Laura (Lori) Lee Talbot Smolka

April 9, 1958 ~ November 4, 2019

Laura (Lori) Lee Talbot Smolka passed on November 4, 2019 of cancer at age 61 in her Salt Lake City home while surrounded by loving family. Lori was born April 9, 1958 in Idaho Falls, Idaho to Elden and Sidney Talbot. She graduated from Bountiful High School in 1976 following which she attended Utah State University and the University of Utah. On December 7, 1979, she married Joseph Dan Smolka in the Salt Lake City Temple.

Lori was a thoughtful, compassionate, and generous woman. She lived her life with honesty and integrity; choosing to focus on others, especially her children. Her life was full of light, joy, and color. She found great happiness in encouraging her children's passions and talents. She spent hours at theater, music, sports, dance lessons, and performances in constant support of her children\s individuality. Later in life she gave that same support and love to her grandchildren. She found light, beauty, and purpose in her family.

Her love was the solid ground on which her children built their lives. If they had a problem she was guaranteed to be there helping them every step of the way. When they didn't know how to reach their goals, or even what their goals were, she would teach them to make a plan and then would work alongside to help them achieve those goals. She pushed each of her children to be the best version of themselves. She was incredibly reliable and loving; many close to her commented on what an amazing mother she was and sought her advice.

Lori's typical week would involve helping her children for hours with homework, working from home, ensuring nightly homemade family dinners, driving children to countless activities, watching or volunteering for many of those activities, and fulfilling her church callings. Each week she strove to spend quality time with each member of her family.

Lori was an advocate for her children and fiercely supported them. Her oldest, Jack, has special needs and she rose to the challenges that brought. She worked tirelessly with the Special Olympics and other programs throughout her life for the benefit of him and his wife, Michelle. For years she drove him to all his events, including five a.m. shifts for work. She recognized his specific needs and did all she could to ensure the best life possible for him. She worked hard to understand what resources were available and fought for him to be treated with respect and kindness.

She spent years working from home in various capacities so she could be present to raise her five children. She loved her work as a real estate agent and was known in the field for her integrity. She received numerous awards during her career for outstanding performance. Lori served faithfully in many callings in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints including Primary, Relief Society, and Stake Young Women presidency. She loved her Savior Jesus Christ and tried to emulate Him in all that she did.

Lori loved the ocean, painting watercolor, and, most of all, spending time with loved ones. She never waned in her love and support of her family and friends. It was important to her that everyone felt happy and loved. Lori was the center of every family gathering; she had a talent for bringing people together and making things beautiful. She was a talented planner and coordinated countless parties for family, school classes, and church. Lori showed her love to those around her by giving thoughtful and meaningful gifts.

Lori was preceded in death by her mother Sidney Talbot. She is survived by her father Elden Talbot, her husband Joe Smolka, her five children (and spouses) Jack (Michelle) Smolka, Desirea (Jim) Forbes, Emily (Isaac) Hepworth, Sara (Cory) Klein, Sally Smolka, her eleven adorable grandchildren and her siblings (and spouses) Michael (Kim) Talbot, Steve (Penny) Talbot, Sherry (Richard) Martini, and John (Sandy) Talbot.

She will be dearly missed.

The family would like to thank the many friends, extended family, neighbors, and the Intermountain Healthcare hospice that have lent so much support during this difficult time.

The family expresses special thanks to nurse Josie.

A viewing will be held Friday, November 8 from 6:00-8:30 p.m. at Larkin Sunset Lawn, 2350 E 1300 S, Salt Lake City. A second viewing will be held Saturday, November 9 from 10:00-11:30 a.m. with the funeral to follow at noon at the Crestview Ward, 2795 Crestview Drive, Salt Lake City.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations to be made to Special Olympics.
https://give.specialolympics.org/page/contribute/utah19 or Special Olympics Utah

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