



HOMEWORDS: A Project of the Poet Laureate of Kansas

By Wyatt Townley

This weekly poetry column explores the topic of “home” in four expanding contexts: from the mobile

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

We’ll approach this big idea with a microscope: the **American Cinquain**. Its 5 lines contain, in order, 2, 4, 6, 8, and 2 syllables. The tension between the theme’s spacious content and the cinquain’s compressed form is what gives this project its energy.

Our theme this week is HOME AS BODY. **Darrell R. Trent** of Hutchinson has been known to play with spiders and understands quantum tunneling (just don’t expect him to do the math) and lives with his ninety pound Labradoodle. Here, his poetic approach to breathing feels as natural as the breath itself.

*I like
it that I can
breathe one breath after an
other and not notice any
at all*

Susan Pierson Redstone of McPherson calls herself a small-town poet inspired by the world around her: the backyard, the old house, and Kansas, where her great grandparents were pioneers. The sound system of hard and soft “e’s” give it an aural shape.

*Once young,
this body creaks
when it should bend and leaks
when greeting old friends with laughter
and tears.*

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 Susan Pierson Redstone, McPherson