

Embracing Grief and Joy: Dahlia's Arrival

(Written August 4, 2026)

I woke up this morning and before my feet even touched the floor, I was in tears. Why today? What triggered this wave of sadness and grief? What brought the stab of pain to my heart and the tears to my eyes? What was it about this morning that made me miss Bob so much?

I spend time with lots of widows, and I hear their stories of grief and pain. I also hear about times that they miss their husbands. Like when they need a smoke detector battery changed, or a storage tub brought in from the garage, or they need a repair to a ceiling fan. Usually anything that requires a ladder brings on a longing for one's deceased hubby. That's not the case with me as I feel fully capable of handling the chores of life. If I can't do it, I know who to call. Those times of need are not the times that trigger my sadness or my longing for Bob. I would hate to bring Bob back to life to have him tick off a few items on my to-do list. Nope Bob can continue to rest in peace and not have to worry about any mundane chores.

But actually, I do know what it is that brought on the flood of tears. I know why I am missing him extra right now. It's because I'm experiencing something truly wonderful that I wish he could be experiencing. He's missing out and I wish he was still here for this joyful time in our family.

Recently, in Texas my 24-year-old great granddaughter Courtney had an emergency c-section and gave birth to Dahlia. Dahlia is still in the NICU at a local Children's Hospital but she's doing fabulous and as of today, she is breathing on her own. The breathing tubes are removed and she's breathing "room air"

–yes, “room air” which is a new term I learned.

Dahlia represents 5 generations in Bob’s lineage. Many in Bob’s family can remember how Bob loved that he had such a BIG group of 4th generation great grandchildren. We took lots of 4 generation group pictures! I may be off a little on the number, but I think at the time of Bob’s passing in November 2021, he had 21 great grandchildren. There were a couple of those greats that were old enough to have babies and Bob would “tease” them and let them know he would like to have a great great grandchild soon thus giving him a 5-generation family tree! We had to remind those young women that we would prefer that they not have any babies at such a young tender age.

They may not have given their great grandpa the 5th generation that he wanted then but I really don’t think he was really disappointed. Maybe Bob was even relieved that they didn’t follow in his (and so many others in the family’s) footsteps and have children at a very young age.

But now nearly 5 years since Bob’s passing, Dahlia comes into our lives! I’m beyond ecstatic to have another precious baby to love and I’m happy for all of Dahlia’s family. But there’s a big chunk of joy that is missing. A little black cloud hanging over me. I’m really missing the man who made it possible for me to have all this wonderful extended family. When Bob and I married, I became a “stepmom” to three “kids” but there has been lots of growth in the following 46 years. That family has grown exponentially to 4 “kids” plus spouses, 14 “grands” plus spouses, and 25 “greats”. And now a “great-great”. Thank you, Bob!

So now if you see me crying a little while I share a picture of Dahlia with you, you’ll understand. I am just wishing Dahlia’s great great grandpa Bob was here to hold her and take advantage of a 5-generation photo opportunity! Boy he would be so happy. I would be too.



