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ANNE DUKE JUDD

Fast Bones

The doctor said
my femurs equal eighty years old.
Someday, I joked, the rest
of my fifty-five-year-old body
will catch up.

Meantime I resist
hormone pills,
synthetic bone-builders,
eat cheddar and broccoli,
crunch salmon spines
while the covetous dog
drools.

The density decline flattens:
bones holding,
body reaches sixty-two.

Backpack replacing
shoulder-straining purse,
I cycle to town,
absorbing Vitamin D
with every push
of the pedals.
From shed to stove,
carry firewood
morning workouts
weight-bearing
without a health club.

Stretched on the scanning table
while the densitometer looks again,
my mind finds poetry
therapeutic.
Doctor's amazement:
density increasing
against the odds.

Strong words my medicine.
Not just getting older
getting denser.
Words outlive bones.

A freelance writer since 1974, Anne Duke Judd works now as an editor, bookseller, publisher, and gardener in Bruce County. Active in Writers' BLOC and the poetry co-operative Words Aloud, she won the 2004 Wingham Literary Day contest.