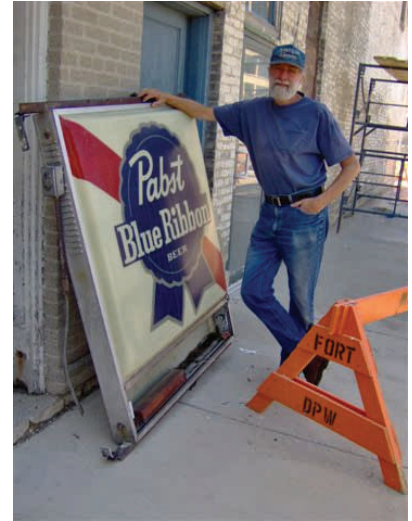




*Friends of
Lorine Niedecker*

*Issue #10
Summer 2009*

I was the solitary plover



Niedecker Poetry Mural Project

The blank wall in the photograph above is the future location for the Lorine Niedecker mural project. The mural will be created by Fort Atkinson artist Jeremy Pinc and will contain original artwork as well as some of Lorine's poetry. The planned completion date is August 31, 2009. Businessman John Hutchinson (pictured above) is graciously allowing us to use his wall which is located at the cor-

ner of N. Main Street and Sherman Avenue in Fort Atkinson

This project is being funded by the Fort Atkinson Community Foundation, the Wisconsin Arts Board and the Friends of Lorine Niedecker. We appreciate the support of these major funders and hope that this is just the first of many "poetry walls" around Fort Atkinson and the state of Wisconsin.

Lorine Niedecker Wisconsin Poetry Festival

The complete schedule for the October 3 and 4, 2009 Wisconsin Poetry Festival in Fort Atkinson is included in this issue of the Solitary Plover. We will begin accepting registrations for the Festival on August 1, 2009 and will be mailing registration forms to everyone on the Solitary Plover mailing list at that time.

Registration will not be required to simply attend the festival, however there are some things that will require registration:

- All meals

- Blackhawk Island Writer's Workshop
- Sunday afternoon programs - Julie Schoessow's talk and Cathy Cook's film

The primary locations for events at the Festival will be the Hoard Historical Museum and the Dwight Foster Public Library.

We have posted this schedule on the lorineniedecker.org Web site. Please share this information!

I was the solitary plover

a pencil

for a wing-bone

From the secret notes

I must tilt

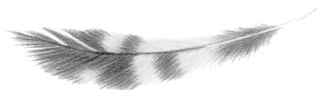
upon the pressure

execute and adjust

In us sea-air rhythm

"We live by the urgent

wave of the verse"



a pencil for a wing-bone

POETRY

weeding irises
same toad
as yesterday

Landing Road

Old pine trees
line the road

so many tongues
for the wind

At Sea

Your envelope's a wing
I open slowly

tearing off the end
I breathe the air inside

American Haiku

Bullfrogs
stop
to ponder
that last
cherry bomb

Michael Kriesel

Michael Kriesel, 47, lives in central Wisconsin. His poems have appeared in *The Progressive*, *North American Review*, and *Nimrod* magazine. In addition to being a finalist in the 2008 Frost Foundation competition, he was a finalist in *North American Review's* 2008 and 2007 Hearst competitions, and also a finalist in the 2008 *Another Chicago Magazine* contest, and the 2008 *Atlanta Review* Competition.

In 2003 he won the Lorine Niedecker Award, from the Council for Wisconsin Writers. He's been nominated for the Pushcart Prize six times. He won the 2009 Muse Prize from the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets.



In the Wetlands

Not just first thoughts
inside an empty house, after

A steel drum holding wood
on a snow-tracked hill

The bell tone of dinner
amplifying darkness

An open slot cut into the
trees, space for imagination

Filling with leaves
a grid of saplings clear-cut

To widen the road
arrowheads under fence lines

Like many collections
enshrined in shoe boxes

Where meaning
was left and lost.

What needed to be
said, could not be said,

*although the land
was never ours, memory*

*makes a claim on it
in the ditches we found*

Wild grape, so improbable
in the wetlands

Landscape School

Consider the lily
the wasp and thistle
shagbark hickory and aster

Consider the junco
the song sparrow and
the late April ice storm

From the secret notes I must tilt

Consider the honey bee
then look down—
consider the ground

At the Scenic Overlook

We make our way
 through pine bough
 ropes until a trace
 of glacial rubble
becomes the top
 of geologic time.
 The whole unravels
 west to east along
a terminal moraine
 upon which rests
 the Pleistocene epoch.
 Zebra mussels of
former oceans
 cling to granite
 plinths from the
 vault of Canada.
Everything visible
 all at once— cars,
 speeding semis,
 purple loosestrife
rampant in the
 meadow. Just as
 night became
 day we follow
an obelisk of light
 into the climax
 forest, our own
 late Cenozoic Era.

Constance Turke

I currently live in Minneapolis, Minnesota, but spent an idyllic childhood slipping in, out, and on top of the Rock River near Watertown, Wisconsin. Ms. Niedecker's poetry touches that elemental place of my earliest beginnings, a place I attempt to conjure up in my poetry.



Poem

No, no, *wittingly* you scathed
which jutting parts

offended—say your peace,
distressor-box—better

friendlies not found, bitter
husks holding a tenor groan,

or they shushusha. There
is a pinch in my best

sub-field: thanks, for true.
It will make good, this pinch,

bear fruit,
I pray it.

Haiku

The sky wears pink skirts;
When too much dust settles, some
One wipes it away.

*

Why couldn't I kill
that little mouse I saw stuck
in sick'ning death throes?

*

These scant whiskers don't
Add warmth. But they do make me
Feel more creaturely.

*

Darling, that little
Trumpet on your forehead was
Not an accident.

*

Snow and wind and salt.
Sparrow in a naked shrub.
A small end-of-days.

John Harkey

John Harkey, a Ph.D student in poetry and poetics at the City University of NY Graduate Center, is currently at work on his dissertation, "Significant Little Wrecks," which concerns small poems (especially Niedecker's), violence, and Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic philosophy. John and his wife Erin live in Sunnyside, Queens.

upon the pressure

A Murder of Crows

Like black teeth they encircle
a fallen deer—a twisting mouth
of winter that devours skin, sinew
and hair.

Too Many Poets

Ignore the depressed,
alcoholic and suicidal
poets

and those who teach
students, they can't
write.

Listen to the four-year-
old, alone in an attic
who sings,

“ I've been working on
the rainbow ” quietly
to himself.

Outed

It's not so much the electricity
going off in our small town—

our bank's closing, the post
office computer not issuing

stamps—but that, as I drive
down Main Street, I see Bob

enter the Amish place. And,
when lights come back on, how

we almost understand the past.

An Old Dog Goes Deaf

The sound of a hammer or ax in the
distance, a whippoorwill, computer
hum, a refrigerator door opening,
cats chasing on the floor upstairs,
nothing, and then your lips saying
goodnight.

The Village Poet

He meanders off-leash
down Rockdale streets

early mornings and late
nights. Sees in homes,

hears TV voices, smells
bread baking. The details

of our lives, footprints
in fresh snow.

John Lehman

John Lehman is the founder and original publisher of *Rosebud*, a national magazine of short stories, poetry and illustration for people who enjoy good writing. He is the poetry editor of the *Wisconsin People & Ideas* as well as managing partner of Zelda Wilde Publishing. John was a finalist for the Wisconsin Poet Laureate position in 2004 and again in 2008.

John grew up in Chicago but for the last twenty years he has lived with his wife, Talia Schorr, their four dogs and six cats in Rockdale, the smallest incorporated village in Wisconsin.



My Body Politic

My head has muddled itself
into six different categories/ cities/
regional authorities.

I wander through rooms
like a vague spectre and wish
I could become a depraved addict
or alcoholic,

but alcohol makes me sick
and drugs are so bad for you.

I'll drink too much coffee today
and eat chocolate, then complain
I can't sleep.

execute and adjust

I've thought of suicide
but who would comfort my baby
when he cries in the night,

and who'd open my purse
when my son needs to borrow twenty bucks?

I'm taking in air
like a lost and hungry child,
feeding it to myself
one inhalation at a time.

This has slowed me down
till *I have only the present moment*
in an oxygen bowl.

I breathe innnnn ... ouuuut ...
to relax/ clarify/ focus
till I am jelly/ a pinpoint/ a camera lens,
to still the cacophony of my mother's voice,
prove that I'm not afraid of silence.

Days pass like moving pictures
of water separated
into single drops
flowing in patterns.

I am a test pattern,
constantly tested/ contested terrain.

A political body
conservative and liberal with marginal seating,
I have to say proportional representation
hasn't worked well for me.

I am a village on the margins
surfing the rim,
a musty head dictating on a whim,
course changes plotted by majority vote.

I count my money,
re-working my finances,
and still I have more than I had
when I was married
and no one to tell me
my dress size is too big/ out of style/
the wrong colour,
or shows off chubby arms
I hadn't noticed.
But then –

no one to tell me.

Now an independent candidate
amassing my own cabinet,
I mix my metaphors with enviable ease.
Dancing around dinner tables
my tights twinkle,
feature dazzling footwork, as I
trip/ twirl/ teeter/ pirouette.
My head, not keeping up,
trails behind my feet,
preoccupied with droplets
collected in a self-sufficient miasma.

My political body entertains a need for plasma
and reconstitution –
if only babies would stop crying in the night.

Jenny Craig

Jenny Craig lady
has displaced her weight
to her
fat
white
S.U.V.,
overflowing
the parking space
next to us.

Rae Pater

Rae Pater has been published online and in print.
She has three children and a cat named Gus. Rae
has completed a B.A in English literature and has
recently qualified as an adult literacy tutor.

Rae edited Verse Libre Quarterly for a year or so,
placed first in the NPAC online poetry competition
in January 2004, won honourable mention in the
IBPC August 2006, and was nominated for the
Pushcart Prize by *Verse Libra Quarterly* in 2003,
Erosha in 2004, *Sun Rising Press* in 2005, and by
IntheFray in 2008.



In us sea-air rhythm

Overcast

hanging sheets she's overcast
by rain like
a mouthful of pins
three geese overhead
in nettle-shirt formation
fingers work at arrow-stitch
and unpick

she secretes needles
will sew herself inside-
out as hem to hem she edges
thrift-eyed
toward a centre

Sophie Mayer

Sophie Mayer is a London-based writer, editor and educator. She is currently the moderator of the English PEN World Atlas and a Commissioning Editor for Chroma. 2009 sees the publication of her first solo poetry collection, *Her Various Scalpels* (Shearsman) and *The Cinema of Sally Potter: A Politics of Love* (Wallflower). To find out more, see www.sophiemayer.net.



Lorine:

Such a lovely
Quiet lady
Her memory
Lingers on
Her words remain
For all the centuries
To marvel
At her depth of simplicity.

Janice Redford

Janice Redford is a resident of Fort Atkinson, WI.



Lilacs

Lilacs make me think of you
And a country garden
A sunbonnet and a hoe
With a long apron over your work dress

Washing off the vegetables
At the pump by the milk house
Sitting outside to "snap" beans

Going in the house to make noodles
And cook up the side meat

After supper dishes were washed,
Reading the Bible and doing a little crocheting

I still have the poncho you made me
And your love of flowers.

Linda Schumacher

Linda Schumacher lives in Edgerton, Wisconsin. "My Grandma was a very traditional farm wife in the 1960's. These are my remembrances of her."



"Liebling"

An evening stroll through the cemetery
behind our apartment, the day after
D-Day when the clouds spend most their hours
shifting around the horizon of trees.
You and I stop before an open gate

To examine the bunches of grapettes
turning into drops of skin wrapped around
water and sugar that floats from the graves
marked by stones left on top where the names
indicate the beloved.

Victor Schoonover

Victor Schoonover is a teacher and writer from Rockford, Illinois. The poem, "Liebling" was written about the Hebrew cemetery in his neighborhood. While not a Jew, Victor was impressed by the *mitzvah* tradition of placing rocks on the grave-stone as a symbol of participating in burial of the dead.

"We live by the urgent wave"

Wild Tolerant Native Grapes

why is there a fence around the cemetery
because everyone is dying to get in
-Anon.

law-enforced straightforwardness
brings to a close the phylum of human failure
followed the impatient blaze
from rational to irrational
the strength of all that aimless losing
i pretend i'm alone drinking water
on the powell creek segment of irving bread trail
ostentation is concealment
an ideal that the voice from within can't attain
the rhetorical wal-mart rhymes
the genetic adversarial emotion
listen extractively in the proximity of exactitude
hiking is my extra-marital lily pads
my screwed-up tree trunk, my cavorting chicory
my gully full of milkweed
what am i escaping from
the answer is: nothing is everything
an emptiness typically filled with errant self-denial
drought tells me smaller is bigger
a largeness that arrives in several installments
apologizing profusely
a test for intransigence
meaning is when you can't see anything
except nature's link to humanity
wilting leaves add up to necessity

tom hibbard

Tom Hibbard has had many poems, translations, reviews and articles published on and off line. Reviews are in the current issue of "Galatea Ressurrection." A long poem titled "Big Snow" just went online at issue 37 of "Jacket." A book of poetry is available at Otoliths Storefront. And a long piece "Linear/Nonlinear" can be found in the archives of "Big Bridge."



Cut

over
across
there is
a narrow
through
rock
passage
across
through
just wide
enough
over
for a
canoe
through
over
yet open
in every
water
across
level
over
through
that runs
straight
across
maybe
twenty-five
chains
through
across
and it
can save
over
you a
good five
miles of
across
paddling
over
around the
through
headland

of the verse "

Spirit Level

Striations of dried pollen, ochre and rust, track the broken boulder shore
confirming our recollection of earlier summers

*The river is a metre, maybe
metre and a half low this August*

Making some things easier, others harder; generally
speaking rapids become more 'technical'
*less volume
more to hit*

Side streams may lie rock-exposed, forcing us to shoot, line or carry
tight and turbulent stronger channels

Here on the big river, most tributaries gathered
ubiquitous capillaries, impossibly
vast

and watery land
overturned bowl
mirroring
the sky

In low water, the bottom of long rapids displays
meandering
deposits
of
current-tumbled
rocks
heaped mounds,
graduated
by
weight and resistance
to flow

It is amazing how far these veined formations extend downstream
exposing hidden places

*We slid across that rock two years
ago, it almost swung our stern*
now stretching, re-telling, adjusting packs, sponging
out waves taken over the bow—

The river is carrying boulders beneath us.

Gordon Sisler

Gordon Sisler lives in St Catharines, Ontario where he is the proprietor of Crown Mills Paper and Emmet Press engaged in hand papermaking and letterpress printing . His work involves explorations of the interface between paper, print and poem. He has roots in Wisconsin having spent his boyhood in the Fox River Valley where his father worked in the paper industry.



Solitary Plover Summer 2009

Haiku

1/

light years
away

stars left behind by fast moving thoughts

2/

higher
with the spring thaw

the river crosses the border

3/

bringing stars

a distant mountain's
warning light

4/

recent photos
the meaning of railroad tracks into
Auschwitz

5/

sunrise warmth

the moth's dead
weight

Gary Hotham

Gary Hotham lives in Maryland. He has been writing for a long time now and his poems have appeared in a variety of literary journals and magazines. His book *BREATH MARKS: Haiku to Read in the Dark* was published in 1999 and his latest chapbook, *MISSED APPOINTMENT: The Haiku Art* in 2007. Both books received a Mildred Kanterman Memorial Merit Book Award from the Haiku Society of America.



Solitary Plover Summer 2009

The Lorine Niedecker Wisconsin Poetry Festival Presented by Friends of Lorine Niedecker Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin October 3 and 4, 2009



FRIDAY, October 2, 2009

Festival guests arriving for the weekend are invited to an informal Welcome Gathering at 4:00 at the Café Carpe, 18 S. Water Street. The Carpe is a great gathering place for dinner or a drink. If you like, bring a poem to share. There will be an open poetry mic from 7:00- 8:00 p.m. Open to the public.

SATURDAY, October 3, 2009

- 8:00 Poetry Café Opens for Registration Museum Overlook
The Poetry Café will be the place to meet, greet, swap, Luella Hoard Gallery
leave messages, information or relax with a beverage.
Coffee, tea and water will be available.
- 8:00 Hoard Museum Opens Museum
The museum offers several exhibits, art inspired by Niedecker, and the Lorine Niedecker Room with information and artifacts. There is a gift shop and a Share Table for Festival related materials. The museum will be open Saturday and Sunday.
- 9:00 - 10:30 Workshops - concurrent
#1 How To Make A Poem Your Own Library (Worcester Room)
Ideas and suggestions about how to connect with poetry.
Moderator - John Lehman
- #2 Teaching Wisconsin Writers Library (Rogers Room)
How to engage young writers with inspiration from Wisconsin authors.
Moderator - Charlotte Johnston
- 10:30 - 11:00 Poetry Café Break Museum Overlook
Explore the museum, register for events, check the bulletin board, obtain resources from the share table, and meet Festival participants.
- 11:00 - 12:30 The Nature of Wisconsin Poetry Museum (Jones Gallery)
Each year the Council for Wisconsin Writers offers a Lorine Niedecker Poetry Award. Past and present winners will compose a panel to address: How does Wisconsin and the place where you live influence your poetry? How does your poetry relate to the Wisconsin landscape or your sense of place in it? A discussion with the audience will follow. Panel members include: Michael Kriesel, Anne-Marie Cusac, Karl Elder, Alison Townsend, Susan Elbe, David Krump.
Moderator - Mary Linton. (150 seats available)
- 12:30 - 2:00 Welcome and Box Lunch (available for \$, pre-paid) Museum (Jones Gallery)

Solitary Plover Summer 2009

Saturday Concurrent Events

- 2:00 - 4:00 Tours of Niedecker Landmarks Blackhawk Island
A van will loop every half hour from the museum to Blackhawk Island, the cemetery, library, and Riverside Drive. Maps available with registration materials. (Parking and rest-room facilities are NOT available on Blackhawk Island.)
- 2:00 - 4:00 Lorine Niedecker Archive Museum (Research Lib.)
The museum will have archivists on hand to share photos, scrapbooks, and papers from the Niedecker Collection.
- On-going Lorine Niedecker Exhibits and Store Museum Overlook
Tour the Lorine Niedecker and Niedecker- inspired art exhibits. The store will include books, broadsides, cards, bookmarks, and other related items.
- 2:00 - 3:00 Publishers Roundtable Library Rogers Room
Poetry editors and publishers from around the state will gather to discuss how to support the business of poetry publication. A Q&A session will follow. Further tips and connections are encouraged at the Poetry Café. Moderators - Sarah Busse and Wendy Vardaman, co-editors of the Wisconsin poetry magazine Verse Wisconsin.
- 2:00 - 4:50 Poetry Reading Museum (Jones Gallery)
Poets will have an opportunity to present their poetry to listeners. 5 minutes per reading. Moderator - John Lehman. Early sign up- sheets available at the Poetry Café at the museum overlook.
- 2:00 – 2:30 Poetry of Place
2:35 – 3:05 Wisconsin Faces
3:10 – 3:40 War and Peace
3:45 – 4:15 Family
4:20 – 4:50 Work
- 4:00 - 6:30 Lorine's Dinner Buffet from Lorine's Recipes Café Carpe
A special dinner buffet will be prepared using Lorine's recipes. Reservations by 9/10. Maximum 60 seats - reserve early, \$ per person.
- 7:00 - 9:30 Wisconsin Poetry Museum (Jones Gallery)
- Council for Wisconsin Writer's, Lorine Niedecker Poetry Award Winners (Six - 5 min each)
 - Niedecker videos (2 -:30) and Niedecker audio reading (6 min.)
 - Invited poets and students (3 min. each)
 - Short Break
 - Wisconsin Poet Laureates
 - 10 min each – Susan Firer-Milwaukee, Fabu Carter Brisco-Madison,, Marilyn Taylor-State of Wisconsin
 - My Life By Water video (8 min.)
 - Closing remarks, closing poem
- This celebration of Wisconsin poetry will include poet laureates, invited poets, and students, audio and video presentations. This will include the only known video of Lorine Niedecker, a short independent film, and the only audio of Lorine reading her poetry. The evening will be a condensed, vibrantly paced composite of Wisconsin Poetry.*

Solitary Plover Summer 2009

SUNDAY, October 4, 2009

9:00 - 11:30 “In the Spirit of Lorine Niedecker”
Blackhawk Island Writer’s Workshop Blackhawk Island
For those who are interested in writing prose "in the spirit of Lorine" this workshop is being held on the property that was Lorine's home along the Rick River. This location may bring about some reverence and awe in addition to stimulating inspiration. Participants will create new work.
Free, registration requested. Limit 20
Chris Fink - Beloit College, Pat Moran - UW Whitewater

9:00 - 11:30 Workshops - concurrent
#1 Understanding Lorine’s Poetry Library Worcester Room
Lorine Niedecker took words and weeds and water and sky and made of them something which resonated far beyond her marshes, poetry which speaks across all boundaries and borders. What does Lorine do in her poetry, and how does she do it?
Moderator – Tom Montag

#2 Playing With Words Museum Class room
Lorine made small books with her poetry included. Examples of these books will be available, and participants will create their own small books. All materials provided. Moderator- Dawn Hunter Free, registration requested

12:00 - 1:00 Poetry Café Box Lunch – (available for \$, pre-paid) Museum Overlook

12:30 - 1:00 Blackhawk Island Workshop Readings Museum Overlook
A short selection of poems will be read from the morning’s workshop.

The following programs are ticketed events. Ticket price is \$10

1:00 - 2:00* Julie Schoessow “The Lorine I Knew” Museum (Jones Gallery)
Lorine’s stepdaughter will speak about the relationship she had with Lorine, memories of her father, his relationship to Lorine, and their life in Milwaukee and on Blackhawk Island. A Q&A will follow. New pictures from Julie’s personal collection will be shared.
Pre-register or at the door. Limited to 200.

2:00 - 2:15* Poetry Café Break Museum Overlook

2:15 - 4:30 Film “Immortal Cupboard” by Kathy Cook Museum (Jones Gallery)
This Wisconsin Film Festival jury award winner is an artistic interpretation and film essay of Lorine’s life and poetry. A Q&A with the filmmaker will follow.

5:00 - 6:30 Encore “Immortal Cupboard” (tentative)



Solitary Plover Summer 2009

NEWS

WANTED: We are looking for an issue of Poetry Magazine, volume 30 which is the edition that was edited by Louis Zukofsky. This was the volume that inspired Lorine to write to Louis and began the correspondence that lasted her lifetime. The current archive has her personal library but not this publication. Anyone who might be able to help us find it, donate it, or help us fund its acquisition would be appreciated.

Lorine Niedecker has a Facebook page! Thanks to Drew Kunz, Milwaukee who set this up. To date Lorine has 347 Friends. The URL for her Facebook page is www.facebook.com/pages/Lorine-Niedecker/65611870346

Property Update: The former Niedecker property on Blackhawk Island was extensively damaged in the flood during the summer of 2008. The cabin survived relatively unscathed but cottage has been gutted. Plans are in place to repair the damage and thankfully, 2009 has provided flooding but no damage.

Digitization Update: Most of the materials from the Niedecker archives at the Dwight Foster Public Library and the Hoard Museum were delivered to the University of Wisconsin Digital Collections Center in Madison on May 18. Approximately 120 documents, 83 photographs and about 20 audio and video recordings will be digitized as part of this project. The expected date for return of the materials is October 27. In the meantime, some of these materials have been photocopied to allow access for researchers.



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.

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

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