

Meet READ to ROVER dog, Otis

O tis is a Chimacum Creek Primary School READ to ROVER dog whose partner is Shirley Williams. They have been a READ to ROVER team since 2012.

Otis is the first rescue dog Shirley has ever owned. She says "He is just perfect for us." Otis was rescued from a shelter in Texas by the National Great Pyrenees Rescue (NGPR) group. By 2012, west Texas had already suffered through several years of serious drought conditions. Ranchers were losing their cattle and many guard/herding dogs, now without jobs, were being surrendered. Having lost a Pyrenees some months before, the Williams family started looking for another dog. The Pacific Northwest NGPR group suggested Otis, a Great Pyrenees/Australian Shepherd mix, who would be coming up here soon. It was love at first sight!

Shirley had had a certified therapy dog in the past and knew, if the right dog came along, she'd like to do such volunteer work again. When she saw Otis's "resume" from the NGPR, she felt he might be great in that role. After



Otis with a message about reading in the Pet Parade

she read about the READ to ROVER program in the Pet Pals newsletter, she decided to have Otis tested and join our program working with young kids.

Otis has another job as well. He serves as the official parade dog for the Olympic Peninsula Chapter of the Red Cross. Maybe that's why he's a natural when it comes to marching with the READ to ROVER teams in the annual Rhody Pet Parade.



Shirley and Otis listen carefully as a Chimacum Creek second grader reads Photo credit: Chris Parsons



Red Cross Volunteer

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WHO'S WHO IN OLYMPIC MOUNTAIN PET PALS

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Olympic Mountain Pet Pals is a 501(c)(3) (nonprofit) organization whose mission is to prevent the birth of unwanted pets and community cats through our spay and neuter programs. We are funded by donations and grants.

For more information about Olympic Mountain Pet Pals, visit our website at www.ompetpals.org

From the President

O ur friends and donors understand the importance of our mission, but do you know how effective our work has really been? Each year we compile statistics for our annual report and the numbers really bring home the impact of OMPP on the number of homeless animals in Jefferson County. In 2015, a total of 431 pets were spayed/ neutered through our programs (327 low income family pets and 104 community cats).

Since inception of the program, statistics show we have spayed/neutered 6,551 animals (4,412 low income family pets and 2,139 community cats). Translate this into litters of unwanted dogs and cats and there



Pam and her dog, Gus

would be a very different picture in our community, especially when you think of the potential ongoing reproduction since 2001. Without this organization, it is almost certain that our local shelter would not be sustainable and that thousands of animals would have been left homeless one way or another.

A recent Seattle Times article on the turnaround at the King County animal shelter cited a strong spay and neuter program as one of the key factors in the rapid drop of euthanasia numbers. We are proud to have been in the forefront of this movement and delighted that the Humane Society of Jefferson County credits us with playing a significant role in their 96% "release rate" for 2015.

In addition to this core work, our READ to ROVER and Pets to People programs are stronger than ever, with 35 active teams helping kids to sharpen their reading skills and bringing joy to senior citizens.

Ginger's Fund, OMPP funds administered by local veterinarians, helped 30 animals of low-income clients receive emergency treatment in 2015. Since 2013, 581 have been helped.

Our complete 2015 annual report is available on our website, along with an archive of our newsletters and other articles and resources. Thanks for keeping this work alive, for although we've made incredible progress, there is always more to do. Your compassion for animals and your generosity are the drivers for our efforts and we are proud that we have accomplished so much on your behalf.

- Pam Kolacy

Kim Pratt Joins the Pet Pals Board

We are pleased to welcome Kim Pratt as a member of our Board of Directors. Kim was raised in a military family. Most of her growing up years were spent overseas. As an adult, she's moved around a bit. She graduated from Eastern Kentucky University, moved to California to work as a classroom teacher for students with special needs, got married and moved to Eugene to complete graduate work at U of O. Because Kim's husband was interested in becoming a merchant seaman, they moved up to Port Townsend where they have lived for the past 32 years. For the first 16 years working in the field of Speech-Language Pathology, Kim commuted to Sequim. When a position opened up in the Chimacum School District, Kim decided that it was time to work closer to home.

Kim's passion for animals has been lifelong. Three endearing Golden Retrievers have been family members over the years. Volunteering for animal rescue agencies, taking care of dogs belonging to good friends, helping out with Port Townsend's annual Pet Parade and facilitating READ to ROVER at Chimacum Creek Primary School as the school based coordinator has keep her engaged in the animal world. Kim is excited about joining the Olympic Mountain Pet Pals Board in an effort to support this wonderful organization. Upon her pending retirement, Kim is interested in continuing her work in animal related fields, specifically with the elephants and rhinos in Africa/Asia as well as with our state and local animal rescue organizations.



Kim with some of her READ to ROVER pals

Thank Yous

HTTB Family Fund was established For Their Love of Animals to benefit the cats and dogs of the Olympic Peninsula e're thrilled to receive a new grant for 2016 from the HTB Family Fund to support our Low-income Spay/Neuter and our Community Cats programs. This grant will provide an additional \$10,000 to our budget for veterinary services. Last year's grant of \$8,000 allowed us to spay and neuter 52 dogs and cats for low income families and 43 community cats. This new grant will enable us to do even more to reduce unwanted litters.

Pet Pals is extremely grateful to the HTB Family for their continuing support.

Olympic Mountain Pet Pals Thanks These Local Businesses for Their In-Kind Contributions:

- Kathy Stanger of Macs Macaroons for making our READ to ROVER scarves and tasty dog treats
- Lucky Dog Training Center, owned by Georgia Towle, for therapy dog testing
- **OlympusNet**, owned by Kate and Ned Schumann, for hosting our website
- **Olympic Mailing Service,** owned by Caroline Stuckey, for handling the mailing of our newsletter.
- **The Food Co-op** for including us in their Beans for Bags program.
- Helmsman Financial for help with our accounts.
- Secret Gardens Nursery, owned by Sheila Piccini, for hosting the annual plant sale to benefit animal groups

Thanks to the Quimper Unitarian Universalist

Fellowship for designating their April 24th service as a benefit for Pet Pals.

Thank You to the World's Best Veterinarians!

Our spay/neuter programs depend on the generous help of our veterinarians and their staffs:

Dr. Ginny Johnson, Dr. Cindy Alexander and **Dr. Melissa Steinmetz** of **Hadlock Veterinary Clinic**,

Dr. Jeff Highbarger of Chimacum Valley Veterinary Hospital,

Dr. Madelyn Curll of Oak Bay Animal Hospital

Traveling Cross-Country with Cats by Ginny Messina

The hardest part about moving from Port Townsend to Massachusetts last year, aside from leaving my beloved Pet Pals, was transporting our five cats more than 3,000 miles. We made the trip in a minivan, the kind with seats that fold into the floor. A friend built a platform for the back and we used the space beneath it for storage. The cats in their carriers traveled on top of the platform. We dubbed it the Cat Mobile, loaded up Willow, Phoebe, Juniper, Rocky and Bamboo, and set off on our cross-country adventure.

We drove 10 hours a day and devoted another two hours to getting into and out of hotel rooms. It was a major production but I wanted to create a little home away from home for the cats. Each evening, we unloaded five large cat crates, four large litter pans, water fountain and water bowls, scratching post, cat food, a bag of brushes, toys and treats, a carton of cleaning supplies plus a hand vacuum and a broom, our luggage and computers. I unpacked cats and all their belongings and set up feeding and litter stations while my husband went out to find dinner for the humans.

In the morning, we scooped litter, swept and vacuumed up cat fur and litter, wiped down with spray cleaner anything that needed wiping down, packed up litter boxes, bowls, and water fountain. More often than not, we also needed to take apart one of the hotel beds to dig out one or two cats who were hiding inside the frame.



Willow and Phoebe after a pinch of catnip in the hotel Photo credit: Ginny Messina



Phoebe in her cat carrier Photo credit: Ginny Messina

that set aside special (not especially clean) rooms for pets.

Our other mistake was in using extra big crates that could accommodate a litter pan for each cat. They never used them, and getting the crates in and out of the car was that much more difficult.

Despite this, our trip was smoother and easier than I imagined. In fact, now that we've experienced a New England winter, we're wondering how the cats would feel about a trip to Florida.

Since my biggest fear was having a cat escape from the car or hotel room, we took a lot of extra precautions. We never let the cats out of our sight. Not ever, not for one minute. We took turns with bathroom breaks, ate in the car or standing outside of it, had dinner in the hotel room.

We also stayed only in hotels with rooms that opened onto a hallway, rather than directly to the outside, creating a buffer between cats and the outdoors. And we never let the cats out of their carriers in the car. Their carriers were closed up tight and covered with blankets to form the kind of dark secure caves that cats love.

To make things more comfortable for the cats, we stayed in either suites or two adjoining rooms. It cost more, but was worth it. They did exceptionally well in

the hotels, and I think the extra space helped with this. We also requested rooms near the side entrance so we didn't have to lug five cats through the lobby.

Our biggest mistake was not flea treating the cats before we left! We arrived in our new home with fleas, probably picked up from one of the hotels



Bamboo and Rocky enjoy the life of luxury Photo credit: Ginny Messina

Many Blessings by Kitti Udd-Delong

know the meaning of a black cat crossing the road in front of you, but what significance is there in a shaggy, long-haired calico with a pug face tramping across your garden path multiple times?

That orange, brown, and bright white dappled coat passed by the open door of my studio numerous times. I noticed her between attention to various work tasks and I lazily decided that she must have moved into the neighborhood with a recently transplanted family.

Lo and behold, a day later there was a little face peaking out from under the studio, all black with long hair, very small but with eyes open. What a treat for my twelve-year-old Nikki! We had never been able to have a pet because of allergies and now here was a volunteer with no strings attached and a responsible momma to take care of her! What could be better than this unexpected blessing? Then, the next day, there were two kittens. Now a gray striped baby had been added. Excitedly, we tried to approach, but they were all very afraid, momma and babies both. Still, that was okay. Two



Four female kittens spayed by Pet Pals Community Cats Program Photo credit: Kitti Udd-Delong

kittens would keep each other happy, and wouldn't be any more difficult for us. Amazingly, the next day there were three babies, and the following day, there were five! Could we still consider this new adventure a blessing? We never saw Momma Calico carry any of those kittens into our garden, but there they were. We agreed we were going to treat them as wild animals, leaving them to care for themselves, though they would be safe in our fenced back garden.

But the universe had more surprises in store for us. Nikki came home from school to report she had seen the Momma Calico in a field, apparently hit by a car. And then, one of the kittens disappeared, leaving three gray striped babies with the one long-haired all black baby. Now, decisions had to be made. It appeared they were not old enough to fend for themselves. Hunger was forcing them to approach our back door, and our hearts were wrenched with their distress. We hightailed it to the store for kitten chow.

Nine months later, all four kittens (yes, we still called them kittens) were full grown, and we didn't know whether they were males or females. What if some of them were females? What if they decided to have kittens of their own? We already had more than we bargained for. As a retired woman on a fixed income, and raising a grandchild, too, I was at my wits end as to what to do. Should we rent live traps, catch them, and release them in the country somewhere far away? That didn't seem right, so we did nothing.

And then, we received another blessing. Our neighbor, Pat, knocked on our door. She gently queried about the cats in our back garden. Yes, we were feeding the feral cats. No, we did not know their sexes. No, I couldn't afford to make sure there were no more kittens. In fact, we couldn't even get close to them! Pat knew about Olympic Mountain Pet Pals and that the group would possibly help us. And help they did! OMPP delivered live traps and explained how to use them. For the next two weeks, our kitten adventure changed complexion from feeding and watching, to trapping and delivering to the vet's. Our full-grown kittens each received a little operation, four more blessings!

Amazingly, all four kittens turned out to be female. What are the odds? Think how many babies we could have had by summer time. All four kittens recovered from their operations much better than I could have expected, and in the few weeks since that time, have become a bit less frightened of us. We can now feed them without having them run clear across the garden out of fear. They now might hop off the porch, or may move only a few feet away while Nikki fills their bowl.

Our pending crisis has been controlled and I am no longer looking at becoming the "Cat Lady of the Neighborhood," with 1,000 wild and crying babies, all thanks to Pat's knowledge of Olympic Mountain Pet Pals, Phyllis Becker, and Donna Regester. Your group is full of angels. Your caring support and help has been a blessing to the lives of my family, including my family of "kittens."

Many, Many Thanks!

Successful Launch of Quilcene READ to ROVER

W hen teachers and community members from Quilcene asked if we could start a new READ to ROVER program in the Quilcene Schools, Lisa Aniballi stepped forward and offered to coordinate it. She has done a great job, working with Bill Breakey, K-12 Learning Specialist, on scheduling, communicating with teachers, and providing the materials needed. She recruited a set of volunteers to certify their dogs as Pet Pals Therapy Dogs. Now, every Thursday at noon, five volunteers share their dogs with the kids. Every second grader in the school gets a chance to read for 15 minutes, one-on-one with a dog. If you

are interested in becoming a READ to ROVER team in Quilcene, please contact Lisa at (360) 821-9297 or email lisaaniballi@hotmail.com.

Ava and her dog, Lucy, listen to a Quilcene student read



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IN HONOR OF...

IN MEMORY OF...

Katie Bailey, recipient of the Thomas J. Majhan Teen Leaders Award for 2015 Kiwanis Club of Port Townsend **Phyllis Becker** Priscilla Jensen Phyllis Becker's Birthday Dolores Harvey Sarah Becker Marsha Wiener Pam Kolacy's retirement Kelly McLaughlin **Ginny Messina** Carla Ellis and Rick Floyd Connie and Jeff Graham Randi and Lindsay Winter Phyllis and Paul Becker Kay Adamson Donna Regester Rhonda Scharf, for her birthday Debra Andrews Clair and Puppy, our beloved dogs Robin and Jack Scherting Mimi, my beloved cat Lvnne Teveliet Sandy, Anne's beloved dog Dave and Anne Krabill Takai and Max, my beloved cats Sandra Flaherty **Pets to People teams:** Jen Bates with Daisy Melanie Lake Buerkle with Lily and Dusty **Corine deBoer with Piper Michael Everitt with Dot** Jay and Cheryl Lowenstein with Lavina **Ruth Merryman with Sammy** Pam Rogge with Fleurette and Jeeves Georgia Towle and Topaz Carla Ellis and Rick Floyd



Photo credit: Deja Webster of Deja View Photography

Rose Foss, my mother Janice Hodge **Michael Gohn** Virginia Ryning Tyson James, dear son of Linda and Bill James Kate and Ned Schumann **Chris Purvis** Patricia Horvath My sister, Erica Springstead Linda Jeanotte **Tod Wakefield** Carla Ellis and Rick Floyd Annabelle, loving READ to **ROVER dog of Heidi Ruegg** Heidi Ruegg Carla Ellis and Rick Floyd Pamela Rogge and Ted Barkhoefer Aslan and Kiana Johanna E. Goering Our beloved dog, Bear Lili and Sam Glast Becky, much adored dog of Deb Hammond Kate and Ned Schumann Bernie, my beloved dog Bonnie Masi Charlie, beloved cat of Bev Brice Sally Rodgers Chester, loved and missed dog of Malcolm Dorn Kate and Ned Schumann Cleo, my best Kitty Nancy Stickney Cleo, beloved cat of Rich and **Karen Ciccarone** John and Donna English Ebony, my beloved cat Linda Scott Emma, beloved dog of Gordon

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Pam and Keith Kolacy

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Grant Street School Poop Station

The community is cleaner and OMPP has some new

and "thanks for the dog poop stashion. Now the people

Students from Molly O'Brien's second grade class

that own dogs will pick up ther dog poop."

friends at Grant Street.

came to our attention that dog poop on the playground was a significant problem. Not tary School is one of the schools participating in our READ to ROVER program. It he new dog waste station at Grant Street school is a big hit. Grant Street Elemen-



Photo credit: Randi Winter Pet Pals Poop Station donated by



Photo credit: Randi Winter their playground. rot noitet2 qoo9 of the Poop Station for Grant Street School kids watch the



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