

Jessica Mary Bender

August 26, 1982 ~ October 24, 2020

Saturday, October 24th we lost our amazing sister, daughter, niece, wife, and mother, Jessica Mary Bender. Jessica was taken quickly and suddenly after a tragic accident while riding her horse.

Jessica was born and raised in Salt Lake City, Utah. She attended Highland High School, University of Utah and eventually Parson's School of Design in New York. Although Salt Lake was always home base, Jessica used any excuse and opportunity to travel and explore. She felt most at home in the outdoors and in nature. From a young age, Jessica would often be caught sleeping outside rather than inside in her room, even in the cold winter months. As she got older she expanded her adventurous spirit past Utah's borders and beyond. Jessica has explored so many remote and faraway places with anyone who dared follow her and sometimes on her own.

For as strong and adventurous as her spirit was, Jessica's heart and compassion was just as soft and sensitive. With an artist's eye, Jessica saw the world with unique color. It wasn't enough for her to see new places, but rather to immerse herself in the culture and appreciate the differences and lessons they had to offer. Jessica was a champion for those in need and could not pass up an opportunity to serve everyone that she met.

Jessica met and married her perfect match Thomas Bender in 2011. Jessica absolutely adored Tom and together they fed off each other's creativity to build two thriving businesses. When they weren't working, both Jessica and Tom could be found outside riding bikes, hiking or back-country skiing with their adored dogs. Jessica loved spending time with kids and could always be found down at their level immersing herself in anything that interested them. It is no surprise that Jessica's greatest joy came when she gave birth to her beautiful baby boy, Wolfe Lee Bender on August 10, 2020. Getting Wolfe here was a journey all of its own, and he brought instant happiness and calm to her heart. Jessica savored every moment she had with Wolfe.

Other than her precious Wolfe and Tom, Jessica left behind her parents, Sidney Franklin and Teri Lyn Baucom; her in-laws Gary and Carol Bender. Also, her siblings Sidney Lincoln Baucom (Liz), Paige Baucom Meek (Nathan), Zachary Hansen Baucom (Kacee); and brother-in-law, Jeff Bender. Jessica will be missed dearly by her nieces and nephews Charlie, Jack, Roger, Hank, Liv, Luisa, Marley, Ozzie and Jonah. Jessica also leaves aunts, uncles, cousins and countless friends struggling to cope with this loss. She is preceded in death by her sister Morgan Baucom.

Let us carry on her legacy. Hike that trail. Jump in that lake. Get on your bike. Walk instead of drive. Truly care for the welfare of others and serve silently - those you know and those you don't. Let your heart guide you.

In lieu of flowers Jessica's friends have generously set up a Go-Fund-Me to off-set medical costs and to help secure a future for her dear Wolfe.

Due to COVID, we do not feel like it is safe to gather at this time. It is our hope that by the summer we can all celebrate Jessica's beautiful life together. In the mean time, please follow this link to share your photos and stories of Jessica. Everything will be complied and a book will be created for Wolfe.

https://www.commemo.co/contribute/c70abd