



Lina Poorten

March 15, 1951 - May 20, 2020

Lina Poorten was born Carmelina Profeta, in March 1951 in Catania, Italy to her parents Salvatore and Maria Profeta. She was the second child of Sal and Mary (as they were later known in Queens and Jersey), and her older brother Giuseppe (now Joe) was the subject of her admiration and affectionate irritation all her life. When Lina was about 5, the family left Italy for a new life in the New World, first for several years in Medellin, Colombia. Lina came from Colombia to the US with her family in 1963 and, like so many immigrants before and since, immediately improved it. School was Catholic and all girls, at St. Nicholas in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. She was a gifted student and, in taking on English as a third language, came to love it as only a convert can, with fervency and curiosity and joy; she found in its contradictions and absurdities fodder for her piercing humor. Sal and Mary both worked their way up the American Dream-post; they bought a house in Richmond Hill and gifts for their children to put in it. Joe got a pool table; Lina got a piano, which she kept all her life.

A short stint at NYU, a brief marriage, and Lina was off and running into the 1970s. Which consisted of, inter alia, getting a job at AT&T in Manhattan, owning a boat named Renegade, and going to Iran on a work assignment, where she got to know Hank Poorten. They were married from 1978 to 1990, and had two sons, Billy and Jimmy, both of whom Lina adored and treated like princes from God. Lina and Hank worked together, even if not together, to give them a happy childhood and see them off to their successes as adults.

In the mid-90s Lina found faith, and, a few years later, she found love. Tom Betlow and Lina were married from 2003 until death pulled them apart a few days ago. Tom treated Lina like she was a princess from God, which she was. Lina and Tom lived together and supported each other in every way, including in Lina's earning undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Central Florida. Lina loved Tom's daughter Amanda immensely.

For years, Lina looked after her octogenarian, and then nonagenarian, mother Mary, who lived nearby and became increasingly dependent on her, the roles reversed and tables

turned. When Billy and his wife Christine - who Lina loved fiercely - had Valerie, Lina became Nonna, and Nonna fell completely in love with her baby granddaughter.

Lina's golden years, which were supposed to be spent spoiling Valerie, beaming with pride at Jimmy's accomplishments, and gallivanting the globe with Tom, were cut short by a wretched battle with pancreatic cancer. She fought bravely against the disease, however, and because of that was able to be with her family for birthdays (including Valerie's third birthday, for which she supplied a fabulous cake) and other important milestones before being taken away.

If you knew Lina, you liked her, and probably loved her; if not, there is something wrong with you. She made the world better through her sweetness, generosity, gentle spirit, intelligence, and humor. She showed those around her what it was to love. She will be painfully missed by her family (including but not limited to Joe, Tom, Billy, Christine, Jimmy, Amanda, and Valerie) and friends (who are countless and know who they are) for as long as they all live.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to ST. JUDE in memory of Lina

https://fundraising.stjude.org/site/TR/GiftFunds/GiftFunds?px=6640905&pg=personal&fr_id=39300

Comments



“ Lina will be missed by so many. I'm so thankful God allowed her to be a part of my life. She is an angel. We talked about many things when she came to Publix. We prayed together and laughed together. I lost my dad to pancreatic cancer and my two sisters to cancer. I knew all too well the battle she was facing. I knew her love for Christ and I was blessed to be able to pray and love Lina. The news of her death was bitter sweet. No more suffering. I knew she was going home. My prayers are for Tom and all the family. God Bless you my sweet friend. RIP Lina. Much love Debbie Porter

Debbie Porter - May 26, 2020 at 06:17 PM



“ I met Nina in the coffee shop at Publix
I always looked forward to her visit and :)
Stimulating conversation
I'll miss seeing her shopping with Tom at Publix And will always think of her kind and gentle ways



Heather O'Leary - May 26, 2020 at 12:42 PM



“ My deepest condolences to Billy and Jimmy and the rest of the Poorten family.

I had the privilege of meeting Lina one holiday season. If I recall correctly Billy and I were driving in from out of town and came to Lina's place in NJ late. She came out to check on us and was very warm and welcoming. The next morning, I just remember thinking how comfortable I was at the house. It was Lina's exceptional hospitality and ability to make me feel like I was home that made an impression. I was young and inexperienced so I am sure I was awkward and felt out of sorts. But then I met Nonna who's bright blue eyes made me smile. She was a strong woman and her presence was felt immediately. Having three generations of family in one house made me feel right at home.

That was my impression of Lina, having everyone together in a safe space felt very natural. I know her presence will be with you both as you endure this time of loss. All the best.

Chris Hernandez - May 25, 2020 at 06:18 PM



“ So sorry for your loss. Lina was such a special lady. Always smiling and laughing. She loved her Mom, and took such great care of her. Lina will be missed by many, but never forgotten

cindy watson - May 24, 2020 at 10:34 AM



“ In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to ST. JUDE in memory of Lina
[https://fundraising.stjude.org/site/TR/GiftFunds/GiftFunds?
px=6640905&pg=personal&fr_id=39300](https://fundraising.stjude.org/site/TR/GiftFunds/GiftFunds?px=6640905&pg=personal&fr_id=39300)

Jim Poorten - May 22, 2020 at 12:08 PM