

The Weekly Avocet - #545

May 14th, 2023

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

**each tiny seedling,
turned with trowel in the sod
springs life from the earth**

R. Duke Liddell - Valley Stream, NY - dukel@optonline.net



Submitted by Edwina Kadera

Happy Mother's Day to all the mothers out there! Enjoy your Day... Thank you for all that you do!!!

Eternal Sunshine

(For my Mother, Simone)

(For the best Mother-in-law a man could know)

Her all-encompassing love, beauty, and grace were as elemental as:

Sunny disposition- her inner strength and determination she was eager to imbue into each of us from the start it fueled her/us with a direct source of positive energy.

Universal - feelings of endless reach of support that embraced us with warm arms and healing hands. She shined brightest whenever her children needed her help.

Nurtured - each of her children constantly to develop our own deep roots and successful systems so we could have healthy friends and families of our own someday.

Steady - stream of light she kept up around us like a shield to protect us from any threat of danger and dispel any form of darkness from taking root.

Healthy - which meant green was essential to our beings from the beginning. She practiced and taught us clean living developed from her native alpine living.

Intuition - her gut intelligence helped us seek out ours. Her intuitive capacity and accurate perception shined above the rest making her a great source of warmth.

Noble - in her gentle manner with respect for knowledge yet never afraid to question complacency or seek out new growth and research a novel approach to life.

Everlasting - a towering source of enlightenment she shared her love with us deeply in this life and the next realm, we would feel her sunshine anytime we needed her.

I seek the sunshine from her grace and love each day. I was blessed to have a mother show me how to love so deeply, completely, and forever. I miss her in countless ways every day.

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

“What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the Lives of others.” - Pericles

A Mother's Love

The spring rains came
hard and heavy this season,
causing flooding of the river;
swift, fierce the force
of the swollen waters,
racing, rushing, pulling
everything in as it rushes
over the riverbanks,
nothing is safe in its path,
as a lion cub races ahead
of its Mother to drink
from the awakening river,
when suddenly the lion cub
is taken up and carried away
by the strong current, soon
struggling to keep afloat
as it is swiftly pulled
down river, battling
for its survival,
for its young life,
but still its best efforts
can't keep the cub
from being swept away
from its loving Mother, who
quickly springs into action
racing along the shoreline
as the flooding water
heads down stream,
she leaps high into the air
diving headfirst
into the rushing waters
to rescue her little one,
pulling her cub out
by the tuft of hair on
the back of its neck
she pulls her cub to safety,
back onto terra firma,
she pulls her cub
from the grips of death...

Charles Portolano

“Destiny itself is like a wonderful, wide tapestry in which every thread is guided by an unspeakably tender hand, placed beside another thread and held and carried by a hundred others.” - Ranier Maria Rilke

Her Protective Nature

The insufferable sun
scorches the earth below,
so, the elegant elephant,
majestic in her mothering,
knew of a cool watering hole
for the sun's heat hurts
the sensitive skin
of her young calf
but danger is everywhere
here in the savanna.

All seemed clear
for any real concern,
but her maternal instincts
never, not for a moment,
let down her guard
for danger can come
from unseen places.
Towering over her young one,
they wander into the cool
pool of cloudy water.

Hiding under the surface
of the watering hole
a huge crocodile attacks,
striking the wobbly legs
of the young calf,
hoping to bring her down,
but Mother elephant
was ready, ever alert,
always vigilant to protect,
took control of the situation.

She frantically stomps, fiercely
into the murky, dark water,
crushing the long tail
of the reptile, who
knew this battle was lost,
as it scurries off,
quickly out of the water hole
sneaking off into the thick bush,
as Mother elephant calmly
cares for her young one's needs.

Charles Portolano

A Mother's Instinct

While heading to the waterhole,
the lioness spots an injured
bat-eared fox, a young one,
who can't walk, just crawling.

She keeps staring at the wounded
little yipping, fearful fox,
screeching for its life,
with great curiosity of its situation.

With no interest in harming
the little creature, her three cubs
circle around the baby fox,
sniffing, following Mother's lead.

Then a male lion comes wanting
to grab, snatch a little lunch
before his real hunt for food begins,
the fox was just waiting to be eaten.

But Mother lioness, strangely
takes a defensive pose,
protecting the baby fox from
being gobbled up in an instant,

so soon a fight breaks out,
growing louder and more dangerous
for the fox and the lioness,
who would not back down.

Baring her fangs, she lunges,
then kicks the male lion,
positing herself between the fox
and the ever-angrier male lion,

then a rustling noise in the bush
gets the male lion's attention
and he bolts from the fight
to check out the waterhole.

She and her three cubs
follow the male into the bush
for real substance is what they must
find as the sizzling sun rises.

Now alone and safe for the moment,
the little fox finally finds the strength
to get up and stumbles off
into the safety of the thick bushes.

Charles Portolano

Taking a dark turn

The male tiger was tired
after three days of the rituals
of mating -- roaming, marking
their territory in the dense forest.

Tired from playing for days,
he looks for an easy meal,
there her three cubs now nurse,
from a previous partner.

Not even his own,
and the law of the forest--
kill off all competitors
when territory is scarce.

But to his surprise
being nearly twice her size,
the female mother
stood, held, her ground.

When fear isn't a factor
when facing down death,
protecting one's offspring
is the rule of survival.

To mate often, with many,
increases the chances of
the survival of her cubs, and
for her majestic species.

He pounces up from napping,
hungry, looking for food,
lunges upon them,
brutal in his attack.

But a mother's strength
will be beyond her being.
Quickly he knew to
back down from this fight.

She and her three cubs
disappear into the forest,
while the male tiger lays tired,
in the dust, licking his wounds.

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

These four poems are dedicated to the most amazing mother I have ever met, Vivian Portolano. She has pulled our daughter, Valerie, from the clutches of death too many times for me to even dare count. Happy Mother's Day, sweetheart!!!

Roses and Lavender

(for Valerie)

Roses and lavender,
Lilacs and lace,
Border the lanes
To a wonderful place,
A warm sunny place
Where you never see Snow
Where stars twinkle softly,
And pineapples grow,
Where fairy dust sparkles
On all of the trees,
A land of sweet moments
And warm memories.
So, step very lightly,
And taking my hand,
We'll walk through the flowers
To this beautiful land.

Lorna Volk - Cincinnati, OH - cportolano@hotmail.com

“Nature inspires me to believe!”

Violets and Valerie

Violets and Valerie live in my heart
And that is just where they should be,
For violets are one of the first in the Spring
To nestle beneath every tree,
To bloom on the hillside,
The meadow and the plain--
This surely takes valor to do,
And gives them the sparkle
Of sun after rain
That always reminds me
Of you

Lorna Volk - Cincinnati, OH - cportlano@hotmail.com

The Whirly, Curly Plant

I have a plant that whirls and curls
Upon my kitchen table
And I would like to make it STOP,
If only I were able!
It touches all the tiny plants
That sprout in the pots below,
Because my whirly, twirly plant
Just grows and grows and GROWS!
It's taking over everything,
It clearly wants to be
The King of all the plants around
And even King of me.

Lorna Volk - Cincinnati, OH - cportlano@hotmail.com

hearing a buzz
two bumble bees fly
my heart's glad

Carol Farnsworth - Ada, MI - carolfarn@aol.com

**Please feel free to share [The Weekly Avocet](#) with all those you know who love
Nature poetry. Thank you! It's free, just email us...**

Taking Umbrage in Silk

Flurries confuse small narcissi,
drooping daffi-heads on stems lie,
wait to rise before hail assaults,
hardy showy but weakly petals,
bud heads cringe ambivalent slow
whether to dare shoutout a blow,
sleeping forsythia still watched,
subdued redbuds go/no-go blotched.

To assuage anticipation:
full-leaved blue-yellow anemone
robust full shining bright two-lips
smacking yellow crocus, forsyths.

Diane Tehrani - Portland, OR - tehranid@pdx.edu

Stream

Free flowing in Springtime,
running easy, clean and clear
bypassing rocky barriers
rushing past shore, brown and sandy,
toward distant water, dark and deep.

Slower coursing in Summer,
drifting by light shore and aged stone,
warm and quieter, sun-bathed and shallow,
trickling past fields, green and yellow
toward far water, light and warm.

Slow moving yet in Autumn,
rippling by fields, brown and empty,
water chilling in crisp cooling air
glistening past land, yellow and brown
toward far water, cool and deep.

Slowest traveling then in Winter,
gliding under ice and snow
cold and silent, over rock and shell,
sparkling past country, gold and silver
toward distant water, icy and white.

J. B. Hogan - Fayetteville, AR - jbhogan22@hotmail.com

Preserving the Blue Marble

So much we can do
 . . . if we do it;
we know what needs to be done
 . . . with the will to do it.
The world wakes up to need
 as it wakes to spring
 blossoming, petals opening,
arms spreading wide to the season
 welcoming;
 in that is hope
 not the arid desert of fear
 where dust blows and blinds.
Look at the precious blue marble
 that gemstone
sitting in the black velvet of space;
 look at the fragile blue marble
 unique to us
 us to it.
We are partners on this journey,
 it's not ours to disrespect.
Consider our lovely blue marble
 as home
 and keep it
 safe.

Barbara Novack - Laurelton, NY - bnovack@molloy.edu



This iconic photo, called “The Blue Marble,” was taken by the crew of Apollo 17.

blue blooms burst
in a bed of green
myrtle again

Carol Farnsworth - Ada, MI - carolfarn@aol.com

Good Morning

The birds
sound
like I
feel--

thrilled
to behold
the everyday
miracle

of another
sunrise;

eager
to discover
what gifts
the morning
will bring.

Together,
we welcome
the new day.

My heart sings
and flies
with them.

Kai Siedenburg - Santa Cruz, CA - kai@ournatureconnection.com

loons call greetings
returning to mate
celebrate

Carol Farnsworth - Ada, MI - carolfarn@aol.com

The Songs of Seeds

What if
seeds sang
when they
sprouted?

Imagine
the meadows
ringing
with the
joyous sound

of thousands
of tiny green voices
lifted together
in exultation.

Kai Siedenburg - Santa Cruz, CA - kai@ournatureconnection.com

squirrel on deck
peers in at me
hopes for seeds

Carol Farnsworth - Ada, MI - carolfarn@aol.com

Winged Mystery

Today, a lovely
yet unfamiliar voice
creates ripples
in the stillness
of the morning.

The elegant,
fluting call,
spiraling gracefully
up and down,

is as near
as the plants
outside my window
and yet

utterly foreign.
I haven't seen
his face,
don't know
his name--

I know nothing
about him
but the sound
of his voice,

yet already he has
stirred my imagination
and captured my heart
with his enchanting song.

Who is he--
this winged man
of mystery?

What does
he look like?

Where did
he come from--

and why now,
after all these years?

There is so much
I want to know.

For now,
I have the beauty
of his song,

and the beauty
of the mystery--

and that
is more than
enough.

Kai Siedenbug - Santa Cruz, CA - kai@ournatureconnection.com

rain drips down
splashes in planter
nurtures plants

Carol Farnsworth - Ada, MI - carolfarn@aol.com

Our Big Chance

This is it!

the plants
seem
to be saying,

Our big chance!

Who knows
when we'll have
rain like this
again?

So go ahead
and grow!

Go ahead
and bloom!

Give it all
you've got!

What if
we, too,
could
live
like that?

Kai Siedenburg - Santa Cruz, CA - kai@ournatureconnection.com

sun feels warm
breeze cools weathered cheeks
as I walk

Carol Farnsworth - Ada, MI - carolfarn@aol.com

The Earth on Life Support

These days,
being with the Earth
is like being
at the bedside
of a beloved grandmother
who is critically ill.

We love her
so much.

We hate
to see her
in pain.

We can't bear
the thought
of losing her.

We desperately
want to help,

yet what
we're able to do
feels completely
inadequate.

It's almost
too much
to bear.

It's no wonder
that sometimes
we have to turn away.

Turn away
if you must.

Take breaks
when you need to.

Find the strength
to keep going
and then return
to her side.

Let her know
you're there.

Tell her
how much
you love her.

Hold her hand.
Tell her stories.
Sing her songs.

Do what you can
to ease her suffering,
to bring her joy.

and help her
get the best care
available--

even if all this
will never
seem like enough.

Even if she doesn't
visibly respond,
she can hear you.

She can feel your love.

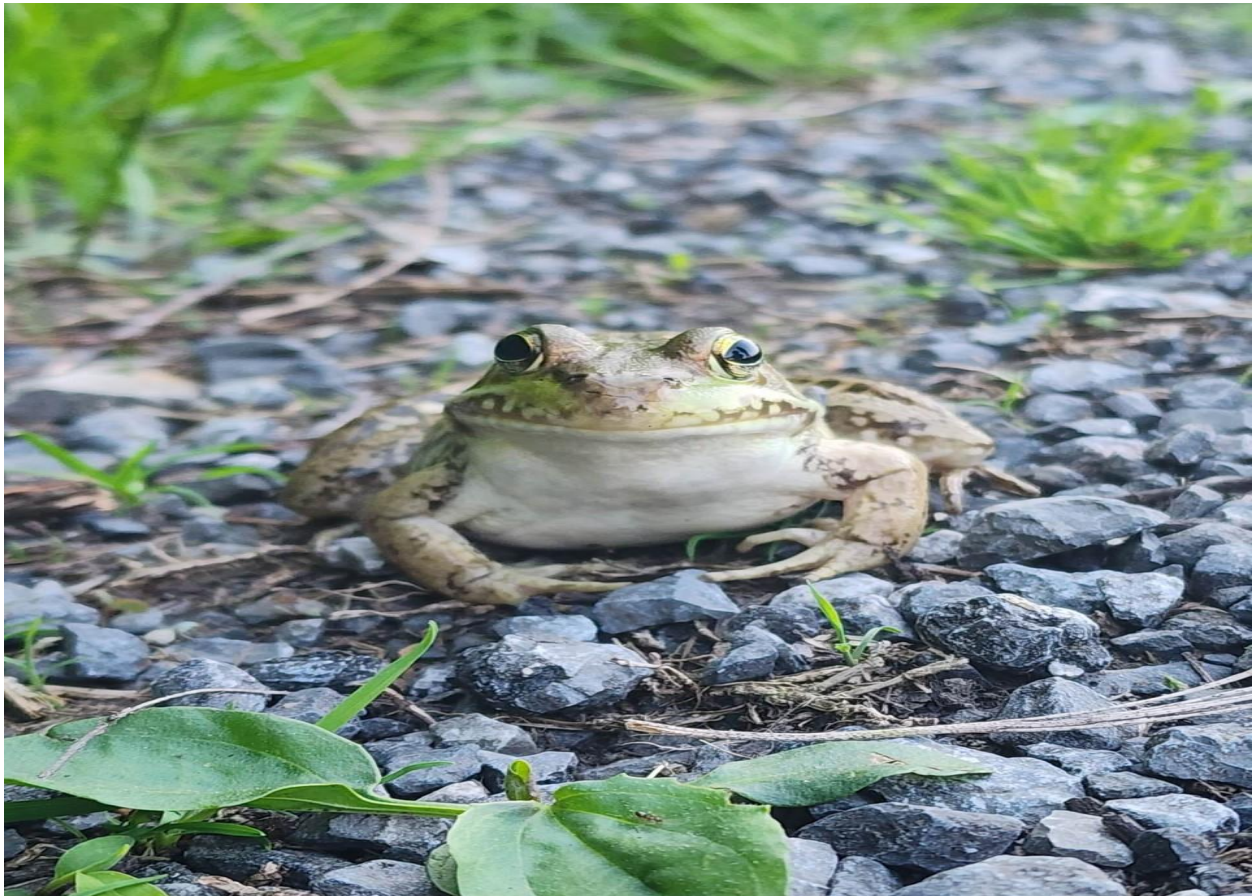
Now,
more than ever,
the Earth needs you.

Kai Siedenburg - Santa Cruz, CA - kai@ournatureconnection.com

golden blooms
flicker on the bush
every year

Carol Farnsworth - Ada, MI - carolfarn@aol.com

Plant a tree and see how much happier you will be...



Mary Martinez - tenndaisy@live.com

Sweet Release

Outside the streaked window,
a horse fly lands on the glass,
its luminous wings silent.

Beyond it, a sweet gum
tree stands almost completely
swaddled by the parasitic ivy
making its way to Orion's Belt,
one leaf at a time.

Becky Parker - Lyles, TN - tenndaisy@live.com

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

“It may not roll off our tongues quite the way “autumnal” does in the fall, but vertumnal is a great word to use this time of year. Originating back in the 17th century, it means pertaining to spring (much as autumnal means pertaining to autumn). The word has its roots in Vertumnus, the Roman god of seasonal change and plant growth. You can use vertumnal as a poem title or you can just drop it in casual conversation to impress your friends. For a little inspiration, here’s Thomas Adams, writing 401 years ago: “Her smiles are more reviving than the vertumnall sunneshine.”” - Chris DeWeese

season change
brown turns yellow green
food for deer

Carol Farnsworth - Ada MI - carolfarn@aol.com

May, Painted in Words

May brings gentle breezes
amid the warm sunshine.
Daffodils, with sunny greetings complete,
now absorb essential nutrients into their bulbs;
While Violet and Dandelion patterns
in the lawn are fading away.

Bleeding Hearts, Azaleas, and Ferns
show fullness of bloom;
And a newcomer, with hidden, hanging purple petals
pushes its long leaves upward. .
New-green leaves appear on the Rose of Sharon bushes,
while the woods and trees are greening their greetings.

Wild playfulness of the small creatures
bring delight to the soul:
Squirrels leap for the feeder
which swings and spills seed;
Chipmunks chase each other around the garden;
while munching rabbits hop from all the scurrying.

Birdbaths refresh eager bathers and thirst-quenchers.
and birdsong brings further delight to the day, until...
Skies darken mid-afternoon to allow a thunderstorm
to pass by--then, all is fresh again.
May is full of Nature’s song and fruitfulness,
while awaiting summer’s softer symphony.

Anita Leamy - Sykesville, MD - alleamy22@gmail.com

Please be kind, write to each other...

The Avocet and The Weekly Avocet are publications devoted to poets and readers who find meaning in their lives from the world of Nature; poets who write of the beauty, the peace, and the fury of Nature in all of its glory...

The Burning Question for us Earthlings is:

What are you/we going to do to stop or even just slow down Climate Change?

Do you feel like there is nothing you can do about climate change? Well, there is, even if we all do small things it will make a great difference. Alice C. Hill (the David M. Rubenstein senior fellow for energy and the environment at the Council on Foreign Relations.) states the first thing we all need to do is not shy away from the subject. Talk about, write about, climate change to everyone you know and meet. Write your congressperson and Senators. Let them know what you think and fear!

I want to have, at least, one Saving Mother Earth poem in each issue of The Weekly Avocet, so I am always looking for poems that address our most important issues of today, so please write about what you think and fear of the coming end of our world as we know it. A world our great grandkids will never know. A Mother Nature who is no longer kind.

But if we join together, maybe, just maybe, working together, we can make a difference to Save Mother Earth, the only home we have. Show you care. There are so many topics to write about when it comes to Climate Change. Please find one you are passionate about and write about it!

Write a Tell-off poem letting the world know what you are feeling about what is being done right before our eyes by those who claim to want what best for all of us.

Think it out in your head, then put it down on the page, then fight with it, get your rage out, then send it to us to share, so you can see your voice, your words, being read, being heard...

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

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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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