You know what it is like to be born. Not reborn. Not born again. We are not talking religion. We are not talking Shirley MacLaine. Past life regression. Reincarnation.

We are talking being born. Of submersion in a warm fluid. Of the trauma of being plunged into unexpectable glaring light. No wonder babies scream when they're born. This can scare the hell out of you.

We are talking an out of body experience: The extreme water slides at the Flagstaff Aquaplex that wind in and out of the building.

You start by ascending a towering staircase. Think stairway to heaven. Think quadriceps burn. You encounter two ominous cup shaped spaces filled with rapidly running water. Position yourself in one of them. Someone else wishing for the fright of her life is in the other. You grip the edges lest you be rushed downstream without warning.

You let go. You cross your arms over your chest. You lie flat on your back. All hell breaks loose. You are in darkness. Twisting. Turning. Inside. Outside. INSIDE. OUTSIDE. It's so very dark. Dark. DARK. You didn't know to expect that. You cannot see anything.

You're flying down. Down. DOWN. You're in a tube that makes the Olympics luge look like it's for sissies. No way to stop. No way to slow down. A torrent of water moving you with the velocity of a turbojet. Think doing the rapids in a cocoon without a paddle.

And then, with no warning, it comes towards you. Faster. Faster. FASTER. A light at the end of the tunnel – like an oncoming train – is upon you – or you are upon it – and in a nanosecond with enough presence of mind to hold your breath – hold your nose – close your eyes. You're goin' in, baby! You're thinking, my will is in order.

My heirs will inherit prematurely. You are jettisoned out of a cannon at warp speed into the pool – butt first. You hit bottom. Your legs flailing in the air. Where are you? Twenty thousand leagues under the sea? Will you ever surface again?

Not pretty.

This, however, is not your story. It's mine: “Grandmother of the Year Survives.” If granddaughter Oakley is in Arizona, it must be late August. We're in Flagstaff. I am her playmate.

When you're nine years old and it's summer, you're not thinking about swimming. Which means yours truly must buy a new bathing suit. Traumatic at best. Haven't bought a new one in years. I've never embraced meeting my demise by drowning. Safest way to avoid that is to stay out of the water. Bikini days are long gone. Front not bad. Rear view. Something else. One piece suits ride up and are uncomfortable. Tankini is the way to go. Clothed I look great. Unclothed? Not so good. I am a grandmother.

It's a rainy day in the mountains. We are at the Aquaplex with its pools and slides and climbing wall. I have brought my swimsuit but not convinced I'm going to put it on.

“Come with me down the slide, Glammie! I don't want to go alone.”

“Ask Poppy.”

Did she ask him? No. Was there even the slightest chance he would if she had? Nooooooo. Was Glammie to be the “fun” grandmother and go too – or the stodgy grandmother and stay dry?

“Pretty pleaseeeze. I don't wanna go alone. I love you sooooo much!”

I cave. Put that puppy on and, as Nike would say, “Just do it.”

I think I will die underwater and my body will never be discovered. O.K. It's only three feet deep. A shallow pool inhabited by a village of children with poor bladder control.

Horifying.

“That was fun! Let's do it again!”

And, yes. I do it again. And again. And again. I can barely walk or climb the stairs. My lungs have room for no more water. My body is beat up to the extent that I can barely stand. I am the “fun” grandmother.

So, if that's not enough fun, two days later we go to the Coconino County Fair. At least this time her mother has returned from NYC to give me some relief. I had forgotten, however, what an absolute chicken my daughter is – so it was Glammie who went on the “Zipper” with Oakley. A contraption described as, “An action packed spectacular ride with over the top thrills where riders are in cages that flip upside down while circling the 50’ tall boom.” It's considered a “Level 5 Aggressive Thrill” manufactured by a company called “Chance.” Really?

Exiting, the operator tells me he went on it once and would never do it again. Now he tells me.

“Glammie! You were screaming ‘Ooh S**!’ Over. And over. And OVER.”

How many kids can brag that their grandmother did all of this and didn't need a defibrillator?

“I’ve got one!”

Hope H. Ozer is founder and Publisher Emeritus of CITYSunTimes.