

# The Daily Courier


e-Edition

**Subscribe Now**

For as little as \$4.50 a month

TRUSTED LOCAL NEWS LEADER FOR PRESCOTT  
AREA COMMUNITIES SINCE 1882

MON,  
SEPT. 02

WEATHER  
72.0 

SUBSCRIBER  
SERVICES

CONTACT NEWS  
US TIPS



## Pet Partners bring dogs, children, reading together



Prescott Unified School District students read to Bailey, as part of the Pet Partners of Prescott programs within the district. (PUSD/Courtesy)

Originally Published: September 1, 2019 6:37 p.m.

Share

Tweet

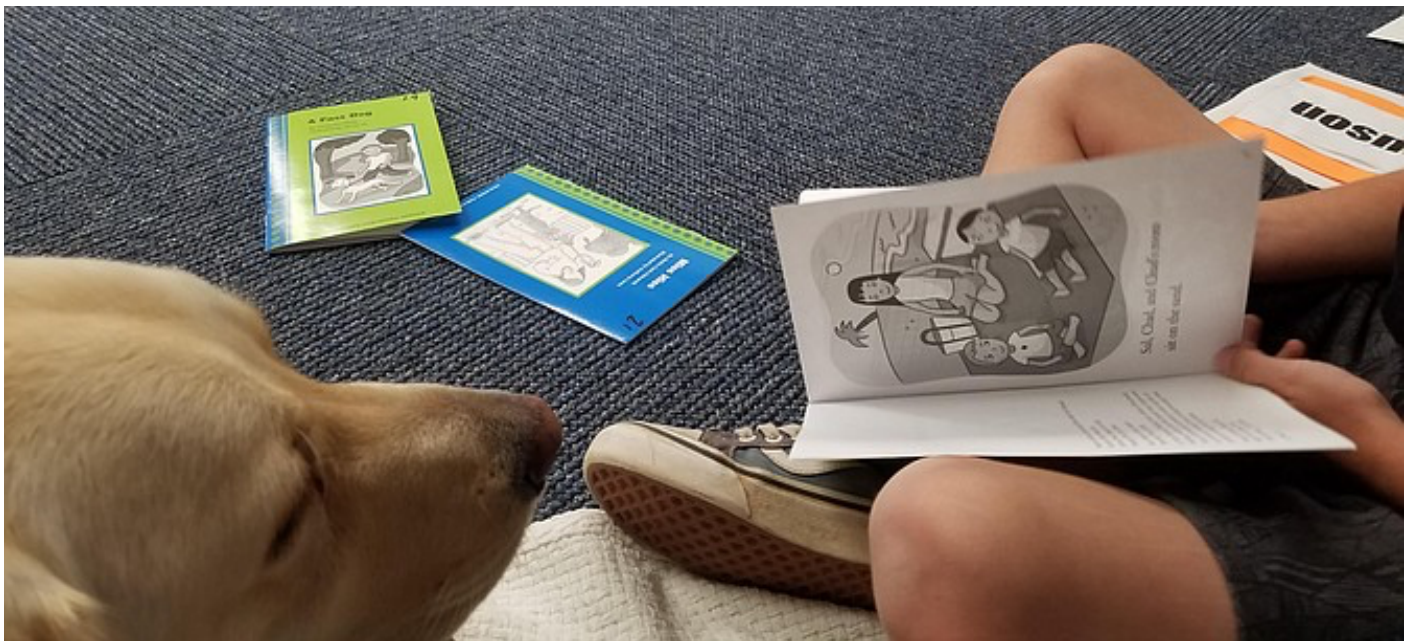


It warms the heart to see a therapy dog surrounded by a group of children reading to

him. And he is paying attention.

This happens every week at Prescott Unified School District elementary schools. The difference it can make in a child's life is unmeasurable.

Pet Partners of Prescott started as a small group out of the PAWS program at Yavapai Regional Medical Center in October 2018. It grew to more than 25 teams by this summer. The teams started working with the elementary schools and Granite Mountain social workers. Since that beginning, Pet Partners has added all of Discovery Gardens preschools, special education classes at the elementary schools and the Read with Me program at Lincoln. We also have been asked for teams at Prescott High School.



A child reads to a therapy dog as part of the Pet Partners of Prescott program in the Prescott Unified School District Elementary Schools.

What can teams do for the children? In the words of one teacher, the visit teaches the children love, acceptance, joy and that the therapy animal has the ability to make them happy. The children are also learning that the dog can help other children to be calm and comfortable with other kids and being at school. Lastly, the visits are teaching these young children a very valuable life lesson that they can practice throughout their lifetime.



Working with the social workers has been invaluable. To see a child come to the social worker crying because of a situation they are experiencing in their life and see the dog crawl into their lap is amazing. The child calms and is able to talk about his or her feelings more freely. Many people experience this calmness, this feeling of relief when petting their own pet.



Shown is a student reading to a therapy dog in the Pet Partners of Prescott program in the Prescott Unified School District Elementary schools.

The Read with Me program is all about building self-confidence. The child reads while petting the dog without interruptions. These interactions with therapy animals improve social skills among their peers. Children experience better focus and confidence while learning with therapy animals present and are more motivated to participate and maintain their motivation over time.

Pet Partners is about touching lives and improving health and well-being through the power of therapy animals. Pet Partner teams are highly trained and pass a rigorous evaluation. The team must re-evaluate every two years to maintain registration.

For more information, please visit [PetPartnersofPrescott.weebly.com](http://PetPartnersofPrescott.weebly.com).

*Information provided by Prescott Unified School District.*

Sign up for Courier e-News Alerts