

Joseph Pickard Eulogy

Good morning everyone and thank you for being here to celebrate the life our Dad, Joe Pickard. My name is Scott Pickard and I am the third of Betty and Joe's four children: Carolyn of Grand Junction; Larry of Houston, TX; Scott of Champaign, IL; and Kay of Denver, CO. Joseph Pickard passed away just a few days before Thanksgiving, that wonderful holiday when we celebrate the many blessings we all share in America. In that lingering spirit of Thanksgiving, and now with the Christmas season ahead, our family wishes to say "thank you" to our Dad's many friends, supporters, and caregivers that have made his life (and our Mom's) so happy and peaceful since they moved here eight years ago.

We know there are many members of the First Presbyterian Church here today. Our family would like to thank you all for the friendship and fellowship you have given to our dad since he first became a member of this fine church. Joe Pickard was a man of softly-spoken yet unwavering faith which was the bedrock and compass guiding him through a resilient, successful, and joyful life. He loved this church and its congregation. Thank you, First Presbyterian members. And we must say a very special thank you to Pastor Tom Hansen for all that he has done to bring our family together during the passing of our mom, Betty Pickard, three years ago, and now our dad, Joe Pickard. Tom's wise words and positive spirit have given our family comfort and peace during these times. Thank you very much, Pastor Tom.

And we need to thank everybody in our family who have traveled far to celebrate the life of Joseph Simmons Pickard: our dad, father-in-law, granddad, great granddad, and the leader and main event at all of our family reunions. The "Pickard Family Tree" that flows from Betty and Joe Pickard now numbers 37, soon to be 38 when a baby granddaughter will be born in February to Ryan and Caitlin Pickard of Houston, Texas. Our family has been reunioning someplace in the United States every other summer for the last 20 years. Just this last summer we were all together in Grand Junction at the Wine Country Inn. We had a great time and Dad had a great time with his 19 grand and great-grandchildren all around him. So a big Thank You to this wonderful family.

We know that there are many residents and staff members from the Atrium here today to pay their respects to Joe Pickard. The Atrium has been home to our parents since 2008. We want to thank the residents and staff for your friendship toward our parents, and Joe in these last three years since mom passed away. We want to thank the staff at the Atrium for their kind and caring services, day-in and day-out, which made it a comfortable and peaceful home for Dad. And as you all know, Joe never missed a meal, so that must say something! Thank you to all the residents and staff at the Atrium.

In particular, though, we need to thank Joe's close friends – Marilyn, Richard, and Jim — who sat together every day to share breakfast, lunch, and dinner at what they called the "Happy Table". You helped Dad get through a very sad time after our mom passed away. He so enjoyed your friendship and good humor each and every day. A heartfelt thank you to the Happy Table crew.

We know there are many family and friends here that have played golf with Joe Pickard at one time or another. We want to say thank you to his golfing buddies for all of the good times and fellowship you shared with him on and off the golf course. If you were lucky enough to play golf with Joe, you had to call all your penalties and make all of your putts, even if the ball was 1 inch from the hole! He was an exceptional golfer and it was, second to being with mom, his greatest passion and the most fun thing for him to do. At our family reunion here in July, he hit the ceremonial opening tee shot on the first hole and of course, he hit the ball right down the middle of the fairway. To my knowledge, that was — at age 99 — his last golf shot. In particular, we want to thank Josh Holmes for encouraging our Dad to enter the 2014 Huntsman World Senior Games in St. George, UT, at age 97. And it is no surprise that he won a gold medal! Thank you Josh, and thank you golfing buddies for being such good friends to Joe Pickard.

There is a special couple here today that I think we all know: Carolyn and Dave Brown. Our family needs to thank Carolyn, our sister, and her husband Dave, for everything they have done for Betty and Joe Pickard, mom and dad, since they moved to Grand Junction in 2008. Carolyn and Dave watched over and cared for Joe and Betty and were best friends to them including day trips up to the Monument, or the Mesa, or the Book Cliffs; sharing meals at Grand Junction restaurants; libations at 5:00 pm at the Atrium or Snow Mesa Road; golf on Friday mornings; and cheering on the Broncos on football Sundays. They have simply been there for Mom and Dad every step of the way until dad's final days. Thank you, Carolyn and Dave, for being the local "guardian angels" to our parents and doing everything you could to make their Grand Junction period secure, peaceful, and happy.

And finally, we have one last very big thank you to our mom and dad, Joe and Betty Pickard, for their gift to us of immeasurable value, which is the example of the very life they lived: two people who loved each other for 73 years as husband and wife, always together, never apart, building their story year by year of honest hard work, faithfulness, the joys of family, and ultimately the relaxed peacefulness of retirement. They have been like two stars in the sky always showing us the way, guiding us, inspiring us, teaching us, and comforting us. Mom and Dad, Betty and Joe, we love you, we thank you, and now, may you both rest in peace together.