



# Hand in Hand

BY PAUL SKOUSEN

*No more computer work for me.  
The second job is put away,  
and that tired look from her tells it all.*

*A turned head says, "Let's go."  
I take my wife by the hand, step quietly  
to the door,  
and disappear down the front steps  
into the cool of the night.*

*Out past the driveway we amble,  
into the quiet, the peace:  
our very own place  
where silence is disturbed only by  
our thoughts  
and hushed words.*

*Walking too slowly to call it exercise,  
we gaze into the sky, the waning moon,  
the stars and clouds,  
and quietly stroll by as the neighbors' lights  
blink off to bed.*

*Now it's just us.  
Around the cul-de-sac we walk  
hand in hand, whispering the day away—  
what worked, what didn't;  
who called, who didn't;  
what it cost, what it didn't.*

*Around we go—  
three, four, five orbits.  
Maybe six, maybe ten.*

*All of the things that wound us up  
slowly unwind with each turn of the cul-de-sac.  
The day finally talked out, the fresh air  
crisp and cool,  
our feet now tired, our hands still clasped:  
our minds take ease.*

*Once more we go around.  
All seems well.  
It was a good day—not too bad. Productive.  
Somehow the night turns the day upright.*

*We end the circle beneath old branches,  
past crickets and cats, into the moonlight and out.  
The day finally loosens its grip  
and we pause  
in front of our peaceful home  
to decide.  
Yes,  
It's time to go in.*

*I escort my bride of 32 years back to the front porch.  
A quiet kiss, a big hug,  
a look into each other's eyes,  
and we turn in.*