



## Anita Shapiro Wilson

February 18, 1945 - November 28, 2019

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Anita was born in Albany, NY on February 18, 1945, to Leon Shapiro (1910-2008) and Hannah (Spitolowitz) Shapiro (1912-2005). When she was 8, her family relocated to Hartford, after her parents were blacklisted for being Socialist sympathizers. She studied cello from an early age, and played whatever instruments were needed in school ensembles, including trombone and percussion. She graduated from Weaver High School in 1962, and earned her B.A. in psychology from Connecticut College in 1966. After graduation she traveled to Israel with her Grandfather for a one month trip. Because her Grandfather refused to return home without her, she was finally convinced to returned to the states well over a year later.

Anita worked as a programmer at Connecticut General from 1967 to 1978, taking time off to travel the world with friends. In 1976 she met Charles Wilson (who is allergic to wine) at a wine tasting at the Jewish Community Center, and they were married in February 1977. Their first child, Nathaniel, was born in 1978, followed by their second, Naomi, in 1980. Anita stayed home with them for the next few years, and, realizing that she had more love to give, she and Charles decided to invite foster children into their home. Between 1986 and 1992, they welcomed 5 foster children into their family. Their first foster

son, Leon (born José), became a permanent member of the family in 1993, and they finally officially adopted him in 2009. While her children were in elementary school, Anita earned her teaching certification, and she spent several years substitute teaching, and tutoring in Elementary and Middle Schools, mostly in Newington and West Hartford.

Finally, after decades of dreaming about it, she had an amazing trip to the Galapagos in the Fall 2016, where she took gorgeous pictures of the wildlife, swam in the ocean, and spent time with interesting people from around the Americas.

But Anita's lifelong ambition was to be a philanthropist, and she donated regularly to Public Radio, Public Television, Audubon Society, NARAL, ACLU, Nature Conservancy, Planned Parenthood, her alma mater Connecticut College, and many, many others. Giving money was never sufficient for Anita; she was also a dedicated volunteer, giving generously of her time, energy, enthusiasm, and expertise. When she joined an organization, she was all in. She was a devoted member of the Connecticut Valley Symphony Orchestra (and was treasurer for many years),

Friends of Lucy Robbins Welles Library (where she served in many roles, including president and booksale chair), Musical Club of Hartford (Treasurer), and Friends of Connecticut Libraries (president). She was always involved with the school PTA when her children were young, she volunteered in the Hartford Public Schools, and she and her husband dedicated countless hours to raising 13 puppies for the Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation. She also donated blood regularly for her entire adult life, until her iron count dropped too low as a result of MDS, the condition which eventually led to her incurable Leukemia.

Anita is survived by her husband Charles; her son Nathaniel and his wife Denise Ricotta of South Windsor; her daughter Naomi and her husband Joshua Schmidt of Easthampton, MA; her son Leon of Windsor; her three grandsons, Aaron Wilson, Solomon Schmidt, and Norman Schmidt; her brother Mark Shapiro of Bloomfield, and innumerable family members and

friends.

In lieu of flowers, anonymous donations should be made to any of the organizations listed above, or to a charity of your choice. There is no funeral or memorial service planned.