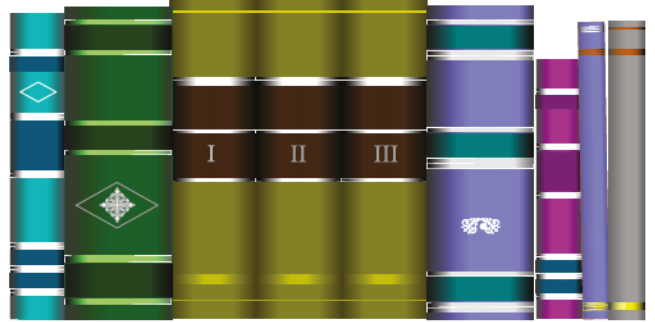




BOOKS

WHAT ARE THEY READING?





Patsy Oser reads “Up” to students in the library of Astor Elementary School.

Photos by JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian



Name: Aiden Dennis
Favorite book: “LEGO Star Wars: The Visual Dictionary,” by Simon Beecroft



Name: Sam Moss
Favorite book: “A Big Guy Took My Ball!” by Mo Willems



Name: Elizabeth Blankenship
Favorite Book: “Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale,” by Mo Willems



Name: Delaney Anderson
Favorite Book: “Let’s Go For a Drive!” by Mo Willems

The Daily Astorian invites people to submit titles of books they are reading and share a few thoughts about the work. This week, Patsy Oser, a former teacher and librarian who reads to students, passes along her observations. To submit, send to news@dailyastorian.com

Emotional connection

“The SMART reading program is one-on-one. I do a whole class. I have them for 25 minutes. Between stories, we get up and move around. I don’t have many discipline problems, ever. “My approach is to develop the listening skill. In order to understand a story, you have to totally engage. The listening part is essential. It is a skill that has to be nurtured and continued. “I teach all sorts of skills verbally, and I make it fun. If children have an emotional connection with reading at this age, they’ll stick with it. “When a child absolutely adores a story and comes up to hug me, that’s worth a million dollars to me, because I know it will stick.”

Three of Oser’s favorite reads for second-graders: “The Book With No Pictures,” by B.J. Novak “It’s pretty funny. I have to sing.”

“The Tiny Wish,” by Lori Evert “It uses a real little girl. Very believable.”

“Betty Bunny Loves Chocolate Cake,” by Michael Kaplan, illustrated by Stephane Jorisch “Very funny. I put on different voices. There are four books in the series.”

Of children’s books, Oser says:

“They print about 5,000 new titles a year. The difference between today’s books and those of years ago is the quality of the art. It is magnificent.”

Patsy Oser, a former teacher and librarian, has read over 1,500 stories to the children at Astor Elementary School over the past nine months. An unpaid volunteer, Oser reads for kindergartners, first- and second-graders. Her undergraduate degree is in education and she has a master’s degree in library science.

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THE SHIP REPORT

Global Sentinel crisscrosses Pacific on cable missions

By JOANNE RIDEOUT
Special to The Daily Astorian

The other day I got to do the coolest thing. Well, cool if you’re a ship geek like me. I was invited to spend the day and take a tour of a ship that has intrigued me for years. I drove to Portland, to the shipyard at Swan Island, and went aboard the cable ship Global Sentinel. I learned that she’s every bit as high tech and fascinating as I imagined she was. The Global Sentinel is an unusual vessel that we occasionally see passing by Astoria on her way to Portland and eventually back again, out to sea. She’s big and gray, not military gray, but kind of a pearl gray. She has an elongated bow with what looks like a big pulley in it. She’s out of the ordinary, and her job is too. Her mission is to install and repair telecommunications cable on the bottom of the ocean. She crisscrosses the Pacific on a regular basis, between Oregon and places like Hawaii and Japan. Look at a map of these cables across the world’s oceans and you see a complex web. There are at least a dozen cable networks con-



ALEX PAJUNAS — The Daily Astorian
KMUN General Manager Joanne Rideout is the voice of The Ship Report.

necting the U.S. West Coast and Asia. The cables carry (in simple terms) electronic data — 0s and 1s — as the ship’s master, Capt. Grant Thomas, told me. Contained in that data can be everything from phone calls to banking data and lots in between. Stuff we take for granted. Stuff we depend on. This ship has the capability of carrying thousands of miles of cable on board and painstakingly burying it on the ocean bottom. The cable itself is deceptively narrow, maybe about the thickness of your thumb, but it’s hardy. It has special casings to

protect it from, among other things, being crushed by undersea landslides or bitten by sharks. A lot can happen on the ocean floor. The bottom of the ocean is like the surface of the waterless parts of the world, filled with valleys, canyons and mountains. When I asked what they do when they encounter, for example, the Mariana Trench (about seven miles deep), the answer was simple: they string the cable around it. On board, they have sophisticated computer systems to help keep proper tension on the cables when they’re setting them down

on the ocean floor and picking them up for repair. (It’s all about tension, the captain said many times.) They have a remote-controlled vehicle that goes way down to the bottom, far deeper than any humans can go, to repair cable and assess equipment. On the surface, computers keep the ship centered over a particular spot while they do their work. This impressive array of gear requires an equally impressive group of professionals to operate it and maintain it. The crew members I met seemed delighted with their jobs and proud to talk about what they do. The ship is big, close to 500 feet long. But, on the bridge there’s no hefty ship’s wheel. Tiny “go-kart” sized wheels and joysticks do the job. This is a ship for the 21st century. Walking around on the Sentinel’s many decks on a guided tour, we went up, up, up many flights of stairs to get to the bridge, then back down, down, downstairs again into the multiple levels of the engine room and work areas, where technicians work with cable and parse it out through a massive series of heavy winches. Going up and down all

those flights, I had no questions about how mariners on this ship get exercise at sea. I love being on ships. The narrow hallways, the ample linoleum, the watertight, heavy doors. The thick, round windows (portholes) to protect from damage at sea. Then, unexpectedly, a big comfortable lounge for guests and a cozy dining room. Capt. Thomas’ office was spacious and elegantly appointed, with lots of varnished wood. I asked him if things moved around in his office at sea. He smiled and said, “Anything that’s not secured — you’ll find out about it.” I’m grateful to Scott McMullen of the Oregon Fishermen’s Cable Committee for inviting me on this adventure. The occasion was an OFCC board meeting on board the ship. Scott and his group have, over the years, forged many positive alliances between trawler fishermen and companies that also conduct business on the ocean floor. I saw a lot of mutual respect at this gathering, a meeting of the minds between fishermen, industry officials and decision makers. On the day I visited the Global Sentinel, the crew

was preparing for a trip across the Pacific on another cable mission. I imagined her making her way through the ocean swells with the sun glinting on the water, following the great circle route to Hawaii. Part of me wished I could take that trip, too. On the way out of the shipyard, I saw lots of vessels in various stages of repair and maintenance: a ship-sized barge under construction; a military missile tracking ship; and the Essayons, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dredge in dry dock, looking even more gigantic than she does at sea. So many interesting stories. Plenty of things to talk about; lots of stories for another day. Joanne Rideout is general manager of Coast Community Radio (KMUN-FM) in Astoria. She’s also the creator and producer of The Ship Report, a radio show and podcast about All Things Maritime. You can hear The Ship Report on Coast Community Radio at 8:48 a.m. weekdays at 91.9FM, streaming at www.coastradio.org. Podcast available on The Ship Report website at www.shipreport.net.



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