

Former Gallup Community Pantry director dies. Memorial service set for Feb. 20

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
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Gallup lost a pillar of the community when Tim Kelley, a former executive director for the Jim Harlin Community Pantry, died Jan. 23 in Spokane, Wash.

Jessica Church, Kelley's daughter, said Kelley, 68, suffered from COPD and congestive heart failure and died as a result of complications from both. COPD stands for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, a progressive illness that makes breathing difficult.

A memorial service for Kelley is scheduled for Feb. 20 from 10 am - 12 pm at the Gallup Community Center along Bataan Veterans Road near the Community Pantry.

Church said Kelley lived in Gallup up until November 2015 and moved to the state of Washington due to the severity of the illnesses.

"He moved to Washington so that he could be closer to family," Jessica Church said. "He was appreciated very much by the Gallup community."

Darla Yazzie of Yatahey said she met Kelley about four years ago, when she and her husband Hanson fell on hard times after losing their jobs.

"He was very helpful, not only to us, but to everyone who would go to the pantry. He helped everybody and helped us get back on our feet," Yazzie said.

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Kelly began working at the Community Pantry in 2009, replacing the late Jim Harlin. He accepted the directorship position at the Community Pantry in 2011.

Also, Kelly worked at the Crownpoint Hospital in the early 1980s and was one of the people who helped plan the building of that hospital. He retired from the hospital in 2001, and was ordained a deacon and worked with the St. Johns Vianney Parish in the Indian Hills neighborhood of Gallup.

Kelly worked at Gallup's Care 66 until 2009 where he amassed the job of chief operating officer.

Church requested that in lieu of flowers that donations be made to Care 66 or the Gallup Community Pantry.

"It's a tremendous loss to our community," Executive Director Alice Perez said, who took over operations of the Gallup Community Pantry in June 2015.