



HOMEWORDS: A Project of the Poet Laureate of Kansas

By Wyatt Townley

This weekly poetry column explores the topic of “home” from micro to macro: from our **body** to the **house**

it inhabits, to the **land** that anchors the house, to the **sky** in which it swirls.

We’ll approach that big idea through the lens of the **American Cinquain** (22 syllables divided among five lines—2/4/6/8/2). This week we’ll explore HOME AS BODY. Here are three quite different takes on it: snapshots of a lifelong relationship with the mobile home that has gone with us everywhere since birth, quietly undergoing all our experiences.

Robyn Peterson of Olathe is a self-described Harry Potter fanatic who collects plush hippopotami and spends all her free time and money on books. A high school junior in the Distinguished Scholars Language Arts program, she’s on the newspaper staff and dreams of becoming a published author. If this cinquain is any indication...

*Just a
place, says the mouth.
But in your heart, not said
by anyone, it is heard all
the same.*

Annette Hope Billings of Topeka is a recently retired registered nurse “launching fearlessly into writing full-time” with a new collection of poetry, *A Net Full of Hope*. Her poem is layered with musical allusions (measure, rest, time) that add to its innate music.

*Body
tired beyond
all measure of fatigue
calls out for rest that will not come
in time.*

Ruth Cathcart-Rake grew up in Manhattan and lives in Salina where she sings, dances, and rides horses in her dreams. This is Ruth’s first published poem—an honor for us all. The poem itself has a dreamlike quality.

*Ashes
settle down a
place in Kansas soil as
Mother tumbles into her last
sweet bed*

HomeWords is a weekly column that runs through National Poetry Month (April) as Wyatt Townley finishes her term as Poet Laureate of Kansas. To read past columns, 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 Robyn Peterson, Olathe



Poet Annette Hope-Billings, Topeka



Poet Ruth Cathcart-Rake, Salina