

Tracey Thompson untethered her beautiful soul at sunrise on January 30, 2023, eager, as always, for her next adventure. Just as she taught so many of us to live true and to revel in the wonders of life, she also taught us how to move on with love and grace.



Tracey with her dogs at Iron Springs.

Tracey was born in Wenham, Massachusetts as the sixth child of Nancy (Leet) and Cameron Saunders Thompson. When she was just six months old, her father died in a car accident on his way to work. Her mother remarried and added four more siblings to make it a pack of ten kids, all of whom Tracey adored. Tracey is predeceased by her beloved sister, Joan.

Tracey met her first spouse, Gene, when they were teenagers at Philips Exeter Academy. Tracey and Gene welcomed two children, Michael and Alexandra, before divorcing. Tracey met her current spouse, Kellye, during law school when Alex and Michael were toddlers. They began living together as a family soon after that, in August of 1994. Kellye later adopted Mike and Alex with Gene's blessing in one of Washington's first third-parent adoptions.

In 2003, Tracey found her life's calling when she joined Teamsters Local 117 as a Staff Attorney. She reveled in championing workers' rights and was a formidable advocate in mediations,

arbitrations, and court proceedings as well as at the bargaining table. Her opponents often mistakenly assumed Tracey's big smile and easy-on-the-eye looks made her a soft target; it was a mistake they only made once. Being on the other side when she locked eyes and stared down injustice was not an experience one soon forgot.

She became the first woman to lead Teamsters 117 when she was elevated to Secretary-Treasurer in 2008, winning a white-ballot re-election in 2010. When asked what she was most proud of in her work, she refused to cite any one accomplishment. She said anything that gave her members dignity was her highest honor. Her efforts were recognized widely, including with the [Mother Jones Award in 2015](#). She was passionate about mentoring the next generation of leaders, and her influence has reached many individuals in labor and law. Her Teamsters family has honored her life and legacy [here](#).

When her metastatic cancer forced an early retirement in 2016, she was delighted to hand the reins to her trusted friend and colleague, John. While Tracey's retirement lasted about five minutes (when John asked, she jumped back in as General Counsel and held that role until her recent (second) retirement), it prompted one of the happiest moments of her life. Her son, Scott,

whom she birthed at 17 and allowed to be adopted, reached out to connect with her for the first time after reading about her illness and retirement. Tracey and Kellye welcomed Scott and his soon-to-be husband Justin into their lives with open arms, having celebrated Scott's birthday each and every year along with Alex and Michael as they longed for Scott to find and contact Tracey.

Tracey loved traveling, gardening, vacuuming (especially right before leaving the house for a trip), playing with her grandson, roaming the woods and beach with her dogs Missy and Raven, laughing (let us hear that explosive laugh forever!), and being among her families and her friends talking, scheming, eating and drinking. Lobster was a favorite and one especially epic Christmas Eve Feast of the Seven Fishes saw her tackle at least three (accounts vary!) of these crustaceans.

Her Teamsters family, her huge East-coast family of origin, as well as her Seattle and Bainbridge Island family and friends eagerly await her continued love, guidance, and ass-kicking in whatever form she can send them. Most of all, we want Tracey to know that we love her forever. We will always be grateful that we got to share our lives with her.

If you would like to remember Tracey, we ask that in lieu of flowers you donate to the Teamsters Solidarity Scholarship Fund (mailing address [here](#)) or at this link to the [Orion Center for Integrative Medicine](#).