

Random thoughts for the New Year about the Old Year

After the passing of our loved ones we feel as though we are not living a complete life. Where are the joy, the laughter and excitement? Can we experience new things that bring pleasure? As the New Year started last year, I decided to list all the things I experienced within the outgoing year. Here is my list of firsts from the year 2007.

My great nephew has juvenile diabetes. My husband and I went to classes to learn how to be a source of help. We learned about diet, carbohydrates, bonking and insulin. We even practiced on ourselves! When we visited our nephew, he suggested I give the little guy an insulin shot. I was petrified!!! I was talked through it and it was one of the most powerful feelings I've ever had. Experiencing the tragic death of my son with no way to save him, I felt as though I was giving "life" to the little guy. When we were finished and little guy thanked me for giving him a shot, there was no better joy than that.

I bought a car. Big deal, huh? Well, it was a first for me. I negotiated and fought for the deal I wanted all on my own. What a fun time I had.

Life can be so busy and trying to agree on a movie can be a daunting thing. When the movie "Bridge To Terabithia" came out, I decided to wait for no one. I went to the movies for the first time ever by myself. I had a great time. I went in, found my seat and enjoyed. I didn't even feel funny when I was crying all alone!

Looking for a new adventure, I decided to take ice skating lessons. Can an old girl stay on her feet? At the second lesson, with 3 other six year olds, I was having trouble with a move. One of the girls got it perfectly. I told her that that move was hard for me. She said, "Oh, you just need more practice." She was right. I eventually got it and I even advanced from level 1 to level 3 in 6 lessons. Try something out of your comfort zone. It is so exhilarating!

In April, I took a trip to Los Angeles to visit my daughter. This was no ordinary visit. It was going to be the first trip I ever took with my Mom and three sisters. One of my nieces came along too. We laughed, we shared, we fought, and we did sightseeing. When it was time to leave we hugged and cried. I highly recommend this activity. I have memories I will never forget.

My husband did a charity ride in Whitefish Montana for Juvenile Diabetes, www.jdrf.org. I went along as a volunteer. It was the first time I ever volunteered for a high profile charity. I had never been to the northwest area of our country either. Absolutely breathtaking country and a class act organization. Volunteering is a great way to honor your loved one. Adam was with us the whole time. Find something you feel strongly about and get involved or volunteer.

My first ever girlfriend road trip was a part of my new adventures in 2007. It was to North Carolina. 752 miles in a car with a special friend is an awesome experience. We solved all the world's problems. I didn't know I could talk for 13 hours straight and still have more to say!

My husband and a group of friends decided to do the 90- mile Adirondack Canoe Classic in a war canoe this year. Usually other spouses go along as support crew.

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Needless to say I was the only support person. No crew. I drove around 7 guys and gals. It was an adventure all right. I had a fantastic time and got new friends too! How does it get any better than that?

I decided to start scrap booking this year. I have some really nice mementos from Adam's life and funeral. I really like all the special ways you can tell a story with scrap booking. I have been purchasing books, paper, tools, adhesives and pens. My niece, the scrap-booking queen, has been helping me. This is a special way to remember your Loved One. If a whole book intimidates you, you can try a page and frame it.

One of my new discoveries this year has been Christian radio. I have found when I am melancholy and missing Adam that I find solace and peace in the inspirational, uplifting music they play. I also discovered that there are a lot of crossover artists. The best time to listen for me is in the car. I can really concentrate on the words and reflect. Give some new music a try. You might surprise yourself and find something you never thought you would enjoy.

Wow, looking back on my list I guess I had more than a few new experiences this past year. Every one of them taught me something new about the people involved and myself. I believe our Loved Ones would want us to continue experiencing new things. If you open your heart and mind to new adventures you can find, joy, laughter, excitement and pleasure.

Happy New Adventure Year,

Barb