



## Lena Moliero

April 16, 1948 - January 9, 2019

Lena Moliero, a sought-after legal secretary and project manager at some of New York City's most powerful law firms for almost 50 years, but best remembered as a smiling beacon of positivity and love to her large family and legions of friends, died Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2019, at Staten Island University Hospital South, surrounded by her loving family. She was 70.

Born Lena Masella on April 16, 1948, in the small town of Cantalupo in southern Italy, she emigrated to America with her parents, Antonio and Anna Masella, and her siblings, Joe and Fran, in 1957. Little Lena was just 9 years old and could speak no English when the family settled near Prospect Park, Brooklyn. They later lived for about five years in Flatbush.

The youngest of the three Masella children, Lena was often the most responsible, and "always seemed to know what to do," recalled her daughter, Kathryn.

Lena met her beloved husband of 48 years, Joe Moliero, in 1967 on a blind date. He had just returned from Vietnam. Joe worked in a mailroom with Lena's cousin Vinny, who decided to try to set them up. Three years later they were married and honeymooning in Bermuda.

The young couple moved to Great Kills, Staten Island, in 1976. They raised

their children Michael and Kathryn in a warm two-family home on Armstrong Avenue, and when the time came, Kathryn and her husband, Alex Duenas, elected to raise their family -- Lena's beloved grandchildren Jeremy and Michaela -- in the same place, upstairs.

Alex, like Lena, was an immigrant. And Lena, a master of Italian cooking, made sure to learn how to cook Ecuadorian dishes -- especially her son-in-law's favorite, cerviche de cameron -- to make him feel at home. And even though Kathryn told her not to, she would often go out and buy Alex's favorite Spanish cheese and rice pudding.

The Moliero home for decades was the center of the annual family ritual of jarring the tomato sauce. Dozens of family members and neighbors would gather over a late August weekend and form an assembly line in the backyard, where they'd rinse, boil, crush, and bottle more than 100 crates of fresh plum tomatoes so that all the participating families would leave with a year's supply. But it wasn't just about making superb sauce; it was about laughing, feasting, drinking and enjoying each other's company, one weekend every year, come what may. And Lena was always at the center of the production -- ensuring quality control, making sure people were fed and the coolers full, and keeping talmudic notes in her marble notebook on that year's yield and other notable happenings. And there were always notable happenings.

It was this meticulous attention to detail that led to Lena's great success in the legal world, where she entered the workforce immediately upon graduating John Jay High School. With her newly-learned shorthand skills, 100-words-a-minute-plus typing ability, and unmatched spelling and vocabulary (Lena, a great reader, had mastered the English language quickly), she landed a job with Thatcher, Proffitt and Wood on Wall Street in 1966. She worked her way up from legal secretary to project manager during almost 30 years at the firm,

which later moved to World Trade Center South. She had already left when it was destroyed on 9/11.

After working briefly at Hawkins, Delafield and Wood, Lena settled in at the highly respected law firm of Hughes, Hubbard and Reed downtown in 1994. She worked there for 20 years, and was constantly in demand among the partners. "Everybody wanted Lena as their secretary," Kathryn recalled.

Lena vowed to retire when she turned 66 in 2014, after 20 years as Hughes Hubbard, and she did. But she missed her commute -- "the ferry ride with the girls," her daughter said.

That is not to say Lena did not enjoy her retirement. She did, immensely. It meant more time with her cherished family, longer walks at the beach with the dog Bobby she "inherited" from her grandson, and traveling the world with Joe. They went to Italy almost a half dozen times, and visited parts of Europe, and the Caribbean, Hawaii and California.

Among the most special trips were the ones Lena and Joe, a retired MTA train operator, took every year to meet Joe's buddies from the Vietnam War. The veterans of the 11th Armored Cavalry would gather in a different city annually, and the Molieros became friendly with several other couples. They would go on cruises and trips to the islands together. They all wanted to eat Lena's famous, fresh tomato sauce. So one year, Lena shipped six jars of sauce ahead to St. John, where they were renting a house. It was an expensive proposition and Lena decided next time they'd have to settle for a supermarket brand.

Lena loved to joke, to laugh, to be around friends and family. She drew people to her because she was a positive presence, her daughter remembered, who

never judged. She will be dearly missed.

Lena was the loving mother of Michael Moliero and Kathryn Duenas; the fond mother-in-law of Alex Duenas; the dear sister of Joe and Joyce Masella, Fran and Tony Peccia and Judy Moliero; and the devoted grandmother of Jeremy and Michaela Duenas. Lena is also survived by many loving nieces, nephews, great nieces and nephews, and many friends. She also leaves behind her "walking buddy," Bobby.

The family will receive friends from 2-5 and 7-9 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 11, 2019, at John Vincent Scalia Home for Funerals, 28 Eltingville Blvd, Staten Island, New York. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 9:45 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 12, 2019 at St. Clare Church, 110 Nelson Ave, Staten Island, New York. Burial will follow in Forest Green Memorial Park Cemetery, Morganville, NJ.

# Cemetery Details

## Forest Green Memorial Park Cemetery

535 Texas Road  
Morganville, NJ 07751

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 11. 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

John Vincent Scalia Home for Funerals, Inc.  
28 Eltingville Blvd  
Staten Island, NY 10312

## Visitation

JAN 11. 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM (ET)

John Vincent Scalia Home for Funerals, Inc.  
28 Eltingville Blvd  
Staten Island, NY 10312

## Service

JAN 12. 9:45 AM (ET)

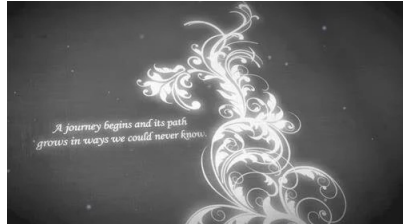
St. Clare Church  
110 Nelson Ave  
Staten Island, NY 10308



# Tribute Wall



“ *John Vincent Scalia Home for Funerals Inc. created a Tribute Video in memory of Lena Moliero*



John Vincent Scalia Home for Funerals Inc. - January 10, 2019 at 06:10 PM

MF

*What a beautiful tribute and a wonderful life, our thoughts and prayers for the Moliero and Masella families.*

Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Figliola - January 11, 2019 at 02:03 AM

DN

*separated by distance but, not by heart. God Bless*

Dolores Nucifora - January 11, 2019 at 12:59 PM



“ *Lena Moliero*

October 04, 2023 at 06:13 PM

ER

“ *Aunt Lena, you will truly be missed. I was very fortunate to have you as my Aunt. I will always treasure all of the memories of our times spent together. There are just too many to write here. My heart is broken but I know in time all of the memories I have of you will help to mend my broken heart. Rest In Peace. Love you always, Emma*

Emma Rondinelli - January 17, 2019 at 07:10 PM

LC

“ Joe, I'm not certain if I'll be able to pay my respects in person, but please accept my sincere condolences for your loss; I was fortunate enough to have met Lena a few times and always enjoyed her company.

*Sincerely, Lou Corradi*

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**Lou Corradi** - January 11, 2019 at 04:42 PM

FR

“ Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, love leaves a memory no one can steal.

*We mourn the loss of our friend Lena.*

*Lucille & Frank Renda*

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**Frank Renda** - January 11, 2019 at 11:52 AM

AA

“ Lena will always be a part of our NYCT family, from our picnics to our Christmas parties to our dine around club that was started when we began to retire. She was always there to have fun & we all will miss her. Rest in Peace.



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**Anthony Annarumma** - January 11, 2019 at 10:17 AM

DN

“ *Dolores (Marsillo) Nucifora purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Lena Moliero.*



Dolores (Marsillo) Nucifora - January 11, 2019 at 09:22 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Lena Moliero.*



January 11, 2019 at 08:40 AM

PB

“ *Pam Bernstein lit a candle in memory of Lena Moliero*



pam bernstein - January 10, 2019 at 08:57 PM

PB

“ *2 files added to the album Memories Album*



pam bernstein - January 10, 2019 at 08:00 PM

CM

“ If there is one thing I have to choose to say about Aunt Lena it is that she never spoke a negative or harsh word against anyone. She is, was, and will forever be a beautiful, positive, white beacon of love and light..... May your positive energy forever surround those you love and who love you. Blessed Be

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**Coleen McNeill-Brown** - January 10, 2019 at 06:57 PM

EL

“ My precious Aunt Lena - share a memory! Share A memory! Which one do I pick? There are too many wonderful memories. Look at the pictures of my aunt! Not one phony or forced smile. 100% genuine all the time. Not a mean bone in her body. She gave the best Christmas and birthday presents (aka not clothes)! She spoiled us rotten letting us eat and drink plenty. But insisted we be respectful. She didn't put up with BS but she enjoyed witnessing our childhood and letting us just be kids! Tomato sauce weekend! Smelling her food before she ate it. But in a dignified expert way! Our family cruise. Dance floor at every family party. Thanksgiving turkey! Christmas Eve - frying zeppolis. Eggplant parmigiana and pickled eggplants. Italian cookies! Ok so I'm food obsessed too!! Her contagious laugh. Her love for her family. Her love for others. Her love for her dogs! I'll stop...for now. Aunt Lena, I love you and you will forever live in my heart.

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**Elaine** - January 10, 2019 at 05:57 PM

MM

“ Margery & Ted Mayer purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Lena Moliero.



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**Margery & Ted Mayer** - January 10, 2019 at 05:12 PM



“ 104 files added to the album *LifeTributes*



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**John Vincent Scalia Home for Funerals Inc. - January 10, 2019 at 05:03 PM**

MA

“ Anyone who knew Lena, loved her. I had the privilege of working with Lena for many years. She was always happy and upbeat, and lit up any room with her bright smile. The last time I saw Lena was in July of 2018. We attended a show together on Staten Island through our mutual friend Susan. That night, Lena looked exceptionally beautiful, and I kept telling her so. She said to me at one point, "are you going to stop now, or am I going to have to tape your mouth shut". LOL. I will never forget that night as it was not long ago. Also, some years ago, my mom needed carpal tunnel surgery. She was petrified to have it done, and did not want any part of it. Lena, who had never met my mom, called her, and told her how wonderful the surgery can be, and that she should not be afraid. She gave her the name and number of the surgeon that she had used for her surgery. Thanks to Lena, my Mom did have the surgery and it was a success. Lena will be forever missed for many reasons. Lena, may you rest easy with the Angels until we meet again. You may be gone from this earth, but your amazing spirit will live forever.

*Michele Azzarello | Administrative Assistant  
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**Michele Azzarello** - January 10, 2019 at 02:47 PM

BA

“ *My beautiful friendship with Lena made my life sweeter. Lena was the best "floor lead" I could ever have had at work, besides her making the best spinach dip I ever tasted. I will miss you, Lena, and always love you.*  
*Brigette Andrukiewicz*

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**Brigette Andrukiewicz** - January 10, 2019 at 02:19 PM

AC

“ *I feel blessed to have called Lena my friend. She was such a beautiful person inside and out.....her smile says it all. We will truly miss her at our "ferry girls" dinners. I will remember her always. Rest In Peace sweet Lena.*

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**Ann Calderone** - January 10, 2019 at 02:08 PM

LO

“ *Will miss uou my griend*

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**Lori** - January 10, 2019 at 01:33 PM

ST

“ *May she rest in peace*

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**Steve** - January 10, 2019 at 01:23 PM

  
Shakinah  
Davis

“ So very hard to believe that such a bright spirit is not with us anymore. My heart and prayers go out to Lena's family and other friends who will miss her dearly.



Shakinah Davis - January 10, 2019 at 01:04 PM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Lena Moliero.



January 10, 2019 at 11:43 AM



“ Lena you are so loved and will be missed...

MaryRose Baffi - January 10, 2019 at 10:45 AM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



MaryRose Baffi - January 10, 2019 at 10:39 AM

MB

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



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**MaryRose Baffi** - January 10, 2019 at 09:36 AM

MB

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



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**MaryRose Baffi** - January 10, 2019 at 09:36 AM

MM

“ *I have so many memories of Lena. We always were laughing. She had a great sense of humor. My latest memory is her tutoring me in Italian for 2 semesters. We had fun. Of course at such a late stage trying to learn a foreign language in the proper form is difficult and we would laugh. I can hear her telling me to practice. Always fun times with her! She was a great cousin! Rest In Peace beautiful Lena you will always be with me. I will never forget you. 💔*

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**Maria Masella** - January 09, 2019 at 10:14 PM

MB

“ *I will always cherish my friendship with Lena. I am so lucky to have known her and to have become friends with her. I will miss her terribly. She was such an upbeat and fun person to be with. Rest in eternal paradise my friend. Until we meet again. Love you forever...xoxo*

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**MaryRose Baffi** - January 09, 2019 at 10:05 PM