

Celebrate Shakespeare's birthday at Gulu-Gulu

By Tom Dalton
Staff writer

SALEM -- Shakespeare will celebrate his birthday this week.

Of course, The Bard won't actually be in attendance Thursday night at Gulu-Gulu Cafe, but that's not unexpected. It's his 446th birthday.

The annual open-mike night has become something of a local tradition.

'We had about 100 people' last year, said Gary LaParl, executive director of the Salem Theatre Company, which is co-sponsoring the event with Rebel Shakespeare, a youth theater program.

'It's one of those evenings when you don't know who will show up', LaParl said.

Last year, for example, the Rev. Jeff Barz-Snell of The First Church in Salem, Unitarian, did a reading. Mayor Kim Driscoll took the microphone a few years ago.

'We've had a couple of 12-year-olds do the nurse-Juliet scene,' LaParl said. 'We had some actors come up from Boston last year.'

Anyone who wants to read a sonnet, deliver a soliloquy or play out a scene is invited to take the stage. The fun starts at 8 p.m.

'The evening has a really great spirit,' LaParl said.

Admission is free.