

# Uniform dedication — to others

## Astoria woman featured in new book saluting military spouses

By **PATRICK WEBB**  
FOR COAST WEEKEND

**M**ilitary spouses rarely earn recognition. But anyone who has served will readily acknowledge they make a difference.

“Behind the Scenes: The Tales of Military Spouses Making a Difference,” a book published this summer, seeks to highlight some of those 1.1 million unsung heroes.

Those featured include Stacey Benson, a new resident of Astoria whose husband, Petty Officer First Class Larry Benson, has joined the crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast as a maritime law enforcement specialist.

The book was coordinated by Cara Loken, 2016 Armed Forces Insurance National Guard Spouse of the Year. Its stories highlight 30 spouses in all the Armed Forces, husbands as well as wives, some of whom are civilians who had prior service careers.

They were selected because they all had another common theme to their lives: helping others.

“I kept hearing story after story of the life-changing things that spouses everywhere were doing, in addition to meeting and conquering their own day-to-day challenges,” said Loken, a craft store owner based in Nebraska who encourages veterans to explore the arts to alleviate post-traumatic stress.

While some of the writers have specific “helping” occupations — like life coach, mediator, counselor and clinical psychologist — the book’s stories include those of an artist, a real estate salesman, a broadcaster, an attorney, an author, and teachers at middle school and university levels.

“When these women and men see a need, they fill it,” Loken said. “It was important to me to put these stories together so all Americans know just how very remarkable the people behind our service members are. I’m sure the tales will inspire others to find their own way to have a lasting impact.”

Continued on Page 15



PHOTO COURTESY WINEGEART PHOTOGRAPHY  
Stacey Benson and her husband, Petty Officer First Class Larry Benson, a law enforcement specialist who has just begun serving aboard the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast, homeported in Astoria.



### THE BOOK

“Behind the Scenes: The Tales of American Military Spouses Making a Difference”

CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform

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222 pp

On sale via Amazon

\$13.95

All proceeds benefit charities nominated by segment authors; Stacey Benson’s group is the Semper Fi Fund.

For more details, see [www.semperfund.org](http://www.semperfund.org)

For more details about the other contributors to the book, see [www.facebook.com/amilitaryspouselegacyproject](http://www.facebook.com/amilitaryspouselegacyproject)