

Margery Beth Brown



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Margery Beth Brown died at home on Sunday, July 9, 2006, of ovarian cancer. Marge was born in Columbus, Ohio on March 28, 1956, the youngest daughter of artist Pauline Slepicka Brown and Walter Nelson Brown, Professor of Horticulture and Head of the Vegetable Crops Division at Ohio State University. Marge spent her young life in Ohio and Colorado. She worked as a Forest Service firefighter and ranger in the Coconino National Forest of Arizona, and as an Outward Bound instructor. She moved to Olympia, Washington in 1977 to attend The Evergreen State College. After graduating, she began her lifelong career as faculty and staff for the college. Her inspired teaching and dedication to her craft were instrumental in the decision to include animation in Evergreen's full-time curriculum. She was a respected colleague and cherished member of the Olympia community with an uncommon willingness to contribute as both a leader and collaborator. Marge built a diverse portfolio of creative and professional achievements: she received her Master's degree in Film Theory and Motion Graphics from Antioch International University in Yellow Springs, Ohio; her photographs appeared in Audobon Magazine and National Geographic; she was the sound engineer for live performances by such artists as Sweet Honey in the Rock, Ferron, and Lily Tomlin; she co-founded and for eight years was the director of the Northwest International Lesbian/Gay Film Festival; she served in residence at the California Institute of the Arts in Southern California; she produced the short film, "Meeting Magdalene"; and she was a co-producer and camera person for the award-winning feature film, "Group". Marge's humor, unique vision, and meticulous craft were never more evident than in her animated works, including "Mitosis", "No Place Like Home", and "The Cat Couch". For almost thirty years, Marge shared her life with her partner, Helen Thornton. Together, they were models of enduring love and commitment. Marge and Helen, along with two other lesbian/gay couples, worked with the Washington Federation of State Employees to secure domestic partnership benefits for all Washington State employees. They collaborated on many endeavors -- most important, in 1984 they became parents to their son, Asa Brown Thornton. Marge will always be known for her generosity, her graciousness, and for her unflinching ability to see the value of every person she encountered. Her compassion, patience, and thoughtfulness set her apart as a genuinely good person. Marge was preceded in death by her parents and by her sister, Kathy Jean Brown. She is survived by her sisters, Marilyn Kay Brown and Janet Elaine Brown; two nephews and one niece; two grand-nieces and two grand-nephews; her son, Asa; and her partner, Helen. A private ceremony will be held at the Delphi Pioneer Cemetery this Saturday, July 15, 2006. A memorial service is being planned for the fall at Evergreen. Flowers may be sent in Marge's memory to Panorama City Convalescent and Rehabilitation Center or to Mother Joseph's Care Center. Donations may be made directly to the family for an Evergreen scholarship fund being set up in Marge's memory. To leave online condolences for the family, please go to: [www.funeralalternatives.org](http://www.funeralalternatives.org) Arrangements by Funeral Alternatives of Washington, (360) 753-1065.

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A special thanks... During the nearly thirty years of Marge Brown's partnership with Helen Thornton, Helen's family offered their unflinching love and support to Marge. Acknowledgement of these family members was inadvertently overlooked in the obituary that ran for Marge in the July 13th edition of The Olympian. These family members include Marge's mother-in-law and father-in-law, now deceased; five sisters-in-law and four brothers-in-law; seven nephews and four nieces; and one grand-nephew. To read Marge's obituary and to leave online condolences for the family, please go to: [www.funeralalternatives.org](http://www.funeralalternatives.org) Arrangements by Funeral Alternatives of Washington, (360) 753-1065.