Katherine Norton Whetman

February 2, 1954 ~ May 6, 2017

A friend recently remarked, "beautiful, smart, funny, Kate." She made us laugh to the end. How we love her and miss her. She was always proud to have been born on Groundhog Day (1954). She was set free from this life May 6, 2017.

A talented actor and master of voices, she enjoyed performing in local theater and entertaining family and friends. She played the title role inI Remember Mama,delivering her lines in a pitch-perfect Norwegian accent. Her reading of \"Jabez Dawes, the Boy Who Laughed at Santa Clause\" was a cherished family Christmas tradition. Kate was active in the Utah Heritage Foundation, where she authored the docent script for the Devereaux House. She was also involved with the K.E.E.P. Yalecrest preservation project.

She was the general manager of A Woman\s Place Bookstore from 1987 to 1998. The following fifteen years were spent counseling students at University of Utah Career Services. In both of these capacities, she touched and influenced many lives.

Kate adored her children and grandchildren and was enormously proud of their many accomplishments and achievements. She and her granddaughter Brooklyn wrote a book about their adventures, illustrated by her niece Amanda, \"You Don\t See That on the Freeway.\"

Kate had many interests, among which were neither cooking nor gardening. She loved music, movies and, above all, books.She crocheted beautiful baby blankets and was an avid bowler. She also really liked chocolate, but "not the fancy kind." Her Corgi, Charlie, was a beloved and comical companion. Kate was a girl on the go. She enjoyed road trips and long drives with Lew and running endless errands with her sister. Best of all were the times spent with family and friends, visiting or playing games-- \"White Rabbit!\" Kate was the ringleader of a family girl gang we call \"Club.\" Her favorite place on earth was the porch at the Smith family ranch, where she could commune with nature on her own terms.

Kate had a compassionate heart and a can-do spirit. When an unidentified Asian woman was killed in a fall from a University shuttle bus, Kate organized a proper burial, including a graveside service, in Mount Olivet Cemetery. This was a bureaucratic challenge of mythic proportions, but she never faltered.

She once organized a used book sale in her yard which raised over $3,500 for the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson\s Research. In lieu of flowers, she would appreciate a donation to the MJFF. Here\s how: michaeljfox.org; 1-800-708-7644; Donation Processing, Michael J. Fox Foundation, P.O. Box 5014, Hagerstown, MD. 21741-5014. Kate made a valiant effort to donate her brain to eradicate what she called \"this pesky disease,\" but it is not possible to do that at this time in our area.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Ray and Donna Norton. Those left behind include her high school sweetheart and best friend of 43 years, husband Lew; children Peter Norton Whetman (Jessica June) Annie ValDez (Casey) and grandchildren Brooklyn, Paige, and Casey ValDez; sister, Sally Smith (Lee) and many loving friends, nieces, nephews and cousins.

Heartfelt thanks to her caregiver friends: Pat Jones, Llana Anderson, Jodie Topian and the caring women of Home Instead and Elevation Hospice.

A memorial service in appreciation of Kate\s life will be held at the First Unitarian Church, 569 S. 1300 East, onFriday, May 12 at noon, followed by a short walk to the grave site in Mt. Olivet Cemetery, then back to the church for food, drink, and reminiscences. Family will be happy to greet friends one hour prior to the service.

\"Life is not orderly. No matter how we try to make it so, right in the middle of it we die, lose a leg, fall in love, or drop a jar of applesauce.\" Natalie Goldberg