**~ In Memoriam ~
George Puentes**

**It is with great sadness we share news of the passing of George Puentes.  George passed away on Friday, October 13th following a challenging and lengthy battle with cancer.  He was in the presence of his wife of 27 years, Stephanie, in their home in Hailey Idaho.  George was a mentor, advocate, son, husband, father, brother and a friend to so many.  Those who were lucky enough to know George well will miss that charismatic smile, his incessant teasing and his bad jokes.**

**George served three years for the United States Air Force and was a graduate of San Jose State University.  He began his professional career with Del Monte Foods in the Bay Area before joining his father and three brothers in establishing a craft tortilla baking company in the Willamette Valley in 1979.  He served as President of Puentes Bros. Inc/Don Pancho Mexican Foods Inc. until he retired in 2014.**

**George was deeply committed to advancing the lives of young people, establishing the Scholarships for Oregon Latinos Fund for aspiring students wishing to attend college.  He also served his residents as a member of Salem City Council in the mid-90s.  George served as Salem Chamber President from July 1st, 2002 through June 30th, 2003.  George is a member of the International Tortilla Baking Hall of Fame and a recipient of the Salem Chamber’s First Citizen Award in 2004.  In 2015, George was chosen to receive the Oregon History Makers Medal for positively shaping the history, culture and landscape of Oregon.  Proudly, he was a guest of President George W. Bush & First Lady Laura Bush on two occasions at the White House, which were a few of his favorite memories.**

**After retirement, George remained active by spending time as a board member on the Federal Reserve Board, NW Natural Gas, and the Meyer Memorial Trust.  He and his wife Stephanie loved to travel and spent several months a year at their home in Zihuantanejo.**

**George leaves behind his wife Stephanie, his mother Hortensia Puentes, and siblings Frank Puentes, Robert Puentes, Phillip Puentes, Patricia Puentes and Monica Baez.  He was preceded in death by his father Frank D. Puentes, sister Ruth Moghadam, first wife Carol and only son, George Jr.  George will be cremated and the family is organizing a celebration of life, of which details will be shared at a later date.**