

The Definition of "Home"

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"Be it ever so humble, it's more than just a place. It's an idea—one where the heart is. It's a way of organizing space in our minds. Home is home, and everything else is not-home. That's the way the world is constructed."¹

Home is more than concrete and wood. Home is a feeling. It

may be a feeling that you associate with where you grew up, or where your children grew up. It may be a friend's house, or a favorite vacation spot. If you are lucky, it's where you are right now. For those that are "homeless," home might be where they are treated with dignity and respect, such as a shelter (read Michael Bannasch's article starting on page 35 for more about how today's animal shelters have evolved).

COMPLEX, YET BASIC

*"The meaning of home is complex, interpretational, and unique. It is also subject to our aspirations, beliefs, and historical experiences. Whatever it is, the meaning of home is a way of organizing and understanding the space within ourselves and the way the world is constructed around us."*²

With so many recent tragic world events, many people question home. Buildings can be destroyed by floods and tornadoes; by tsunamis and hurricanes; by deliberate explosions and industrial accidents. Yet even for those affected by such disasters, the tie to the feeling of home remains intact. Home is linked to the most basic things around us. Smells, pictures, memories, and songs all remind us of home.

MY DEFINITION OF HOME CHANGES DAILY

*"There's no place like home... There's no place like home..."*³

For Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, home was Kansas. That was her country. Home is your country. I recently traveled to Montana for my niece's wedding. I had never been out West before, and I was overwhelmed by the beauty of it. Being surrounded by family and friends, gathered at this spectacular location, I felt at home.

Home is where I spend my days and nights with my husband and furry family members, whether we are in our Ohio house or our Maine retreat. When I pull up to my physical home, I get that emotional feeling of being home.

Home is that all-comforting feeling of being safe, secure, needed, and loved.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW NAVC HOME

*"Home: A place where something is discovered, founded, developed or promoted; a source."*⁴

In February 2017, the NAVC moves to its new home, the Orange County Convention Center (OCCC), where you will learn, explore, discover, and connect. We are excited to open our doors to a new experience: the OCCC is an all-inclusive venue, with all the NAVC excitement under one roof. For those of you who have attended before, your homecoming will be in a new location; however, you will still have the feeling of being home at the NAVC. For those of you joining us for the first time...welcome home!

Home is a feeling. ■



Photo by www.ianjphoto.com

LYNNE WITH HER SISTER, Mairi Marker (left), and niece, Marlie Johnson-Wyatt, DVM, at Marlie's wedding in Montana. No matter where you are, when family is there, you are home.

References

1. Klinkenborg V. The definition of home. Smithsonian.com. May 2012. smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/the-definition-of-home-60692392/?no-ist. Accessed July 2016.
2. Bennett L. What is the meaning of home? Architizer.com. October 3, 2014. architizer.com/blog/what-is-the-meaning-of-home/. Accessed July 2016.
3. Langley N, Ryerson F, Woolf EA. *The Wizard of Oz*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. 1939.
4. American Heritage Dictionary. ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=homes. Accessed July 2016.

Do you have a story you'd like to share? Write me at ljohnson@navc.com.