**LUNCHEON SPEECH**

**FOR**

**CHARLENE E.**

Hello everyone and welcome to this **TRIFECTA** of a celebration! It looks like it's true that if one is patient and vigilant, and lives and waits long enough, the planets align as circumstances and events conspire to form the event of a lifetime... REALLY! (**Name your husband**)  **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** and I have been so blessed to share this life we've lived and loved, and today is the anniversary of all of the days for which we give thanks. Of course we're here to celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary along with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_'s 80th birthday and my "almost 75th." Astronomers might indulge us and allow us to call this our own personal "Harmonic Convergence." \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I prefer to call this one of the most wonderful moments of our lives and we cannot imagine celebrating any other way but with all of you right here.

In spite of what you've been told or may have heard, we believe that **LOVE** and **TIME** are really the gifts that keeps on giving. It's hard to believe that **HALF A CENTURY** has passed since \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I shared our wedding vows. Fifty years ago we were young and curious and the future was ours to discover. The "Swingin' Sixties" brought us together, sealed the deal, witnessed our passages into adulthood and married life, and brought many of you into our lives and hearts. We've been blessed with FIFTY years of laughter and love, challenges and opportunities, but most of all infinite blessings.

I may be tempted to repeat all variations of the word "**BLESSED**" today but there's no other way to express our gratitude for the precious gifts we've been given through life. My father, may he rest in peace, knew how to share a quote and one that comes to mind today is, " Your life would not have been possible without me." Of course he was right! Both \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I are so grateful to have such close and deep family ties thanks to the examples established by our parents. Our lives could also not have been possible... Or at least the same, without all of you to share it and it has always been our intention to honor our heritage by sharing those values with our family and friends... because each one of you holds a very special place in our hearts. We specifically stated "NO GIFTS PLEASE" for the simple reason that we've already been given all the gifts we need and that's your friendship and love. Each one of you holds a very special place in our hearts and we are so touched by your expression of what our friendship means to you. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I want you all to know that through this celebration of life and love, family and friendship, just how much you mean to us.

As I look around this room I can't help but think.... Where has the time gone? It's gone into building an amazing life with three wonderful children and nine precious grandchildren in ..l.ten years! It's gone into extraordinary events and simple every day occurrences that are actually the glue that forms and cements a life well lived. Your friendship and support have given us joy and cause for thought, a good laugh and strength when we needed it most.

We have been so touched and moved as we read all of those sentimental and moving expressions of what our friendship has meant to you and both \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I hope that we will be remembered for our thoughtfulness and kindness.... Especially by our children and grandchildren!! We look forward to celebrating many, MANY more life cycle events with all of you.

(**If you want to make a special acknowledgement of your husband, you can say**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, here we are, celebrating our **GOLDEN** anniversary and your 80th birthday!!! To paraphrase my father, I REALLY could NOT have done this without **YOU**!!! Thank you for being by my side for all of these years and for sharing the best life anyone could ever wish for.

Today is an extraordinary milestone and celebration but I want to make one more request of all of you. Remember this day. Remember the joy that is overflowing in this room. Remember the love and respect and the memories we share and share it with others. A life well lived is only as great as the acknowledgement and thanks we can sincerely give to others, and for this we thank you from the bottom of our hearts..... Thank you all, we love you and here's to many more!