

Story slam by the sea

What story would you tell?

BY KATHERINE LACAZE

Every bar, every town, every place has storytellers.

But which ones are the best?

That's the question the upcoming Pacific Story Slam, organized by three North Coast bar owners, will attempt to answer.

Over the next 10 weeks, storytellers from Astoria, Seaside, Long Beach,

Wash. and everywhere in between can share tales on themes of love, first impressions, travel and more before meeting at a final Grand Slam on April 10 at Fort George Brewery in Astoria.

According to Carla Curtis, owner of North Beach Tavern in Long Beach, "There is already this storytelling environment here," not just at bars but throughout the Lower Columbia River area. "Bringing the communities' stories together is just going to be very fun."

Along with Curtis, the Pacific Story Slam is being hosted by Diana Kirk,

owner of Workers Tavern in Astoria, and Sadie Mercer, co-owner of Maggie's on the Prom in Seaside. Each establishment will hold one story slam per week between Jan. 20 and March 19 before doing a town-specific semi-final featuring the winners from previous slams. The top four contenders from each city will then advance to the Grand Slam. North Beach Tavern's slams will be held at 6:30 p.m. Mondays; Workers' at 7 p.m. Wednesdays; and Maggie's on the Prom's at 6 p.m. Thursdays.

An introduction at Maggie's

Story slams are hardly a novel idea, Mercer said, referencing NPR's The Moth Radio Hour and The Mortified Podcast, but when she held a 17-week series at Maggie's last year, the concept was well-received.

Kirk, an author and avid storyteller, was one of the weekly winners who advanced to Maggie's finale. Although she shared what Mercer described as a "tear-inducing funny" story, she lost the

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Diana Kirk

Winners at Maggie's on the Prom's Story Slam in 2019 compete during the Grand Slam. The storytelling event at Maggie's is serving as a template for the upcoming Pacific Story Slam, which will take place in Astoria, Seaside, and Long Beach, Washington, from Jan. 20 to April 10.