

# OUT & ABOUT

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

## It's time for the 20th annual FisherPoets Gathering

This week's Coast Weekend, is a special edition (and a large one!). We've once again partnered with the FisherPoets Gathering to bring you the official

2017 FisherPoets Gathering program.

You can find the program on Pages 13 to 20.

With its own cover, the program both fits snugly in Coast Weekend and is

a middle pull-out section readers can remove. It will help fisherpoet fans easily navigate their way around the various venues and special events of the 20th annual Gathering, which runs Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 24, 25 and 26 in downtown Astoria.

Pull the program out to carry with you as you traverse the Gathering from venue to venue. Or, keep it in Coast Weekend and read up on all the fun events happening in the region this weekend between sets of fisherpoetry.

For an introduction to the Gathering, make sure you don't miss the Coast Weekend cover story on Page 10, which lays out some history and what Gathering-goers can ex-

pect this year.

I've attended the Gathering four times. The combination of labor-intense, blue-collar work stories with literary form is enlightening and inspiring.

At the Gathering, speakers on stage tell many stories throughout the weekend: tragedies and triumphs, homesickness, weather woes, fast friendships and hard work. Audiences listen to limericks about new boats, poems about the call of the sea, stories of heartache and loneliness, and bawdy rhymes. And all of it focuses on the art of fishing.

One thing that's striking about this event is the variety of experiences

attendees can get from it. Depending on which venue you visit, on which night, and which fisherpoets are on stage, the feelings, mood and over-arching experience you walk away with can differ from that of your neighbor.

Are you part of the dark crowd in the Voodoo Room? Do you enjoy the bustle of the Wet Dog Cafe? What about the intimacy of KALA? Or perhaps you listen on KMUN 91.9 FM, broadcast live from the Astoria Event Center. Are you going to watch films at the Columbian Theater? Or do you want to turn your own hand to writing in the on-site poetry contest?

There's an endless array of stories to hear



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and activities to enjoy. You don't have to do them all — there are 90-some poets at this year's Gathering, after all. But that lively variety makes this festival something truly special.

## coast weekend

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### ON THE COVER

Renee Ahre, of Astoria, reads a poem titled "Damn Sea Lions" at the Astoria Event Center at last year's FisherPoets Gathering.

PHOTO BY JOSHUA BESSEX

See story on Page 10

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