



Santa Fe County Proclamation

PROCLAIMING JULY 27 –AUGUST 2, 2021, AS “MELINDA ROMERO PIKE WEEK”

Introduced by: Commissioner Anna Hansen

WHEREAS, Melinda Romero Pike was born in Agua Fria Village in Santa Fe County on February 19, 1927, to Luis Romero and Valeria Rivera. She was raised in the ancient and historic traditional Agua Fria Village and traced her ancestry to Barolome Romero II from Corral de Almuquer, La Mancha Reino de Castillo, España and the 1598 Oñate expedition; and

WHEREAS, Melinda came from a long line of generous and community-minded individuals; her grandparents Maria Albina Romero and Jose Antonio Romero y Saiz lived in Agua Fria during the late 1800s and opened their home in the center of the village for many public uses, including a clinic for visiting doctors, a polling place and a community meeting spot; and

WHEREAS, NM State Senator Nancy Rodriguez often speaks of the Romero family’s “relentless unselfishness”; Senator Rodriguez honored Melinda Romero Pike for her many accomplishments and community activism on the occasion of Melinda’s 90th birthday by introducing a resolution to the NM State Senate in 2017; and

WHEREAS, Melinda’s contributions to Agua Fria and the larger Santa Fe County community (which you will read about below) certainly carried on this tradition of “relentless unselfishness”; she said of her family: “our parents did not have hordes of money [but] they possessed a treasury of strong values, high morals, character, and firm convictions; always with love for God and neighbor”; and

WHEREAS, when Melinda was five years old, her mother died; she was raised by her aunt in the Village, and attended a one-room school house built by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and graduated in 1944 from Santa Fe High School; and

WHEREAS, in 1945 Melinda moved to San Francisco where she enrolled in Business College, worked as a secretary for a Lieutenant Commander at the Commandment 12 Naval District, volunteered as an usher at the San Francisco Metropolitan Opera, and worked as a freelance high-fashion model of furs, gowns, and hats; and

WHEREAS, Melinda is a member of the “Greatest Generation,” a generation of citizens that sacrificed much during the Great Depression and served our country during World War II and after, and whose legacy of service to others, church, and community is our greatest gift; and

WHEREAS, Melinda returned to Santa Fe in 1949 and later married David Steven Pike (a.k.a Leon Edgar Pike) on November 22, 1950, and both returned to Santa Fe in 1954; and

WHEREAS, Melinda’s loving husband passed away on May 18, 1963, and she became a widow at age 36 with two boys, Steven and David, ages nine and eleven; and

WHEREAS, in those early years after losing her husband, Melinda worked as a secretary at Cristo Rey and St. Anne’s / San Isidro Parishes and at Catholic Charities, and later at the District Court; and

WHEREAS, a lifelong resident and active member of the Agua Fria community, she was the first woman to serve on the San Isidro Parish Council, the Board of the Agua Fria Community Water



Association, and the Agua Fria Cemetery. She was instrumental in raising funds to build a new multi-purpose center for the San Isidro Parish and acquiring the land on which it was constructed; and

WHEREAS, she also served on the boards of the Santa Fe Community Action, the Villa Therese Catholic Clinic and Catholic Charities; and

WHEREAS, after surviving breast cancer in 1973, Melinda co-chartered the Santa Fe unit of the American Cancer Society (ACS) and was a member of the national ACS Reach to Recovery and Cancer in Minorities committees, serving as a volunteer for 20 years; and

WHEREAS, she helped to organize a number of successful fundraising events and received the prestigious "Terese Lasser Memorial Award," the highest national award for service in the American Cancer Society Reach to Recovery program; and

WHEREAS, she was hired at the age of 70 and worked for approximately 22 years as a hostess, bartender, and assistant manager at Tortilla Flats in Santa Fe; and

WHEREAS, Melinda reflected in 2017 that when she was hired at Tortilla Flats her only experience in the restaurant business, "was to go eat"; and

WHEREAS, so beloved was she by the community and her employers, she was selected as one of the three "Santa Fe Living Treasures" in 2004, after being sponsored for the honor by Tortilla Flats CEO Dean Alexis; and

WHEREAS, Melinda wrote stories about family lineage, culture, history, lifestyles, church, and community and became known as a "storyteller" and "historian" during her employment at the District Court; and

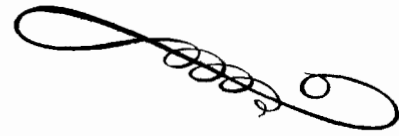
WHEREAS, on October 26, 2010, Santa Fe County honored her as "Official Historian of Agua Fria Village" and named "Romero Park" in honor of numerous ancestral familial contributions to Agua Fria Village in honor of Maria Albina Romero, Melinda's grandmother, and descendants, including her siblings and Melinda herself; and

WHEREAS, Melinda referred to Romero Park as "the heart and soul of the community where all sorts of activities took place"; and

WHEREAS, she loved the Santa Fe River and believed in the rights of the Acequia Madre, Agua Fria's Irrigation Ditch. She wrote an outline for an Amicus Brief: "Agua Fria Irrigation," tracing the water rights in the village to pre-1896 and reported that the Agua Fria Village property owners and farmers had irrigated their lands since at least 1640, and had pre-1907 water rights and these rights had precedence for decades prior to the City of Santa Fe's construction of dams that retained the headwaters of the Santa Fe River; and

WHEREAS, Melinda was appointed to the Santa Fe River Commission in 1994 and remained active for 21 years until she was 88. As a member of the River Commission, she helped to get the Living River Ordinance passed in 2012; this gave her a tremendous amount of joy; and

WHEREAS, she is proud that the Santa Fe River Commission members, the Santa Fe Watershed Association volunteers, and others who care so deeply have accomplished much to ensure a certain flow and level of health for the river she loved so well; and



WHEREAS, she wished to be remembered most for her work to restore the Santa Fe River to its past splendor – the green lushness of the river of her youth – and she offered universal wisdom to us all in her biography when she stated: “if you enjoy good health and are strong, don’t stop doing things, volunteers are always desperately needed ... each day is a new beginning to appreciate and to enjoy with people who touch your life”; and

WHEREAS, Melinda passed away on June 17, 2021, at age 94; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Fe County Board of County Commissioners wishes to recognize the accomplishments, community activism, and remarkable life of Melinda Romero Pike.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT WE, THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF SANTA FE COUNTY, DO HEREBY PROCLAIM THE WEEK OF JULY 27 – AUGUST 2, 2021, AS:

“MELINDA ROMERO PIKE WEEK”

APPROVED, ADOPTED, AND PASSED ON THIS 27th DAY OF JULY, 2021.

Henry P. Roybal, Chair
Commissioner District 1

Anna T. Hamilton, Vice-Chair
Commissioner District 4

Anna Hansen
Commissioner District 2

Rudy N. Garcia
Commissioner District 3

Hank Hughes
Commissioner District 5

Katherine Miller
County Manager

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Gregory S. Shaffer
County Attorney

ATTESTATION:

Katharine E. Clark
County Clerk

