



I was the solitary plover

FRIENDS OF
Lorine Niedecker

A Founding Friend

By Karl Gartung

The Friends of Lorine Niedecker are sad to note the passing this past December of Bonnie Roub, who with her husband Gail were primary movers in preserving Lorine Niedecker's legacy in Fort Atkinson. According to Niedecker's biographer, Margot Peters, at Al Millen's invitation, "Gail and Bonnie rescued some books, scrapbooks, and papers that had not been burned. Al ceremoniously presented [the remainder of] Lorine's personal library to the Fort Atkinson library." (Peters, 2011)

The Roubs kept their part of Niedecker's library for many years in their living room and allowed visitors to sit and read these books. Among the Niedecker items and memorabilia they brought home was a

box full of papers found at the back of a closet. These turned out to be 200-300 pages of Niedecker's research notes and the trip summary for the journey around Lake Superior and to Lake Itasca. This trip inspired what Niedecker called her 'magma opus' - the poem Lake Superior. Bonnie and Gail allowed me the opportunity to photocopy those papers over a couple of days in the mid 1980's, for which I and others are eternally grateful.

Gail Roub's friendship with Lorine Niedecker fueled his growing recognition of her importance as a writer. He also shared her interest in history, painting and in the landscape of Blackhawk Island where they were neighbors.

In a Wisconsin Academy Review article from 1986, Gail said, "She knew I was interested. I think she sensed my difficulties, and as trust grew between us she decided to allow me in some ways to share the privacy of her artistic life. I had probably known her about a year when I suddenly and directly asked her, 'Lorine, who are you?' Her equally direct reply with a slight smile: 'William Carlos Williams said that I am the Emily Dickinson of my time.' After that I began to try harder.

"A kind of breakthrough came in the summer of 1965 when I was relaxing from the school year



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and attempting to paint. I had bought some of the new acrylic colors and was trying for a vivid spring background into which I planned to place a prothonotary warbler, the brilliant little chrome yellow bird that frequents watery places like Blackhawk Island. It was an unselfconscious painting, very sketchy, the yellow and green background almost vibrating on the eye, and somehow the little blob of yellow bird pulled the whole painting together. I was sitting there looking at it when Lorine knocked at the door for a quick visit as she passed by. When she saw the painting, she threw up her hands in delight and I could see that she wanted it, so of course I gave it to her.

“A week or so later she told me she was writing a poem about the painting . . . :

Bird singing
ringing yellow
green

My friend made green
ring
—his painting—
grass
the sweet bird
flew in”

Roub continues, “In 1968 I startled my students and friends by announcing that I would marry for the first time at age forty-two. While courting my wife Bonnie, I was anxious that she would accept my life on Blackhawk Island, and one evening I showed her a copy of *Paeon to Place*, the long and lovely poem in which the poet evoked the deepest images of her life in haunting language. Bonnie read the poem slowly, then read it again and again. Always more intuitive than I, she sensed the beauty and power of the language even before she fully understood what Lorine was doing.” (Roub, 1986)

The Roubs knew that Niedecker was anxious about the fate of her writing. She knew how good she was as a writer and her contemporary peers knew it as well. Ultimately, it took the very special neighbors Gail and Bonnie to preserve her legacy in Fort Atkinson and even abroad.

As the Roubs came to recognize Niedecker’s significance as a writer, they began to regard their growing knowledge as a responsibility. They went out of their way to assist anyone seriously devoted to Niedecker’s writing who made the trip to Fort Atkinson. Gail had known Niedecker before his romance and marriage to Bonnie. But on their return to Blackhawk Island after the summer romance in Europe, he took Bonnie immediately to meet Niedecker.

Margot Peters notes in her bio “That December Gail Roub married Bonita Sigl, an English and Latin teacher, at Fort Atkinson High School. Gail had brought Bonnie to Lorine’s house to meet her; Lorine had cupped her face in her hands, gazing deep into her eyes to ‘know her.’

Later, Bonnie and Lorine would occasionally share walks to the end of Blackhawk Island. Peters notes, “Like Lorine, Bonnie was quiet and Lorine opened to her, describing how autobiographical *Paeon To Place* was, or how her ‘humiliated’ mother could only communicate with her by notes: ‘When I took care of my mother, I became the adult, my mother the child.’ Once, Bonnie remembers, Lorine threw back her head, exclaiming, ‘I feel like a goddess when I walk this island.’

“Determined that Lorine be recognized, Gail Roub proved an exceptionally loyal friend. He and Bonnie talked to groups about Lorine, urged teachers to use her poetry, and — crucial for biography — interviewed people who had known her. He was joined in this work by two Fort Atkinson librarians, Mary Gates and Marilla Fuge. Fuge became intensely interested in Lorine’s ancestry and spent years researching Niedecker and Kunz genealogy. Fuge and Gates also



Blackhawk Island Celebration

In September, past and present members of the Friends of Lorine Niedecker Board of Directors gathered at the former Niedecker property on Blackhawk Island for fellowship and poetry.

Front Row left to right: Paul Smyth, Margaret Schroeder, Sylvia Sippel *Back Row left to right:* Nancy Shea, David Pavelich, Ann Engelman, Karl Gartung, Jeremiah Beitzel, Tom Montag, Nancy Rafal and Dot Kent

interviewed important witnesses like Ernest Hartwig and Aeneas McAllister. They were determined not to let Lorine Niedecker's life be lost.

“Roub also chaired a local committee that in 1990 nominated the former Niedecker property for a State Historical Marker as ‘Poet of Place.’ Spurred by rejection because ‘her place in history does not yet appear to be firmly established,’ the Roubs solicited testimonies to Niedecker’s status from professors, critics, librarians, and poets like Rakosi, Enslin, Williams, Sorrentino, and Levertov. The Historical Markers Council capitulated. On July 13, 1991, a group of loyalists assembled at a ‘once in a lifetime literary event’ to erect the marker.” (Peters, 2011)

Gail Roub was rightly given credit for instigating so many of the activities in Fort Atkinson honoring Niedecker, but careful attention reveals Bonnie

alongside him every step of the way. They opened their home to visitors together and participated in public events as full partners in their mutual belief in Niedecker’s importance as a writer. My welcome to their home was entirely mutual and warm, though Bonnie was always attending to her children, and Gail the overt host.

Her daughter Maisie told me Bonnie “wrapped her whole being around Gail, her children and grandchildren. She wanted a closed tender relationship with her grandchildren, loving, not judgmental. In that she succeeded totally, with understanding and quiet love.”

Maisie reminded me of a videotaped interview conducted with Gail and Bonnie about Niedecker. In it, Gail recounts his relationship with Niedecker and with Bonnie. He repeatedly defers to Bonnie for

precise dates and names and memories of occasions with Niedecker, and subsequently with visitors and scholars. And she responds, again and again, with her very sharp knowledge. They were full partners.

Bonnie gave their portion of Niedecker's library to the Dwight Foster Public Library and the papers to the Hoard Museum. This was a happy accident, very fortunate for those of us who earnestly and perhaps naively believed that if possible, the books and papers should stay in her home town. There is real value for local readers and visiting scholars to experience the place.

Surely, the many contributions Gail and Bonnie made deserve our thanks with public recognition. I imagine a monument with Lorine Niedecker's poem for Gail and Bonnie cut into stone:

Katharine Anne

A poor poet
divining Gail

The baby looked toward me
and I was born—
to sound, light
lift, life
beyond my life

She wiggles her toe
I grow
I go to school to her
and she to me
and to Bonnie

References:

Margot Peters, *LORINE NIEDECKER A Poet's Life*, 2011, The University of Wisconsin Press.

Gail Roub, *Getting to know Lorine Niedecker*, Wisconsin Academy Review, June, 1986.

Karl Gartung bio:

Karl Gartung,
along with Anne Kingsbury
and Karl Young cofounded
Woodland Pattern Book Center in 1979.

He always considered Woodland Pattern as a kind of homage for Lorine Niedecker since the lack of awareness of her stature as a poet was so unfortunate both for her and for Wisconsin readers and writers.

Inaugural Lorine Niedecker Fellowship Winner Announced

Michigan Poet Lauren Carlson Awarded Fellowship

The Friends of Lorine Niedecker and Write On, Door County are pleased to announce the selection of Michigan poet Lauren Carlson as the first recipient of the Lorine Niedecker Fellowship. The fellowship provides a two-week residency, one week at Write On, located on Wisconsin's northeast peninsula, and one in Niedecker's hometown of Fort Atkinson, WI, along with a \$1,000 award and a travel stipend. Carlson was selected from a pool of 11 candidates representing six states. Katherine Yets of St. Francis, WI, and Kasey Jueds of Shokan, NY, were named honorable mentions.

Lauren Carlson is a poet and spiritual director living in Manistee, Michigan. Her chapbook, *Animals I Have Killed*, won Comstock Review's Chapbook Prize in 2018. Her poetry has appeared in *Crab Creek Review*, *Salamander Magazine*, *Terrain*, *The Windhover*, and *Waxwing* among many others. Her critical writing has been featured in such publications as *Pleiades*, *The Rumpus*, and *Ploughshares*. In 2022, she won the Levis Stipend from Friends of Writers for her manuscript in progress. Her writing has been supported by Tin House, Napa Valley Writers' Conference, Sewanee Writers' Conference, the Southwest Minnesota Arts Council, Artplace America, and the Colledgeville Institute. She serves as the editor for *Tinderbox Poetry Journal* and holds an MFA in poetry from the Warren Wilson MFA Program for Writers.

The selection committee consisted of Wisconsin poets Tom Montag and Nancy Rafal.

A poet and essayist, Montag was a Founding Contributing Editor of the Pushcart Prize. His poem, "Lecturing My Daughter in Her First Fall Rain," is incorporated in the design of the Milwaukee Convention Center. Rafal wrote her first poem in fifth grade and returned to writing after retiring from elementary education and moving to Door County. She is a founder of the



Newport State Park Poetry Trail and served as the 2019-2021 Door County Poet Laureate.

Administered jointly by the Friends of Lorine Niedecker and Write On, the fellowship is offered every two years to an established or emerging poet familiar with the work of poet Lorine Niedecker. The purpose of the fellowship is to encourage research into Niedecker's life and writing and to promote new work that deals with the poetry of place. Carlson will spend the week of April 30 - May 7 at Write On and the week of May 7 - 14 in Fort Atkinson. She will present public programs at both locations.

The Friends of Lorine Niedecker is dedicated to preserving and expanding the legacy of the 20th century poet. They offer access to research archives and education material and publish *The Solitary Plover*, a semiannual newsletter, and the monograph series *What Region*.

Visit www.lorineniedecker.org.

Write On, Door County is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to inspire and engage writers and readers of all ages at all stages. Write On conducts programs at various venues throughout Door County and offers residencies to emerging and established writers of all genres. Visit www.writeondoorcounty.org.
ndoorcounty.org.



Our poetry editor
Tom Montag,
has initiated
a new feature.

Each issue he will
select a few poets
to share Niedecker's
influence on
their work.

In this issue look
for this addition
from **Lakshman Bulusu,**
Stephen Hemenway
and Angela Hoffman.

For Susan

"One asked, does she dance?
Yes, across the Great Divide,
Silent squeeze-box girl."



Stephen Maki became a person in the Tongass Forest, and later lived in California, Hokkaido and Berlin. He is a lifelong student of, particularly, Snyder, Rexroth, Rilke, Oliver and Gluck, and has translated Vallejo. He mainly, though, worships at the altar of Lorine. He currently lives with his wife, Estrella, and two cats in North St. Paul, Minnesota.

Poem For Bayfield WI

Another evening we watch the moon come up over the largest of the Apostles, Madeline Island, the moon is rust fire reflected on Superior, the ferry docking to sound of Hallelujah being sung by a duo, we slow dance on the sidewalk as people pass. I like to think as if in wonderment. JFK endorsed the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore concept because they flew him low where he saw sail boats which reminded him of Kennebunkport. A man grew apples to lure investors, something to do after all the trees were cut down. The magnolia warbler was or was not there, we saw the redstart for sure, heard maybe both of them. The great flood of '42 deposited boulders where we sit now, perhaps leaving some trees would have been useful. Niedeker drove by before that, in 1941 published her travelogue sponsored by the WPA, her Lake Superior poem much later. Nazaire LaBonte's house built in 1863 now an inn where we hear every voice from the room beside us.

We've cut down all the pine
Next all the hemlock and hardwood
Ten years more they said and did



Ross Belot is an ecopoet, filmmaker, photographer and opinion writer on climate change inaction from Hamilton, Ontario. He worked for decades in the fossil fuel industry but now focuses on environmental work. His latest poetry collection, *Moving to Climate Change Hours*, was listed as one of the best Canadian poetry books of 2020 by the CBC. He has lived by the Great Lakes most of his life.

Wonky Pumpkins

The answer waits among
the wind in the trees, and leaves
on the river, the sweet smell
outside the bakery, the procession
downtown, the freight train
at the station, the little boy
on the bike, the jingle of the bell
above the shop's front door,
the twin girls swinging on swings
at the park, the stray dogs barking,
the farmer selling wonky pumpkins
at the orchard, the bees pollinating
in the garden, the woman admiring
the amateur painter
at the farmer's market, the widow
remembering fifty years ago.
The old milkshake shop opens
across the street, the couple holds hands
in the theater, a bucket of popcorn falls
on the floor, the cat sleeps
by the fireplace, the kids make smores
by the dozens, mothers give birth
to future poets.



Lauren Kaltenecker is a young poet from Illinois. This is her first publication. Inspired by the works of Lorine Niedecker and other female poets, she is nearing the completion of her first poetry book dedicated to her two grandmothers she lost during childhood.

December 31

Lights blurred in rain, this
small flood
swept into the channel
of another Another
year gone on

Tide blurred by rain and
small bird
swept through the fronds
of the pepper tree Smell

of wet wood and beyond
it tide Tide
swept up, brushing
the bank where the bird
would hide, would

have hid in high grass After
the owl call, the owl's
feathered silence Gray

burr of night
dislodged Softening
bird's failure to fly Absent
to the ear Another,
this other year's wary call



Elizabeth Robinson is the author, most recently, of *Excursive* from Roof Books. Forthcoming are *Thirst & Surfeit* from Threadsun Press and *Rendered Paradise*, collaboratively written with Susanne Dyckman, to be published by Apogee Press.

Threads

September slid its stitches onto October with careful devotion.
The indigo sky cast a stark contrast against the golden grasses.
We hiked the path through rows of prairie flowers
discovering an eagle sitting as if he was dropped then sewn
into this tapestry of loose threads
of plum, heather, rye, sage, knotted with occasional blues.
The lemon-drop moths seemed to pull
us forward so we would not miss the garter snakes basking
the young rabbit, further on, two red-crowned cranes regaling
a doe browsing, a cluster of swallows rising, falling as one
spun strand. Milkweed pods unraveled their downy wishes
as he slipped his hand into mine, seamless, all tied together.



Angela Hoffman lives in Wisconsin. Her poetry has appeared in *Solitary Plover*, Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets *Museletter* and calendar, and *Your Daily Poem.com*. She committed to writing a poem a day during the first two years of the pandemic. Angela's interests in spirituality and personal growth inspire her poetry.

We Find Our Way

Like dusk, the noon day goes dark
as rain falls, thunder rumbles.
I light a candle, shelter inside the gray.
Even the birds have quieted.
I hear only the humming of cars;
the murmur of humanity.
Headlights greet strangers in passing
on their way to find something more.



The first poem I ever read of Lorine's was the beginning words of her poem, Paeon to Place (Fish/fowl/flood/Water lily mud/My life). I read the words painted as a mural on the side of a building in Fort Atkinson. I imagined what words I would write to sum up my life (perhaps something like: Carp/cloud/crow/ Spring wildflowers/snow or Trout/trails/trees/Sweet buttercups/bees). I knew her life consisted of so much more. Later, a larger than life statue of the poet lady was placed on the bike trail in Fort Atkinson that I frequented with my grandchildren. We always stopped to pay her a visit. And so began my fascination with this larger than life poet! I wrote my first poems during the pandemic in 2020. I have to admit I found it difficult to decipher the meaning of many if not most of Niedecker's poems. So much hidden

in such a condensed space. Paeon to Place seems to me, both a song of praise and of lament. Just recently I took a drive out to Blackhawk Island to see her home and place where she lived. I felt the sparseness along with the harshness of a life lived on a river that was forever changing yet forever staying the same. That feeling is reflected in her poem. It speaks to loss yet solace, loneliness yet attention to the lovely ordinariness of life set alongside betrayal, a strained marriage, tension, a mother gone deaf, and an eventual distancing of family members. Near the end of the poem, Lorine reminds us: not save love for things, but to throw things to the flood. I like to think that she is reminding us to consider what really matters in life.

Angela Hoffman

Winter Commute

to work and home
a three month crust
of road salt

*the crack of young ice
in his dreams*

by her hands
crackers crumbled
into the soup

*soap box flakes
harder to remember
Grandma's kitchen*

chickens clean up
what's left in the corn crib

*her bed
in the living room
the year ends*



Julie Schwerin & D Schwerin

Rev. Dan Schwerin is the Wisconsin Conference United Methodist Church Clergy Assistant to the Bishop and poet. He is the author of *ORS*, from red moon press and has resided with his wife Julie in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin since 2021.

Julie Warther Schwerin (she/her - Sun Prairie, Wisconsin) is an associate editor at The Heron's Nest (www.theheronsnest.com) and a member of the *Red Moon Anthology* Editorial team. She was instrumental in establishing several haiku installations in the Midwest. The most recent is *Words in Bloom: A Year of Haiku* at the Chicago Botanic Garden which features the work of haiku poets on signs throughout the garden.

One Step Ahead

joe-pye
the prairie back
at full height

always one step ahead prairie grasshopper

bank fishing for bluegills
another bite
of his tuna sandwich

wind turbines
cartwheeling through prairie grass
children's laughter

cottonwood day throwing caution to the wind

where we each grow wild pulling off for lupines




Julie Schwerin

all
we tried
you
interested
summer


the crawdads
to catch
becoming
in other things
evening



D Schwerin




Cloud tincture stains
the notebook
and this double-barreled
sky is hard
as a long look from you



Snow all gone
and the trail's
hard-packed ice
we have to walk
beside only Ivy
chooses to try
to tightrope it
so we cut the loop
short and get her
home to dry pants



Michael Sikkema is a poet interested in mycology, poetry of all kinds, and trying to look more closely at what's right in front of him.



For coffee and tea and wifi
hipsters pay dearly;
my natural resource: empty
the tip jar daily.



Joel Van Haften

Stone Poem

Wien, 2019

Amphibolite, angled luxury
I take thee

Blackish green, resinous slope
Parent rock: Epidote

Prismatic, green crystal mound

Anchor me,
monoclinic increase
from the ground.

Parallelogram, aciculated base spray
largest rock-solid found:

Knappenwand.



Julia Kadlec-Wagner writes poetry, literary analysis, music reviews, and when time permits, good teaching practice for conferences such as the New Jersey Writing Alliance, Common Ground Publishing, The Modern Language Association and The Conference on College Composition and Communications. She also serves as Director of the Metro Writing Studio located on the Metropolitan Campus of Fairleigh Dickinson University where she lectures in Academic and Creative Writing. Find more information about her writing at wagnerjulia.com.

Lorine Niedecker

Young in Fall I said: the birds
are at their highest thoughts
of leaving

from Lorine Niedecker's "Four Poems"

I admire her
for her leaving
she had so much
to leave
 dysfunctional home
 a bad marriage
 miserable work
 poverty
 a fickle lover
 (although she kept him
 as mentor and muse)

she took
 all her leaving
 and filtered
 it like the marsh
through poetry
tenderly shaped
and sharply tuned
to speak her truth
 and after all
 the caregiving, work, heartbreak,
 the leaving was done,

and there was room
 for finding

her own
way,
words,
love,
returning
home
on Blackhawk Island,
until she left
us with her words.

Migration

fish ladder—
fingerprints on the glass
at child height

early salmon migration—
an empty vase
in the summer house

salmon bake—
the vegetarian
sipping water

a salmon carcass
under the log bridge—
drifting leaves

salmon migration—
a Beethoven tune
comes to mind


somewhere upstream
where I've never been
salmon spawning




Michael Dylan Welch has had his poetry performed for the Empress of Japan and at the Baseball Hall of Fame, printed on balloons and chiseled into stone. He is president of the Redmond Association of Spokenword, curates SoulFood Poetry Night, and is founder of National Haiku Writing Month (www.nahaiwrimo.com). You can learn about his many books, and read his poems, essays, and reviews (published in hundreds of journals and anthologies in at least twenty languages) at his website, graceguts.com.

Katrina Serwe, BS, MS, PhD...it took her three degrees to figure out she's really a poet. Now she's on Wisconsin's Ice Age Trail writing poems and sharing hiking haiku on Instagram. Her poems have been published in *Bramble*, *Moss Piglet*, *The Little Book Project*, and the *Muse 5*. You can find her at <https://www.wfop.org/katrina-serwe>






blasting thru the car window
the other instrument
in the jazz piece



crossing the room
sounds less daylight
makes



growing darker
stars kept a long way
from us



Gary Hotham currently lives in Maryland. His most recent chapbook was published in 2022: *Playground Grass: Haiku Options*. Pinyon Publishing will be doing one later this year: *Soft-serve: Haiku Remains*. His last major collection: *Stone's Throw: Promises of Mere Words* was published in 2016. He was named the 2022-2023 Honorary Curator of the American Haiku Archives at California State University Sacramento.

While She Fixes the Lawnmower

their voices cross from atop
an electricity pylon

reach over the flood plain
of a traprock mountain meadow

green grasses and oatstraw,
daisies, in abundance

it is earth's spring morning
when we first see them

corvus
northern ravens with their young

they call out toward the mountain
a husky sequence like an arrow

through this cold grey
like Marconi's first wireless



Donna Fleischer is the author of five poetry chapbooks, most recently, *from beyond my window: the Covid-19 Poems* (Meritage Press, 2020), *<Periodic Earth>* (Casa de Cinco Hermanas Press, 2016), and *Twinkle, Twinkle* (Longhouse Publishers, 2011). She received the support of a Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art - Tupelo Press residency and the University of Hartford's Creative Writing Award for Poetry.



I don't remember specifically which was the first poem I read by Lorine Niedecker, but it was for my first poetry class, at Berkeley Extension with Ed Smallfield. I think I can pick out all of the poems that were in the handout that week. They were all from *The Granite Pail*. To me they were of a piece—her voice came through instantly in poems as short as *There's a better shine* or as long as *Paeon to Place*. The brevity and exactness, the intelligence, the conversational qualities, the meanings that could be fleeting or overwhelming and often somehow hard to fully grasp. Take for instance the first poem *There's a better shine*, a mere five lines, and the sense of aging, of clock-watching it conveys. It's a wonderful intro poem, suggesting what will be expanded in the coming pages. It's a complaint of a sort but also with the rhyme and the quickness it's clever and funny. After the semester ended I went out and bought the book.

Stephen Hemenway

in every part of everything
is something that once was rock†

after Niedecker

in pieces of rock
is stuff

that once was life
pale and hollow

in the folds of her book
passages marked
by leaf or
bus pass
*

a break

in the weather
in the water

in her eighties
and a bathrobe
my neighbor M sweeps
my sidewalk and gutter

all the stray leaves
taken in

and me standing
gawking at geese
in their northerly
arrow
*

once grampa
had us
sweep the single
snow fall
from our mountain
cul de sac

flakes mixed
with gravel
melted
at the edge of our circle

†From *Lake Superior*
by Lorine Niedecker

Stephen Hemenway graduated in 2006 with an MFA in Poetry from San Francisco State University, has been published in a few magazines, including *14 Hills* and *Twenty Six*, and has one book of poems, *Fold Books*, published by Battery Street Press.

Petition on Behalf of the Bifurcating World

May the wind that shapes the weather
and the creatures who live on life's bounty

carry the seeds of peaceful change
to plant new forests to hold up the sky,

shelter the birds from prowling predators,
hold fast to the earth in stormy weather.

May our forging of weapons for war
give way to the ploughshares of peace,

shared bread and wine, dance,
and the replanting of those gardens

soaked now in blood and the wreckage
of lives--may lust for power subside.

May this age of the Anthropocene
not lead to heat death for our species

or any creatures of land, air, or water.
May our way forward be together.

May the center hold.



The Custodian of Snowstorms

I'm the one who cleans up
after all that easy sweep
of downy flakes transforms
the winter scene to bushy heaps.

I'm the one up at 4 a.m., driving
my beeping snowplow through
drifted roads, leading the blind
drivers in a slow parade

of scraped slush, yellow glow.
I'm the one spreading
sand and cinders on sheets
of ice before someone breaks

their neck on glassy patches.
Heater blasting in my cab
to keep out the 30 below,
I work the storm's long track,

passing shuttered houses
on side streets where I know
people lie awake and listen
for the sound of an opening road.



Robin Chapman's recent books include *The Only Home We Know* (2018) and *Panic Season* (2022), available from Mystery to Me or spdbooks.org. She is recipient of Appalachia's Helen Howe Award in poetry and teaches workshops in poetry at The Clearing. She and her husband hiked to Lorine's cabin to visit it on a day of rain so fierce it flooded the roads up to their knees.

Sijo

A wicked wind blows the golden autumn away today
Cardinal sways on the branch, feathered heart against spirals of snow
Takes his place for the winter, a burning candle in the cold.



Margaret King is a Wisconsin native who loves to be inspired by the seasons and landscape of the Upper Midwest. Her recent work has appeared in *Nightingale and Sparrow*, *Brave Voices Magazine*, and *The Writing Disorder*. She is the author of the poetry collection, *Isthmus*, and teaches tai chi. She appreciates the legacy of poetry Lorine Niedecker left, and how it continues to inspire so many others today.



woods in winter

bark

bark



the birds gone,
the notes to their songs
white on white paper



birch,
moonlight, and snow, among those
who can't sleep



Michael Nickels-Wisdom has been writing haiku since 1990, while working in a public library. Since then, his poems have appeared in various magazines, most recently *Bones* - journal for the short verse, *Whiptail* - journal for the single-line poem, and *Cold Moon Journal*. He was most recently anthologized in *A New Resonance 12: Emerging Voices in English-Language Haiku* and *Haiku 2021: 100 notable haiku from 2020*. His poems have received awards from the Haiku International Association, the Tokutomi Memorial Haiku Contest, and the International Kusamakura Haiku Competition, among others. Retired after 38 years in library work, he lives in Delavan, Wisconsin.

Deep Freeze

isolation seems
the only way

padded blankets
caving me

capsulated
limbs torso hair

nowhere needs
my going there



Georgia Ressimeyer, a three-time Pushcart Prize nominee, has published two poetry chapbooks and two full-length collections. Her most recent chapbook is *Leading a Life* (Water's Edge Press, 2021). Her poetry has received awards from the Council for Wisconsin Writers, *Wisconsin People & Ideas*, the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets, The Washington Island Literary Festival, *Peninsula Pulse* and others. For more information, see georgiारessimeyer.com.

Extended Pandemic

In the first year
luxuriated in silence
read books about pestilence
baked bread discovered new
but disappointing technologies
stayed away masked
from friends strangers
wrote nothing the mind
preoccupied tongue
gone dry

In the second year
words came as a stream
unstoppable
snows melting as cascade
after long winter the pass
finally open
new vaccines hope bending
illness out of shape
Death once more behind us
yet not for so many beloved
one cousin friends we let go

In the third year
by then five jabs
anticipating more
yet still crippled
reluctance becoming
a way of living
wary of others
keeping distance
so many still sickened
so often tired
sleeping days
watching bland
programming on TV
nature still the only
consolation companion
husband and the hens
the hens the hens
sweet ignorance in
daily regime



Ronnie Hess is an essayist and poet, author of five poetry chapbooks and two culinary travel guides. She lives in Madison. Find her at ronniehess.com.



Lorine Niedecker was definitely a “Poet of Place”. From Black Hawk Island to North Central, “place” played a central role in her poems, be it “Wilderness” or “Paeon to Place”. In addition, her voice captured poignant issues prevalent in her time, be it the second wave feminist movement when women were dominated by men or the fourth wave feminist movement of today when the issues still persist. I was moved when I read her poem “Wilderness” which was the first poem I read of her. Here Lorine speaks of the powerlessness of women by way of inequalities in domestic and work places as well as in abusive relationships. She captures in stark images like “You are my other country” portraying men a long distance away from women or “prickly pear” and “the sudden violent storm” that touch upon domestic violence of men against women. And in the final stanza, she uses “wounded doe” as a metaphor, where the woman that gets drowned in the river of male mania. This poem sends a ringing message to all men and women noting that the same inequalities exist even today, in a way occupying a forward place in spite of women being empowered. What I felt touching was the way she uses phrases and comparisons to describe the “powerful” issues in society and in a “less is more” fashion taking this poem as an example.

Lakshman Bulusu

Your poems lead the way

to the many place(s) in a *'poet of place'*
Stars in the firmament,
as poems on the same page,
they shine together.

In your "Paeon to place",

*' the place
was water'*

and

*'river-marsh-drowse
and in flood
 moonlight
 gives sight
of no land'*

stands juxtaposed with

*'Fish
fowl
flood
water lily mud.'*

They are sparkles, and like streaks of sunlight
in woods—ever glowing.

Black Hawk Island to "The Granite Pail",
to "Lake Superior" to "North Central"—
everywhere your discovery of many friends,
among them,

'A Friend Tree',

and the many places

'between your house and mine'

enable to see beauty everywhere, beyond praise.

You *'rose from marsh mud'*,
to become the *'lonely woman icon'*,
and *'the solitary plover'*,

*'united for life to serve
silver.'*

Your poems have a place in history—
And remind me to read them,
again and again.



Lakshman Bulusu is an international poet, author, and educator. He is published in over thirty poetry journals in the US, Canada, UK, Ireland, Taiwan, and India. He invented the STAR poem genre and MIRACLE STAR poem genre in 2016 and 2021 respectively. He was an author feature for *OpenDoor Poetry Magazine* in February 2022. He was a semi-finalist in the Wine Cellar Press Order of Chaos Poetry contest for New Poetic Forms for his invented STAR poem genre.

North Central: A Virtual Reading Series

presented by Friends of Lorine Niedecker

Friends of Lorine Niedecker (FoLN) present the first in a biannual series of North Central virtual readings on Sunday, March 26, 2023 at 5pm CST. Our inaugural readers will be Shannon Tharp (Denver, CO) and Noah Zanella (Chicago, IL).

Shannon Tharp is the author of *The Cost of Walking* (Skysill Press, 2011) and *Vertigo in Spring* (The Cultural Society, 2013). She's also co-editor with Sommer Browning of *Poet-Librarians in the Library of Babel: Innovative Meditations on Librarianship* (Library Juice Press, 2018). Her poems and essays have appeared in *Blazing Stadium*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Coldfront Magazine*, *The RS 500*, *SALT*, *Typo*, and *The Volta*, among others. She lives in Denver, where she's a librarian at the University of Denver.

Noah Zanella is a Chicago based writer and musician. He works as a professor at Carthage College, an editor at MASKS literary magazine, and a teaching artist at Hugo House. He's also a cofounder of *Gourd* magazine, which will be releasing its first issue in the fall. He credits Lorine Niedecker's writing with teaching him how to write poems, and he reads her collected work every summer.

**North Central:
A Virtual Reading Series
presented by Friends
of Lorine Niedecker**

Sunday, March 26, 2023 at 5pm CST

Link to join this event and hyperlink it with this URL: <https://carthage-edu.zoom.us/j/95956984069?pwd=VHhGRotSOEtROWxlc1vSkRVWHRPQT09>

Meeting ID: 959 5698 4069

Passcode: 607922

One tap mobile

+16469313860,,95956984069#,,, *607922# US

+13017158592,,95956984069#,,, *607922# US

(Washington DC)

For more information:

write Chuck Stebelton cstebelton@gmail.com

or Richard Meier rmeier@carthage.edu

This event will be recorded.

Lorine Niedecker will be turning 120 on May 12.

Come and help celebrate.

The Friends of Lorine Niedecker and Fort Atkinson Chamber of Commerce will be hosting "Write On The River" on May 11-13. Get outside with your journal, laptop or notebook and write! While you are at it, write a poem and share it at the Open Mic planned Saturday evening, May 13 at the Cafe Carpe on the banks of the Rock River.

On Saturday, May 13,
**stop by the Farmer's Market
for street poet Paul Wiegel.**

He brings his typewriter and creates personal poems on the spot.

The Hoard Museum will have a
birthday cake and Lauren Carlson,

2023 recipient for the Niedecker Fellowship, will talk about her two week writing experience culminating on Lorine's birthday.

**Take a selfie in front of
one of the Niedecker Poetry Walls.**

Use hashtag #Fort Poetry so we can include your poem.

Watch the website lorineniedecker.org for additional activities.

New Solitary Plover Submission Guidelines

We accept submissions from the public for the newsletter. Items considered for publication include: essays, book reviews, events related to poetry and/or Niedecker, and news items related to poetry and/or Niedecker. In addition, we will consider excellent original poetry which honors Lorine Niedecker in theme, style, or content. We have not yet established limits on the size of submissions.

Please send one submission of 1-3 poems (of any length and style) to newsletter@lorineniedecker.org. Put your last name and "Plover Submission" in the subject line. In the body of the email please include a cover letter with mailing address, a 50 word bio, and your poems. Please do not submit poems as a separate attachment unless your poem requires special formatting (PDF preferred).

Contributing authors will receive one contributor's copy of the print issue.

Rights revert to poets/contributors immediately after publication. If poems are reprinted later (in a collection or anthology), we appreciate an acknowledgements credit.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Amy Lutzke by sending an email to newsletter@lorineniedecker.org.

Hear the Solitary Plover

Join us as we continue to share the poems published in the Solitary Plover in a virtual reading. On Thursday, April 13 at 6 p.m. CT, poets published in the Winter 2023 issue will read their poems.

Link to join this event and hyperlink it to this URL:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88153520820>

Creative Space Art Retreat

Reconnect with your creative self – join the Creative Space Art Retreat at the historic DeKoven Center in Racine, Wisconsin, scheduled for October 27-29, 2023.

The name of this ongoing arts retreat is spot-on. Creative describes the retreat itself, open to artists in any genre (be that visual art, paper-making, stamping, dancing, writing, music, you name it!), as well as what happens there – exciting creative work. Space describes the historic DeKoven Center buildings, including Spectrum School of the Arts and Community Gallery, studio spaces, 11 acres of wooded grounds, and incredible vistas of Lake Michigan where creatives stay and work. Here, one finds space to work on projects in progress or those waiting in the wings for attention. A third component, Community, inspires and supports retreat participants in unexpected and wonderful ways.

For more information, call or email Denise Zingg at Spectrum School of the Arts and Community Gallery, 262-634-4345 or email Jean Preston at mpreston@carthage.edu.

FRIENDS OF
Lorine Niedecker

209 Merchants Avenue, Fort Atkinson, WI 53538



**Published by the
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Editor: Amy Lutzke

Poetry Editor: Tom Montag

920.563.7790 | lorineniedecker.org

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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.

Many Thanks

The Friends of Lorine Niedecker would like to thank Melanie Jensen for her design and typography on this issue of *The Solitary Plover*. We would also like to thank the Fort Atkinson Community Foundation for the grant funding to update our publication.