**WEDDING SPEECH**

**FOR**

**PAUL PICKHOLTZ**

Hello everyone, and welcome... Cathy and I are thrilled to share this very happy moment with all of you. To those of you that have traveled from near and far... mostly from the “**motherland**...” (**Wait for the laugh**) and by that I mean the **tri-state area**, on behalf of Delta, United, JetBlue, and the Pickholtz family, we thank you. Unfortunately we don’t give miles or bonus points...(**Do you want to add**) ... the best I can do is a couple of antiacids and maybe a glass of seltzer.... (**Wait for the laugh**) I suppose it can be said that we’ve waited a lifetime for “a moment like this...” from that very first shot of Vitamin K into Chelsea’s tiny “pulke” upon her birth... hey... **once a doctor**... (**Wait for the laugh**) to the moment we had the privilege to walk her down the aisle just a little while ago, Cathy and I knew... actually we hoped and prayed... that Chelsea would find her partner in life, and she has. Jeremy, we are happy to welcome you to our family, and to Edward and Dawn, Jeremy’s parents, it’s great to share “mutual” congratulations with you.

I have had many blessings in my life... I am filled with gratitude for all of them... of course the two greatest being my daughters, Lisa and Chelsea, and while Lisa led the way down the aisle a few years ago, today Chelsea “bats clean up.” Also in my life, I’ve learned the importance of research, preparation, and thoughtful consideration, so, **yes**, I have been thinking of what I wanted to say as this inevitable... and joyful... and **emotional** moment has approached. Chelsea, I thought of the generations that preceded you... of your grandparents, your mother, your sister, and how you’ve demonstrated your own unique style... your likes and dislikes, your curiosity, your goodness, and how you’ve evolved into the interesting, beautiful, compelling young woman and bride that we celebrate tonight. I thought about how considerate you are... and have been from the very beginning... and believe me, your thoughtfulness at such an early age didn’t go unnoticed... Have I ever thanked you for entering this world at just the right time??? I mean **ANY** time would have been great, but you chose to arrive while I was on duty... I came into the room... we all **KNOW** your mother did all the work... (**Wait for the laugh**)... assisted with your birth...gave you that shot of Vitamin K... checked all the “moving parts...” and we were on our way.... and yes, you must have been a beautiful baby... and you were, and here we are...

Chelsea, over the years I watched you develop from an adorable little girl to an active kid to a popular teenager, to a talented, conscientious, involved, engaged, and accomplished teacher... so dedicated, in fact, that you’ve become the Program Coordinator for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ School..... Although I may have been busy caring for patients for much of the time that you were growing up, I always kept an eye on your progress and passions... your energy in all you did and do... and, well, it was and is wonderful to watch. You were a great student and when you threw yourself into an activity, you gave it your all and you still do that. You played the cello with a fervor and you ice skated with the best of them, and no matter what you chose to do, your mother and I were and are your greatest cheering section. Of course your mom did most of the “hard time...” running logistics and making sure schedules were met, and for that, I am very thankful... Thank you, Cathy.... you’re the “glue” that keeps us going...

I also know that growing up isn’t always easy... at least I realize that now... hindsight is **20/20**... if only I had been an ophthalmologist, maybe I would have seen the signs sooner... (**Wait for the laugh**) and I know you faced challenges you may not have wanted, but you dealt with them just like the champion you are.... in the middle of my tenure in New York, opportunity knocked and adventure beckoned... okay... that sounds good... but the reality was... I accepted a job in the **BOONDOCKS** of West Virginia and ripped you out of your **IDYLLIC**, friend filled, hectic eleventh grade life to wind up in some G-d forsaken backwater.... I was nervous and concerned enough for your wellbeing, and then.... there were..... **CONDITIONS**... no real **ransom**... just a house with a bedroom.... and a **huge** closet... and an “**en suite**” bathroom... on your **own** floor... and this was **BEFORE** “Househunters...” your mother and I were basically “flying blind...” but you had a vision.... and **demands**.... and I just want to say... if the teaching and program coordination don’t quite pan out... may I suggest **CRISIS NEGOTIATION**??? It worked on **ME**!!! Jeremy... I **HOPE** you’re paying attention... your wife has **SKILLS**....(**Wait for the laugh**)....

We all survived eleventh grade in West Virginia, and even though, no, I didn’t get a tee shirt to commemorate that milestone, Cathy and I got something even better... we saw the strength, good sense, and resilience our daughter Chelsea innately possessed. We witnessed as you started school in a strange town... you didn’t know a soul... and every experience was new... and fresh... from mumbling indistinguishable epithets at me to learning the finer points about roadkill... **YES**, folks... **ROADKILL**... freshly skinned and prepped at the local market.... and **NO**... we didn’t import any for tonight’s festive meal... (**Wait for the laugh**) Chelsea received the experience and education she **NEVER** knew she wanted or needed... but Chelsea, being who she is... showed us all how to make lemonade... not the Beyoncé lemonade... but the one where we find the blessings in life.... I believe Chelsea really saw and understood the importance of experiencing life from new and different vantage points... how well rounded that makes a person, and by the time she graduated from her new high school, she loved it. (**If any of Chelsea’s West Virginia friends are present you can say**) .... and those connections have endured... just ask \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who are with us tonight. There’s a lesson for all of us in that... and as Chelsea learned and expanded her understanding of people and ways of life, so did all of us... Cathy and I also learned and it turns out that, looking back, it was a great experience... even the part when, at the “lower” points of that early adventure,... we learned... about each other... about life... about adapting to newness... and about learning from **EVERYTHING**.

Chelsea, you survived the trauma of being uprooted... you showed your strength and determination, and as you got older and went to college, you showed us even more just how terrific you were becoming... you did great at James Madison University (**Please make sure this is correct**) and what we really took note of was your pride in your Jewish heritage. Now, especially in the times in which we find ourselves, pride in our Judaism is more important than ever... and you honor that, and we are even more proud of you. Chelsea, you love going to temple and attending services... you wanted a Jewish wedding... and now you have a wonderful, Jewish husband at your side. Jeremy, as I said earlier, Cathy and I are happy to welcome you into our family as our son, and it’s very gratifying to watch as our family grows.... and now we have Lisa and (**mention Lisa’s husband and her kids)** and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and of course, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_... add to that Chelsea, Jeremy, and Harlow, and we have a happy, full house.

Chelsea and Jeremy, life is not always easy.... there are plenty of bumps along the way... But if we’re smart... and I know you two **ARE**... and if we pay attention... and if we learn from our experiences and heed the lessons that life **hurls** our way... I mean presents to us (**Wait for the laugh**), we all find that life is good, and there is wisdom to be gained. As I thought of the kind of advice I would want to give you, my first thought was, **PLEASE** ... **DON’T** take **MY** advice... (**Wait for the laugh**)... and then I thought of some wise words uttered by a pro... Chelsea and Jeremy, you may not know who Henny Youngman was, but some of us **DO**... he was a comedian, married to Sadie Cohen for **FIFTY NINE** years... how did they maintain that? He would tell people, “What’s our secret to a long and happy marriage? Well, I’ll tell you. We make it a point to going out two nights each week... dinner... live music.... a great bottle of wine... I go on Tuesday, she goes on Friday (**Wait for the laugh**).

You get the point... the secret to any successful relationship is love and respect, appreciation for yourselves both as independent adults and in partnership, humor, and the continued commitment to work together toward a common goal. Your mother and I believe that the two of you have exactly what it takes to live a wonderful and fulfilling life together and we look forward to cheering you on each step of the way.

I would like to invite all of you to raise a glass as I propose a toast...

To Chelsea and Jeremy... here’s to a lifetime of love, health, happiness, adventure and more than you might ever wish for... Mazel Tov!! We love you!!