

Good Morning, Honored Guests.. When David asked me to introduce him, he said I was his first choice...HA! More likely, I was his last resort! But I will do my best!

Today, we are ALL honored guests! Honored to be here on this beautiful island, honored to be with each other (our friends and colleagues), and honored to leave our small footprints as part of the great cycle of life in this annual meeting of great importance! This afternoon we will bid adieu to the fine man who has been our President for the past year as he prepares for the tradition of handing the gavel forward.

I'm going to take a moment to tell you about this terrific "gavel holder" which is a title he will bear only for another few hours. There's no need to review all the typical bio info, that's what the internet is for! I want to tell you about my great husband, David, so settle in for just a minute because we are going to get personal.

I met David in 1976 when we were both working at Overlake Medical Center in Bellevue, Wa. I had just arrived from the east coast and was a brand new hire. David came out of a patient's room in his OR scrubs, asking for a nurse to help with a lumbar puncture. I quickly scanned for someone more qualified to take the lead, someone to come to my rescue but the halls were empty. Then his eyes settled on me. I hesitated..."I'm a new nurse" I squeaked out. "You'll do just fine" he replied. Oh my, I didn't think I'd do "just fine" at all! I had never assisted with LP's in nursing school and I was hardly more than a couple weeks into my nursing career. But we aced that LP! Not because I knew what I was doing, but because this kind, patient doctor guided me thru what needed to be done and how I could best help him in the procedure.

This is just one small example of the fine, fine man my David is: helpful, thoughtful, meticulous to detail and resourceful. I remember this first meeting so clearly because, after getting to know the many other physicians I worked with over my almost 30 years of hospital nursing, I know for sure that many would have sought out a more qualified nurse and not been so quick to settle for the newly diploma'd one standing in the hall and looking like she was ready to bolt to the nurse's lounge!

David has never hesitated to be a teacher. His great intelligence, high standards, and infinite kindness have won him the adoration of his patients, from his many years in private practice. He was a shining light to young residents during his decade at the Univ. of Washington as he sought to show, to share, to teach the exquisite craft that he had meticulously honed for so many years. And he was to become my beloved husband, some 13 years later. And to think our great love all started over a lumbar puncture!

David and I are into our 33rd year of marriage.. and it's our "BIG" love, as we call it. And that's why I AM HERE to introduce you to my terrific husband, David. He also happens to be a fine physician, mentor, teacher and the 67th President of the Western Neurosurgical Society - Dr. David Thomas Pitkethly!