Hello. I’m Rick Weber -- Susan Weber’s other son.

Four years ago, my brother and I had the chance to speak at the retirement GALA for my parents. I wrote a joke for that event that I decided not to use, but which fits well here. And the joke was..

“Without a doubt, my dad’s single greatest asset is my mom. In contrast, he might rank somewhere in her top five ...”

All the attributes you’ve heard today, well, our mom really was all of that. It wasn’t an act – that was her.

Most of you probably didn’t know that my mom had pulmonary fibrosis. My mom would not have wanted to “burden” you with that information.

But more importantly, she was not one to be diminished by a disease. She was not going to be defined by a condition. And she was not going to “wallow” in a diagnosis. “Wallowing” was not in her DNA.
So she chose not to dwell on the diagnosis. Instead, she resolved to maximize the quality of her time left.

Typical of her attitude, she came to view her last year as a blessing -- as bonus time. Her original diagnosis gave her a life expectancy of only one to two years, a timeline she simply disregarded – And almost doubled.

Now, for her, maximizing quality of life meant more time enjoying aspects of her life that many of you probably didn’t know about.

- It meant more time at Hancock Point, that spot on the coast of Maine that my parents first discovered over 40 years ago.
- It meant “puttering about” in the flower gardens that she started there years ago. She could weed like nobody’s business!
- It meant taking more time to watch the eagles and loons and hummingbirds she loved – she was an avid birder, with a life list of hundreds of birds.
- It meant good food and wine, including her favorite pizza – black olive and anchovies. [We know, the guys at PAT’S Pizza in Maine could never believe it either!]
- It meant more New York Times Crossword puzzles – a perfect outlet for her great knowledge and vocabulary
And it meant good conversations with families and friends. That meant cocktail parties with the familiar cast of characters that make up the summer community of Hancock Point, Maine. Folks we’ve known for decades. And if you know my mom at all, you know she loved a good cocktail party!

And so it was no surprise to us that she hoped that when her time was up, she would pass at home in Maine, without a lot of fuss, without a lot of discomfort, and with that great view of Acadia and Frenchman Bay out her window.

My family visited my folks here in San Diego last February. Mom was still doing well. But by the time I saw her in Maine in May, her disease had progressed. Her doctors put her on oxygen, 24/7. But that didn’t stop her – she simply got an extra-long oxygen hose!

By the time we saw her in July, the act of walking from the living room to the kitchen had become exhausting. But she was herself in all ways except the physical – And she still found great joy in her life. We got her out for a great family dinner on that trip, and it was wonderful to see her chuckling at her grandkids and commiserating with my wife about these crazy Weber men.
In October, her body failed her. Her bed was set up so she could enjoy that great view of the Bay. And when I arrived, she smiled and recognized me right away. And we talked and got caught up on things.

I was struck by how much she was HERSELF in spirit and wit and intellect – she still had that gleam in her eye. We talked about news headlines, and talked about the cards and good wishes that came in the mail. Her pain was controlled as well as possible. The great laugh was gone, but she was quick and engaging and insightful.

HER ESSENCE WAS INTACT.

She was herself. She was as comfortable as she could be. She was loved. And she was home.

And she passed a day later, exactly the way she hoped she would pass: without a lot of fuss. Without a lot of discomfort. And with that great view.

It is such a rare thing to be blessed with the exit that you hoped you could achieve, and I am so pleased to be able to report that she went out as she hoped she would.

Now, this is not to be a somber event! Mom left us with strict instructions: When I go, have a party. She wanted good
conversation, a little wine, and lots of laughter. In short, she wanted the kind of cocktail party that she would enjoy.

But before we do that, I’d like to thank Chris Lindmark for organizing this event. My mom was a pro at events like this, and I think she’d tip her hat to you on this one!

I’m going to end with a piece of family history. It’s another story involving my dad’s mother. But this time, no prostitutes.

Now, to preface, you need to understand that Grandma Weber was widowed by her first husband, and pursued a career as a nurse and airline stewardess, when those were very uncommon choices. And when her second husband -- my father’s dad -- died suddenly, this single mother moved her young boys from New England back to the family farm in Stoney Ridge, Ohio. And she raised those three boys to be independent, industrious and respectful. So understand – this was a woman of substance, not easily charmed by just any pretty face.

So I give you my Grandma Weber’s take on my mom – from a letter she wrote to one of her friends in 1964:

“Greetings from Ohio. The very best news I can send is the happy announcement by Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Keim regarding the engagement of their lovely daughter, Susan, to Steve . . . .
“I think she is beautiful. There is no vanity or conceit. She is happy, uninhibited, wholesome, healthy, delightful and totally unaware of her charm. I know that my adjectives carry me away, she is intelligent, has a sense of humor, nice to know, easy to meet, and has a spontaneous gaiety which is contagious.”

Thank you ALL for the good times you shared with my mom. Thank you for the support you gave her. Thank you for your good wishes for our family. And thank you for coming here today.