

## ANN AZARI

“Do what you love, and success will follow,” said Ann Azari, who was an influential resident of Fort Collins for several decades. She served the city as mayor three times, owned a thriving import business, joined the boards of nonprofit organizations and became a leader in civic affairs, inspiring improvements and demonstrating initiative. She championed diversity and inclusivity and was honored for her contributions with a mayoral proclamation.

## EARLY LIFE AND LIFE SPAN

Harriet Ann Coates was born to Spencer and Grace Coates June 20, 1930, in Long Beach, California. She married Paul (Parviz) Azari in 1955 in Berkeley, California, where she earned a degree in history from the University of California at Berkeley. The couple had five children, Aaron, Victoria, Doran, Nina and Katherine. She died in 2009.

## COMING TO FORT COLLINS

Ann came to Fort Collins in 1963 when her husband accepted a position at Colorado State University. She quickly became a part of the wider community through joining organizations, including the Cultural Diversity Task Force. A proponent of the arts, she praised Open Stage Theater, a local amateur theatrical company, for its memorable performances and contributions to the culture of her adopted home. She shared her love of music with her children, ensuring that they received rounded cultural educations, and initiated Arts Alive, a cultural program promoting all the arts.

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

In 1989 Ann ran for City Council and was elected from her district. She was on the council until 1993, when she ran for mayor, an elective position in Fort Collins. She served three terms. She was also a member of the Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce and the Platte River Power Authority board. She served on the executive board of the Colorado Municipal League, bringing knowledge gained from that connection to her own community. She also served on the board of the Downtown Development Authority and was active in Boys and Girls Clubs here as well as Crossroads Safehouse, a safe haven for women experiencing domestic abuse.

## BROADER INVOLVEMENTS

Ann was active nationally as chair of the U.S. Department of Commerce Census 2000 Advisory Committee and co-chair of the U.S. Conference of Mayors Census Task Force. She also served on the National League of Cities Advisory Council. She owned and operated an import business, Caspian Ltd., in downtown Fort Collins until joining the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment in 1983, during which period she held several positions including associate director of the Governor's Job Training Office, Director of Field Operations, and Director of Information Resources. She was a member of the League of Women Voters of Larimer County board and active in the Mountain Prairie Girl Scout Council in Fort Collins.

## HER LEGACY

Ann believed in the power of community and made considerable efforts towards creating private-public partnerships. She was known for her sense of humor, intelligence, and commitment to bettering her community. She served three terms as Fort Collins Mayor.

#### TIMELINE:

1933—born in Long Beach, California

1955—married to Paul Azari

1963—moved to Fort Collins

1983—employed by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

1989-93—member of Fort Collins City Council

1993-1999—mayor pro tem and mayor

2009—end of life

#### QUESTIONS:

1. Why is it important for citizens to get involved with local government?
2. What differences can one person make?
3. How can one person make a difference?
4. How would you describe Ann Azari's legacy?

#### GLOSSARY:

Civic—Having to do with the governing of a local community

Diversity—differences among individuals

Executive board—the group responsible for making decisions about an organization

Inclusivity—making sure everyone is included

Legacy—the impacts a person makes in life that endure after death

Proclamation—a public declaration by a government official

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY:

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