

Ode to Dr. Jack Vernon

by Vivian Ehrlich

I can't believe you're in heaven
and not helping us down here.
You answered our tinnitus questions
52 weeks a year.
Xanax, maskers, sound machines,
hyperacusis too.
Flying on planes, drilling at the dentist
what were we to do?
A tinnitus flare-up,
how to calm it down?
Water running, fire alarms – we learned
much about soft and loud sounds.
“Protect your ears from loud sounds,”
you always cautioned us.
And so we bought sound meters
and a pair of good ear muffs.
Then, too, you cheered us
all those Fridays on the phone.
You put tinnitus in perspective
when we would cry and moan.
You made us see clearly
that life could still be great.
There was a lot to enjoy
with friends, our children, our mates.
And so we will miss you dearly
of that you can be sure.
But we know you'll be looking down on us
as we struggle toward a cure.