

Eugene P. Mortara – Teacher



Native Nevadan Eugene Mortara, 63 years old, passed away Thursday, January 29, 2004, surrounded by family at his home in Verdi. Eugene had many ties to the community throughout his life. Having obtained a B.S. in chemistry and a degree in education from the University of Nevada at Reno, he began teaching at Billingshurst Junior High School. From there he transferred to Reno High School, where he taught chemistry until he retired, with 20 years in the Washoe County School District. There he developed a strong rapport with his colleagues and students. Here he founded the Reno High Ski Club and coached the ski team. His classroom door was always open to young people, who affectionately called him "Uncle Mort" and congregated in his room at lunch and after school.

Colleagues appreciated his presidency of the Washoe County Teachers Association, his work on the board of directors of the National Association of Urban School Districts, and his service as a delegate to the convention of the National Education Association. Eugene's other links to the community included involvement in many service organizations, such as membership in Rotary Club, Sons of Italy, the Italian Benevolent Society, and his work with the Boy Scouts, where he saw all three of his sons through Eagle Scouts. During the Vietnam War he was a staff sergeant in the Air National Guard in Nevada, where his unit's specialty was photoreconnaissance, an activity that led to a life-long hobby of photography.

An enthusiastic outdoorsman, he enjoyed mountain climbing, back packing, hunting, fishing, skiing, and rounding up cattle, all with his wife, family, and friends.

Born on September 9, 1940, in Reno to Italian-American parents Frank Mortara and Eva Brunetti Mortara. Eugene valued family ties all his life, and it was during boyhood visits to relatives in Italy that he learned to love his heritage and traveling, another passion he indulged in with family and friends all his life. His parents, as well as a brother Virgil Mortara, preceded him in death. He is survived by his wife, Pamela Pincolini Mortara, and sons Christopher, Eric, and Nicolas, all of Reno; his daughter Virginia Mortara Larson and two grandsons, Connor and Trace, of Battle Ground, WA; and his sister, Rita Mortara Morgan of La Mesa, CA; and many nephews,

nieces and cousins, both in the U.S. and Italy.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests a contribution to the Community Foundation of Western Nevada to the Eugene Mortara Memorial Endowment, 1855 S. Arlington Ave., Suite 103, Reno, NV 89509. Proceeds will benefit education, which was Eugene's expressed wish.

A memorial service and celebration of life will be held at St. Albert the Great Catholic Church, 1250 Wyoming Ave., at Kings Row, at 11:00 a.m., Saturday, February 7, 2004.