

# Welcome to the 2018 FisherPoets Gathering

One of my favorite Northwestern poets, Richard Hugo, began his 1980 poem “The Towns We Know and Leave Behind, the Rivers We Carry With Us” with a verse I have never been able to get out of my head.

*I forget the names of towns without rivers.*

*A town needs a river to forgive the town.*

*Whatever river, whatever town*

*it is much the same.*

*The cruel things I did I took to the river.*

*I begged the current: make me better.*

There is maybe nothing more emblematic of a Northwestern sense of place than water; the sleet grey winters and ubiquitous rainfall, the creeks, sloughs, sounds and bays. Of course the salmon rivers that have defined the history of population and colonization in the territory, all of it meandering out into the Pacific Ocean.

Richard Hugo has been called a eulogist of Northwestern rivers, but I find his writing to be as much a celebration as it is a critique — reflections as much on the internal lives of the people who have shaped our landscape as on the external region of the natural world. He regarded these views as inseparably linked.

While those who make their living or live by working on the water have always been an integral part of the backdrop in the Pacific Northwest, what the FisherPoets Gathering has created is a rare platform for working people to describe the landscapes of their lives in their own voices. It should come as no surprise that the ways we classify our experiences of abundance and loss, joy and scarcity inherent in creating a life that's tied to this environment are as rich and

## GET YOUR ENTRY BUTTON!

Don't forget your entry button, good throughout the weekend at all reading and special event venues.

### Buttons are for sale at:

- The FisherPoets Gearshack (1174 Commercial St.): Noon to 10 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday
- The Liberty Theatre Box Office (1203 Commercial St.): 2 to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday
- The Wet Dog Cafe (144 11th St.): 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday
- The Astoria-Warrenton Chamber of Commerce (111 Marine Drive): 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday and Friday; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday
- And at all reading venues during the Gathering.

### Price:

\$15 each

Children and students under 18 get in free.



PATRICK DIXON PHOTO

Billie Delaney, fisherpoet

diverse as the people who make up the fishing industry.

Telling stories in bars is nothing new for most commercial fishermen, but since its inception in 1998 the Gathering has swelled to include more than a hundred writers from both coasts and Alaska, as well as films, photography and other visual art, exploring the themes that define the past, present and future of the fishing community. In addition to the nights'

reading events, you can tour a working boat, a no-longer-working cannery, support working artists by purchasing some of their wares at the Gearshack and get some tips on writing and nautical craft from pros.

This year's schedule of Saturday workshops includes other important stuff: You will have the opportunity to hear from people who have been at the heart of the decades-long fight to protect Alaska's Bristol Bay from large-scale mining interests at the Pebble Mine update and attend the “Strength of the Tides” workshop, where participants will explore ideas of how to create a greater culture of accountability, safety and access for women in the fisheries.

Wherever you wind up at the 21st annual FisherPoets Gathering, it will be impossible to come away without some insight into the people, places and waters that take up residence inside of us. I'm glad you could make it.

— Billie Delaney  
Port Townsend, WA



ALEX PAJUNAS PHOTO

Jay Speakman, left, of Gearhart, and Jon Broderick, of Cannon Beach, play a duet during a FisherPoets Gathering. They will emcee and perform together during the 2018 event.



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1 COLUMBIAN THEATER 1114 Marine Dr.  
2 FORT GEORGE BREWERY LOVELL SHOWROOM 426 14th St.  
3 KALA 1017 Marine Dr.  
4 LIBERTY THEATER 1203 Commercial St.  
5 LABOR TEMPLE 934 Duane St.  
6 VOODOO ROOM 1114 Marine Dr.  
7 WET DOG CAFE 144 11th St.  
8 WINEKRAFT 80 10th St.  
9 BARBEY MARITIME CENTER 1792 Marine Dr.  
10 CLATSOP COLUMBIA HERITAGE MUSEUM 1618 Exchange St.  
11 CLATSOP COMMUNITY COLLEGE PATRIOT HALL 1651 Lexington Ave.  
12 FPG GEARSHACK 1174 Commercial St.  
13 STUDIO 11 453-A 11th St.  
PIER 39 HANTHORN CANNERY MUSEUM 100 39th St.