



# R.E.A.D.®

# ON!

Continuing Education for R.E.A.D. Teams

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## Maggi Payne

*ITA Team # 1195 and R.E.A.D. Team #505  
1945-2022*

Our R.E.A.D. Family lost a devoted advocate and friend on October 18th. We are all saddened at the loss of our friend, colleague and advocate.

Maggi had a life full of adventures. Coming from upper NY State in 2003, she and husband Bill, along with Corgi Annie Rose, piloted their sailboat up the St. Lawrence Seaway, around the tip of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, and followed the eastern coastline of the US and around into the Gulf of Mexico, where they



*Maggi with Buddy, one of her beloved Corgi R.E.A.D. partners.*

landed in SW Florida and built their home in North Fort Myers.

It was here that she discovered R.E.A.D. and Maggi became a R.E.A.D. team in Marcy of 2005. With her Corgi partners Annie Rose, Buddy and finally Riley, she read with children at the Royal Palm Exceptional School from 2007 to 2013. Together with R.E.A.D.

team Ronnie with Sadie & Daisy, they shared

R.E.A.D. with some very “tough” kids.

Maggi wrote, “R.E.A.D. really captured my heart. I’ve never done anything so worthwhile and rewarding. It was such a success at Royal Palm Exceptional School because the teacher and the administrator totally bought into the program, and our time there each week was sacrosanct. And the fact that it was a com-

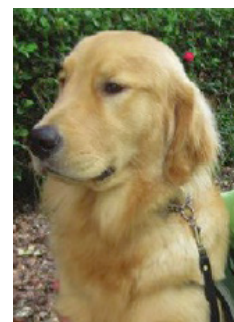
bined fourth and fifth grade meant the some of the students were with us for two years. That really made a difference.

“The students were blown away that Ronnie and the dogs and I showed up every week, and that our dogs were a part of our lives and not chained up in the back yard, and that we bathed them and brushed their teeth and spent time grooming them before every visit.”

Maggi and Ronnie and their partners continued with weekly R.E.A.D. sessions at AFCAAM (African Caribbean American Center) under Catholic Charities in Lee County. It was here that they met and worked with Sister Lynn who was extremely supportive of the R.E.A.D. program. R.E.A.D. sessions continued at the Ft. Myers Beach Library in 2008. Edgewood Academy welcomed them as R.E.A.D. Teams in 2012 and 2013.

Throughout her years in R.E.A.D., Maggi was not only an educator and an advocate, but an incomparable ambassador for R.E.A.D. She helped us bridge the gap of cultures in our International R.E.A.D. Trainings.

After many years, Maggi retired from R.E.A.D. life, studied and worked to become a Lay Minister at her Congregational Church in Cape Coral. Service Dog, Nova, came to live with Maggi in 2017. Nova helped Maggi understand and teach us all about the love, reliance, compassion, and etiquette that surround a working Service Dog.



*Maggi's Nova*

Throughout everything, Maggi showed us all how to be humble, unassuming, unpretentious, kind and compassionate. We are all better people for having had Maggi in our lives.

Godspeed, my treasured friend . . .

– Merilee Kelley

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