**13859 Sharon Herelle – Birthday**

Good Evening Everyone,

Tonight we’re here to celebrate my Aunt Sandra’s 50th birthday. Many people hate to reach this birthday and many woman don’t want to acknowledge it but I can’t think of a better birthday to celebrate for a better person.

I’ve had a special relationship with my aunt, one that unique, at least in our family. You see, I am only four years younger than Aunt Sandra. That meant she was the big sister I never had. She walked me to and from school from the age of five. She has always been my friend, my mentor and my advisor. She’s never been too busy to listen to me when I needed a friendly ear. She’s also been my accountant, my financial advisor as well as my spiritual advisor. Even though we live miles away, when I was first diagnosed with cancer, she took time to pray with me over the phone. She gave me nutritional advice and checked up on me because that is who she is. She has a strong sense of family and is a very God fearing woman. She’s also a very generous person in every way.

I remember when I served as her matron of honor at her wedding. She began crying during the service. I made a point of wiping her tears to make sure everyone could see she was crying. She whispered to me, “You’re making sure everyone knows I’m crying.” Well, I had to do something to liven things it. It was such a formal service. That got people wondering if they were happy tears or sad tears. But, the years since have proven they were happy tears.

She’s had a wonderful effect on more than just me. She was always the favorite aunt in our family. All the other nieces always wanted to either spend the night or spend their vacations at her home. She was just plain fun to be around and always went out of her way to make our time with her special.

With all of these wonderful qualities my Aunt Sandra is someone I have tried to emulate in my life. She has set an example simply by being herself. She gives of herself to others without thought to herself. She naturally attracts others to her by her own exuberance. Her character is without question. And her relationship with God shines from within her. She doesn’t have to formally teach a formal lesson; she teaches others about God by the way she lives. Her example is one of natural service to others.

I think the greatest personality trait that stems from her godly character is her joy for life. She spreads that joy with her giving nature, with her fun loving lifestyle and with a love that cannot be measured or limited. I have the greatest respect for my Aunt and hope that I can extend to others the love and joy that she has freely extended to me.

I offer a favorite quote of mine in closing. "As you reach a new chapter in your life may you discover it's you who will write your own story,” As you enter a new chapter in your life Aunt Sandra may you be blessed with what you write. I love you and we all love you.