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“There’s a magic when a ship goes by,” Rideout said. “Stand on the waterfront and it is easy to become transfixed by them. The ships connect us to a wider world. There’s something kind of exotic about them.”

The onset of the pandemic also did much to illustrate the importance of both “The Ship Report” and KMUN. “I went from working in a studio to working at home,” Rideout said. “I was also acting as news director and was able to do the live news from our house,” she added.

Realizing that the local community was looking to the station to know what was going on, Rideout embraced her responsibility of remaining a stable source of information. “I wanted to be a voice that people can count on. I needed to be accurate, calm, and comforting. And lighthearted when I could be,” Rideout said.

Though now retired from KMUN, Rideout has no plans to sunset “The Ship Report.” “I have no desire to stop and will continue to produce the show at home,” she said. Additionally, she plans to possibly write a few books, including one that highlights a 2010 trip aboard an oceangoing gypsum ship. “I would like to get back on another vessel and bring things to people that they may never know or experience,” she said. “I want to continue to highlight the humanity of the maritime world and show what it is like to be at sea for four months, away from family.”

For readers wishing to partake in a ship watching adventure of their own, Rideout recommends taking a stroll along the Astoria Riverwalk and vis-



Photos by Andy Cameron

ABOVE: A cruise ship docks beneath the Astoria Bridge at sunset. BELOW: The Explorer Africa, a cargo ship, sits anchored in the river.

iting both Pier 39 and the Columbia River Maritime Museum. To assist ship watchers with identifying the various types of river traffic, Rideout has also published a foldout field guide, available online and at the Maritime Museum.

Reflecting on the draw that river traffic has with both visitors and locals of Astoria, Rideout is quick to illustrate the interconnections between everyday life and the seafaring sector. “Ships are a window to a wider world, and I am glad that people are tuning into the maritime

aspect of where we are,” Rideout said.

“The ships bring people from everywhere and they bring most of what we purchase. Raw ingredients leave the river and come back as manufactured goods. It is a small planet, and we all have to work together,” she added.

