

Kathy McKee Willis Riddel

First of all, Pauline – HAPPY, HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

What a stupendous thing it is to reach your 98th birthday and still have all your faculties about you, still being able to thoroughly enjoy each day with JOY, as you always have. Way to go, girl!!

I don't ever remember when you weren't a part of my life and world. You've just always been there. Your calm common sense and pragmatic, direct, loving approach to how to live life were very important as I was growing up, though I didn't know it at the time. You certainly were a wonderful role model and a true friend to my mom and dad.

You and Wayne hosted the rehearsal dinner the night before I married Larry. Your home was so welcoming, and you were so happy for me. A few years later, when I was home with my first son, John, you called my attention to what an exceptional child he was. Of course, as he was my first, I didn't have anyone to whom to compare him directly. I understood that you knew what you were talking about and heeded your encouragement to give him every opportunity – educational and otherwise – that I could in order to nurture this intelligence. He's turned out very well, and I still remember that conversation. Thank you for that guidance.

Another time, during a piano lesson when I again hadn't practiced, we talked about how I could use my music beyond only playing piano and viola. You told me that my abilities would open doors to me wherever in the world I went, introducing me to interesting people and fantastic opportunities.

You were so right. As it turned out, Larry and I moved around the world quite a bit, and I got to play with local symphonies and even sing the role of Golda in *Fiddler On The Roof*, with the British Players group in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The people I met through these encounters were awesome!

I think maybe what I remember the most is how positive you were about everything – good or bad. You encouraged me, by your example, to make the most of any situation in which I found myself. This has been such a blessing, but it only worked because I watched you do that yourself.

Again, thank you so very much for everything and sincerest love,

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