

A new state, A new story: Peggy Secor

Peggy Secor, originally from Oswego, Illinois, was the middle child of a family with six other sisters. When she graduated from high school, she worked in a factory with two of her sisters, Dot and Mary. But after almost twenty years of living in her small town with her two daughters, her company sent her to the ever-growing Orlando, Florida, Where she would start her own family as they began to settle their roots.

In a small town outside of Chicago, Peggy Secor would begin her life in Oswego, Illinois. An area surrounded by corn and wheat fields that embodies the small town image. She was a part of a close-knit family, Comprised of six sisters and two brothers; as Peggy would describe "Oswego is a small town. Everyone knew everyone. Growing up with my sisters, We always had another. I was closest to my sister Dot. The two of us were always causing trouble; I don't think we were ever a part often. It really was just fun. When we all got together, it didn't matters where we were; it was a party. They made my life entertaining and made it a bit easier. I am so grateful that I had them by my side."

Despite this comfortable and quaint life, however, Peggy would soon be offered the chance to spread her wings, and with nothing but her car and her two daughters, Peggy would pack up and take her two daughters to Orlando, Florida, Leaving their home and life as they knew it behind them.

"It was terrifying at first. I was leaving my home and my sisters to go to not only a new state but a new environment." Says Peggy, "I grew up in Oswego. I can still tell you the name of every person I went to school with. It was a small town; Everyone knew everyone. Going from this to a huge town was intimidating; I knew it wouldn't be like the small town world I grew up in."

Despite where they were going, It was not all sunshine for Peggy as Peggy and her family were homeless when they first arrived, Having not purchased a home in the state before they made the move.

"We didn't have anywhere to stay at first. Apartments are expensive, especially being with your mom and aunt. I had to take care of them first. For the month or so, we actually stayed at the Flordia hotel; It was the closest I could be to the factory."

Adjusting to the major city of Orlando proved difficult for Peggy, As Orlando was littered with tall buildings and highways. A spread-out town that never sleeps, A type of city that Peggy had never witnessed for herself before despite living an hour away from Chicago

"It was a lot bigger. I found myself getting lost more often than I ever did. I still struggle with it today. I was so used to being able to walk or bike places to need to drive almost everywhere."

However, there was a light at the end of the tunnel for her. As she settled in and adjusted to the city, She was given a happy surprise.

"When my sister, Dot, got moved down here, it helped a lot. It felt like I had a little bit of home here in Flordia."

With her sister and her sons now living just twenty minutes away, Peggy finally began to change Orlando into her new home. While it was not Oswego, they found their community together, Making friends from her work, people from around their apartment, and even the parents of her two daughters.

She made her own life outside her hometown, A feat many are not brave enough to do. By making the decision that she did, She created her destiny, One that she would make again and again.

"I will never regret it. If I didn't move down here, I would have never gotten you guys, Never would have been able to see killer whales or dolphins. I would never have gotten new experiences and learned to grow if I had never left. No matter how homesick I get, I love being here. I love my life here. Plus, I was so tired of the cold. I love the hot weather."