

## In remembrance

# Philip McKee loved ranching & giving

by Lenore Harris Hughes

Philip S. McKee, rancher, rodeo rider, contractor and philanthropist, died July 6 at the age of 64. An El Paso native, he owned and operated the 27,000-acre McKee ranch in New Mexico

until 1981.

McKee was well-known in the region as a follower of the rodeo circuit who sometimes rode bulls in competition.

He was  
b o r n

Oct. 20, 1931, the seventh of eight children of Robert E. and Gladys Evelyn Woods McKee.

"When my father, R.E. McKee, first came to the area in 1910, he actually came to work on a ranch," said Philip's brother, Louis McKee. "He was around horses and loved the life of a cowboy. Later, when he owned a ranch near Vado, N.M., we children also worked on the land.

Our father insisted that everyone learn to work 6½ days a week with vacation time like any of the adults.

"My brother Philip always loved the land and was most happy when working on a ranch. He was an extremely hard worker and would often stay the entire summer."

Philip graduated from Austin High in

1949. He was active in the Future Farmers of America. Austin was one of the few high schools with a course in farming and animal husbandry. Philip's father had been the contractor/builder of Austin High, which opened its doors in 1930. Philip was one of the chief participants in the "Kid's Rodeo."

Philip developed a range of skills, which he learned as a child watching his father build a construction company from scratch to one of the top 10 building contractors in the U.S. He, along with his brothers, help build many of El Paso's landmarks.

He graduated from New Mexico State University with a degree in range management and animal husbandry in 1954, and married Emma Jean Brewley. They had two sons and a daughter.

One of Philip's activities was to work with the El Paso-based Robert E. and Evelyn McKee Foundation, which was chartered in 1952 as a private, non-profit charitable foundation. Its purpose is to use its funds for charitable, educational, religious, medical, community and civic institutions.

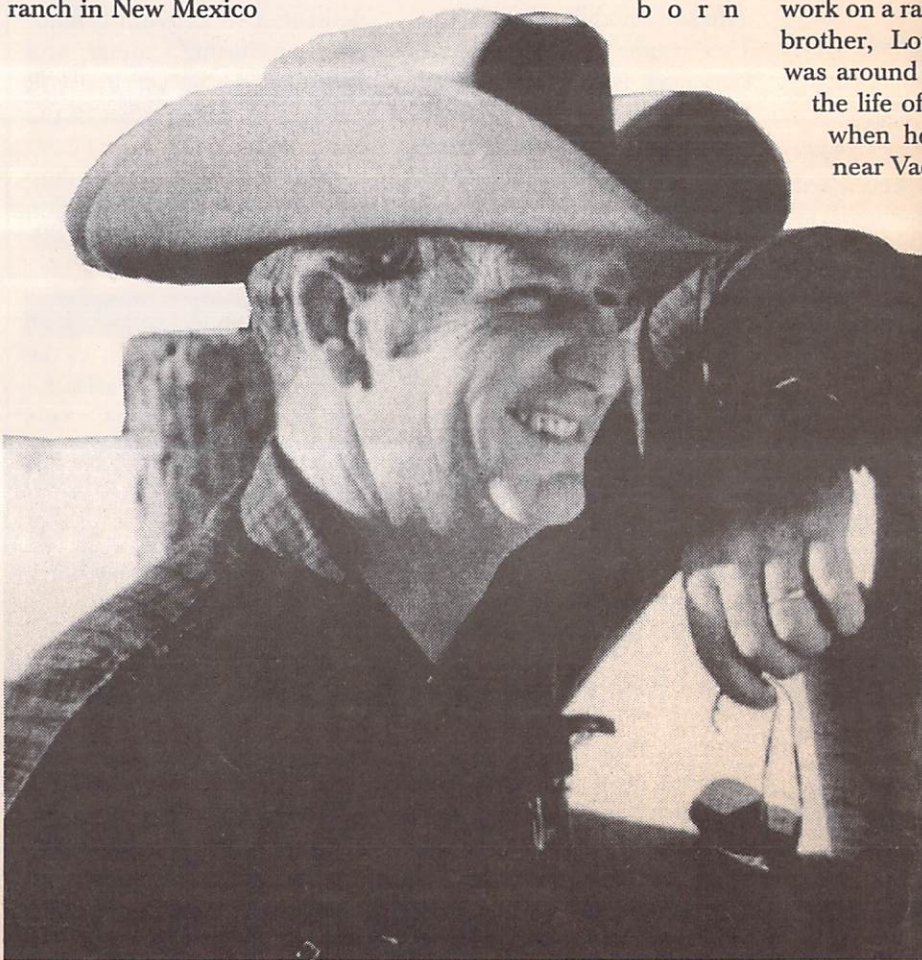
Philip worked behind the scenes, even after moving to his ranch in Galistro, N.M., in 1950, making periodic visits to El Paso to help with the foundation, attend meetings, work with the budget committee and handle special requests.

Each year, about 100 agencies are helped with monies from this Foundation.

In order to bring more money into the fund, R.E. McKee's children have published two books: "Hennig's Stories," the life of cowboy Hennig Von Bosse, and "Pisacah" (a place of Plenty) a regional history by Lillian H. Bidal. A third book is to be written by historian Leon Metz.

Philip is survived by his wife, Linda, three children, and two grandchildren, three brothers and two sisters. His body was cremated and his ashes scattered over his ranch.

"He was very dear to my heart," said his sister, Frances Hays. "Philip was a wonderful, kind, loving brother and a very giving person. You could forget your troubles when you went to the ranch. Everyone did their two bits' worth. We loved one another and enjoyed our time in the open air."



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## McKEE

PHILIP S. McKEE, rancher and contractor, passed away suddenly last Saturday in his hometown of Galisteo, New Mexico. He was 64. Philip was born in El Paso, Texas, on October 20, 1931, to Robert E. and Gladys Evelyn McKee, the 7th of eight children. In 1950, armed with a degree in range management and animal husbandry from New Mexico State University, Philip moved to Galisteo, where he owned and operated the 27,000 acre McKee Ranch until its sale in 1981. Philip also became a prominent and indispensable member of the Galisteo community as a contractor. He employed a broad range of skills and an unsurpassed work ethic, which he learned as a child while watching his father building a construction company from scratch into the sixth largest in the United States. Philip was a member of the Sheriff's Possee, the Santa Fe Public School Board and a trustee of the Robert E. and Evelyn McKee Foundation. While Philip left an indelible mark on the land he loved, including the water systems and roads used by those he left behind, his love for the land and the people who live on it will long outlast those physical contributions. Friends saw Philip as a witness to the history and growth of the community, always ready with a humorous anecdote or a helping hand. Philip's willingness to assist friends in need, helped shape the community into an extended family. Philip, along with his wife Linda, helped many newcomers take root in Galisteo, thereby evolving into an unofficial elder of the community - a father to some and grandfather to others. He helped instill a pride in the community which will live on in his absence. Generous, kind, hardworking, straight forward and unassuming, it was always good to see Philip waving from atop the backhoes and bulldozers he loved so. Years after his parents' deaths, Philip wrote. "We were all grown and on our own at the time of their deaths. But it was extremely hard on me as I felt at the time I had lost my best friends, counselors and advisors...I loved them dearly and still miss them to this day." Many in Galisteo will have identical thoughts for Philip in the years to come. Philip is survived by his wife, Linda of Galisteo; two sons and a daughter: Dr. Richard Brian, of Broomfield, Colorado, Philip Russel, of Artesia, New Mexico and Debrah Elaine Pendelton, of Los Lunas, New Mexico; as well as the children's mother, Emma Jean Brewley; three brothers and two sisters; John S., Louis B., William, Frances McKee Hays and Margaret McKee Lund of El Paso, Texas; four grandchildren: Audrey Nicole McKee, Kristopher Ryan McKee, Sherry Lynn Chadwick, and Glen Nelson Chadwick; two great-grandchildren: Brittany Poirier and David Anthony Jones. Philip was preceded in death by his parents and his brothers David and Robert. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that donations be made to either the Galisteo Community Association or the Galisteo Volunteer Fire Department. Services were held at the family home, July 10, 1996.