

Mauī No Ka 'Ōi





We're home from Bob's 80th birthday celebration in Maui. We traveled with 8 dear family members (thanks to you all!!) and also visited two of Bob's siblings that live in Maui. It was a very special time for us all!

How was it? Overall it was great with some crazy moments. Bob was delighted to be with family and he loved being the center of attention.

He was thrilled to tell MANY TOTAL strangers that we were in Maui to celebrate his 80th and was elated when people responded that they didn't believe he was 80. Oh so vain...

I think it was good for me to have other family members spend some extended time with him and experience some of his mental confusion first hand. One of the most shocking moments was when he asked our niece who her mother is. Sad since her mother is one of Bob's sisters and we spend LOTS of time with

this niece and her family. It was just a good indicator of how confused his thinking can be at times.

I know his daughter Shelly was brought to tears one day when her dad snapped at her for correcting him. She was sad that she had made him mad and also she realized that what is going on in his mind is correct (to him) whether it really is correct or not.

Most of the memories that we have had during past vacations in Maui seem to be gone. None of the landmarks and restaurants we visited in the past seemed familiar to him on this trip. How does someone forget Macademia Nut Pancakes at The Gazebo Restaurant?! I often said "remember when we..." and he gave me a blank stare. His neurologist says I shouldn't ask if he remembers something. Really? Try to visit with someone you've been with 39+ years and NOT use that question. I challenge you to try!

After a few days of the family (not him) swimming and snorkeling in the cove at our condo, Bob asked me what snorkeling was. It's something he has done many times in the past but that word meant nothing to him now. He did join us for a swim in the pool one day without taking his hearing aids out!! I think what made me the saddest is that I should have been watching him better and I felt it was my screw up and not his. We are blessed though, as the hearing aids are still working—thanks to daughter Julie drying them with the blow-dryer. (Julie had to sneak around to blow dry them as he is adamant that he could clean them with a cue stick! We hope he meant a Q-tip.)

Spending quality time and making new memories is my #1 goal with Bob. Since Bob doesn't seem to remember much about the old days, I want to make sure these new days are filled with good times, friends, and family. Honestly, it hurts that the old memories are vanishing but I am trying to not take it personally. I am blessed with those memories and those

precious memories are what fuel me to make new memories with this wonderful man.

While in Maui, he told me that he wished for 38 more years with me.

It was a perfect vacation.