



*Friends of  
Lorine Niedecker*

*Issue #8  
Summer 2008*

*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"*

*I was the solitary plover...*



### Fish Fowl Flood Waterlily Mud

One has to wonder what poetry the flood of June 2008 would have inspired for Lorine. According to the local newspaper, the highest recorded water level at Fort Atkinson was in 1929 when the river crested at 9.19 feet. Most recently, the river crested at 10.85 feet on Sunday, June 22, a full 1 1/2 feet above the previous record. There has been much devastation, loss and heartache in Fort Atkinson and the entire Rock and Crawfish river watersheds, as well as elsewhere in Wisconsin and the Midwest. I'm sure Lorine would think this little water on her floor to be just another flood. And, as the Niedecker family would have done, the current owners of the property have vowed to repair the damage and go on.

#### Meet the Board of Directors

We would like to warmly welcome four new board members.

**Ellen Last** lives in Madison and is retired from the Department of Public Instruction. She will be helping us navigate the school systems in Wisconsin to place information about Lorine and her poetry.

**Karl Gartung** is co-owner of Woodland Pattern Books in Milwaukee. Karl was a key planner for the Niedecker Centenary event in 2003.

**Sylvia Sipple** lives in Lake Mills, WI. She is a poet and a great help-

mate to the Friends of Lorine Niedecker.

**Tom Montag** is a poet, essayist, editor and author from Fairwater, WI. Tom will be helping us with our newsletter and planning for the future.

Other board members include:

Ann Engelman - Fort Atkinson

Amy Lutzke - Fort Atkinson

Mary Gates - Fort Atkinson

Bonnie Roub - Fort Atkinson

Pat Moran - Fort Atkinson

Faith Miracle - Madison

John Lehman - Cambridge

Cathy Gans - Hoffman Estates, IL



# *a pencil for a wing-bone...*

## **LORINE NIEDECKER CELEBRATION**

The June 1, “Lorine Niedecker Celebration” event at the Hoard Historical Museum, was a success. The program was sponsored by the Friends of Lorine Niedecker and included drama, music and art.

The first part of the program was the performance of a new play titled “Renowned,” written by Wisconsin resident Rae Brown. This was the premier performance of the one woman dramatic presentation of Lorine’s life and poetry. It was directed by Marti Gobel of Fort Atkinson. Lorine Niedecker was portrayed by Cathy Bond of Lake Mills.

The second part of the program was a piano performance, “Lorine Niedecker In Words and Music.” Lorine appreciated all art forms, especially music. Pianist, Jeffrey Wagner, performed compositions that she specifically mentioned, including works of Beethoven and Chopin. Jeff researched her references to music in the letters she wrote to poet and long time correspondent Louis Zukofsky and her friend Cid Corman. Appropriate quotes from her letters were read by way of introducing the selections.

Jeffrey Wagner holds degrees in music from Northwestern University and Indiana University and performs in the Chicago area. He is a consulting editor and frequent contributor of reviews, interviews, and features, to Clavier magazine. He has also published in the Review of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters.

In addition, an art exhibit was presented. “Niedecker Inspired,” included a collection of oil and watercolor paintings, mixed media and artist books, inspired by Lorine and

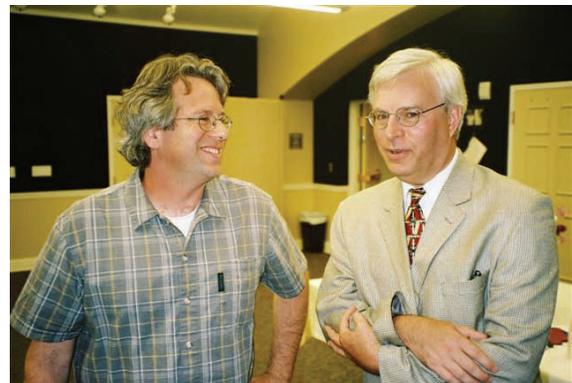
her poetry.

Information from the program is posted on the Lorine Niedecker Web site at [www.lorineniedecker.org/prog08.html](http://www.lorineniedecker.org/prog08.html). It includes biographies, credits and lists of the art exhibit and music selections.

The event raised \$1,767. The money will be used to support the Web site and two newsletters for next year. It will also provide some seed money for a Lorine Niedecker Wisconsin Poetry Festival being planned for October 2009. Stay tuned for details.



Sylvia Sippel sells goodies to eager shoppers Ellen Last, Faith Miracle and Jane Roeber.



Board member Pat Moran shares a moment with pianist Jeffrey Wagner.

# *From the secret notes I must tilt...*

## **POETRY**

### **Woman**

*After Lorine Niedecker*

Well she saw woman created  
out of the undulations of the sea.  
She located the abyss.  
Gave up fighting herself—  
to an enclosure where she paid  
for seeing the light through a window,  
just seeing the light mind you!  
Lived penned within. Planted  
seeds that grew slanted toward the light.  
Saw people on the walls.  
Only water for meals.  
Now she saw from the abyss  
the striated sky  
a folded golden poppy kind of light.

She did grow poppies  
you know.

### **Pleasant Valley**

So, fall desiccates the land,  
cracks salt crust, leaf, archway  
of the woman held in this elevated valley by blindness.

Hello to crabgrass by the road  
and all she pulled for the eye.  
If she could see— too much vision in the world,  
too much wind, blowing  
poor leached dirt from the valley.

Her brows are low.  
Small closed eyes.

She's spent her whole life in the shifting acres.  
Her woman's got nothing but a full truck.  
Her dog, a hunter, rolls, pants.

# upon the pressure...

## Laura

*After Niedecker*

when ladybugs  
fall

from the leaves  
that crowd  
the path

the sun

warming them  
as they fall

their tiny  
flimsy shells  
Laura

Gabrielle Myers

Over the last few years Gabrielle has shifted her focus from the culinary world to the literary. Eventually, she hopes to work as a writer and teacher. She has been published in *Caesura*, *Produce*, a local chapbook, *Art for Autism*, and has a poem forthcoming in *IF Poetry Journal* and *Damselfly Press*. She recently finished an MA in English at the University of California, Davis. This fall she will attend St. Mary's MFA program on a teaching fellowship. In the meantime, she cooks in restaurants, caters in the San Francisco Bay Area, and works for the USDA grading dried fruit and tomato products in the Central Valley of California.



## The Willow-slip

When the girl complains *that bird's song*  
*is so annoying* I know she's repeating something  
she's heard her mother or a neighbor say, and I  
step down from the porch and begin to prowl the yard,  
searching the trees. And when the bird flies off--  
a blur of brown and white or maybe gray, I say  
I think it was a *willowslip*, a name I've made up  
on the spot because I want the girl to love it.

# *execute and adjust...*

## **Dominique**

You write to say how busy  
you are & how your life is

"absolutely crazy" and I  
write back scolding you

for your dangerous  
American tendencies.

Don't you remember the day  
you asked me over for coffee,

how you closed your  
kitchen window against

a neighbor's Sunday-morning  
lawn mower? Such violence,

you said. Then we sat down  
to coffee, bread with honeyed

jam, a tiny square of chocolate  
on my saucer like an invitation.

--eve robillard--

Eve Robillard is a Wisconsin native who writes for both adults and children. She has two chapbooks of poetry: *when gertrude married alice*, Parallel Press 2004 and *everything happens twice*, Fireweed Press 2002. Garrison Keillor has twice read poetry of hers on his NPR program *The Writers Almanac*. She is a retired children's librarian who currently dabbles in watercolor. Her Web site is: <http://everobillard.com>.



## **NEWS**

The Sterling North Society is sponsoring an Antiques Appraisal Fair on Saturday, August 16 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Masonic Lodge, 312 W. Fullerton St. in Edgerton. Professional appraisers Bill Wartmann, Jeff Chandler, Sherry Blakeley, Phil Schauer and the Beloit Auction Service will share their expertise as they answer your questions about antiques. (Please, NO large furniture, coins or jewelry). Admission is \$10.00 for one item or \$15.00 for two. TWO item limit. Lunch is available.

## **SUPPORT**

The Friends of Lorine Niedecker board has decided to dispense with the practice of "membership levels." The Friends of Lorine Niedecker is a 501(c)3. There are no staff, just devoted volunteers. We will ask for support in each newsletter as a reminder that your donation, whatever you can contribute, will support the goal of preserving and expanding the legacy of Lorine Niedecker, offering educational materials, access to archives, a semiannual newsletter and events as time and resources are available. Please consider sending a contribution now. We will not remind you for another six months.



Contact us at:  
Friends of Lorine Niedecker  
102 E. Milwaukee Avenue  
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538  
(920) 563-7790  
[contact@lorineniedecker.org](mailto:contact@lorineniedecker.org)  
[www.lorineniedecker.org](http://www.lorineniedecker.org)

*Friends of Lorine Niedercker  
102 E. Milwaukee Ave  
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538*