



Kevin Heaton was born in Council Grove and raised to the age of fifteen in Valley Center. His family moved to Oklahoma in 1968 where he met Charlotte, his wife of thirty-six years, and worked for the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department as a State Park Ranger.

Later, he formed an independent record label and produced a number of projects including his own album, "Tin Roof Sunday", and the musical score for a full length Country video, "Oklahoma Faded Love", in which he also appeared.

Heaton has recently completed his first volume of poetry entitled: "*Harahey.*"

His work has appeared or is forthcoming in: *Kansas Poems, Foliate oak, Elimae, Nerve Cowboy, Grey Sparrow Journal, MB Herald, Sacred Journey, Reunions Magazine, Right Hand Pointing, Hanging Moss Journal, Calliope Nerve, Counterexample Poetics, The Council Grove Republican, Little Balkans Review, WestWard Quarterly, Pembroke Magazine, Full of Crow, Heavy Hands Ink, Victorian Violet Press, Disingenuous Twaddle, Carcinogenic Poetry, The Houston Literary Review, Rubber Lemon, and Pirene's Fountain* and many more.

His chapbook, *Post Card's of Faith* has been accepted for publication by Victorian Violet Press.

Remembrance

*The heart I left upon flint hills-
in death will call me home.*

Additional poems appear on following pages

I left without goodbye on a crisp,
January morning many years ago.
Snow White and Old Man Winter
had met amorously the night before;
discovered by dawn, they had
forgotten their blanket, still draped
over the hills, all aglitter in sunlight's
early blush.

Like the prodigal son I wandered,
searching for that which was already
mine.

With each year's passing, thoughts
and memories of the prairie summon
my spirit: come home. Come home
to once again know the peace
and contentment of a late spring
stroll on the Kansas plains; where
I cast my cares into swaying arms
of the tall grass, and fell asleep
to the trill of a Meadowlark's piccolo,
while gentle cottonwood fairies
danced across my face.



Kevin Heaton

Distinguished Kansas Poet

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Aeolus' Vengeance

*Mannford, Oklahoma—
1984*

A cyclone sister's half-mile wide ample ass
follows the Yellow Brick Road to Oz through
flatlands path of least resistance in ebony Malt-
O-Meals boiling brew of swirling, chugging,
locomotion tractor-pulled hell at Satan's
impish tribute to revenge against Mother
Nature's Holstein heifers and wind-
plucked Plymouth Rocks bareback
on a silo funnels wounded copter
ride reading history books in
roll desks airmailed to other
districts beside levitating
buses and riding mowers
skydiving without chutes
high atop cars adorning
tall Sycamores as yule
ornaments pass soda
straws sucking sap
stuck in Elm trees
and blue hairs
set eyebrow
snatched on
amen pews
while wall
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The Rental House On Ash

The aroma of homemade bread wafted down
to the post office three blocks away
where grandpa and I went every other week
for ten, three cent stamps. The angel,
who helped raise me always baked five loaves
at a time, just as she had done for years
feeding family and farm hands working harvest
in late spring, before bountiful fields
fell fallow.

Willie's songs were yet unsung
when they lost the farm and moved halfway
across Kansas to where my parents lived,
to a rental house on Ash.

Grandpa and Uncle Paul made one final
trip back to the farm for what remained
of meager possessions. Grandpa settled
some business, and Paul went swimming
with school mates in a stock pond that doubled
as a dipping hole. He got a cramp and drowned
before his friends could reach him. Paul
was fifteen, and the apple of my angel's eye.
I remember trying to comfort her amid
sobs that would not relent; a faith of granite
was nearly shattered.

We sat out on a wraparound porch in summer
dusk to watch bats circle the bell tower
of a Methodist Church across the street,
and to make rooster calls at passersby
driving today's vintage gems.

A blissful night's sleep always beckoned
on a feather bed great grandparents had given
them, when their life together began.

Henpecked hands turned bloody gathering
double yolks from under barred rock hens
sharing nests with black snakes.

Grandma babysat for Searcy's kids; Carl
Dean's stools were so huge, they wouldn't
flush.

Our clubhouse was a hole in the chicken
yard with a Hudson hood roof and Banty
chicks for club members; grandma loved
her Banty chicks.

I splattered flies with rubber bands:
helped grandpa light black kerosene flares,
lost my teeth to a door knob string, washed
chicken squirt from between my toes, learned
of faith, loss, and love; at the rental house
on Ash.



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Hermit's Cave

Giovanni Maria Augustini

High atop Belfry Hill (where an old bell rang out Indian attack warnings and later sweethearts met) is a flatstone haven hole where a Spanish padre lived giving God to the Kansa.

Alligator Snapper on Eagle Claw hook, Neosho's muddy shore.

Peacepipe smoke 'neath old Council Oak, kisses on Belfry Hill.

History blessed the lush game-filled valleys below with a babe swaddled in Flint Hills, fashioned out of Cottonwoods and limestone. Spanish Conquistadors: Daniel Boone's grandson, Jesse James, and General Custer himself all doused campfires and paused to rest under these same stars.

Big Bobcat on a swift March Hare, Paintbrush red and gold. Cottonwood

seeds on Four Mile Creek, neckin' at the Chief Drive-In.

Dad and I had been fishing below Kaw Mission on the Neosho near the same crossing where Jesus put Madonna on the Santa Fe Trail. On the dirt road back to grandpa's trailer we stopped to ask two teenage boys with bloody arms and four twenty pound Flathead's on a hemp rope, "what'd you use for bait?" They replied, "Nightcrawlers."

Catfish heads and Coyote hides on barbed wire section line.

Meadowlark drizzlins' on a fence post perch, ruts axle deep on the trail.

On Saturday nights we piled into grandpa's lime green Lark with rotating hood ornament and parked downtown between lines in front of the Coke ad on a brick side of Bretz's old Mercantile to visit. Folks did that in small Kansas towns in the 50's. Mister Sisson's wife had a hair-lip and pronounced Lloyd Shear, "Toyd Tear."

Wagon trains west from a Last Chance Store, Post Oak mail to the east.

A hot short stack at the old Saddle Rock, frog legs kickin' in the pan.

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