

California Area re:Generations  
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**A group of California area residents has formed a nonprofit  
to honor a Civil Rights martyr and make improvements to their community.**

California Area re:Generations (CARE), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, was created out of the desire to recognize Viola Gregg Liuzzo, who was born in East Pike Run Township (California) in 1925 and spent her formative years there. Mrs. Liuzzo was murdered by the Ku Klux Klan in Alabama in 1965, after the Selma to Montgomery March. Her death sparked the passage of the Voting Rights Act, and she is the only white woman to be acknowledged as a Civil Rights martyr.

“We’ve been wanting to honor Mrs. Liuzzo for a long time,” said Rosemary Capanna, chairperson of CARE. “When we reached the point where the research and resulting documentation confirmed her birth and early life here, people began asking us how they could contribute to a memorial. We formed a committee, and I asked board member/treasurer Lisa Buday, who’s an attorney, about how to set up a nonprofit. I thought if it was doable, then folks could give to a legitimate organization and we could perhaps pursue grants and things of that nature to help with the funding. It led to a discussion about what else could be done in the community. With a little creative brainstorming, this is what we came up with. I didn’t know Mrs. Liuzzo personally, but given how she lived her life, I think she’d be pleased that her memory has inspired what we hope will be an ongoing effort to help our neighbors.”

Lisa conceived the group’s tagline, “Connecting the past to the future,” which sums up their mission. “My family roots in California go back to almost its beginning. It is exciting to have a group dedicated to preserving our past and helping our communities’ future,” said Buday.

“The tagline is clever and appropriate,” added Capanna. “We can recognize our roots and look toward the future—we want to build on our past. We have other notable residents we’d like to honor, too. Add to that our Curbside Grants program, art installations, local historical markers, apps for do-it-yourself tours of our community...well, it’s exciting.”

The Curbside Grants program aims to provide small grants for community improvements and to residents of the California Area School District to spruce up their property. “It’s a hand-up. Someone may be a little strapped financially or physically unable to attend to something,” explained Capanna. “Perhaps there’s a public space that needs some attention. We hope we can make an aesthetic difference through simple things, like weed whacking, minor repairs, or painting, for example. Hopefully, this will instill pride and interest in how our area looks and motivate others to help. To quote an old cliché, a rising tide lifts all ships. We hope our efforts are inspiring and contagious.”

*For more information or to donate to the Viola Gregg Liuzzo Memorial Project or CARE, please visit the California Area re:Generations website at <https://calregenerations.org>. All gifts are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.*

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