Diana Josephson

Diana H. Josephson, 69, who was known for her vision in revitalizing organizations ranging from government agencies to nonprofits, died March 6 at her home in Boulder, Colo., from complications of cancer.

Ms. Josephson, who previously resided on a sailboat in Annapolis for many years, spent much of her more-than-40-year career in the Washington, D.C., area, beginning in 1959. At her death she was one of five associate directors of the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder.

Born in London, England, she began her career as a lawyer, holding degrees from Oxford and George Washington universities. She was a member of the bar in both Britain and the United States.

A naturalized U.S. citizen in 1962, she coordinated youth activities in Washington, D.C., for the city government and eventually oversaw programs run by 22 agencies. After heading the American Civil Liberties Union for the Washington area for three years, she joined the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in 1978. She managed the weather satellite service and the commercialization of the Landsat satellite system through 1982.

She worked in various positions in the aerospace industry and then rejoined NOAA as chief operating officer and deputy undersecretary for oceans and atmosphere. During the modernization of the National Weather Service she spearheaded development of a $2 billion annual budget. For her contributions to major improvements in climate forecasting, she earned NOAA's special recognition award for lifetime service.

In 1997 she moved to the Navy as principal deputy assistant secretary for installations and environments. Among her duties was finding an environmentally friendly way to dispose of napalm left from the Vietnam War. She received the Navy's highest civilian honor, the Distinguished Public Service Award.

From 2000 to 2004 she was senior vice president for Environmental Defense.

Her partner of 30 years, Jim Alexander, died in 2001. Avid sailors, they lived on sailboats most of their life together in Annapolis, on the Potomac in Washington, D.C., and at a marina in New Jersey when she worked in New York.

Surviving are three siblings, Jean Hayward Branston of Highworth, Wiltshire, England, Roger Hayward Bailey of London and John Hayward Bailey of Oxford, and numerous nephews and nieces.

A celebration of life will be held at 3:30 p.m. Monday at the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research Auditorium, 3080 Center Green Drive, Boulder. Additional services will be held at 2 p.m. April 29 at Friends Meeting of Washington, 2111 Florida Ave. NW, Washington, D.C.

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