



## YOU CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN

### Description

I recently flew back to my hometown Aurora Illinois for the Christmas holidays. I have 11 siblings and everyone is married and most have kids that have kids. Whenever I go home it turns into a long series of parties, non-stop eating, drinking and general carrying on.

My daughter picked me up at Midway airport and we headed off for a day of shopping and brunching. As we drove through Aurora, I could not help but noticing stores and people and cars were everywhere and I was soon overwhelmed by the hustle and bustle of everyday life in my hometown.

I lived in Aurora from 1960 until 2008 when we moved to our lake house in Wisconsin. I attended grade school and high school there, and lived at home while I attended NIU. I worked in Aurora at my first *real* job as a photographer for a newspaper. After leaving the paper I ran my own business for 30 years before retiring.

I was very active in my community and, because people running for office always need a photographer, I was active politically. I was involved in a local theater restoration, served as president of the Aurora Noon Lions Club and was Chairman of the City of Aurora revenue sharing commission.

For nearly 40 years I considered Aurora my home. But as my daughter drove me through the town, I didn't feel that I was connected to it anymore. It had grown exponentially and had pretty much filled in the established boundaries. The hustle and bustle of the community and traffic buzzing all around made the place feel distant, foreign. Busy.

I guess the lesson here is that you can't go back home to your childhood, to a young man's dreams of glory and fame. You can't go home to the place and things that at the time, seemed everlasting but now are only fading memories.

Sadly, the Aurora I knew then and the Aurora that exists now are two different places. I grew up in a small town where everyone knew each other. Aurora now is a massive (2nd largest city in IL) busy megalopolis with wall to wall stores, people and pulsing traffic.



After my holiday visit my wife picked me up from the Ft. Myers airport and brought me back home to LaBelle and Whisper Creek. With golf carts humming by and people strolling and waving it felt good, it felt comfortable, it felt like home.

Wait a minute! I guess you can go home again. Home is where your Whisper Creek family is. Home is where your heart is. Home is what you take with you, not what you leave behind.

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*Home isn't where you're from,  
it's where you find light*

*when all else grows dark.*

— *Pierce Brown*

## **MEET THE AUTHOR ??**

Fellow Whisper Creeker Greg Stangl comes to us from the great state of Wisconsin. He and his wife Colleen spend summers on Lake Wisconsin and enjoy the leisurely winter months here in our little paradise together with their beautiful Springer Spaniels Isabella Rosalini and Sophia Loren.

Greg is a professional photographer, speaker and writer who not only owned a photography studio for 40 years, but also taught college courses and lectured on the subject in 35 states and 7 countries.

Greg's other passion is writing. He has published works in 10 national magazines and also authored workbooks employed in photography and marketing. Whisper Creeker News is both honored and excited for Greg to share his creative writing talents with us as well!

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