Virus Vigil
Poetry by Jim Blackburn
Art by Isabelle Scurry Chapman

[Painting of a blue bird in a grassy setting with handwritten text superimposed on the artwork, possibly containing the poem's content.]
Little Blue Heron

Out of my car window I see
The little blue heron wading
In the clear stained water
Of Linville Bayou in Matagorda County
Just off State Highway 521.

It stands looking for fish in a bayou
That was dead not long ago,
Killed by the discharge from a refinery,
Killed by toxic metals and polar organics
Concealed beneath a smelly foam
That meandered with the water
Through the Columbia Bottomlands,
Water where the frogs and crawfish
And minnows could no longer exist.

The little blue heron fishes today
Because of the action of citizens
Living near the bayou,
Citizens like K.J. Richardson
Who loved to fish for flounder in the fall,

Citizens who worked for the company
And knew that it could and should do better,
Citizens who were willing to take a stand
And go into court and complain
That the oil giant was not doing right.
The little blue heron fishes today
Because someone cared enough
To take a stand for stewardship,
For the ethical conduct of business,
For corporate responsibility.

The little blue heron never knew K.J.
But they are inextricably linked
In the wonderful way that ethical action
In defense of the Earth
Links all living things together.
Forever.
JIM BLACKBURN
Senior  Tackle