect the pet related items and food donated in September and October during the Ameritas pet food drive.

LAA would like to thank the employees of Ameritas at both locations for helping out our pet food bank. These kind of events help LAA continue to help at risk pets, and their people, in our community.



Wonderful service & very friendly!

Arlene, Pet Food Bank recipient



Help given us—food, treats—helped us and our pets.

Thank You!

Jennifer, Pet Food Bank recipient

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

With more people 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.

LAA's 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 gifts at your Birthday party? 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 – Collection bins – how many locations will you have? Arrange for food pick-up or delivery – When? How often? 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.

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

info@LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org
or 402.817.1168

Dog Park in the Beer Garden—Good Beer for a Good Cause



We want to shout out a HUGE thank you to Moran's Liquor Works for hosting "Dog Park in the Beer Garden—Good

Beer for a Good Cause" for Lincoln Animal Ambassadors on July 20th. And we would like to also thank all of you who came out to support LAA on that HOT day. There were very few dogs, and we are so glad that most of you made the good decision to leave Fido at home that day because of the heat! And those dogs who did attend were allowed into the cool air!

We cannot thank you all enough!



Your donations make a huge impact on animal homelessness

Numbers make everything sound more official. Let's take a look at some of the digits LAA has seen over the past years.

3,153

The total number of dogs, cats, and occasional rabbit that LAA has helped spay or neuter since our Low-Cost Spay/Neuter voucher program began in 2010.

116

The number of vouchers sent to Lincoln dog owners during the "Fix Em for \$50" campaign in early 2019.

100

The number of vouchers sent to Lincoln dog and cat owners during the "Fix Em for \$50" and the "Fix Me Meow" campaigns in 2018 & 2019.

100%

The percentage of our organization that is supported by donations and volunteers.

Not to toot our own horn, but these numbers are better than we ever could have imagined over 11 years ago. That's a lot of unwanted litters prevented, a lot of pet parents helped, and a lot of shelter animals who have a better chance of being adopted. And our supporters—those in Lincoln and beyond who care about companion animals and people in need—had a huge part in making these numbers so great.

But here's one number our spay/neuter fund moves toward every day: 0. LAA is faced with cutting back on the number of vouchers we provide to pet parents in need. Because spaying and neutering is absolutely one of the best solutions to pet overpopulation, we want to avoid this for as long as possible.

Now more than ever, we need your support to keep the spay/neuter program

going strong. Here are some more numbers to consider contributing:

- \$25 toward a cat neuter
- \$50 toward a cat spay or small/medium dog neuter
- \$100 toward a large dog neuter or small dog spay
- \$150-\$200 toward a medium/large dog spay

Don't know about all the ways you can donate? Have a look at this handy list:

- Mail a check to our post office box. Why not make use of the delightfully fun-sized return envelope included with this very newsletter?
- Make a secure Paypal donation at LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org—or better yet, set up a recurring monthly donation.
- Shop Amazon.com and donate 0.5% of any purchase to LAA through AmazonSmile
- Visit and make a donation at one of our upcoming events, including Spayghetti and No Balls in March, or Wine & Howl on June 13th, or Meow & Chow in October.
- Drop some pet food in one of our donation barrels at Petco or Super Saver.

Your contributions are making a difference. Thank you for all that you do to help address animal homelessness.

”

It made us happy. Thank you so much.

John, Pet Food Bank recipient

Continued: Taysia Blue Rescue

The Taysia Blue Rescue volunteer leadership team pays close attention to metrics to help guide their priorities, the team constantly reviews and tweaks processes to be more efficient. Decreasing the number of days each dog spends in foster care and decreasing the time it takes to process an adoption application are the focus for this group. "We know that if we can reduce the average number of days the dogs spend in foster care, we can save more lives without increasing the number of foster homes" says Steph Konz, Taysia Blue Rescue Executive Director.

"The number of requests for help from shelters and the number of adoption applications can be overwhelming for an all-volunteer organization. We set a goal to respond to all adoption applications within 1-2 days." says Taysia Blue Rescue Placement Officer, Starla Muller. "We are so lucky to have the volunteer tech talent to help automate some of our processes. Steven McKenzie has donated thousands of volunteer hours to build and improve our custom database. This allows us to automate much of what we do, from our requests from shelters, to details and files on the dogs, to online adoption applications, to the entire adoption process. We believe that this kind of efficiency has impacted our ability to increase the number of dogs we can save."

Taysia Blue Rescue provides impact to over 50 shelters in the states where volunteer teams are located: Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Arkansas and Colorado. When space allows the group expands efforts in states that have the highest number of animals at risk.

Taysia Blue Rescue is always looking for volunteers to help by fostering or helping to complete adoptions. More information can be found on the website: TaysiaBlue.com

Like our newsletter?
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Contact us at
info@LincolnAnimalAmbassadors.org





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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 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!