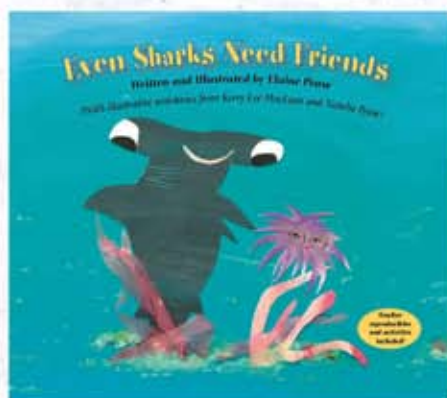


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"I came to appreciate what good books really were and realized how much I needed them and they gradually gave me a stoical confidence in myself: I was not alone in this world and I would not perish!"

— Maxim Gorky

Undersea acquaintances



IF YOU GO

WHO • Elaine Pease reads from and signs "Even Sharks Need Friends"

WHEN • 11 a.m. today

WHERE • Borders Books and Music, 1101 S. Hover St., Longmont

CALL • (303) 684-6446

Boulder kids' author charms again with 'Even Sharks Need Friends'



Even Sharks Need Friends by Elaine Pease, with Kerry Lee MacLean and Natalie Pease. PeasePod Books, 42 pp. \$15.95.

By Anna Stewart

For the Camera

It won't take long for readers to dive into this book and engage all the senses. Each page of textured collage will make you want to touch the glittery coral, listen closely as the Swimmy Buffet and the Coral Waver Band plays, and admire the stick-on cloth-

ing the sharks wear. And that's just the pictures.

Then you'll meet Hammy, the lonely hammerhead shark, and learn of his quest for a friend. Hammy is not very good at being a friend, and the other hammerheads make fun of his large size. He eats to feel better — a theme more adults will relate to than kids, but it's handled tactfully.

Hammy meets the near-sighted sea

urchin Gloompa but rejects her for the same reasons he is rejected: size (she's too small), differences (she wears glasses), and his own lack of social skills. He tries to join the Coral Waver Band but he can't play conch. Gloompa can, though, and he finally sees she has more to offer than he thought. He makes a kind and generous offer to her and they slowly become friends.

While the story is both entertaining and thought-provoking, the story behind the book is also worth telling. Elaine Pease, a Boulder resident, worked with the popular Boulder children's book illustrator and author Kerry Lee MacLean (author of the delightful "Pigs Over Boulder" series and spin-offs) and Pease's 10-year-old daughter Natalie, who painted the ocean backgrounds. In the back pages, they explain the process of making the book.

From their stories of fact-checking with a marine biologist to sharing that much of the paper came from Boulder's own Two-Hands Paperie, the team makes bookmaking seem not only possible, but encouraged. Their enthusiasm bubbles from every page of the story and in the extra pages of activities and the detailed information of how they made the book. It's a great example of self-publishing that works.

"Even Sharks Needs Friends" mirrors the challenges for young and old to be and find real friends. It does it with grace, boldness and a charming cast of undersea characters.