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Turning Sixty-Five in Montana

Walt McDonald

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Turning Sixty-Five in Montana

by Walt McDonald

Here, grizzlies roam, at home in a million trees.
We've here in a tent in autumn, weeks until 2000.
God knows how puny we are and lets the seasons run,
a thousand years like a day to someone who can save.
Thousands of tourists encounter grizzlies
in the visitors' center—photos behind locked glass,

paws broad as skulls. Bears killed nine campers
in Glacier Park last year, hiking in spite of claw marks
slashed in pine trunks and bear scat shouting
Here there be bears. Ten times that many died
by drowning, car wrecks, strokes. Crosses mark
Montana's wrecks along all mountain curves,

and billboards promise *Jesus saves*. Glaciers
scoured Montana granite thousands of years
like clumsy sleds on stones, gouged a vast moraine
to make McDonald Lake, a slushy, ten-mile pond
no one could see from the moon. God knows
how puny we are and lets the glaciers melt.

