

Health Home Herald



Olympic Area Agency on Aging - Robotic Pets

Written by Lori Lindley with stories from Katrine Colten and Yolanda Pearson all with Olympic Area Agency on Aging

Olympic AAA received COVID money and were able to purchase some robotic dogs and cats for our Health Home clients. These clients range from nursing facility patients, clients that rarely leave their homes, clients with dementia, and clients experiencing depression from loneliness related to being mainly homebound and receiving fewer visitors due to COVID. These clients have a wide array of needs for these pets, and all have been so happy to receive them.

By Katrine Colten

I provided robotic pets to three clients, one lives alone, one lives with a roommate/good friend, and

one lives with her husband, all three rarely leave their homes for various reasons.

When I delivered a robotic cat to my client who lives alone, he was absolutely thrilled as he is homebound much of the time due to mobility issues. We opened the box and turned on the pet and it started to meow and purr, and he instantly fell in love. He named the pet Rachel after his wife who passed away a few years back. When I delivered the pet his 95-year-old neighbor was there visiting and she also fell in love, she asked me all kinds of questions and she held the cat and gave it pets, and I have since discovered that her caregiver ordered one for her. Before I left the cat was tucked into the client's bed with some other stuffed animals and baby dolls.

Since the robotic cat was delivered to the client, the client states her robotic cat has been the talk of the building and everyone wants to see her.

I delivered a dog to my client who rarely leaves her house due to anxiety and depression. She lives with her roommate, who is also a good friend. My client previously had a dog that she had to rehome as she felt she could no longer care for it properly. She lost a son to suicide two years ago as well which has increased her depression. We opened the box and turned on her new pup, she loved that it barked for her. She has an adult disabled daughter that she said would probably love one as well and said she was going to try to find a way to get her one for Christmas.

Continues on page 2

Robotic Pets (cont.)

She held her new robotic dog and pet it the whole time I was there and was deciding on a name when I left.

I delivered another cat to my client who is married and lives with her husband. They both rarely leave their home due to her mobility issues as well as a fear of getting sick. When I first started working with her, they had two cats, one was put down shortly after I met them and the other several months later as they were both elderly cats. My client and her husband had decided that getting another cat would be too much for them at this point in their lives. We opened the box and turned on the cat and it started to meow and purr, she giggled and laughed and talked to the cat as it sat in her lap. She was so happy to have it and named her fluffy after a cat she had when she first met her husband. I have spoken to her since, and the cat is usually sitting in her lap.

By Yolanda Pearson

One of my clients chose to have a



dog and right away named the dog Buster. She rarely leaves her home and has no caregiver or family and states that Buster keeps her company and is a great companion for her. She really enjoys that Buster barks so that if anyone comes to her house, they think she has a real live dog for her protection. This client normally calls several times a day and deals with a lot of mental health issues. She will make the phone calls to me shorter and tells me she is going to go snuggle with Buster.

The second client choose a cat. She had the cat on her lap during our visit and giggled the whole time. She first named the cat Cyber and then changed her name to Sunny and then again changed her name

to Pretty. She giggles every time she talks about the cat. The cat sleeps with her every night and she states the cat makes her feel calmer. She lives alone and only goes out to her daughters house a few nights a week for dinner. She reports the cat goes with her to her daughter's house. Her daughter reports the cat has brought her mom a lot of joy.

Another of my clients who lives in a nursing facility was given a robotic dog. He was so excited, he laughed and smiled. His brother called the Care Coordinator the following day and reported how elated the client was. The next month client is still happy with his dog and has named him Hank.



Participant Portrait

Lead: Amerigroup

CCO: Pierce County Human Services

HH Care Coordinator:

Kerri Hummel

My client has received DDA services for years and her father had been her paid caregiver until he passed away early last year. Her family stepped in to provide informal support, but the client wanted to be independent and move to an Adult Family Home.

Finding a good fit for her was challenging due to her possible language barriers. She had also only lived with family and her family wanted an all-female home with other women that had similar disabilities. Not only were we working within these constraints, but she was reassigned a new DDA Case Manager who was new to the program.

On the other hand, it was challenging to find an Adult Family Home that met my client’s requirements and also met the needs of the Adult Family Home. Many Adult Family Homes wanted a higher daily rate although the client’s care needs were low. Working with her family, we contacted several Adult

Family Homes and did site visits to determine if the home was safe and a good fit for the client.

The client's family and I decided it would be a good idea to get the DDA Ombuds involved to help with the situation. For weeks the DDA Case Manager, DDA supervisor, DDA administrator, client’s family, DDA Ombuds, and I met via Zoom to determine how to proceed.

Finally in the fall of 2021, we found a good fit. The client met the homeowner and they immediately connected. Things fell into place and client moved into her first Adult Family Home. The Health Home Care Coordinator was able to do a home visit to meet the client, family, and Adult Family Home homeowner the following week.

This has been very exciting and scary for my client as this is the first time she has been able to live without family and she finally feels "independent". Through this experience, my client has been able to remain positive and upbeat knowing that “her friend Kerri” has been able to help, support, and encourage her to meet her goals.



Commemoration months 2022

Jan	<u>National Mentoring Month</u>
Feb	<u>Black History Month</u>
Mar	<u>Irish American Heritage Month</u>
Mar	<u>Women's History Month</u>

Submit your story, resource, or ideas to the Care Coordinator Corner via our newsletter inbox:

healthhomenewsletter@dshs.wa.gov



Getting Back on Track with Heart Health

By Sara Eve Sarliker, MPH
 Cardiovascular Consultant,
 Washington State Department of
 Health, saraeve.sarliker@doh.wa.gov

February is Heart Month and the first Friday in February, the 4th, is Wear Red Day. This tradition was started to raise awareness that heart disease isn't just a "man's disease" but is a major cause of illness and death for women as well. We've made a lot of progress since the first Wear Red Day in 2004, but it's still valuable to be reminded of how much our hearts do for us, and what we can do for our hearts in return.

There are eight basic behaviors we can attend to that help our hearts. Here at the Washington State Department of Health, we call these the **Great 8**. These are:

- ♥ Be Active
- ♥ Eat Well
- ♥ Practice Wellness
- ♥ Check Your Blood Pressure
- ♥ Understand Your Blood Sugar Numbers
- ♥ Know Your Cholesterol Levels

- ♥ Steer Clear of Smoking and Vaping
- ♥ Follow Your Doctor's Recommendations

Great 8 resources are available in 28 languages and are accompanied by simple pictures to help with communication. They can even be used as coloring pages!

Whether you review this list on your own, or use it as a basis for conversation with clients, friends, or family, it can help remind you of ways to treat your heart and circula-

tory system well.









This Wear Red Day—or anytime you want to show your heart how much you appreciate it—practice one of the Great 8 topics by setting an individual health goal. It's ok to keep your goals small, small steps are great and build on each other.

If you have questions about your own heart health, schedule an appointment and check in with your healthcare provider. You can use Great 8 to help with that conversation, too!

The **Great 8** Cardiovascular and Diabetes
 Healthy Heart Behaviors

ALL "GREAT 8"

Each message below represents one of the **Great 8** recommended healthy behaviors.
 Please do one or more of the following:

 Be Active.	 Eat Well.	 Practice Wellness.	 Check Your Blood Pressure.
 Understand Your Blood Sugar Numbers.	 Know Your Cholesterol Levels.	 Steer Clear of Smoking and Vaping.	 Follow Your Doctor's Recommendations.



Impact of Partners

Pet Partners & Rural Resources

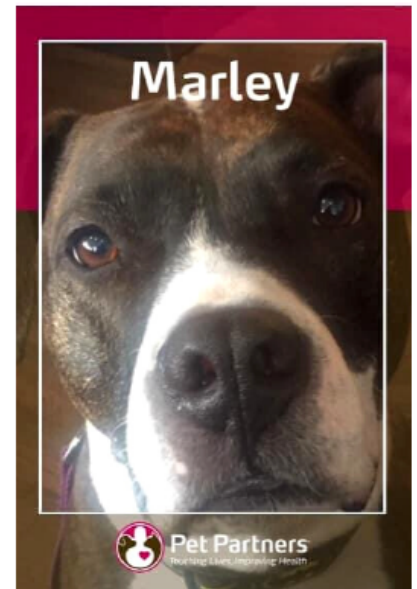
Marley's Bond *Written by Jesse Murphy-Hill from Rural Resources*

Kimberly Devich and Marley volunteer to help connect community members during the pandemic. Kimberly is a Health Home Care Coordinator at Rural Resources, and she is also a registered Pet Partners therapy animal handler. Having Marley interact with clients has helped relieve the feeling of depression and isolation. For many of our older adult clients, they have been isolated from any in-person contact for well over a year. Many of these clients are unable to have a pet of their own due to living arrangements or they are at the point they wouldn't be able to care for one. Having the chance to see Marley on a Zoom call or receive a picture/trading card in the mail, is often the highlight of their day. These highlights help connect our staff to the clients that they care for, it increases happiness and allows us to have the personal conversations necessary to ensure they are getting the medical treatment needed.

Kim and Marley have been working with Cherie as she has been confined to her bed due to severe scoliosis. Cherie states that "the connection was instantaneous. Marley was the glue that cemented the bond between two devoted creature lovers and the ones they protect and provide for." Cherie has worked with rescue animals in the past and has a passion for creating a better life for all living creatures. Cherie is a photographer and has used her love for animals and photography to help raise money for rescue animals, however, due to scoliosis it has been difficult to find the strength to do the things she loves. One common goal of Rural Resources and Pet Partners is to help clients reach their goals and increase happiness and sustainability. Since meeting Marley, Cherie states, "Kim and Marley's visits and Kim's encouraging words have been such an inspiration to me that I have begun not only walking again but taking up my camera, which formerly was my source of income."

Another client that Kim and Marley have worked with is in assisted living and has serious respiratory problems. When asked about how Marley has made an impact on the necessary health care conversations Linda states "It puts you on even ground because if you like a dog or have a dog you found something in common with each other and we both know that conversations go a lot easier if you find that one common denominator be it a dog, a horse, a cow, or a child. It all brings everything down to one level and it's very very easy to talk to someone like that because you open up."

At Rural Resources, we are constantly working with individuals and families that are going through difficult times. Therapy animals can make all the difference to some. Most recently, with the continued effects of COVID-19, isolation is one of the biggest concerns for our older adult residents. Therapy animals have helped to make a connection and fill the gap when isolation, depression, and increased health issues have been so present. Therapy animals help connect our employees and clients, which build a deeper relationship and help clients open to their real needs. Therapy animals can bring a sense of calm and security and comfort. None of this would be possible without Pet Partners and their passion for therapy animals, handlers, and the communities they serve. Pet Partners is a national leader in animal-assisted therapy and works with multiple species to reach their mission to improve human health and well-being through the power of the human-animal bond. Thank you, Pet Partners, Kim, and Marley, for making these connections possible!!



Pet Partners Trading Card



Kimberly Devich & Marley



Spotlight on Resources



Client Information & Resources Page

The Client Information and Resources webpage provides assistance, contact information and other resources for clients of the Aging and Long-Term Support Administration (AL TSA). These pages are designed to help clients more effectively navigate their services and find the help they need. The page was developed and is continually updated with the input of the Service Experience Team. Please share the link with your clients so they may have this

resource: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/home-and-community-services/client-information-and-resources>.

Service Experience Team

Do you have a client that is receiving HCS services and would love to be part of a client advisory group that helps provide feedback and input into ongoing HCS programs and services? The Service Experience Team (SET) is currently seeking up to 9 members to join the SET team. The purpose of SET is to discuss, educate, and provide feedback while representing individuals who are receiving Home and Community Services. Participation helps to promote choice, quality of life, health, independence, safety, and active engagement to programs developed and operated by HCS. The Service Experience Team members will be a voice for people receiving Long Term Support Services across the state.

The specific responsibilities of the HCS Service Experience Team include:

- ◇ Provide feedback and input into ongoing HCS programs and services;
- ◇ Review and provide input regarding cutting edge programs;
- ◇ Help identify opportunities to improve the quality of services and the client experience, and address gaps in care; and
- ◇ Promote community involvement in the support of the HCS mission and vision.

For more information or to nominate a client please visit the [Service Experience Team](#) webpage for more information or contact Nicole Dronen at nicole.dronen@dshs.wa.gov

Consent Guidance

The Consent Guidance document has been added to the Care Coordinator toolkit on the DSHS Health Home webpage.

Go to <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/stakeholders/washington-health-home-program-core-training> and find it under **Section C: Forms & Tools**

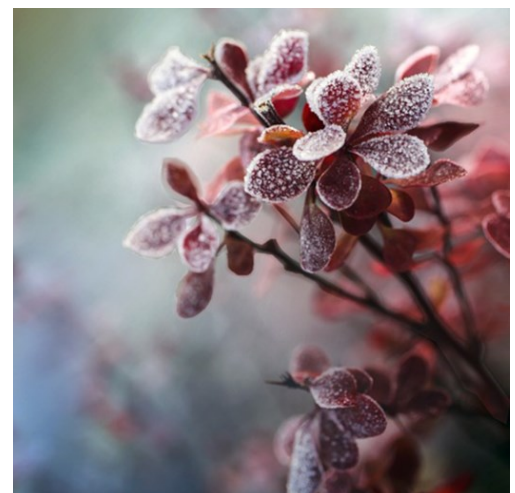
Webinar Trainings

Join us for free monthly webinar trainings designed for Health Home Care Coordinators and allied staff. Webinars are typically held from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. the second Thursday of each month.

Invitations are posted on DSHS website at [Washington Health Home Program – Training Invitations | DSHS](#) so check often for any updates to topics and links.

Upcoming topics

Jan.	Documentation & QA
13	
Feb.	Manage Goals Manage Time Please note this training will be 2 hours
10	



Building Resiliency Huddle
will be from
9a-10a.

JAN 3RD
FEB 7TH
MAR 7TH

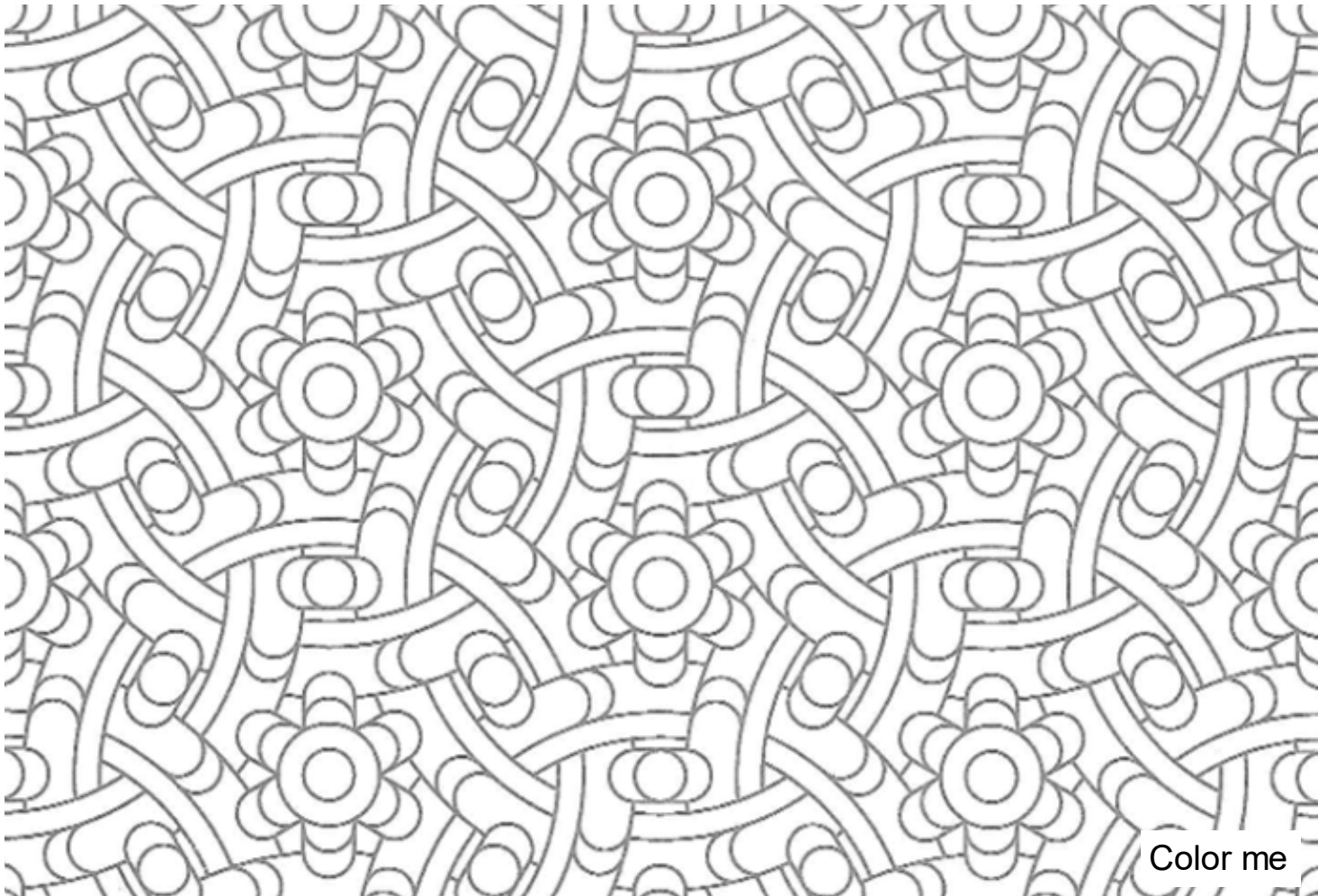
APR 4TH
MAY 2ND
JUN 6TH

JUL 11TH
AUG 1ST
SEP 12TH

OCT 3RD
NOV 7TH
DEC 5TH

Please note: July & September huddles will occur on the second Monday of the month due to holidays.

Building Resiliency Huddle Meeting Link: [Click here to join the meeting.](#)



Color me