

SOLUTIA

FROM

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cc:

SUBJ: Anniston

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Please see the attached article that appeared in
The Anniston Star.

Kevin

Kevin Cahill

Attachment

DSW 138441

STLCOPCB4038396



David Baker speaks to the audience Thursday night, helping West Anniston residents to form an environmental coalition to take on Monsanto over the use of PCBs in past years.

Bill Wilson/The Anniston Star

West Anniston wants environmental justice

By Jonathan Lifland

Star Staff Writer

Witness the birth of a grassroots movement in Anniston.

Flyers were passed at church services and tacked near street corners. Word of mouth spread through neighbors and friends. Then on Thursday came an evening meeting to tie it all together, along with a strong pitch to form into a group.

Organize. Visualize.

West Anniston residents began the embryonic stages of becoming an environmental justice coalition Thursday, lending their bodies, voices and pocket change to form a group to take on mighty Monsanto for previous contamination that could affect their health.

A group of nearly 60 formed under the banner of the Alabama African-American Environmental Justice Action Network, listened intently as organizers delivered the message that all those present must get tested for possible contamination of themselves, their children and their property.

Monsanto, now Solutia, manufactured polychlorinated biphenyl's, or PCBs, for years at its west Anniston plant, and nearby residents are now worried that they may be suffering the effects from years of exposure to the chemical.

PCBs are a suspected carcinogen that has caused cancer in animal testing, although human testing has never

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Justice: EPA assistance sought

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been conducted. West Anniston residents learned that people were there to help them in their quest for justice and for medical testing to determine their long-term health.

A petition against both Monsanto and Solutia was circulated through the throng gathered at the Anniston Funeral Home, requesting Environmental Protection Agency assistance in finding the extent of the contamination.

The work is likely to lead to further litigation, suggested Thandi Chimurenga, an organizer with the Atlanta-based Southern Organizing Committee for Economic and Social Justice.

"They need to pay us for the results from their actions," she said. "The people of west Anniston need to be organized to help the residents of west Anniston. My question is 'What are y'all prepared to do.'"

Solutia has repeatedly faced challenges from a series of lawsuits claiming environmental damage, and a similar class-action suit is scheduled for

early next year.

Many in the crowd had not been involved in previous lawsuits and needed guidance, Ms. Chimurenga said. Environmental justice, aid her group seeks to bring, can right the wrongs of ill health and behavioral problems from the chemical.

Mentioning a litany of symptoms that included dizziness, arthritis, unexplained illness and attention deficit disorder, local organizer and former Monsanto employee David Baker declared that PCB's are spread throughout a large portion of west Anniston, and residents needed to sign the petition to initiate EPA intervention and remediation.

By the end, folks were reaching into their pockets, collecting for the new, independent group. Further meetings were scheduled and plans laid to widen membership within the fledgling organization.

"We need some answers tonight for the community that's been left out," he said. "The concern must come from within. You all live in an area that's been contaminated."

The Anniston Star

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