

Letter from the Editors

*by Roy Beckemeyer, Ken Lassman, and
Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg*

Treat the world like it really existed. ~ William Stafford

As I finish uploading the poetry, fiction, memoir, essays, videos, and photo essays onto our website, I'm cognizant of how much our contributors help bring us home to where we truly are, not so much metaphorically (although plenty of that happens too), but as embodied beings on a living planet. Our contributors help us to make more vivid not just the place, but the moment that we're occupying right now.

For me, that moment takes place on our screened-in porch although the cats have torn through enough of the screening to make it all-too-welcoming to mosquitos. The Osage orange tree is heavy with lime-green fruit, getting ready enough to fall that we'll have to be careful of where we park our cars or that fruit may cost us some new windshields. The air is just tipping into a bit of wind,

readying itself for the cold front that will bring rain and autumn in tonight. One loud cricket outside, and a curious cat inside stir. At the same time, I hear the news on NPR with the latest reports of how much people in Puerto Rico need water, power, ice, and food. We've been concerned about fellow bioregionalists in Mexico and Houston who are helping remake their neighborhoods lately due to the Mexican earthquakes, and Hurricane Harvey.

We are composed of these moments and so many more whether we're paying attention or not. The beauty of a publication like *Konza* is that it allows us to open our peripheral vision a bit more, taking in the steady and always-in-motion beauty and wonder of the earth and sky as well as climate-related and other disasters inflaming suffering and long-term despair, but also catalyzing some of the best of humankind.

“Treat the world like it really existed,” William Stafford writes, reminding us to keep expanding our ability to see, feel, hear, taste, and smell where we are as well as opening our hearts to connect with those over the horizon tens or thousands of miles. In learning more of where we

live through the wonders in this journal, it's my hope we can cultivate greater resilience and vision for the local and the global.

~ *Caryn*

Fall is the time when nature around here is planting seeds for the spring, covering the walnuts, acorns, grass seeds, airborne milkweed seeds, animal eaten-and-pooped-out berry and fruit seeds with dead leaves to over-winter along with the hunkering down frogs, turtles, insects and other critters. Fall is also a time of migration: myriad birds, dragonflies, butterflies, spiders and other critters head south to warmer climes, while the flying horse constellation of Pegasus flies high overhead and Orion the Hunter rises in the east.

As the autumnal equinox passes and the nights get longer, it is a time of busy preparation, just like in nature, and I think that readers of this edition of *Konza* will be pleased with the quality of the kernels of wisdom, observations and insights that have been put to bed in this issue, and hopefully these words, drawings and photos will

inspire further sharing and insights over the winter, inspiring renewal and rejuvenation as the days once again get longer after the winter solstice. Enjoy the fruits of many labors, and let us know what you think.

~*Ken*

I am very happy that Caryn and Ken asked me to contribute to the 2017 edition of *Konza Journal* as an editor. I considered myself fortunate to have had several short prose pieces accepted for the 2016 issue, which showcased the words and images of so many extraordinary writers, artists, and photographers, and consequently saw this as a wonderful opportunity.

I believe we have assembled an impressive issue for 2017, and am pleased to have been a part of putting it together. I hope you find *Konza Journal* #51 an enjoyable, informative, and delightful celebration of our sense of community and place, of this, our prairie bioregion.

~*Roy*