



*Friends of  
Lorine Niedecker*

*Issue #19  
Winter 2014*

*I was the solitary plover*



## Blackhawk Island Painting Donated

The painting above was part of the “Poetry: the art of it” program at the 2014 poetry festival in Fort Atkinson. This project brought together artists and poets who collaborated on a connected art piece and poem. This painting was done by Madison painter Diane Washa.

Diane is a full time businesswoman who currently manages the development of quality assurance prod-

ucts used in the field of radiation oncology. For the last seven years she has immersed herself in plein aire landscape painting and photography. Diane's art is shown exclusively at the Artisan Gallery, Paoli, Wisconsin and most recently in juried art exhibits at the Rockford Art Museum's Midwestern Biennial and the Wright Museum's Beloit and Vicinity Exhibition.

*I was the solitary plover*

*a pencil*

*for a wing-bone*

*From the secret notes*

*I must tilt*

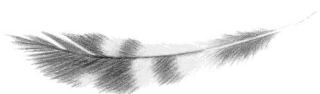
*upon the pressure*

*execute and adjust*

*In us sea-air rhythm*

*“We live by the urgent*

*wave of the verse”*



## Save the Date!

The 2014 Lorine Niedecker Wisconsin Poetry Festival  
is scheduled for October 10 and 11, 2014  
in Fort Atkinson.

## NEWS



### Passing of a Niedecker Champion

It is with heavy hearts that the Friends of Lorine Niedecker must report the passing of Mary Gates. Mary was the director of the Dwight Foster Library from 1974 to 1992. Together with the late Marilla Fuge, Gates was a prime mover in the decades-long effort to ensure that the late Lorine Niedecker received her rightful seat among literature's most important 20th-century American poets.

Gates was proud of the permanent library display set up in 1983 in recognition of Niedecker. She went on to be active in the Friends of Lorine Niedecker and the Wisconsin Poetry Festival highlighted by events related to Niedecker and hosted in Fort Atkinson.

Former Dwight Foster Public Library Board of Directors President and current holder of the Niedecker legacy, Ann Engelman said she would truly miss her dear friend.

"She was the one who initially accepted Lorine Niedecker's personal library collection on behalf of the family at Lorine's death," she said, noting that years later, the Gail and Bonnie

Roub family donated the books they had from Niedecker's personal collection.

Combined, those books now make up the collection of Lorine's personal library in the Jane Shaw Knox Niedecker Room at the Dwight Foster Public Library.

Engelman noted that it was Gates' friendship with the late Marilla Fuge that began the legacy of Niedecker.

"Without Mary Gates and Marilla and their understanding of the significance of Lorine, we wouldn't have interviews with people who knew Lorine; we wouldn't have the collection," she said.

Gates was responsible for asking the Knox family to create the original bookshelf that served for many years as the Niedecker display in the Dwight Foster Public library. Years later, the Knox family would contribute toward the renovations for the Niedecker Room that is there today.

"It was through a lot of relationships that Mary built that we have as much as we do, because there were people who thought, 'oh, that will be safe with Mary Gates,'" Engelman said. "It is one thing to give something that is very treasured, like a scrapbook from your childhood. It was another thing that Mary Gates was going to be the caretaker of it."

She said the combination of Gates' library vision and of the research and information collection that she and Fuge embarked on is why Niedecker's legacy is on the sound footing it is.

Mary is survived by her two daughters, Jane (Karl) Fossum and Ann (David) Lueder, both of Fort Atkinson; two grandchildren, Matthew (Molly) Lueder of Milwaukee and Amy Norris of Fort Atkinson; four great-grandchildren, Madelyn and Charlie Lueder, Emma and Ellie Norris; one sister, Ann "Onnie" (James) Weiss of Fort Atkinson; two nieces, Sandy (David)

# for a wing-bone

Street and Nancy (Russ) Putnam; one nephew, James (Robin) Weiss; Kelly Lueder, and many special friends.

*Portions of this article were reprinted from the Daily Jefferson County Union.*



## Virtual Niedecker Bookshelf

The Friends of Lorine Niedecker have completed a project to produce a virtual library of Lorine Niedecker's books. This library is housed at [librarything.com](http://librarything.com). Each book from the archival library has a record listing authors, contributors, publisher, date of publication, number of pages and possibly other details. In addition, the cover of each book has been scanned so it can be viewed with the other publication information.

The collection can be searched by author or title. The collection can be browsed by title, author or date of publication. Here is the URL

<http://www.librarything.com/catalog/LorineNiedecker>.



## Niedecker Bird Field Guide

Have you seen Susan Tichy's Field Guide To the Birds of Lorine Niedecker's Collected Works? This fabulous index lists dozens of birds mentioned in Lorine's work, the poems in which they appear and the page number in Jenny Penberthy's Collected Works. A valuable guide for researchers and bird lovers it is available at

<http://tinyurl.com/ngy9usy>.

## Solitary Plovers Celebrate Two Years

Feedback from several evaluation forms after the 2011 poetry festival asked for a way that local residents could better understand Lorine's poetry. Beginning in January 2012 a group of eight people gathered to do just that.

Pat Moran, UW-Whitewater professor and local poet facilitated this first session in which the group discussed "When Ecstasy is inconvenient." Since that time the group, now known as The Solitary Plovers, meet about six to ten times a year. The photo below is of a session led by Sarah Busse, one of Madison's two current poets laureate.



On January 19, Margaret Schroeder, coordinator of the Solitary Plovers, was gifted with a hand-carved piping plover. The carving was made by local artist Jerry Schoen and will reside in the Niedecker Study Room at the Dwight Foster Public Library.



For upcoming Plover meetings, please check the [lorineniedecker.org](http://lorineniedecker.org) website or call Margaret at (920) 563-1482.



# From the secret notes

## A Tally Of Contemporaries

If you missed the 2013 Lorine Niedecker Wisconsin Poetry Festival we hope you have checked out the information and photos from the event that we have posted on the website. One of the items available there is the paper presented by Nancy Shea, local poet and member of the Solitary Plover study group. Her paper titled "A Tally of Contemporaries: a reading of Lorine Niedecker's 'If I Were A Bird' and a study of the poets who inspired it" is a fascinating look into the poetic influences on this poem. To find this paper and other festival information go to [lorineniedecker.org](http://lorineniedecker.org). Select "past festivals" from the "poetry festival" menu.

You will also find a slideshow of photos from the festival including some of those to the right.



## Baileys Harbor Mural Project

Baileys Harbor is a small community on the shore of Lake Michigan in Door County, Wisconsin. The Ridges Sanctuary which figures in Lorine Niedecker's poem "Wintergreen Ridge" is just outside the town.

This mural celebrates Baileys Harbor and features lines from the poem, "Wintergreen Ridge." It was painted on the side of Nelson's Market. Ram Rojas, the artist who worked on many of the Walls of Wittenburg (WI) created this piece.

The mural was officially dedicated during a ceremony held Sept. 28. Nancy Rafal, Wisconsin poet and member of the Friends of LN board spearheaded the project. Grants and an interest-free loan from an interested resident are helping to fund the current work. Persons who wish to contribute to the project can do so by making a check payable to Baileys Harbor Historical Society-BHMC. Send donations to BHHS-BHMC, c/o Nancy Rafal, PO Box 340, Baileys Harbor, WI 54202.

Read more about the mural project at:

<http://tinyurl.com/n7wjteg>  
and

<http://tinyurl.com/l4s9zee>



The "Poetry Path" was a chalk art poetry project inviting folks to create a short poem describing their life in 6 words. Above: Pat Moran and other poets create their works.



Participation came from a wide cross-section of the community including kids, grownups, a dog and a sheep!

## POETRY

### Like A Raspberry Seed Between My Teeth

Across the road  
a white screen door slaps.  
Redwing blackbirds scatter.

Cattails' slow explosions  
fill the ditch.  
I crack a beer and watch.

Last night at the Badger Tap  
someone asked me why  
I came back to Wisconsin.

Even in peacetime  
ten years in the navy  
was killing me.

An east-to-west airliner  
slowly flies over.  
Its contrail spreads.

Sometimes it's what  
we're not  
that matters most.

**Mike Kriesel**



### Canoe

Look up  
to feel rain  
on my chin

Fishing spoiled  
I still  
have mud

### Moonberry Marsh

We switched places  
walking across the wooden bridge  
so I could be near the soft grasses  
& twisted tree trunks  
overlooking the river  
that depends on the tide

**Carrie Schonoff**



### A Lesson from Julia

(Inspired by an episode of *The French Chef*, rebroadcast  
in Nov. 2013 on *Create*)

Today, it's Quiche Lorraine.  
In black and white, she moves her  
graceless frame about the studio set,  
tucks and re-tucks a linen towel  
into the waistband of her straight dark skirt.

Her high-pitched, awful, lovely voice  
directs her T.V. audience – 1960's  
suburban women, still confined  
to harvest gold and avocado kitchens.  
She gives them what they need –

this recipe, simple but special.  
Invites them in to savor with her  
a sweet half hour of elegance. Shares  
her secret (a pinch of nutmeg) to  
turn the ordinary extraordinary.

**Jean Preston**

# *upon the pressure*

## **Between Edgerton and Heaven**

Sun  
And  
Farmer  
Woke with  
Sleepy eye  
To funneled  
Fog  
On  
This March morning  
Chickens pecked  
At seed  
Some swaddled  
In mud  
As the  
Old truck  
Sputtered  
Into daylight  
Somewhere  
Between Edgerton  
And  
Heaven.

**Kimberly Blanchette**



perches  
on a breath,  
purple finch

hummingbird stops  
at me in a pink tee seeing  
how Bosch saw

13 ways  
(through the blackbird's eyes)  
of snow

**Donna Fleischer**

## **Wintering**

day moon—  
the prize pumpkin  
lifted to the pickup

first cold night—  
the farmhouse linoleum  
worn at the sink

a love stamp  
on the severance cheque—  
cold rain

scrambling too many eggs  
for breakfast  
the widow

snow day—  
your apple compote  
bubbling on the stove

pet cemetery—  
the frozen earth  
so hard to dig

job interview—  
the snow shovel  
lifted from its hook

**Michael Dylan Welch**



# execute and adjust

## Reading Lorine Niedecker

1.

Her example—  
right word

from life's  
work—that

seemingly  
simple—

pot scrubbed  
and put on

table—so  
*presidential*

who shunned  
debate to

speak fact—her  
certain place

2.

*Footnote:*

“Al, burn these,”  
she wrote,

her life  
going up

in smoke—  
what she felt

withheld,  
except

for rock-like  
work

**David Eberly**

## Canoeing the Kickapoo River

Drive home from a day's canoe trip  
along the Kickapoo, *kiikaapoa*,

its wandering bends, *he who goes here*  
*then there*, weather in the 40s,

intermittent sun and gusts  
that make me tremble,

rain clouds on the horizon,  
veils that trail moisture

to the ground. We are both falling  
asleep, you at the wheel, me beside you.

We switch places.  
You point across the windshield

to a double rainbow, not a complete arc,  
not a complete life, but this scarcely matters.

The colors are sharp, even luminous,  
somewhere a dying man's mirage.

**Ronnie Hess**



even a little door ovenbird

\*

morning star  
rocked in a lemon wedge  
to sleep

**Sabine Miller**

# *In us sea-air rhythm*

## **Attending the Poetry Festival with my Mother**

The assignment  
what are your six words?  
inspired by Lorine Niedecker's

*Fish*  
    *fowl*  
        *flood*  
    *Water lily mud*  
*My life*

(for now ignoring the 630 words that follow)

My mother says  
*I can't write*  
    *any poem*

My six words

*In the*  
    *shadow*  
        *of trees*  
    *flowers*  
*My life*

On the drive home  
Mother recites

*The cat and me*  
    *Jim's*  
        *gone*  
*My life*

**Nancy Shea**



## **CONTRIBUTORS**

**Kimberly A. Blanchette** is a dynamic and enthusiastic Poet, Artist, Public Speaker, Photographer, and Activist. Throughout the last 25 plus years she has published four books of poetry, produced two poetry cd's, has spoken at conferences and other venues all across the U.S. and has performed on radio and television. Kimberly has a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy from the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, is a member of the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets and is co-founder of Pickle Barrel Press. For more information please visit [kimberlyblanchette.com](http://kimberlyblanchette.com)

An independent scholar and poet, **David Eberly** is coeditor, with Suzette Henke, of *Virginia Woolf and Trauma: Embodied Texts*, published by Pace University Press. David was fortunate to have met Cid Corman and to have heard Lorine Niedecker's voice from a tape recorder Cid balanced on his lap sitting in the back of his Japanese restaurant on Boston's Newbury Street.

Hartford, CT native **Donna Fleischer's** poems appear in journals and anthologies worldwide, including or forthcoming in *Bones*, *Cattails*, *Contemporary Haibun Online*, *EOAGH*, *Esque*, *Exit Strata*, *Fiera Lingue*, *Kō*, *Jupiter 88*, *Lilliput Review*, *Naugatuck River Review*, *Otoliths*, *Poets for Living Waters* (Blazevox), *Solitary Plover*, *South by Southeast*, and *Spiral Orb*. Donna curates contemporary poetry and permaculture content at [donnafleischer.wordpress.com/](http://donnafleischer.wordpress.com/).

**Ronnie Hess'** writing has appeared in national and regional newspapers and magazines. Her poetry has been featured in *Alimentum*, *Poetica* (including the Mizmor L'David Anthology, 2010), the *Wisconsin Academy's People and Ideas Magazine* and *Verse Wisconsin*, among other journals. She is the author of a poetry chapbook, *Whole Cloth* and a culinary travel guide, *Eat Smart in France*. She lives in Madison, Wisconsin.



# "We live by the urgent"

President of the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets, **Michael Kriesel**, 51, is a poet and reviewer. He's won the 2012 Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets Triad Award, the 2011 *Wisconsin People & Ideas* Poetry Contest, the 2009 Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets Muse Prize, and the 2004 Lorine Niedecker Poetry Prize from the Council for Wisconsin Writers. Books include *Chasing Saturday Night: Poems about Rural Wisconsin* (Marsh River Editions), *Whale of Stars* (haiku) (Sunnyoutside), *Moths Mail the House* (Sunnyoutside), and *Feeding My Heart to the Wind: Selected Short Poems* (Sunnyoutside). He has a B.S. in Literature from the University of the State of New York, and was a print and broadcast journalist in the U.S. Navy 1980-1990. He's currently a janitor at the rural elementary school he once attended.

**Sabine Miller** is a poet and artist. She started writing haiku shortly after reading *The Granite Pail*.

**Jean Preston**, newly appointed Poet Laureate for the City of Kenosha, is the Director of the Writing Center and an Adjunct Assistant Professor of English at Carthage College. She earned her M.F.A. in Creative Writing from the University of Southern Maine's Stonecoast Writing Program. Jean is the co-author of a photo-journal, *Tete's Story: One Woman's Work Among the Karen of Thailand*, and author of a poetry collection, *All the Queen's Horses*, and a chapbook, *Sixteen Mothers*. Her work has been published in *Pleiades*, *Verse Wisconsin*, *The Solitary Plover*, and *The Journal of the Association of Research on Mothering*.

**Carrie Voigt Schonhoff** draws inspiration for her poetry from her life on a small farmette in rural southeastern Wisconsin that she shares with her two children.

**Nancy Shea** lives near the confluence of the Rock and Crawfish rivers. She is a member of the Solitary Plovers, a Lorine Niedecker study group. Her poem is inspired by an event at the Lorine Niedecker poetry festival held in Fort Atkinson, WI.

**Michael Dylan Welch** is former vice president of the Haiku Society of America, director and co-founder of the Haiku North America conference, and cofounder of the American Haiku Archives. He is also poet laureate of the city of Redmond, Washington, where he curates two poetry reading series, and is proprietor of National Haiku Writing Month ([nahaiwrimo.com](http://nahaiwrimo.com)). In 2012, one of his translations from Japanese was printed on the back of 150,000,000 United States postage stamps. His personal website is [graceguts.com](http://graceguts.com).



## 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.

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

### THIRD THURSDAY 2014

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:

February 20 – Kimberly Blanchette

March 20 – Jean Preston

April 17 – Marilyn Taylor

May 15 – Wendy Vardaman and Shoshauna Shy

June 19 - Geoff Collins

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