
“We are all doomed, us, our children, our grandchildren, and on, and on, and on”

The story of Rosemary Cordova.

By Joshua Wheeler (Text) and [Reto Sterchi](#) (Photo), 16.10.2021



Rosemary Cordova.

Rosemary was 5 months old. Her family was living a few hundred miles from Trinity, in Pampa, Texas. She suggests this distance from the fallout is a reason she hasn't been diagnosed with cancer, though she is on medication for her thyroid. "But," Rosemary says, "cancer has plagued our family and it is hard to remember each and every one of them."

Her grandfather had a sheep ranch only 50 miles northeast of Trinity, in a village called White Oaks. Though he had passed away by July 16, 1945 many of his nine children, Rosemary's aunts and uncles, still lived there at the time of the test. "Aunt Nellie died of stomach cancer. Aunt Lorena died of ovarian cancer. Uncle Juan Jay was diagnosed with breast cancer. Uncle George died in a prison camp in the Philippines during WWII. So that wasn't the bomb but we still lost him to the war."

Rosemary's own mother, who moved them back near the family ranch at White Oaks around 1949, was diagnosed with brain cancer in 1964 and died sixteen months later. "Cancer is like this branch of the family tree that keeps branching out," she says. "But it's not only genetics. Everyone around here dies of cancer. After the bomb, nobody was warned, maybe don't eat the vegetables. Maybe don't drink the water. It just makes me sick to think that we were guinea pigs."

Rosemary is still in Tularosa, where she lives with her son who suffers from complications related to a brain tumor. "We are all doomed, us, our children, our grandchildren, and on, and on, and on. I pray that one day our government will do what should have been done long ago."