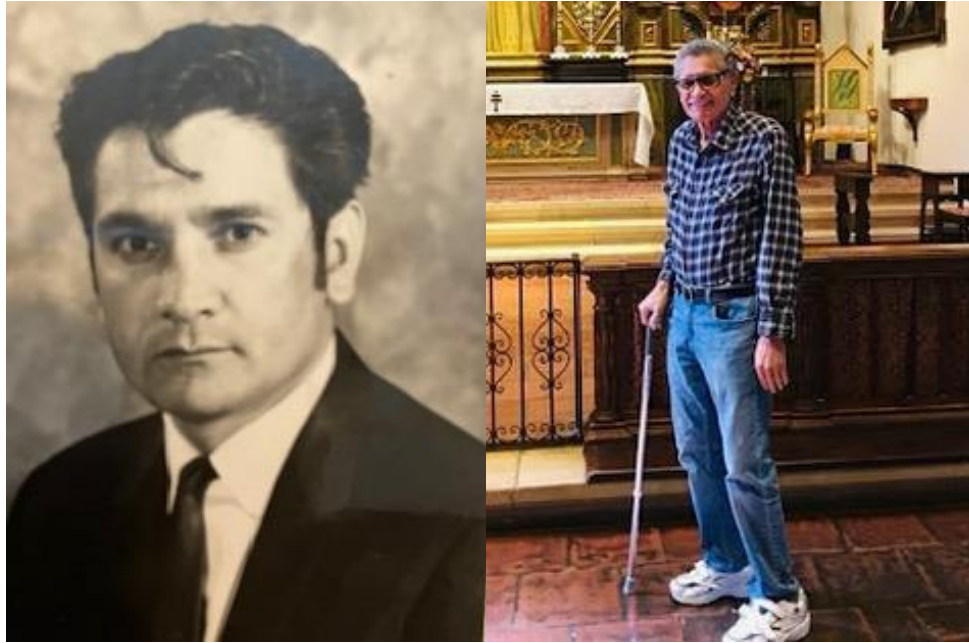


In Loving Memory of John Fred Rivera UPDATE

JUNE 13, 2024



With profound sorrow, we bid farewell to our father, brother, uncle, grandfather, and friend, John Fred Rivera, who passed away on May 21, 2024, of natural causes in Sacramento, California. He was 86.

Known by all as Fred, he was born on May 13, 1938, to Federico and Mariana Nefor Rivera in Dawson, a coal mining company town in the mountains of Northern New Mexico. He was one of 13 siblings. The family later settled in nearby Raton.

As a boy, Fred was struck by a car when he pushed his sister Beatrice off the road, which she said saved her life. He would suffer chronic back problems as a result but didn't let it slow him down. He later contracted scarlet fever and was bedridden for months. During both instances, he used his convalescence to study and read voraciously, particularly history books which he liked to discuss with his father at dinner. He had a gifted mind and excelled at mathematics. Growing up in the tumultuous Civil Rights era of the 1950s and early 1960s, he found a lifelong passion for social justice and advocating for the underdog. After graduating from Raton High School, he was expelled from two colleges for what school officials described as inciting race riots. In fact, he was standing up for the rights of Hispanic students in Northern New Mexico.

Fred enlisted in the Army and served two tours in Vietnam as a radar technician before returning to college to earn a degree in electrical engineering from the University of New Mexico. He went on to work as an engineer at Kennecott Copper near Silver City and then as chief electrical engineer at Kaiser Steel at its York Canyon coal mine outside Raton.

After two failed marriages, he finally found the person who would become the love of his life, Eloisa Marie Grine, of Raton. They married on April 30, 1980.

They moved frequently as Fred took jobs in Green River, Wyoming; Pueblo, Colorado; Carlsbad, New Mexico and finally settled in Henderson, Nevada, where he spent some of his happiest years with Eloisa and their son, Gregory. He worked in the gold mines near Laughlin, Nevada, and then as a real estate agent and lastly, as a beloved tour guide at Hoover Dam, a job he enjoyed immensely because it combined his love of history and technology. Fred was devoted to Eloisa and nursed her through her difficult final years before she died, too young, of scleroderma in 2016.

Fred loved visits with his family and friends, talking politics and helping people who were down on their luck. He was unfailingly positive and swore that he always woke up happy and grateful, no matter the difficulties life threw at him.

In addition to Gregory, Fred is survived by his daughter Sara Rivera and her daughter, Myah; son Jimmy Rivera, wife Karen and daughters Nicole and Bethany; son Ray Rivera, wife Sarah and children Joseph, Pyeatt and Salley; and daughter Richelle Rivera, partner Dewey Campbell and son Jace.

He is also survived by his sisters Marlene Miller and Anna Foland and her husband Jack; and brothers Anthony Rivera and his wife Elizabeth and Craig Rivera and his wife Eleanor. He was preceded in death by his parents and sisters Ramona Spicer, Marcelita Rivera, Beatrice Roaque, Valerie Sheehan; and brothers Ralph, Albert, Marcel, Pantaleon and Gregory.

A remembrance gathering will be held at the V.F.W. in Raton on Saturday, June 22, beginning at 4 p.m. followed by an interment ceremony at Mount Calvary Catholic Cemetery on Monday, June 24, at 11 a.m.