



Olympic Mountain Pet Pals

Annual Report 2024

Overview

Olympic Mountain Pet Pals is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to enhancing the lives of pets and people in Jefferson County, WA. Our programs benefit the lives of schoolkids, senior citizens, and lower income pet owners by connecting them to resources supporting the health of pets and offering positive interactions with therapy dogs. Founded in 2001, our original mission was to help low-income families without the resources to pay for spay and neuter services for their beloved pets afford such services and, consequently, reduce the burden of unwanted and homeless animals on the local community. This remains a goal although the methodology has changed over time as explained below. Our expanding therapy dog programs include READ to ROVER for children in schools and libraries and Pets to People for seniors in assisted living facilities.

Spay and Neuter Clinics

In 2021, we changed OMPP's spay/neuter financial assistance model from issuing vouchers for private veterinary hospitals (which we determined was not sustainable in the long term) to providing financial support for two local non-profits, 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. These clinic partners also provide low-cost vaccinations and microchips.

In 2024, HSJC performed 92 procedures (22 dogs and 70 cats) and CVAR performed 136 procedures (60 dogs and 76 cats).

Impact: How many animals/families have we helped and at what cost?

In 2024 we funded services for 228 animals, 82 dogs and 146 cats including community cats*. Since the clinic model began in 2021, we have served 1210 cats and 438 dogs. (*Starting in 2021, we included community cat procedures with the total cat procedures so there is no longer a separate listing.)

Total spay/neuter funding assistance for low-income families and community cats in Jefferson County since our programs began in 2002: 9,864 animals (2,649 dogs and 7215 cats). Even with

conservative estimates of potential population growth, OMPP has prevented many thousands of dog and cat births in our county.

The cost of spay/neuter services in 2024 was approximately \$22,300. Our cost per procedure this year was about \$98.80 per animal (compared to \$126 prior to our new model). This is up from \$73.67 per animal in 2023 because we increased our reimbursement rates in 2023 to create a reward for performing more operations per clinic.

In 2024, a staffing shortage of veterinarians and veterinary technicians and large numbers of in-house animals at each facility have been limiting the number of public clinics offered. We hope for growth in the size and number of clinics in 2025 and we are committed to continue providing much-needed funding as long as we have the resources.

Therapy Dog Programs

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 each week. The Chimacum READ to ROVER program had 30 volunteers in Spring semester 2024 and 35 in Fall 2024. These numbers include weekly dog teams, substitute dog teams, and supporting humans (without their own dogs).

At Salish Coast Elementary School, READ to ROVER has 15 active volunteers, including one participant who escorts the kids to and from the classroom and two dog-handler teams that rotate weeks. Because of travel schedules, our numbers vary each week. The enrollment in Port Townsend’s second grade exceeds our ability to serve every child every week, so we have responded by holding four twenty-minute sessions so we can serve as many kids as possible. We commend the owners and dogs since the time can get long for dogs to sit still. More teams are needed at Salish Coast.

The Jefferson County Public Library ran a summer READ to ROVER program every Friday from June 28 to August 9. At least two therapy dog teams participated each week with seven teams involved over the course of the summer.

The Port Townsend Library offered once-a-month summer READ to ROVER sessions involving one team each time. They also offer after-school READ to ROVER sessions during the school year.

The Pets to People Program has been active at Victoria Place Senior Living. Each week, up to 11 teams visit and bring joy to the residents. Scarves for dogs with the Pets to People logo are provided and human volunteers can buy T-shirts with the logo on them.

OMPP has reached out to recruit and certify new volunteer teams all year, with testing conducted every month. In 2024, we welcomed 22 new teams who passed our therapy dog test and joined various programs.

We hosted a volunteer appreciation event in February 2024 for currently active volunteers.

Funding

Our primary source of funding is individual donations. We also receive in-kind donations, which are listed in our semi-annual newsletter. We are most appreciative of the long-time supporters who have also made us beneficiaries of their estates.

This year, OMPP joined Washington Gives, the organization that sponsors the GiveBIG fundraising campaign for nonprofits in Washington State in May and supports the Giving Tuesday fundraising campaign in December. The extra visibility has helped us attract new donors as well as donors who put up matching funds. This has proven to be a very successful form of fundraising for OMPP.

Outreach

In addition to our semi-annual printed newsletters (Spring issue in May and Fall issue in November), our e-newsletters were published regularly in 2024 (2 issues in May (the 2nd May issue was focused on GiveBIG), July, and November). This has allowed us to share timely news on a regular basis. Our website www.ompetspals.org is an excellent source of information. We also have a low-volume presence on social media.