



We Honor Our Volunteers!

Pet Pals was pleased to throw a **Volunteer Appreciation Party** at the Port Townsend Golf Course Restaurant on February 25. The conversations among the volunteers were lively. So many stories were shared, many of them centered on the pets we love. It seemed like everyone had a great time!

The food, prepared by Rick Unrue, was delicious. OMPP board members brought yummy desserts. Connie Graham and Kim Pratt decorated with flowers and Kim chose the gift boxes of chocolates that everyone could take home. Thanks to them for making this event happen.

We repeat a heartfelt **“thank you”** to our volunteers for all you give of your time and energy in the READ to ROVER and Pets to People programs. To the volunteers who could not come, we missed you and highly value your contributions as well.



Above: Board members, Connie Graham, Pam Kolacy, Donna Geer, and Pets to People volunteer, Karin Lowrie
Below: Almost the entire group



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WHO'S WHO IN OLYMPIC MOUNTAIN PET PALS

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Max Grover
Ken McBride
Ginny Messina
Kathleen Mitchell
Bob Podrat
Michelle Sandoval

Olympic Mountain Pet Pals is a 501(c)(3) (non-profit) organization whose mission is to enhance the lives of pets and people, serving kids, seniors, and low-income pet families. We are funded by donations and grants.

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

From the President

As my first year as President comes to an end, I face the task of writing an annual report for 2023, summarizing the activities of Pet Pals during the year. The easy part is that, as we continue to emerge from the pandemic restrictions, many of our activities are energized and growing. The hard part of reviewing 2023 is seeing the difficulties involved with keeping up with demand for spay and neuter services in light of the staffing shortages at clinics, the large number of pandemic pets now needing our help, and a decline in donations.

2023 was our third year of providing financial support for the Humane Society of Jefferson County (HSJC) and Center Valley Animal Rescue (CVAR) to offer spay/neuter clinics for lower income county residents. We provide dedicated funding for these spay/neuter clinics which helps enable both partners to provide this essential service to our community. In 2023 we funded services for 358 animals, 66 dogs and 292 cats (including community cats). Since the clinic model began in 2021, we have served 1064 cats and 356 dogs. Total spay/neuter funding assistance for low-income families and community cats in Jefferson County since our programs began in 2002: 9,636 animals (2,567 dogs and 7069 cats). Even with conservative estimates of potential population growth, OMPP has prevented many thousands of unwanted dog and cat births in our county. In 2023, even as Covid restrictions eased, a new challenge arose: a staffing shortage of veterinarians and veterinary technicians has been limiting the number of clinics offered. In August, we changed our reimbursement rates to create a reward when our partners perform more operations per clinic. We hope this helps.

The READ to ROVER program is thriving, providing second graders in local public schools with regular meaningful reading experiences and an appreciation for canine companions. Every second grader at Chimacum Elementary School has their own special "forever dog" to read with. The Chimacum READ to ROVER program has 17 dogs and handlers, plus 8 supporting humans (without their own dogs). At Salish Coast Elementary School, READ to ROVER has 15 active dog-handler teams, but a boom in enrollment in Port Townsend's second grade exceeds our ability to serve every child every week. More teams are needed at Salish Coast. Please, consider volunteering!

The Pets to People Program resumed in 2023 at Victoria Place Senior Living. Each week, between 7 and 11 teams visit residents and bring joy with a dog party.

OMPP has reached out to recruit and certify new volunteer teams all year, with testing conducted on a regular basis (approximately monthly). In 2023, we welcomed 14 new teams who passed our therapy dog test and joined various programs. Sadly, we also lost 3 of our active therapy dogs. Recruiting is a constant focus.

I end this letter, as I usually do, asking for your help to ensure more Jefferson County cats and dogs can live healthier lives regardless of their family's economic status and to address the critical ongoing goal of reducing the number of unwanted and homeless animals in our community. Thank you for your continuing support!



Carla Ellis

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 printing and 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 and Pets to People tee shirts.
- **Max Grover** – for design of our READ to ROVER and Pets to People logos.

News from our Clinic Partners ***by Pam Kolacy***

The Humane Society of Jefferson County, an OMPP spay/neuter partner, has welcomed a new Executive Director. Jen Dupree has over 15 years' experience in non-profit operations and management. She worked most recently as the Animal Behavior and Training Manager at the Kitsap Humane Society's shelter in Silverdale and has experience working in various capacities at shelters in Tennessee and Georgia. Her extensive background includes community outreach regarding spay/neuter programs as well as rescue coordination.

Having years of experience in shelter management and having observed the challenges of overcrowded shelters, Jen is a strong advocate for spay/neuter programs that provide services for both underserved pet owners and community cats. Although our local shelter faces the same challenges that are common to all animal welfare organizations, including the dearth of veterinary professionals, the flood of COVID pets, and the constant struggle for funding, Jen knows that spay/neuter must be high on the list of priorities. OMPP's assistance with dedicated funding for public spay/neuter clinics is greatly appreciated. According to Jen, "HSJC couldn't be more grateful for both the collaborative efforts and financial support from OMPP that positively impact the lives of all who walk through our doors. Without this generous support to subsidize spay/neuter services, we wouldn't be able to serve those most in need or contribute to the ripple effect that is felt throughout the community through lessening the pet overpopulation crisis. Thank you, OMPP, for valuing teamwork, community, and animal welfare!"

In other spay/neuter news, OMPP contributed \$2,000 to Center Valley Animal Rescue to help defray the cost of the free spay/neuter clinics last November that served the Hoh and Makah Tribes on the west coast. In addition to over 130 spay and neuter procedures that were badly needed, over 300 vaccines and flea treatments were provided in this joint effort between CVAR and the Welfare for Animals Guild. As CVAR's founder Sara Penhallegon stated, "This is a first step toward a more encompassing program aimed at the overpopulation of pets."

Pet Pals is committed to financially supporting spay/neuter clinics at both the Humane Society of Jefferson County and Center Valley Animal Rescue. We are grateful for the efforts of our partners to provide this vital service to the community.



Photo credit: Deja Webster of
Deja View Photography

Meet Therapy Dog, Gracie

As related by Pat Hale

Hi, my name is Gracie and this is the story of how my mom and I met each other and I became a READ to ROVER dog. No one really knows how I came to be running loose in the countryside in Texas. Well, I know but I don't want to talk about it. Let's start when my life began to improve. Some kind person lured me into their horse trailer with a big bowl of food and a nice bed. I was suspicious but also very hungry and tired. Did I mention that I was pregnant? No wonder I was hungry and tired. I went in and the door closed behind me. Scary, but there was the food and the bed. I ate and slept. Meanwhile my benefactor contacted the wonderful folks at the Big Dog Rescue Project. After checking with local vets and shelters to see if anyone was looking for me (they weren't) they came to get me. My next stop was The Puppy House, where my foster mom, Jennifer, would take care of me and my puppies after they were born, seeing us through until it was time for us to be adopted.

Our time came and I was worried that once again no one would want me, after all there were eight adorable snow white puppies to choose from. The puppies were adopted quickly but guess what? Someone was looking for me too! My soon to be new family wanted a grownup dog, that was already house trained and past all that sock ripping, shoe chewing stuff. That was me, yay. BDRP agreed that we were right for each other and settled on the adoption. A long trip from Texas to Washington in a transport van ensued and I and several of my puppies arrived in Tacoma to meet our new families. I was NOT sorry to see that van pull away and drive out of sight. It was such a long trip.

I was sick of traveling but it wasn't over yet. After a chance to walk around, stretch my legs and do my business I was led over to a pickup truck and invited to "hop in." "Hop in" is an instruction that I now love as it usually means a fun adventure including our weekly trip to school for READ to ROVER. But that day? Nope, no and no again. I was not getting into that truck. Finally, Dad hefted all 70 pounds of me into the truck and with an additional boost from Mom the door closed and we were on our way. The truck was very comfortable and soon I was asleep and did not wake up until we pulled into the garage of my new home.



Rover dog, Gracie



Mama Gracie

That was a very long story about me, but what you want to know about is READ to ROVER. The year was 2020 and something called Covid was really spooking the humans, schools were closed so no READ to ROVER. Mom had faith and we began working on the training I would need to pass the therapy dog test to become a Rover Dog. We worked on sit, down and stay which I mostly already knew about, but also walk with me, polite people greetings and taking treats very gently. It was hard to practice people greetings because we had to stay six feet away from other folks. Well, Mom had to but I'm a dog so I could get as close as the leash would let me. We live in a neighborhood of dog lovers who were happy to help me, although, even now, if someone is very special to me, I occasionally forget myself.

Finally, the humans came up with a vaccine for Covid and felt safe enough to reopen the schools. Still, I had one more thing to do before I could become a Rover Dog, the dreaded therapy dog test. Just to be sure that I really knew my stuff we went to Georgia Towle's special

class for dogs and their people who want to pass the therapy dog test. I blush to admit that Georgia quickly became one of my favorite people and I disgraced myself more than once by jumping on her. When the chips were down however, I did pretty well on my test, if I do say so myself. I was ready to become a Rover Dog.

Just before school started in September, Mom and I went to Salish Coast Elementary School to practice walking together with me on a loose leash right next to her, up the long walk and the stairs to the door where I was told to wait. Later, when we did it

for real, I had to wait while she opened the doors and then walk politely down the hall to the library. That was very hard for me at first because there were so many people and they were so happy to see me. Now we go every week, and I proudly wear the red scarf that once belonged to my predecessor, Lincoln, who was Mom's first Rover Dog. I've been told that I have a lot to live up to following in his footsteps. I love the kids and the staff and all the petting and loving that I get every week. It's fun to greet all my new dog friends although we do have to behave ourselves. Sometimes when I'm really lucky we go to help out at Chimacum School when they need a team to fill in for someone who is going to be missing. READ to ROVER twice in one week, yay!!

When I'm not at school I love going camping in our little Scamp trailer, seeing new places and checking out the wildlife (bunnies and squirrels, oh boy!) and other dogs. I like every kind of walk anywhere at all, my weekly visit to my friends at Dog Townsend, and playing with my friend Dingle who lives up the street. He's a Portuguese Water Dog and he can run even faster than me which is saying quite a lot. I also love baking in the sun and hanging with my people especially my Dad who gives the best belly rubs ever and never, never clips my toenails.

People and dogs, if you want to try READ to ROVER be brave and do it. It's not for everyone but it's fun for many of us and the kids will love you. You'll hear some great stories too.



Silly Gracie with beloved purple rhino

Welcome to New Board Member, Araya Sol

We are thrilled to welcome a new member of the Pet Pals Board of Directors, Araya Sol. We will let Araya introduce herself: "I was pleased and honored to be asked to serve on the Board of OMPP. I hope the skills I have learned along the way will be useful in my new position.

"When I first considered moving to Port Townsend years ago, I met Kate Schumann who told me about the OMPP READ to ROVER program. It sounded like so much fun. Fast forward to 2017 when I actually made the move to PT to join the newly-formed Quimper Village Cohousing Community. My new 5-month-old puppy, Toula, whom I adopted from Center Valley Animal Rescue, accompanied me and stole the hearts of all (well, many of) our new neighbors. Living in a nascent self-governing community required a major time commitment to get all the systems up and running smoothly. In 2020, when life settled down



Araya Sol and Toula

a bit, and when Toula became a more mature dog, we prepared to join READ to ROVER. Remember Covid? Our intention got sidelined. Finally, when the schools reopened, we were able to don our red t-shirt and bandana and begin listening to the second graders at Salish Coast Elementary read to us. What a delight!

"I've almost always had a dog companion, from growing up in Minneapolis, to 20+ years in San Francisco going to college, working as a tour guide and running my own event planning business. For many years I worked in various capacities in Jewish organizations, honing my administrative and organizational skills. World travelling played a major part of my work and recreational life. Those were the times when I was dog-less. Eventually I moved to Seattle in 1989 with my young daughter. Raising a child kept me closer to home and gave her a canine sibling.

"Volunteering has always been an important part of my life. In San Francisco, I was a docent at some architectural gems. In Seattle, the Vivarium exhibit at the Olympic Sculpture Park allowed me to observe and show off the wonders of an ever-changing nurse log. Currently, I've combined those experiences by serving as a docent and tour guide at the magnificent 150-acre estate on Bainbridge Island, the Bloedel Reserve. Now it's time to offer whatever skills I have to help out with Olympic Mountain Pet Pals."

Welcome aboard, Araya!

This is the full list of 2023 donors from January through December 2023.
This list of “In honor of” and “In memory of” gifts covers the period of October 18, 2023 to April 15, 2024.

DONORS

Townsend Bay Property
Management
Mike Accurso and Maria Lococo
Teri Ann Adams
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Carol Baker
Will and Patricia Barrett
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Linda Scott
Jeannine Shold
Carolyn Silk



Photo credit: Deja Webster of
Deja View Photography

Maggie Smith
Sandy and Sherry Snider
Araya Sol
Nancy Steinberg
Meemie Sullivan
Pat Swain
Elizabeth Thompson
Linda Thompson
Georgia Towle
Polly Towle
Cathy and Steve Tucker
Lisa Van Horn
Scott Walker
John Watts
Melody Sky and James Weaver
Shelly Webb
Ann Weston
Don and Sylvia White
Katie Whitman
Nancy Wyatt

GiveBIG on May 7 & 8 for Pet Pals

Get that GIVING feeling! Olympic Mountain Pet Pals is now a registered non-profit in Washington Gives, the organization that sponsors **GiveBIG** in May and **GivingTuesday**, the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving. The GiveBIG campaign for 2024 kicks off on **April 23** with early giving and ends with the main event on **May 7 and 8**. When you give to Pet Pals during GiveBIG, good things happen for kids, seniors, and low-income pet families in our Jefferson County community.

The Washington Gives platform makes it easy for new donors to discover non-profits serving the causes they support. The two big fundraising events are designed to create a sense of collective energy around supporting non-profits in Washington State. We are proud to be participating in this broader community effort.

Visit our [GiveBIG page \(www.wagives.org/organization/Olympic-Mountain-Pet-Pals\)](https://www.wagives.org/organization/Olympic-Mountain-Pet-Pals) and please **donate!**



IN HONOR OF...

**Jan Chappuis and her dog
Barry and the Adelma
Beach walking group**
Rhonda and Steve Scharf

**Molly, Lavern's beloved cat
who found her forever
home**
Jennifer Flagel

My beloved cat Amy
Sandy Guinup

Sharon
Joel and Rose-Ellen Leonard

Our beloved cat Felix
Cynthia and Joseph Lesh

Debby Kopetzky's father
Peter and Deborah Kopetzky

Our beloved dog Betsy Ross
Donald and Celeste Dybeck

**Dusty, beloved dog of Jim and
Carole Marshall**
John and Donna English

**Ella, much loved dog of Eric
and Greta Smith**
Maggie Smith

**Fern, beloved dog of Jane Albee
and Harold Anderson**
Will and Patricia Barrett

**Gloria Brown, beloved sister of
Keith Kolacy**
*Jan Schroeder
Pam and Keith Kolacy*

**In honor of Carla Ellis and in
memory of Carla and Rick's
beloved dog Lumie**
Rosalyn Roberts

**Izzy, beloved former Read
to Rover dog of Nan Toby
Tyrrell**
Carla Ellis and Rick Floyd

Janet Harker
Sharon Gyovai

My beloved cat Webster
Jeannine Shold

**Joanne Kurtz, my childhood
friend**
Sandra Flaherty

**My beloved dogs Bubba, Ozzie
and Solly**
Leonore Kilmer

Martin Musson
Ingrid Musson

Meg Mason
Meemie Sullivan

Melinda Brydon
Cathy and Steve Tucker

Merlin, my beloved cat
Mary Robson

**Rocky, beloved cat of Tim and
Lana O'Neill**
Carla Ellis and Rick Floyd

**Ruby, our beloved Corgi
therapy dog**
*Nancy Jo and Richard
Schneider*

**Ruby, gentle and beloved dog
of John and Carolyn Watts**
Catharine Robinson

**Sheila and Ken Danielson's
beloved dog Cooper ("the
best pug puppy ever")**
Melody Sky and James Weaver

Susan Solley
Sheryl and Kenneth Klock

IN MEMORY OF...

**Bucky, beloved dog of
Michelle and John
DiMaggio**
*Maureen Huff and Karen
Crouse*

**Buster, beloved dog of David
and Teresa Goldsmith**
John and Donna English

**Chico, beloved Read to
Rover dog of Laura Joshel**
Carla Ellis and Rick Floyd

**Jeeves, beloved Read to
Rover poodle of Pam
Rogge**
Carla Ellis and Rick Floyd

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.

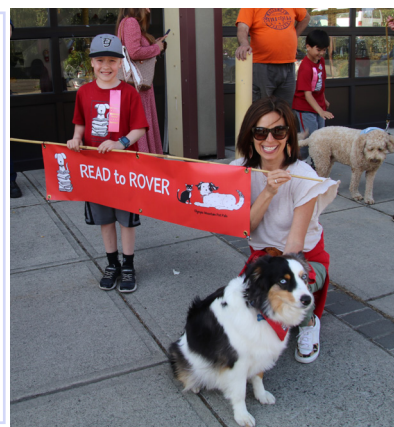
See You at the Rhody Pet Parade!



Once again, our therapy dog teams will be marching in the **Rhody Pet Parade on Thursday afternoon, May 16**. Come out to cheer us on!

Photos from last year's Pet Parade

Photo credit: Carla Ellis



Grover Gallery Hosts Cookie Exchange for Pet Pals Volunteers

Julie Read, co-owner of the Grover Gallery and a READ to ROVER volunteer herself, held a Cookie Exchange Party during the holidays at the gallery in Port Townsend featuring an exhibit of animal artwork. The idea of a cookie exchange is for everyone to bring a tray of cookies (for either human or canine attendees), eat as many different cookies as one can, and take home a selection of the leftovers. It was great fun and Pet Pals thanks Julie and the Grover Gallery for honoring our volunteers with this event.



So many cookies!



Julie samples her first cookie

Laura Tucker has the attention of Araya Sol's, Toula, and her own dog, Yogi, with tasty dog cookies

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