



Obituary



Rudolfo "Rudy" Rodriguez 1938 - 2015

A former Texas Ranger with keen investigative skills, Rudolfo "Rudy" Rodriguez could be found on the greens when he wasn't uncovering fraud and corruption in South Texas.

"We played golf a minimum of 50 weeks a year," longtime friend Dan Liberatore said. "He reminded me a lot of my own father, and we just had a wonderful time."

Rodriguez, who spent more than 20 years in law enforcement, died Sunday of late-stage Alzheimer's disease. He was 77.

"He was so respected, so humble and a loving husband, father and grandfather," said his wife, Connie Rodriguez.

Rodriguez grew up in Floresville and joined the Navy after high school. He served on the USS Newport News in the Mediterranean and returned to his hometown after his service.

He became a deputy for the Wilson County Sheriff's Office and rose through the ranks to become chief deputy. He attended St. Mary's University and the FBI Academy before becoming a ranger in 1974.

"Right away, he was a very likable fellow," said Ray Martinez, who worked with Rodriguez. "He was funny, and he was quick to meet people, and he had a very good personality that radiated friendship. By the same token, people could understand that he didn't put up with any nonsense."

He was one of the last rangers to join the division without having served in the Highway Patrol for the Department of Public Safety, his wife said. She briefly worked in the division's San Antonio office, where they met. They married in 1985.

During his 20-year career with the Texas Rangers, he helped exposed fraud and corruption throughout South Texas, notably in Duval County. There, he served on a task force that investigated criminal activity among public officials, school board members and others who had been associated with political boss George Parr. Twenty-nine people were convicted.

"The dragnet caught many, many people," Martinez said. "Rudy was a spark plug. He was very dynamic and full of energy. I really enjoyed working with him."

Martinez said Rodriguez worked long hours those days and demonstrated a dedication to the job that served him well as an investigator.

“He was tenacious, and when he came to an obstacle, he ran over it, under it or through it,” he said. “Obstacles did not deter him.”

But he wasn't too busy for his friends. Liberatore said Rodriguez helped him establish an insurance office by recommending his services to co-workers. He recalled the rangers walking into the office, wearing John Wayne-style hats.

“I had never met a better man,” Liberatore said. “If I had to have someone cover my back, it would be Rudy.”

Adapted from *San Antonio Express-News – My San Antonio* - by Katherine Blunt, Staff Writer