



*Friends of
Lorine Niedecker*

*Issue #21
Winter 2015*

I was the solitary plover



Merrill Gilfillan at the Niedecker cabin. Photo courtesy of Chuck Stebelton
Story on page 2.

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"



What Region? Monograph Series Launched By Friends Of Lorine Niedecker

The Friends of Lorine Niedecker are pleased to announce the formation of an editorial board to oversee the creation, production, and distribution of a series of monographs on the life and work of Lorine Niedecker. The series will be titled *What Region?* in homage to Niedecker's response when she learned that the Library at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee had catalogued her work under local or regional poetry. "What region?" Niedecker asked. "London, Wisconsin, New York?"

The editorial board for the series consists of Tom Montag (Managing Editor), Chuck Stebelton (Production Editor), Nancy Rafal (Funding Lead person), and Karl Gartung.

The board envisions publishing two monographs per year, intending to so-

licit writing about Lorine Niedecker that is personable, insightful, and accessible - not "standard" literary criticism, but essays that are somehow appropriate to an encounter with Lorine. Indeed, Kenneth Cox's essay about Lorine's work might be seen as a model for the kind of writing that is being sought. Target for publication of the first monograph is May 12, 2015.

Payment to the author of a monograph will be a \$200 stipend plus 26 hand-sewn copies of the monograph. Each monograph will appear as a stand-alone printed piece; then, one year later, it will be made available as a PDF at the Lorine Niedecker website; and, at some point in the future, a collection of the monographs may be issued as a book.

To date, two anonymous donors have pledged a total of \$1500 to support the

series; \$1000 is earmarked for authors' stipends and \$500 for production costs. In addition, one of those donors has promised to match the first \$1000 of additional donations raised to support the monograph series. You may make your checks payable to The Friends of Lorine Nie-decker and indicate the donation is meant to support *What Region?* Your contribution to the Friends of Lorine Nie-decker is fully tax de-ductible. Send checks to:

Friends of Lorine Nie-decker, Inc.
209 Merchants Avenue
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

The editorial board intends to create a Face-book page to help publicize the series and solicit monographs. Monographs will be sold through the Friends of Lorine Nie-decker web site and the Woodland Pattern Book Center, and other venues. In addition, copies will be distributed to donors who contribute to the sup-port of the monograph series or to the support of the Friends of Lorine Nie-decker, and to pro-spective authors of future monographs.

Who is expected to write these monographs? Scholars who can write about Lorine in a way that is neither academic nor popular, but occu-pies a middle place that is insightful, person-able, and accessible; poets who can speak clear-ly about their encounters with Lorine's work; some of those who have made presentations about Lorine at the Lorine Nie-decker Wiscon-sin Poetry Festival; and some of those who have made presentations to the Solitary Plovers reading group.

Contact with the editorial board can be made through:

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Merrill Gilfillan Leads Blackhawk Island Bird Walk

"Look Lorine, another great poet at your door!" On a cold day in October a poet without gloves but with a pair of well used binoculars led a troop of adventurous birders to hit some hot spots in Jefferson County.

Merrill Gilfillan is the author of fourteen books of poems, two collections of short stories and five volumes of essays. Our friends at Wood-land Pattern Book Center brought Merrill to the area for a reading from his newest collection of poems, *Red Mavis* (Flood Editions, 2014). The next day, they brought him to Jefferson County where we hit three birding spots and, between the group members, listed 36 species of birds.

We started the morning at Dorothy Carnes Park where the American Coots numbered about 100:2 to Wood Ducks. We caught the tail-end of neotropical warblers, spotting several Yel-low-rumped Warblers. Also in the park were the usual suspects of Cardinals, Nuthatches, Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, Red-bellied Woodpeckers and the lovely blue splash of Eastern Bluebirds. Sandhill Cranes graced us with their sound and flight. After a bite to eat we stopped at Indian Mounds Park where the highlights were a juvenile Bald Eagle and a Barred Owl.

Our last stop of the day was Blackhawk Island where we had a nice view of a Fox Sparrow across the road from Lorine's cabin. In search for White-Pelicans, we were rewarded with a view of them in Stinkers Bay on Lake Koshko-nong. Pelicans, Great Blue Heron, and Red-tailed Hawk all in one sweeping binocular view—now that is a great birding day!

Merrill's most recent publications include the poetry collection *Red Mavis* (Flood Editions, 2014), a collection of essays *The Warbler Road* (Flood Editions, 2010) and a group of river drawings, *Distant Rivers* (Prairie Rose Press, 2012). He recently moved to Asheville, North Carolina.

Submitted by Nancy Shea

for a wing-bone

POETRY

Inheritance

Somewhere
in the poem

there is
a struggle

with tenses
when the

old man
I was

writing about
changes

from father
to me.

River Rats

Tough as those who didn't go mad
getting here, lost in tall-grass prairies,
humidity heavy as their regrets.

Mosquitos, black flies swarming
eyes, copperheads, rattlesnakes
twisting through tangled roots.

Resilient as the ones that settled
along waterways with Indian names:
Ohio, Illinois, Mississippi, Missouri.

Hunters, rivermen, trappers,
immigrants who cleared timber, plowed
fertile bottomland, harvested sons and
daughters who became doctors,
merchants, millworkers, crafts people.

Now their children bloom wild along
dusty, gravel roads, trying to survive
lives of loss, their little houses
clinging to bluffs like beggar's-lice.

David Gross

Coyote Hunter

a bloodied snarl
from the skin of her teeth
tail hanging down

yellow eyes
lurking at river's edge
a rustle of birds

the den floor
scattered with twigs
small frail bones

human scent
stills the yips and howls
cross-hairs

hunting at high noon
winter coat matted
hind leg dragging

Marilyn Fleming



Golding

'lyke a
plash of
raine' her eyes

when they
open

Steven Manuel

From the secret notes

In The Image

It hid there.
Then it moved.

In Permafrost

all compassion
scared out of the child

into the night –

the animals, the
caribou!

Phillip T. Egelston



what is the use of a fallow field?
is it, as they say, the calm
before the storm,
the grief
on an unused womb?

Michael Dylan Welch



Default

leaves
on lawn
on loan

Meditation

cold blooded
murderous
meditation --
two and fro
Zen crows

James Gollata



Poison Ivy-O

O poison ivy I cut a wide berth
walking by, Ah, what chemical powers
instantaneously amass
from the nearest box store, and like you
there is always one of those close by

Except, who am I to decide? a nobody too.
And like you, even hated enough by some
who would wish me dead for being, merely
another old woman

We have learned, you and me,
how to hide in the lush overgrowth of easements,

in these overlooked places we creep

Donna Fleischer

I must tilt

Three Variations on Niedecker

I.

Mississippi:
a still soul falls
instead of snow

II.

brushed by ferns
electric green
what remains
a tingle

III.

between a pocketed letter
in his love's own hand
and his salt-ravaged flesh

lain the sopping fabric
of a waistcoat and shirt

in life he floated
"on the viewless wings of Poesy"
(a fellow's words)
in death he floated
to shore

Amy Mallory-Kani



Winter Morning

In the cold near-silence of snow-muffled sound, his boots swoosh soft on the walk she'll have to shovel in awhile. The street's white cover gentles the angry tires of his car as he pulls away, his face a study in ice, his body a shield held stiff against her touch. *It will pass*, she thinks, as she moves back to the house, *it will pass as it has before*. But this morning was different, their voices kept low so the children wouldn't hear, heavy like dark gray clouds about to turn inside out. She can't forget the way he shook his head, how his eyes kept looking toward the door, how he stood silent when she said, *We'll work it out*. The house has nothing to say to her either. A rattle from a window, a muffled hum from the refrigerator. In the cracked blue mug, her coffee's grown cold. In their rooms, the children still sleep. This almost-silence somehow ominous – not a total lack of sound, just less of it.

Jean Preston



upon the pressure

CONTRIBUTORS

Phillip Egelston's new book, *Reste Placide*, will appear in January 2015. He is Advisor on Creative Writing and Visual Arts to the Shawnee Hills Arts Council in Southern Illinois.

Hartford, Connecticut native **Donna Fleischer's** poems appear in journals and anthologies worldwide, including *Bones*, *Fiera Lingue*, *is/let*, *Kō*, *moongarlic*, *Naugatuck River Review*, *Otoliths*, *Poets for Living Waters*, *Solitary Plover*, *Spiral Orb*, *The Marsh Hawk Review*, and *TRUCK*. Her chapbooks are *Intimate Boundaries* and *Twinkle, Twinkle. Indra's net*, an out of print chapbook, is available free to read at Scribd. Donna curates contemporary poetry, poetics, and permaculture content at her blog *word pond*. She is a contributing writer on the arts in Connecticut for Art New England.

Born and raised on a dairy farm in Wisconsin, **Marilyn Fleming's** poetry has been published in various literary journals, and anthologies. She has a special interest in Oriental forms of poetry and won her first prize in the Hildegard Janzen Oriental Forms Award in 1988.

James A. Gollata, minimalist poet, walks the sands and stones of the Lake Michigan shore near his rediscovered hometown of Manitowoc. There, in his own life by water, he thrives on waves and words.

David Gross lives in southern Illinois near the Shawnee National Forest. He is the author of four chapbooks and has recently published poems and book reviews in *Big Muddy*, *Naugatuck River Review*, *Common Ground Review*, *The Cape Rock*, *Solitary Plover* and *Verse Wisconsin*.

Amy Mallory-Kani is an assistant professor of English at Mississippi State University. She studies the intersections among literature, medicine, and politics in the British Romantic period.

Steven Manuel is the editor of *from a Compos't*, poet of this & that.

Jean Preston holds an M.F.A. in Creative Writing from the Stonecoast Writing Program. She authored *All the Queen's Horses* and *Sixteen Mothers*, and her poems have been published in *Pleiades*, *Verse Wisconsin*, *Solitary Plover*, and *The Journal of the Association of Research on Mothering*. Jean directs the Writing Center at Carthage College, and lives in Kenosha with her husband, Tom, and her Scottish Terrier, Maggie.

Michael Dylan Welch is proprietor of National Haiku Writing Month (www.nahaiwrimo.com) and poet laureate for the city of Redmond, Washington. His poems have been published in hundreds of journals and anthologies in more than fifteen languages. His personal website, devoted mostly to poetry, is www.graceguts.com.



Save the Date!

The 2015 Lorine Niedecker
Wisconsin Poetry Festival
is scheduled for Friday and
Saturday, October 16 and 17.

Details available in our summer
issue of *Solitary Plover*

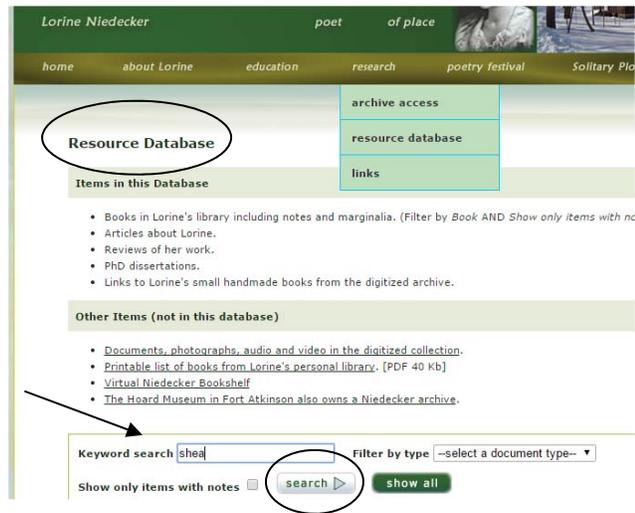
execute and adjust

NEWS

More Bibliographies

Nancy Shea, a member of the Friends of Lorine Nie-decker and the Solitary Plovers, recently compiled a list of books mentioned in *Niedecker and the Correspondence With Zukofsky, 1931 - 1970*, edited by Jenny Penberthy. Last summer she did the same with *Between Your House and Mine: the Letters of Lorine Niedecker to Cid Corman, 1960 - 1970* edited by Lisa Pater Feranda. These lists expand the information available about the books and authors that Lorine read.

Both lists will be permanently available in the database under the "research" menu. To find them, click on Resource Database under the Research menu. Scroll down to the search box and enter the word "shea." Then click "search."



Poetry Festival attendees gather for a group photo at the Niedecker Poetry Wall in Fort Atkinson, October 2014.

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 website.

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Find Lorine on Facebook

Friends of Lorine Niedecker Annual Report

We have posted our 2014 report of activities and acquisitions on the Niedecker website. Under the “friends of Lorine Niedecker” menu, click on “past events.”

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