



HOMEWORDS: A Project of the Poet Laureate of Kansas

By Wyatt Townley

This weekly poetry column explores the idea of “home” from micro to macro—from the mobile home of the

body, to the **house** it inhabits, to the **land** that anchors the house, to the **sky** that holds it all.

Our theme this week is HOME AS BODY, and our poets approach it using a tiny poetic form: the **American Cinquain**. Its 5 lines contain, in order, 2, 4, 6, 8, and 2 syllables. The cinquain’s small size is also its biggest challenge: making every word—indeed every syllable—count.

Linda Foster publishes the local newspaper, *The Miltonvale Record*, with her husband and draws with the Kansas Figure Drawing Group at Three Rivers Gallery in Bennington. Her slim, melancholic poem is brimming with music.

Ashes

*Come then—
bring the tin box
with brittle paper bones.
One last dance cast in a pasture
of rest.*

Arlin Buyert of Leawood casts a similar tone of melancholy in his cinquain. His maternal ancestors made their way from Germany to settle in Osborne County, near Downs, in 1891. Arlin writes of his mother, born there on the family farm.

*Mother
never looked back
waking, weeping, walking
six children born dead, six alive
Quiet*

Poets and poets-to-be of all ages from

across the state are invited to submit to HomeWords. For guidelines, visit www.kansashumanities.org.

The Kansas Humanities Council is a nonprofit organization that supports community-based cultural programs and encourages Kansans to engage in the civic and cultural life of their communities.



Poet Arlin Buyert,
Leawood