

In January 1958, Olga Owens Huckins, a retired literary editor for two Boston newspapers, sent a letter entitled “Evidence of Havoc by Air Spraying” to the editor of the *Boston Herald*. In this letter she described the disastrous effects of the aerial spraying of DDT on wildlife, mostly birds, at her home and adjoining two-acre bird sanctuary in Duxbury, Massachusetts.

Huckins also sent a copy of the letter to her friend Rachel Carson who worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Washington, D.C. This letter inspired Carson, a marine biologist and conservationist, to write the book *Silent Spring*, which decried the effects of pesticides on nature and humanity and portrayed a fictional small town poisoned with chemicals.

Carson’s influence prompted the newly-formed U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to ban DDT in 1972 and *Silent Spring* helped generations of readers to understand environmental issues and inspired the modern environmental movement.

She wrote:

The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction.

September 27 marked the 50th anniversary of the publishing of *Silent Spring*. We celebrate Carson’s work and believe it may be time for a new inspiration of similar magnitude.

Inspiration—it’s elusive, but there are plenty of environmental issues here in the Midwest that can inspire fine writing and art. The battle for clean water in our Great Lakes, sand mining in Wisconsin and Illinois, and air quality are just a few examples.

Part of the mission of *Seeding the Snow* is to foster connections to our Midwestern landscapes. If you take a look back, you find an early issue of this journal requested “essays that reflect women’s experience in environmental justice, sustainable agriculture, and efforts to save land and endangered species.”

As we head into 2013 we wonder: Can we be inspired to portray our actions on behalf of nature as well as our reactions to nature?

While artistic depictions of your connection to the Midwestern landscape will always be a welcome and valuable part of *Seeding the Snow*, we also challenge you to create writing and artwork that shares your experience of working on behalf of nature.

We are ready for another Olga, with luck perhaps another Rachel. Is she among us?

Jill Spealman, associate editor