

Back to the beach — new editor like a kid again

By Scott Williams

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My first experience in Lake Geneva occurred sometime around 1970. I was 9 or 10 years old, living in Chicago with my mother and two older sisters. One day, mom piled us into the car and headed north. I had no idea where Lake Geneva was, but a day at the beach sounded nice.

It was more fun than I could have imagined. Playing in the sand, splashing in the water, basking in the sun.

When it was time to head back home, mom had to tear me away.

As memorable as that day was, I would not make a return visit to Lake Geneva for more than 40 years.

I graduated from high school in Chicago and attended college amid the cornfields of DeKalb, Illinois. Along the way, I discovered a deep love of newspaper reporting. It started when I covered sports for my high school paper, and it continued in college, where I tried a little bit of everything in jour-

nalism. By the time my college days were over in 1984, I knew I had found my career.

Never could I have anticipated the changes that I would witness in the newspaper business, or the complicated path that would lead me back to Lake Geneva and the beach that I remembered from that glorious day in 1970.

During my first job in Peoria, Illinois, I got the chance to cover a campaign debate between U.S. Senate candidates. The assignment took me on the road, and af-

ter the debate, I rushed back to write my story in a hotel room. I was fascinated by the equipment that allowed me to use a telephone line to transmit back to Peoria every word just as I had written it. It was my first glimpse of the sort of technological advances that would later transform newspapers — and the rest of the world.

My passion for news grew stronger as I gained experience covering schools, crime, business and more.

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