

~ Volunteer of the Month ~

Activist seeks to ‘get people fired up’

By Carol Carpenter
RMC Communications Team

If there is one thing Tiffny Shanaughy would like to do as a Sierra Club volunteer—and for activists there is never just ONE thing—is to “get people a bit fired up” to help protect the environment. Rocky Mountain Chapter’s talented Convio administrator who designs and lays out our monthly *Peak & Prairie*, Tiffny astutely comments: “We’ve got a lot to be fired up about!”

One of Tiffny’s top suggestions to improve the planet and reduce one’s carbon footprint is this: Be a more thoughtful consumer by considering where things come from and where they will go before buying them. “These are items that end up in landfills, floating in ocean garbage patches, or worse, in an animal’s stomach. I’m not a big fan of consumerism and believe we could all live with a heck of a lot less stuff” she states with conviction.

A fan of social media and a member of RMC’s Communications Team, Tiffny gets particular satisfaction from posting articles on RMC’s Facebook and Twitter pages—topics can start discussions or get people excited. Among them: human population control, the decreasing potable water supply around the world, GMO foods, fracking, climate change, factory farms and polluted oceans. “The list goes on and on. I don’t think we can stand idly by and wait until governments figure stuff out,” she notes.

Particularly upsetting to her is the breakdown of governmental political systems that serve the interests of only a select few who control the purse strings. “This is definitely a hot topic for me,” Tiffny emphasizes. “It is very disheartening when a back-room deal takes precedence over what is best for the bigger picture. It’s frustrating to see politicians cave to big money, especially since it’s so hard to find those who have an agenda outside of their own interests. We have scientists around the world agree-



Tiffny Shanaughy

ing on climate change, yet many representatives in our government won’t even acknowledge it.”

Something ‘extra’ to do

Volunteering is not something this relatively new Denver resident has been doing for a long time. Moving here from the Philadelphia area more than three years ago with her husband and young son, she soon decided she needed something extra to do part-time. Seeing a Sierra Club ad on craigslist seeking a Communications Team volunteer, she responded.

“Now I can share with others environmental articles I find interesting and informative,” she says, adding that she chose Sierra Club because of its long and well-respected history to preserve the environment. “Grassroots efforts can still work and more and more people are joining the cause(s).”

Inspired by other RMC volunteers, she is pleased to have seen, for example, successful efforts that led to moratoriums on fracking in Longmont and Broomfield. More recently she has felt dismayed that the oil and gas industry “is much stronger than the morals and integrity of our politicians and that those bans were lifted.”

One favorite volunteer task has been learning how to use the Convio communications system. “As I become more familiar with the system, I hope to help out more with action alerts, and soon I’m going to be working on an electronic ballot for the upcoming fall Chapter elections. This will make it easier for our members to cast their votes via e-mail.”

Looking ahead, Tiffny would like to become involved more socially with other Club members. For example, she is considering taking part in hiking outings, such as Denver Metro Network’s popular Hike & Writes. “Getting out, meeting other members, hiking the trails and seeing beautiful scenery sounds wonderful,” she says. “Everything about Colorado has exceeded my expectations. After what I’ve seen so far, I can’t wait to see more.”

