



Olympic Mountain PET PALS

Enhancing the Lives of Pets and People

Serving kids, seniors,
and low-income pet
families
Spring 2025



Superheroes of the Chimacum READ to ROVER Community by Terra Frank and Kim Pratt

It isn't every day that a wonderful volunteer program comes with its own set of "Superheroes," but gratefully, the Chimacum Elementary School's READ to ROVER group does indeed have some of the BEST! Doggie blankets and beverage bowls are used each week in our program to ensure comfort for the teams and to make sure that no canine companion becomes "parched" during their reading duties! Students in the "Learning Support" classroom, under the stellar leadership of Ms. Terra Frank, have taken on the tasks of washing, drying and folding our blankets as well as washing our water bowls. We couldn't thank this group of "Superheroes" enough for a job well done as well as for the generosity of their time and dedication to the READ to ROVER Program. Their story is truly worth telling, so read on and learn more about our "Superheroes."



Each week all the students in Ms. Terra's Learning Support class participate in helping the READ to ROVER group. Some students have selected jobs in class.

Raiden Warner loves to help with washing the dog blankets each week. He independently counts out 10 blankets and places them into the washing machine. He helps pour in soap and pushes the button. He is working on understanding a sequence of events and tells me each step while we work together. His favorite part is loading the dryer after the blankets are washed. He takes a lot of pride in his support for the dogs and has a big smile after we have completed our work together.

Christian Fernades also has the job of washing the dog bowls each week. He does a wonderful job scrubbing each bowl and making sure that all the soap is gone before he sets them up to dry. We talk about how we love to take care of the dogs and make

sure they have fresh water and good treats!

All the students, but especially Levi Moore, support folding the dog blankets each week. We set them out in class, and everyone practices how to fold them. Levi loves to experiment with laying them out on the floor and figuring out the best method of how to fold. Sometimes we work together as a team and he loves to give high fives after we complete our job!

The students really enjoy being a part of this world! Even former students still help and comment that they miss reading to the dogs.



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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 individual articles for this newsletter started rolling in, an unexpected theme started emerging - how the READ to ROVER program has become a deeper part of the culture at the schools we serve. I hope you enjoy the stories of other people who have contributed in various ways, beyond the always appreciated volunteer dog teams in the 2nd grade reading sessions. Our therapy dogs touch so many lives!

I want to thank Donna Geer who is retiring from the Board after successfully coordinating the Salish Coast READ to ROVER program for several years and for serving as Vice President of OMPP. We will miss her insights at our meetings and wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

One of the President's jobs is to produce an annual report for the year that has just concluded - in this case, 2024. The full report will be posted on our website, but I'm giving you the highlights of our accomplishments and challenges in this letter.

This was our 4th 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. In 2024, we funded procedures for 228 animals, 82 dogs and 146 cats including community cats. HSJC performed 92 procedures (22 dogs and 70 cats) and CVAR performed 136 procedures (60 dogs and 76 cats). Even with conservative estimates of potential population growth, OMPP has prevented many thousands of unwanted dog and cat births in our county over the years. Our partners continue to face a staffing shortage of veterinarians and veterinary technicians and large numbers of in-house animals that have been limiting the number of public clinics offered. Thus, we are pleased to be adding a new partner (see article on the next page).

Our therapy dog programs are thriving. READ to ROVER provides second graders in local public schools with regular meaningful reading experiences and an appreciation for canine companions. 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 classrooms. Both the Port Townsend Public library and the Jefferson County library offered READ to ROVER programs last summer. The Pets to People Program continues to bring joy to residents at Victoria Place Senior Living with weekly therapy dog visits. 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.

Finally, I ask 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 goal of reducing the number of unwanted and homeless animals in our community. Thank you for your continuing support!



Carla Ellis and Dipper

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 Smith, 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 and scarves.
- **Max Grover** – for design of our READ to ROVER and Pets to People logos.

Welcome a New Spay/Neuter Clinic Partner ***by Pam Kolacy***

Financial support for programs that provide spay/neuter services to lower-income residents of Jefferson County has long been a core mission of OMPP. We are pleased to announce that we've added local non-profit **Pet Helpers Port Townsend** to our list of partner organizations. Pet Helpers is dedicated to providing access to veterinary care for homeless and/or underfunded residents of Jefferson County. They work with local vets to provide medical care for qualified pet owners and are planning two free spay/neuter clinics in 2025. We are pleased that financial support from Olympic Mountain Pet Pals will help make these clinics successful. (Check their website www.pethelpersporttownsend.org for further information on spay/neuter clinics and other services.)

Pet Pals also partners with Center Valley Animal Rescue and the Humane Society of Jefferson County to help defray costs for their public spay/neuter clinics. We know that all of these organizations continue to face challenges which affect their ability to provide services to all who need them. OMPP is committed to supporting these local partnerships by providing consistent funding for these important services. Minimizing the number of animals that are most likely to become unwanted and homeless means happier lives for people and pets.



Photo credit: Deja Webster of
Deja View Photography

In this time of political turmoil and economic uncertainty, it is easy to feel conflicted about how to support the many organizations that need help. The ability to provide help to members of our own community can be a saving grace. When you give locally, you can see a definable impact – and everyone giving locally in their own neighborhood, city, or county can add up to some major changes across the country and the world.

We have all experienced the sense of love and safety a beloved pet can bring to a family or individual. Providing low cost or free spay/neuter services makes a big difference to many families who may be struggling to stay afloat and simply cannot afford vet bills. Overpopulation results in a serious strain on the local organizations that take in and house animals who have been abandoned or given up for adoption. Your contribution toward affordable spay/neuter services matters to multiple hard-working animal organizations.

We applaud the groups who are tackling these serious issues and are proud to add our support to their efforts.

Meet READ to ROVER Dogs, Piper and Larry

“Piper Tells All” as related by Kathy Long

My name is Piper and I’m a READ to ROVER dog like my brother Larry. This is our fourth year with the program.

We were born at k9Rescue & Rehabilitation in Auburn, WA. I was number one and Larry was number seven of 11 puppies. We were told that our mother was a husky mix, and when we had our DNA done, we found out that mix included nine different breeds! Just call us “All American Dogs!” We lived with a family that named us London and Paris—yuck! Who names their dogs after big cities? When we were three years old, that family gave us back to the rescue because they were moving to a place too small for big dogs. The rescue lady renamed us Larry and Piper—thank goodness. Those names are much more fitting. After three months back at the rescue, we were adopted by Tom Speer and Kathy Long. Whew! Were we happy. We had been very worried that we would have to go to different homes.

At our new home, we found out that our next-door neighbor was also named Larry. Kathy and Tom thought about changing our names again, but we were very happy that we didn’t have to go through that again. They decided they could just distinguish between Larry (the dog) and Larry (the person). It’s worked out well. Larry and Larry have become the best of friends.



Exploring at Howe Farm

When we are not serving as therapy dogs, we love to go to Howe Farm dog park for wag fests and chasing each other around. We love to meet our dog friends and we’ve even warmed up to a few of the humans there. It’s a great place to go where we can run around in a great big field, or hike some of the forest trails. We also like to hike in Port Gamble Forest. There are lots of trails there too. As you can see in the picture, Larry is putting his Read to Rover skills to work, now reading the trails maps so we know exactly where to go. Everyone thinks Larry’s a mighty hunter, but the truth is, if he didn’t have me for the spotter, he’d be nothing. We love to take off after a squirrel or a deer when we get to go off leash. Our human may sometimes wonder if we’re ever coming back! Actually I’m a lot better about that than Larry. In fact, I always come when I’m called. Larry takes his sweet time and comes back when he feels like it. But if he takes too long to come back, then I give him a good scolding. Can’t say it helps that much, ‘cause he does the same thing

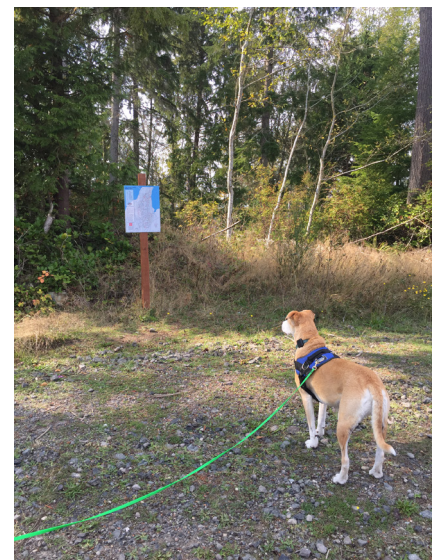
next time. But he’s gotten better over the years.

Here’s my best kept secret. I like to play tricks on Larry. Sometimes he gets on the couch and takes up all the space. He doesn’t leave enough room for me to join him. Can you believe that? What I do, is pretend that I see a squirrel or raccoon, run to the window or the front door and start barking. He jumps off the couch to see what it is, just in case he might get to go outside and catch it. While he’s still looking for what I pretended to see, I make my move. I head back to the couch and spread out so I don’t leave any room for him. Well, OK, maybe I make room for him too some of the time.

My other signature move is to get him to come out and play when he would rather just stay inside and bask in the sun. I go outside and again start barking like I saw something in the woods—like the coyote that used to visit. He’ll come and look out



Piper (left) and Larry (right)



Larry reading the trail map for Gamble Forest trails



Larry tricked into rushing to the window

the back window and beg to be let out. Once he's out, then I attack. My best move I call the Kung Foo Panda. I run straight for him, jump up in the air, do a full 360 and then give him a good push to the back side with my paws. Gets him every time. Then he'll start spinning circles trying to imitate me. But he hasn't ever quite perfected that move like I have.

We started coming to READ to ROVER in 2021, just as things began to open up after Covid. Before Covid we had done several classes with Georgia Towle at Lucky Dog, at first as simple as learning how to walk on a leash without pulling too much, then later agility, and scent work. We had heard about READ to ROVER, but there weren't any openings at the time. Then in 2021, Georgia put out the word that they were looking for more dogs to join READ to ROVER. We signed up immediately.

We had to take the test to become therapy dogs, so we did a few practice sessions with Georgia, and then we took the test and passed. Yay! We were ready to go to work. In the fall of 2021, Larry and Tom and Kathy and I would go every Friday and read with the students. It was pretty exciting to show up at the school and see so many other dogs and their humans heading into the school building to read with the students. Unfortunately, Tom was only able to do that with us for a year. That made me really sad, because that was one of the things he liked best out of every week. We have been so fortunate to have other people step in to partner with Larry since Tom has been gone. Ginny Partridge, Carla Ellis, and Peggy Norcutt, all long-time READ to ROVER humans, have helped out partnering with Larry, when they were "in between" having dogs who were ready for READ to ROVER. Thank you so much. Without you we might not have been able to continue in the program.

We used to wonder if reading with the students each Friday, was meaningful to the students. When we started we were at the Primary school. After the students finished second grade, they went over to the Elementary school for third grade, and we never saw them again. But then last year the second graders were moved to the Elementary school. The first day we showed up for READ to ROVER, we were met with a barrage of students, all very happy to see us and the other dogs. Our forever kids from both the previous years were so happy to see us, we were just overwhelmed with joy! It was just a great feeling to know what we were doing did mean a lot to the students. (Don't tell anyone, but some of my former students who are now in older grades still find ways to stop by and say "hi" from time to time. And I am so happy to see them!). If Larry were writing this, he would probably want to say something out loud to finish the piece. Almost every time READ to ROVER comes to an end, Larry expresses his opinion with a

big moan—where's the next student? It can't be over already! Honestly, we have never been in a program where both humans and dogs have been so appreciated. Not only by the students but by the caring support from the program coordinators. Thank you Carla Ellis, Kim Pratt, Chris Parsons and Chris Walvatne! You make it extra fun to be part of the group.



And now, the couch is all mine!



A student reading to me



A reader with me and Larry (and Kathy) at the Jefferson County Library in their summer program

This is the full list of 2024 donors from January through December 2024.
 This list of “In honor of” and “In memory of” gifts covers the period of October 16, 2024 to April 15, 2025.

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Nancy Steinberg

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Elizabeth Thompson

Linda Thompson

Georgia Towle

Cathy and Steve Tucker

Laura Tucker and Hank Walker

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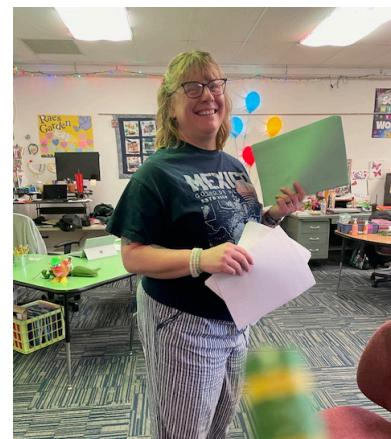
Taylor Worth

Nancy Wyatt

A Pet Pals “Thank You” Spotlight!

We would like to give a shout out to our fabulous “Teacher Rae” who provided her time and enormous wisdom to the Chimacum READ to ROVER teams at a luncheon held at the PT Golf Club Cafe last month. Lunch was delicious (thank you Rick Unrue).

It is not always clear how to navigate around the many reading challenges students bring to the table when you are not a trained teacher. Some of the old ways of instruction are now supplanted with new techniques. Even though we are not an instructional program, sometimes it is beneficial to have some simple strategies at hand to help students “get over the hurdle” of a challenging word. Rae offered information about reading, reading challenges as well as ideas to support student learning. Thanks Rae for your generosity and support of our READ to ROVER program.



Rae Heaselbach

IN HONOR OF...

Finn and Buster

Diane and Clinton Hurd

Jan Chappuis and Read to Rover dog Barry

Rhonda and Steve Scharf

Kay Adamson and Jasper

Kim and Phillip Henry

Pam Kolacy

Jan Schroeder

Thanks to all staff and volunteers for the needs you fill for our

community (from “gone but not forgotten” Henry the Wonder Dog)

Don and Sarah DuBos

IN MEMORY OF...

Babe, beloved cat of Chris and Rhonda Marrs

Bonnie Masi

Beloved pets kitty Tessy and dog Bo, faithful friends of many years to Dave & Frances Oberholtzer

Ellen Ostern

Blitz the German Shepard, beloved dog of Emmie and Chris Vance

Melody Sky and James Weaver

Boo, beloved Read to Rover dog of Kim and Erik Pratt

Carla Ellis and Rick Floyd

Pam and Keith Kolacy

Julie McEdwards

Catharine MacMillan

Barbara Read

Christina Pivarnik

Guthrie, beloved doggie of Karla Nelson and Danel Wolf

Melody Sky and James Weaver

Helen Lenz, beloved sister of Linnea Patrick

Pam and Keith Kolacy

Karen and Lily

Pat Swain

Lee and Beth’s sweet kitty Xena

Keri French

Louise Hartford, my beloved sister

Linnea Patrick

Meg Mason

Meemie Sullivan

Murphy, my beloved dog

Nancy Steinberg

Ollver, beloved dog of Heather Sanders

Jane Krabill

Patricia Weedman

Cathy and Steve Tucker

Rexy, beloved dog of Becky Waite

Kim and Phillip Henry

Rita, beloved dog of Brenda

Lewis

Jim and Debbie Dodd

Rocky Balboa, our beloved dog

Mike Accurso and Maria

Lococo

Dear sweet Rosie who lived a full life and shared her perfect self with all who knew her

Nancy Wyatt

Simon, beloved Read to Rover dog of Linda Abbot-Roe

Carla Ellis and Rick Floyd

Soapy my sweet, beloved dog

Jan Schroeder

Tula, beloved doggie of Nancy and Mark Grant

Melody Sky and James Weaver

Wes Reed

Leonore Kilmer

Ziggy, beloved dog of Siobhan Cauty

Melody Sky and James Weaver

Zoe (“Miss Puppy Pants”) beloved dog of Jennifer and Rob Forbes

Melody Sky and James Weaver

Zull, beloved dog of Michael and Erin Adamson

Kim and Phillip Henry

A special team member of the READ to ROVER program at Salish Coast Elementary

by Karin Nyrop

In early June, the 2024/2025 READ to ROVER program at Salish Coast Elementary School in Port Townsend will come to a close. It has been another wonderful year of watching young readers grow in ability and confidence, dogs being loved by the students, and dog owners feeling gratified by the contribution they are making to the school. This year’s program was made even more special by our student helper, **Aiden Grewell**.

READ to ROVER at Salish takes place on Wednesday mornings from 9:30 to 10:50 in the school library. This year, just before the dogs and owners entered the library, Aiden would set out seat cushions for the dog owners and floor seats for the students. At the end of the morning he would collect the cushions and seats and put them away. Aiden’s efforts made for a much more comfortable and intimate reading session for owners, students and dogs. The dogs loved settling in around and between the seating.

In addition to setting up the library seating, Aiden would greet the dogs and their owners with enthusiasm and interest. Aiden has been such a valuable member of the READ to ROVER team this year that he clearly deserved a special shout out and thank you for his exceptional contributions to the READ to ROVER program.



GiveBIG on May 6 & 7 for Pet Pals

For the second year, Olympic Mountain Pet Pals is participating as 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 2025 kicks off on April 22 with early giving and ends with the main event on May 6 and 7.

Our Spring fundraising goal is to raise funds to “gear up” to be ready for the 2025-26 READ to ROVER school year starting in the Fall. Our “back-to-school” expenses, among other things, provide each of our 2nd grade readers with a red tee-shirt, building a sense of community for students who can identify as readers. Donations beyond our READ to ROVER needs will be used to support low-income spay/neuter clinics. A group of dedicated OMPP supporters has pledged to match donations until our goal of \$5,000 is met!

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 within Washington State. We are proud to be part of this broader community effort. Our past experiences have proved successful.

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



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