Heather Bennett

October 10, 1957 ~ March 23, 2019

Born October 10, 1957 to Moana Ballif and John Harper Bennett, Heather Bennett passed on March 18, 2019.

The eldest of six, Heather spent the first nine years of her childhood in Bountiful before moving to Salt Lake City with her family. Her siblings,ÄîJohn, Brandon, Marc, Craig, and Shaz,Äîcould regale you with stories of a happy childhood: falls from treehouses, bikes borrowed without permission, Grandpa Harold's Midway cabin and Christmas mornings on Mount Olympus Way.

In 1976, Heather graduated from Skyline, after surviving Hodgkin's disease and excelling at debate, theater, and journalism.

Emboldened by her teenage accomplishments, Heather traveled in Israel and Egypt, before attending the University of Utah, where she studied English Literature and did further study abroad in London. Throughout her life, Heather was an exceptional writer and a voracious reader. As a young woman, she took long car trips alone with an open book on the steering wheel.

She began dating Kevin Hanson in 1983, and married the filmmaker and teacher that December. Together they lived in San Francisco, Dayton, and finally again in Salt Lake City for the last 26 years. She is survived by Kevin and their three children, Samuel Bennett Hanson, Hannah Harper Hanson, and Emma Rose Hanson.

In a loving home, Heather nurtured her kids, never treating their opinions as unimportant because of their age. Nieces and nephews often sought our her wisdom, and the archive of familial memory she carried. Taking care of family was second nature to Heather, and she put in tremendous work at the end of each of her parents lives.

Professionally, Heather was an accomplished print editor. She worked for Wadsworth Publishing Company in San Francisco and later for Gibbs Smith in Layton before founding her own business, Hither & Yon Editing and Publishing.

Outraged by the closure of Lowell Elementary School, which Sam and Hannah attended, she ran for the Board of Education in 2004, forming close bonds with fellow activists. Heather served on the board until her death, including several years as Vice President and President. In her work in the schools, she insisted on structures that supported equity,,all children being able to reach their highest potential. She worked to ensure that health and other benefits were made available to the domestic partners of employees. She also spearheaded the board resolution that assures that the district \"cannot and does not\" ask students' families to disclose immigration status.

Heather was involved in the founding and development of two public charter schools in the Salt Lake City School District,,the Salt Lake Arts Academy and the Salt Lake Center for Science Education. After her two daughters graduated from SLCSE, she continued to support the school as a science fair and Poetry Out Loud judge, a debate coach, and an advocate on the School Board.

Her love for language was infectious. She delighted in books read aloud, stolen moments devouring literature alone, and dozens of trips to the Utah Shakespeare Festival. In Utah's National Parks and Forests, and on visits to wilderness from Wales to Oaxaca, Heather spoke eloquently about geology and the night sky, sharing the wisdom they taught her. We will remember Heather in those wild places, and anywhere a love of words and beauty flourish.

Funeral services will be held at the Garden Park Ward, 1150 East Yale Avenue, on Saturday, March 23. Friends and family can call as early as 10:00 AM and the service will begin at noon. Everyone should feel welcome to attend.

The family has set up a college scholarship in Heather's honor. Recipients will be young women graduating from SLCSE. In lieu of flowers, donations should be made to Nonprofit Fiscal Services, 177 East 900 South, Suite 202, SLC, UT 84111, with Heather's name on the reference line. Follow the link below to donate online:

https://secure.lawpay.com/pages/nonprofit-legal-services-of-utah/trust