Dixie Amanda Hemingway

August 24, 1966 ~ March 6, 2017

On March 6, 2017, Dixie Amanda Hemingway was found dead (from what is expected to be natural causes) in her Philadelphia apartment by fellow employees of the National Park Service. Dixie, was born the 9th child to Betty Stewart (Wickham) and the late Vern Hemingway on August 24, 1966. Dixie grew up in the Salt Lake area and graduated from Kearns' High School in 1984. She lettered in Tennis and participated in student congress. Before high school, Dixie placed in statewide chess competitions. She played most sports and coached girls' basketball. For college, she moved to West Virginia and attended the University of Charleston where she joined the Crew team. Dixie returned to Utah and completed her Bachelor's Degree in Health at the University of Utah in 1992.

She read voraciously in her youth and continued writing stories and poems throughout her life. In August 2013, Dixie wrote: "I was a bookworm and I liked most genres: science fiction, western, fantasy, romance, with female heroines - I wanted to be one." Dixie didn't always feel listened to or understood by her siblings; so, she shared many of her stories with her nieces and nephews.

Never having spouse or child, Dixie adopted her siblings' kids and often their spouses. Dixie's life centered on her extended family, sports and being outside. She loved exploring nature while hiking, rock climbing, biking, rowing, laying out under the stars, and skiing. Dixie was introduced to skiing with her sisters, mom and Aunt Margaret in elementary school. After that first day skiing, in, what seems like a moment, Dixie was teaching people how to "Ski Utah" every winter - and on the payroll at Park West, Alta, and Snowbird. Off payroll, Dixie encouraged and taught any able niece or nephew (and their kids) how to ski. On December 5, 1996, Dixie wrote; "I remembered today how much I love the snow , so intense , so integral to me. I don't think I could ever live where it didn't exist. It makes me alive."

For the past 15 years, Dixie worked as a Ranger, Interpreter, Dispatcher, Union Secretary, and Security Assistant at Independence National Historic Park. When she arrived there, Dixie expressed concern about working in central Philadelphia with crowded spaces, narrow streets, sirens, and helicopters at night. She longed for "ropes, mountains, and caves." Although she preferred to be outside, over the years, Dixie gleefully shared the historical sites in Philadelphia including, Independence Hall, Liberty Bell, and the Poe house. Dixie displayed childish enthusiasm over Edgar Allen Poe's history and writings, especially "The Black Cat" - a story often re-told by her Father. Plus, Dixie managed to work temporarily away from the city at Lake Meade, NV and Shenandoah National Park, VA. Among the many parks, Dixie also worked at Yellowstone and Golden Spike National Parks, along with Dead Horse State Park near Moab, Utah in 1989. She spent 7 seasons at Timpanogos Cave Ntl Monument, coordinating scores of family hikes and memorable cave-tours. Before starting her interpretation job at Timpanogos, Dixie called it "another adventure and I can't wait to go smell the flowers' sniff sniff." Wind Cave

National Park, SD, welcomed Dixie May 2001. While there, she wrote about the smell of burnt ponderosa pines alongside a brook with cliffs and green rolling hills. She called herself a "slow poke" as she re-took the "pack test" struggling to carry a 45lb pack for 3 miles in 45 minutes. Dixie kept pushing herself, and continued trying to pass or reach or achieve, when others would have quit. Dixie fulfilled her unapologetic childhood determination, that when she grew up, she was going to be a "forest ranger in the summer and ski patrol in the winter."

Yet, it seemed every step presented road blocks to which Dixie had to break down, overcome, or capitulate. Nothing came easy for Dixie. But, through sheer determination and grit, Dixie spent most of her life pursuing and realizing her dreams. November 17, 1996 Dixie wrote about recent bike rides: \"I made it to the top of Millcreek [Canyon] or where the gate closed the road (5 miles up w/ several brakes),Ä¶ and last week I also biked the alpine loop on 6" packed snow. It marked a change , or a progression to keep going when your heart is dying. To do crazy things , that I've always aspired to but never felt I was good enough, tough enough. Now, I've hiked to Mtn tops , hmm.\"

In a 2001 letter, Dixie asked: "Do you think I will always be dreamer Dixie? Dreaming up what I want to be and endlessly pursing it? Will I know when I am happy? And be content? I believe I'll succeed or I'll go crazy. I do like adventure." Dixie's bucket list included a visit to Hawaii which she made in 2014. But, she died before making the sisters' trip to Cancun or being able to experience all those new adventures in store for Dreamer Dixie.

Dixie leaves behind her mother, Betty Wickham, and nine siblings: V. Rulon Hemingway, Colleen Sadler, Christine Ellis, Robin Hemingway, B. Joanne Van Valkenburg, Carma Hemingway, Jennis Hemingway, W. Marcus Hemingway, and Jerry Wickham, along with her beloved black cat, Velveteen Bernard Caboodles. Thirty-six nieces and nephews, and dozens of grand nieces and nephews survive Aunt Dixie. Her first "great-grand" niece, Reagan Jean Pankow, born shortly after Dixie's death, is the great-grand child of Dixie's sister, E. Pauleen Hemingway who proceeded Dixie in death by 26 years. Her Father, Vern T. Hemingway died 20 years' ago.

The celebration of Dixie's life will be held Saturday, March 25, 2017 10:00 a.m. at the LDS Ward Building, located at 4232 W. 5015 So. Kearns, Utah 84118. The viewing will be from 9:00-9:45 a.m. Interment at Larkin Sunset Lawn, 2350 East and 1300 South, Salt Lake City, Utah.

A memorial tree-planting ceremony will be held at Independence National Historic Park, Philadelphia April 3, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. in the Carpenters\ Hall courtyard between New Hall Military Museum and Pemberton House. The tree planting will be on the north side of New Hall, on Chestnut Street between 3rd and 4th Street. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations to the National Parks Conservation Association may be made in Dixie's name using the link below.

https://secure.npca.org/site/Donation2?df_id=1420and1420.donation=form1ands_src=ALGXXXX00WSCand_ga=1.44883