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# Pro Rege

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Volume 47  
Number 2 *Fine Arts Issue*

Article 2

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December 2018

## Neighbors

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### Recommended Citation

Dengler, Mary (2018) "Neighbors," *Pro Rege*: Vol. 47: No. 2, 3.  
Available at: [https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro\\_rege/vol47/iss2/2](https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege/vol47/iss2/2)

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A quarterly faculty publication of  
Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa

# Neighbors

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*Mary Dengler*

Across the street, a family rents a nondescript beige house  
With beige garage; they recently arrived from Mexico, I'd guess.  
How quietly, each day, their actions start, from early morn  
At 5 a.m. and lasting until after dark; from house to garage  
back and forth they run, with only one to manage. At first  
the words "Meth Lab" came tumbling from my mouth,  
Since that's what renters started in my other house.  
But then, an upstairs friend walked boldly over and inside  
That busy place, and what did she see there?  
A cottage industry, tortilla factory intact,  
Going at full speed, with lines of workers, shaping,  
Baking, packaging—enough to stock the restaurants  
Of all surrounding towns. At first, small trucks that serve  
Their fare from windows pulled into their space, but soon  
A line of vans as large as hotels took their place to get  
Their morning fill. These people never stop their work  
Until great stacks of boxes crowd their yard, all neatly organized,  
With noise and scent contained within their tiny space.  
I've never met these neighbors, only smile as several tiny children  
Race across their yard. I'll bet that after years of work they could  
Own housing south of town, decide to run for mayor,  
Decide who's out and who is in, as well they should:  
They moved, survived, and make America the Beautiful  
The thriving place it is.