

The Weekly Avocet - #594

April 21st, 2024

Special Earth Day issue

**Earth it is your day
a rebirth of green and kind memories
of all we had forgotten**

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Submitted by Edwina Kadera

April 22 is Earth Day

Earth Day Affirmation

Each day is Earth Day. Mother Earth's universal energy that flows thru Spiritual Gaia is constantly flowing with Affirmations of her awesome powers to each sentient being that spark of Life is evident to me from the moment I open my eyes.

There is a constant interconnected consciousness in each day.

It starts with a kiss, warm, tiny, soft whiskers tickle me awake from my slumber. Immediately

I see big, brown doe eyes staring down at me.

It's Coco, her undying love and loyalty to my being is my first affirmation of my existence within this unique Universe. We snuggle our way downstairs and outside together to stretch and enliven our senses. My feet are planted directly on terra firma, I breathe in and say "hello" and allow that flow of breath in the natural dance born in my body to feel joy it opens up. Lifting up my arms high directly up to the clear blue sky with a warm golden ray of sunshine filling me with energy, 1... 2... 3... 4....

Trust that feeling and take the nourishment I say, holding the energy until my nose, starts tingling from tart, sweet scent of lemon from my citrus tree makes a great exhaling sensation.

Next deep breath carries the busy desert breeze, flying past my line of sight is a fluttering purple butterfly, a big buzzing black and gold bumblebee and a zippy hummingbird.

Each time I allow the flow of life to fill my deepest spaces strength builds. I surrender to Mother Earth's abundance of promise it warms each part that vibrates with the sparks of beating energy.

"Praise Earth, Praise Nature, Trust your heart to be in the flow."

I count the plants and trees to be among my heartfelt friends.

This synergy deeply woven thru Earth's magnetic fields of pulsating connection finds my heartbeat and quickens the rhythm.

My last exhale is both blissful and blessed.

Coco's little paws taps my feet with a message, "Enough, time to eat!"

Inside I enjoy thirst-quenching water with freshly squeezed lemon juice.

I smile happily knowing it grows right next to me along with oranges trees

directly across the way is a 200-year-old Saguaro cactus with an empire of its own that blesses my home.

Yet, how lucky am I that within the first thirty minutes of each day

all five senses are fully awakened and tapped into by the magical power
of Mother Earth inviting me into Earth's presence of collective lives.

The beauty and sorrow with shifting sands on Earth make it hard to look away from the dramatic role we play in the outcome of keeping Earth whole and thriving. To think of Earth as anything but this conscious interconnection is impossible to me. My romance with nature allows joy to flow in my life. That connection through Nature is universal energy.

Earth Energy drives the entire universe, and that might seem too big and too vast.

So, I happily say each day when among my friends, ***“Every Day is Earth Day!”***

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

Red Trellis - White Trellis

(for Mom and Dad)

Before I could talk, I heard, “Flowers, you can't eat them, a waste!”
This dichotomy made no sense to me, without judgement
I knew my garden would be an embodiment of both edibles
and flowers. My fruition had to bear fruit, yet, within heavenly
perfumed paths. I dreamed of future days of gardening...

The first vegetable I ever grew was the robust cherry tomato.
The charm of cherries infused me to a lifetime of growing
good things to eat. Prolific, vigorous vines over ten feet
needed to be trellised. Long clusters of Sungold's captured
my heart, their sweetness made them impossible to resist,
eating them straight off the vines. Italian Ice tomatoes,
pure white shiny perfect globes to my pure delight!

One day on my pathway through my garden my sensibilities
were overwhelmed by the scent of roses.
A scent of honey mixed with perfumed air made me aware of the
opposite end of the garden. It was from the Iceberg roses!
Lovely, strong, white climbers completely covered one side.
I saw the second trellis light up under the summer sunlight
covered with roses. While Rosa Nostalgia bloomed
a creamy white flower with cherry red edges exciting me like
a bride-to-be and won my heart.

Standing there that day taking it all in made me think back to when
I was young. I could be fed from both my plants and my flowers.

One fills my stomach, the other fills my soul.

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

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

Welcome Earth Day

Air was once pure, fresh,
water ran clear, fish were plentiful,
abundant animals roamed freely
in green pastures, forests,
on the Great Plains.
Forests were lush,
wild berries juicy for the picking.
This was the land of indigenous people.
They only took from Mother Earth
what was needed for survival.
She was revered, nothing wasted,
gratitude expressed for her many gifts
through ceremonial dances, prayers,
belief that Earth did not belong to man,
man belonged to the Earth.

Mother Earth, look what we have done
to Terra, the only home we have.
We must repair, restore what is lost,
the beauty of nature described
in Lewis and Clark journals,
writings of John Muir.
The ravages of man are left
in polluted, poisoned water
in Flint and Camp Lejeune,
hurricanes in Florida,
tornado wreckage in Glenallen,
burnt forests in Paradise,
massive flooding of Lake Charles
and the Mississippi River,
depletion of natural resources and wildlife.
Climate change, due to man's carelessness,
has resulted in ever increasing devastation.

Time to preserve what we have,
restore what we can.
Wake up deniers and abusers
before it's too late to save.

Jane Russell - Pittsburg CA - jrusle@yahoo.com

Hope Rises in April

How can there not be hope,
with each new day a promise.
The ides of March are behind,
the lion has had his way,
stormy weather has passed by,
gone are winter doldrums.

Lambs now frolic in the meadow,
through sunny mustard,
orange poppies, blue Lupines,
rabbits hop through blades of grass,
squirrels scurry up tree trunks,
butterflies flutter by,
birds warble their praises,
new growth raises sleepy heads,
bees buzz around fragrant flowers,
buds open to greet the sun.

Showers freshen the earth,
brown earth now carpeted
with velvety fresh green,
trees exhibit new leaf growth.
In my garden, signs of spring
pop everywhere: bright yellow Daisies,
variegated pink Camellias, red Azaleas,
white orange blossoms, all in full bloom.

With new life comes new hope.
I focus on blessings of spring,
the message of Easter,
preservation awareness on Earth Day.
Spring's breath sweetly scented,
cleansed by heavy rainfall,
sky washed with blue.
I will rise again, my spirit renewed,
dance through fields of delicate wildflowers
to welcome this season of renewal.

Jane Russell - Pittsburg, CA - jrusle@yahoo.com

When Profits Rule

The water nymph sat
on the barren bank of Fountain Creek,
her head bent in sorrow and loss.
Tears could not cleanse her heart's pain.

Gone were the sweet sounds
of frog chorus and dragonfly wings.
No minnows darted about their games.
No wildflowers grew here.

Chemical waste flowed
along the muddy lifeless course, where
once clear laughing water danced
now flushing factory sewage.

DeAnna Quietwater Noriega - Columbia, MO - dqnoriega@gmail.com

“The love for all living creatures is the most noble attribute of man.” - Charles Darwin
(Theresa Cancro - phoenixlady@comcast.net)

The Cradle of Immensity

Few have seen Earth
from afar, and yet those
who've rocketed into space
speak of being forever changed.
Humbled, awed
by our planet's fragile beauty,
catapulted into immensity
beyond the boundaries of ordinary mind,
these travelers return home
rarefied. They speak the language
of urgent love, having realized we are
all children of one Earth, one birth.
There are no children
of a lesser god, only children
of living or dying orbs.
And they see Earth's fate
is ours.

Lynn Palumbo - Knoxville, TN - lynnpsychotherapist@gmail.com

The Shire

Surest fire
For the soul

These hillsides
Take a toll
Shifting in tune
Sifting sand dunes

Canary streaks
Burgeoning beaks
In brownest earth
Greatness speaks

Amanda Niamh Dawson - Sebastopol, CA - aniamhdawson@yahoo.com

Going, going

Comfort is the cause of climate change. - Bob Hicok

In the Western World we like to leave things running.
cars, buses, trucks, ...
We leave the lights on.
We turn water on to brush our teeth and just let it run.
Why is this? Is there some mindless need to assure ourselves these things are working?
If we leave them on long enough
maybe they'll stop. Then, maybe we too will stop.

Kate Potter - Allentown, PA - kppipeline@gmail.com

Cheap

Everybody talks about the environment
Naturally
Venomous machines and toxic schemes of
Industry gone mad spoiling everything
Rushing into news like somebody accidentally hit fast-forward
Our earth and sky, flora, fauna, feathered flight in danger of demise
Nobody wants to sacrifice conveniences, elusive free time
Maybe someone else will keep an eye out while we sleep, Oh yes
Everybody jaws about our precious environment
Now and then -- Talk is cheap

Kate Potter - Allentown, PA - kppipeline@gmail.com

“Kindness is free.” - Dee Harris

Gaia

grasslands
marshlands
wetlands
deserts
tundra
woodlands?
teaberry plants
thick, potent little leaves, and if we're lucky,
actual spicy, rosy-red little teaberries may be found, under those small leaves,
tasty source of methyl salicylate for relief
of pain & inflammation--
once inadvertently cured a friend's abscessed tooth
while only shooting for pain relief using leaves--leaves alone of
the precious teaberry plant, growing close to the ground—
shaded acidic ground like its near neighbor
spotted pipsissewa--
better known in some regions as fireweed
and SURE I can click on “Save” and these words will be saved in in a Word Document
but I can't save biomes already lost or yet under looming threat
Yes, yes, I can write-emote and write with reverent love about them
but that erstwhile effort
won't save em in these dark times
when some idiot homo sapiens first laid eyes on
one whole biome
thought MINE
DIBs on this one -- I saw it first!
planted a mall
a housing development
an industrial complex
a hospital campus
sure enough these atrocities grew
monstrously they grow
killing off native species
shattering whole
habitats
humans profit
generate great wealth, bad money
so dirty they
have to launder it

Kate Potter - Allentown, PA - kppipeline@gmail.com

“Wildlife is something which man cannot construct. Once it is gone, it is gone forever. Man can rebuild a pyramid, but he can’t rebuild ecology, or a giraffe.” - Joy Adamson (Theresa Cancro - phoenixlady@comcast.net)

By the Streambed at World’s End

Smelling the smoke of charcoal burning where families have been, sharing fireside chats on their weekend excursions, I gaze at the creek and boulders in the streambed of World’s End State Park in Sullivan County, Pennsylvania. I’m thinking of a distant day, when the Lenape and other Native Americans roamed these hills that were their homes, where they communed with spirits and smelled the sweetness of nature in the undisturbed forests, before the white man moved over this land like a dark cloud on the horizon of civilization.

Now the white man inhabits this parcel of land, laying claim to it with parchment paper deeds labeled state forest land, much like a man with a leash on his dog. Though I hear the distant sound of a native drum in the backdrop of thought, and the spirited chanting and dancing in a circle, I am unhinged when smelling carbon from a car’s exhaust pipe billowing with the roar of a loud muffler. The intrusive noise of these new world warriors, like the Spanish Conquistadors who invaded Hispaniola or Haiti as we now know it, with Columbus in 1492, who brought with them disease and oppression and the Old-World arrogance into this once pristine place, is disturbing.

I nod a note of shame when pondering this new breed of modern man, used to coddling their own insecurities and sense of Manifest Destiny, on the land they believe God granted them to divide and conquer, inhabit, and codify, while laying waste to the soil, water, and timber land of which their purse strings could jingle the coin of profit in their loins.

I ponder these thoughts then back off, as I walk down the dusty trail away from the sound of human traffic and their voices. It is a mid-summer day in July, as a breeze blows by rustling leaves on the trees, then over my face like a painter’s brush stroke. I sit on a bench and look over the bank into the running water of the creek. The big boulders lie there like stepping- stones in the rivulet passageway, and a symphony of sound from water and wind entice the eyes and ears. It brings me into nature’s fold as I form these thoughts on an envelope, inadvertently placed in my shirt pocket with a pen over the lip of the seam.

Lester Hirsh - Watsontown, PA - lesterhirsh@hotmail.com

flat-earthers hate facts
they just turn their backs on facts
while we all just wait

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

Narcissus

The daffodils bloom
in sun or shade
are usually left alone
by roaming critters

We humans, in kind,
invade our spaces,
neglect our neighbors,
build fences as a fortress

Leave headstones
like a cairn
for when we are gone

The daffodils will
grow there too
if we don't intrude

Lester Hirsh - Watsonstown, PA - lesterhirsh@hotmail.com

Mother Earth Needs Us

We watch the news everyday,
Filled with heart breaking stories and
Horrific pictures of bees and birds dying
In big numbers, due to poisoning.
Many dead whales wash up on shore, and
We keep wondering why?
Is it the rising temperatures of the oceans,
An increase in ship traffic and sea activity?
So many species are at risk of extinction!
Humanity's impact on the different ecosystems is so great...
We came to alter natural habitats, disturbing the harmony of Many environments
that are unique to certain species.
We have simply forgotten that this planet is not ours...
That we have borrowed it from our children, grandchildren and Future generations!
We ought to acknowledge that we have a moral obligation to Beautiful Mother Earth!
We must take responsibility, to protect and preserve all Creatures that inhabit it.
Our indifference and lack of compassion make us, as Responsible for the deterioration and
destruction of Mother Earth, as the firsthand perpetrators...
Do something, NOW!

Virginia Tello - Forest Grove, OR - tello.virginia0102@gmail.com

Earth Day 2024

Earth, a mother
not capable of revenge
instead absorbs the toxicity
of her human children
until grief wracks her body and
the earthquake sobs shake our human feet and
the winds howl and
the lands flood and
the cold breaks us all and
children that we are--
we think we are being punished
because that is more accessible
than witnessing
a mother's decline toward death.

Stacey Murphy - Ithaca, NY - staceycmurphy@gmail.com

Invisible Cloud

Under the invisible cloud of CO₂,
the birds coo and sing, as the trees dance,
like children; innocent sea;
but the blue moon, like you and me, feels the nights
with the images of scars
on Mother's face; on our children,
with the thinning Ozone; with skin disease;
panting; sweating rain.
Polar bear watches as her cubs struggle to find
ice on which they can rest, between the moment
of in the water.
Sea otter weary of vanishing friends;
the elephants and tigers, and the trees
of the rain forests;
the insensible human hands.
Invisible clouds of CO₂,
miles and miles. And we wonder
why the wind howl; one of Mother's pleas
to our wandering mind. And we nod,
flaxen our muscle of waves.

Byung A. Fallgren - WY - pyogool65@gmail.com

we have now unleashed
the perfect storm on ourselves
time will not be kind

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

“I felt my lungs inflate with the onrush of scenery -- air, mountains, trees, people. I thought, ‘This is what it is to be happy.’” - Sylvia Plath

Love for Others

What about the ant?
Whose tiny, long heart
pumps clear life-blood?

And the minuscule gnat
with wings that fly,
what about that?

What about the centipede
whose one-hundred legs
work in waves?

And hey, the butterfly
who gets blown in the wind
and still knows the way?

The honeybee, who is on this list
produces such sweet
that we cannot resist.

A delicate crane fly
poses on the wall.
Spring is coming

And we are enthralled.
In this world of wonders
We can love them all.

Anne Stackpole-Cuellar - Forest Grove, OR - romitaj244@hotmail.com

“Life is driven by purpose. What do you live for?” - a First International Bank advertisement

Miraculous

Winter waned here in the Valley;
Storms turned to showers almost
Like clockwork; but days stayed
Dreary, grey, ominous--as if soon
Yet another storm would break.
The calendar passed March 20th
Just a week ago, but flowers sent
Regrets. Yet just some sun evoked
Childhood memories of exultation
At the passage of winter to spring;
And soon, the child-inside prayed
For light and leaves, spring-green
To deck still bare branches, dismal
Against a gloomy grey dome. Near
A week more passed since Equinox.

Dejected for reasons buried but
Sad at spring delayed, I felt foolish
Until one morning, I spotted rays
Reaching through layers of clouds
For the first time in way too long.
Driving into our driveway, I spied
Sunbeams shimmering like prayers
On polished leaves of the tall bush
In front of home. Leaving the car
Faster than in many years, I raced
To the place where light, at last, had
Set green aglow, bared a full flower
Ringed by four pink buds. Innocence
Reborn, I gazed at the first camellia
Whereupon rested a single raindrop
Like one of my tears. Soft, I cupped
The miracle in my hand as child-like
Again, I kissed her pale pink petals.

Judith Lyn Sutton - Campbell, CA - jlsutton46@comcast.net

Please share this special Earth Day issue with all those you know who love Mother earth, our only home we have! Thank you.

“Avoiding climate breakdown will require cathedral thinking. We must lay the foundation while we may not know exactly how to build the ceiling.” - Greta Thunberg

Breakthrough

A desert garden amidst conifers and
Deciduous trees, each a unique green
On Nature's summer palette--who
Would it not amaze to discover just
Atop a hill, the paradisiac placement
Of succulents sipping sultry sunlight
As most plants thirst for rain or spray?
Back home, I would turn up my nose,
Pass neighbors allowing trees, shrubs,
Lawns to die ousted by drought-tolerant
Bamboo, tanbark, and, yes, succulents
As if we resided in a bona-fide desert.
I would thank my creator for cultivating
Mature enough foliage and woodland
To ride out swelter on our quarter-acre;
I gloried in green, peopled by tall ferns
Sublime in shade from Mother Magnolia
And grateful receivers of the buckets we
Lugged of showers started before water
Warmed enough for us to soap down and
Rinse off. Even when Mother grew faint
From hot sun, she kept her candle-blooms
Closed as we carried flow to fortify ferns.
Now, riveted by this succulent stretch
Gleaming, I spy hummingbirds riveted
Like me. Limber leaves of glossy green,
Resonant purple, even enticing turquoise
Frame brilliant mahogany disks, slender
Coral bells, lustrous yellow or rose stars
Ablaze on grey-green stalks. They beg
Me neither to pass them by nor shy away
Anymore from the delight they can bring.
Of a sudden, a bevy of butterflies greet
Me as I draw nearer; fluttering flower
To flower, they say: Forget-not-this-day!

Judith Lyn Sutton - Campbell, CA - jlsutton46@comcast.net

If we work as one, we can get the job done!!!

“The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it.” - Robert Swan

While We Slumber

Flash lights the sky
followed by a boom and rolling thunder.
Wind rotates within the cloud.
Bullets of rain pound my oven vent
Torrents of water cascade off my roof.
These are the sounds of our mighty planet at its most majestic.

Ash and fire explode into the air.
Silicate rock and molten elements erupt from the core
of an angry world.

Cleora Boyd - Fort Worth, TX - sitting.duck@springmail.com

Please be kind and write to those poets whose work moved you. Thank you.

Drought
Persistent unrelenting
Parching shrinking cracking
Empty riverbeds leave marks
Residue

Water
Clear fresh
Cascading streaming pooling
Havens teem, bring abundance
Lifeblood

Rainfall
Steady torrential
Beating pounding rushing
Rivers roar from above
Deluge

Gay Marie Logsdon - Oak Ridge, TN - gmarielogsdon@gmail.com

he walks in wonder
rooted deep in Mother Earth
silence soothes his soul

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

“The earth is what we all have in common.” - Wendell Berry

The Andree Clark Bird Refuge

Coots and cormorants are regulars
And crows, of course,
Hérons and egrets take refuge on the wooded islands,
Sparrows and finches march methodically through the chapparal
And mallards patrol the parking lot, looking for handouts.
It was a tidal lagoon when the Spanish arrived,
Fed by a creek and flushed by the ebb and flow of the Pacific.
In time, progress swept across it,
Railroad tracks laid down hard against one edge,
And a boulevard along the other named for one of the Spaniards.
She was 19 when she died, a daughter of wealth,
Though wealth was no match for meningitis.
Funds from the family fortune paid for a weir,
Three new islands and platforms for viewing Nature,
A refuge for birds and a memorial for Andree Clark,
Now, the engineers report, the creek must be rerouted,
The weir replaced,
Invasive plants removed, the shoreline recontoured
And a new bio-retention pond built
For the remediation of foul odors.
The ancients believed in Genius loci.
Their rituals of foundation were precise,
The ground to be purified, tokens buried,
The physical and the metaphysical reconciled,
So that the spirits of the place
Would not forsake the company of men.
The permits, however, make no mention of this,
No rituals are specified in the work contracts,
The City does not negotiate with spirits.
There is no place now between tracks and boulevard
For the ancient creek, the rhythm of the tides,
Or the wisdom of the ancients

Dennis Doordan - Santa Barbara, CA - ddoordan@nd.edu

unearthing ourselves
from this perfect paradise
cruel universe waits

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

“Nature inspires me to believe!”

Do all you can

reuse, reduce, recycle
ride a bicycle
help save
this great
Earth of ours
by doing all you can
for this world
our land
lend a helping hand
be good for all mankind
share a smile
volunteer a little while
do a good deed
help others in need
do all you can
be your best you!

Wendy Schreiner - West Seneca, NY - wendyew3@yahoo.com

**“Nature instructs me daily in awareness.” - Melanie Perish
mperish@unr.edu**

Don't waste

Don't waste
reuse
recycle
craft
and create
make
old stuff
new
renew
less waste
saving
Mother Earth

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Celebrate Earth Day

breath in
fresh air
let's all
try to care
about the
world in
which we live
celebrate
Earth Day
in a
special way
remember what
it's all about
today

Wendy Schreiner - West Seneca, NY - wendyew3@yahoo.com

**Please feel free to share The Weekly Avocet with all those you know
who love Nature poetry. Thank you!**

Remember Our Earth

Don't litter
Don't waste
reuse
create new
recycle
pick up
compost
and break down
quit polluting
our wonderful world
it's all we got
let not it be forgot
remember our Earth
every day!

Wendy Schreiner - West Seneca, NY - wendyew3@yahoo.com

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

another year of new extremes

not unlike the year before
nor those before that year
there has been a steady march
new highs new lows that add an “-est” each year
surpassing those once “-est” just the year before
forecasts like the weather, based on old statistics
gathered over years of steady highs and lows
now in these new times of global warming, climate change
irrelevant
one-hundred-year events and thousand-year
happening more than once-a-year
all is change now

unpredictable? oh no, not at all
we were forewarned
denial for so long delayed all action
no longer in denial we still delay

we still argue about
what must be done, what we should do
selfishly we focus on
how these extreme events affect our lives
but what about
the bees? the monarch butterflies?
the birds? the whales?

our remedies still too little
now perhaps too late
and if that were not enough
we foul our nest
pollution of
the lands, the air, the oceans

I am grown old
I do not see ahead too many new years
but alas I fear
to see the end of all in my own lifetime

Gordon Gilbert - New York City, NY - gordonagilbertjr@usa.net

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...

Vows

Curled up in the hole of your burn,
covered with the woven threads
of your wooden core in Hendy Grove

your charred black bark closes tight
and warm around my back. Through
an invisible cord I am filled with your breath.

I breath out, open to all you've seen of loss
when rivers bled brown logs that screamed
their way down stream as the slaughter continued.

Somehow you survived, fire scarred, unseen,
ancient redwood, so close to the sun.
If I was born indigenous here on the Coast

I could have been marched out to Round Valley.
Even now there is no promise I'll emerge
from you safe. But I vow I won't forget

we are connected. From shared roots
I will grow my voice.

Karen Marker - Oakland, CA - KImarker123@gmail.com

**“Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.” -
Warren Buffett**

amidst the madness
let's get lost deep in the woods
where the wild ones live

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

**“This Earth Day and every day, let's commit to taking swift action in our fight for a
sustainable future” - Al Gore**

A Modern Fable

*Double, double toil and trouble
Fire burn and cauldron bubble--
Shakespeare, Macbeth*

When shall we three meet again,
in pesticide runoff, poisoned air,
or slaughterhouse drain?

When the climate is warmed.
When the arctic is farmed.
That will be when humanity is harmed.

Hail modern humanity, Civilized!
Hail modern humanity, Affluent!
Hail modern humanity, Self-Vanquished!

Splotches of oil, blue and green,
have overflowed from some machine.
Tar and gravel wash from the road
gouged out by a truck we overload.
The marsh is clogged with silt and loam
as dead fish rise on the river with foam.

*Fillet of a fenny snake
In the cauldron, boil, and bake.*

The fertile land has washed away,
a sin for which we all must pay.
Dispel these pains; remove the greed,
and from this curse, we may be freed.

Ray Zimmerman - Chattanooga, TN - znaturalist@gmail.com

You Really Don't Know What You Have Until It's Gone

This is why you don't hear about the hole in the ozone layer anymore.

By Ben Stern

When's the last time you heard about the ozone layer? Or about the hole in the ozone layer? For most people, it's been years or even decades since the topic has crossed their minds.



View Of Earth with Ozone layer from outer space© Provided by The Cool Down

And there's a good reason for that -- it's because human cooperation and swift policy change were extremely effective in fixing the problem.

The ozone is an invisible layer of gas in our atmosphere that protects us from damaging, cancer-causing radiation given off by the sun, basically acting as the Earth's sunscreen. Without it, life on Earth would be extremely vulnerable. So in the 1980s, when it was discovered that a hole was forming in the ozone layer, it was a big deal.

The hole was forming because people across the world were using man-made chemicals that ate away at this natural barrier, primarily chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). CFCs were mostly used for refrigeration and in aerosol sprays. But as the hole in the ozone layer grew, so did many people's concern over it.

Last summer, false suggestions began circulating on social media that the panic about the hole in the ozone layer was unwarranted, and that the current urgency about the overheating of our planet is similarly unjustified.

In reality, the alarm about the ozone layer in the '80s was necessary to combat the crisis.

Just a few years after the discovery of the hole, the world took action. In 1987, leaders from around the world met in Montreal, where they agreed to phase out the use of CFCs quickly.

Dozens of countries ratified the Montreal Protocol; industries were forced to find CFC alternatives, such as HCFCs, in order to stop damaging our planet; and CFC use has dropped to well below 1% of its 1980s level. The protocol is arguably the best example of cooperative environmental problem-solving ever.

As a result of these changes, the damage to the ozone layer is being reversed. It is now estimated that the ozone layer is likely to fully recover by the end of the 2060s, saving *millions* of lives.

So, if the question is why don't we hear a ton about the hole in the ozone anymore, it's because humanity worked cooperatively, and quickly, to do something about it.

The cooperative effort to protect our ozone layer should be not only seen as a success story, but as *proof* that humanity can overcome daunting and monumental environmental challenges.

As heatwaves, wildfires, and floods inundate our communities, we must not downplay the magnitude of problems or the potential for global cooperation to solve them.

Please be kind, write to each other...

Showcase your work in The Weekly Avocet.

Time to share up to four of your Spring themed poems for The Weekly Avocet,

**Spring photos (4),
Spring haiku (up to 10),
Saving Mother Earth Challenge poems
(as many as you can write)**

Please read the guidelines before submitting

Please send your submission to angeldec24@hotmail.com

Please put **Spring/your last name in the subject line.**

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

(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 - town, state - email address under your poem. No Zip codes.

Please send your poem in both the body of an email and an attachment, **no pdf file.**

We look forward to reading your Spring submissions...

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

If you would like to become a supporting member of The Avocet community, The Avocet is only \$28.00 for 4 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 make your check out to The Avocet and send to:

**The Avocet
P.O. Box 19186
Fountain Hills, AZ 85269**

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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