

# LITA of Contra Costa Love Is The Answer Summer News 2023

A Non-Profit Public Charity since 1980



Gardening with Lily, AD staff Greta & Lynn

**MISSION STATEMENT:** LITA of Contra Costa involves youth, families, and aspiring artists as community member volunteers to help fulfill our mission to improve the quality of life for disabled and senior persons living full time in skilled nursing facilities, post acute and memory care and hospice hospitals in Contra Costa County.



Pittsburg SNF: AD Melanni, Jake and Victoria



Best Volunteer Katey



John helping Lynn out at new Bayberry Garden



*LITA GARDENS for patients are maintained in Pittsburg, Bayberry Concord (photos above) and Martinez. El Sobrante and Walnut Creek SNF need funding to go ahead. Work in 2023 done thanks to a large Share The Spirit grant, a generous gift from El Cerrito City Club, Beswick Family Trust at Eastbay Community Foundation, Phillips 66, Mechanics Bank and Chevron and Johnston & Johnston retiree foundations.*

**LITA of Contra Costa donors list including individual gifts will appear in our Fall Winter Newsletter.**

*LITA ELECTRONICS gift programs are still in place and expanding to new skilled nursing facilities (SNF). Our budget is divided between electronics, holiday events and garden programs. Tablets, sturdy cases, headphones, smart phones are not provided by skilled nursing facilities. LITA donates them for use by patients in Martinez, El Sobrante, Pittsburg, Walnut Creek and Concord (20 to a Bayberry sister-facility in Pleasanton, Alameda county) Pleasant Hill Post Acute Care & Rosewood Manor Care has received dozens along with Pittsburg Skilled Nursing, who also requested and got a radio and galaxy starlite room projectors.*



Pictured here are just a handful of recipients made happier by their own personal LITA ipod or tablet since 2013

**LITA OF CONTRA COSTA LOVE IS THE ANSWER PO Box 121 Port Costa CA, 94569**

## LITA of Contra Costa Warmly Welcomed Sandra Olson to our board of Directors June,19, 2023



Victoria, Pat, Bunny and Linda 2010



Linda Daniel, Joan Finton & Pat Berndt 2011



July 4<sup>th</sup> LITA, booth crew 2012

*It is impossible to say how very much we miss Pat Berndt and her exemplary service on LITA's board. It may (or may not) be time to unpack the old tent again for a July 4 raffle at the El Cerrito City Fair. Either way, thinking of Patsy, it's Onward and Upward for LITA*



**Sandra Olson LITA of Contra Costa Board Director [sandraolson500@gmail.com](mailto:sandraolson500@gmail.com)**

Sandra Olson was born in Indianapolis, Indiana in 1955, lived in Chicago, then Wheaton IL until age 14. Her family moved to Walnut Creek, where she graduated from High School and later from Diablo Valley College. Sandra makes her home in the Rockridge District of Oakland.

*Sandy's first trip to Africa was to Kenya where she turned 23 and met Joy Adamson (of Born Free fame), in Samburu National Reserve, Kenya. Sandy worked in the travel industry for almost 25 years, seeing most of the U.S. Europe, Canada, Latin America and Antarctica, but especially Sub Saharan Africa: Kenya, Tanzania, Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe & South Africa.*

After 9/11, she worked for an Emeryville bio-tech company, then did recruiting for usability studies. Sandy is currently a part-time office manager for an acupuncture clinic in Berkeley.

Her 11 year old golden retriever Freya is an important part of Sandy's life. They volunteered for [TherapyPets.org](http://TherapyPets.org) (animal assisted therapy) visiting SNF and assisted living facilities. [Paws to Read](#), where grade-school children read to volunteers' dogs in Alameda, Oakland & Berkeley public libraries was another pursuit of theirs until the pandemic. Sandy expresses hope and wishes to support LITA to ease back into a viable pet visitor program, as doors open up again to this heart- warming activity.



**Linda Daniel LITA of Contra Costa Board Chair and CFO [danielbucket@acweb.com](mailto:danielbucket@acweb.com)**

Born in Berkeley, third generation Bay Area native, Linda Daniel began her work life for 6 years with an insurance company. Working for 20 years, she's been retired now for thirty years. Linda enjoyed tennis early in her retirement. Eventually was invited to work for a local family owned mortuary as a decedent affairs clerk, which she enjoyed very much as she was treated like a part of the family. After that business was sold she worked at another mortuary in Lafayette. Widowed in 1998, Linda has remained active in her local Episcopal church since 1967. She has served on the LITA of Contra is currently caring for her eighth feline friend, a darling tuxedo named Zoey



**Barbara Schneider** LITA of Contra Costa Board Secretary [avebarb@aol.com](mailto:avebarb@aol.com)

Barbara Schneider is a retired Chevron employee. She later worked at Phillips 66 Refinery when she was introduced to Victoria Ryan while at P6 and became a LITA Board member. Barbara enjoys our Friday afternoon LITA Music Zooms with musicians, singers & dancers performing for nursing facility residents. While at Phillips 66, Barbara was Committee member for 15 years with The Walk of Honor fundraiser to honor and celebrate the service of our military veterans. Funds raised were divided between the Viet Nam Veterans of Diablo Valley and Crockett Community Services District. Barbara did a fantastic job requesting and obtaining raffle items. Over 14 years she was instrumental in raising over \$475,000 to be donated. Barbara now volunteers four days a week with Rebuilding Together Solano County (RTSC) a mobile food pantry program serving 16 sites in Solano County via Feeding America, Food Bank of Contra Costa/Solano Counties and Vallejo Community Presbyterian Church. RTSC volunteers distributed more than 750,000 pounds of food serving 5,000 households each month.

Barbara enjoyed traveling with her late husband Avery and the two of them visited over 40 countries together. She is looking forward to doing more travel with good friends this year and in the future.



**Joan Finton** LITA of Contra Costa Board Director [Joanfinton1525@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Joanfinton1525@sbcglobal.net)

Joan Finton is a working artist and a long-time teacher of art. After moving to the Bay Area from NYC where she taught art in the city's high schools, she continues teaching in her home-studio, and through the auspices of the Richmond Adult School, in several convalescent hospitals. She taught briefly at NIAD, an art studio devoted to fostering creativity in developmentally-disabled adults.

Joan comments, "To observe the pleasure people experience when they make something they never thought they could do, is the great reward of teaching". As a printmaker and a valued member of the California Society of Printmakers, she has exhibited widely and her work is in a variety of private and public collections. And at the age of 93, she is happily still teaching, and making art! Her service on LITA's board began in 1983 when she was recruited by LITA of Contra Costa's founder, Iris Suhl.



**Bunny Daly** LITA of Contra Costa Board Director [b.coffman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:b.coffman@sbcglobal.net)

Bunny Daly was born in Memphis, TN, lived in St. Louis, Missouri. She has lived in northern California for the last 40 years. Bunny comes from a large family with eleven siblings. Her last family reunion had 85 attendees. She worked for Chevron Corporation in finance for over 30 years. She became a LITA volunteer in 2008, LITA's Central County Volunteer Coordinator 2012 through 2014. Since then, she has been serving on the LITA of CC Board of Directors. Bunny and her husband Mike Daly were very popular volunteers at Windsor Rosewood in Pleasant Hill for a number of years. Now the couple enjoys life traveling and spending time with their four sons, four grandchildren and two pups.



## Dear Friends, Volunteers and LITA Donors

## Happy Summer 2023 from Director Victoria Ryan



John Gruenstein zoom host



Co Host Victoria Ryan



Brooke Aird & William Beatty



Randy Burge & Hali Hammer

Dr Alan Brast



Sarah Adams & Sadie Peake



Meso Tadeo



Tina Tiller



Ed Hilton



We've all been through so much since 2020. LITA of CC, serving seniors and disabled in skilled nursing, since 1980, remains particularly accepting & understanding of individuals taking any and all precautions not to expose themselves or others to any type of virus, and who wish to avoid getting caught in a crowd of people indoors. Facilities check temperature and current health status of any and all LITA volunteers who enter any facility. There are still quarantines, which make scheduling volunteers much more difficult.

**LITA extends our deepest condolences to John Gruenstein who has lost Carolyn, his wife of 53 years.**

Thanks to John, LITA recorded live and at a safe distance, a Music Show zoom, all Fridays since 2020. We welcome new performers Brook Aird, highly esteemed bay area concert violist with William Beatty, pianist and composer to our roster. View all shows at <https://www.youtube.com/@moodmusicians8761/videos>

**There is a natural beauty to LITA's interior patio gardens for nursing and post-acute care patients.**

Thanks to a Share the Spirit Grant, this year we launched two new interior gardens and maintained 3 established ones with funding from donors. Enjoy the cover photos of SNF patients in action in their recreational garden. Katie Alva was our main in-person volunteer visitor in 2023 and she graduates in June! This year so far Katie constructed a raised bed for seedlings for the launch of the patio garden at Bayberry Health Care. She made and brought 1000s of beautiful Valentines and Happy Spring cards to Tampico, Bayberry, Legacy and Pleasant Hill- Post Acute Care. Fall and winter 2022, Katie recruited friends and classmates from TAPS: Teen and Parent Service Society for LITA activities at Legacy Nursing & Rehab for expansion of a large patio garden. On a second group visit, the girls went room to room with Activity Director, Vanessa hanging hand-made lovely oragami crane mobiles made by Katey. The volunteers also made, delivered and installed a variety of patio garden ornaments, Happy Fall cards and Halloween decorations. More TAPS cards, were delivered to Activity Directors for residents and staff by LITA at Shields Nursing Center locations, in El Cerrito and Richmond, Pittsburg Skilled Nursing, Vale Care, in San Pablo and Greenridge Senior Care for Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living in El Sobrante. LITA is seeking local garden volunteers for a weekly or bi monthly garden visit at all of these locations.

**Bring your green thumb and let's have some fun. Call Victoria at 925 212 4573 Please do Donate!**

Love Is The Answer  
Victoria Ryan, LITA Director



Victoria in a Friday show hat



Lynn Jaeger, LITA's Best New Gardener

LITA's Board and Director gave these **JULY 4<sup>th</sup>** gifts in advance appreciation for donor support

First donors whose check or deposit is received by LITA of Contra Costa in donation amounts of: \$50 , \$100, \$200, \$500 or More,- will be contacted by LITA Director by August 4th and offered their choice of one of the special thank you gifts below. Please be sure your phone number or email address is written on your check in case you are an eligible gift recipient. To send your donation via Zelle use LITA's Director's email address: [victoria4lita@gmail.com](mailto:victoria4lita@gmail.com) and provide yours or mail your check to LITA's US postal address below.

*Thank you so much for helping LITA carry out another successful year of service*

*Two French red wines below were recommended for collectors not to be opened earlier than 2025 up to 2050! The Cote de Rhone you'll simply enjoy no matter when you open it. The Zu tisch Weiss is Austrian from Dry Farms Wines, as is the Italian white: l'archetipo. The Rayburn Chardonay is a good one from Sonoma County. These wines ranged from \$16 to \$45 per bottle at TJ's. Dry Farms Wines are \$35 and cannot be purchased in a store*



Red Collector blend



Olson's pick



Fine Bordeaux



Dry Farm Austria



CA Chardonay



Dry Farm Italia



Mata Ortiz Olla by Daniel Gonzales Valued at \$98  
Pot 6" tall and 21" around, includes wrapped stand



Joan Finton Lens Art brooches  
Lemon Lady



Valued at \$50 each  
Bearded Gent

 **A ONE HUNDRED DOLLAR AMAZON GIFT CARD** 



**Mail your donation to**  
**LITA of Contra Costa**  
**PO Box 121**  
**Port Costa, CA 94569**

**LITA OF CONTRA COSTA LOVE IS THE ANSWER [www.litaofcontracosta.org](http://www.litaofcontracosta.org)**

Write us at [victoria4lita@com](mailto:victoria4lita@com) with your info Zelle or call 925 212 4573