



ashley's avenue

By Ashley Murphy

Last month there was a day especially reserved for celebrating Mothers. This month, there is a day reserved for celebrating Fathers, June 21st to be exact. Just like I said about Mother's Day last month, Father's are not the only ones to celebrate on Father's Day. There are several other people that can have an influence in a child's, even an adults, everyday life. Granddads, Uncles, Cousins, Brothers (whether they are a parent or not) anyone who has been there and influenced you at any point and in any way should be appreciated and thanked.

In addition to my Dad, I have a stepdad and two granddads, all who have been a part of my life ever since I was born or since I was very young. My stepdad, Don, worked at Duracell for several years as Plant Manager. When I was in elementary school, he was taking a job overseas and would be there for a couple of years, so it would only make sense that the family move there as well. He gave me the opportunity to move with them, which I took, and it ended up being one of the most wonderful experiences I've ever had. It has definitely opened my

eyes to culture and travel and given me a new outlook on opportunity.

My Papaw George is definitely the joker of my Mom's family. No matter what mood you may be in, he could probably put a smile (or a blush) on your face. We went to eat at the Monterrey restaurant one night sometime ago and he thought it would be funny to tell the waiter that I had a big crush on him and that I wanted his number. Of course this wasn't the case so all I could do was sit and laugh...and turn beet red. I can say I may have gotten a bit upset, but in the end his personality and character put a smile on my face. Everyone needs to smile and needs a good laugh every once in a while and someone in their life that can make that happen.

When I think of my Papaw on my Dad's side of the family, two things come to my mind: lemon apricot cake and his compassionate understanding. The lemon apricot cake seems to be a family favorite. Any time I went to my Granny and Papaw's house, the first thing to usually come out of my mouth was, "Did you make a cake today, Papaw?" Whether he's making a cake or just there to listen,

I'm thankful everyday that he is a part of my life.

While I have several people to be thankful for on this Father's Day, there's no man in my life who has influenced me and cared for me as much as my Dad. When I was little, I guess you could say I was what you would call a "daddy's girl." Don't get me wrong, I absolutely loved my Mom to death, but there was just something that made me miss him when he wasn't around and made me hold on every time he had to leave. I loved to be tucked in at night and my Dad was the last person I wanted to see before I went to bed. There was a period of time when, after tucking me in, he had to lay down next to me until I fell asleep. He always tried to comply to make his little girl feel safe. After all, isn't that what Daddy's are for?

Those of you who know me, already know of my impeccable driving skills, especially at high rates of speed. Well maybe not that impeccable, but at least 25% of my wonderful driving skills I learned from my Dad and at a very young age. He seemed to be the only one that would ride around and let me "learn" to drive, without making a huge fuss of how I was doing it. But, I hate to admit, that 25% that I "learned" may be the only good skillful parts of my driving. There is one bad habit that it seems my sister and I both inherited from our Dad that involves a gas

pedal and a heavy foot, but we won't go into detail here! A while back my Dad used to have an old green and white 1971 Ford pick-up and nothing made me happier than driving that old truck. On nights that he would take me back to my Mom's house late, if no other cars were around, he'd let me sit in his lap and "drive" the rest of the way home. While it wasn't even a mile, those few minutes that he let me sit in his lap and steer the way home made me one of the happiest little girls in the world. I mean, isn't that what Daddy's are for?

There were several times when I was sick or not feeling well as a baby and as a little girl, and every time my Dad was always there for me. I remember one night in particular when I woke up at my Mom's house with severe pains in my legs. All I could do was sit on the floor, rock back and forth, and cry. When

medicine wasn't helping my Mom finally decided to take me to the emergency room. By this time it was well into the midnight hours. My Mom must have called my Dad, because he met us up at the emergency waiting room. The wait was ridiculous, as most emergency rooms are these days, and my legs eventually quit hurting on their own. Either way, my Dad got out of bed and drove up to the hospital to sit in a cold emergency room, all of this in the middle of the night, because he cares about me that much. But, isn't that what Daddy's are for?

We all make mistakes and do things that make our parents upset with us. Now that I've gotten older, I know for sure I've done my fair share and it's a list longer than I care to detail. I don't see my Dad as much as I used to or as much as I'd like to, but that doesn't mean that I love him or appreciate him any less.

Throughout my 23 years, my Dad has been proud of me and he has been disappointed in me, but he's never stopped loving me and supporting me. After all, isn't that what Daddy's are for?

Happy Father's Day to all the Daddy's out there that care about their little, or not so little, ones!

"They say that from the instant he lays eyes on her, a father adores his daughter. Whoever she grows up to be, she is always to him that little girl in pigtails. She makes him feel like Christmas. In exchange, he makes a secret promise to not see the awkwardness of her teenage years, the mistakes she makes, or the secrets she keeps." -Unknown

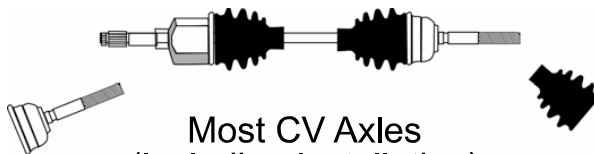
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