



Inspiring memoir

Author Eric O'Grey, left, signs 11-year-old Brady Chase's copy of "Walking with Peety" during the Community Reads event on Thursday evening. Chase said he liked hearing about O'Grey's journey with his dog, and read the book in 10 days.

Missourian Photo/Antjea Wolff.

Seattle author shares his transformative story

By Antjea Wolff
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Eric O'Grey, author of "Walking with Peety," spoke on how companionship and a plant-based diet changed his life at the Scenic Regional Library on Thursday evening.

Dozens of people filled the meeting room at the Scenic Regional Library Union Branch to hear O'Grey's story of personal transformation which began by simply adopting a dog from a shelter.

"Walking with Peety" was chosen as this year's Community Reads book for the library.

"This year, I think our committee selected 'Walking with Peety' for several reasons," Scenic Regional Library Director Steve Campbell said. "But I think most importantly it was because of the positive uplifting message of the book. The book obviously provides a great incredible example of how people can overcome obstacles, insurmountable obstacles, and achieve their dreams."

dent Bill Clinton had on a plant-based diet, O'Grey began searching for a doctor who could help with this particular lifestyle change.

O'Grey connected with Dr. Preeti Kulkarni, who took the time to listen to him, and she managed to get him to open up about the fact he was a recluse, who ate poorly and didn't have any friends. Kulkarni gave him food advice and recipes, and told him he needed to adopt a dog.

In 2010, following the suggestion from his doctor, O'Grey adopted a middle-aged overweight dog, Peety, from his local animal shelter.

"We became so bonded," he said. "We became best friends like something I had never really experienced with another person or creature in my entire life."

O'Grey said Peety acted like he was the greatest human being on the planet, so he vowed to become the person Peety thought he was.

With taking Peety on walks and trips every day and sticking to

ing him in his arms. In the following months, O'Grey began sharing his transformation and how his dog had impacted his life, which led him to writing a book and giving inspirational talks across the country.

O'Grey later adopted a Labrador, Jake, to join him on new adventures and share his life and journey with.

After he told his story to the library patrons, O'Grey signed copies of his book for the room full of people. Brady Chase, 11, was one of the first people in line.

"I read dog books, and I loved how it was all about his journey with Peety, and then at the very end, with Jake," Chase said.

Chase said his father picked up one of the free "Walking with Peety" books while they were visiting the Washington Library, even though his father didn't think Chase would be able to read it.

"I ended up reading it in 10 days," Chase said.

Attendee Holly Hoemann said she adored

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At age 50, O'Grey weighed 340 pounds and was diabetic, taking 15 different medications. His doctor advised him that if he didn't make a drastic change, he was going to be dead in five years.

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With taking Peety on walks and trips every day and sticking to his plant-based food intake, O'Grey began losing weight and feeling healthier. Eventually, he no longer needed to take his medications, including his insulin. In less than a year, O'Grey lost 155 pounds.

In 2015, Peety passed away with O'Grey hold-

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Attendee Holly Hoemann said she adored hearing about the bond between O'Grey and his rescue dog, Peety.

"Just hearing it in his voice how much the dog had meant to him," Hoemann said, "And just about how his life did such a total 180 was great, and I just loved it."