

The Cranes Return

By Georgia Ressmeyer

When Lake Michigan is baby-new
and gurgles, sleeps for hours, has
no wrinkles, ruffles no feathers, and
when its ice mattress has been hauled
to the curb for disposal —

then come the sandhill cranes,
eccentric uncles and aunts flying in
with rattles and bugles to tout
the newborn's arrival, wake reeds
still sleeping in the muck of the marsh,
put deposits down on nesting sites,
practice mating rites —

in the process rousing baby Lake to
kick its heels, and us dune rambblers
to stomp our feet to the wild beat
of all those crane maracas.

