

Activities 2025 – Friends of Lorine Niedecker, Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin

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

The highlight of the year was the completion and launch of the PBS Wisconsin series “Welcome Poets.” PBS Wisconsin’s six part digital series explores the lives, work and legacies of two Wisconsin poets with strong ties to Fort Atkinson. In the series the life and work of the late poet Lorine Niedecker is celebrated through the personal reflections of Nicholas Gulig, 2023-24 Wisconsin Poet Laureate as he examines the people, places and influences that have shaped his own life as a poet.

It premiered September 9 at the Hoard Historical Museum in Fort Atkinson. The Friends of Lorine Niedecker in partnership with the Hoard Museum and PBS Wisconsin assisted with the collection and documentation of photos, letters and ephemera for use in the series. A “Welcome Poets” Web site was created specifically for the series to support schools, study groups, libraries and individuals wanting to learn more about how poetry affected these two remarkable Wisconsin Poets.

PBS Wisconsin has extended an invitation to anyone who would like to host a screening and will help support technical logistics and publicity. An invitation link is on the series [Web site](#). Additional content is also available.

“Solitary Plover” Newsletter Published

- Winter issue #41, articles included: “Solitary Plover Poetry Editor, Peggy Turnbull” and “Al Millen and Lorine Niedecker Together, Seven Productive Years” by Paul Hayes
 - Summer issue #42, articles included: “Notes on the 2025 Lorine Niedecker Fellowship” by Caryl Pagel and “Placing Lorine: Some Reflections on Place” by Sara Burant
- These and [all issues](#) can be found on the Web site.

“Solitary Plover Readings” - Poets published in Solitary Plover issues read their poem and a Niedecker poem. The Readings with moderator Sharon Daly was hosted on-line by Woodland Pattern Book Center.

- March 13 and August 14 readings are now posted to the Web on [Utube](#).

“North Central Readings” This series via Zoom is recorded and available [online](#).

- Lisa Fishman and Jordan Dunn, April 6, 2025

Web Initiatives

The Web site for PBS Wisconsin’s [“Welcome Poets”](#) is beautiful and robust. The six episodes can be streamed. Additional content supports the series including behind-the-scenes, Lorine’s watercolors, Nick Gulig insights and shorts.

Host changes to the FOLN Web site and marketing platforms are now more cost effective and efficient. We are grateful to have this expertise on our board and available to us.

Education Initiatives

“Welcome Poets” Producer-Colin Crowley, Nick Gulig-Writer and Zach Whitford-Editor have traveled to attend many screenings across Wisconsin. Their presence helps place context, answer questions and moderate conversations regarding the project. Screenings have been well attended.

The Hoard Historical Museum continues to support a 4th grade study unit on poetry and Lorine Niedecker. Four public schools participate. Students write poems in the style of Lorine Niedecker, sometimes with illustrations. These are delightful and archived by the museum. Students visit the museum to learn more about Niedecker, her influences and visit Blackhawk Island to see her cabin. FOLN underwrite bus transportation.

Activities and Presentations

- There have been many screenings of the digital series “Welcome Poets” across Wisconsin and many more are planned. Information for screenings is [available on their site](#).
- It has long been a wish to have exact specifications for Lorine’s cabin and the cottage she shared with Al Millen. Should flooding or other crisis befall the property we now have Record Drawings documenting the structures and property. Rachel Nelan, American Institute of Architects, and Mitchel Bobitt, designer, collaborated to create “Lorine Niedecker Cabin & Cottage Record Drawings 2024.” Currently these are available through the Hoard Historical Museum in Fort Atkinson for \$30.
- FOLN participated in the Earth Day Clean Up on Blackhawk Island hosted by the Regional Department of Natural Resources on April 19. FOLN facilitated a fall clean up on November 1.
- The Friends of Lorine Niedecker continue to assist the Hoard Museum staff in the Niedecker archive including materials inventory, collection placement, updating finding aids and supporting visiting scholars. Access to the collection continues to be available during museum hours and by appointment only.
- The Friends of Lorine Niedecker continue to accommodate visits to the Blackhawk Island property by appointment.
- The Friends have worked with Jenny Penberthy this year to acquire periodicals published during Lorine’s lifetime. The collection now includes all the “Origin” periodicals edited by Cid Corman, most of the Poetry magazines and others, some rather obscure.

Board Initiatives - The Board meets bi-monthly, the Communication and Marketing Committee meet bi-monthly.

Submitted by Ann Engelman, President Friends of Lorine Niedecker, December 31, 2025

