

Renowned artist Armando Alvarez walks on

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Armando Alvarez Compean, who lived in Gallup for more than 20 years, died June 1 in Descanso, Calif. He was 79.

Born in Mexico, he came to the United States at an early age and worked as a businessman for many years in Brownsville, TX before starting a career as a painter.

He came to Gallup to visit his brother, Alex Alvarez, who was a golf pro here, and decided to stay. While here he married his third wife, Gaye Brown, who worked as a writer and copy editor for the *Gallup Independent*.

A year after coming here, he secured a contract with the City of Gallup to build a sculpture to reflect the nature of the city and its people. The \$100,000 contract resulted in the creation of the "We the People" sculpture that is now a park on Maloney Avenue.

He was also the creator of the sculpture that now rests in front of the *Gallup Independent*.

Over his life, he produced hundreds of paintings and more than a dozen major sculptures that now reside in museums and buildings all over the world.

According to his website, here are a few of the biggest:

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“Wall of Honor,” a \$37,000 steel sculpture at the New Mexico State Police Academy.

“La Puerto del Sol,” a \$100,000 steel sculpture done in 1997 for the city of Tome, NM.

“The Miners,” a \$55,000 steel sculpture that was done in 1999 and now resides in Raton, N.M.

“Watering Place,” a \$73,000 steel sculpture done on 2000 for the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Museum in Las Cruces.

“Los Aros de Longmont” a \$100,000 steel and Byzantine sculpture in Longmont, CA.

A steel and Byzantine glass mosaic for \$30,000 that now resides in the entrance arch for the Los Angeles Zoo.

The family plans to hold a private memorial service sometime in the future.