

Adrienne Anderson, longtime environmental activist who worked with labor unions, low income and other neighborhoods affected by industrial pollution, Denver neighborhood associations, the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center, and a host of organizations on behalf of environmental justice, passed away on September 7, 2011, after a five month battle with brain cancer. A memorial service and celebration of Adrienne's life is planned for **November 6, 2011, from 1:00pm to 4:00pm** at the **Altona Grange Hall, #127, 39th and Nelson Road, Longmont, Colorado**, just east of North Broadway (Hwy 36) in Boulder. Adrienne's friends, supporters, and co-workers are invited to share light refreshments and remembrances and to honor her life. In lieu of flowers, a donation may be made to the college fund set up for her daughters at the Public Service Credit Union. Checks may be made out to Erin and Sarah Smile and sent to them for deposit at 306 Peery Parkway, Golden CO 80403.

With Anderson's death, Colorado lost a courageous fighter for environmental justice. Adrienne worked with many environmental organizations in Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, New Mexico, and Oregon. Her projects ranged from improving services provided by electrical utilities to rural communities, to protecting Pinon Canyon from encroachments by the US military, and to fighting contamination of farmlands, watersheds, city parks and lakes with toxic and radioactive wastes. Though



Adrienne Anderson (1952 - 2011)

environmental work is always tough, Adrienne never shirked from really hard tasks. While it is relatively easy to take on less controversial causes such as wilderness protection, energy policy, general air and water quality enforcement,

global warming, it is an entirely different matter to challenge defense contractors, Denver Water, and the corporate establishment of Colorado. Adrienne was an activist with the Toxic Alliance Campaign when she came to Colorado. There, she helped to publicize the failure

to truly protect workers from plutonium contamination, and the subsequent failed clean up of the remains of the Rocky Flats Nuclear Plant. Her most celebrated campaigns began with the Friendly Hills neighborhood in Southwest Denver. Unusually high cancer rates were discovered there near the Martin Marietta plant, especially among young children. Cancers were associated with Martin Marietta's practice of pumping effluent from production of rocket fuel into aquifers and pipelines serving the area's water supply.

After being appointed by Mayor Wellington Webb to the Denver Metro Wastewater Reclamation District Board specifically to represent worker and union concerns, Anderson uncovered a massive cover-up of ground and surface water contamination by rocket propellants in suburban southwest Denver by Lockheed-Martin, and ground water contamination by toxics and radio-nuclides from Rocky Flats and other sites. These toxic materials were being illegally dumped into the Lowry Landfill, whose effluent enters the Platte River and leaches into aquifers providing water to the Denver Metro area. While the city of Denver has always claimed that there has been no plutonium contamination at Lowry, it is undeniable that the Lowry landfill received toxic materials from Rocky Flats, Coors, and other corporate entities. Workers with Metro Wastewater sued under the OSHA because they had no protection against the contaminants that were

being flushed into the wastewater system at Lowry Landfill.

Anderson was asked to serve as an expert witness in the case. Federal whistleblower Judge David W. DiNardi of Boston fully vetted Anderson's documentation of radiation at the Lowry Landfill and found it "most credible" and "well-founded." Comparing her to top whistleblowers like Erin Brockovich and Karen Silkwood, he ruled in her favor on every issue before him. His ruling was subsequently reversed by Bush appointees in the Department of Labor on a technicality. The contamination against which Anderson fought continues in the Denver area.

Judge DiNardi's analysis and a series of articles in the *Westword* by Eileen Welsome remain the most thorough discussions of Anderson's work. Welsome's articles won a Pulitzer Prize for investigative reporting, and provide detailed analysis and key documents that substantiate the full range of Anderson's controversial claims about radioactive material that was dumped at the Lowry Landfill and now is being clandestinely removed

Anderson often ended up on the losing end of tough fights. She was repeatedly vilified publically and threatened by those whose crimes or duplicity she attempted to expose. Thugs threatened her in front of her home. A public relations firm was hired to smear her. Newspapers and media campaigns impugned her intelligence, her work,

and her morals. And pressure from politicians and corporate donors to the University of Colorado—the same corporations whose actions she had sought to uncover—caused her to lose her job as an instructor in environmental ethics and environmental research at CU, where the content and balance of her classes and her pedagogy had received the highest ratings for teaching excellence for a dozen years. Not long after Anderson's dismissal from CU, the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center hired her as the foremost investigative environmentalist in the Rocky Mountain region to continue her fight against pollutants, especially plutonium and other radio-nuclides. While continuing her association with the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center, her last employment was with the LIUNA construction workers' union, where she investigated potential development sites to assure that they were free from toxic contamination.

Adrienne Anderson was an extraordinarily courageous woman. She never flinched when challenging those arrayed against her. She was a role model as a community organizer and strategist. She was an inspiring teacher who influenced generations of students and future activists. Her passion for keeping families safe went far beyond her duties as an environmental scientist. She fought to keep corporations accountable to all of us so we could have acceptable clean water and a toxin-free environment. She truly did pass her legacy on to her children and all

those who work very hard to keep their families safe from contamination. At the time of her death, Adrienne was working with Denver neighborhood organizations to stop the use of recycled water contaminated with Lowry effluents in City parks—resulting in the drowning death of numerous waterfowl—and contamination of playgrounds, schoolyards and recreational areas.

Adrienne Anderson was born on February 10th, 1952 in Dallas, Texas. She grew up in Texas and received her BA in Sociology from Southern Methodist University and her MA in Environmental Sociology from the University of Oregon. She is survived by her two daughters, Erin, 20, and Sarah, 16, and a host of life-long friends, family members, admiring co-workers and supporters. Adrienne never stopped fighting. In 2005, she was awarded the very first Edward Abbey award for support of the environment. In June 2011, just weeks before her untimely death, she broadcast a call on KGNU radio to the public, warning people about the danger of harmful toxins in their water. The proclamation below was written just days before her passing and left at her house by one of the organizations with which she worked. It exemplifies the breadth of her commitment and engagement. Unfortunately, Adrienne did not live to read it.

A Resolution of Thanks by INC PARC

**Denver Inter-Neighborhoods
Cooperation Parks and Recreation
Committee (INC PARC)**

**A Resolution in Honor of and Respect
for Adrienne Anderson**

**Whereas, the Inter-Neighborhood
Cooperation Parks and Recreation
Committee (INC PARC) has had the
distinct honor and privilege of having as
a guest and member, Adrienne
Anderson, and**

**Whereas, Adrienne Anderson has been
a woman who throughout her life has
stood for justice and progressive social
change, worked with labor, farmers,
students and community-based groups
throughout Colorado, the Midwest and
the Western United States, and**

**Whereas, she has spent many years
working to protect communities from
radioactive contamination, to raise
awareness for and implementation of
preventive public and occupational
health policies, and**

**Whereas, she has performed
exhaustive research and has been a
tireless advocate for the public interest
regarding environmental hazards and
an enlightened national environmental
policy, and**

**Whereas, she has spent more than two
decades fighting the plan and
subsequent flushing of the Lowry
Landfill, plutonium-contaminated,
Superfund site into the publicly owned**

**Denver Metro Sewage District
treatment works, and**

**Whereas, recycled water containing
only effluent from this treatment works
and from this contaminated Superfund
site is being used in Denver's Parks, on
Denver parkways and at the Denver
Country Club, and**

**Whereas, Adrienne Anderson has
educated and made aware the INC
PARC members as to the public health
and safety concerns with regard to
possible environmental hazards and
need for preventive community health
policy reform posed by Denver's
recycled water;**

**Now therefore be it resolved: That INC
PARC expresses its everlasting gratitude
to Adrienne Anderson and pledges to
her that it will continue to diligently
pursue and act on issues surrounding
unanswered questions as to the long
term safety to animals, plants and
humans from recycled water which is
distributed in many areas of Denver
through the "Purple Pipes".**

**Offered this 20th day of August, 2011,
by the members of Denver's Inter-
Neighborhood**

**Cooperation (INC) Parks and Recreation
Committee (PARC), with gratitude and
affection.**