



## Read to Rover Starts Up Again

**O**n Friday October 8, Chimacum Creek Primary School joyfully held our first Read to Rover session after a COVID hiatus of 18 months with 15 therapy dog teams coming to read with the 2nd graders outdoors. The previous Wednesday was an outdoors orientation session during which the kids learned about the expectations of Read to Rover and some tips on dog safety etiquette. Unfortunately, the following Friday was rained out. So the CCP Principal, Kyle Ehlis, formulated protocols for moving us safely indoors with extra ventilation, masking, vaccination requirements, and appropriate distancing rules. As one of our volunteers said about his comfort level with the new plan, “it’s all for the kids.” Thanks to Kim Pratt and Chris Parsons for working closely with the school staff to get this off the ground. The first day indoors on October 22 went extremely smoothly.

The Read to Rover program at Port Townsend’s Salish Coast Elementary School will start on Tuesday November 2 inside the school library. At a meeting for the volunteers on October 19, the school staff described all the protocols in place to protect participants. After the meeting, Donna Geer, the program coordinator, said “Denise Aedan, our librarian, did a spectacular job of talking to us about everything the school has done to keep everyone safe and it was very impressive to hear and see. I felt very comfortable being there.” The Salish Coast program will start small with 3 or 4 teams.

We could use more therapy dog teams for Port Townsend and Quilcene Read to Rover programs, plus more subs for Chimacum. If you are interested, we have resumed therapy dog testing. Please get in touch (contact information is in the Who’s Who on the next page)!



**Keri French and Jake with CCP Reader**  
photo credit: Kim Pratt



**An Overview of Read to Rover Outdoors**  
photo credit: Kim Pratt

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## WHO'S WHO IN OLYMPIC MOUNTAIN PET PALS

### Board of Directors

Pam Kolacy, President  
360-385-5694, [pamkolacy@gmail.com](mailto:pamkolacy@gmail.com)  
Connie Graham, Vice President  
360-379-1798, [connie@accmeals.com](mailto:connie@accmeals.com)  
Kay Adamson, Treasurer  
360-301-3682, [kjadamson98368@gmail.com](mailto:kjadamson98368@gmail.com)  
Pat Swain, Secretary  
360-301-9025, [pwsain@gmail.com](mailto:pwsain@gmail.com)  
Carla Ellis  
360-385-3950, [carla@cs.duke.edu](mailto:carla@cs.duke.edu)  
Donna Geer  
360-355-6123, [donamgr@gmail.com](mailto:donamgr@gmail.com)  
Kim Pratt  
360-385-3852, [jonah@olympus.net](mailto:jonah@olympus.net)

### Program Contacts

**NEWSLETTER AND WEBSITE:** Carla Ellis

**PETS TO PEOPLE:** Lana O'Neill,  
602-400-7890, [oneilltm@aol.com](mailto:oneilltm@aol.com)

**READ TO ROVER PROGRAM:**  
Port Townsend: Donna Geer, 360-355-6123  
Chimacum: Carla Ellis, 360-385-3950 and  
Kim Pratt, 360-385-3852  
Quilcene: Alicia Johnsen, 360-765-2942

**SPAY/NEUTER CLINICS:**  
Center Valley Animal Rescue, 360-765-0598  
Humane Society of Jefferson County,  
360-385-3292

### Board of Advisors

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Michelle Sandoval

Olympic Mountain Pet Pals is a 501(c)(3) (non-profit) 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](http://www.ompetpals.org)

## From the President

At this point it looks as though we are in for another winter of COVID. On the bright side, we live in a highly vaccinated county, our schools are in session and we are seeing restaurants, shops and theaters open, although with restrictions. When I try to put a positive spin on the pandemic, I think about how much more often I have walked with my dog and how many more evenings than usual I've enjoyed the pleasure of having a purring cat on my lap. I even continue some of my pandemic-honed home baking skills.

This is a time to do what we can to shop at local businesses, show patience while dining in understaffed restaurants, and give our teachers, healthcare and public service workers praise for their daily contributions. And please don't forget to show special gratitude to the folks who are providing veterinary services, sheltering abandoned animals and providing other basic services for the pets in underserved households in our community.

Everybody needs volunteers! With staffing shortages as they are, volunteers can make a huge difference to the services provided for the animals in Jefferson County. If you have time, are ready to work with COVID protocols and love animals, please contact either the Humane Society or Center Valley Animal Rescue and try to find a job that will match your needs.



Pam Kolacy and her cat, Ollie



Photo credit: Deja Webster of  
Deja View Photography

You'll see from the rest of this newsletter that we are working hard to continue fulfilling our mission to provide low cost spay/neuter services to those in need and maintain and grow our therapy dog programs in spite of the current challenges.

We may once again miss our large family gatherings over the holidays, but we do know we are all in this together. As we wait for better times, enjoy the warmth after a brisk walk with your dog, savor quiet evenings with a contented kitty, and contribute what you can for the greater good. We at OMPP wish you the very best, a thankful holiday season and as always, send our sincere gratitude for your continuing support to help us make life better for all the pets in our community.



# ***Pet Pals is Grateful for Community Support***

## **Olympic Mountain Pet Pals Thanks These Local Businesses for Their Generous Contributions:**

- **Lucky Dog Training Center**, owned by Georgia Towle, for therapy dog testing.
- **OlympusNet**, owned by Ned Schumann, for hosting our website.
- **Olympic Mailing Service**, owned by Caroline Stuckey, for handling the mailing of our newsletter.
- **Helmsman Financial** for help with our accounts.
- **Deja View Photography**, owned by Deja Webster, for providing photos of shelter dogs and cats for the newsletter.
- **The Gathering Place** for providing dog treats for Read to Rover.
- **PT Shirt Company**, owned by Frank Iuro, for supplying our Read to Rover tee shirts.

## ***Our Spay/Neuter Partners' Perspectives***

**N**ow that our new model for supporting low-cost spay/neuter services has been functioning for several months, we checked in with our partners, the Humane Society of Jefferson County and Center Valley Animal Rescue, for their perspective.

At the Humane Society of Jefferson County, regular spay/neuter clinics are filling quickly, with a constant waiting list. According to HSJC President, Paul Becker: "By sponsoring HSJC's spay/neuter clinics, OMPP has provided the financial support necessary to reach more Jefferson County low-income residents with services that would otherwise be out of reach for them. We have seen an increasing demand for spay/neuter services from qualified applicants, and with OMPP's continued support, we can increase the frequency of clinics." HSJC also offers low-cost vaccinations and microchips for eligible residents.

As far as impact on the shelter, Paul notes "animal overpopulation has been a problem for shelters everywhere, forcing some to resort to euthanizing animals due to lack of space and staff to care for them. HSJC has never had to euthanize an animal for lack of space, due in large part to the success of OMPP's wonderful spay/neuter program. The continuation of an affordable spay/neuter program is vital to the function of HSJC, as well as to the health and quality of life of Jefferson County's pet cats and dogs."

Center Valley Animal Rescue Executive Director Sara Penhallegon says that since OMPP is helping sponsor spay/neuter clinics, they are able to get closer to their goal of having a spay/neuter clinic weekly and at these clinics they can also provide vaccinations and flea treatments as well as other parasite treatments to any animal needing them. Currently, Center Valley has five veterinarians volunteering with their program and another who can be hired to keep up with the need. CVAR has long provided spay/neuter clinics for low-income residents to the best of their ability and has been able to increase the number of clinics with our help. As Sara points out, "the more animals we can spay/neuter, the fewer we have to rescue."

Both partners are actively seeking Licensed Veterinary Technicians to enable them to maintain and expand their programs and are also very much in need of volunteers. If you can help, please contact them. See more about volunteer opportunities and other information at [hsjcw.org](http://hsjcw.org) (Humane Society) and [centervalleyanimalrescue.org](http://centervalleyanimalrescue.org) (Center Valley).



**A surgery at the HSJC funded by Pet Pals**

# Meet Read to Rover Dog, Yogi

## An Interview with Laura Tucker

**Y**ogi is a 5-year-old male English bulldog. He was born in Snohomish, WA. We got him when he was 11 months old. The breeder who raised him had hoped to show him but he was too big. We just wanted a pet and this breeder is known for only breeding a few dogs and selecting for health and temperament. We got both with Yogi!

*How did you get involved with our therapy dog programs and how long have you been doing this? How did you find out about Pet Pals therapy dog programs?*

We love being part of the Read to Rover program! In 2011, I met a founding Read to Rover participant (Elsa Golts) at a dog park and she thought our previous bulldog, Sparky, might be a good therapy dog and Read to Rover candidate. Sparky started out at Grant Street Elementary and then was asked to help the new group at Chimacum Creek Primary. After Sparky crossed the Rainbow Bridge in 2016, we knew our next dog had to carry on in his place at Read to Rover, and Yogi has loved being part of the program.

*What do you and Yogi like about participating in the therapy dog programs?*

Yogi loves being a therapy dog because he loves meeting students and adults! He likes to approach children when he's out in the world because he thinks they are as wonderful as the Chimacum Creek Read to Rover students. He has met a lot of youngsters that way. Yogi also has a "standing order" from Carrie Ehrhardt, the principal of Port Townsend High School, to stay with her or Officer Vergin, the school resource officer, when I'm in a weekly lunchtime meeting. Yogi flies out of the car and races to the door of the school to dash into Ms. Ehrhardt's office for pets and treats. He loves walking the school grounds with Ms. Ehrhardt or Officer Vergin and visiting with the students while they eat lunch. Yes, he's quite interested in what they are eating and if they want to share anything.



**Yogi giving comfort  
in the hospital**

Yogi also enjoys visiting patients in the hospital or at senior living residences. He is quiet and well-behaved so he gets asked to visit a lot. He even got to spend 3 hours with my husband while he was in the hospital with shoulder surgery. Yogi became the therapy dog for two shifts of nurses at the University of Washington surgical center that day. He was also requested to visit the "Reflection Room" to give support to those whose family members were in serious condition. He spent a lot of time with several people over a 2-day period while my husband was in the hospital, with requests coming in almost every hour for more people who wanted to spend time with him. His goofy face and sweet disposition helped many through a rough day at the hospital.

At the last Pet Parade for Rhody Festival, Officer Vergin asked Yogi to ride in his police car and lead the parade. Yogi loved it as you can see! He did miss walking with his other Read to Rover buddies, though.

*What does Yogi like to do when he isn't serving as a therapy dog?*

Yogi is a very social dog so he loves spending time with people and other dogs. He likes cats, horses, goats, and pigs too. He enjoys going to the dog park and playing with dogs and asking their

owners for treats. He does love his treats. He loves going on rides anywhere. I think he sees it as a new adventure - you never know where you're going, so "Do you want to go bye-bye?" is always met



**Leading the Rhody Festival Pet Parade**



with a very excited dog who runs to the front door and waits to jump in the car.

He lives with one cat who he loves and cuddles with, and has just spent 2 months fostering a kitten who is going to her forever home next week. They have become best friends and sleep together. I know he will miss her.

His best friend is another English bulldog named Lollipop. They have been buddies for 4 years. When she comes over for a weekend “sleepover”, they play for hours. Bulldogs have a special kind of play. My husband says it’s a combination of bumper cars and demolition derby. They love to slam into each other and roll around. They make us laugh a lot!

*Do you wish to offer any advice to other pet owners who’d like to get involved?*



**Yogi and Lollipop going for a ride in the car**



**Yogi in the Chimacum Creek Primary library for Read to Rover meets the stuffed bulldog**

The Read to Rover program has been the delight of our week for both Yogi and me. I have been involved for 9 years with our former bulldog, Sparky, and for the past 4 years with Yogi. In addition to Yogi loving being a Read to Rover dog, I love being his human in this program. It is heartwarming to have students read to the dogs and watch how their confidence in reading grows over the school year. I am deeply appreciative of Carla Ellis, Kim Pratt, and Chris Parsons who not only organize the program, they manage all the changes with such grace and efficiency. They make us all feel so appreciated!

If you have a dog who might be a good candidate for Read to Rover or other therapy dog opportunities, be sure to socialize them in all kinds of situations before going through the test. We took both of our dogs downtown often to meet strangers, including all ages of children, as well as other dogs. They learned that people were wonderful and they loved the attention. They were also able to interact with dogs who weren’t always so friendly and learn how to manage those interactions well.

*Do you have any insights into challenges/frustrations of being a therapy dog team during these COVID times?*

Yogi would get so excited when I would put on my t-shirt because he knew he was going to the school for Read to Rover. He deeply missed the program during COVID. We did a few Zoom sessions with the library, but it’s just not the same as having a student in person. We had our first in-person session last week and Yogi was over the moon with happiness. He loved meeting his new students! During COVID, we would take Yogi on various trails for exercise, but where we wouldn’t meet many other people. We now know it’s safe for people to pet him with low risk for passing on a virus, but at first, we didn’t allow that. Yogi really missed being petted by others, not just us. After the first two months of COVID, our neighbor came into our house as he had just tested negative and was going to spend time with his elderly mother. We used to have neighbors and their dogs over to visit all the time. When Yogi saw our neighbor, he started running around the house like

he was saying, “Wow! There are still humans!!”. He really had a tough time being so isolated during COVID. Now that people are getting vaccinated, it’s safer and we have returned to the dog park and other areas, which makes Yogi so happy!



**Outdoors Read to Rover**

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# Welcome New Board Members

**W**e are pleased to welcome Donna Geer and welcome back Kim Pratt as members of our Board of Directors.

**Donna Geer** and her husband Mike recently moved to Port Ludlow with their beagle Cooper. They have four children and three little grandsons. She retired from a career at Boeing as a senior operations manager and a contracts manager for airplane interiors. Prior to that, she was a senior project manager at Arrow Electronics for large banking computer systems. She spent years in the contracting arena for the Air Force purchasing airplane components and one of her earliest jobs was driving



**Donna Geer and Cooper**

a forklift, moving landing gear parts from one building to another. She was also in the Air Force Reserve and the Air National Guard building bombs and conducting radar surveillance. Along the way, she snuck in college classes, eventually earning a bachelor's degree in Business and later an MBA and a professional coaching certification. Once she retired, she went back to school to do something really fun and got a Multimedia degree that keeps her busy taking photos and creating videos. Now she works part-time at Peninsula College in Port Angeles as an advisor to veteran students. She says "Each time I've changed careers, I've learned so much." The Pet Pals Board will certainly benefit from her experience.

Donna loves volunteering and has spent the last few years trying different opportunities that use skills acquired through the years and make a difference in our communities. She currently volunteers with Volunteer Hospice of Clallam County as a Grief Support Facilitator. She also started the Novel Conversations Book Club in Sequim for the North Olympic Library System.

Donna and Cooper have been involved in the Port Townsend Read to Rover program at Salish Coast Elementary School for several years. She recently took on the coordination of the program there, hoping to restart the program after the COVID shutdowns. She is looking forward to resuming in-person reading this fall. She says "It will be great to see our volunteer teams back up at the school, listening to the second-

graders as they read their books to our dogs, children with one hand turning a page while the other hand is petting the dog that's intently (well, mostly) listening as the child reads out loud."

**Kim Pratt** 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 in 1979, 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 relocated to Port Townsend where they have lived for the past 37 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 finished up her career in Chimacum after 17 years working with students preschool-21 years of age.

Kim's passion for animals has been lifelong. Three endearing Golden Retrievers preceded her most recent dog, Boo Radley. Boo is an Australian Labradoodle who recently passed his Canine Good Citizen and OMPP therapy dog tests enabling him to take an active part in Chimacum's Read to Rover program. His first day "on the job" turned out to be a success which was very exciting for Kim!

Helping to facilitate the Read to Rover at Chimacum Creek Primary School as the school based coordinator has been a joy over the past 12 years. Disheartened by the Covid closures last year, Kim is hopeful that we can once again resume this amazing program for kids who are passionate about their opportunity to read with their "Forever Dogs" each Friday morning.

Kim is excited about returning to the Olympic Mountain Pet Pals Board, now that she is retired and able to commit the time and energy involved with this very worthy organization.



**Kim Pratt and Boo Radley**



The list of 2021 donors will appear in the Spring 2022 issue.  
The list of "In honor of" and "In memory of" gifts is current as of October 15, 2021.

## IN HONOR OF...

**Dr. Virginia Johnson**  
*Kim and Phillip Henry  
Jennifer Brinch*

**Finn, the best rescue**  
*Diane and Clinton Hurd*

**Kim Pratt and her tireless work  
for critters and people!**  
*Patti Smith*

**Maddie's thirteenth birthday**  
*Barbara McColgan*

**Pam Kolacy**  
*Jan Schroeder*

**Port Townsend Read to Rover  
and Quilcene Read to Rover  
programs**  
*Kim Pratt*

**My beloved cat Amy**  
*Sandy Guinup*

**Violet for her 96th birthday**  
*Jan Schoeder*

## IN MEMORY OF...

**Our dearest best friend Rosey,  
beloved dog of Randi and  
Lindsay Winter**  
*Selden McKee*

**Barb Mahoney's beloved dog  
Arre**  
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**Kathryn Strecker's beloved dog  
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*Sandra Flaherty*

**Our special Read to Rover dog,  
Sparky**  
*Laura Tucker and Hank  
Walker*

**Linda and Tom Dacon's  
beloved cat, Dulcie**  
*Laura and Bernard Rosenberg*

**My beloved cat, Bella**  
*Maria Holtgrave*

**My sweet cat Mimi**  
*Lynne Teveliet*

**Otis, beloved Read to Rover  
dog of Shirley and George  
Williams**  
*Carla Ellis and Rick Floyd  
Christina Pivarnik  
Susan and Mort Robinson*

**Our beloved cat, Oreo**  
*Sheryl and Kenneth Klock*



Photo credit: Deja Webster of  
Deja View Photography

**Sheryl and Kenny Klock's  
beloved cat, Oreo**  
*Kay Adamson*

**Rocky Balboa, beloved pet of  
Mike Accurso and Maria  
Lococo and his "Aunt and  
Uncle" the Melons**  
*Helen G Williams*

**Rocky, beloved dog of Pam and  
John Clise**  
*Grace Dumenil  
John and Donna English*

**Selden McKee's beloved  
companion, Maggie**  
*Karen and Tony DeLorenzo*

**Susan McGregor's beloved dog  
Elsie, a Read to Rover dog at  
Salish Coast**  
*Carla Ellis and Rick Floyd*

**Rhonda Scharf's beloved horse,  
Jasmine.**  
*Debbie and Jeff Andrew*

## Remembering Our Pets

Losing a beloved pet can be devastating but it helps to know that others care about your loss. Contributing a memorial gift to Olympic Mountain Pet Pals in honor of a friend's dear companion both expresses your sympathy and helps local animals. When we receive a gift in memory or in honor of a pet or person, we acknowledge that gift to the family with a personalized Olympic Mountain Pet Pals card. Please include the name of the pet or person to be remembered and the name and address of the person who should be notified of your donation when you make your contribution. Your kindness will be greatly appreciated.

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# Kim's Paintings Go To Good Homes

**W**e've been following the story of Kim Pratt's marvelous painting project over the past year. Kim's original goal was to express her gratitude by giving each of the long-time Read to Rover volunteers a painting she did of their dog. This goal was recently realized at a party hosted at Georgia Towle's Lucky Dog Training facility. After much socializing with friends who have not been together in a really long time, the volunteers went home with paintings they will treasure. Thank you so much to Kim, for these wonderful gifts, to Julie Read, for being a great art teacher for Kim, and to Georgia for hosting the party.



Just happy to get together



Kim Pratt, Jane Hall with portrait of Julio Jalapeno, and Julie Read

Shirley Williams with painting of Otis, Georgia Towle with Topaz, Christina Pivarnik with Shawnigan and Sidney

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