

# Vail Daily



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## Building a business, and a community, in the Vail Valley

Gerald Gallegos to be honored at Vail memorial service

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EAGLE COUNTY, Colorado — Gerald Gallegos would probably be a little embarrassed by all this attention. He's getting a big send-off anyway.

Gallegos, founder of The Gallegos Corporation, died in a Denver hospital the evening of Aug. 19. He left a legacy of hard work, love for his family, and philanthropy. Anyone who's lived in the valley for more than a few days knows the name of the company. Anyone who's lived here for much longer than that knows the company is also synonymous with helping the community in ways great and small.

Gallegos usually deflected attention away from himself, and focused instead on the business at hand, whether it was his company or one of the host of local nonprofit groups he championed.

While Gallegos never sought publicity for himself, he's getting a hero's farewell Saturday at the Ford Amphitheater in Vail. Expect a packed house, because Gerald Gallegos' family extended far past his wife Suzanne and daughters Hillary and Caroline. It extended past the families of his three brothers and two half-sisters, past his mother Rosa's even larger extended family in Minturn.

Gerald Gallegos' family extended beyond his company to the community he grew up in and loved. Those he worked with said every kid helped by every nonprofit group he was involved in was, in some way, a Gallegos.

### Memorial service

Gerald Gallegos will be honored at a memorial service Saturday at the Ford Amphitheater in Vail. The service begins at 1 p.m.

The town of Vail is asking those who plan to attend the service to park in the Vail Village parking structure. Shuttle buses will be used to transport people to and from the event. The buses will run from 11:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. The Ford Park lots will be closed to parking through the weekend to accommodate the Scott Firefighter Combat Challenge.

In the event the Vail Village parking structure fills, the South Frontage Road will be used for overflow parking.

Gerald Gallegos and the Gallegos Corporation were involved in any number of local nonprofit groups and community projects. Gallegos was a board member of:

El Pomar Foundation.

### A culture of giving

Randy Olin, The Gallegos Corporation's vice president of finance, learned quickly that philanthropy started at the top of his new employer's corporate ladder and trickled down from there.

"It really struck me — I'd never worked at a company that really understood corporate giving," said Olin, a 16-year veteran of The Gallegos Corporation.

That attitude of responsibility and service came early for Gallegos and his three brothers. With mother Rosa raising the boys as a single parent for many years, she and her extended family — the Martinez family of Minturn — stressed the importance of hard work, faith and family. That ethic never wavered, and only grew as the Gallegoses became successful beyond their early dreams.

"When you're successful, you can really give back your time, talent and treasure," brother Bob Gallegos said.

Vail Valley Foundation.  
The Youth Foundation.  
Minturn Community Fund.  
Roundup River Ranch.

Bob helped Gerald start Gallegos Masonry in 1970, then went to Denver to seek his own way in the world. As the company started growing with the construction of the Beaver Creek resort, Bob

returned in 1980, commuting from his home in the Denver suburb of Westminster. He still commutes, and has made the drive countless times in all kinds of weather.

It can be hard for brothers to work together. Over the years, all four of the brothers — Gerald, Bob, Glen and John — all worked for the company. But Bob and Gerald have worked together for the longest time.

### **Different men, different roles**

Bob said the family partnership worked because he and Gerald early on took on definite, and different, roles in the company. Gerald oversaw the actual work, supervising crews at job sites. Bob stayed in the office, handling the growing company's finances.

"We had a clear respect for each other," Bob said. "We had a mission and we had goals."

The two worked closely, but that division of responsibility helped solidify the partnership. And each man was able to leave work at the office or the job site.

"He was always very good about separating work and family," Gerald's wife, Suzanne, said. "When he was home, he was home."

Suzanne Gallegos said Gerald was always generous with his time for her and their daughters.

That, too, trickled down from the brothers to the rank and file of the company. Employees who need time for ball games, parent-teacher conferences or concerts are encouraged to take it.

### **Time for work**

But when it's time for work, the company expects that, too. Gerald started his masonry company with little more than a pickup and a little equipment, and spent plenty of time on the sweaty end of a shovel or hammer.

He and Bob expect the same dedication from the people they hire, even — and maybe especially — family members.

"I've always told them that I can get you a job with the company, and then it's up to you to keep it," Bob said.

But the brothers also want their employees to take personal pride in their jobs, Bob said. He and Gerald worked to create an environment that fostered that.

"We have a saying that if you ask an unhappy employee what he's doing on the job site, he'll say, 'I'm chipping rock, making \$20 an hour,'" Bob said. "But a happy employee will say, 'I'm helping to build a beautiful church.'"

"A lot of our guys, when their families come in from out of town, will drive them around and tell them, 'Look what I helped build.'"

That pride in home and community has taken a straight path from the brothers at the top of The Gallegos Corporation, and it's helped the company build more than homes and hotels.

"Gerald was really something special," longtime friend Tom Harned said. "And he was really good at getting people involved."

"He'd tell me, 'Graybear (his nickname), we need more people involved in this,' and it would happen," Harned added. "And oh, my, who didn't he know?"

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