

*Family*  
Jill Cooper Udall  
Unedited – speaking version

*(In the words of the native prayers, which began this celebration)* Stewart Udall was a great man.

An American icon.

He has been and will be rightfully and gratefully honored for his legendary accomplishments.

For the parks and the monuments and wilderness and for changing the way we think about conservation and the environment. It is altogether fitting that the Interior Building will be named for him. And that Douglas Brinkley, whom Stewart so admired for his conservationist biography of Theodore Roosevelt, will write his next book on Stewart.

Honored for his contribution to the arts. If the Kennedy years were Camelot – then the signal event was Stewart’s idea to invite a poet - Robert Frost – to read at the inauguration. It was Stewart - born with a love of music and poetry – but improbably... from St Johns Arizona who taught Washington how to mix art and politics.

Honored for his integrity and his fight for justice. For the clarity of his intellect and his love of literature and language. As a young man, Stewart wrote home from World War II in 1944, that “when great principles are at stake, as I am idealistic enough to still believe they have been, no man is justified, when given the chance to act – in the words of G.K. Chesterton, to “...play the saner part and keep his head and keep his heart and only lose his soul.” Stewart never lost his soul.

But today – in this place which is also part of his legacy, we also honor Stewart simply as a friend. Those of us here who can join Jonah and the Wailers singing ... “He... was a friend of mine..” have been blessed.

It was my great privilege – in addition to being family and his next door neighbor, to have been Stewart’s friend, his collaborator, his companion. Most especially in the last years.

There was nearly always a project waiting when I got back to Santa Fe. A battle with Walmart or an op-ed piece in the works or an idea for an article, which would be his last statement on the subject – until he thought of something else. And as the writing became more difficult because of his failing eyesight, there were people he wanted to talk to. At Tom’s swearing-in in Washington, the new secretary of interior Ken Salazar sat with Stewart – literally taking notes – while Stewart told him the ten most important things about running the department. Ken Salazar still has the notes.

When Senate majority leader Harry Reid came to Albuquerque last year, the opportunity for a private conversation was too good to miss. On the way down, Stewart went over all the things he wanted to say and asked me to sit in, in case he forgot something. Harry Reid, on the floor of the Senate, described the meeting as one of the most memorable of his life.

Stewart was our political guru. His instincts had not been questioned since Tom's 1998 election to Congress, when the two weeks out panic settled in, Stewart calmly predicted a 53 - 43 - 4 victory - which is exactly what happened.

Stewart was great company. We went to chamber music concerts and took walks. Exchanged books and audio tapes. Watched the sunset from his west porch and talked.

He was my friend and I miss him. We all do. I got an email last night from someone who had planned to be here today and would have said in part

*When I'm in the wilderness, any wilderness, or I'm on a seashore, any seashore, or I gaze at a big strong Redwood, I will think of my friend Stewart and thank him for the most incredibly generous life he lived.*

I think all of his friends here would echo and join Robert Redford in thanking Stewart for his most incredibly generous life.

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