

Remembering the life of...

Denise Adair Varriano, 70, West Fargo, ND, died on Thursday, May 11, 2023, in her home.

Denise Adair Varriano was born in Fargo, North Dakota on September 29, 1952. She was the first-born child to Glenn and Rita Ellenson. Denise grew up in West Fargo and San Diego, California before moving to Hudson, Wisconsin for her senior year of high school. She graduated in 1971 and shortly after that, she decided to travel and spent several months in Mexico. In May of 1972, she married Joseph Maniglia in San Diego, CA. They lived in New York for two years before returning to the Fargo-Moorhead area.

Denise attended Josef's School of Hair Design. After she graduated beauty school, Denise married Richard Varriano on November 20, 1982, at St. Mary's Cathedral in Fargo where Denise also became a member of the Roman Catholic Church. The two made their home in Fargo. Denise had many talents that she shared with everyone around her. Though she never held the title, Denise was an amazing artist-her main canvas was her house on historic 8th street where she single handedly transformed a 100-year-old house into a breathtaking Victorian; a place she raised her children, provided daycare services, and hosted countless dinners and parties throughout the years. Denise was also an impeccable cook. She perfected Italian cuisine under the teachings of her mother-in-law and proudly shared her flair for the culinary arts with everyone around her.

Denise devoted a large portion of her life to supporting and working for the Fargo Catholic Schools Network (JP II Schools) where she supported her children's efforts in the arts, academics, and sports.

Denise will be remembered for many amazing things. Beyond her ability to build, restore, decorate, and beautify herself and those around her, she had a sense of humor and a striking presence everywhere she went. Denise loved to laugh and thrived on telling jokes and pulling pranks on her friends and co-workers.

Nothing brought Denise more joy than her children and grandchildren. She often referred to her daughters as her "beautiful girls" rather than their names, and her sons as "her baby boys". She was a doting grandmother and mother, a loving sister, a caring and thoughtful friend, and a hostess to anyone and everyone around her. Whether it was her daughter's basketball team, co-workers, or friends and family, anyone on the receiving end of Denise's hospitality was fortunate.

Denise passed away on May 11, 2023, in her home. She is preceded in death by her father, Glenn Ellenson, Mother, Rita Paulsen, Stepfather, Donald Paulsen, Stepmother Doris Ellenson, Sister, Donelle Nitzkorski, step siblings Harold Sproul and Toni Brakke, and her beloved dog, Lucky.

Denise is survived by her children, Joseph Maniglia Jr. (Breezy), Fargo, ND, Carmella Varriano (Moorhead, MN), Cosmo (Andrea) Varriano, Sturgis, SD, Giuliana (Kirby) Houchin, Anchorage, AK, and Rita (Jacob) Varriano-Bornholt, Elberta, AL, her brothers Kevin (Lori) Ellenson, MO, Michael (Jamie) Paulsen (West Fargo, ND), and her sister Dawn (Steven) Ruff, West Fargo, ND; brother-in-law, Barry Nitzkorski; step siblings Betsy (John) DeHerrera, and Susan Sproul. She is also survived by her 17 grandchildren and several cousins, nieces, and nephews.

In Loving Memory





I'M FREE

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free!
 I'm following the path God laid for me.
 I took His hand when I heard Him call.
 I turned my back and left it all.
 I could not stay another day
 To laugh, to love, to work or play.
 Tasks left undone must stay that way,
 I found my peace at the end of day.
 If my parting has left a void,
 Then fill it with remembered joy-
 A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss,
 Oh yes, these things I too will miss.
 But be not burdened with times of sorrow.
 I wish for you the sunshine of tomorrow!
 My life's been full, I've savored much-
 Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch.
 Perhaps my time seemed all too brief
 Don't try to lengthen it with undue grief.
 Lift up your heart and share with me.
 God wanted me now, He set me free!

Celebrating the life of
DENISE VARRIANO



CELEBRATION OF LIFE
 West Funeral Home Chapel
 West Fargo, North Dakota
 Thursday, May 18, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.

Officiant

The Rev. Ann Schutz

Eulogy

Carmella Varriano

Readers

Calista Zimara
 Jace Varriano

Music

"Amazing Grace" by Pentatonix
 "Ave Maria" by Celine Dion
 "Free Bird" by Lynyrd Skynyrd

Honorary Pallbearers

Joey	Jace	Ryan
Marco	Tony	Karter
Carmine		Angelo

DENISE VARRIANO