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April 7, 2009

Passings: Prominent Orange County Developer, Cal Poly Benefactor Richard J. O'Neill

MISSION VIEJO -- Richard J. O'Neill, a prominent landowner and Democratic Party activist who helped transform the landscape of Orange County by developing his family's vast Rancho Mission Viejo, died April 4. He was 85.

O'Neill was a longtime supporter of Cal Poly and Cal Poly Athletics. A portion of the rolling lawns on campus overlooking the football stadium are named in his honor (The O'Neill Green). In addition to Cal Poly, O'Neill also contributed to many other philanthropic causes, including South Coast Repertory Theater in Costa Mesa.

After graduating from high school, O'Neill enrolled at Cal Poly where he studied animal husbandry in preparation for taking over the business at the family ranch.

Read his obituary in the Los Angeles Times

<http://www.latimes.com/news/obituaries/la-me-richard-oneill5-2009apr05.0,2602055.story>

And in the Orange County Register

<http://www.ocregister.com/articles/neill-mission-viejo-2354673-ranch-rancho>

And the Capistrano Dispatch

<http://thecapistranodispatch.com/index.php?mact=News,cntnt01,detail,0&cntnt01articleid=932&cntnt01dateformat=%25B%20%25d%2C%20%25Y&cntnt01returnid=15>

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