

# AMERICAN LIFE IN POETRY

A FREE COLUMN FOR NEWSPAPERS BY TED KOOSER, POET LAUREATE OF THE UNITED STATES, 2004-2006  
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## American Life in Poetry: Column 506

BY TED KOOSER, U.S. POET LAUREATE, 2004-2006

I flunked college physics, and anything smaller than a BB is too small for me to understand. But here's James Crews, whose home is in St. Louis, "relatively" at ease with the smallest things we've been told are all around and in us.

### God Particles

I could almost hear their soft collisions  
on the cold air today, but when I came in,

shed my layers and stood alone by the fire,  
I felt them float toward me like spores

flung far from their source, having crossed  
miles of oceans and fields unknown to most

just to keep my body fixed to its place  
on the earth. Call them *God* if you must,

these messengers that bring hard evidence  
of what I once was and where I have been—

filling me with bits of stardust, whaleskin,  
goosedown from the pillow where Einstein

once slept, tucked in his cottage in New Jersey,  
dreaming of things I know I'll never see.

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