



## Lotario Leo Castillo

March 14, 1930 - August 23, 2019

1930-2019

Lotario Leo Castillo was born and raised in Belen, NM. He was preceded in death by his father and mother, Ricardo and Mary Castillo, both of Belen; his dear sister, Gloria Castillo Kaddison and brother-in-law, Ellis Kaddison, both of Hollywood, California, and his two sisters-in-law, Regina Castillo of Belen, NM and Ruth Castillo of Albuquerque, NM. Leo attended the New Mexico Military Institute, a private men's boarding school, during his high school years. He was both a serious and stellar student, displaying a voracious appetite for reading and an outstanding ability for writing. He attended the University of New Mexico where he studied History and Psychology. Leo would remain a lifelong student of both these subjects.

Shortly after college, Leo escorted his sister, Gloria Castillo, to Hollywood, where she was hoping to embark on a career in motion pictures. Leo was photogenic, with chiseled features and sandy blond hair, and had a winsome personality. A career in film seemed like a viable option. Within a year of arriving in Hollywood, Leo landed his first film role. The prospect of an acting career diminished as work in television and film proved sporadic over the next five years. In his final television role, in 1958, Leo starred in an NBC-TV Matinee Theater production portraying the role of a young man in the episode "A Boy Grows Up". He departed the film industry for good in 1967 after

working as a production assistant.

When his sister, Gloria, launched her new career as the fashion designer named Chessa Davis, she enlisted Leo to help her in sales. It was a strong match with Gloria's exquisite designs and Leo's natural genius for navigating the fashion wholesale market. He worked with editors, trade publications, and fashion industry insiders and was able to obtain highly sought-after 5th Avenue store window displays in New York's luxury department stores. Leo was instrumental in persuading key buyers and their management at Saks Fifth Avenue, Bergdorf-Goodman, and Lord & Taylor to showcase Chessa Davis designs for extended periods in their most visible flagship stores. By 1976, Chessa Davis designs had catapulted to the national and international forefront with customers such as Mary Tyler Moore, Betty Ford, and Princess Grace.

The year that followed this staggering success was a sad one, as his sister Gloria contracted cancer and passed away. This was a heartbreak that Leo would endure until his last days.

Leo left the fashion market and began a new career selling high priced rare gems, often in the seven figures, to investors and clients in New York, Palm Beach, and Beverley Hills. Leo eventually achieved a stellar position as the top salesman for the country's premiere jewelers Harry Winston and Van Cleef & Arpels, with exclusive Forbes 400 clientele. Many of the clients he associated with became close personal friends.

Always the student, Leo was near encyclopedic about classical music, opera, literature, and psychology. He took courses at NYU and UCLA, traveled, and spent months abroad studying French and World History at Alliance Française in Paris. A wide and deep consumption of art, literature, and music was an essential part of his life's work.

Leo brought joy to all who had the pleasure of knowing him. He is beloved by his two dear brothers, Dr. Robert Castillo of Albuquerque and Francis Leonard Castillo of Belen, by his many nieces and nephews, and his countless friends. His gentleness and kindness will be remembered fondly in their hearts, and his love of political discussion will be greatly missed. Services will take place at Our Lady of Belen Catholic Church on Saturday, August 31, 2019, beginning with a Visitation at 9:00 AM, Rosary to be recited at 10:00 AM, a Funeral Mass at 10:30 AM and Interment to follow at Our Lady of Belen Memorial Gardens. Please sign Leo's online tribute at [www.romerofuneralhome.com](http://www.romerofuneralhome.com) Romero Funeral Home, 609 N. Main St. Belen, NM

# Previous Events

## Visitation

AUG 31. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (MT)

Our Lady of Belen Catholic Church  
101 N. 10th Street  
Belen, NM 87002

## Rosary

AUG 31. 10:00 AM (MT)

Our Lady of Belen Catholic Church  
101 N. 10th Street  
Belen, NM 87002

## Funeral Mass

AUG 31. 10:30 AM (MT)

Our Lady of Belen Catholic Church  
101 N. 10th Street  
Belen, NM 87002

## Interment

AUG 31. 11:30 AM (MT)

Our Lady of Belen Catholic Church  
101 N. 10th Street  
Belen, NM 87002

# Tribute Wall

MA

“ Leo was such a kind and generous man with an insatiable interest in others, a fascinating life and so humble. I was blessed to have met him in the early 1980s when I first got sober. I remember and am forever grateful for our conversations and lunches. One day he invited me into Van Cleef and Arpels and showed me the remarkable jewels he sold. For someone with such a remarkable life and the people in it, I was always struck by his down to earth demeanor and caring nature. Sadly I lost contact with him after I left Los Angeles and am sad to hear of his passing. He was a gem of a man, ever bit as precocious as the gems he handled. He has lived on in my heart and will continue to do so the rest of my days. My condolences to his family who were even more blessed than I to have had him in their life for so many years.

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**Michael Anderson** - October 10, 2019 at 12:31 AM

KD

“ Thank you to the brothers Robert, Frances and niece Paula for the heartfelt welcome during this time of great loss and grief. The Mass service was beautiful!

*Leo enjoyed life more then anyone I knew. He was a role model and inspiration to me.*

*I will miss him immensely.*

*Photo of Leo with Vitorio and I, out on the town in Beverly Hills.*



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**Kenneth DiGregorio** - August 31, 2019 at 09:16 PM

MA

*I love this photo of Leo! Just as I remember him. Such a wonderful and dear man*

Michael Anderson - October 10, 2019 at 12:49 AM

KD

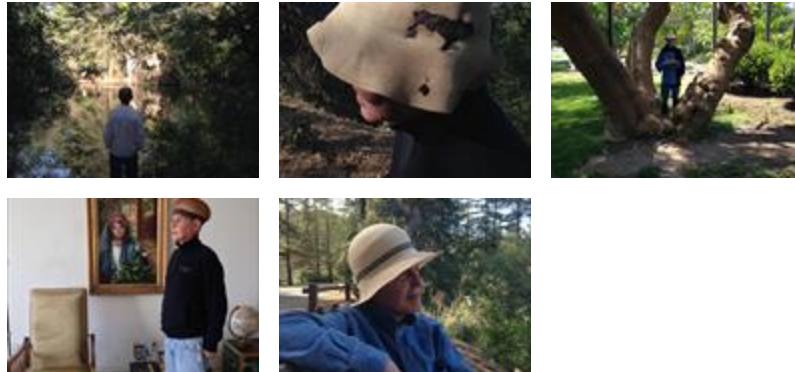
“*Leo was such a positive part of my life. I had the most beautiful times with him! He was so engaging, so interested in what one had to say..a great conversationalist, always curious, always warm and so, so loving!*

*I MISS YOU DEAR LEO!*

*You will always be in my heart. ❤️*

*The pictures are mementos, over the years, of our walks in the Park & his love for eccentric hats.. one of which he's wearing in front of a portrait I gave him of a young man looking like, I imagined, Leo as a boy.*

*Barbara Carrara*



Kenneth DiGregorio - August 31, 2019 at 08:37 PM

DI

*Great words from Ken and Barbara!!!*

dialta - August 31, 2019 at 08:50 PM

BC

*I'm sorry about the mixup with names...the postings above are mine..Ken was kind enough to post it for me..not knowing that it would appear under his name...nevertheless, I'm sure he shares my sentiments about our dear friend, Leo...whom we miss so, so very much.*

*Sweet Leo, you have become the light.*

*Barbara Carrera*

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**Barbara Carrera** - September 06, 2019 at 03:10 PM

LG

*“ I just came home from the beautiful rosary and Mass for Leo. What a wonderful and loving welcome our Leo must have had when he entered heaven. Leo was such a loving and kind friend. Always so happy and had so many wonderful memories of family, you could spend hours talking and listening to him. I will miss knowing he is not inelen, but so happy he had such a rich a full life. Just the most beautiful man. My condolences to all of Leo's family, my dear Leonard, I love you all, and I am here for you in love and prayers. Take care my dear friends. Loretta.*



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**Loretta Gabaldon** - August 31, 2019 at 07:34 PM

DM

*“ Lei  
We will always remember the wonderful moments we had together  
It was a joy  
Of life knowing you  
Dialta and Vittorio*



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**dialta Alliata di Montereale** - August 30, 2019 at 08:43 PM

DM

*LEO THERE WAS AND WILL BE ONLY 1 LEO!!*

dialta Alliata di Montereale - August 30, 2019 at 08:47 PM

OR

“ *Bob & Leonard,*

*You have lost a brother and I a friend. I have fond memories of Leo who in keeping with tradition was honored to carry his grandfather Lotario Castillo's name. As I muse and pause about Leo's life, a clear impression sets forth. He possessed the exciting emotion that goes with discovery. He savored the flavor of life as he had tasted the sweet water from the well. He was vibrant, intelligent and sensitive. He was a truly good human being.*

*His journey as a mortal being has ended and now in keeping with his Catholic faith rests in the hands of God. His soul now takes delight in the eternal garden. May he rest in peace!*

*I submit heart-felt condolences on behalf of my wife Sue, our family and myself. May time bring solace to your grieving hearts.*

*Oscar S. Ramirez*

Oscar Ramirez - August 29, 2019 at 02:47 PM



“ *Blue & White Sympathy Standing Spray was purchased for the family of Lotario Leo Castillo.*



August 28, 2019 at 11:40 PM

DR

“ *Dicky And Suzanne Romero lit a candle in memory of Lotario Leo Castillo*



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**Dicky and Suzanne Romero** - August 27, 2019 at 03:38 PM