



Lena Feliu

May 26, 1945 - February 1, 2015

Lena was born to Lawrence and Mary Squicciarini on May 26, 1945. She had a half sister and two half brothers by her father's first marriage, and two full brothers. Her name was a shortened form of her grandmother's name, and her middle name, Bernadette, was the one used by her family. Bernadette was affectionately abbreviated to "Bee" by her mother, and to "Bernie" or "Bern" by Lena's siblings and, subsequently, by their families. After her father died suddenly in 1948, times were difficult for her mother and the children. Lena was shy, but with a pleasant disposition. She spoke in later years of how growing up with so many brothers made her a tougher person. Lena attended P.S.112, Edward B. Shallow Junior High and New Utrecht High School, as the family continued to live in the same home. When her mother, whom she loved most in the world, died in 1962 after a long illness, Lena was devastated. The family was breaking apart, and soon she had to go out on her own and go to work. In 1966, she married Vincent Conti, who would be the father of her two children: Michele (born 1967) and Vincent (born 1969). When that marriage ended, Lena and the children moved to Staten Island, NY in the early 1970's. In 1977, she married Peter Feliu, and, although the marriage lasted only a short time, Lena retained her new last name and would keep it for the rest of her life. Meanwhile, she continued to raise Michele and Vincent as a single working mother. In 1984, while working at Island Musical Supplies, Lena met Michael Joura, who, five years later, would become her partner in life for more than 25 years. The following year (1985) she changed her job, settling in at

Bank of New York in Manhattan for a long career. Lena was short in stature, just 5'2", but was always a dominating presence with her trademark red hair, her unmistakable and distinctive voice, and her lively personality. Her two children were always the most important people in her life - at least until the grandchildren came along. Michele married first, and had two sons. A decade later, Vincent married as well, eventually fathering a girl and two boys. After more than nine years together on Staten Island, Lena and Michael bought a house in Old Bridge, NJ, where they moved in early 1999. It was a happy period in her life, but the new century brought with it developments which would both define and darken Lena's later life. First, at the end of 2000, was the premature birth of Lena's only granddaughter (Vincent's first child). The baby's survival was touch-and-go for several months, and ultimately nothing short of a miracle. Second was the traumatic horror of 9/11/2001: Lena worked across the street from the World Trade Center, was a witness to the events, and had to flee for her life that fateful morning. It was a long time before she was able to return to her building, during which time she had to work at other locations farther away. Third was the crushing diagnosis in late 2007 that Lena was a victim of ovarian cancer. Many hospitalizations, several surgeries, and years of chemotherapy and its side effects would follow, and take their toll. Finally, and worst of all, was Michele's becoming incapacitated in early 2009, leading to her permanent residence in a nursing home. Lena would go on to visit Michele virtually every day for as long as she was physically able, and devoted all the energy she had to Michele's care. Between serving in this role as caregiver and undergoing cancer treatments, Lena was forced to stop working and go on disability. She would officially retire in the fall of 2012. Lena had been brought up Roman Catholic, and although she was not a practicing one in adulthood, she drew heavily on that faith in her final fifteen years in the face of the big challenges in her life. Before the cancer struck, Lena had liked to travel. Quite a few weekends were spent in Boston, perhaps her favorite place to visit. Multiple trips to San Francisco, San Diego and Las Vegas, and a memorable vacation in Arizona

showed her liking for the West. More locally, Cape May and Chester, NJ and New Hope, PA were frequent destinations. She enjoyed playing the slots in Atlantic City a couple of times a year, and made the rounds of the various outlet malls in both New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania. Lena was always attracted to the ocean, even if just to watch a boat launch or to look at the waves while strolling along a boardwalk. Lena was an avid walker for many years, first in Great Kills Park while on Staten Island, and later around the neighborhood in Old Bridge. She became interested in gardening and worked often in the yard, Relaxing did not come easily to her (even TV-watching was punctuated by channel surfing), but she did like to have her coffee on the deck or do some reading in a lounge chair on the patio. Eating out four or five times a month, Lena preferred Italian restaurants and seafood, but perhaps her favorite thing to eat was cold egg rolls - for breakfast! Lena was a Mets fan from the 1980's until 2000, then afterwards switched to the Yankees, no doubt from Vincent's influence. She had also followed hockey in the eighties, rooting for the Rangers. And she made sure to get into at least one Super Bowl pool every year. Her musical tastes included enthusiasm for doo wop, and a reverence for the singing of Barbra Streisand. She loved dancing, especially in her earlier years. One of her greatest talents was in planning and throwing parties, where her outgoing nature really went on display. She became well-known for this ability in the office, and maybe her finest achievement along these lines came in 2005, when she arranged her own 60th birthday party in a downtown Manhattan establishment after work. But Lena was equally engaged in events for the family: among others, there was an outdoor Christmas party one year, two Halloween costume parties, a "cousins party," and a barbecue to celebrate the paying off of the mortgage in 2011. For years she hosted both Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve dinners, always going all out for the occasion. When the battle against cancer began, Lena's performance became more TV-oriented. She had always had a fondness for disaster movies and science fiction, and now she added cooking shows, Storage Wars

and HGTV to her repertory. She was a devotee of the Thursday night programs on ABC and of Dancing With the Stars, a good customer at QVC, and in her last years became addicted to General Hospital and, most especially The Walking Dead. The grandchildren ruled her affections. Nothing pleased her more than spending time with them or buying presents for them. They came to dominate the many photographs she took, and the albums and scrapbooks she filled with those pictures. Lena was so personable that you couldn't fail to like her. She came in contact with a great many people, and touched their lives with an abundance of both friendship and empathy. Co-workers became friends for life. The nurses at Raritan Bay Medical Center, where she received her chemotherapy, and the staff at Silver Lake, who attended to Michele, became like satellite families. When the cancer finally beat her, on February 1, 2015, she was less than four months from her seventieth birthday - far too young to be leaving us. Yes, Lena is gone now, but for all of us who knew her well she will always remain a beautiful presence, much loved in memory.

Lena B. Feliu, 69, of Old Bridge died gracefully at home surrounded by her loving family on Sunday, February 1, 2015. Born and raised in Brooklyn, NY she lived in Staten Island for 25 years before moving to Old Bridge 16 years ago. Lena was a billing specialist for Bank of New York Mellon in Manhattan and Jersey City for 25 years before her retirement in 2012. Lena enjoyed spending time with family. She loved to bake and had fun experimenting with her cooking. She made great meatballs! Lena also enjoyed reading, watching reality TV and spending time with her grandkids, nieces and nephews and throwing parties for the family. She loved scrapbooking, spending time outdoors with beloved Michael and had the uncanny ability to find a greeting card for every person on any occasion. She is predeceased by her dear parents Lawrence and Mary (Proscia) Squicciarini, her brother Carlo and sister Marie She is survived by her beloved Michael Joura of 25 years; her adored children Vincent Conti, Jr. and his wife Catherine of Parlin and Michele Numis of Staten Island; her loving brothers Angelo Squicciarini of Marlboro, John Squire of Ocean Township and Michael

Squicciarini of Brooklyn, NY. Also surviving are her cherished grandchildren Vincent Frascati, Daniel Numis, Samantha Conti, Nicholas Conti and Vincent Conti, III. Friends and relatives are invited to attend visitation Tuesday, February 3, 2015 from 2-4 pm & 7-9pm at Michael Hegarty Funeral Home 3377 Hwy 9 Old Bridge, NJ 08857. A funeral prayer service will be take place 9:30am Wednesday, February 4, 2015 at the funeral home with burial to follow in Forest Green Park Cemetery 535 Texas Road Morganville, NJ 07751. Please consider memorial contributions in Lena's name to American Cancer Society P.O. Box 22718 Oklahoma City, OK 73123-1718, (800) 227-2345 - <https://donate.cancer.org/>

Tribute Wall



“ *Lena Feliu*

October 05, 2023 at 11:16 AM



“ *Lena, You are resting in peace after a long battle that you fought until the end. Your perseverance and will are admirable and will never be forgotten. You touched my life as a nurse but more so on a personal level and for that I am grateful to have been a part of your life. Rest in peace for ever more my friend.*

Debbie Prinzo - May 22, 2015 at 12:00 AM



“ *Lena, I will miss your zest for life and your friendship. You made everyday special at work, you will me missed by many. May you rest in peace with God. You will always be remembered in my prayers. Love Ya, Linda*

Linda Muller - February 02, 2015 at 12:00 AM