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Castillo vows to carry on father's legacy

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By MARIE EKBERG PADILLA / FOR THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

LADERA RANCH – Although Ladera Ranch has lost its "Captain," his son pledges to keep his memory alive.

Tony Castillo Sr., 71, who many Ladera residents called the "Captain" and the "Legend," died from a heart attack in January.



Tony Castillo Jr., right, and his father, Tony Castillo Sr., ran Castillo Private Patrol in Ladera Ranch.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CASTILLO FAMILY

Castillo served as the first officer of Castillo Private Patrol when his son Tony Castillo Jr. started the private security company in 2000 as Ladera Ranch developed.

"He pretty much set the tone for the patrol out here," Castillo Jr. said. "He was not only my father, but my best friend, my right hand and my mentor. He inspired me in everything I do."

Throughout his life, Castillo Jr., who lives with his family in Ladera Ranch, has followed in his father's footsteps. Castillo Jr. worked as a police officer in Costa Mesa, his father was a police officer in Azusa. Castillo Jr. served as a range deputy for the Rancho Mission Viejo Company, his father was chief ranch deputy for the Irvine Company. When Castillo Jr. launched his

private patrol company, his father joined him as his captain.

"We were kind of like the father-son team out here that patrolled the acres," Castillo Jr. said. "There are a lot of good memories."

Castillo Sr. was born in El Paso in Texas in 1939. He was a hard working, dedicated and proud man, who wasn't happy unless in uniform, his son said, adding that his father's death on Jan. 31 came as a surprise. Castillo Sr., who suffered from Parkinson's disease, spent his final years between Desert Hot Springs and Ladera Ranch.

"He was always proud to patrol this land," Castillo Jr. said. "I will always carry out his legacy."

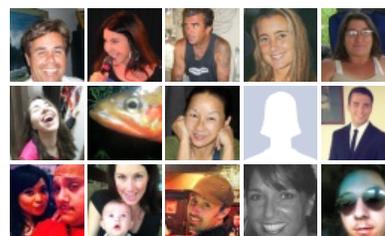
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