Janis Ashley started volunteering at William S. Hart’s hilltop mansion in 1986 or 1987, soon after she moved to Canyon Country from the San Fernando Valley. She proved to be such an asset that the Natural History Museum hired her as the museum administrator in 2000. She left that position in 2006 but never left the premises: She has been volunteering with the Friends of Hart Park and Museum ever since.

Over the years, Janis has been involved in all aspects of the volunteer organization – from organizing Hart Park’s first Pet Fair (now known as “Bow Wows and Meows”) to serving as the current membership chair. She has given tours of the mansion, staffed the Friends’ Gift Shop, and coordinated volunteers. She also helped build several Friends of Hart Park floats for the SCV Fourth of July Parade and has worked on all of the Friends’ special fundraising events including Silents Under the Stars and Bill’s Birthday Club (which she has chaired).

Outside of Hart Park, Janis has volunteered with the Santa Clarita Cowboy Festival (well, that’s in Hart Park now), and she has lent her time and skills to worthy causes locally and beyond. She has helped out with the Santa Clarita Marathon, volunteered at the Castaic Animal Shelter, led walking tours for the Los Angeles Conservancy, worked as a special event docent for the Los Angeles Historical Theater Foundation, and helped build a home in Guatemala with Habitat for Humanity.

Janis grew up in the San Fernando Valley where she graduated from Granada Hills High School and Cal State Northridge. After the Hart, she worked in guest relations for the Nethercutt Museum. In 2007 she joined financial services firm Edward Jones and is currently the administrator of its branch office in Canyon Country.

Her invaluable contributions of time and talents have not gone unnoticed over the years: Both the Natural History Museum and the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation have honored her as a Volunteer of the Year.