

A Great Grandmother



Today is a very special and lucky day. It's the double lucky 7 year birthday (77, that is) of my Grandma Joyce. **Happy Birthday, Grandma!** (We should have gone to Vegas!) Not only is she a great grandmother, in the past year since my birthday tribute to her in 2010, she in fact became a Great Grandmother-- thanks to sister Julie (way to go, Mama J!). As you can see in the photo above, Grandma Joyce (L to R: Grandma-look how happy she looks!, Nephew Noah, Mom, Sister Julie) is the matriarch of the maternal side of my family, and is truly admired by the three generations attempting to follow in her inspirational footsteps. (Although none of her children (that I know of), nor her grandchildren have been crowned homecoming queen of their high school as she was. What can we say? Her popularity may not have been hereditary. Bummer.)

Last year I expressed my gratitude for Grandma Joyce's natural knack for entertaining and all that I have learned from her and incorporate into my life when I'm playing hostess. This year, I am focusing on another characteristic that makes her "great"--**her giving nature.** I am lucky to have been brought up in a family where giving was important and was carried on through the generations from my Mom and Dad. Whether it was a smile, a hug, an ear to listen, or providing/serving meals, clothes, or winter necessities to those in need, I am lucky that I grew up in a family of givers, and Grandma Joyce is a leading example. Whether allowing us to choose the cause of our choice to donate our holiday gifts to, or donating to many organizations, such as MD Anderson Cancer Center, the Texas Heart Institute, both of which have a strong personal significance to our family), or most recently, The Good People Fund, Grandma Joyce is always thinking about the next way she can give. Her selfless tendency serves as a model to me and my family and she is a reminder that there's always a way to give more.

So, in honor of Grandma, I declare this year a year of giving. I pledge to give a little bit more in lots of ways whenever I see the opportunity or even create opportunities for giving wherever possible. Grandma Joyce, thank you for having such a giving heart and for instilling such an important value in me and in our family.

Happy Birthday, and many, many more! I love you!

Oh yeah, keep having fun, and Hook 'Em!

