

The Weekly Avocet

#458

September 12th, 2021

Hello to our Poets and Nature-lovers of The Avocet community:

**Come through my window
Cool air - disperse rising heat
From global warming**

Linda MacKenzie - Auburn, WA - mombmkz@hotmail.com



Enjoy your stroll through our pages to find yourself in nature.

The Hostas Huddle and Huddle

The garden is calm,
peaceful within its beauty, but suddenly,
the wind picks up, the sky turns black,
the acrid smell of lightening fills the air,
thunder bombs from the sky.

“Now, Le Deluge!”

The tulips are terrified,
as their petals disappear into space.
Sunflowers begin to sway, weep and snap.
The basil bemoans her bad fortune.
The pansies puff out their chests in the torrent
to show they are tough.
The mums stay as cool as gangsters
machine-gunning enemies.
The peonies pow-wow privately
about their future.
Snapdragons are irritated,
irises irate. Hail beats down,
the morning glories are smashed
but die with dignity.

I dreamt

I was among the floral community, and
assuring them that no williwaw
will come again this year,
and placid beauty will be theirs again.

David Blackey - La Crosse WI - funkyjubu@yahoo.com

“In a world where you can be anything, be kind.” - Dr. Seuss

“Plant seeds of happiness, hope, success, and love; it will all come back to you in abundance. This is the law of nature.” - Steve Maraboli,

Chickadee

Jaunty black beret
Dove-grey, brown suit with a dash
Of white on takeoff

Linda MacKenzie - Auburn, WA - mombmzk@hotmail.com

Eternal

waves thrust and crash then crawl their way to shore,
deep breaths of life-giving force spread white froth
as bubbles surface and strings of seaweed interlace
in a whirlpool of pebbles, shells, and lifeless crabs,
rolling and tumbling, tumbling and rolling,
left behind on the wide beach
for the next breaker that hurls itself aloft,
releases its roundness, spreads its carpet of foam,
reclaiming those remnants of the sea

Lorraine Rose - Brewster, NY - lorivoice.samuels24@gmail.com

**“Man is not, by nature, deserving of all that he wants. When we think that we are automatically entitled to something, that is when we start walking all over others to get it.”
- Criss Jami**

unstructured time

coffeetime bagel
crossword puzzle unsolved
perhaps an afternoon stroll
at the water's edge

to look for scallop shells
fossil-etched rocks
talk with squawking seagulls
guess which way the tide's moving

yes, it's a plan, but first
fret over chores not done
make a phone call
talk to the cat
admire the tiger lilies
follow the winding road
into fantasy future and faded past

until spilled coffee
calls me back to the day at hand

Emily-Sue Sloane - Huntington Station, NY - esloane2@gmail.com

“I felt like lying down by the side of the trail and remembering it all. The woods do that to you, they always look familiar, long lost, like the face of a long-dead relative, like an old dream, like a piece of forgotten song drifting across the water, most of all like golden eternities of past childhood or past manhood and all the living and the dying and the heartbreak that went on a million years ago and the clouds as they pass overhead seem to testify (by their own lonesome familiarity) to this feeling.” - Jack Kerouac

After the Drought

Have you ever seen
 a more grateful green,
 a more gleeful, laughing,
 joyful green, a gayer green,

a greater gloating green
 turning browns green with envy?

and if green can sing--
 and who says it can't?

it would sing sweet green songs
 of pea and lima bean green notes,

and if green can dance--
 and who says it can't?

it would dance tight forest green steps,
 tangos dipping branch to branch
 beside the light high-stepping swing
 of sun-shocked screamin greens.

Barbara Reynolds - Somerville, MA - franreyn15@gmail.com

“Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of the water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by no means a waste of time.” - John Lubbock

Little wild rabbit
You're not safe in my garden
Beware neighbor's cat

Linda MacKenzie - Auburn, WA - mombmzk@hotmail.com

Feelings of Summer

The morning sun
a teasing, fickle sphere
brilliant one moment
shadowed the next, under
which verdant leaves unfurl,
garden secure, wind teased,
emboldened by warmth.

Hydrangea arms reach upward.
Rosebuds yawn into perfumed pink
and red perfection. Morning Glories
climb a weathered picket fence,
blue and white trumpets
hosting butterflies and bees
siphoning breakfast.

Chattering squirrels chase one another,
racing on soaring tree limbs, claws
scraping brittle bark while below
scavenging birds plunder the
last seeds of a battered feeder.

Nursery rhymes float
sandbox chatter
by architects of castles
dreaming of the sea.

Lawn mowers hum
in Saturday's warm sun
smoke from grills
promise cook-out thrills,
memories form, pregnant
with sight and sound.

Linda Claborn Clarke - Seymour, TN - lindaclarke322@yahoo.com

“Once there were brook trout in the streams in the mountains. You could see them standing in the amber current where the white edges of their fins wimpled softly in the flow. They smelled of moss in your hand. Polished and muscular and torsional. On their backs were vermiculate patterns that were maps of the world in its becoming. Maps and mazes. Of a thing which could not be put back. Not be made right again. In the deep glens where they lived all things were older than man and they hummed of mystery.” - Cormac McCarthy

Time to share

one of your Fall-themed poems,

Photos (4), haiku (up to 10),
Saving Mother Earth Challenge poems

Please read the guidelines before submitting

Only one poem, per poet, per season.

Please send your submission to angeldec24@hotmail.com

Please put (early or late) **Fall**/your last name in the subject line.

Please be kind and address your submission to me, Charles. Thank you.

(Just so you know: I do not read work from a poet who doesn't take the time to address their submission to the editor, who they want to read their work.)

Please do not just send a poem, please write a few lines of hello.

Please do not have all caps in the title of your poem.

There is no line limit per poem.

Please no religious references.

Please use single spaced lines.

Please remember, we welcome previously published poems.

Please put your name, City/State, and email address under your poem. No Zip codes.

Please send your poem in both the body of an email or an attachment.

We look forward to reading your Fall submission...

We feel blessed to publish the best Nature poets in America



How to Live Like a Water Lily

Wake up slowly, float in a dreamy world,
silky arms folded over your face until mid-morning,
then open wide, sun-warmed awake.
Breathe from more than one place, soft and supple.
Do not worry about today or tomorrow
or care what others think of you.
Your radiant center is tough, strong,
nourished by water and light.
Wind and wave may engulf you
but you can easily separate from submersion,
opening your face to the heavens.
Push back beads of wet darkness.
Move freely. Make white water circles until afternoon,
when you fold softly back into yourself,
drowsing in the dimming daylight.

Annette Langlois Grunseth - Green Bay, WI - annettegrunseth@gmail.com

“One must maintain a little bit of summer, even in the middle of winter.” - Henry David Thoreau.

day's at an end
lingering in an orange sky--
ship sits at anchor

Jack Maze - Vancouver, B. C., Canada - erry@shaw.ca

One Last Time

Snakeroot frosts fields now
and goldfinches begin to feed
on the blackened heads of summer
cone flowers, everywhere bits of
yellow creeping into the stems
of foxtail and field corn hinting
at things to come

like the way
the red and yellow croton leaf
in the corner lay on the blue rug
dropped there for no reason
except the parting of stem and stalk

katydids clinging to the leaves
of okra and potato vines
a green hummingbird feeding
from last orange trumpet vine

any day now she will follow migrating
males five hundred miles south
while behind abandoned feeders'
will sway with their sad ruby eyes.

Pat Anthony - Fontana, KS - metpvan@gmail.com

“I think having land and not ruining it is the most beautiful art that anybody could ever want.” - Andy Warhol

The weeping willow
Is engaged in a hula
With a luau wind

Linda MacKenzie - Auburn, WA - mombmkz@hotmail.com

a place to sit
next to a dense growth of grasses--
peaceful rustling

Jack Maze - Vancouver, B. C., Canada - erry@shaw.ca

Mountain Sunrise

Careening down
6,750 feet of narrow
rugged, ribboned roads
from Big Bear
the sun dips behind
Mt. San Gorgonio
only to appear again
beckoning a new morning
sunrise after sunrise.
Peeking.
Teasing.
Disappearing.
Reappearing.
Awakening.
Refreshing.
Until,
rounding the last curve
to the San Bernardino Valley floor
it transmutes into
an unrelenting
blazing
erupting
death-defying
dueling warrior.

Joan (MJ) Koerper - Wrightwood, CA - koerper@aol.com

Clean water is life... Clean air is life...

two dancing on air,
tiny, yellow butterflies
loving each other

Charles Portolano - Fountain Hills, AZ - cportolano@hotmail.com

“Go outside. Don’t tell anyone and don’t bring your phone. Start walking and keep walking until you no longer know the road like the palm of your hand, because we walk the same roads day in and day out, to the bus and back home and we cease to see. We walk in our sleep and teach our muscles to work without thinking and I dare you to walk where you have not yet walked and I dare you to notice. Don’t try to get anything out of it, because you won’t. Don’t try to make use of it, because you can’t. And that’s the point. Just walk, see, sit down if you like. And be. Just be, whatever you are with whatever you have, and realize that that is enough to be happy. There’s a whole world out there, right outside your window. You’d be a fool to miss it.” - Charlotte Eriksson

Songs of Vernonia

In this valley, fir, oak, and maple trees share the land,
squirrels find secret hiding places for acorns and hazelnuts,
while hawks and osprey soar in a cobalt-blue arc of sky.

A Sphinx moth strays past the old mill arboresced with grapes,
musty-ripe. From here, he follows the path to our lake – spun
cozy with webs, it abounds with blackberries and windfall apples.

An iridescent-blue dragonfly, eyes green and bold,
darts along the water’s edge as we maneuver a kayak
into the water, to drift under an elegant canopy of trees.

Cougar and deer tracks meander along the mossy banks,
and a blue heron looks up from fishing in the shallows
as we float past. Listen carefully as a downy woodpecker

commences his gentle drumming on a hollow tree. We are like
nutmeg and ginger, following this sunset and a golden-hued river,
as happy as the birds we find singing along the way.

Daphne Clifton - Portland, OR - daphneclifton@gmail.com

“Summer has always been good to me, even the bittersweet end, with the slanted yellow light.” - Paul Monette

yellow butterflies--
seven swirling around us,
we can feel their love

Charles Portolano - Fountain Hills, AZ - cportolano@hotmail.com

Sometimes the Ranch

The tall grass, willow brush, wild roses cut and dry
drifted on the creekbank. The next day, the work crew
swept them up in hard arms and together in twos, bagged them.
The water ran creek-quick, over stones bigger than chickens,
smaller than the barn cat's head. Stones set polished
in the winding-wet tumbler so they'd shine
gemstone-bold. Days were only smooth at daybreak.
Days ran overtime, through visions that could not
be tunneled. Earth, air, fire, and water appeared, disappeared,
morphed into elements driven by velocities and currents,
angles and inclines that shaped the farm garden, orchard, herd.

Some days gave the ranch blue-black columbine,
renegade daisies or wild lilies bird-seeded
and grown tall on the pond's edge. Some days gave
blue-black clouds, renegade rainstorms,
wildfires that brought hell's heat in flame and ash.

But she-- the oldest of three -- likes to remember
the day, an uncle rode in
late and slow, a bawling brown calf
slung across his saddle,
the barbed-wire cuts not too bad.

(First Appeared in Emerging Poets, Nevada)

Melanie Perish - Reno, NV - mperish@unr.edu

If you like a poem, please let the poet know it...

A Poetry Challenge for all Nature-loving poets in 2021. I love writing Saving Mother Earth Challenge poems. I am always on the lookout for an article about our wondrous Mother Earth. Please find a climate change issue about our precious planet and take the Saving Mother Earth Challenge, and, then send it to us to share with the community...

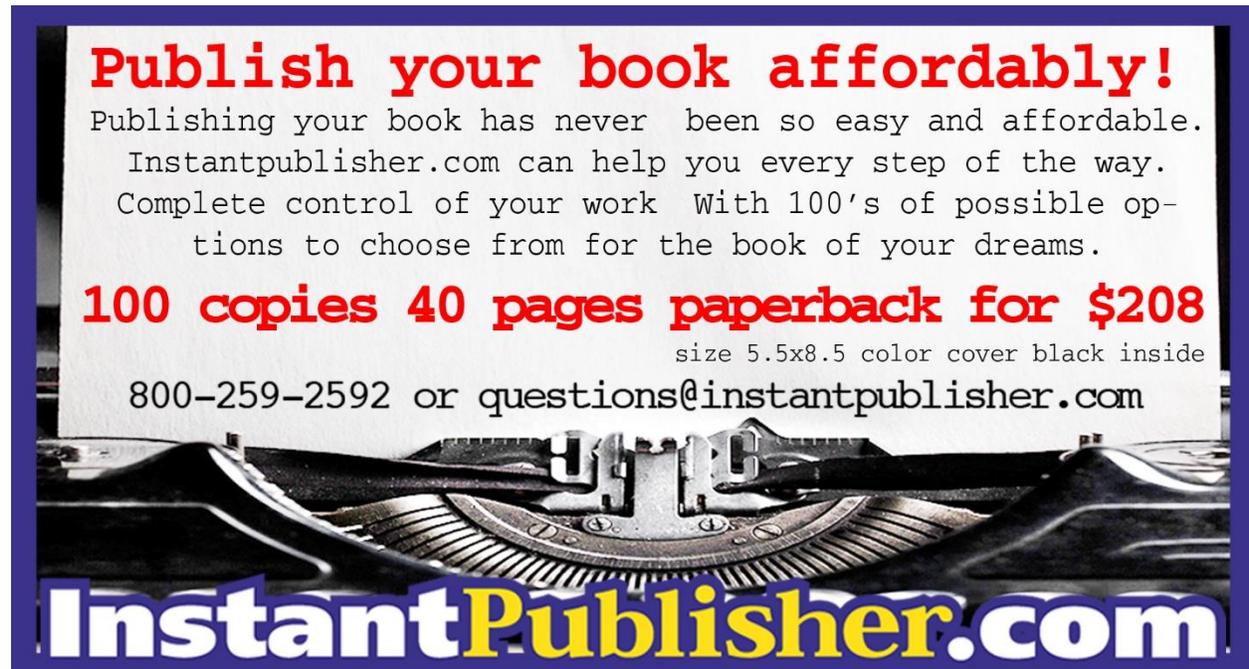
We all call Earth our home - Have your voice be heard through your words!!!

Please put Saving Mother Earth Challenge/your last name in the subject line of your email and send to angeldec24@hotmail.com

If you would like to become a supporting member of The Avocet community, The Avocet is only \$24.00 for 4 - 64 page - perfectly bounded issues and 52 weeks of The Weekly Avocet, every weekend, plus other poetry surprises, with the best Nature poetry by the best Nature poets in America, a steal of a deal. Please think about supporting our little poetry journal. Sample copy just \$7.50.

Please make your check out to The Avocet and send to:

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Please let them know we sent you. Thank you.

Norma Bradley, an Avocet poet - normabradley1@gmail.com - writes, "When I was ready to publish my first self-published chapbook, I called Instant Publisher. Chris was very helpful and answered all of my questions. I am delighted with how the book turned out and have had many positive comments. I did have help along the way to be able to get it sent off to finally

be published. What I like about self-publishing is that I made all the choices for the cover design, font, paper etc. The copies arrived within 10 days. Being able to speak directly with Chris made all the difference. I highly recommend Instant Publisher.”

Deenaz Coachbuilder writes, “I have treasured each poem in Charles Portolano’s new collection of poetry, *Wild with Life*. Love and reverence for nature and those you love imbues each page. Relationships between animals, between man and animals and birds, between humankind and the plants we touch, smell, taste, shelter under, respect.

There is a sense of almost holiness, that they were here before us, and will remain long after, that we are but ephemeral visitors in their world. Our power can be used to preserve nature or destroy it.

The poems enlighten, entertain, instruct. They help us understand the world around us in the best of ways, through the stories he tells, for did we not learn of the world through the stories we heard, and then read, when we were children?

There is a feeling that cannot be described, when we carefully and cautiously rescue a spider, a lizard, a bird, that has accidentally entered our home, which we release back into their natural habitat. It is as if something has blessed us.”

A collection of Mother Earth poetry by Charles Portolano

Editor of The Avocet, a Journal of Nature Poetry – cportolano@hotmail.com

Wild with Life

Just \$15.00, which includes postage, for 90 pages of pure love for our Mother Earth.

*Knowing I am wild with life
but once
on this gift we have been given,
this precious gift that we have
been given guardianship of...*

Send checks to:
The Avocet
P. O. Box 19186
Fountain Hills, AZ
85269

“These poems are written by a seasoned poet who has reached the pinnacle of his art with a recognizable and moving voice. Charles edits the highly-successful nature journal, THE AVOCET, a must for nature loving poets and writers.”- Christine Swanberg, Poet Laureate of Rockford, IL.

“In Wild with Life, Charles Portolano has deepened his engagement with the natural world he began so movingly in his earlier works. It is a noble, ambitious, and moving work.”- Joel Savishinsky - Charles A. Dana Professor Emeritus in the Social Sciences, Ithaca College

The American Avocet

I watch unseen this large,
long-legged shorebird,
with its pied plumage
and a dash of red
around its head and neck,
scampering along
the coastline
searching to snatch-up
some aquatic insect
or a small invertebrate
hidden beneath
the brackish waters
of this saltmarsh.

I watch unseen
it swing its odd,
long, up-curved bill
through the shallow,
still waters, catching
a tiny creature,
trapping it in its bill,
racing off to its nest to
feed her four hatchings
with this feast she found.

I watch in awe
as the male
grows protective,
fearlessly fending off
an encroaching
common black raven,
attacking this intruder,
striking at it with its bill.

I watch in wonder
as they swim as a family
just days after
the young ones are born,
then back to the nest to
rest where its kind flocks
together in a community.

Charles Portolano - Fountain Hills, AZ - cportolano@hotmail.com

We hope we provoked you; that you leave having experienced a complete emotional response to the poetry. I want to thank our Poets for sharing their work with us this week. **And “Thank you for reading, dear reader!”**

Be well, see you next weekend,

Charles Portolano, Editor/Publisher and Vivian and Valerie Portolano, Co-Editors
of The Avocet, a Journal of Nature Poetry and The Weekly Avocet, every weekend.

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