

# THE HYDRANT

**The Monthly Bulletin**  
**for Intermountain**  
**Therapy Animals Members**

**Volume 21/Number 1**

**January 2021**



*Carol Bruggers' Nellie enjoying the snow*



# The Status Quo ~

**As of the first of this new year, we are making a few more happy inroads.  
Here is our current facility list:**

Ogden Regional Hospital

Center for Change

Neighborhood House Adult Day Care

Salt Lake International Airport

R.E.A.D in Washington County Libraries

Copper Hills Youth Care

St. Marks Hospital - Special Requests

University of Utah Hospital - Virtual Visits & Monthly Employee De-Stressing

**HAPPY NOTE: IMED, Primary Children's and Bozeman Hospital have begun offering the COVID vaccination to ITA handlers.**

## ITA Office Hours:

**Monday through Thursday, 9 am to 5 pm**

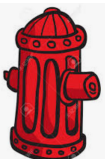
**Fridays - CLOSED**



## January Calendar

**Tuesday, January 12 - Board of Directors Meeting**

**Monday, January 25 - University Hospital Caregiver Stress Relief**



# Dogs Sniffing Out COVID-19

Once again, dogs to our rescue! Progress in Chile, Finland, Dubai

## Report for Duty At Chile's Santiago Airport

A team of Golden Retrievers and Labradors sit when they smell the virus and get a treat.

The task of sniffing out passengers infected with COVID-19 at Chile's Santiago international airport is going to the dogs.

The canines sport green "biodetector" jackets with a red cross.

Passengers at an airport health checkpoint wipe their necks and wrists with gauze pads that are then put in glass containers and sent to the dogs to see if they detect COVID-19.

Sniffer dogs are best-known for finding drugs and explosives but have also previously been trained to detect malaria, cancer and Parkinson's disease.

Dogs trained to detect the novel coronavirus have already begun sniffing passenger samples at airports in the United Arab Emirates and Finland.

A study recently found dogs can identify infected individuals with 85% to 100% accuracy and rule out infection with 92% to 99% accuracy.

Chile's Carabinero police trained the dogs and Inspector General Esteban Diaz said dogs have more than 3 million olfactory receptors, more than 50 times those of humans, so were uniquely placed to help fight the coronavirus.

Infections in Chile are far down from a peak in June but have begun rising again with about 2,000 new cases on average reported each day, according to a Reuters tally. Chile has a total of 589,189 confirmed cases and 16,217 deaths from the disease.

*(For Reuters: Jorge Vega, Patrick Alwine, Lisa Shumaker and Richard Pullin. For The Washington Post: Rick Noack.)*

## ... And in Finland, Dubai ...

Finland is set to launch a pilot program involving coronavirus-sniffing dogs at Helsinki Airport ... amid hopes that dogs could come to play a key role in screening for the virus.

The voluntary canine tests will deliver results within 10 seconds and require less than a minute of travelers' time, said Anna Hielm-Björkman, a researcher at the University of Helsinki who is using the trial to gather data.

Researchers in other countries, including the United States and the United Arab Emirates, are studying canine coronavirus tests. But the Finnish trial is among the largest in scale and farthest along.

In Dubai, health officials this summer began using dogs to analyze sweat samples from randomly selected air travelers, with more than 90 percent accuracy, according to initial results.

Changes in health can affect the way people smell, researchers say. Dogs have long been valued for their ability to sniff for drugs and bombs, and have also proved able to detect cancers, infections and other health problems.

Researchers at the University of Helsinki this year found promising indications that dogs can detect the virus. Scientists say only large-scale trials ... can demonstrate just how effective the method will be in practice.

As in Dubai, the dogs to be deployed in Helsinki will sniff sweat samples and will not come into contact with travelers. People who agree to the test will swab their own necks to produce a sample, to submit through an opening in a wall, said Hielm-Björkman.

*(Continued on page 8)*





# PARTNERS LEAVING EARTH

## Lucas Henry (partner of Ed Hamlin)

(Southern Utah) “This is a sad day here in Cedar City and at our home (November 20, 2020). Early this morning our magnificent German Shepherd Dog Lucas Henry passed away quietly as he slept. He was eight years old.

“He will be missed by his family and the hundreds, if not thousands, of those he served as he visited Assisted Living Facilities, Nursing Homes, Dementia Units, Hospitals, schools and VA locations with ITA. He was a wonderful friend and companion. We loved him.”



- Ed Hamlin

*[Thank you, Ed, for staying on with ITA as a supporting member!]*

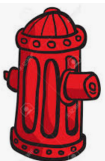


## Lucy (partner of Betsy Oswald)

(Salt Lake City) I'm sad to report that Lucy has passed away. We didn't get to be affiliated with ITA too long (covid, and my sweet parents/aunt needed me). We sure had fun at Shriners! That was definitely a highlight of 2019 for me. Thanks for investing in us!

Be well, and keep up the good work!

- Betsy Oswald



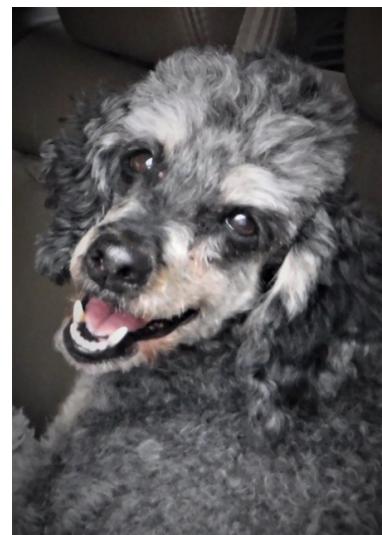
*Our hearts go with you all with endless thanks!*

# RETIRING



## **Joan D'Aoust & Monty**

(St George) After 10 years of wonderful therapy dog visits, my charming miniature poodle Monty is ready to retire. We have both loved our weekly visits to Dixie Regional Cancer Center and to the medical floor of the hospital. I am certain we brought comfort and smiles to many pa-



tients and to the nursing staff. And we met so many wonderful people over the years. I hope to continue when the next poodle comes along, but I think I'll take a short break until then.

*– Joan*

# NEW TEAM



## **Marah Connole**

(Helena) Marah Connole and Sunny, her Yellow Lab. Welcome!!



# Nope, every dog year ...

... isn't equal to 7 human years, researchers now say

How do you compare a dog's age to that of a person? A popular method says you should multiply the dog's age by 7 to compute how old Fido is in "human years."

But new research published Thursday in the *Cell Systems* journal debunks that method. And that's because the scientists behind a new study say dogs and humans don't age at the same rate.

Researchers at the University of California San Diego School of Medicine have developed a new formula that takes into account that variance. Tracking molecular changes in the DNA of Labrador retrievers, and in particular "the changing patterns of methyl groups" in their genome, according to a release, the study shows how dogs age at a much faster rate than humans early in their lives, then slow down after reaching maturity.

"This makes sense when you think about it — after all, a nine-month-old dog can have puppies, so we already knew that the 1:7 ratio wasn't an accurate measure of age," lead author Trey Ideker is quoted as saying.

Based on the study, a one-year-old dog compares to a 30-year-old human, a four-year-old dog to a 52-year-old human. The rate of aging decreases after dogs turn 7.

The new formula "is the first that is transferable across species," and scientists plan to test their findings on other dog breeds to study the impact of longevity on their findings, according to a release.

Researchers also believe that observing changes in the methylation patterns before and after the use of anti-aging products could help veterinarians make more informed decisions in terms of diagnostics and treatment.

A graphic in the study makes the age comparisons intuitive and provides some helpful context for dog owners, including the scientists themselves.

"I have a six-year-old dog — she still runs with me, but I'm now realizing that she's not as 'young' as I thought she was," Ideker is quoted as saying.

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# And Speaking of Aging



Here's a fun, easy read to start the new year while you're contemplating your resolutions.

From the back of the book: "As Dave Barry turns seventy—not happily—he realizes that his dog, Lucy, is dealing with old age far better than he is. She has more

friends, fewer worries, and way more fun. So Dave decided to try to figure out how Lucy manages to stay so happy, to see if he can make his own life happier by doing the things she does (except for drinking from the toilet). Equal parts ridiculous and wise, *Lessons from Lucy* is a witty and affable guide to joyous living at any age."

Barry gets it: "Dogs aren't people, but .... Lucy is *somebody*. Lucy has feelings, moods, attitudes. She can be excited, sad, scared, lonely, interested, bored, angry, playful, willful. But mostly she's happy."

Here's his explanation for writing this book:

"I don't claim that the seven lessons I came up with are amazing, or even original. They are obvious. They are common sense. My problem is not that I didn't know these things; it's that I've done a lousy job of using what I know."

He's so ardent about the value of these lessons that he even did a report card on his own progress, since our universal problem seems to be putting what we know into practice.

Here are the lessons Dave has learned from Lucy—none of which will surprise anyone at all.

## **Lesson One from Lucy:**

Make New Friends.

(And Keep the Ones You Have.)

## **Lesson Two:**

Don't Stop Having Fun.

(And If You Have Stopped, Start Having Fun Again.)

## **Lesson Three:**

Pay Attention to the People You Love

(Not Later. Right Now.)

## **Lesson Four:**

Let Go of Your Anger,

Unless It's About Something Really Important,  
Which It Almost Never Is.

## **Lesson Five:**

Try Not to Judge People by Their Looks,  
and Don't Obsess Over Your Own.

## **Lesson Six:**

Don't Let Your Happiness Depend on Things;  
They Don't Make You Truly Happy,  
and You'll Never Have Enough Anyway.

## **Lesson Seven:**

Don't Lie Unless You Have a Really Good Reason,  
Which You Probably Don't.

So now that I've clued you in on the seven lessons, why should you read the whole book? Because Dave Barry has a unique and inimitable perspective on the world, and he's great at delivering wisdom while you are laughing out loud. (-KK)



## COVID-Sniffing Dogs ... continued from page 3

Regardless of whether they test positive, they will be urged to take a standard polymerase chain reaction (PCR) coronavirus test, so that researchers can monitor the dogs' accuracy. All tests are free for travelers arriving at the airport.

Hielm-Björkman added the dogs may, according to preliminary research, be better at spotting coronavirus infections than PCR and antibody tests. They "can also find [people] that are not yet PCR positive but will become PCR positive within a week," she said.

Virpi Perälä, a representative for Evidensia Elainlaakaripalvelut, a network of veterinary clinics that funded the first stage of the trial, during which the initial cohort of dogs was trained, said more funding would be needed to grow the project, depending on initial results.

... Experts have warned that canine tests, however effective, can be difficult to scale. Training is time-consuming and expensive. Even so, researchers are optimistic that it will come to play a role, even if it cannot alleviate the demands on the world's overstrained testing systems.

One of the aims of the upcoming trial, said Hielm-Björkman, is to gather observations on how long the dogs can work in shifts.

"You see very easily on a dog when it starts to get tired," she said.

The researchers say it is unlikely the dogs will be infected with the novel coronavirus during the tests or that their trainers could be exposed.

Even though many dogs have tested positive for the virus in recent months, "there is no evidence that these animals can transmit the disease to humans," according to the World Health Organization.

Hielm-Björkman said dogs could be deployed to nursing homes, schools and other places, where they may eventually come into direct contact with individuals. "You could open up society in another way if you had those dogs," she said. Their use in such settings could pose concerns, including implications for privacy and for those uncomfortable with or allergic to dogs.

For now, the airport trial aims to give health officials one more tool in their arsenal as Finland prepares to cope with a potential uptick in cases, although overall numbers remain low compared with the surges seen in several other European countries.

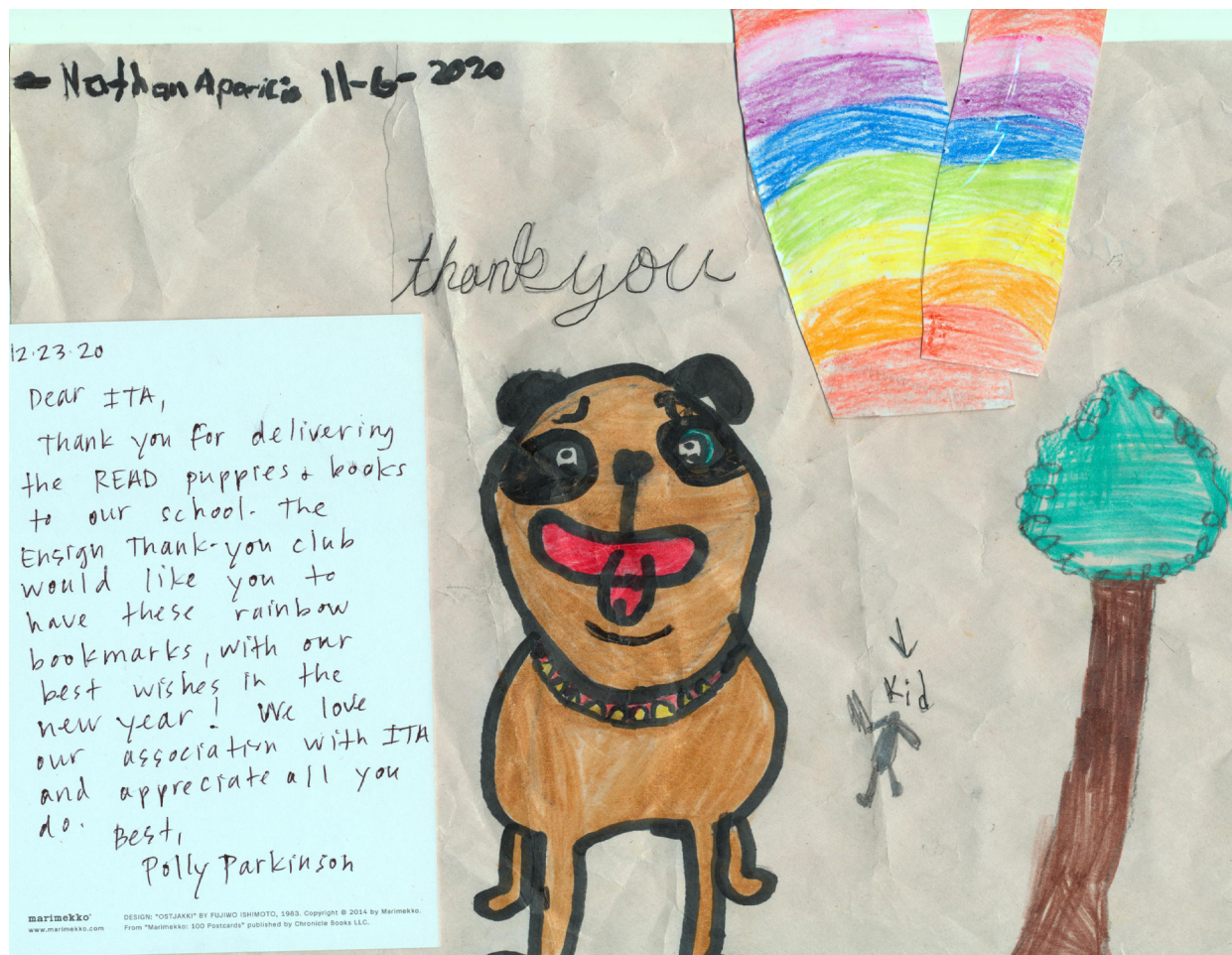
*(For Reuters: Jorge Vega, Patrick Alwine, Lisa Shumaker and Richard Pullin. For The Washington Post: Rick Noack.)*





# FUN FEEDBACK

## Thanks from Ensign Elementary



When you name ITA on  
Amazon Smile,  
every little bit  
really does add up!

amazon smile

Dear Kathleen D. Klotz,

This is the quarterly AmazonSmile notification to inform you that the charity you've selected, **Intermountain Therapy Animals**, recently received a donation of **\$282.62**, at no cost to you.

Thanks to customers shopping at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), or with AmazonSmile turned on in the Amazon shopping app, everyday purchases generated over **\$236 million** in donations to charities worldwide so far.

AmazonSmile's impact:

- **\$5,616.13** to Intermountain Therapy Animals\*
- **\$217,644,976.48** to all charities in the US
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To track donations or change your charity, simply visit [Your AmazonSmile Impact](#) page.

[Go to smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)

Want to use AmazonSmile in the Amazon Shopping app on your phone? Learn how to activate [here](#).



# A Touching Bond

*from The Keene (New Hampshire) Sentinel by Justine Murphy*

**M**assage therapy for animals. While unconventional, it's not a far-fetched idea. Muscles are muscles, according to April Begosh, and they all need care.

The 25-year veteran massage therapist is a lifelong pet owner and animal lover who decided to apply her knowledge and experience to help pets, too.

"Going from massaging humans to animals was a natural transition," said Begosh, [who] works with veterinarians and other small animal health professionals ... "to bridge the gap between traditional medical services that pets need, and the complementary therapies that their owners are seeking."

"If you have a dog or a cat or other domesticated animal, you're petting them all the time," she said. "If you're a massage therapist [for humans] and you have pets, why not apply therapy in that?"

Massage therapy was first practiced on animals in the 1970s by Jack Meagher, the massage therapist for the U.S. Equestrian Team. His work is now formally known as sports massage, which he also put in practice for numerous NFL athletes.

There are several techniques suitable for pets, all of which use different parts of the hands; exactly which techniques should be used depend mainly on the size and build of the animal. Begosh notes that for smaller pets ... that have smaller extremities, the best technique is "digital kneading." This method uses just the fingers rather than the entire palm of the hand.

For larger pets with larger muscles, namely dogs, effleurage works well. This method is a continuous stroke using the flat/palm of the hand. While it incorporates gentle touch, effleurage also involves some pressure as it moves across the muscle. This massage technique warms the muscle area and

encourages toxic release in the body. According to Begosh, the simple act of petting an animal is an example of the effleurage method.

"When you learn how to do this and other techniques properly, it will be more effective," she said. "Learning massage for them provides benefits in a more organized and structured way."

Therapy dogs are great candidates for massage therapy. According to Begosh, behavior and engagement between a person and their therapy dog is largely based on energy. The dog must be relaxed, calm and ready to work for their person. So, if the person is anxious or upset, it has a similar negative impact on the dog. Teaching the person massage therapy for their dog (if possible) is relaxing for both the human and the dog.

"It brings them down to the same level of calm," Begosh said.

Sick pets can benefit greatly from massage, too, as such therapy helps with the break up and ultimate release of toxic buildup. The physiological benefits of massage for the body — whether human or animal — abound, Begosh said.

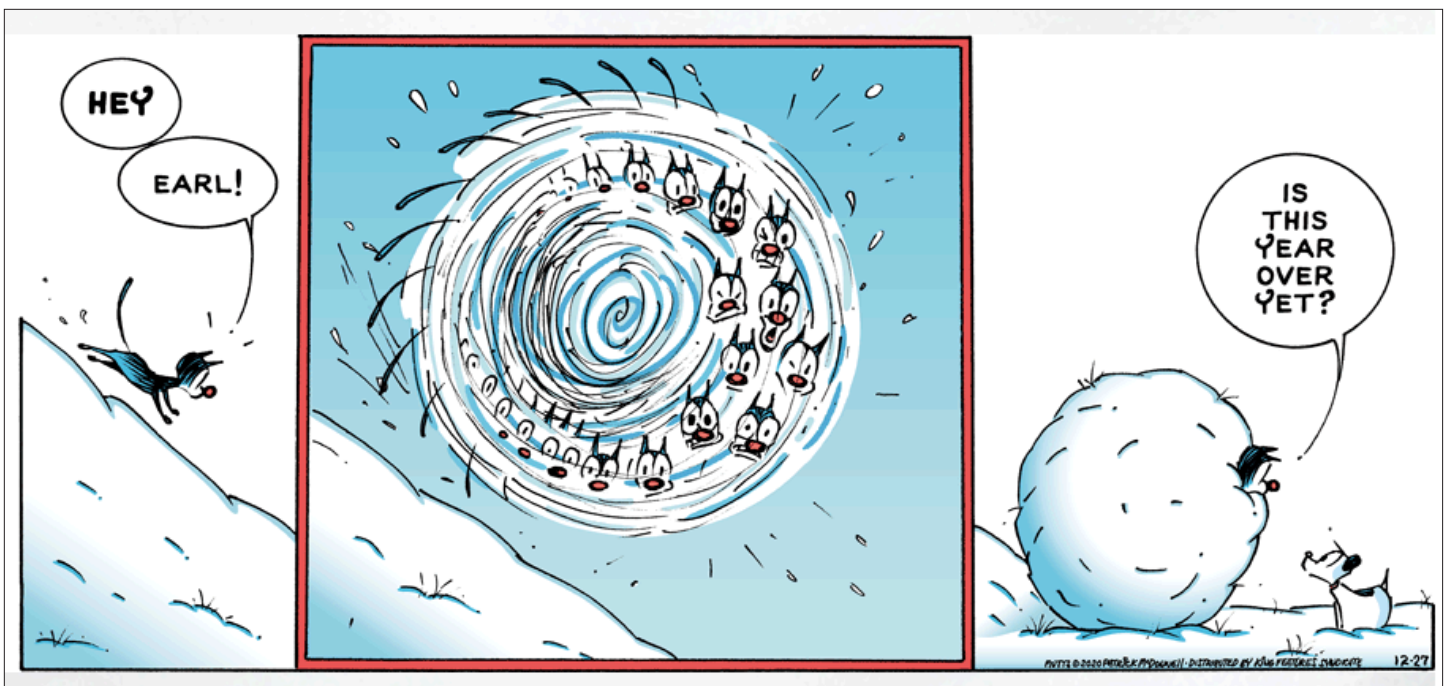
Massage therapy can aid pets after surgical procedures — such therapy can help reduce inflammation, increase circulation and even decrease healing time.

Aging pets can also benefit, as massage therapy relieves arthritis and other movement problems.

Another benefit of pet massage: bonding and trust. [Massage therapy is] ... "a super bonding experience for people and their pets. There's a lot of trust in it," Begosh said. "The animal gets relief from their owner, which builds trust and an even stronger bond."







Yay! It's 2021!





# Dogs Back in the White House!

Major the Dog Came From An Animal Shelter. Now He's Headed to the White House.



from the Delaware Humane Association in 2018.

Major had been surrendered to the shelter along with his littermates, and the whole crew was in poor health. The Bidens first took in Major as a foster puppy and ultimately decided to adopt him permanently. (His siblings also all found homes.)

Since then, the pair has made regular appearances on social media, particularly in photos from Jill Biden.

**A** Joe Biden presidency means his two German shepherds, Major and Champ, will be First Pets.

The White House is going back to the dogs—including a shelter dog.

After four years of President Donald Trump's famously pet-free tenure, Joe Biden winning the 2020 presidential election means that the patter of furred feet will likely be heard inside the White House once more.

The Biden family has two German shepherds: Champ, purchased from a breeder in 2008, and Major, adopted from an animal shelter 10 years later.

When the Bidens got Champ, they were criticized for purchasing a puppy from a high-volume commercial breeder that some described as a puppy mill. The family took a different path the next time around, and adopted Major





# More on the Lighter Side



# 14 Degrees Below Zero in the Grocery Store Parking Lot

by Hayden Saunier

A dog and I stare at each other  
from our separate cars, waiting for our people to return.  
He's a shepherd mix, big head, big ears,  
like me, he's riding shotgun.

Heat blares inside my car,  
exhaust plumes from the pickup truck he's in,  
so I know he isn't freezing but I don't know  
if he's a he or a she, so I just think he.

He watches doors slide open and closed, open and closed.  
So do I.

We look at each other, then back to the doors and I wonder  
who will come back first—his owner or my friend?

I watch the doors, then the dog. I watch  
two girls walk to their car, chuck frozen A-Treat soda cans  
out of the dented trunk, make room for beer.

I look back to the doors, then the dog, and I see  
a man in the driver's seat—his owner has come back!  
He's won!

But I can't see the dog.  
I want to see the dog.

I want to see that he's happy he won,  
even though he didn't know there was a contest,  
even though he might not be a he,

I want to know he loves his owner, even though  
I am assuming all this, I assume things, I assume, I do.

I assume he's a he, I assume his owner loves him,  
I assume my friend is coming back,  
(milk, she said, just milk).

The man in the truck sits head down, cap down,  
rolling a smoke, or checking his phone but  
something's not right. I watch.

I see the stripe on what I think is the man's cap  
turn into the collar on the dog,  
and I realize it's the dog in the truck, not a man in the truck,

it's still the dog, like it's still me, waiting,  
only he moved over to the driver's seat. If he's a he.

I've confused a dog and a man. Oh god, I think,  
I'm getting carbon monoxide poisoning from a faulty heat  
vent,

but that's when my friend gets back in the car  
with milk, bread, jello, toothpaste, laundry soap.

She begins a story about some guy at the checkout counter  
as she backs the car away from the dog  
and the truck and the doors and I'm suddenly sad now,

that churned-up-torn-inside-the-chest-feeling sad  
because we're leaving and I wish I hadn't won,  
I wish he'd won, but he didn't, I won,

and he might not be a he, and I keep twisting, looking  
back, hoping for a glimpse of the owner,

but no one's walking toward the dog in the truck  
who could get carbon monoxide poisoning,  
and there's nothing I can do

but watch as long as I can,  
because I need to know that he's all right,  
because we were the same back there,  
we were the same.

