

# 'The Ship Report' celebrates nearly two decades on air

Rideout introduces locals, visitors to maritime activity

BY ANDY CAMERON

On a dreary February day in the early 2000s, a chance interaction sparked a cultural phenomenon that is now as iconic to the Columbia-Pacific as the column on Coxcomb Hill.

In the parking lot of the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce, vacationing Joanne Rideout, an Arizonan with coastal roots, struck up a conversation with a man tending the organization's plants.

After asking the man why he enjoyed living in the town, Rideout received a brief but fortuitous answer: "I'm here for the ships." Though she kept her eyes peeled for river traffic, Rideout left Astoria without spying any of the now ubiquitous Columbia River ships. She did, however, depart with a realization that the desert sun had depleted the once bountiful salt in her veins.

A few years later, while seated at the control desk of KMUN, Rideout gazed through the picture window and finally laid eyes upon the steel hulls plying the river's currents. Now working for the station and residing in Astoria, she grew curious about the passing ships.

A local Columbia River bar pilot was then hosting a classical music program and grew to be a trusted source of answers for Rideout's growing maritime curiosity. "I asked him a lot of questions," she said. "I found out that people didn't know much about the river. I tried a radio segment on ships, but I wasn't sure that people would like it."

Her uncertainty was soon quelled. Listeners embraced the new source of information and Rideout's show, "The Ship Report," soon became a regular fixture in the lives of North Coast residents. Now marking nearly 20 years on the air, the show has provided Astoria residents and visitors with a connection to a mysterious and engaging world ripe with intrigue.

See Page 7



ABOVE: Radio host Joanne Rideout poses for a portrait beside a plaque.



LEFT: A ship is surrounded by a flock of birds as it drifts along the Columbia.

Photos by Andy Cameron

## The Ship Report

Hosted by Joanne Rideout

On air from 8:48 to 8:58 a.m. on Mondays through Fridays on KMUN/KTCB

[www.kmun.org](http://www.kmun.org)

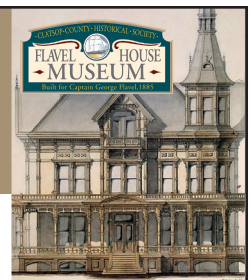
**PRESERVE  
YESTERDAY**

**INFORM  
TODAY**

**INSPIRE  
TOMORROW**

Four distinctively different museums all housed in historic buildings  
—for you and your family to explore during your visit. Join Us.

**EXPERIENCE ASTORIA.**



**FLAVEL HOUSE MUSEUM** **HERITAGE MUSEUM** **OREGON FILM MUSEUM** **UPPERTOWN FIREFIGHTERS MUSEUM**  
**ASTORIAMUSEUMS.ORG** @astoriamuseums 503.325.2203 PO BOX 88 ASTORIA OR 97103