



# Connie J Lekas

AUG 6, 1944 - APR 1, 2017



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FUNERAL HOME, MEMORIAL PARK & CREMATORY

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## **Connie J Lekas**

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**C**onstantina “Connie” Lekas, born August 6, 1944 in Fargo, North Dakota to Constantine and Bernice, passed away at 1:11 p.m. on April 1, 2017. The time of death is significant as her late son Daniel’s police force badge number was 111. She grew up in Oakland. An artist, she attended California College of Arts and Crafts and was a prolific painter throughout her life. Her career was devoted to public education, working with special education students in the Castro Valley Unified School District for over 30 years. Connie was a fierce advocate for the arts, especially in the world of dance, playing a role contributing time, money and encouragement to young dancers in Castro Valley Performing Arts. In addition, she founded the nationally acclaimed, champion Castro Valley High School Dance Team. She herself had a passion for dancing, participating in numerous ballroom dance competitions. “Dance was an activity that Connie loved. She used dance to touch her soul and to touch the lives of others. The social and competitive ballroom dance worlds were lucky to have such a dedicated and passionate partner. Connie danced, taught, inspired, mentored and always left a smile while on that dance floor. She will truly be missed.” Bradley Montoya “Connie helped every child at the dance studio who needed it; feeding them, giving them rides and even buying costumes for anyone who couldn’t afford it. She was their biggest cheerleader, their confidant and their shoulder to cry on. Connie was someone the students knew they could rely on when other adults had let them down and someone that the teachers and faculty depended on to bring a smile to their face even on a difficult work day. There is now tremendous void where her once vibrant spirit filled the dance rooms.” Janet Taddie Always involved in finding ways to help others, Connie founded a local chapter of Operation Mom, providing support, both emotionally and through care packages to military and their family members. She was also a life member of the 100 Club, providing financial support to police officers and fire fighters killed in the



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line of duty. She was an honorary Rotary Club member, served on the Rodeo Parade Committee, a member of the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society. She volunteered her time in her children's classrooms, supported the high school football team as well as the cheerleading and other sport teams in addition to the P.T.A. During the Vietnam War, she served as a volunteer at Oaknoll Hospital. If a name could be ascribed to the words compassion, selflessness, caring and love it would be Connie. In all aspects of her life, her mission was to serve others. She was the "Yia Yia" or "Mom" to every child with whom she came in contact. She cultivated close, lasting relationships with her special education students and their families, keeping in touch with many of them long after they left her school. She was always a champion of the efforts of every child, meeting their various needs no matter what they were. "Connie's impact on the Special Education students of Castro Valley will be long felt after her passing. She touched the lives of many children and families with her caring and dedication. Those of us who had the pleasure of working with her will forever remember her unmatched commitment to provide the best. We love you." Teacher and Aaron aka Janice Peabody and Aaron Ackerman Part of Connie's kind hearted nature was exemplified in her love of animals – any animal that came into her life whether it was brought home by her children or specially selected. No matter the sort; alligator, octopus, fish, bird, kitty, or puppy, Connie took care of them, one way or the other. She especially cherished her last two French Bulldogs, Gucci and Chanel. Second to none however, was Connie's unconditional love and devotion to her two children, Daniel and Tiffany. This carried on to her granddaughter, Angelica and son-in-law, Aaron. Each of their relationships was uniquely special because she was their best friend. She never turned her back on them no matter how bad the situation. All lessons and wisdom she imparted were taught with love. Her house was a constant hub of activity to her children's friends as well, offering to all who entered a listening ear, advice, laughs, and support whenever needed. She encouraged and provided opportunities for her children and their friends to excel whether through words or a helping hand. She was a rock in her children's lives and cannot be replaced. "I will love you forever, my best friend and only other person I'll ever call Mom." Aaron "You will never be forgotten. You will always be loved and forever



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MINE! You are my sunshine...” Tiffany Connie was rich in friendships. To know her was to know a tough, fun loving, joyful lady with unparalleled spunk and a keen sense of humor. She was afraid of nothing, not even cancer. She took on this disease with her usual poise and grace, determined to give it everything she had, even at the expense of great pain. “Laughter was the name of the game for Connie and her great sense of humor will never be forgotten. I will miss my dear friend’s kind, generous spirit but know she will always be in my heart.” Teresa Moal Connie is survived by her daughter, Tiffany, Tiffany’s father James Dillon, her son-in-law, Aaron, granddaughter, Angelica, her Aunt Helen Lekas, Uncle Mitchell Lekas, nieces Julie Groff and Katie Rowley and her longtime companion Jerry Lecatsas. Her son, Daniel Garcia, his father John Garcia, sister Annie Lekas Rowley, nephew Dean Cabrera and her Aunt Bess Lekas predeceased her. When thinking about Connie’s life, the words of Dr. Seuss come to mind; “Don’t cry because it’s over. Smile because it happened.” She would have loved that. May her memory be eternal. Special request from Connie; If you would like to send flowers, she would love yellow roses and/or baby’s breath but please, no Lilies.



## Tribute Wall

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NF

**Norm And Pam Fobert** posted:

Stylish. Warm. Friendly. Accepting. Humorous. Compassionate. Selfless. Tenacious. Brave. Adventurous. Spontaneous. Talented. Dedicated. Devoted. Loving. In the short time we knew her, these descriptors were so evident in Connie. Her life touched so many and in as many ways. In the end, we discussed death and what lies ahead. She firmly believed she would go on living beyond this world and into the next. Death What a Wonderful Way to Explain It A sick man turned to his doctor as he was preparing to leave the examination room and said, "Doctor, I am afraid to die. Tell me what lies on the other side." Very quietly, the doctor said, "I don't know . . ." "You don't know? You're a Christian Man, and don't know what's on the other side?" The doctor was holding the handle of the door. On the other side came a sound of scratching and whining and as he opened the door, a dog sprang into the room and leaped on him with an eager show of gladness. Turning to the patient, the doctor said, "Did you notice my dog? He's never been in this room before. He didn't know what was inside. He knew nothing except that his master was here, And when the door opened, he sprang in without fear. I know little of what is on the other side of death, But I do know one thing . . . I know my Master is there and that is enough." Rest in peace, dearest Connie, until we meet again. Our love, Norm and Pam

April 15 at 12:13 PM

JT

**Janet Taddie** posted:

Connie taught me so much? she taught me to be compassionate, tolerant, to love unconditionally, to be patient, to forgive even when you feel you can't and most of all to treat everyone with love and respect. I, could never be the person that she was ? she is one hard act to follow...but I do know that I have learned a lot from her and that her presence in my life has forced me to hold myself to a higher standard. I have been truly blessed by her friendship and I am so very thankful that God brought her into my life. I will forever miss my friend, my partner in crime, my beautiful, Connie... I miss all of the laughs, the mischief and the heart to heart talks.. I miss her so very much -there are no words to describe this terrible sense of loss. I am so very thankful for the time that we shared..she will forever hold a special place in my heart and my children's hearts as well as all of the hearts of the children at the studio who knew her. Connie's was a life well-lived because Connie made a difference. The lessons that we learned from her and the lives that she changed are all ways that Connie will continue to live on thru all those who she touched. Connie will always be present in my heart and every time I see 111, I will know that my friend is by my side.

April 11 at 8:54 AM

TF

**Tfksanleandro** posted:

Coollest of the Cool Kids! Love u Connie!

April 11 at 7:41 AM



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JL

**Jerry Lecatsas** posted:

Connie and I first met in 1968. Her husband John Garcia was a mutual friend of mine. It was love at first sight, but she was married to my friend. John brought Daniel to see me soon after he was born (a very proud dad). Due to our Greek heritage we remained friends even after their divorce. Later Daniel, as a teenager would tell me to ask his mom out. We ended up married with Daniel as my best man. When he became a police officer he asked for badge #111 because that is my birthday. We were friends up to her last breath.

April 11 at 3:30 AM

BC

**Barbara Cabrera** posted:

I met Connie in 1967; her sister Annie and I went to Oakland High together. Annie married Bert Cabrera and soon we were all dancing 'salsa' and just having the greatest times ever. Connie's smile would light up any room. I do remember her love for Art; when she went to work for Swan's in Oakland I wondered what kind of job she was doing there and then one day someone handed me the newspaper and began telling me that Connie had drawn and put together Swan's advertisements which was a full page! I was so impressed and really proud I had known her. After we both got married and moved on in life, every so often we continued to run into each other along the way, she even came to one of my sons football games. We were so happy to see one another. When someone in our family was very sick Connie went to the hospital. When my grandson Ryan passed away 3 years ago Connie was there at my house weeping right along with us. I wish we could have spent much more time together, but grateful for the times we had. So glad we didn't hesitate to say 'I love you' to each other on our last visit ❤️🙏 Connie .. you will be greatly missed Barbara Cabrera

April 10 at 5:12 PM

JT

**Jennifer Tobia** posted:

Dear Tiffany and family, I have known your mother from the old Chabot Elementary School days when we were both Instructional Assistants.. She was part of our group and we spent time socializing throughout the years with Judy, Diane, Sandy, Sharon, Bernie, Barbara and others. It was always fun to be around your mother, she was so full of energy and was definitely a happy lady. Now she is spending time with your brother, Daniel, who she has missed for many years! Jennifer Tobia

April 10 at 3:34 PM



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Connie by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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