



Valentino Ziliotto

April 4, 1927 - January 2, 2014

A man whose torpedo sandwiches filled the bellies of Santa Barbara residents for decades, has died.

Valentino Ziliotto, owner of the Italian Grocery & Deli — Tino's to locals — on East De la Guerra Street passed away Jan. 2 at home, his sister by his side.

He was 86.

The Santa Barbara native bought into the store, which used to be located in the 700 block of Olive Street, on July 1, 1947, and became sole proprietor 10 years later. In 1978, with help from the city's redevelopment agency, he and former wife Edith moved the store about a block away to 415 E. De la Guerra St., where it's operated since.

In a 1989 feature, the News-Press called the deli "Little Italy in a corner store."

Mr. Ziliotto said at the time that he bought into the business at 20 to make his father happy.

"He didn't want me to be a gardener. He felt that it wouldn't be a good field, because I wouldn't be able to earn enough money."

The shop became a second home, and those who stopped in to say hello did so not only for goods direct from Italy, but also for the giant sandwiches made by Mr. Ziliotto and his sister, Terry Morinini. They are 2-foot-long sandwiches wrapped in yellow paper, pretty much as they have been served for decades in the same Santa Barbara neighborhood.

Speaking with the News-Press on Friday, Deanna Morinini, Terry's daughter, said of her uncle, "He loved his customers, and that's what kept him going 60 odd years."

Mr. Ziliotto, who attended Franklin Elementary, Santa Barbara Junior High School and

Santa Barbara High School, was ill for some time, under hospice care at home for eight months. But even then, he came to the store every day for the first few months.

His last day was Sept. 1, 2013.

"That happened to be the first day that my brother, Elio, started working there," said Ms. Morinini.

Mr. Ziliotto died peacefully on Thursday.

"The house he was born in is the house he passed away in," said Ms. Morinini.

Now, she and brothers Elio and Dino run the place.

"We're continuing it in our uncle's legacy, with his sister's guidance."

It was her mother, she added, who was with Mr. Ziliotto when he first walked in the place all those years ago.

"She was by his side through and life and to death."

The shop is set for another move, perhaps over the summer, to the old Carrows Restaurant location at 210 W. Carrillo St.

"Once we get there, we'll probably do something in his honor," said Ms. Morinini.

The new location is not quite as big as the De la Guerra Street store. Given the De la Guerra building includes 1,000 square feet of storage space that's not being used, smaller apparently is better.

A memorial service for Mr. Ziliotto is being planned for a week from today at Our Lady of Sorrows Church. As of Friday, the time had yet to be determined.

Ms. Morinini said the store will be closed that day.

Valentino "Tino" Ziliotto was born to Giovanni (Indri) and Marina Ziliotto on April 4, 1927. He passed away in the home that he was born in on January 2, 2014. Tino's only sister, Terry was by his side at his death as she had been during his lifetime. She worked alongside him at The Italian Grocery and was always available when needed.

Tino attended Franklin elementary school, Santa Barbara Jr. High and Santa Barbara High

School, class of '44. After Graduation he was drafted into the army and stationed in Japan. Tino had great memories from that time of his life. After he returned from the Armed Forces he began working at the store he soon was to purchase. Tino bought into the Italian Grocery July 1, 1947 and became the sole proprietor in 1957. Tino's Italian Grocery has been part of Santa Barbara local community for many generations. His legacy will live on through his family as they continue to operate and manage Tino's Italian Grocery.

Tino is survived by Valentino, Jr. and several grandchildren. He is also survived by his sister, Terry Morinini, his niece, Deanna Morinini, nephews, Elio and Dino (Lisa) Morinini, great niece, Sammi and great nephews, Connor and Gunner.

The family is very grateful for the support from the Visiting Nurses Hospice Care of Santa Barbara.

Memorial mass will be celebrated at Our Lady of Sorrows, 21 E. Sola St., on Saturday, January 11 at 11am.

In lieu of flowers please send donations to the Italian American Foundation of Santa Barbara, PO Box 22557, Santa Barbara, CA 93121 or the Visiting Nurses Association of Santa Barbara, 222 E. Canon Perdido St., Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Comments



“ Tino was a great man. He worked tirelessly to provide the best sandwiches possible for a reasonable price. I always recommended to SB visitors to get a sandwich at the Italian Grocery and to meet Tino. He was kind to all that he met.

I remember giving him a real Alfa Romeo hat to replace the knockoff that he had been wearing for too many years. He wore that Alfa hat with pride.

Our hearts go out to the family. We were blessed by the short time that Tino was with us.

Neil Delfino - August 06, 2014 at 10:10 PM



“ "Good Man Mr. Tino", I have enjoyed you, wife, family and friends always and forever in my heart. The famous sandwiches. From Junior School to Senior High, it has always been a place to get a great meal quickly. You will be missed. My condolences to the family, this is a great loss in our community.

Laurie A. Haynes

Laurie Haynes - January 09, 2014 at 05:21 AM



“ I first met "Tino" in 1959, when I was 13, as my Dad brought me there to pick out my own "Submarine sandwich" ingredients. We had just moved to Santa Barbara and my Dad worked at Arden Farms Dairy. His fellow workers had told him about the then Olive Street "Italian Grocery" sandwiches and made him try one. 55 years and our three generations later, when I was in the store, I had to share a few moments with Tino, and up until a few years ago, his sister Terry, who finally retired from the store. Not until a couple of months before Tino's death, did Tino not put his daily mark on that store. I am proud to say that I knew him, as he put his mark of happiness on me and my family. God bless you Tino, we all miss you. Steve Schlah

Steve Schlah - January 21, 2014 at 10:09 PM



“ Ciao ragazzo, riposa bene amico bravo and say ciao to la mia Mama up in Heaven

Il tuo Amico Peruvian Immigrant that will always remember you

Cesare

Cesar A. Zevallos - January 09, 2014 at 12:16 AM



“ My deepest condolences to the family .Tino will be greatly missed. He was a unique and kind person.with love Valdivia and Ortiz family

fran valdivia - January 08, 2014 at 11:26 PM



“ Tino my good, good friend and fellow businessman, I will miss your friendly smile and that great twinkle in your eye every time I saw you in the store. Many times I was gifted with a long conversation about life in general and things around the Grocery. You were always concerned how my life was going and always very complimentary about my store and my staff. I'll never forget the Olive store and the whole European atmosphere it and the housing behind it elicited. What an iconic piece of Santa Barbara you and the Grocery was and will continue to be I am sure. You subs were the best in the world. "A Super deluxe on whole wheat please, light on the oil and extra peppers, cut in half please". Oh my gosh I wonder many subs have gone out your doors over time.
Terry my condolences to you. I know how much you loved your brother. Wasn't he just the 'bestest' ever.

Gary Simpson

Gary Simpson - January 08, 2014 at 06:49 PM



“ Words cannot express the loss to Santa Barbara or to thousands of families that grew up with Tino's Grocery. To those that was there for you to the end, "Thanks for being there for one of Santa Barbara's true icons. Bless you all." We are going to miss you Tino.

The Ibarra Family

Angelica St.Clair - January 08, 2014 at 04:51 PM



“ My sincere condolences to the family for your loss. I've been a customer since 1957 and remember as a child those wonderful sandwiches. I still stop by whenever I'm in S.B. for one of them. Things certainly have changed over the years. I'll especially miss the old location with it's ambiance and I wish you prosperity in the future. Godspeed Tino R.I.P.

Penny Perreault - January 07, 2014 at 01:03 PM



“ Dear Terry & Family, So very sorry to hear of Tino's passing. Tino was a good friend and mentor. The several years I worked with you folks helped mold the person I am today and my success working with the public for the past 45 + years is a tribute to him. May God always watch over you and may God always protect him. Forever indebted to a great man.
Ron Munarolo & Family

Ronald Munarolo - January 07, 2014 at 10:30 AM



“ Terry and family; please accept our sincere condolences. it's clear from the many tributes that Tino was a wonderful man who served his community with honour and dedication. We only met him once in 1988 when we visited the USA, but we too remember the wonderful torpedo sandwiches and your hospitality.

Ray and Peggy Ceccato. Griffith Australia.

Ray Ceccato - January 07, 2014 at 05:29 AM



“ The town has indeed lost a legend. Rest in peace my friend, in sub heaven...

Gary Cartzdafner

Gary Cartzdafner - January 05, 2014 at 03:07 PM



“ Tino, you were the nicest man, I remember my dad and I going into your store all the time back when it was on Olive St. And buying torpedoes or your wonderful salami, you grew up with dad, Paul Muller. We will miss you Tino and your smile and generosity!

Tina Willett

Tina Willett - January 05, 2014 at 10:13 AM



“ As a junior higher I could not wait to go to SBHS so I could go to lunch at Tinos. He was quick with a smile and going to his store was a rite of passage for many of us. May Tino enjoy his new life with Christ and the many friends and family who have went before him.

Sarah Jayne Mack - January 05, 2014 at 09:02 AM



“ Tino you always greeted with a smile and always knew what I wanted the second I walked through your doors! As a student at UCSB in the 70's we would borrow a car or take the bus to get your sandwiches and bring them back to the DORMS...right up to today as I walked through your doors and picked up more goods for my teenage son! I hope your running around in paradise having a great time! You will be missed but never forgotten and I will see you every time I walk through the doors of your market!

Harry, Randi & Drake Rabin - January 05, 2014 at 08:52 AM



“ We will miss Tinos smile and he always took time to chat even with people standing in line waiting for their turn to order. We don't know about other subs in town but always referred to Tinos as the best in town. That is where we got hooked. RIP Tino.

Lee & Sue Hatler

Lee & Sue Hatler - January 04, 2014 at 08:34 PM



“ I will always remember Tino and his delicious Subs. He was a very nice man. May God bless him.

Alex Valencia - January 04, 2014 at 05:50 PM



“ I lived on Olive Street growing up, in the cottages with all the Italian families behind the Store. Tino taught me my first lesson of life...we as kids in the neighbor would hear the soda truck deliveries. The deliveries were stacked in the back of his store. We helped ourselves to a couple of sodas. Tino knew it was us, so instead of telling our parents, he made us clean up his store, sweep the front the back, etc. Thank you Tino for the early lesson in teaching us life consequences. He always reminded me when I saw him. Rip Tino.
Olga Herrera



Olga Herrera - January 04, 2014 at 04:32 PM



“ I grew up in that neighborhood also Olga. Worked at the store when I was in HS. Tino taught us a lot that has applied to our lives. When I saw him last we laughed about old times and I kept reminding him how when I worked for him the torpedoes were .50. Yikes, that was a long time ago. RIP Tino.

JoAnn Dally Schwendtner - January 04, 2014 at 05:38 PM



“ RIP Tino, Condolences to the Family. He was a Wonderful man and brought smiles and laughter to many. Many good childhood memories associated with the deli on olive . Karen Huling (Andreatta) niece of Telio & Bobbie Serena

karen huling - January 04, 2014 at 03:43 PM



“ We send our love. Sorry for your loss. Dan and Carolyn Baham

Baham - January 04, 2014 at 01:54 PM



“ I am Bonnie Andreatta Frazier..I've been going to the Italian Grocery since it was on Olive St. a block down from my G.parents house, Telio & Lula Andreatta..that would be in the 40's.Tino was a giving person..caring for the people of his community.. we would get a nickel from grandpa , then head for Tino's to spend it ..I especially recall the line of bins about my eye-level @ the time, filled w/ pastas, beans,etc...and the aroma of good salamis !...just last wk. I took my family to the Grocery for those fabulous sub sandwiches ,w/extra oil & vinegar..the memories are many... and Tino will live on in them..

Bonnie Jo Andreatta Frazier - January 04, 2014 at 01:13 PM



“ Tino was a very kind and generous man. I am so sorry to hear of his passing. Home again, home again never to flee.... Rest now Tino.

valencia - January 04, 2014 at 12:01 PM



“ So sorry to hear of Tino's passing...we always stopped at his grocery for a supply of " tinoburgers " before going sailing...he knew everyone in the family & asked after them whenever we met. A truly good man. We will miss him.

William Coulter, M. D. - January 04, 2014 at 11:04 AM



“ I have been trying to contact my American relatives. Tino. Terry Morinini and Laura Brion.. When serching the net I came accross Tino's Death Notice . I was sorry to discover that Tino passed away. Tino was my mother's cousin. Although I never met him I feel as if I knew him because for as long I can remember his photo was in our lounge room. After my mother passed away I kept that photo as it was special to me. My deepest condolences to all the family. My thoughts and prayers are with Tino's family. My mother was Norma Signor nee Ziliotto, she was very fond of her American relatives and had happy memories of her visit to Santa Barbara. Reading the tributes made me proud to related to Tino and I know Mum would have been too. He must have been a special person. Vonda Hewatt - nee Signor, Griffith, Australia. If any family members would like to contact me at roy.hewatt@bigpond.com or at 40 Probert Avenue Griffith. NSW. Australia. 2680.

Vonda Hewatt - January 04, 2014 at 09:24 AM



“ Tino was a Santa Barbara institution, one of the last remnants of Santa Barbara's old Italian neighborhood. Tino loved Santa Barbara and all of those students, parents and friends who frequented his Italian Market -- it was obvious with the way he treated every customer. This town has had several legends, several people who have touched many with their kind way, Tino is among them. Thousands have enjoyed his sandwiches, thousands have frequented his Market, and undoubtedly thousands will feel a loss when they hear of Tino's passing. Tino you were one of those people who made Santa Barbara so special. We are all thankful to have known you, to have enjoyed the special touch you put into every sandwich, and to have experienced the love you showed to every customer. Rest in peace. You are a local legend. - David Bolton

David Bolton - January 04, 2014 at 12:13 AM



“ Alice Burke sent a virtual gift in memory of Valentino Ziliotto



Alice Burke - January 03, 2014 at 11:56 PM



“ My prayers and hugs go out to the Ziliotto Family. I met Him & His wonderful family 35 years ago. He will be missed by so many people.

Alice Burke - January 04, 2014 at 12:01 AM



“ Hugs and Prayers to The Ziliotto Family. Tino will be missed by many. Always looked forward to seeing him when buying our pepperoni . RIP Dear man you are soaring with the Angels now.

Pam - January 03, 2014 at 09:34 PM



“ My thoughts and prayers are with all of Tino's family and loved ones. One thing I remember about Tino was his amazing memory. I moved away but whenever I returned I would always go and get my sub and if Tino was there he'd smile and say "Where have you been?", "Where did you move?", "How is the family?". Oh that smile! Thanks for the memories ~ Maria Flores Murbach

Maria Murbach - January 03, 2014 at 08:48 PM



“ My Condolence to the Ziliotto Family, my thoughts and prayers are with you all. I grew up in Santa Barbara and when I was in Santa Barbara Jr High was my 1st experience with the yummy sandwiches and if we had a fund raiser, if we sold the most candy. We would win a Tino's Sandwich. By the time I was at Santa Barbara High and the famous place to go was to have a Tino's sandwich. Sometimes the teachers would let you leave early enough to beat the lines at the Italian Grocery if not it was so worth standing in line and the biggest bonus was Tino making your sandwiches. Then when my husband and I started to date and after we got married we would always go get a sandwich at least once a month. Mrs Ziliotto and Family thank you for sharing your Husband, Father, Brother and Uncle to Santa Barbara residents and of course to all of us students of Santa Barbara High School, Tino will truly be missed and his sandwiched will always be the best!!!

Mary Tenoso - January 03, 2014 at 07:29 PM



“ My condolences to the Ziliotto family. I grew up in Santa Barbara and when I was small, I always looked forward to a trip to the Italian Grocery with my dad, especially because I knew Tino would give me a free slice of salami. It was a very small thing, but it stayed with me. As I got older I would always stop by for a Super Delux. Though I didn't know Tino beyond being a customer, I have such fond memories of him, his smile, his teasing me and making me laugh. I'm glad to have known him, even if just a little bit. He will be missed by many, including myself.

Jennifer Arnold

Jen Arnold - January 03, 2014 at 07:02 PM



“ My sincere condolences to the Ziliotto family in this grief. TINO always had a kind word and great smile and he will truly be missed.

Regards,
Mrs. Geno Forner



Mrs. Geno Forner - January 03, 2014 at 03:57 PM



“ hi, Mrs.Forner..My husband Dave worked w/Geno @ Granite and he held Geno in high regard...Dave said they @ one time drove those big Uke trucks together.anyway, recognized your name and wanted to tell you that..sad to know Tino has passed...remember going to his Italian Grocery on Olive St,...it was in the 40's and I was about 4 yrs. old...it had a wonderful aroma of salami !

Bonnie (Andreatta) Frazier - January 04, 2014 at 02:00 PM



“ My sincere condolences. I loved that man. He was my step fathers old ITALIAN friend. Italian from top to bottom. You were kind, generous, loving and best torpedoes in the UNITED STATES. God rest your soul



Veronica Cuevas - January 03, 2014 at 03:52 PM