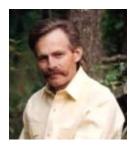


Kevin Heaton

Distinguished Kansas Poet

- E-mail
- Website



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 hillsin death will call me home.

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.

Additional poems appear on following pages



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Aeolus' Vengeance

Mannford, Oklahoma-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 windplucked 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 vule ornaments pass soda straws sucking sap stuck in Elm trees and blue hairs set eyebrow snatched on amen pews while wall cloud war locks and squall line hags do the devil dance of demons inside the w hirl ing der

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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

Dean's stools were so huge, they wouldn't flush.
Our clubhouse was a hole in the chicken

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 Bretzs 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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