

Books for reluctant young readers

Have you been trying to convince a youngster you know that reading can be fun, not a chore? Two new juvenile fiction books, aimed at ages 3 to 8, may help you win the day.

I find it rather curious that both books, so similar in purpose, were published in the same month by the same publisher. On top of that coincidence, it's also interesting that while Pelican Publishing is located in Louisiana, it has tapped into Northwest talent for both of these stories.

Not that any of that will be consequential to the kids who get their hands on these books, so let's get on with

the review!

Poulsbo, Washington, author Kimberly Long Cockroft has had several stories published in children's magazines, but "Reading Beauty" looks to be her first juvenile fiction hardcover. This story follows best friends Gabe and Ellie, who love to hang out together playing soccer, chewing bubble gum and riding bikes.

Another thing they have in common is that neither of them likes to read, until one day Ellie makes the mistake of opining that reading is boring — right in front of the school librarian, Ms. Molly.

In the blink of an eye and the ominous shivering of a potted plant, kindly Ms. Molly momentarily turns tall and terrible, and casts an enchantment upon Ellie: that she will fall into a deep read forevermore.

Sure enough, Ellie is mysteriously captivated by the next book she sets eyes upon, and from then on Gabe cannot convince her to do anything besides read, read, read. His friend's fixation with books becomes so pronounced that even the mayor shows up, with a news truck not far behind, to address the situation.

It appears that only one person can help Ellie snap

out of her reading trance — and that's Gabe — but can he deliver the cure without succumbing to the curse?

With colorful illustrations by Mary Grace Corpus, "Reading Beauty" demonstrates that there are books on every topic under the sun, and promises that even kids who profess not to like books can wind up finding something fun to read.

If you're looking for a high-energy barrel-of-laughs book for that same pre-K to second-grade age range, check out Eric Ode's latest swashbuckler. In "Paulina and the Pirate's Hat," the Bonney Lake, Washington, author/illustrator throws to-

gether a young heroine who loves to read with a shipful of zany buccaneers.

They are led by a captain who has a penchant for alliterative expletives — Bilge rats and barnacles! Fish bones and flippers! — and a hankering for a fine chapeau. This prompts a rollicking escapade across the seven seas in search of the finest hat-making materials available.

Ode's illustrations are bright and cartoonish — serviceably amusing, if not accomplished.

But where this book really sparkles is in the zippy pacing, the zest for knowledge, the humor and the

"Paulina and the Pirate's Hat"
By Eric Ode
Pelican Publishing
32 pp
\$16.95

"Reading Beauty"
By Kimberly Long Cockroft
Pelican Publishing
32 pp
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crackerjack word choice.

Sit down with a youngster today and read with them!

The Bookmonger is Barbara Lloyd McMichael, who writes this weekly column focusing on the books, authors and publishers of the Pacific Northwest. Contact her at bkmonger@nwlinc.com.

word nerd

By RYAN HUME
FOR COAST WEEKEND

HERON

[HER•ƏN]

noun

1. with 68 identified species, any number of long-legged, fish-spearing birds of the family Ardeidae. Some members of this family are called egrets or bitterns rather than herons, but they are all kin. Known to frequent both freshwater and coastal areas, herons are often identifiable by the swoop of their long,

S-shaped necks and thin, pointed slivers of beak. The most common species of this wading bird on the North Coast are the Great blue heron and the Green heron.

Origin

Heron first enters Middle English circa 1300 as heiron, emerging from the Old French hairon or eron by way of the Proto-Germanic haigrō, which means to "scream, screech or caw" (the modern French is the similar héron). Both heron and egret, the name for some of the species' sister birds, arise from this same root, though bittern has a different backstory that also refers to the birds' call. According to the ancient Roman author, philosopher and naturalist Pliny the Elder, the bittern was known for its booming call during mating season, which resulted in the Gallo-Roman butitaurus, a



TRACY HALE PHOTO

A heron eats a fish for lunch in this photo, shot in Warrenton by Tracy Hale, of Astoria. The photo placed in the Top 25 of the 2014 Coast Weekend Photo Contest.

portmanteau from the Latin butionem, meaning "bittern" and taurus, meaning "bull." The modern form is first recorded in English in 1510.

"Patience proved a virtue for Seaside developers Bruce and Max Ritchie.


"For more than a decade, they've submitted

plans for the 15-acre plot of land on the corner of South Wahanna Road and Avenue S known as Blue Heron Pointe."

— R.J. Marx, "Seaside subdivision gets go-ahead," *The Daily Astorian*, Feb. 7, 2018

"The cry of the night herons I cannot describe,

except someone has said it gives the suggestion that the bird has swallowed a very unappetizing frog and is trying hard to unswallow it. The 'squawk' sings at his best from midnight to daybreak...."

— "In a Village of Blue Herons with the Camera," *The Sunday Oregonian*, Aug. 28, 1904, P. 30 

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