Good evening everyone.

On February 26th of last year, I had a meeting with Paul Friedrich. We met at 7:00 a.m. in the Bay Cafe at Fishermans Terminal in Seattle. He proceeded to tell me he was very much in love with Kelsey and was fully prepared financially, emotionally, and in every conceivable way possible to share his life with hers. He showed me the ring he wanted to give to her and was asking for my blessing and because I knew his character and sincerity and I knew he loved Kelsey, I gave him my blessing to ask for her hand in marriage.

Unfortunatley I couldn’t stay very long because I had another meeting at 7:45 just two blocks away at the Starbucks on Dravus Street. This second meeting was with another young man. He had something he wanted to discuss with me as well. He also told me how much in love with my daughter he was. He told me how he was prepared financially, emotionally and every way possible to share his life with hers. He also wanted to propose to my daughter and asked for my blessing. I had known this young man for some time, I knew his character and sincerity, and now I had confirmation of his love for my daughter. Of coarse I gave him my blessing as well.

Now you may be thinking - Kelsey what is up, you have been busy….well you are correct, she has been busy.

Neither one of these young men knew that the other had planned the same meeting, on the same morning, in the same hour, two blocks apart from each other to ask me the same question,,, almost. I say almost the same question because the second young man Ryan Somers, was going to propose to,,,,, Kelseys sister Kevlyn. What a morning that was!

While Kelsey is busy, there are a lot of words that can be used to describe her,,, Beautiful, Intelligent, Dependable….. but the one thing that to me describes the essence of Kelsey is…. heart. She always listens to and follows her heart.

When we brought Kelsey home for the first time, my wonderful wife Susan and I responsible for this beautiful teeny tiny creation wondering as most new parents do if we can do this. Kelsey was like a lot of new borns, she was fussy the first few weeks. She would cry and fuss and she couldn’t tell us why she was crying and fussing. After a couple of rough nights without much sleep for any of us I was walking with her on my shoulder and patting her back around three one morning when I needed to rest. So while lying back on the couch with this tiny little baby Kelsey on my chest I discovered she liked this and she would stop crying and sleep and I did not have to pace the floor with her.

It occurred to me that the reason she liked to sleep on my chest was she could hear my heart. After nine months of hearing Susans heart this was a comforting and familiar sound to her. Kelsey listened to her mothers heart, Kelsey listened to my heart on those first nights, and Kelsey still all these years later listens and follows her heart. It is one special thing about her that I love so much. It has been my pleasure to witness Kelsey, always listening to and ready to follow her heart.

The eldest of six children, ever since she was three when her first little brother Jay was born the joy she found helping Susan and caring for her younger siblings was an inspiration. By the time Kelsey was eleven she had five younger brothers and sisters.

Kelsey has followed her heart around the world. Traveling to Chile on an internship, England and Rome, Italy to study for a semester with her great friend and maid of honor Nicole while earning her degree at the University of Washington.

Kelsey graduated from the UW in 2008, a very difficult period to launch a career. But unlike most college graduates at that time she found work, not the jobs she wanted but a beginning. She has worked very hard since then applying the work ethics she’s learned while following and listening to the heart that God blessed her with.

I am proud to say Kelsey recently had to choose between Nordstrom and Amazon to continue her PR career, they both wanted her. Amazon is fortunate to have you Kelsey.

It’s her amazing heart that makes Kelsey so unique,,, her genuine appreciation of participating in even the simplest adventure has served her well. As I got to know Paul I realized that following her heart was not only a part of Kelsey that he loved,,, it is a trait that they share.

Kelsey met Paul Friedrich on October 16, 2012 after a Husky football game, just one of the things they enjoy together. They were attracted to each other immediately but Kelsey was at a poor time in her life to start a new relationship. She was working for the PR firm Wagner Edstrom and she was preparing to move to San Francisco and live and work there. She made a trip there to find an apartment and was scheduled to move on December 3rd. She was incredibly attracted to Paul and new he felt the same but she had already committed to this move. She was at a crossroads, should she follow her plan and previous decision to transfer to San Francisco or listen to her heart??

Susan and I first met Paul Friedrich late in 2012 at our annual Christmas Party at our home in Gig Harbor. We both felt from that first meeting that Paul was a great person and Kelsey was so happy being with him. We could see why Kelsey was falling in love with this intelligent, athletic, considerate and caring young man. We were both so thankful that Kelsey had decided to listen to her heart and to stay in Seattle and not move and live in San Francisco so far away and we had Paul to thank for that.

Having Paul around our family was a natural fit since that very first day. The old saying about the apple not getting to far away from the tree is spot on with Paul. Like Kelsey he went to a Catholic school, Blanchet and Susan and I both thought “No wonder Paul has tremendous character and values”. Then we met his parents Susie and Alex, and his sister and brother Laura and Mark and they are so sincerely nice and loving. It was clear why Paul was such a great person that also listens to his heart.

Paul also went to the University of Washington and Seattle University where he earned a law degree. He became a partner in a law firm by the age of 30! Since then he has helped me with a couple of legal issues with some contractors. When I asked him how much he charges he told me he did not want my money……kind of a Quid Pro Quo thing….. but he did agree to take our first born child.

After living in the same six bedroom house for over 25 years and raising six kids in this house it was time for Susan and I to down size and move. Nothing measures the amount of love a man has in his heart like asking him to help you move. It’s amazing how many friends and family members are busy or have minor injuries that we had not known about before we solicited their help. But Paul was right there, no excuses, no injuries aches or pains, just lets get this done.

Paul truly enjoys helping others, sometimes in the obvious things like helping us move, but mostly it’s in less obvious things, everyday things. I will never forget how he immediately volunteered to walk my mother down the isle at Ryan and Kevlyns wedding last September. Or how he walked Susans mother to her seat at the reception.

Pauls demonstration of his love for Kelsey was clear in his planning of a surprise birthday celebration for her last October. He secretly reserved the large dinning room just off the bar in the back of the Cantinetta restaurant in Wallingford. He secretly told his family and our family about it. Our assignment was to meet up with Pauls family at the restaurant at a designated time. He then arrived with Kelsey and brought her into where we were waiting to surprise her and begin her birthday celebration . Paul then treated both our families to a wonderful sit down dinner and drinks. It included birthday cake with candles and gifts, a complete surprise birthday party.

But Pauls plans for Kelsey did not end there. After dinner and goodbyes at the Cantinetta restaurant we went secretly to Ballard to the Bastille restaurant on Ballard Avenue and meet in the back bar with about 25 of their good friends. Later Paul arrived with Kelsey were everyone was waiting to surprise her once again and continue the celebration.

This was two surprise parties for Kelsey on the same evening!

What a demonstration of love.

There is absolutely no doubt in my mind the amount of love that is in both of your hearts.

Paul and Kelsey you have so many wonderful things in common. Susan and I and everyone here see the love you have for each other,,,the consideration, respect and love you have for your families and friends. We are so happy and excited for both of you now that your lives have become one life together.

Today before the eyes of God and with our hearts full of his love two families are joined,,,, today Susan and I have another son and our sons and daughters have another brother,,,,

To Mr. and Mrs. Paul and Kelsey Friedrich!

We love you!