



The Oregon 97-1052 10/9/7

Robert Foster, a crew member aboard the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Glacier, hugs his wife, Jeanne, Thursday when the ship arrived in Portland after a six-month antarctic cruise. The 31-

year-old ship is expected to be decommissioned in early July after Coast Guard officials decided needed repairs on the vessel would be too expensive.

Glacier's last cruise ends in Portland

By MICHAEL ROLLINS
of The Oregonian staff

The noise of a cannon, plumes of spray from fireboats and more than 100 eager relatives, friends and admirers greeted the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Glacier at its final homecoming late Thursday afternoon.

The 31-year-old research ship is expected to be decommissioned in early June because needed repairs would be too costly. The 308-foot vessel first arrived in Portland in May 1985 from Long Beach, Calif., and returned Thursday from a six-month antarctic cruise.

The ship pumped an estimated \$63 million annually into the area's economy, said Lt. Cmdr. Tom Pearson of the Coast Guard. All of the officers and crew of 315 have been assigned to new duty stations.

The cost of refitting the ship would have exceeded \$21 million, Coast Guard officials said last January. Before its last departure, the Glacier underwent \$5 million in repairs, which

originally had been estimated to cost \$1.5 million.

The decommissioning was met with relief by most of the crew and visitors as a morale booster, said crew member Ruth Olson, a Salem native. Former Coast Guard cutters have more amenities that make cruises more comfortable, she said.

Despite efforts by Oregon's congressional delegation, no replacement Coast Guard vessel is scheduled to be stationed in Portland.

Patricia Holter, director of the Welcome the Navy and Coast Guard committee, said the U.S. Navy will send a ship to Portland in May for a \$20 million overhaul. A promotional video featuring the Glacier will be made in efforts to lure more ships to the city, she said.

Holter and Multnomah County Commissioner Pauline Anderson were part of a large crowd out in force Thursday to greet the Glacier, along with the Royal Fusiliers and the Stetsons Band. The Harriet Lane Landing Party gave the loudest reception — six blasts from a Civil War cannon.

While other cities may view a ship's retirement with a yawn, "For us, we get a ship like me, so nuts," Holter said.

"We really have busted our pick or, and then feel at home here," Anderson said.

"In Seattle, they could care less when their ship came in," said Gayle Hudson as she her two daughters waited for her husband Michael. "I've never lived anywhere where everybody other than the people on the ship cared."

Renee Foster, 4 and sister ScamnorL 7, carried signs reading "Welcome to Daddy" and "I love you Daddy."

"We'll spend some family time together tonight, then the girls will spend the evening with friends," said Gerie Hudson. "They been missing's dead as much as I've been missing a husband."

Some families of crew members said they enjoyed Portland as a duty station. "I love Portland," said Carolyn Hilliges, whose husband George, served on the Glacier.

Metro/Northwest digest

The metro area

Teachers remained on the picket lines in ten Oregon school districts Thursday, with no end in

Public Utility Commission won confirmation by a Senate committee Thursday. Page C10

Students cheer Pri

Madison High School stu