



HOMEWORDS: A Project of the Poet Laureate of Kansas

By Wyatt Townley

Our theme this week is HOME AS LAND, a favorite topic among Kansas poets. We're using the **American**

Cinquain as our hiking boots—22 syllables divided among 5 lines in this way: 2, 4, 6, 8, 2.

Kim Zuel is a lifelong resident of Lake of the Forest in Bonner Springs. I'm glad to see her use another sense than sight, which brings the poem to immediate life. The world smells different in the rain.

*Rain smells
oak trees and dirt
kansas creeks rise, swell, spill
cutting swaths, some uninvited
mud prints.*

Jane Swearngin of Kansas City is working on a Civil War novel based on a letter from that era. While she lives across State Line in Missouri, she crosses into Kansas regularly, and like so many in that area, feels a sort of dual citizenship.

*Kansas
One block away.
The light turns green. I walk
With glee: "I'm in another state!"
I'm six.*

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 Jane Swearngin, Kansas City