

Many people believe that in death one door closes and another opens.

This ran through my mind often as I sat , 9 months pregnant , holding my dad 's hand during his last month of life.

As the door was closing on my dad's life, he told me he had no regrets . He wouldn't do anything differently anything.

The only thing he wished he could change was the future: that in dying he would not be able to be a part of his grandchildren's lives - that he could not influence them.

But, I know he will. I will make sure of it.

It will an effort , of course, because my dad lived a life of example.

- He never let the water run while he brushed his teeth.
- He turned the light off when he left any room.
- He didn't spend money because he thought it was immoral.
- He went to every track meet, basketball game and cross country race of mine.
- He was the embarrassingly loud fan in the stands.
- We ate dinner together every night.
- In college, he wrote me long letters every week.
- He dressed up as Santa . Every Christmas. And made my 30 year old boyfriend, now husband, sit on his knee.
- He had dates with my mom every week.
- He was such a good dad that although he was so professionally accomplished, he was so humble that I didn't learn how much so until after he was gone.

So, while some may see death as a door that closes, my dad's door will remain open. I like to think his death instead as Hellen Keller did : That "Death is no more than passing from one room to another."

The room that opened for my family 25 days after my dad passed and 12 days ago, is here today: [Rudy brings David to stage]

We named him after my dad: David Harding Verner.

My husband, Rudy Verner, who had the unenviable position of taking a class from my dad while we were both in law school and dating, will bring him up.

May my dad's spirit live on in him and in each of you.