



Forrest Joseph Gerard

January 15, 1925 - December 28, 2013

Forrest Joseph Gerard passed away on December 28, 2013 in Albuquerque, NM. He was born on January 15, 1925 on the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana. He is a citizen of the Blackfeet Tribe of Montana. Gerard is survived by Kay, his wife of 65 years; daughters Patricia, Margaret, Rebecca and Jennifer; and son Stanley. He was preceded in death by his parents, Frederick Gerard Sr. and Rose Douglas Gerard; and siblings Frederick Jr., Charles, Mary, Hazel, Lyda, James, and John. Gerard is highly respected and revered by many throughout Indian Country and federal government circles because of the leadership role he played in empowering tribal communities through the transformation of federal Indian policy. In fact, it is not possible to have an informed conversation regarding Native American issues such as self-governance, self-determination, health and education without his name being prominently mentioned. After graduation from Browning High School in 1943, Gerard enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corp and served with the 15th Air Force in southern Italy where he flew 35 missions as an engineer and gunner. He returned from military service in 1945 and earned a bachelor's degree in 1949 from what is now the University of Montana. Gerard entered public service with the Montana State Department of Public Instruction and advanced into positions with the Montana Tuberculosis Association and Wyoming Tuberculosis and Health Association. In 1957 he moved on to Washington, D.C. where he became the tribal affairs officer for the newly created Indian Health Service. After being selected for a coveted Congressional Fellowship

in 1966, he moved to Capitol Hill and worked on Indian issues first with Representative Al Ullman from Oregon and later for Senator George McGovern from South Dakota. He then served as the legislative liaison officer in the Bureau of Indian Affairs and as Director of the Office for Indian Progress at the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. In 1971 Gerard became a professional staff member on the U.S. Senate's Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. It was in this post that Gerard drafted some of the most significant pieces of legislation in the 20th century, including the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, the Indian Financing Act and the Indian Health Care and Improvement Act. In 1976 he established a lobbying firm to represent tribal interests in the federal arena. In 1977 President Jimmy Carter nominated him to be the first Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs. He was confirmed by the Senate and served until 1980 when he returned to private lobbying practice in Washington, D.C. Many prominent professional people proudly refer to Gerard as their mentor and credit him with having been a major influence in their lives. Gerard was the subject of the book, *The Last Great Battle of the Indian Wars* that chronicled his contributions to history. In 1992 he and Kay moved to Albuquerque, and enjoyed their time with family and friends, cultural activities, traveling, and all the beauty of New Mexico. A Celebration of Life will be held Friday, January 3, 2014, 2:00 p.m., at FRENCH Wyoming. Friends may visit beginning at 1:00 p.m. Memorials may be made to the United Tribes Technical College at www.my.uttc.edu or the National Museum of the American Indian at www.nmaistore.si.edu.

FRENCH – Wyoming
7121 Wyoming Blvd. NE
(505) 823-9400

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 3. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (MT)

FRENCH Funerals - Cremations (Wyoming)
7121 Wyoming Blvd NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109
(505) 823-9400
<https://www.FrenchFunerals.com>

Celebration of Life

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Tribute Wall



“ *French Funerals created a Tribute Video in memory of Forrest Joseph Gerard*



FRENCH Funerals & Cremations - December 28, 2013 at 12:00 AM

NS

“ *Nancy And Jim Scott lit a candle in memory of Forrest Joseph Gerard*



Nancy and Jim Scott - March 10, 2014 at 02:29 PM



Dear Kay: So sorry to hear about Forrest Larry and I have such fond memories of our time with you folks, I have been asking the family here for your number but I think they think I am going to bother you buy if you get this please call me, Carole Bomar 406-590-3960 Cut Bank Mt. Hope I hear from you.

Carole Bomar - November 29, 2014 at 08:36 AM

TH

“ Dear Kay and family,
Our thoughts and prayers are with you .I
admired Forrest so much for all he worked for
to promote better health and relations. I was
thankful for the time he gave to me to
encourage me and how he sent me updates on what he was doing.
I called him Uncle...he called me cousin...I was thankful he called
me family. Much love to all of you, Toni Gerard Hollis (Ed and Lou's
daughter)



Toni Gerard Hollis - January 12, 2014 at 07:53 AM

CS

“ As a former neighbor and having originated in South Dakota myself
I'd like to say that the Gerard family has my sincere condolences.
From Cleophee "Goody" Sumner. Rest in Peace

Cleophee Sumner - January 07, 2014 at 02:41 PM

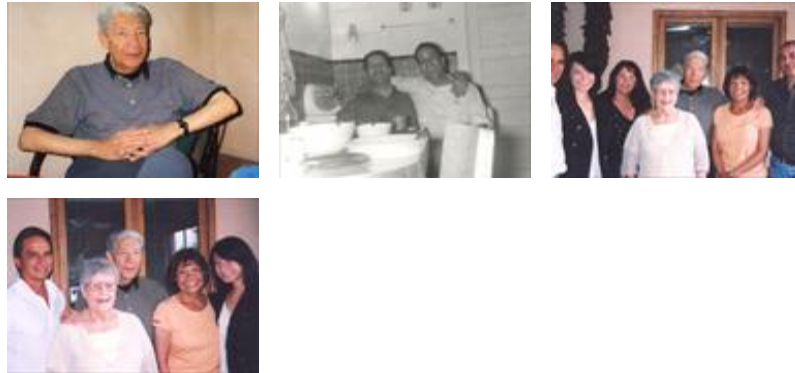
CW

“ Dearest Gerard Family---what a wonderful family Forrest and Kay
have. I have been blessed to have a small orbit around the Gerard
Family over the years. Forrest and Kay were my weekend pals in
Washington, D.C., and Forrest was a much needed mentor to me
as a young professional. We enjoyed a quiet laugh about Forrest's
first memory of the Wilson Family. Forrest came to our house in the
early 1960s in Sacaton, AZ, to have lunch with my parents. We
children were all running around like wild Indians while Forrest and
my parents discussed the future of the Federal Indian Service and
impending worries about "World War-III". We were destined to be
fast friends later in life. Forrest never stopped thinking about
improving upon Federal Indian policies and laws. He was a one-of-
a-kind role model for many young Indian professionals! Lots of hugs
and love to Kay and the rest of the Gerard Family. Cathy Wilson

Catherine Wilson - January 03, 2014 at 12:38 PM

BG

“ 4 files added to the album New Album Name



Barbara Gerard-Mitchell - January 02, 2014 at 09:17 PM

BG

“ *Dear Uncle, You have had a good journey on this earth and you leave behind a legacy for all of us to remember. So many you have touched with your true interest, a listening ear and a look in you're eye that said you cared. You have always taken special time for relatives and friends all they way down to the "little ones" with love from your heart. You have supported nieces, nephews, cousins, grandchildren and I could go on and on...you are an inspiration beyond imagination for people across this nation. I am so proud of you and proud to be your niece. I'm sorry I won't be there with the family to say good byes, but you will be in my heart. My thoughts will be with the family as they gather together in Albuquerque to surround you with great energy of love and spirit. You're niece, Barbara*



Barbara Gerard-Mitchell - January 02, 2014 at 07:46 PM

RS

“ *Rena R Sanford purchased the Classic Sympathy Dish Garden for the family of Forrest Joseph Gerard.*



Rena R Sanford - January 02, 2014 at 07:38 PM

JN

“ *Janet Nielsen lit a candle in memory of Forrest Joseph Gerard*



Janet Nielsen - January 02, 2014 at 07:08 PM

SC

“ *Shawn & Tammy Running Crane, Janet Running Crane-Nielsen purchased the Blue & White Sympathy Floor Basket for the family of Forrest Joseph Gerard.*



Shawn & Tammy Running Crane, Janet Running Crane-Nielsen - January 02, 2014 at 06:57 PM

EG

“ We are all thinking of Uncle Forrest here in Montana this week and send out our love and sympathies to our dear Auntie Kay and our wonderful cousins at this difficult time of sorrow. Mom thought very highly of Uncle Forrest and said that he did so much good for us all and for the Indian people of this country. Our whole family is so very proud of him as I am that we were able to know and to be related to this wonderful intelligent man and to celebrate his life and all of his accomplishments. He set the bar high for us all and for that we are thankful!

We all wish we could be there to honor Uncle Forrest but hope that you all know that we are there with you in spirit to hold you up and to dry your tears! Love to you all!

Elaine Gerard

Elaine Gerard - January 02, 2014 at 06:19 PM

DG

“ Forrest was a wonderful friend & Patriot for our Nation and for all of the Indian Tribal Nations across the land. In particular, he was one who brought key elements together to make landmark decisions that have bettered and created so many opportunities for Indian Country. We know he is the American Indian who orchestrated what become the Indian Self-Determination law(s). He brought diverse elements from Indian Country to agree to all the key elements of the Tribal Controlled Community College Act of 1978. Most of all, he has been a great & kind man to know and call a friend, and always, always believed in the in First Nations Peoples and The Rights of Tribal Nations. His Journey has been a good one for all, and he continues on with Tunkasila (Grandfather) & Wakan Tanka (Great Spirit). The treasure is that We know him ... Dave Gipp, President, United Tribes Tech. College

David M. Gipp - January 02, 2014 at 06:19 PM

EG

“ *Elaine G. purchased the Yellow & White Sympathy Standing Spray for the family of Forrest Joseph Gerard.*



Elaine G. - January 02, 2014 at 06:13 PM



“ I posted the following on my FaceBook site, when I learned of Forrests taking his trip across the river. He was a friend to me and my Father, whom passed about twenty two years ago. I wish I would have kept in touch with Forrest:

One day I was at lunch with the Deputy Secretary of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, in Washington D.C. He told me a story of when he first got to Washington. He told me that it was at his first meeting with his senior staff, where he got his real introduction to Washington and his new job.

At the meeting was all the Senior staff under him. I don't know how many. The meeting was to introduce himself to them and brief them and outline his expectations during the new administration.

He told me that after the briefing and all the handshakes, that a few of the most Senior of the Senior staff waited around. When the rest had left, the Most Senior of the small group leaned over the table and shook Forrests hand and said, "Mr. Gerard, you are here for four years. We are here forever!" They then all walked out of the room! LOL!

Forest you are a good man. You are and were a good friend to me and my Father. Have a good Journey across that river, my Father is waiting for you, along with a multitude of your friends and acquaintances. Journey on Brother!

Anaquad Cobe

Anaquad Cobe - January 02, 2014 at 02:23 PM

TF

“ *The LaFromboise Family purchased the Sympathy Standing Spray in Christmas Colors for the family of Forrest Joseph Gerard.*



The LaFromboise Family - January 02, 2014 at 01:05 PM



“ *Sympathy Standing Spray in Christmas Colors was purchased for the family of Forrest Joseph Gerard.*



January 02, 2014 at 01:02 PM

GG

“ *One of the blessing I have received is to have know and worked for Forrest.*
George E. Gover

George E. Gover - January 02, 2014 at 12:31 PM

TJ

“ *Thomas R. Johnson purchased the Blue & White Sympathy Floor Basket for the family of Forrest Joseph Gerard.*



Thomas R. Johnson - January 01, 2014 at 03:52 PM

CI

“ *Mr. Gerard was one of the most genuine people I've ever met. Every time I got to be with him, he always made me feel welcome. I remember the time I was honored to visit him and his family in Albuquerque. His love of his family was evident, his smile contagious, and his dedication to the Native American community is unparalleled. God's speed dear soul. My love and prayers to his wonderful family.*

Cindy - December 31, 2013 at 08:45 PM

TJ

“ *On behalf of the French Family of Companies, we express our deepest condolences.*

Tom Jordan - December 31, 2013 at 12:47 PM

MD

My thoughts and prayers reach out to the Gerard family during these difficult times. - Mark Davis

Mark Davis - December 31, 2013 at 02:31 PM