

The Minnesota Trentini Club's Louise Fort remembers LoRetta Seppi

Louise's eulogy at LoRetta's funeral Mass on Sat., July 20, 2013
at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Buhl, Minnesota

Here I stand again, only 18 months after we said good-bye to Mary Seppi. I never would have thought that in such a short time that I would also have to endure the loss of another dear friend, LoRetta.

My mother died in 1994 and LoRetta came into my life in 1995 and filled a void that had been left after my mother's death. She was not my replacement of a motherly figure, but instead reminded me of my mother with her spunk, humor, caring ways and the love and ease of getting to know people she had just met.

When I was president of the club for eight years, the first thing I learned from my vice president was that you spelled LoRetta WITH A CAPITAL R. She sat next to me at meetings and corrected my pronunciation of Italian words. When I said such things as Mondo, out of the corner of her mouth and under her breath she would say, "It's MONDO."

I liked that she was concerned that I spoke the language correctly. She and a few others started our Trentini club and she has been the vice president of our club ever since our first meeting in August of 1995. She volunteered and worked hard for the club. She shared her awesome Pinocchio collection with us and others. I am happy she was with us, one year ago today, to enjoy and help the Minnesota club host the 20th International Trentini convention in Mountain Iron. All our guests from across



Club veterans LoRetta Seppi and Louise Fort at a Minnesota Trentini club officer installation meeting on Jan. 10, 2008. LoRetta was re-elected vice president at the time; Louise was immediate past president, continuing her lasting participation in the club with membership responsibilities.

the U.S., Canada and Italy had a wonderful time discovering the Mesabi Iron Range.

LoRetta was a bit mischievous. She tricked me into chewing on coffee beans in my Sambuca, just to see my reaction to the texture and taste. She encouraged us to take

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“just a five-minute walk over the hill” to the village of Seio. We had to walk uphill and through fields to get there, and it took us 45 minutes. She got a ride over to Seio in a car! LoRetta would get this sparkle in her eyes and flash her beautiful smile and I knew we were in for fun.

LoRetta was generous. Generous with her kind words, generous with her time, generous with sharing her knowledge and generous with her donations to our Trentini club and to others.

LoRetta had a wonderful singing voice and would lead us in many Italian songs...at the picnics, at conventions, and on all the bus trips we took together in the U.S. and Italy. She encouraged many of us to visit Trentino, the homeland of our ancestors. She was a storyteller. She told us stories about her many trips to Trentino. And through words, she painted a picture of the villages nestled in the valleys of the Dolomite Mountains in northern Italy.

As a consequence, 22 of us decided it was time to visit Trentino for the first time in 2002. Many more trips followed. She was our interpreter on these Italian trips. Without her, shopkeepers and bus drivers would not have known exactly what we wanted. She let the bus drivers know that we wanted and needed A LOT MORE AIR CONDITIONING, that we wanted the music turned up, or needed a potty break, or the music turned down, or that we wanted to stop to shop for souvenirs. She introduced us to her

Italian family, who were always so kind to us. She introduced us to her Italian friends whom she played softball with on her previous stays in Trentino. They were just as much fun as she was.

LoRetta introduced us to the village of Cavareno and our favorite hotel, Hotel Rosa. I have wonderful memories of sharing delicious food with good friends at the long table at Rosa's. She taught me Italian sign language---such as Bagno---to alert each other without words (me in the back of the bus, she in the front), that we needed to stop at the restrooms. She also taught me more Italian sign language, those signs I have no intention of sharing with you! And I will always remember one of her favorite sayings: “Those who go slow go far.”

LoRetta had a fulfilling career and filled her life with service to others and fun adventures. LoRetta and her mother Mary were a dynamic duo and I only knew them for about the last 18 years. I can only imagine what they were both like in their younger years. There is a beginning and an ending to everything alive. In between is living. All of us here today are living our own lifetime. The dynamic duo would want us all to fill our lifetimes with faith, love, courage, generosity and kindness, as they both did. I find peace in knowing that LoRetta and Mary are together again.

Louise Fort