Turning a Fair Day into a Great Day!

Since Bob's death, the first-time experiencing holidays and special occasions without him has been difficult. Our 41st anniversary came quickly on the heels of his passing and was very tough. Then Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day, our Birthdays, Easter, Kyle's MBA Graduation, Father's Day and on and on and on. Every special event is a big reminder that Bob isn't with us anymore and a big reminder of how much he enjoyed all those occasions with me and with our family. Special days are still special but a bit hollow without my guy.

Along comes the San Diego County Fair. I really wanted to go. But who did I want to go with? Bob. Really no one else. Bob and I had our own favorite things at the Fair and we usually didn't vary much from our routine. We didn't like the rides or carnival games so we spent our Fair Day looking at the garden exhibits, the commercial booths, the gem and woodworking displays, the children's art, the fine arts, the unusual collections, the craft displays, the animals, and we would sit and listen to music along our way throughout the Fair. Bob would be patient while I looked at High School Yearbooks. I'd be patient as he looked for a new baseball cap or sweatshirt. We had a sweet routine.

Bob wouldn't fuss if I wanted to buy some odd pain cream, a vegetable peeler, a flagpole, or a carved wooden sign. Yep, and one year (over 33 years ago) we even bought a spa! And of course, we tried so many crazy foods—especially fried foods or decadent sweets!

I couldn't imagine not doing the same old things. I couldn't imagine going with someone who had a different Fair routine. I didn't feel I was ready to move own and establish a new

routine. I just wanted a “Bob and Susan Day” at the Fair. I got a little bit emotional and almost talked myself out of going. What kind of person goes to the Fair by themselves? Isn’t it a friend and family event? Was I being overly anxious about keeping our old routine? Was I clinging to memories when I should be letting go a bit?

Well off I went. A bit uncertain about how the day would turn out but certain that I wanted to give it a try. My attitude was good. I had confidence that Bob would be glad I was giving this a go and I felt he was cheering me on. “Go and enjoy” was what I heard him saying.

And enjoy I did. I stuck to our traditional routine but found myself spending a little more time at the photography and paintings and a little less time at the animal exhibits. I sat longer and listened to the bands/music and skipped the Pig Races. My “Bob and Susan Fair Day” had some variations. Mainly the old routine but a bit of the new. I ate somewhere Bob would have never eaten (an artichoke sandwich) and lingered longer looking at the table settings and quilts. I had a strawberry sundae instead of our traditional gingerbread. Of course, I still visited all the Law Enforcement booths and thanked them for their service. Bob would not have left the Fair without doing that!

It felt good to be mixing in some new with our old. I think that’s what my life going forward will be like. Bob will always be there even when I’m trying new things or going about my life a little differently that I would have in the past. I’ll be carrying Bob with me as I forge some new traditions and have new experiences.

So, who knows? Next year I might even be able to go with a friend and see what their “Fair Day” looks like! Maybe.

A God Moment! After I posted this blog, I read my Grief Share daily email and this was the prayer for the day: ***Righteous***

God, strengthen me, one step at a time, to face the old precious memories and to create wonderful new ones. Amen



New Fair Routine with 6 month old Kyle!! 1990



Bob and Kyle loved this part of our routine!



Fair Selfie 2017



Fair Selfie 2019



We had this picture tradition throughout the years with Kyle



At some point, Kyle no longer fit in the cab of the truck!