



HOMEWORDS: A Project of the Poet Laureate of Kansas

By Wyatt Townley

This week our topic is **home as sky**. To address this idea, we're using the American Cinquain, a 5-line form whose

syllables are divided among its lines: 2, 4, 6, 8, and 2.

It's no surprise, the night sky and the stars are a central Kansas experience. They loom large in our state motto, *Ad Astra per Aspera*, in the sheer number of NASA astronauts who hail from Kansas, and in our poems as well. **Patricia Traxler** of Salina is the author of four books of poetry and a novel, and the editor of two anthologies of personal history by Kansans.

*Summer
sun dominates
the sky, the land, our skin;
even in night's welcome darkness
it reigns.*

Dennis Etzel Jr. is the Managing Editor of Woodley Press and a fifth-generation Topekan whose new chapbook is *The Sum of Two Mothers*. The far-flung stars mirror the plaintive tone in his poem.

*Sister,
constellation,
I wish we were closer.
Kansas seems made for watching stars
alone.*

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.



Poets Patricia Traxler, Salina, and Dennis Etzel Jr., Topeka