



Loretta Ann Mendiola

May 22, 1948 - May 30, 2013

Cortland, OH - Loretta Ann Mendiola, 65, of Cortland, went home to her loving Father on May 30, 2013 after a courageous battle with cancer. Loretta was born May 22, 1948 in Ravenna to John and Ida (Trocchio) Mendiola.

She graduated from Ravenna High School in 1966. Loretta went on to graduate from Kent State University in 1970 with a teaching degree in Home Economics. Her college friend whom she loved like a sister, Lynn Meluch Clint, formerly of Diamond, remembered their days at the KSU Home Management House at Nixson Hall, where Home Economics students lived for a semester to practice their skills.

Even at a young age, the future Home Economics teacher was sewing and cooking with her mother and grandmothers. They taught her how to make pasta and can the bounty of an Italian garden. The oldest child and only daughter, Loretta had her hands full helping her mother look after three boisterous brothers, Frank, Rob and Fred. And while her mothering exasperated them at times, especially when they were older, the boys loved their big sister for her goodness and her cooking.

From Ida and John, Loretta learned the lessons of hard work, compassion, honesty and love of family and church. And cleanliness, as all the little Mendiola's could be seen helping their parents clean John's barbershop in

downtown Ravenna on Sunday nights. Loretta went to grade school at the Immaculate Conception School in Ravenna. She was active in 4-H during junior high and won numerous awards for her sewing. After graduating from high school, she was remembered by her classmate, Portage County Commissioner Maureen Frederick, who was her friend since kindergarten, as an excellent student and a compassionate young person "who always had a smile for everyone."

Lynn laughed affectionately as she talked about the Mexican dinner they planned and served for former KSU President Robert White, which was an assignment. Loretta drafted her musical brother, Frank to play Spanish songs on his guitar. Being poor college students and needing a dramatic flower arrangement for the table, Loretta convinced a local funeral home to give them flowers left after a service. Few people knew how the duo was able to dress their tables so well. "People always asked where we got those gladiolas," Lynn said.

Loretta and Lynn survived the Home Economics classes and projects and even graduated sitting next to each other after that tumultuous spring of 1970 at KSU. "There will be a huge hole in my life," Lynn said.

Lynn shared how Loretta, the "honorary" aunt to the five Clint children, visited often and taught them how to make gnocchi, lemon meringue pie and quilted potholders. After college, Loretta found a home among the students and faculty of Warren G. Harding High School in Warren where she taught Home Economics for 30 years until she retired in 2000. Students in her classes came out well versed in foods, nutrition, sewing, money management, child care, and home management. It was important to Loretta to know her students and she had great rapport them, according to colleagues. She kept track of her students and they were part of her comfort as she tried to recover.

Loretta excelled at cooking and baking. After retiring, she surprised friends with homemade pies and baked hundreds of loaves of bread at Thanksgiving for every family at her parish, St. Robert Bellarmine in Cortland. She also helped to bake the Eucharistic bread that was part of First Communion for the children of St. Robert's. St. Robert's pastor, Fr. Carl Kish said he was often the lucky recipient of one of Loretta's freshly baked loaves of bread.

At Mendiola family events, guests would line up for Loretta's eggplant parmesan, according to Commissioner Frederick. "There were no seconds. And she was always so humble. She would say, 'You can make this too', Maureen remembered fondly. Fr. Kish, who previously served the parish at Immaculate Conception, first met Loretta and her family when she was in high school and then became her pastor again when he joined St. Robert's in 1999. He was impressed with her devotion to her parents and brothers and to her church. "She was a very spiritual woman and her faith meant a lot to her," Fr. Kish said. She used her talents to benefit others, donating quilts for church projects and items for the Cortland Area Cares food pantry as well as community causes like mental health organizations in Portage County.

When she wasn't cooking, Loretta could often be found with a needle, thread and quilting pieces in hand. A skill she acquired after retiring, she loved the creative process of piecing a quilt. She joined a group of quilters who were also retired Home Economic teachers after she vehemently vowed never to become a quilter until they coaxed her into attending a quilting seminar, said her longtime colleague and friend Shirley Miller.

Loretta became hooked on the craft of quilting and continually amazed her fellow quilters with her ability to use absolutely every scrap of fabric. Besides the quilts, she made table runners, place mats and checkbook covers. "It wasn't surprising to see her holding on to a postage-sized piece of fabric to

use it later. She always said she paid good money for it and she was going to use it all," Miller warmly recounted.

During the 10 years she was with the group, Loretta became a phenomenal quilter. Her favorite fabric to use in quilts was batik, a printed, colorful fabric developed in Asia. She started out piecing together very traditional quilts but then became interested in modern designs. "She was always so generous with her quilts and the other items she made. Her family and friends would receive these wonderful quilts as gifts and she would make them for other to give as gifts," Shirley recalled.

It was her generous spirit and kindness that made Loretta a great friend. In return, many of those who loved her gave of their time to help during this past year while she underwent treatment for cancer. While

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the miracle never came for the remission of the illness, Loretta was the miracle for her family, friends and students.

Loretta will be remembered and deeply missed by her parents; brothers; Frank (Olivia) of San Jose, CA; Rob (Dee Dee) of San Juan Bautista, CA; Fred of Kent, nephews; Marcus of San Juan Bautista and Alexander of San Jose, Aunt Millie Trocchio of Boardman, Aunt Cecilia and Uncle Julius Passalacqua; her devoted cousin, Janice (Donald) Winans of Cortland, other cousins and many friends.

She was preceded in death by her maternal grandparents; Gertrude and Alfred Trocchio of Campbell, OH; paternal grandparents; Frank and Lucretia Mendiola of Ravenna, and her uncle, Paul Trocchio (Millie) of Boardman.

Family will receive friends on Monday, June 3, 2013 from 4:30 PM to 7:30 PM at McFarland and Son Funeral Home in Warren. Additional visitation will be on Tuesday, June 4, 2013 from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM at St. Robert Bellarmine Parish in Cortland. A Funeral Mass to follow at 11:00 AM with Fr. Carl Kish officiating. Final committal will also take place on Tuesday at 1:00 PM at St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery Chapel at the intersection of Mill & Madison Rd. in Ravenna, OH 44266.

The family requests that in lieu of flowers for friends send memorials to; St. Roberts Bellarmine Parish, 4659 Niles Cortland Rd. N.E., Cortland, OH, 44410.

Arrangements are entrusted to McFarland and Son Funeral and Cremation Services Co., 271 North Park Avenue, Warren, OH 44481, 330-393-9621. Please visit www.McFarlandCares.com to view this obituary and to send condolences.

Previous

Tribute Wall

LG

“ *Loretta was a regular shopper at my store B & K Farm Market for many years. Her and I shared many quilt patterns, material and stories. We loved and will miss her very much. our hearts and prayers go out to your family. Linda, Keith and all of your friends from B & K Farm Market.*

Linda Goldberg - September 25, 2014 at 10:01 AM

SG

“ *It is with the deepest sadness that I learned of Loretta's passing. My thoughts and prayers are with her family. Loretta made a difference in every life she touched, and she touched so many! If there is one word that best describes Loretta, it is 'generous', generous in every way possible. Loretta brought a little bit of heaven to our daily lives on earth. May she now rest (& quilt & cook :-) in the Great Peace with the other angels and may her memory be Eternal.*

Stephanie Gabbard - September 25, 2014 at 10:01 AM

NA

“ *I loved Miss Mendiola. She was one of my favorite teachers. I graduated back in 1981 and only saw her twice after that, but both times she called me by name and remembered my brother and sister too. She was a treasure to teaching. God bless her and her family.*

Nancy - September 25, 2014 at 10:01 AM

SS

“ I was in Van Campen Hall at KSU with Loretta. We occasionally met at Warren City Schools teachers meetings but I taught elementary school. Then she joined the local American Sewing Guild and I would see her at events or sometimes on bus trips. It was a shock to see her obit. My thoughts are with you at this time.

Susan Stoddart - September 25, 2014 at 10:01 AM

SD

“ I was saddened to hear of Loretta's passing. Loretta was a fantastic student in my Home Economics classes at Ravenna High School. She was a freshman when I started my teaching career. I was very proud she chose to become a Home Economics teacher. How lucky I was to have known her!

Sandy DePue-Wise - September 25, 2014 at 10:01 AM

JE

“Loretta was very special, one of most thoughtful and generous person I have ever known. We met as first year home economics teachers in Warren City Schools, she was at Harding (my alma mater) and I was at Reserve HS. She remained with Warren schools while I moved on to Portage County schools. She always got a kick out of this switch and my Ravenna mailing address. We shared many activities together including stints as clothing judges at the Portage County Fair and judging jams and jellies at the Geauga County Fair. One summer we traveled to the Finger Lakes region of New York for a week with a group from Road Scholars organization. She was always there for the weddings, births, graduations, retirements and later the funerals in my life. Our last project together was designing and constructing four flower girl dresses for my daughter's wedding along with identical dresses for their favorite dolls. I could have never done this without her help and encouragement. I will miss so much about her that words fail me. Dear, sweet Loretta my life was enriched for having been your friend. Janice #3

Janice Everett Evanovich - September 25, 2014 at 10:01 AM

AC

“I knew Loretta from WGH...she always had a wonderful smile and attitude. She was open and bubbly with that wry sense of humor..truly was a person who you enjoyed being around...fond memories.. God bless and God speed Loretta.

Andre Camarata - September 25, 2014 at 10:01 AM

LG

“Loretta was a fellow Home Economics major at KSU and lived next door to me in Van Campen Hall. Our group of "VC Girls" has kept in touch over the years and we had several enjoyable meals together at Loretta's condo. An outing to Chataqua NY to celebrate our 60th birthdays included a Beach Boys concert. Loretta was a good Christian, caregiver and friend. She will be missed by all.

Lynn Hawkins Garver - June 03, 2013 at 12:00 AM