

3 pages:

Eulogy given For Archuleta
by D. Mather on

Thursday, January 3,
1991

Felipe Archuleta was a proud man who cared deeply about a lot of things. And he cared more about his family than anything. He often alluded to the fact that all of his children were now working adults--that all of them were good citizens. He said to me, "How come I never see any of the Archuletas out on the street, or in the cantinas causing trouble? All the Archuletas have good credit all over town."

Read AT F.B.A.'S
Burial - AT The
request of
Family Members -

Felipe Archuleta was a man of many legacies, of many enthusiasms. But the focus of his life was his family, his neighborhood, and the two bedroom house he built himself in Tesuque, New Mexico. And it was there that Felipe started communicating with the larger world through his carved wooden animals. So many visitors started to come in fact, that it drove him a little nuts. He'd say,

"They come down from Chicago and come right over here. They get about twenty Kodaks or maybe more. That's what I think. They have more than twenty kodaks, oh yeah, that's a bunch."

And while Felipe seemed genuinely flattered and amused and somewhat mystified by his growing fame and popularity as a wood carver, he never lost touch with who he was.

He always took pleasure in the simplest tasks--watering the flowers and vegetable garden, talking to whoever, repairing things, feeding the stray dogs and cats in the neighborhood, watching daytime

television and cooking. I remember Felipe making tortillas from scratch in his kitchen. There used to be a green formica topped table in the room. A pot of pinto beans would simmer all day on the stove-- coffee and homemade, thick torillas and red chile sauce and fried potatoes were always being served to his helpers and guests.

In the summer Felipe might interrupt a meal by yelling out into the street, "Hey why don't you feed your dog." And with that he would bound out of the house with milk cartons in both hands and he would bend over the steel mesh fence out front and put food and water down for the animals.

He apparently always had an affinity for animals. Mrs. Albert Borrego, a Santa Cruz schoolteacher and close neighbor of the Archuleta's in his youth, once recalled for me, " I remember that Felipe could ape people real well, just to make people laugh. You know he was humorous--liked to entertain. Felipe could imitate musical instruments, flutes, coronets, drums. And he had an instinct for imitating animals, all kinds--cows, chickens, cats, turkeys, birds, anything--he was good at it."

Felipe was humorous and usually very direct. I can't think of many people I've known personally who are so uproariously quotable and I can imagine that he was even funnier in his native Spanish.

Even though Felipe experienced great national and local fame and recognition his real success was at a personal level. He was a man of immense creative energy and unlike many he was lucky enough to find an outlet and avenue for this energy. He was doubly blessed to have a family who believed in him and his vision.

Felipe often worried that he would not be able to fulfill all of the obligations and orders made by the many who wanted to own an example of his work. He has more than fulfilled all of these orders by giving of himself through his work--he has given us all a legacy which will live for