

A 'COZY' MURDER MYSTERY

Long Beach author Jan Bono signs copies of latest book, 'Crab Bait,' on July 14 in Ilwaco

By **PATTY HARDIN**
FOR COAST WEEKEND

Summer is here, the time is right for lighthearted beach reading, and Long Beach author Jan Bono is doing her best to satisfy readers' needs.

Bono will have a book signing at Olde Towne Coffee Cafe (formerly Olde Towne Trading Post) in Ilwaco, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, July 14. Her latest book, "Crab Bait," a cozy mystery set on the Long Beach Peninsula, is the third installment in a planned eight-book Sylvia Avery Mystery series.

"Normally I release my new books in the fall, just prior to the holiday bazaar season," Bono said, "but this book is special."

People have been stopping her on the street to ask how soon she'll finish it, she said.

A cozy mystery is a very specific genre — no graphic violence, no obscene language, no explicit sex scenes. It involves an amateur sleuth in a small town who works with the police department to solve crimes. There is a quirky cast of characters and lots of humor.

"It's like 'Murder She Wrote' on paper, only I think my stories are funnier," Bono said.

The author possesses a ready sense of humor and a deep love and knowledge of history — and both are integral to her mysteries. Consider the name on the back of the boat featured on the "Crab Bait" cover.

"Ilwaco was initially called Unity in celebration of the end of the Civil War," Bono said.

Skyler Walker, manager of Tangly Cottage Gardening, proofread the book. "It lovingly and wittily captures the history, culture and ambience of a fictionalized



COLIN MURPHEY PHOTO

Author Jan Bono, of Long Beach, Wash.

IF YOU GO

Book signing with Jan Bono, author of 'Crab Bait'

When: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, July 14

Where: Olde Towne Coffee, 108 First St. N., Ilwaco, Wash.

For more information, call Bono: 360-642-4932

Long Beach Peninsula," he said.

"Crab Bait" was printed by Gorham Printing in Centralia, Wash.

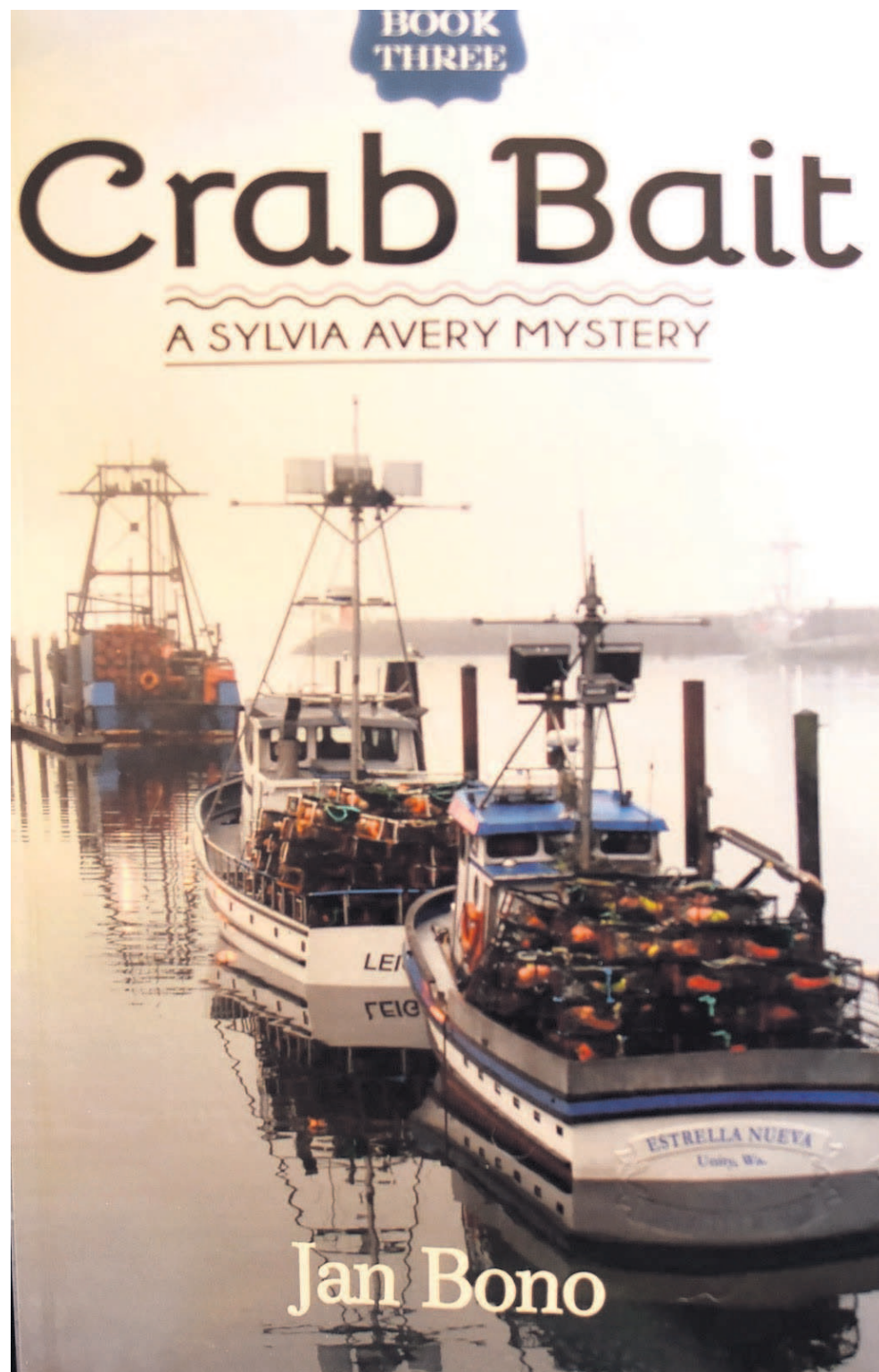
Back on track

Bono's series began with "Bottom Feeders" and "Starfish," both published in 2015. Then Bono faced a few personal challenges.

"My fiancé died, I had open heart surgery to remove a benign tumor living in my right atrial, and my house was broken into," she said.

"Every time I had my feet back under me, boom! Something else happened to postpone writing 'Crab Bait.' But it's here now, and I'm thrilled."

Look closely at the boat on the cover, The Estrella Nueva.



COLIN MURPHEY PHOTO

The cover of 'Crab Bait,' by Long Beach, Wash., author Jan Bono.

"It means 'new star,'" Bono said. Boats are frequently named after women. So we have Estrella Nueva — New Star — Nova. "Nova, one of the characters in 'Crab Bait,' is the wife of the guy who owned the boat, and he named the boat after her."

In "Crab Bait," the Merry Widows of the North Beach Peninsula may be just a tad too merry. They've formed a geriatric belly-dancing troupe, The Veiled Rainbow,

and are having the time of their lives spending the insurance money they received when their respective husbands died — deaths that happened under mysterious circumstances.

Bono's laugh fills the room as she talks about her ongoing series.

"I'm very fortunate to have a loyal following. And I'm extremely happy to be back on track," she said. 