

Activities 2022 – Friends of Lorine Niedecker, Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin

Mission – Dedicated to preserving and expanding the legacy of Lorine Niedecker.

Board Initiatives

This year the board saw a transition to a new president, treasurer and secretary.

The board developed a committee structure that currently includes an Executive Committee and Programming Committee.

“Solitary Plover” Newsletter Published

- Winter issue #35, articles included:
“Poetry Wall *Mergansers*,” “A 1970 Visit that Never Happened” by Daphne Marlatt
- Summer issue #36, articles included:
“School Mural Project,” “Cedar Chest Donation,” “Engelman Retires,”
“Reaching Through Rooted: Lorine Niedecker’s *Paean To Place*” by Lauren K. Carlsen
- A new initiative invites poets published in the Solitary Plover to read their poems via Zoom as a public on-line event. April 26 and November 15 were the first two. This will become a regular event following each issue.

Circulation – email subscribers 638 (3% increase), snail mail 205 (13% decrease)

All issues can be found on the Web site. www.lorineniedecker.org

Web Initiatives

- The Web continues to be Lorine’s link to the world. In 2022 there were 6,570 page views. (34% increase) Updating and improving the Web site continues.
- Lorine currently has 1,539 Facebook Friends, 5% over last year. We no longer have a person to post and maintain this initiative. We hope to improve this in 2023.

Education Initiatives

Planning for the Lorine Niedecker Fellowship, a partnership between Write On Door County and the Friends of Lorine Niedecker continued. Application guidelines were created, calendar set, a selection committee identified and publicity coordinated. The purpose of the Fellowship is to encourage research into Niedecker’s life and writing and to promote new work that explores poetry of place. The Fellowship will be offered every two years to an established or emerging poet familiar with the work of Lorine Niedecker. Two weeks will be divided between Fort Atkinson and Door County in May 2023. There were 11 qualified applicants. The winner will be announced in January 2023.

Archive Collection Initiatives

- A review of the Hoard Historical Museum Lorine Niedecker Collection files was made.

Public Art

- Luther Elementary School hosted Jeremy Pinc as Artist in Residence to create a mural including Lorine's poetry. All public schools now have murals including Lorine's poems. Pictures of the murals can be found on the Web site.
<https://lorineniedecker.org/friends-lorine-niedecker/poetry-art-projects/>
- Downtown Fort Atkinson Poetry Wall "*fish, fowl, flood, water lily, mud, my life*" was touched up by artist Jeremy Pinc, paid for by building owners Russ and Netti Toeller. The wall was painted in 2009, the last touch-up was in 2013.

Presentations and Activities

- Attended an Arts and Literature Lab (ALL) reception in honor of Ellen Kort in their new location in Madison. Assessed new potential for FOLN partnerships and events.
- A birthday party for Lorine was held at the Hoard Historical Museum. 4th grade poems, in the style of Lorine were displayed and students read poems. The Hoard Museum supports the 4th Grade Poetry Study Unit. Julie Schoessow was the special guest. Lorine's cedar chest that held her papers and correspondence was accessioned by the museum, a gift from Julie Schoessow and Ann Engelman.
- A presentation was made for the Fort Atkinson Club lecture series on May 11 highlighting history and stories surrounding the three poetry walls in Historic Downtown Fort Atkinson.
- Partnership - The Fort Atkinson Community Foundation's Lorine Niedecker account is not at the level allowing annual disbursement. The Foundation generously arranged for FOLN to receive 4% of the account each year.
- Deb Bauer was welcomed as the new Dwight Foster Public Library coordinator for FOLN. On July 12 she presented a tour of the Lorine Niedecker Study Room at the library (with very short notice) for CBS 58 (#58 Hometowns) that stopped in for an impromptu interview to learn about Lorine and her ties to Fort Atkinson, Blackhawk Island, and the library.

Board Meetings

- January 17, February 21, March 21, April 18, May 16, July 18, August 15, October 17, December 19

On a sad note, we lost two very dear Friends of Lorine this year.

On June 18, Margot Peters lost her struggle with breast cancer. She was on the Board of the FOLN from 2009 – 2018. She wrote and published the biography "Lorine Niedecker: A Poet's Life" in 2011. She made appearances all over Wisconsin. Her research was extensive. She generously shared her insights with scholars, forums, conferences and curious visitors. Margot's papers for the biography are at the Hoard Historical Museum in the Lorine Niedecker Archive.

On December 29, Bonnie Roub died of a stroke. She and her husband Gail significantly contributed to build the foundation for the legacy we have today. They lived on Blackhawk Island and were good friends to Lorine. They donated their collection of Lorine's books from her personal library they acquired shortly after her death, also watercolors, correspondence and some of Lorine's research papers, most notably for her "*Lake Superior*" poem. Gail and Bonnie worked diligently to persuade the State of Wisconsin to designate Lorine's Blackhawk Island Road home as a Wisconsin Historical Marker. Bonnie served on the FOLN Board for many years ultimately becoming an honorary member.