



Salvador Arévalos

April 21, 2024

Salvador Arévalos, also known as “PeeWee”, “Shorty” and “Tony”, was born on December 11, 1926, in Pueblo, Colorado to Gavino Arévalos and María Trinidad Rico. His long life of 97 years came to a peaceful end at home in Fort Collins, Colorado under the loving care of his adult children on April 21, 2024.

Dad was just a baby when he lost his mother. She was struck by a train while gathering coal used for cooking and heating along the railroad tracks. In 1928, his father, employed at the Steel Mill, decided it was best to return to Rancho Cortijo de Zacapu, Michoacán, México. Tragedy struck again when at the age of 12, his father unexpectedly passed. Now an orphan, Dad was placed in the home of an elderly man to complete chores in return for food and shelter.

As a teenager, he worked at a rancho that bred bulls used for bullfighting. It was from this experience that he acquired the calling and knowledge to become a vaquero, a cattleman, and was an accomplished horseman. He also earned the reputation for being quite the bull rider. He shared that he was recognized for his bull riding skills and was given a coveted rodeo belt by the adult vaqueros after one of his rides. Dad bore scars and suffered many injuries over the years from his numerous encounters with the bulls, cows, and horses.

In 1946 at the age of 19, he made a life changing decision to return to the United States. After working for a short period of time in Elko, Nevada and Fresno, California, he met the Berumen family and journeyed with them to Fowler, just 36 miles east of Pueblo, his birthplace. It was there that a young, beautiful, and hard-working woman, who joyfully sang all day long while working in the fields, caught his eye, Lucy “Lucia” Mary Castañeda. They married on December 20, 1948, and raised a family of five.

Raising a family can be a challenge. It was especially so for Dad. He grew up never knowing or feeling the love, warmth, care and understanding of a mother. With the passing of his father at such a young age, he lacked the presence of a positive male role model to guide him. Dad was hard on us. He imposed strict rules and had high expectations. He would challenge us with tasks giving little to no instructions or directions; forcing us to figure out how to solve problems. He would implore us in Spanish, “¡Que no se te cierre el mundo!” Roughly translated, “Don’t let the world close in on you.” He struggled and made many missteps along the way but together with his “vieja”, the love of his life, they would work through the struggles and challenges. They succeeded in providing us with love, guidance, and support while instilling the important lifelong values of proper conduct, determination, confidence, a strong work ethic, and the drive to never ever give up. “¡No te rajes!” They spent 73 years together until Mom’s passing on December 28, 2021.

Most of Dad’s work life was spent in the meat processing industry in Fowler and in nearby Rocky Ford. It was while working at the meat processing plant in Rocky Ford that the life of a “vaquero” he so loved while growing up in Mexico became a goal. He saw many pregnant cows being brought in to be processed. With the approval of the owner, he acted on his idea of quickly removing and “saving” the life of the calf by performing a C-Section. The first calf to survive this procedure was named “Sancho”. Each calf saved thereafter

was given a name and that is how he began to realize his goal of becoming a rancher. Some years later he contracted and became seriously ill with the bovine “black leg” disease and was advised to find a different line of work. He was hired by the Fowler School District and was responsible for the maintenance and care for Park Elementary School. He not only cared for, maintained, and kept the school in tip top condition, he also greatly enjoyed interacting with and taking care of the children and staff.

Dad’s workdays were long and exhausting, but he set aside family time taking us to eat at the A&W, Stifler’s market for ice cream, the Ark-Valley Fair on Watermelon Day, and to the Rocky Ford Drive-In to watch classic “Golden Age” and the modern Mexican movies of the day. He taught us how to fish and took us on a short vacation to the Pike-San Isabel National Forest, an experience that would affect us all in some way. And then there was baseball. He loved the game and had a great time coaching Little League and Babe Ruth. His favorite team was the NY Yankees. On a trip in 1976 to visit his son Arturo in California, he attended not one but two Major League baseball games, the Padres and the Dodgers. Later we were fortunate to share Colorado Rockies group season tickets providing Dad, and even Mom, the opportunity to attend games for many years. Dad’s dream of one day attending a World Series game was fulfilled when the Rockies played the Boston Red Socks in 2007. Coors Field was his happy place. Dad was also an avid fan and had fun watching professional WWE wrestling.

Dad and Mom, along with his herd of cattle, moved to Fort Collins in 1990. With the combined and various help from his adult children throughout the years he was able to continue with ranching. He loved being outdoors, keeping busy and especially spending time with his cattle. And while he was a man of few words, stoic, and did not articulate his feelings or complain of the constant chronic pain he suffered, he deeply loved his family. His family

replaced the loneliness of being an orphan. He also thoroughly enjoyed the special relationship, as grandparents do, with his two granddaughters and his three great-grandsons. He would always light up, be playful and smile broadly in their presence.

Dad told us throughout our lives to take care of Mom. That she came first. That you can have many fathers, men in our lives who can be a father figure, but you only have one mother. This view was shaped by the emptiness he felt from not experiencing his mother's love. Dad underestimated his presence and the impact he had in our lives. Yes, we had our mother, but we had our father, too. Towards the end of his life, Dad would say "Thank you" each time we would help him put on his clothes; bring him lunch; shave his beard; cut his hair; take him to buy an ice cream cone; or put on his shoes. Dad, we thank you for being our Father, Grandpa, and Papa. Love you, always.

Dad was preceded in death by his wife, Lucia; his first-born infant son, Juan Ramon; his parents; brother David; his half-brothers and sisters (José Arnulfo; José Erasto; Eduardo del Sagrado de Jesús Corazón; Evarista; and María Jesús); and his beloved granddaughter, Carisa Alan Kohutek. Close family members who will keep Dad forever in their hearts and his memory alive include children Arturo (Peggy); Anna; Dale; Lenora; Lisa; granddaughter Alicia McGeer (Paul); and his three great-grandsons Darien and Ashton McGeer, and Kaysen James Kohutek (Daniel "Cain" Kohutek).

Dad always wanted to return to Fowler. He will be laid to rest in the Fowler Cemetery alongside his wife on Tuesday, May 7, 2024. Viewing will begin at 10:30am with Graveside Service at 11:00am.

Honorary pallbearers: Lewis Flores, Charles "Chi" Marmolejo, Paul McGeer, Daniel "Cain" Kohutek, Nathan Pugel, and Jerry Norton.

Tribute Wall

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“ *Lenora, Lisa, Anna, and family. I send my deepest condolences. I never had the chance to meet Mr. Aevolos. But it easy to see his dedication to family and hard work in his children. Peace to all of you.*

Joel and Margie Stewart - May 06, 2024 at 07:49 AM