

The Weekly Avocet - #688

February 8th, 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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Gordon Gilbert - New York, NY - gordonagilbertjr@usa.net



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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 - mattiequesenberrysmith@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

cold warnings
freezing sap and cracking barks
term: exploding trees

Carol Bezin - 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

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

Aimé E Duclos - South Berwick, ME - ajduclos47@gmail.com



Aimé E Duclos - South Berwick, ME - ajduclos47@gmail.com

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.

Aimé E Duclos - South Berwick, ME - ajduclos47@gmail.com

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

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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 wonderful snow while it lasts.

Trish Hubschman - 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

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

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

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,
inching 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.

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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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