

The Story of How Laura Joan Came Into The World

After nine months and several extra days (the due date being April 21), Laura Joan, then known as Boscoe Osgood, decided that it was time to enter the living world. Her Mom and I thought it only appropriate to record the details of this event as best as we can for future consideration. In all likelihood, this means you Laura! When you grow up, you will be able to appreciate these kinds of things!

On April 25 at 7:48 P.M., contractions began while we were watching TV (“Wheel of Fortune,” I think). Grandma Joan just happened to be at our home visiting and was about to head back to Virginia at the end of the show. We started timing the contractions and they were between nine and thirteen minutes apart. The contractions were mostly in Mom’s back and didn’t feel very wonderful.

This was all quite coincidental as earlier in the day Mom and Grandma Joan had been out for a ride over the proverbial “bumpy road.” This was actually a dry run to the hospital to show Grandma Joan the way. Little did we know that the bumpy road would do the trick!

I went to sleep at about 11:00 P.M., knowing that any rest might prove to be valuable (and it was). By now, the contractions were every seven minutes.

At 1:00 A.M. (on April 26), Mom woke me to tell me that the contractions were every five minutes. In my usual asleep manner, I responded with “Neat”!!

Mom woke me for good at 2:00 A.M. Somehow I always knew that all of this would happen in the middle of the night and that I would have to go through this whole ordeal with little or no sleep. I guess I should feel lucky because Mom didn’t get any sleep! Anyway, Grandma Joan started timing the contractions while my life flashed before my eyes.

At 2:15 A.M. we called Dr. Tuegel. He sounded about as happy to be wakened at this time of the morning as I was about calling him at this time of the morning. The contractions were now every three and a half minutes. Dr. Tuegel told us to wait an hour and, if things continued as they were, we should go to the hospital. I was not sure that I felt like delivering a baby at home, but he was the doctor!

So Mom and I started to get ready to head off to the hospital. I took a shower and threw a few goodies into my overnight bag. Mom got her suitcase and goodie bag together. At 3:15 A.M. we were off! Well almost. I realized that I had forgotten something when we were pulling out and had to go back into the house. The next door neighbor was up feeding her cat and saw us go. Grandma stayed home and anxiously waited by the telephone.

We arrived at the hospital at 3:45 A.M. Mom felt something leaking in her “plumbing” as we strolled across the parking lot. And just like they said in the baby classes, she had a contraction on the way in. We had arrived in our labor room at 4:00 A.M. We were happy to find that we were the only couple there. The nurse checked Mom out and told us the “good” news—Mom was only 0.5 cm dilated—oh, boy—this after almost nine hours of what was becoming rather intense back labor. The contractions were coming every four minutes and the baby had not dropped yet! Hang in there! At 5:00 A.M. I called Grandma Joan to tell her Mom would be staying at the hospital. This was kind of humorous as they had almost sent us home! At 7:00 A.M. I took a break to go and eat breakfast and to call my parents.

Finally, at 7:30 A.M., Dr. Tuegel arrived and checked out Mom. The verdict came in. He told us that there had been no additional dilation. Great! He completed breaking Mom’s water and said that he would be back in one and a half or two hours. Mom complained about the pain. The nurse replied that she ain’t seen nothing yet! The nurse was right. After everyone left was when the really bad pains started. It was during this time that Mom and I had to work out a system for disconnecting all of the wires and tubes so that Mom could go to the bathroom and get back in bed between contractions. We got pretty good at it!

Things got more and more painful. I made several trips to the nurses’ station to request that they give Mom something for the pain. Dr. Tuegel had left instructions that nothing was to be given because he did not want to slow down the process. By 11:30 A.M., the pain was too much to handle. It was obvious that things were not progressing. Dr. Tuegel arrived and found that Mom was only 3 cm dilated. Bummer! He suggested an epidural for the pain and some pitocin to help things get going a little bit better. Now we were talking!

The nurse anesthetist came in at 12:15 P.M. and kicked me out. I left the labor room and found that Grandma Joan was now at the hospital. Waiting at home was more than she could stand. Now we had an official cheerleading section! I used this break to get something to eat and to make two phone calls (to my parents and to Mom’s best friend, Janine). When I returned, things were taking a little longer than had been anticipated. Although the pitocin had been started, the epidural was having some problems taking—the first epidural did not take on either side. The nurse anesthetist made a second attempt at 12:40 P.M. The contractions started to get more intense as a result of the pitocin. Mom was getting VERY tired.

The second epidural failed on the right side. At 1:30 P.M. a third epidural was attempted. I got another break for more phone calls. I was feeling better because Mom was feeling better. Even though the epidural had not fully taken, Mom was feeling some relief. I could tell because when I asked her how she was doing, she said much better. She even smiled! The third epidural took on the right side. Praise the Lord!

Things felt so much better that Mom got in a little nap between 2:00 P.M. and 2:30 P.M. I think that this rest was what helped get everything relaxed and rolling. The nurse checked in at 2:30 P.M. and found that Mom was 8 cm dilated. Now this really was good news! The nurse again checked in at 3:30 P.M. and told us that Mom was not quite yet 10 cm. We didn't have long until Mom could start pushing.

The nurse gave another look at things at 3:40 P.M. and reported that Mom was fully dilated!! The nurse (whose name was Dolly) told us that we could start pushing (notice how I said "we"). After Dolly gave us instructions on how to push, we had a few trial runs. No problem here. Dolly left us to "our" pushing.

At 4:00 P.M. Dolly returned. She watched Mom make a few pushes and told us that the baby was not staying down after each push. Down the hall there was another woman who was, evidently, at the same point in her labor. She picked this time to let out the most blood-curdling screams we had ever heard. This was not-so-great for our confidence level. Dolly ran out and left us to push.

At 4:10 P.M. Mom turned to me and said, "Go get the nurse! This baby is coming!" I wasted no time in running out to find a nurse. There was only one problem. I couldn't find any nurses! They were all in with the lady down the hall who was minutes away from giving birth. I finally found a nurse in the next ward and told her, "My wife insists that this baby is coming any second! Please go find the nurses and the doctor!!" I didn't feel like delivering a baby!

Dolly returned and said, "Don't push any more!!" Dolly began to get things ready to move Mom into the delivery room. At 4:16 P.M. Dolly and I moved Mom into the delivery room. By 4:25 P.M. they were prepping Mom. Dr. Tuegel arrived. No more pushing required here! It was at this time that we could first see the top of Laura's head. Lots and lots of hair!

At 4:30 P.M. things really started picking up. Dr. Tuegel performed the episiotomy. Immediately afterwards, Laura's head popped out followed shortly thereafter by her shoulders. Mom said, "But he's not breathing!" Dr. Tuegel responded, "I don't want him to start breathing yet. The baby still has too much fluid in the lungs to start breathing." Meanwhile, the body popped out and Mom and I saw that the umbilical cord was around the baby's neck. Dr. Tuegel unwrapped the cord, averting any potential problem. By 4:35 P.M. the legs were out and Mom and I—for the first—found out that Boscoe Osgood was really Laura Joan Wilkie!!

Dr. Tuegel shook Laura a little. Laura coughed some and then started to cry quite loudly. Her umbilical cord was cut and clamped and Laura was laid across Mom's stomach. Mom said to the nurses, "Her name is Laura." Laura was taken and given the usual battery of post-natal tests. Her first Apgar score was an eight (out of ten), as was her second test five minutes later. The nurse also took Laura's footprint and Mom's thumbprint.

After three minutes of excitement, Mom had to remind me to start taking pictures by asking, "Hey ... you going to take any pictures?" Dr Tuegel got a laugh out of this. I had become too overwhelmed to remember one of my more important functions. After five minutes, the nurse brought Laura over for Mom to hold for the first time. Mom and I were crying at this point because we were both very happy (and relieved). After a minute or two in Mom's arms, the nurse brought Laura over to me. This was a special moment for me because I had never held a baby before. I had always declined to hold other babies in the past because I wanted my baby to be the first. Dr. Tuegel commented that Laura was one of the loudest babies that he had ever heard!

After another couple of minutes, I carried Laura to the nursery leaving Mom in the care of Dr. Tuegel. Laura arrived in the nursery at 4:50 P.M., a very busy time for the two nurses that were on duty. I left Laura in her crib for a minute to go out into the hall and find Grandma Joan. Grandma followed me to the nursery window. I went back into the nursery and picked Laura to show Grandma Joan her new granddaughter. Grandma was pretty happy!!

Most of the nurses had just started to take all the other babies to their mothers for the five o'clock feeding. One of the nurses started some of the necessary tasks for Laura, including weighing her. Nine pounds six ounces!? Wow, what a big baby!! At the time of birth, Dr. Tuegel had said Laura probably weighed about eight or eight and a half pounds. He would later comment that he was quite surprised Laura weighed so much. After the nurse finished doing the blood work, she left to go back to taking babies to their mothers, leaving Laura and I for twenty minutes of getting to know each other. In this short time, I told Laura what a lucky little girl she was and all about the nice room she had at home filled with teddy bears. I also watched her turn from blue to pink. We had a good old time and Laura even smiled for me.

While Laura and I were getting acquainted in the nursery, Grandma Joan had gone into the recovery room so that Mom wouldn't be alone while I was away. This was a very special time for Mom and Grandma.

The nurses finally returned to give Laura a bath. Laura let them know that she wasn't very pleased about this, at all. I thought that the nurse would have to go out and get a set of ear plugs because the screaming was so loud.

When the bath was over and Laura was all checked out, it was about 5:30 P.M. I carried Laura out to the recovery room to see Mom who had been wheeled in earlier. Mom was resting comfortably and was anxiously awaiting the arrival of her new daughter. Dad handed Laura over to Mom for what was to be Laura's first meal. After several minutes, Grandma Joan appeared holding a beautiful bunch of flowers and a little pink teddy bear that played "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing" and moved its head as it played. Grandma Joan and Mom then started to cry because they were so happy. These thirty minutes or so were very wonderful!

A little after 6:00 P.M., Mom's room was ready. We gave up Laura to one of the nurses and Mom was wheeled to her room. I went into the locker room to change clothes and managed to forget to return my "doctor scrubs." Oh, well ... it made a great souvenir to remind me of Laura's birth.

We all met in Mom's new room. We were greeted by the sound of a TV set and some pretty strange characters. Mom's new roomie was about twenty, unmarried, and on her second kid. Their conversation was less than romantic for two people who had just brought a life into the world.

We arranged for Mom to get something to eat. After a while, Grandma Joan and I went down to the cafeteria to get some much deserved dinner. When we came back, we found Mom and Laura in the room getting further acquainted. We all had a nice time playing with Laura and getting caught up on each other's insights of the day's events. Grandma Joan left to go home around 8:00 P.M.

I stayed until ten o'clock. Those two hours were very special for Mom and me. When you get married they always say "for better or for worse." On this day we had seen both ends of that spectrum. Intense physical pain and tiredness and the tremendous joy of knowing that you have brought a new life into the world. I took my new daughter to the nursery at about 9:45 P.M. and then returned to the room to say "good-night" to Mom. This was a difficult good-bye. I wanted to stay with Mom and be with her as she fell asleep. I wanted to share in the contented sleep that would come to Mom.

I kissed Mom and then finally left. Several minutes later I was greeted by the cool night air. After several deep refreshing breaths, I looked up at the moon and noticed that it was in its first quarter. A good sign—a new beginning!