

Profiles in Giving

by Lyn T. Garson, CVT

Our Companions is fortunate to have a dedicated group of volunteers and donors. Through their stories featured in this section, we hope you will become inspired to help animals in your own way.

Meet Some of Our Volunteers

Our Companions functions through volunteer support. We have over 100 volunteers without whom we would not be able to offer the variety of life-saving programs for animals. Each of our volunteers is passionate, unique and distinctively dedicated to Our Companions and animal protection. Recognized for exemplary service in 2008 are six volunteers we would like you to meet.

Name: Paul Johnson

Volunteer Since: 2006

Volunteer Position: Administrative/Office Support

Most Notably: Paul's kind "Hi, Sweetie!" greeting to each of Our Companions' office cats when he arrives for his shift.



After Hurricane Katrina, Paul and his wife, Cathy, volunteered with Best Friends and Animal Rescue New Orleans. The experience was so rewarding they searched for ways to help locally and discovered Our Companions. Now, you can find Paul busy on the computer every Tuesday at our office. Paul loves dogs but prefers cats, of which he has two.

Update: Paul has just been hired as Office Manager at Our Companions.

Name: Daryl Carbone

Volunteer Since: 2006

Volunteer Position: Canine College (Dog Training) / Animal Helpline



Most Notably: Daryl's magical ability to clear her schedule to assist with a dog behavior evaluation-anytime, day or night.

Daryl learned about Our Companions after bringing her dog Jackee to a dog training class. Daryl completed an orientation class with Our Companion's Canine Operations Director, Marie Joyner, attended a volunteer class and quickly signed up to volunteer. She loves all animals but is partial to dogs. So, how many dogs does Daryl have? "Jackee is my only animal and that is the way she prefers it," says Daryl.

Name: Jeannie Kitchens

Volunteer Since: 2004

Volunteer Position: Sterile Feral Program Trainer / Our Companions Book Keeper

Most Notably: Jeannie is Our Companions' official office supply benefactor. Thanks to Jeannie, Our Companions has not had to purchase a single office supply since 2004!



Jeannie was shown the Hartford Courant article about Our Companions shortly after finding a cat with kittens in a window well. She contacted Susan Linker for advice on how to rescue and re-home the feline family, and before she knew it she was invited to a volunteer orientation meeting. Jeannie has been volunteering, fostering, donating supplies and being an integral part of Our Companions business activities ever since. She even creates the promotional posters which advertise all of Our Companions' adoptable pets. She cares for a lovely menagerie of indoor cats and two semi-feral outdoor cats.

Name: Sue King

Volunteer Since: 2004



Volunteer Position: Animal Helpline, Ambassador

Most Notably: Sue knows of every homeless shelter dog in the tri-state area. And if you give her just a little time, you will find yourself adopting one. It's simply brilliant (or as Sue would say, "Neat!").

Sue was impressed not only by Our Companions' solid plan for the future, but also by the many programs made available to help animals. Sue attended an orientation led by Our Companions CEO, Susan Linker, and was lit up by her passion for animal welfare. Dogs and "every other animal out there" are

favorites of Sue's. She currently has only two dogs but says there would be many more "were it not for the guy in my life."

Name: Angie Pugliese

Volunteer Since: 2004

Volunteer Position: Cyber-Queen (Webmaster and Manager of e-Newsletter)

Most Notably: While Angie can't remember what she had for breakfast, she can recall every detail about her dog, Holly's, day-to-day life activities for the last three years.



Angie had just returned from visiting Best Friends Animal Sanctuary in Utah, when she picked up a copy of the Hartford Courant article about Our Companions and the organization's sanctuary plans. She knew immediately this was a project she wanted to be involved in. Angie believes in Our Companions' mission and says those she meets through her involvement "are such a fantastic group of people who are dedicated, compassionate and committed to seeing our dream come true." The owner of both a dog and a cat, she thinks all animals are special in their own way, but if she had to pick one favorite, it would be cats. "Nothing comes close to the almighty cat," Angie says.

Name: Kim Green

Volunteer Since: 2006



Volunteer Position: Animal Helpline and Helpline Program Trainer

Most Notably: Kim has a secret superpower: finding great homes for senior cats. History will show, the world's oldest cat was re-homed by Kim.

Kim moved back to Connecticut from Boston looking for a career change. She contacted Our Companions and decided to volunteer while searching for jobs. "I learned what an incredible organization Our Companions is," says Kim, "and I've also met a lot of great people." Kim considers her work on the Animal Helpline to be "one of the hardest and most rewarding jobs" she has ever done. She has one very spoiled cat, who isn't interested at all in a feline companion. Kim's favorite animal is "definitely a cat."