He is an unsung hero, born Jeremiah Eduardo Fuentes, and known throughout New Mexico for his numerous contributions for the betterment of community. Motivated by his fierce dedication to his native heritage, and his love for the land, "Jerry", as he was known to all, was a driven man. Especially in all fields related to agriculture, he enjoyed telling the stories from his childhood. How his grandfather put him on a horse at the age of 3; the same horse that pulled the plow that his grandfather used in the fields where the three sisters grow--corn, squash, and beans. So, in Jerry's lifetime, he experienced farming from behind his family's horse-drawn plow at age 5, to the advent of modern mechanized farming as we know it today.

In his home village of Truchas, his heritage rooted deep in the soil, like the forest mantle of Truchas Peaks. The mountains and forests around Truchas, where the alpine air, like a fragrance, revitalizes the human spirit; and the pure mountain water quenches the thirst... I was fortunate to be with him one day, after a half-day spent in the ancient tradition of wood cutting/loading/hauling/splitting. I say fortunate because I had never had the privilege to see someone so in tune with their environment. When those turkeys made a break for it and ran across the road in front of his truck, Jerry was ready. He grabbed his shotgun (always at the ready), pursued the jakes that were now running at full speed for the forest cover. In one fluid motion, I saw him crouch, take aim and fire only once. Running, he disappeared into the forest and when he returned, he was carrying a large, very dead tom. But he knew the old ways. That turkey was destined for the feast day at Tesuque Pueblo. Unbeknown to the turkey, "tom" had sacrificed his life for ceremony--with all the proper relevance that accompanies the sacred manner, which we should all acknowledge, has its rightful place in the natural order between the people and the sacred earth which sustains.

That's who Jerry Fuentes was--someone who could be counted on. He embodied the values of courage, compassion, caring, and respect. Respect for the old ways, respect for the elders, he cherished women, and loved children. He cared not just for the planet and its people, but also for the beauty of a culture that he deemed was worth defending.

Albeit perhaps an over-simplistic notion, the "common good" was his expression. To him, the common good was not an abstract ideal, but personified an expression that could help us to navigate the complexity of the future by spooling from the common threads of tradition. Jerry was not someone who dictated his beliefs to the unwilling or unbelieving--he was only trying to defend his slice of paradise for the benefit of future generations.

After a lifetime of working to improve his community, lobbying for funds to improve roads, building an existing community center in Chimayo, and securing a trash station to discourage illegal dumping, he then turned his attention to legalization of cannabis and industrial...
hemp. Within this premise of belief, the *sacred plants as sacred medicines* were worth defending.

So, this page is dedicated to him. Jerry Fuentes was a social justice warrior before it was cool to be one. The stories of his escapades are colorful and numerous. So much so that his life could have been a movie. He leaves us a legacy that inspires us all to live more courageously, and less in fear, because he believed courage and love could transform the world...

We hope this page will become an archive for the true telling of the contemporary history of all the unsung heroes and heroines who came together to work for the common good.