

## **Introduction of Kay Cumbow, by Kevin Kamps of Beyond Nuclear**

**ANA Awards Reception in Hart Senate Office Building, Room 902, Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C.**

**April 19, 2016**

Our annual Unsung Hero Award is given, to honor the memory of Beyond Nuclear co-founder, Dr. Judith H. Johnsrud, and the spirit and qualities she embodied. Judy herself, who passed on in 2014, received a Sierra Club lifetime achievement award, for a half-century of cutting edge anti-nuclear power and weapons activism.

Kay Cumbow is most deserving.

Working with many grassroots environmental and justice groups in the Great Lakes, Kay has devoted more than three decades of her life to the anti-nuclear cause. I just learned Kay was initially inspired to get involved by hearing a Marshall Islander speak, who, despite all she had suffered, selflessly travelled to the U.S. to warn us, to protect ourselves, against the horrors of nuclear weapons.

Kay is very hard-working and self-sacrificing. She has kept up a daunting pace not for years, but decades. “The Great Lakes Nuclear Hot Spots” map by the International Institute of Concern for Public Health gives you some idea of why Kay has worked so tirelessly, for so long. She has been in the middle of many of those fights against every step in the uranium fuel chain, from mining, milling, and processing, to reactors, radioactive waste storage and dumps, as well as transports.

She is a tremendous bridge builder, between the U.S. and Canadian environmental movements, as well as with Native Americans, who are so often on the front lines of these fights. Her vigilance on behalf of the irreplaceable Great Lakes, drinking water supply for 40 million people in eight states, two provinces, and a large number of indigenous First Nations, is astounding.

Kay has maintained a determined, fearless spirit when confronted with challenges and setbacks in countless David versus Goliath nuclear fights. Just as Judy Johnsrud never gave up after major defeats, but rather redoubled efforts, Kay didn't let the Nuclear Regulatory Commission rubberstamp of high-level radioactive waste dry cask storage on the shore of Lake Michigan defeat her. Rather, Kay went on, Paul Revere style, to warn of secretive schemes to ship radioactive waste on the waterways, to dump it on the shores, and incinerate it into the air. Kay's ringing the alarm, more than once, enabled us to stop such insane proposals, dead in their tracks, or at least has given us a fighting chance, even if the fight still goes on.

Like Judy Johnsrud herself, Kay is not only outspoken and stubborn (in a good way), but quintessentially modest. She has done all this as a volunteer, often without resources, and on her own dime. Often by driving for hours, in a document-laden car, that sometimes serves as office and sleeping quarters – assuming sleep is an

option. Often standing up to the authorities who deny and downplay the dangers, while protecting the nuclear industry instead of the public's health, safety, and environment.

For all these reasons and so many more, it is my honor to present the:

**Alliance for Nuclear Accountability and Beyond Nuclear award the 2016  
*Dr. Judith H. Johnsrud Unsung Hero Award***

*to*  
**Kay Cumbow**

***For demonstrating tireless dedication and stubborn determination, despite daunting odds, in her creative, visionary work for a Nuclear-Free Great Lakes.***