



*Friends of  
Lorine Niedecker*

*Issue #17  
Winter 2013*

*I was the solitary plover*



Photo by Sharon Auberle, 2012

## Looking Through Lorine's Window

### Friends of Lorine Niedecker News

#### **Festival Papers**

The 2012 Lorine Niedecker Wisconsin Poetry Festival was an outstanding success. A new feature this year was the presentation of papers that looked at aspects of Lorine's life and poetry. Sarah Dimick wrote about "Lake Superior" and Emilie Lindemann discussed "More Than Recipes." The text of these papers are now available on the Niedecker website.

#### **Speaking of the Festival**

The photos from the 2013 Poetry Festival are also available on the website. To access any of the past festival information go to [lorineniedecker.org](http://lorineniedecker.org), point at *poetry festival* in the green menu bar near the top of the page, and select *past festivals*.

#### **What Have We Been Up To?**

The Friends of LN annual report has also been posted to the website. Click on *past events* under the *friends of Lorine Niedecker* menu.

#### **New Lorine Books**

The City University of New York's Lost and Found Poetics Document Initiative published *Homemade Poems*, edited by John Harkey. This volume is a reproduction of a handmade book Lorine created in 1964. The first copy was sent to Cid Corman, later she made two more which she sent to Louis Zukofsky and Jonathan Williams. These books were created out of dime-store sketchpads, making covers out of wrapping paper.

Wave Books, a small poetry press in Seattle, WA is releasing this spring *Lake Superior: Lorine Niedecker's Poem and Journal*. Besides the full text of *Lake Superior*, it includes her travel and reading notes, excerpts from explorer journals and Wisconsin guidebooks, and related critical and environmental writings. View the table of contents at [wavepoetry.com](http://wavepoetry.com) on their Forthcoming page under the Catalog menu.

*I was the solitary plover*

*a pencil*

*for a wing-bone*

*From the secret notes*

*I must tilt*

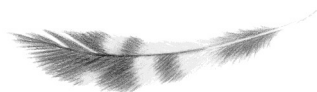
*upon the pressure*

*execute and adjust*

*In us sea-air rhythm*

*"We live by the urgent*

*wave of the verse"*



## Property VS. Prosperity

Poetry Magazine recently published "The Open Door, 100 Poems, 100 Years of Poetry Magazine" edited by Don Share and Christian Wiman. Three of Lorine's poems, published in 1963 were included.

The local Niedecker study group, Solitary Plovers, noted the first line of the second poem indicates "Prosperity is poverty -" and in Jenny Penberthy's book, "Lorine Niedecker Collected Works" the line reads "Property is poverty -."

We enquired and received a response from Christian Wiman stating, "Niedecker originally printed the poem with the word "prosperity," and we've retained all of the original versions as they appeared in the magazine."

I continued to be curious because "property" seemed more in keeping with Lorine's sentiment at the time because of her frustration with renting tenants. She used the word "property" in other poems. I went back to "Collected Works" to see if there were any footnotes regarding this poem. And there were. Penberthy notes, page 424:

Property is poverty - Unpublished in book form.

MS (manuscript) dated June 8, 1962. LN's annotation on MS: "(Don't confuse this with reality - I don't have to foreclose)"

In a numbered group of "THREE POEMS," *Poetry* 102.5 (August 1963): 302-303, where the opening line mistakenly reads: Prosperity is poverty.

We don't know whether Lorine changed the word after the manuscript or submitted a different version. "Prosperity" vs. "Property" - see what you think.

Property is poverty –  
I've foreclosed.

I own again

these walls thin  
as the back  
of my writing tablet.

And more:  
all who live here –  
card table to eat on,

broken bed –  
sacrifice for less  
than art.

Ann Engelman



## Poetry Trail

Newport State Park, along the Lake Michigan Shore of Door County, is a magical place of water and forest. Through a partnership of local poet groups and the Newport Wilderness Society, a portion of the hiking trail has been designated a "Poetry Trail."

Since January, the featured poet on the trail has been Lorine Niedecker. At various points along the trail, markers display Lorine's words and story. Just a short distance from the Ridges that Lorine so eloquently described in Wintergreen Ridge, this poetry trail is worth checking out. Lorine will be featured through the month of March.



# for a wing-bone

## POETRY

### Birthday in Brussels

We want there  
to be love  
    & so love  
    what is difficult

clear our plates  
of tender, bitter

room for sweetness  
in a clean dish

Elizabeth Savage



*Figuring rain in the next moon change,*  
my window will show me  
as my companion  
to the river, wet places, slivers.  
Panels reveal outside transitions,  
at night my face with falling drops  
will change in the morning.

Ann Engelman

spider  
web  
above

a door  
hinge

a spider hangs  
from the lamp  
light

fruitflies  
of course  
you are

no one  
rest of  
the way

John Martone  
excerpted from *Millimeters*

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### In Late October

a tree branch falls to the ground, taking other branches with it. Geese  
make their way into the night, flying ahead of the first snow.

Morgan Harlow

# From the secret notes

Dear Tomorrow,

I want to wake with you  
in a small town with an animal  
in its name, where lovers and  
the poor sleep a little slightly, where  
there is a museum housing  
Lorine Niedecker's very-blue  
Harlequin eyeglasses  
and inch thick poetry books travel  
across clouds, over pastry shops,  
through whitewashed skies.  
(Oh, even if slightly, today's  
clumsy words, hold space,  
time & history waiting for you.)  
Tomorrow, many have  
crocheted anthems for you.  
This might be an anthem for you.  
Squash and rutabagas are here  
yet you're not. Wagner  
in his "ideal production of 'The Ring'  
wanted the theatre burned down  
at the conclusion." Could  
I be so long in your thought  
you forgot I'm not? No one can  
burn you down, Tomorrow.  
Long after others stall in yesterday,  
you will be Tomorrow.

Susan Firer



## Mist

This morning's paper  
is full of abuse  
and miscarried justice.

From the hill  
I see how the mist  
has settled  
in the river valley,  
how gently  
the world is held.

The uncommon  
forgiveness of spring,  
holds me  
in the cup  
of its hand.

A hierarchy of kindness  
from grass to tulip  
to tree top to sky

I am surrounded  
by diffused light  
a moment's elegance  
but see in the west  
how dark clouds arise.

Sandra Lindow



## Ditch Lilies

*The thought that stings.*  
Today one flower's bright orange perfection  
Rises above slender green nest.  
Tomorrow faded.  
*How are you, Nothing?*

Vicky Daniels

# *I must tilt*

## **Some Kind of Living**

Some days  
you sit  
and stare  
while cracked  
PBR erases

Some days  
you think  
what the hell  
crack another  
PBR, suck hard

Monday mornings  
you *play*  
*Ask*  
*For a Job*  
on the workforce

website  
wonder when  
plumber or  
autoworker  
or any other

scuffed knuckle  
trained eye  
kind of job  
some tool hand  
kind of work

some put two  
words together  
make sense  
kind of  
reality

some survival  
without  
smart phone  
saving  
rainwater

rubbing  
your hand  
along  
maple bark  
kind of

living will be  
on that Monday  
morning list  
Something  
Useful

Mary Linton



## **Letter from Metropolis**

*I missed the cranes this year.*  
—Lorine Niedecker

I missed the cranes this year,  
and the redwing blackbirds  
whistling and swaying  
on dry windwild reeds,  
and the lovelorn peeper  
shouting from living mud.  
I missed the raucous phoebes,  
the lyrical cardinals  
and the proprietary robins  
ordering the sun to rise,  
bidding it to set,  
all the while fussing  
with bits of string  
and ragged grasses.

I missed all my common denizens,  
but most I missed the cranes,  
their harsh far-flung cries  
yearning toward home.

Barbara Cranford

# upon the pressure

It's about 5 miles  
by my count, where I sit,  
from where I sat, when  
*my mother saw the green tree toad*

Floating in the hot tub  
outside of our log home  
where mating season could not take place.

Sterile sea-foam froths  
bright lights under water  
where tree toad moths  
come to float

but outside of her log home,  
tree toads stay green on leaves,  
gray in name,  
on autumn's eaves  
where veery sings  
calls and songs  
emerald algae  
on green tree frogs.

Max Ames



## Variation

gold shimmers  
    low light  
    trees reflect on pond surface

heron circles  
    still waters  
        disturbed  
        plowed open

leaves will fall  
geese will migrate

Mary Rowin

## Lorine's Cabin November

*Summer's away,  
I traded my chicks for trees.*

for river music   I traded  
for one crow sailing  
    above it   low

for the furrowed bark  
of tall guardians  
    I traded

for sorrow  
and the turning seasons  
    for golden carpets

of leaves   I traded  
and always the water--  
    my soul   my song

for the dirt-brown love  
    I've carried with me

beyond  
    and beyond  
        and beyond...

I don't know how  
    I will ever let go

Sharon Auberle



## Three Days

So, my employment contract gives three days  
to mourn your death. Three days, then back to work.  
I am no Christ to rise again that way.

Lester Smith

# *execute and adjust*

## **Inside Lorine's cabin**

i stumbled over  
field

stone  
as i sat  
*Traces of Living Things*  
in my lap

oh the  
pea-blossom wit!

rolling granite themes  
and sensual notation  
wind  
water, sky  
dragonfly

man  
leafing  
bending  
neverending  
folds and  
unfolds  
adrift

*love over the fence*  
betrayal

*Traces*  
begins with  
*Museum*  
ends with "*Shelter*"  
water  
land  
*disowns*

this cabin  
contained

human  
paper  
nature

ten cent plant  
tells— all invented  
already  
sacred

design

lines on face  
in stone  
in sand  
wave

water

between two shores

a dark tulip  
stands  
a man  
deceived

hooded merganser  
fanning crown  
over river bed  
expert  
communicator

no fool  
Lorine

*in a folk*  
*field*

*Stone*  
*that hard*  
*contact—*

i am humbled

Nancy Shea



# *In us sea-air rhythm*

## **Wisconsin Worker (Buy Local, Buy American)**

enter, enter,  
leave your apprehension behind  
with its conspiracy of nations  
what is your opinion  
we have so little to offer  
besides our crippled volubility  
up in oneida county  
up in vilas county  
come in from the cold  
beside our poor fire  
factory workers from Racine & Kenosha  
called off afternoon work  
assistant UW-M professors  
in the lamars bus station  
without a suitcase  
we embrace the impossible task  
of finding a better life  
all of us are jobless  
all of us defend rights  
the day is at hand  
no matter who we are  
from our own back yards  
those were our orchards  
those were our bridges & supper clubs  
the bells are ringing  
your festival is beginning  
with a tender kiss  
stay & eat  
the immense night spans  
all the boundaries of destruction

Tom Hibbard



## **The End of War**

The end of war is like the beginning of war;

cherry trees blossom,

then drop their petals,  
another is soon to follow,

it takes the breath away.

Cate McNider



## **Blackhawk Peninsula, from Lorine Niedecker's Cabin**

*this papering evening I want a theatre*

this young hand  
a leaf reaching up  
from mud  
a seed  
in the breeze  
goldfinch

*this papering evening I want a theatre*

nuthatch  
leaf  
mud

*this papering evening I want a theatre*

long road  
in the cold  
follows the man-  
made  
river  
spider



# We live by the urgent

raccoon tracks  
deer tracks  
in the mud

silt  
like quicksand  
deer, raccoon  
otter tracks  
disappear at water's edge

Trish Stachelski



*She could have grown a good rutabaga,  
in a fruitful living garden. Keeping alive  
the lonely lady in Sumner. Red-eyed Chupacabra  
was what she raised. Underneath those limping  
mutants, searching for a child's monster, finding but  
the remains of the once fresh fountain containing  
her freshest smiles. But, she knew a dog's bark  
was not meant for her. So let me turn  
into a wolf and whistle my death  
hollow tune at you, since no one else does.  
I am but an eagle in quest for my lost  
persona, hoping for my name to be engraved  
through your cold and polluted river.  
So let us have that drum we've made  
with that bloody-rust scent animal fur,  
let us play it, each hopeless day  
and eat the rotten fungi, to see our God.*

Fabiola Fajardo



*My dear one tells me that you are wrong to-day  
and then the fire started up. The log had stopped  
moving after you moved off it. The word that wanted  
me was nothing but trouble. The bark on the tree,  
and the sap on its needles. Was that a helicopter  
or an airplane? I ask. It was so quiet, after  
the water was so still. Normally he writes fast,  
but today it was the opposite. Do you see the  
tiny little waves coming from the boat? Well, do you?  
And a different subject is the hurricane. Just think of  
random things, I said. Not everything is a discussion, is it?*

James L. Fishman-Morren



## Things To Do On Blackhawk Island

*Cricket night, seismograph and stitch. All tongues backed  
by a dog barking or a Belted Kingfisher.*

Wave back at the trucks. Wave back  
at the boats. Wave back at the dock.

All hands waved back.

Burn the leaves.  
Face the sun. Face the dog  
facing the pen.

Laugh back at the White Breasted Nuthatch.

Write to Tom today. Row or make wake  
if you have that sort of a boat.

Chuck Stebelton

*for Tom Pickard*



# wave of the verse "

## River

*riled the shore like bullheads*  
we boys in our beauty  
our un-reason  
in cat-whiskered depths  
and clam-bottomed shallows  
grown  
now graying  
down-stream eyes  
fixed  
on one more bend  
the snags, the slowing  
we love too late  
the pull ahead  
the bullhead  
can't resist  
the insist  
of  
coming season

Ralph Murre

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## Our Contributors

**Maxwell Ames** is a Senior at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, majoring in English and French for Secondary Education. A native of Fort Atkinson he considers himself lucky to have grown up only a couple of miles from Lorine Niedecker's Blackhawk Island residence.

**Sharon Auberle** is the author of three poetry collections, two of which also contain her photographs. Her poetry has appeared in numerous publications and anthologies and, for reasons which are still a mystery to her, she has authored a blog--"Mimi's Golightly Cafe"--for seven years, which contains a potpourri of her images and words.

**Barbara Cranford** was born in Chicago, where she was an encyclopedia editor, poet, sculptor and gallery owner. In her Central Wisconsin woods where she has lived since 1971, she conducts an occasional poem-making workshop and writes when she feels like it.

**Vicky L. Daniels** lives in Fort Atkinson, WI, very close to the Rock River. Her poetry has appeared in several publications, most recently in the inaugural edition of *Viscera*, published by the California Journal of Women Writers. Vicky is the author of *Angel's Land*, which was a finalist in the New Women's Voices poetry contest, sponsored by Finishing Line Press.

**Ann Engelman** is a poetry appreciator and co-coordinator of the Lorine Niedecker Wisconsin Poetry

Festival. The creation of this poem was inspired by Lisa Fishman's writing workshop on Blackhawk Island.

**Fabiola Fajardo** is a student at the University of Wisconsin-Rock County, who recently started writing after taking a creative writing class as an elective. She hopes to transfer to a four-year college where she'll continue to study and pursue her degree in secondary-education.

**Susan Firer** has new work in the online journal *Yew Journal* (no. 16) and in *Prairie Schooner's* online Fusion Series: Fusion #4 "Feast." More information at [www.susanfirer.com](http://www.susanfirer.com).

**James Fishman-Morren** is a poet, musician, woodcarver, and ceramicist. He lives in Orfordville and Madison, Wisconsin.

**Morgan Harlow's** poems and other writing have appeared in *Washington Square*, *Seneca Review*, *The Tusculum Review*, *The Moth*, *Wisconsin Poets' Calendar* and elsewhere. Her poetry collection, *Midwest Ritual Burning* (2012), is published in the UK by Eyewear Publishing. Originally from Madison, Harlow currently lives in rural southwest Wisconsin.

**Tom Hibbard** has written in a variety of genres. His full length poetry collection *Sacred River of Consciousness* is available online at Moon Willow Press and Amazon.com. Hibbard read his poems recently at the open mic for the 2012 Lorine Niedecker festival and has been featured at Bonk series in Racine. He lives in Hartland, Wis.

**Sandra J. Lindow** lives on a hilltop in Menomonie, Wisconsin, where she teaches, writes and edits. She has published seven books of poetry and her critical book, *Dancing the Tao: Le Guin and Moral Development* was published in 2012. Her awards include Jade Rings for serious and humorous poetry as well as the 1990 CWW Posner Award for best poetry collection.

**Mary Linton** is a wetland biologist and poet who lives in Fort Atkinson. "Fish, fowl, flood, water lily mud" and "peewee glissandos" are life-giving to her.

**Cate McNider** is also a bodyworker, movement therapist, dancer and artist. Her debut poetry collection, *Separation and Return*, (Vantage Press) in 2010 received rave reviews from *Publisher's Weekly*, *The Midwest Review* and *Currents*. She is working on her next collection.

**Ralph Murre** draws, writes poetry and occasional prose, and has been published in various periodicals, in several anthologies, and in his own books: *Crude Red Boat*, *Psalms*, and *The Price of Gravity*. He has had thirty occupations, more or less, and as many obsessions. Look for him near water.

**Mary Rowin** writes poems and stories from her home in Middleton, Wisconsin. Her poems have been published in *Verse Wisconsin*, *Stoneboat*, *Artella* and the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets' *Calendar* and *Museletter*. Mary lives with her husband Roger and their cat Rio.

**Elizabeth Savage** is a professor of English at Fairmont State University in West Virginia, where she serves as poetry editor for *Kestrel*. Furniture Press published her books, *Grammar* (2012) and *Jane & Paige or Sister Goose* (2011).

**Nancy Shea** lives near the confluence of the Rock and Crawfish rivers. This poem is inspired by the experience of reviewing *Traces of Living Things* under the leadership of Karl Gartung. Nancy has other poems that snuck into the 2011 and 2012 Wisconsin Poets' Calendars.

**Trish Stachelski** grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Her poems have appeared in *Hummingbird*, and chapbooks from the New and Nearby Reading Series and *rock, paper, scissors*. Her blog is [longfellowfarmer.com](http://longfellowfarmer.com) "urban nature notes." An essay on Phyllis Walsh, founder of *Hummingbird*, will appear in April 2013 of *Verse Wisconsin*.

**Chuck Stebelton** is author of *The Platformist* (The Cultural Society, 2012) and *Circulation Flowers* (Tougher Disguises, 2005). He works as Literary Program Director at Woodland Pattern Book Center, Milwaukee.

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### THIRD THURSDAY 2013

In April of 2011 the Friends of Lorine Niedecker began a monthly poetry reading, held at the Dwight Foster Public Library in Fort Atkinson. The program features a guest Wisconsin poet and a community open mic reading. It has proven to be a great success. Here are some of the scheduled featured poets:

**March 21** - Anjje Kokan

**April 18** - Chris Fink

**May 16** - John Walser

**June 20** - Fran Abbate

## ABOUT US

The Friends of Lorine Niedecker is a non-profit corporation. There are no staff, just devoted volunteers. Our goals include preserving and expanding the legacy of Lorine Niedecker, as well as, offering educational materials, access to archives, a semiannual newsletter and events as time and resources are available. We are supported through donations and grants.

Donations are always welcome and are fully tax-deductible.

The Solitary Plover is issued twice yearly, in winter and in summer. Sign up for the email version on our Web site.

Friends of Lorine Niedecker  
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[www.lorineniedecker.org](http://www.lorineniedecker.org)

## UWM Field Station Natural History Workshop

### Creative Writing about the Natural World

April 12 & 13, 2013

This course will give students, even those who write little, many opportunities to write creative non-fiction about the particular ecosystems found at the UWM Field Station.

The instructor will be Mary Linton, wetland ecologist, aquatic biologist, writer and poet.

**Schedule: Friday** 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Saturday** 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Workshop fee:** \$95

<http://www4.uwm.edu/fieldstation/workshops/>

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