

Burcham Park

The sun warms my back,
the cool breeze
lovingly ruffles my hair.

This may be the last chance this year
to sit in the park
before the cold overtakes us.

So far, spring has always followed winter.
I expect it will again.

Some spring I will not sit here
to see the river rush by,
feel the warm sun, feel the wind.

Ahead is the bridge
and our city hall, which says,
“City Hall,” the theory being
you ought to know
which city you are in.

The trail between
seems empty today
but it’s filled with memories.

In memory, I see a little boy
playing Pooh Sticks on the bridge,
throwing twigs on one side,
running to the other
to see them there—
laughing.

I see a flash of tail and

a wolf grin—
Cunka's favorite walk,
digging, digging, looking for something
I couldn't see.

Taking her out
one last time
watching her joy,
a last time
before we said good-bye.

I thought we'd never get
another dog, but
I see a black dog
who decided she could swim in the river
and the little boy
grown
pulling her out.

Down the path
there are makeshift tents
of homeless people.
The city would not have them there.

Are they so different
than those first settlers
setting up
their A-frames?

The river brought us here,
gave us power, sometimes
rebels.

Day by day, went higher,
covered the railroad tracks,
carried off

the giant cottonwoods as though
they were never
there.

~ Anne Haehl

Anne Haehl lives with her husband, two cats and a dog.
The Haehls have two grown children. She loves words,
both written and spoken, and is a writer and storyteller.