



Wallis Marie Parmenter

February 13, 1944 - August 2, 2019

WALLIS MARIE (Sanders) PARMENTER, age 75, of Pueblo West died on August 2, 2019. She was preceded in death by her husband, John and parents, John “Ken” and Lila (Harrington) Sanders of Denver and numerous beloved members of her extended family. She leaves behind two wonderful daughters, Kelly and Kim, and a beautiful granddaughter, Peyton.

Today is a very good day to die;
Every living thing is in harmony with me;
Every voice sings a chorus within me.
All beauty has come to rest in my eyes,
Today is a very good day to die.
My land is peaceful around me;
My fields have been turned for the last time;
My house is filled with laughter.
Yes, oh yes, today is a very good day to die.

A beautiful young woman with a movie star figure, Wallis worked briefly as a fashion model in California. After graduating cum laud from Metropolitan State College of Denver and conducting graduate study at the University of Colorado and National Academy of Corrections, Wallis was a professional penologist & criminal corrections administrator; working 20 years in Colorado’s prison system and three years in private community corrections. She

successfully served as a Correctional Officer, Parole Agent, Supervisor, Manager, & Prison Warden. Wallis was highly regarded for her administrative prowess and strong ethical stand against a corrupt executive director who was forced to resign. A Colorado community corrections pioneer and champion of minority rights, in 1978 Wallis chaired La Plata County Community Corrections Board. In 1984, at Rifle, she became Colorado's first woman warden of a male prison and is the only woman to have served as Colorado DOC's Inspector General; working tirelessly to insure agency integrity, officers' safety, and humane treatment of prisoners. She was the first Warden of San Carlos Correctional Facility and Pueblo Minimum Center; administering the final phases of construction, programming, staffing, training, and initial operations of that special needs prison. Wallis took particular pride supporting development of the Therapy Dogs Program at PMC and San Carlos. Her career is featured in a 2017 book, THE FACES OF CHANGE: The Women Wardens of Colorado by S.J. Jones.

Beyond her profession, Wallis was a trained, accomplished classical pianist and gourmet cook. She cultivated beautiful rose gardens, restored antique furniture and was a highly respected Duplicate Bridge competitor. Wallis designed and oversaw construction of three luxury homes in which she later resided. In retirement, Wallis was a successful property manager and supporter of animal rights, while enjoying high desert landscaping.

In lieu of flowers, donations in the name of Wallis Parmenter may be made to PAWS for Life Animal Welfare & Protection Society, PO BOX 11208, Pueblo, CO 81001.

Per Wallis' request, cremation will take place and there will be a private family service at a later date.