

Ship Report Transcript

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

By Joanne Rideout

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It's time for the Ship Report the show about all things maritime. I'm Joanne Rideout. It's Wednesday, May 22nd, 2024.

Well, in our Marine weather forecast, we have a weather front in the process of moving through the area. You probably noticed all that rain yesterday bringing widespread rain before breaking into showers. Seas have been becoming increasingly steep and that will continue through today and then subside on Thursday. High pressure returns on Thursday, followed by another weather system on Friday into Saturday, accompanied by steeper waves yet again. So we'll have, at least in theory, a little break in between fronts on Thursday, at least for part of the day. We have a small craft advisory in effect through this afternoon. Northwest winds today 20 to 25 knots, gusting up to 30 seas, 8 to 11 feet. Wave detail, northwest six feet at 7 seconds apart. Northwest, 11 feet at 10 seconds and southwest two feet at 15 seconds. And there's a chance of showers in the morning.

Well, a quick look at our ship schedule and then we're going to talk more about the Coast Guard today. And the Coast Guard overseas actually got an interesting comment from a listener. And I thought it would be an interesting detail to follow up on that. Our U.S. Coast Guard is not just in our territorial waters, but is also overseas. But first, a look at our ship schedule. We have an interesting vessel in Astoria today, the Frosty. She used to be a regular visitor here and has come into the river many times over the years. She is a fish processor arriving from Vancouver, British Columbia, headed for the Port of Astoria, I believe, to Bornstein Seafoods there. She will arrive at the dock there, probably at the Port of Astoria, probably by about 10:30 a.m. and leave by about 2 p.m. today.

And we have the Erithiani arriving from China headed for our Astoria Anchorage, corn, soy or wheat eventually up in Kalama is where she's headed, to pick that cargo up, and will be in the Astoria Anchorage by about 8:30 p.m.. And we have the Global Mermaid arriving from Port Angeles, headed to the Longview Anchorage. She's going to be picking up logs at the Port of Longview. Eventually she will pass Astoria around 10:30 p.m. and be in Longview by about 2 a.m. on Wednesday.

Well, this week we've seen the arrival in Astoria of our new Coast Guard cutter, the David Duren. And by new, I mean not just new to us, but that she is also a brand new ship that will be commissioned here in June. I was talking yesterday about that new ship, which is part of a fleet of new Coast Guard vessels called FRCs or fast response cutters, which are smaller than the medium endurance cutters that we've had here previously, the Alert and the Steadfast, but which are new and high tech and efficient. And I was talking about the other places around the U.S. that these FRCs are being deployed and in addition, some places overseas.

And a listener wrote to me to comment that most people probably think of the U.S. Coast Guard as being purely a domestic military presence when actually they're overseas, too. So I thought it would be interesting to talk about that today.

Here's a little bit from Wikipedia about the Coast Guard overall. "The United States Coast Guard is the maritime security search and rescue and law enforcement service branch of the United States Armed Forces and one of the country's eight uniformed services. The service is a maritime military multi-

mission service unique among the United States military branches for having a maritime law enforcement mission with jurisdiction in both domestic and international waters. And a federal regulatory agency mission as part of its duties. It's the largest Coast Guard in the world, rivalling the capabilities and size of most navies, close quote. So that's Wikipedia. The Coast Guard has a 13.4 or \$5 billion fiscal budget for 2024 - 41,700 active duty personnel, 7800 reservists and 8300 civilian employees. That makes it less than one quarter the size of the U.S. Marine Corps.

It is the only military service funded outside the Department of Defense since it is part of the Department of Homeland Security and operates under that department during peacetime in times of war. The Coast Guard could be transferred in whole or in part to the U.S. Department of the Navy under the Department of Defense, by order of the president or by act of Congress.

The Coast Guard is divided into two area commands, the Atlantic area and the Pacific area. The areas are divided further into nine district commands. The Atlantic area includes five district commands covering the eastern United States, the Atlantic Ocean, the Great Lakes and the Gulf of Mexico. The Pacific area includes four district commands covering the western U.S. and the Pacific Ocean.

Here in Astoria, we are part of what's called District 13, which, according to the U.S. Coast Guard Web site for that district is made up of Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. More than 3000 active duty and reserve members, civilian employees and Coast Guard auxiliaries are stationed in the Pacific Northwest. However, the Coast Guard has a robust international presence, including three permanent international units. The Coast Guard has a presence in over 160 countries worldwide.

I thought it would also be interesting to talk a little more about U.S. Coast Guard ships. Another interesting bit of detail about the Coast Guard is that many of their vessels are called cutters, even though they have specialized functions. In fact, any coast Guard vessel over 65 feet long is called a cutter.

The origin of the word cutter hails back to sailing vessels and their sail plans. And a cutter was and is to this day a sailing vessel with two or more head sails. So two jibs or maybe other kinds of sails that are forward of the base of the mast. And you see that on some recreational boats. My boat, when I first got it, was rigged as a cutter with two jibs and toward the bow there before the mast. Now, so that's a very old word, cutter, that has been adapted for other uses within, say, the Coast Guard.

Within the Coast Guard, Coast Guard cutters are color coded in terms of their uses. And by color coded, I mean, their hull colors are specific to their roles within the agency. Enforcement cutters, like the Steadfast, Alert and the David Durran have white hulls, buoy tenders like Astoria's Elm (stationed at Tomgou Point) have black hulls and ice breakers like the Polar Star base in Seattle have red hulls. So you can easily tell what the function of a given cutter is by the color of her hull.

Now, it's interesting to note about coast guards in general. We tend to think of the Coast Guard as being our Coast Guard, the U.S. Coast Guard. But it's interesting to note that we are not the only nation to have a Coast Guard. Other nations do as well. And you see Canadian Coast Guard ships here on the Columbia during the Rose Festival in June, coming down here to visit as part of the festival.

Most coastal nations, in fact, have their own Coast Guard agencies that tend to be part of each country's military. So if you get into trouble on the water in the territorial waters of another country, it will be their Coast Guard that will respond to any water emergencies. And the U.S. Coast Guard partners with other Coast guards and navies around the world, the U.S. Coast Guard has forums with Coast guards

and maritime organizations from Canada, China, Japan, Korea and Russia. These forums provide information sharing, international cooperative efforts and sustainable fisheries management practices.

Our Coast Guard also partners with other U.S. government agencies, such as the Department of Defense and the U.S. State Department.

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