

# The Weekly Avocet - #688

## February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026

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

**trees outlined in white  
snow laying on branches  
sculpture art**

Carol Bezin - angelbezin@gmail.com



Submitted by Edwina Kadera

## **Window Watching**

Cold one today,  
window-watching.

autumn-yellow tree  
envies evergreen--  
perhaps the other way around.

don't know their names--  
the trees.  
They get it.

Tired old fire hydrant  
hides  
from salt-and-pepper mailboxes.  
Clearly a history there.  
They get it.

Plump little bird  
swaggers around  
like he owns the place.  
He gets it.

He knows about the trees,  
and the drama  
between mailboxes  
and fire hydrant.  
Cold one today,  
but how warm  
the company.

Owen Barclay - Olympia, WA - oabarclay99@gmail.com

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

**Couple rescues two baby cows - now they're like giant puppies**  
When Arlo was saved from a dairy farm, his sister Zoe unexpectedly came with him—and they've been inseparable ever since. Arlo is the playful, bouncy wild child, while Zoe's the calm, affectionate "big sister." Together, they snuggle, supervise their humans, and act like oversized lap dogs. Their bond is unbreakable—and their love is contagious.

**[Couple Rescues Two Baby Cows Now They're Like Giant Puppies - Search News](#)**

## **Rings**

if you must,  
fell an oak,  
count its rings,  
then you'll see  
that the dead  
knew too once,  
how to live. if perhaps  
you cut me open, you'd see  
my rings are but the scars of life,  
worn as if ornate gems;  
a record of burdens  
etched inward  
as prayers

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## **Storm**

the storm is over,  
though the memory  
still plays on my tongue in  
captivating sourness.

the sea, so calm now, the  
clouds unmoving, while glimpses  
of sunlight shimmer along  
the water as if  
there'd been no storm  
at all. still,

It haunts me.  
and I wish that  
I could let go,  
move on swiftly, as do the sun  
and the sea.

I envy them, for  
they face the storm  
only once, where I so often  
live it again  
one-thousand times.

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### **born of new extremes**

now are the winters born of new extremes  
too warm at one extreme too cold the other  
chaotic and confusing to the trees  
budding leaves and flowers when it's warm,  
all nipped and falling when it all turns cold  
heavy rains falling on some days  
ice and sleet and snow that fall on others  
forecasts now no longer can be trusted  
based as they are on patterns now unstable  
arctic and antarctic ice is melting  
more water in the atmosphere, less frozen  
the only forecast now and for the future  
is weather will continue more extreme

Gordon Gilbert

**waiting for a deer**

among the black trees  
behind the red fox  
in the white snow  
the hunter hides  
only watching  
not his prey

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## To Be Caught on Collapsing Currents

To be caught on collapsing currents  
Is not a bad thing. There is time  
For failure, time to sink and slip  
Into an unwinding spiral.  
Settle in. Take your seat.  
You take the last, the very last  
Seat, and it is best to float

Across an ocean of doldrums,  
In a space of no convection,  
Rib-to-rib with the deadliest  
Trials, such as zero and nothing,  
Ennui and boredom,  
Rackets of inaction.  
(Action does no good.)

No sense flailing to catch  
The wind, no sense arching  
And winding around  
To catch a peak. Look:  
The sharp-shinned hawk  
Knows the wisdom  
Of winging it down

Keel-to-pinion,  
Winging it down  
An impossible,  
Mechanical  
Gyre.

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

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

bitter cold weather  
extremely dangerous ice  
neighbors help neighbors

Carol Bezin - angelbezin@gmail.com

## **Silent Beauty**

At the forest's edge,  
I stand, touched by the sky's gift:  
As Earth goes to sleep!

Though covered with snow,  
Evergreens stand straight and tall:  
Showing pride and strength!

I watched some children  
Playing together with joy  
As they threw snowballs

Birds forage for food,  
Hoping that they can find some  
Buried in snow drifts.

Terri Winaught - Pittsburgh, PA - [terriwinaught2@gmail.com](mailto:terriwinaught2@gmail.com)

cold warnings  
freezing sap and cracking barks  
term: exploding trees

Carol Bezin - [angelbezin@gmail.com](mailto:angelbezin@gmail.com)

## **The Coming of the Storm**

last night after the sunset and moonrise,  
as black heavy clouds filled with evil spears of ice,  
and fiery blasts of lightning assisted by the winds  
of the underworld boiled in the sky  
the energy swirled and lashed  
coming in a hail of the elements  
suddenly, rain - snow - sleet - whipped into a fury of destruction  
and set upon the inhabitants of the land  
the storm settled in for an icy stay  
all who could spoke to the creator

*(Backstory - That's what it felt like as the wind shifted, the snow turned to shards of ice and the ground morphed into a dangerous landscape resistant to balance and upright mobility.)*

Patty L. Fletcher - Bristol, VA - [Patty.volunteer1@gmail.com](mailto:Patty.volunteer1@gmail.com)

## Snow Tunnels

Earth sleeps  
rests in quiet peace  
seasonal hyperactivity subdued

under white woolen comforter  
some activity persists  
silent life

winter rain  
melts many inches  
mini backyard road map emerges

voles tunnel for survival in safety  
nature is not dormant  
even in sleep

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### Like Pen and Ink – Ekphrastic Tunnels

Earth sleeps,  
rests in quiet peace  
under a welcomed,  
white, woolen comforter.  
Winter rain exposes  
the backyard alleyways.  
Silent engineers construct  
a hidden web, a network.  
Vole tunnels  
crochet the shivering grass,  
create a map of a new land  
and its highways.  
I shrink from this day  
to stroll the paths  
in winter's peace.  
Like voles,  
dreams do not sleep.

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severe cold week  
warnings and advisories  
birds eat crabapples

Carol Bezin - angelbezin@gmail.com

**Orphaned wombat refused to be touched - now he's a total mama's boy**  
When Bridget first met Stew, he ran from every touch and didn't want anyone near. But after days of gentle patience and bottle feeds, he nudged her for pets--and never looked back. Now, he's her sassy sidekick, hopping on laps and zooming through the house for cuddles and potatoes. His attitude is big, but his love is bigger.

[Orphaned wombat refused to be touched - now he's a total mama's boy | Watch](#)

artic cold warning  
frozen outside world  
car started right up

Carol Bezin - angelbezin@gmail.com

## **Snow Fall in the South**

It's snowing.  
It's beautiful.  
I never dreamed I would see that here,  
in South Carolina.

The dog loves to play in it.  
I don't think he knows what it is anymore.  
This is 2 years later.  
Would he remember snow falls from years back?

The pretty white flakes are floating sideways  
Wafting to the earth and settling there.  
It's so clean and perfect, untouched.  
But it will melt or be shoveled away soon enough.

As the day progressed,  
It became colder  
As evening approaches,  
The soft snow will turn to ice.

The ice won't last for long though.  
Tomorrow the sun will shine.  
In the South, it's bright and warm,  
Even when the air is cold.

I want to see children play,  
Throw snowballs at one another,  
Or go sledding or tobogganing,  
And enjoy the wonderous snow while it lasts.

Trish Hubschman - [plutzhub@gmail.com](mailto:plutzhub@gmail.com)

**“Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity.” - John Muir**

daily cold warnings  
water, power, heat working  
gratitude warms

Carol Bezin - [angelbezin@gmail.com](mailto:angelbezin@gmail.com)

### **Oak's Lament**

Limbs stretch frantically  
Leaves, where have you gone?  
Sleet, stinging now  
Wind whipping, branches snapping  
Pain, soft wood freezes  
Trunk, ice-coated  
Shivering  
Cold... so cold  
Winter, endless night  
Spring, where are you?  
Frozen teardrops fall

Dawn McCormack - Plainfield, CT - djohnson8251@yahoo.com

### **Bear's Surprise**

Bear had grown accustomed  
To eating leftovers thrown out  
By the kindly old woman  
Who lived in the big green house  
Right next to the forest

This had become such a habit  
That when the woman died and  
A new family moved in,  
He expected this would continue  
And showed up in the yard as usual

Much to his surprise and confusion  
An angry looking lady opened the door  
And began rudely banging pots and pans  
And calling him horrible names  
That he'd never even heard before

Dejected and still hungry, he turned and left  
Hoping he'd find something to fill his stomach  
It was getting cold; it was time to hibernate  
And he knew he hadn't eaten quite enough  
And that his Winter sleep would probably be restless

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## A Fugitive Silence

The day the Earth erupted,  
and fireballs scourged the sky,  
a mountain rent the stratosphere,  
bones and bakeshops pulverized.  
And there on the lovely island\*  
where sunlight should have gleamed,  
a death cloud choked the air  
and drowned the sea.

The decade the Earth erupted,  
a pale horse stalked the land,  
summer ice storms starved the crops,  
diaspora sapped beast and man.  
And there on the mighty acropolis,  
where temples used to rise,  
with averted eyes, the silent gods  
withheld their obsolete advice.

The epoch the Earth erupted;  
it erupted frequently;  
volcanic, atomic weapons  
rained death and misery.  
And when the silence settled,  
where insight should have spawned,  
an arms race escalated,  
dooming the dawn.

As the latest pandemic erupts,  
and our lives are overset,  
cycles of variants lasso the globe,  
ever-mutating alphabet.  
And as the silence hovers, I  
show humility and awe  
for fugitive life on this fragile Earth,  
one race, one creed, one shore.

(\**Thera (Santorini), c.1628 B.C. E*)

Jackie Fellague - Torrance, CA - cportolano@hotmail.com

**“Wilderness is a necessity... there must be places for human beings to satisfy their souls.” - John Muir**

## The Skating Ring

A cluster of crows sitting  
on a high, thick branch  
of a huge, old oak,  
loudly cawing in awe  
of two red foxes,  
brothers, not yet one year,  
inchng their way forward,  
their young legs quickly  
sliding in different directions  
the moment their paws  
hit the cold-to-the-touch ice,  
these two thick-as-thieves  
brothers knew this was new,  
just like when they first  
saw, touched, falling snow, it  
threw a sudden shock through  
their young memories, but...  
they find themselves soon  
scatter-stepping across  
the frozen solid pond,  
where once they drank water,  
now they are far too busy  
being brave and daring  
during their ice cascades  
to care for a drink,  
with those crows cawing,  
cheering, the brothers on  
as they learn how to slide,  
glide across the ice  
as if they were flying  
like the crows from above;  
learning to turn around proved  
quite a challenge for the two,  
curious brothers to overcome,  
but in time they do spins  
and circles as the crows  
glide down, sliding freely like  
their young, red fox friends  
across the smooth ice,  
their raw, raucous cawing  
of laughter fills the clear air  
on this sunny, Winter afternoon  
hidden deep in the forest.

Charles Portolano

**“Most people are on the world, not in it.” - John Muir**

### **Evocation of Awe**

The two young brothers  
chase after each other playing  
a game of tag deep in the cave.  
All the men and older boys  
are out planning the next hunt  
and they are too young to go.

The taller of the two boys  
falls and bangs his palm  
against the taut hide tied tight  
to posts of a large, male antelope.  
A big, booming sound  
reverberates off the cave walls.

Then boom, boom, boom rings  
as both boys begin to pound.  
All the women stop and stare  
for they could feel the vibrations  
across their skin as the hair  
on their necks and arms rises.

Surprised by the resounding echo  
of the boom, boom, boom moves  
all of them for they can feel it within,  
stirring them to tap their feet  
to this mystical, primal beat  
that surrounds them from all sides.

Soon they find themselves clapping  
along to the booming sound, in sync  
with its pulsating beat gets some  
banging hollow bones against each other,  
then the stomping begins as their voices  
sing out, shouting, out from their souls.

The incredible acoustics in the cave  
sends chills down their spines,  
while large shadows wildly dance  
along on the walls of the cave for  
they have entered a different dimension  
at a visceral, cellular level, all connected.

All sense of time and space is lost in  
their deep trance for hours have passed  
before the men finally return to the cave.  
They find their women sitting in a circle  
around the dying fire, holding hands,  
speechless, lost in a state of transcendence.

Charles Portolano

### **Sharing his Wisdom**

The Elder of the clan leads,  
traveling the paths that his ancestors  
have trekked for thousands of years  
always in search of the next meal.

He knew this land having lived  
through deadly droughts,  
he knew where to find the few  
mudholes for survival.

He knew where the forest were  
full of walnuts having traveled  
these paths etched deep into  
the good earth that Gaia gave them.

He knew where the predators,  
those wild creatures, wait,  
ready to pounce on any fool  
that crosses through their forest.

He knew he must tame the careless  
bravado and bluster that all  
the young males show to the clan  
to prove how brave a man they were.

He knew not to fear the distant thunder  
for the rains would soon follow  
and the world before them would turn  
lush green teeming with life again.

He knew to follow the well-worn path  
to where the grasslands burst  
into a lush landscape  
where food for the clan is plentiful.

He knew not to fear the meteor showers,  
that made the night sky appear as if  
it was falling, but to be in awe of the  
beauty that Gaia graced to share with them.

He traveled in the footsteps of his father,  
who now lives in the sky, watching over  
his every move for he makes no decisions  
without talking to his father first.

Now his eldest son follows in his footsteps,  
his boy keeper of the flame,  
like he was before him, keeper of this  
great gift that Gaia gave to them to tame.

But before they leave the winter cave in search  
of their next food source, he makes an offering  
to Gaia, Goddess over all who roam earth, so,  
he burns incense to ask her to watch over them,

praying to keep them safe in a world where  
behind every bush might be death waiting  
for there is so much to fear of the unknowns  
at every twist and turn traveling ancient paths.

Charles Portolano

**“One day’s exposure to mountains is better than a cartload of books.” - John Muir**

### **Friend, now foe**

*Goddess Gaia gladly gave us  
the gift of fire,  
taught us how to tame  
the flames to claim as our own.*

They watch from the far ridge  
the lightning bolt striking  
the field of thick thickets below  
ignite, burst, into flames.

Trembling in fear, they watch  
as the blaze rages, spreads, across  
the landscape as everything  
is burnt to the ground, ashes,

They watched this in wild wonder  
at what just happened right before  
their disbelieving eyes for  
the impassable thickets were gone

and when the fire finally died down,  
they walk among the smoldering ashes,  
then they stop to welcome the warm  
feeling from the intense heat on their skin.

They find cooked, charred, food among  
the smoking, glowing ambers  
of well-done creatures, nuts, and tubers  
ready to eat and so easy to now chew.

*Goddess Gaia gladly gave us  
the gift of glowing fire,  
taught us how to tame  
the flames to claim as our own.*

With the taming of fire man now  
had an unlimited source of energy  
to bring light and warmth  
to their dark, damp, cold caves,

plus, a deadly weapon to scare off  
all the large, wild predators  
they once lived in fear of, now  
they run from man in fear of us.

Man quickly learned to burn down  
the field of thick thickets, so  
soon after grasslands appeared  
teeming with a feast for the clan.

Taming fire gave Homo Sapiens  
the edge to stand alone on earth  
for us to be on top of the food chain.  
So soon it was our way, our whim.

But as we harmed Mother Earth, Gaia,  
over the short course of our history,  
fire has become red in tooth and claw  
towards our disrespect for the gifts given.

Now fire willingly rages against us,  
with fierce firestorms that burn down  
our forests as we stand unable to tame  
these out-of-control flames from Gaia.

*Goddess Gaia sadly cries for giving us  
the gift of fire.*

*Sorry she ever taught us how to tame  
the flames to claim as our own.*

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

## **Winter Weather**

Grief drifts through the cracks  
icy winter visions  
you with wooly hat and snow boots  
making tracks in the freshness

Icy winter visions  
wind as cold as your absence  
making tracks in the freshness  
memories of us hiking through snow

Wind as cold as your absence  
too silent the season without you  
memories of us hiking through snow  
how after, we cuddled before the fire

Too silent the season without you  
lingers the scent of decorated evergreens  
how after, we cuddled before the fire  
flicker of candles reflecting off glass  
Lingers the scent of decorated evergreens  
shadows of past years settle on the mantle  
flicker of candles reflecting off glass  
I gather the blanket around my shoulders

Shadows of past years settle on the mantle  
the cat curls up on my lap  
I gather the blanket around my shoulders  
to ward off winter's weather

Louise Moises - Richmond, CA - bookstallsf@outlook.com

# **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**

**Up to four Winter 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

**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.

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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.

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