



# HOMEWORDS: A Project of the Poet Laureate of Kansas

By Wyatt Townley

Our theme this week is HOME AS LAND, a favorite topic among many Kansas poets. They use the **American**

**Cinquain** as their medium—22 syllables divided among 5 lines in this way: 2, 4, 6, 8, 2.

Two reasons I like the cinquain so much for this project: 1) it's a simple form that welcomes both beginners and longtime poets, and 2) it combines the verbal with the numerical. Enter **Rebecca Roberts**, a mathematics instructor at UMKC for 28 years. She recently retired with her husband to rural Miami County, near Lane, where they were married 38 years ago.

*The well  
by the rock house  
had almost gone dry, so  
the only bath that day was for  
the bride.*

**Larry Heffel** grew up in the blue haze of the Saline River Valley north of Dorrance and now lives with his wife in Lenexa. The phrase “blue remembered hills” alludes to an A. E. Housman poem from *A Shropshire Lad* and sets up the cinquain’s music and melancholic tone.

*The blue  
remembered hills  
of his youth now lie deep  
beneath the blue-black cold of Lake  
Wilson.*

Poets and poets-to-be of all ages from across the state are invited to submit to *HomeWords*. For guidelines, visit [www.kansashumanities.org](http://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.



Poets Rebecca Roberts, Miami County, and Larry Heffel, Lenexa