

# **The Weekly Avocet - #682**

## **December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

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

**winter solstice  
slithers in on icy feet  
days will get longer**

Lloyd Abrams - Freeport, NY - lbabrams@gmail.com



Submitted by Edwina Kadera

### my worst day of the year

the day i most despise  
is that too-crisp day in autumn  
when later there's a danger of frost...  
window and door screens must get switched  
radiators have to be bled  
everything has to get done  
in such haste  
especially bringing in plants  
that have been flourishing outside  
twenty-two free-standing and hanging plants--  
wandering jews and a glossy-veined croton  
spider plants and rex begonias  
fragile jades and a forty-year-old cactus  
will winter in my wife's studio  
though several do migrate upstairs

it's certainly not life-threatening awfulness  
but when the luxuriousness  
of longer warmer technicolor days  
give way inexorably  
to shorter colder grayscale afternoons  
when t-shirts and shorts and sandals  
get supplanted  
by thermals and sweat pants and shoes with socks  
and our bicycles stand unriden  
for months in the garage  
i *don't* have to like it...  
one bit  
but i *will*... i *must* embrace the change  
there is no time for melancholy  
no time for lamentation  
cold weather *does* have its allure...  
walking for miles clothed in multiple layers  
shoveling snow while listening to jazz  
snowshoeing at the park and on the beach  
and i know  
with almost absolute certainty  
that spring  
-- the exquisite time of renewal --  
is only months away  
and with it will come  
my *best* day of the year

Lloyd Abrams - Freeport, NY - lbabrams@gmail.com

## **Prayer**

Even as we watch a home  
tumble into the ocean  
we know Nature's power  
and we sigh for the vanity  
of man's fixated desire to  
'own' waterfront prevails  
among the greedy  
Even in Delaware's Sussex County  
we fought a decade ago to have a 100-foot barrier  
on bays, but NO, a state  
legislator sued the Department of Natural Resources  
and won.  
He called it 'freedom'  
And so, we pray  
new homeowners will be good stewards  
on fragile land  
Meanwhile all the sand pumping along the coast  
has not stopped high tides from their occasional surges  
closing a major artery  
And so, we wait for the tide to recede  
to cross the bridge to come home  
and pray

Kit Zak - Lewes, DE - [kit.and.bill.zak@gmail.com](mailto:kit.and.bill.zak@gmail.com)

## **Wolf Whacking**

Geared up for Wyoming's chill--  
sky's a flat gray but  
Chuck's primed

Imagine the kick--  
the thrill  
the chase, engine gunning  
as he runs down  
his prey, a lone gray wolf  
yellow eyes show terror as the wolf tries to  
escape the roaring snowmobile

Later, the mighty victor  
pounds his chest as he  
drags the bloodied, broken corpse  
to the bar's doorstep where

fellow drinkers gather to admire the kill  
its mouth agape, yellow eyes glazed, bloodied, mangled fur of the lifeless  
*Canis lupis*

Kit Zak - Lewes, DE - kit.and.bill.zak@gmail.com

### **Winter's Here**

The Pacific Northwest feels like  
a piece of heaven on earth!  
Looking around, Mother Nature  
grace us with the promise  
of a new tomorrow,  
a luscious white blanket  
covers the landscape.  
Frozen cornfields are dormant  
hugging a few bright orange pumpkins  
left behind,  
the naked trees shiver  
at the kiss of old winter,  
a doe and her fawn peacefully  
feed in the meadow!  
The whispers of the season  
warm my heart.  
Driving on highway twenty six  
a gray sky opens in front of me  
hiding the sun behind thick  
December clouds!  
Will it rain or will it snow? Who knows  
the weather in the Pacific Northwest  
is ever changing,  
it will surprise you!

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

Old winter came again  
bitter cold and icy pond  
luminous blue sky.

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

## **Night Gala**

A dazzling moon hangs from the sky  
rays of light pierce the glass,  
the city is transformed into a  
breath taking luminous wonder!  
Love and togetherness,  
homes filled with the warmth  
of family and friends,  
the cold breath of winter  
taps at the window pane.  
When the world is locked  
in ice and snow,  
I snuggle down in my bed and  
cover myself from head to toe,  
slipping away into a peaceful slumber  
until the sun breaks  
the hours of darkness,  
I'll be dreaming again and again!

Virginia Tello - Forest Grove, OR - [tello.virginia0102@gmail.com](mailto:tello.virginia0102@gmail.com)

## **Festive Spirit**

It's the most wonderful time of the year,  
a time for spreading goodwill and  
holiday cheer, a time for peace!  
The house is looking merry and bright  
with all the decorations,  
a sense of celebration has taken hold of me.  
A woody, pine-like freshness fills the air,  
chimneys are busy at their task  
wildlife can be spotted everywhere,  
quieter outdoors display  
beautiful snow-capped mountains,  
dramatic stormy coastlines and  
winter's white cloak covers the scenery.  
We are brimming with excited  
anticipation for the adventures ahead!  
We will carry the memory of those we've  
lost, and their absence will be a void!

Virginia Tello - Forest Grove, OR - [tello.virginia0102@gmail.com](mailto:tello.virginia0102@gmail.com)

### **A Flash of Red in the Woods**

The Pileated Woodpecker's hammering  
can be heard through the woods  
loud like a linesman fixing an electric pole.  
He remains hidden, but for the sound  
he would not be found.  
Red feather crest, white markings on his face  
black body, a strong tail that helps him  
move up the tree.  
There is a flash of red  
when he flies to his next tree.

Beth Cash - Howes Cave NY - bethjeancash@gmail.com

**Please be kind, write to each other...**

### **Silence Is Red in Holly**

Silence is round in winter.  
Corpulent and red, silence  
Is bound to burst any minute  
In the quickest bird's beak.

Round in winter, holly berries  
Crown the silent snow, prepared  
For a neighborly host that winters  
With us on the ridge: chickadees,

Cardinals, house wrens, and  
Bluebirds. A feather-force  
Of black, straggling crows  
Hangs back--silent scavengers.

All of them dart to snip our sweet,  
Red holly berries, dropping the pits  
Behind the brush pile you stacked,  
Dropping them in quick time for

Spring.

Mattie Quesenberry Smith - Lexington, VA - mattiequesenberrysmith@gmail.com

### **Wishing you were here**

Looking up at the many twinkling lights  
on the massive tree on this pale, cold,  
late December day in Rockefeller Center,  
I remember how you loved seeing this sight--  
maybe the tree here in cold New York City  
reminded you of the ones in the Swiss Alps,  
your adored home country,  
and how you had promised  
to take me next Christmas  
but you were dead two days into December  
and squeezing my Dad's hand,  
I can't help thinking that the tree,  
like everything else in the world,  
is less bright, shiny, without you here.

*(For my beloved Grandma Simone; without you, everything is less magical now. RIP.)*

Valerie Portolano - Fountain Hills, AZ - [cportolano@hotmail.com](mailto:cportolano@hotmail.com)

### **Garden Shadow**

Amidst a winter storm  
the weather-beaten gate blows open.  
There's a knock at the door.  
No one is there  
No footprints in fresh fallen snow  
No handprints on the railing  
There must be a secret to be told.  
Someone from somewhere has arrived  
with a message too dispiriting  
to leave in the mailbox.  
Someone so cold to stir seasons  
of unpleasant memories as hands  
of time fall back just far enough  
to be haunted by faceless voices.  
The knocking silences.  
The gate swings closed.  
Another night alone lost to wind swirls  
of mystery, more disturbing  
in the absence of the gardener's shadow.

Robert Savino - West Islip, NY - [dynsus@aol.com](mailto:dynsus@aol.com)

## **Forever, Susan Lily**

Archetypal clusters of Forever Susan Lily  
bulbs arrived in the mail  
cushioned with hoary moss  
dusty bulbs and dry Iris corms.  
Every single one will have a winter's nap.

Forever Susan Asiatic Lilies  
glorious manifestations beside  
Hyacinth mix of purple and pink.  
I imagine them thriving next spring.

Just think, how does Mother Nature keep bulbs safe in frozen soil?  
I know she's  
laughing at winter snowstorms.

My pipedream endures for  
Nature has perfect timing in her ornate drawers of dreams-come-true.  
Purple Dusky Challengers with black beards  
quivering and tall.  
Representative ambassadors  
singing life-force.  
That is who you are  
underground secrets of winter.  
Victorious prize-winners  
warbles in secretive clusters.  
Xerophytic, ferns asleep in rocks and rubble  
yearnings by washed-out pathways when it's zero degrees in the sunshine.

Lynda McKinney Lambert - Ellwood City, PA - riverwoman@zoominternet.net

## **Healing Snow**

Snow is falling tonight  
in soft, silent flakes.  
Our transgressions to the eye  
are being transformed  
into clean, white hillocks  
and blue hollows.  
In Her kindness  
Nature is bestowing upon us  
Her healing snow.

Ray Staubach



**3 A.M.**

Today, pelting rain  
shrouds of draping darkness. Now  
star chunks stud the night.

Sheri Lindner - Bondville, VT - SheriAL@aol.com

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

### **Ode to a Sunflower**

At the edge of the threshed field,  
brushed lightly with snow,  
the multi-headed sunflower  
sways in the breeze  
like an anthracite-eyed  
hippie-chick at a Dead concert  
in Golden State Park.  
Its thick stem holds on.  
Its sole companion is a crab apple  
whose desiccated fragrant fruit  
rests on the snow like maraschino cherries  
topping a vanilla sundae.  
The wind picks up and  
wants to topple the sunflower but  
the school-bus yellow  
petals merely quiver while  
the elephant-ear leaves flap.  
The heads are a community  
waiting for famished crows  
to attack its dried seeds.  
Some few will drop and  
come to life in Spring.  
For now, it knows  
they are beginning to die,  
that to be real  
is to die.

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

### **A Winter in West Virginia**

A cold wind blew around the corner of the old house,  
The snowflakes fell, and they fell all night.  
Icicles glittering in the moonlight hung from the roof.  
Twelve steps to the front porch froze over with ice,  
One step down a body could fall.  
The last of the embers of the fire in the coal stove still burning,  
But not for long,  
The cold wind moaned and groaned as it blew through  
The cracks in the wall,  
Bringing the chatter of my teeth and shivering of my body.  
Inside the old house, ice on the linoleum,  
Made my toes stand up as I dare step with my bare feet.  
The snowflakes still falling when daylight comes,  
Twelve inches of snow on the ground,  
Weather person predicts more on the way.

Terra L. De Lora - Cornelius, OR - terradelora@yahoo.com

### **The Seer**

A lone crow sits on a high branch  
For no other reason  
Then to drink in the pure joy of the view;  
It sits, stoical and settled,  
Surveying the wide winter world,  
Like a dark seer who waits  
for the seeker.  
I imagine being that crow  
On the high branch,  
Still and silent--  
Nothing to accomplish but to contemplate  
The distant bound, round bales  
Spaced rhythmically, ready;  
Cows on the wind-broke side of the hill,  
All facing east with no destination;  
The sweeping fallow fields, resting,  
With some snow still in the harrows,  
And all gilded by the early, slanted light.

Patricia Thrushart - Clarington, PA - patriciathrushart@gmail.com

## PEACE ON EARTH

might as well wish  
upon a star

William Scott Galasso - Laguna Woods, CA - [scottgalasso@yahoo.com](mailto:scottgalasso@yahoo.com)

### Cranes

Their voices call to my ears,  
pull my eyes skyward,  
heard before sighted,  
Sandhills from Michigan.

Cranes overhead wing southward,  
call my thoughts to fly with them  
to Okefenokee or the Gulf Coast of Florida.

The cranes arrive,  
bring their news of winter,  
their voice compared to barking geese,  
to the bugling of wild elks.

These are no geese,  
their words no honk,  
no barnyard bark for them.  
It is a rattling coo,  
doves amplified 1000 times.

Arrows shot from a bow,  
they neither swoop nor slow,  
they rocket southward,  
abandon me here  
rooted to the ground.

Ray Zimmerman - Chattanooga, TN - [znatrualist@gmail.com](mailto:znatrualist@gmail.com)

In winter's white woods  
The purest, coldest water  
Humbled there, I drink.

Amy Melman - Croton-on-Hudson, NY - [amy1melman@yahoo.com](mailto:amy1melman@yahoo.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 your email address...**

### **The Taste of Snow**

North winds bluster all morning.  
leaving behind an afternoon  
too frigid for outdoor play.  
Outside carved drifts rise as high  
as four-year-old Meaghan  
stretches on tiptoe to see  
beyond an ice frosted picture window.  
*Look, Nanna. Cool whip everywhere!*  
The awe in her voice takes me back  
to a railroad flat where in back of the closet  
my snowsuit and galoshes waited  
for just such an auspicious winter event.  
*I wonder what snow tastes like,* she sighs  
and I am undone by a plea for magic  
only a grandmother must make happen.  
I push hard against snow mounds  
and wedge open the back door.  
Hurrying to fill a large pot,  
I pile mounds of unblemished snow  
into the kitchen sink as Meg looks on,  
her eyes the mazarine blue of a clearing sky  
after a winter storm.  
On a stool, my granddaughter hums,  
toasty in her red hoodie,  
clumsy wool mittens at work  
creating snow cakes with  
wooden spoon and plastic cups.  
She pauses, and smiles  
as she hands me her creation.  
*I made this just for you, Nan. Taste it.*

Joan Vullo Obergh - Seaford, NY - [lydia82@verizon.net](mailto:lydia82@verizon.net)

**Please be the reason someone smiles today...**

# See you next year - 2026

**Time to share your Winter-themed poems for The Weekly Avocet.**

**Please read the guidelines before submitting**

**We love previously published poems!**

**Please send your submissions to:**

**[angeldec24@hotmail.com](mailto:angeldec24@hotmail.com)**

**Up to four Fall themed poems,**

**Photos (4), haiku (up to 10),**

**Saving Mother Earth Challenge poems**

**(as many as you can write)**

**Please do not stack your info when submitting submissions, please have it: name - town, state - email address, in a line, just like it appears in both publications. Please do not make extra work for us. Thank you.**

**Please send your submissions to [angeldec24@hotmail.com](mailto:angeldec24@hotmail.com)**

**Please put (early or late) Winter/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 - town/state - email address under your poem. No Zip codes.**

Please send your poems in the body of an email or in one attachment, **no pdf file.**

### **We look forward to reading your Winter submissions.**

Please think about becoming a supporting member of The Avocet community. The Avocet is only \$28.00 for 4 - 64 pages, perfectly bound 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

All donations are greatly appreciated, so if you have been enjoying all the Nature poetry, please think about making a small donation. Each year it gets harder and harder to keep our doors open. Thank you for supporting The Avocet and The Weekly Avocet.

## **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 to 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](mailto:cportolano@hotmail.com)

We hope we provoked you; that you leave having experienced a complete emotional response to the poetry found in each issue of The Weekly Avocet. 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.

Copyright © 2025 by The Avocet (for our poets)