

## Our final destination will be 'home'?

by Mark Pavilons

'Mother's there expecting me

Father's waiting too

Lots of faces gathered there

All the friends I knew

I'm just going home ...? - Going Home

Lately I've felt that my get-up-and-go has got up and gone, but I'm not sure where.

Sure, I'm blessed. I have a strong-as-steel wife and unique children ?? family that would make anyone proud.

Sometimes, it dawns on me must how old I am and I slump a bit in my chair. There's no way in hell I'm looking forward to another birthday ending in 0.

Home is where most of us are safe, and find warmth, comfort and joy. It's a place we can relax, be ourselves, and escape from the rain and sleet outside the door.

We use the word 'home'??several times a day. 'I'll be home soon.'?Or 'I'll get it on my way home.'?

It's a place we wake up to each morning and a feeling we return to at the end of every day. It's like an inexplicable magnet.

My wife and I have owned two houses and lived in two apartments together. I grew up in Caledon, on a four-acre parcel my parents created with blood, sweat and tears. When I think of 'home,'??my thoughts almost always turn to our Albion homestead. I vow to buy it back one day if I ever strike it rich.

I have a black and white photo of me sitting on a hammock, on a summer's day, on a grassy hill.

That was the site of our home, which was built in 1972. We remained there until 1994.

We never locked our doors and everyone was always welcome. Our 'back 40'??was the scene of countless gatherings and parties.

Those were the days, I?guess.

It always felt like 'home,'? even when I feared my parents' wrath, or came home in the wee hours stumbling in the dark. It was a place where putting a long stalk of grass in your mouth just made sense.

I?can still feel the warm breezes through my hair ? heartfelt wind that only existed on that spot, at that time. Oh, how I long for a return of those days, long before cell phones and the internet.

Regardless of our religious beliefs, we often refer to our final resting place as 'home.'? Whether it's Heaven, Zion, Shangri-la, Valhalla or even the happy hunting ground, it's a place we are welcomed and find eternal peace.

Of course, the only drawback is we have to die to get there!

Billy Graham said his home is in Heaven and that was 'just traveling through this world.'

Forrest Gump thought that we all may have a destiny, or we could just be 'floatin' around accidental-like on a breeze.'

Through all this floatin' and traveling, just where to do we end up?

You got it, home!

While colloquially expressed, there's much more to this expression.

Think of home as a birthplace, the scene where it all started. Then think of our universe.

Current speculation is everything 'all life in the universe' began millions of years ago with the Big Bang. From that monumental spark, all the stars and planets were created, settled into their orbits, perfect conditions arose and life began.

An Ontario-based astronomer told me that we are all made of 'stardust.'

The iron in our red blood cells, and the steel to make buildings, came from the iron cores of massive stars as they exploded.

We're also connected to almost every life form on Earth 'from apes and dolphins, to trees and cabbage. Our DNA contains many similar strands of all of those things. That cannot be a coincidence or an 'accident.'

'I am a being of Heaven and Earth, of thunder and lightning, of rain and wind, of the galaxies,' said Eden Ahbez.

We don't have to look very far to be awestruck by our planet. A plant, or a tree, can live forever. Most of our medicines, elements, chemicals and more come from Nature or natural sources. I firmly believe that everything we need 'even the cure to every disease known to man' can be found here on Earth. Everything on this planet needs water and sunlight to thrive, including us!

Every culture, dating back to our cave-dwelling ancestors, had some sort of spirituality, or a belief in a higher place, a higher being. 'Why?'

Why would our less developed cousins look to the heavens and ponder such things?

Anthropologists say primitive minds looked to 'heaven' because their limited knowledge and science had no other explanation. But today, even with our advanced scientific base, our top intellectual minds believe science and religion can not only co-exist, but must co-exist.

Earth, according to Gilbert Chesterton, is our 'task garden' and heaven our 'playground.'

Here, on terra firma, we're being tested, and granted the good fortune to rise, meet challenges, and explore our existence.

'God is at home, it's we who have gone out for a walk,' observed Meister Eckhart.

'Remember my dad talking long evening strolls around our Caledon property. He often joked he spoke to the trees. Maybe he knew something I didn't.

Maybe we're all on the 'walkabout' of our lives, a never-ending rite of passage.

When our chores are done, and it's time to go home, the stars will point the way.

High above our heads, or perhaps all around us in an unseen dimension, our home awaits.

One day, and that day is inevitable, we will head back to where it all began.

To die, Peter Pan said ?would be an awfully big adventure.?

Looking forward to seeing everyone back ?at home.?