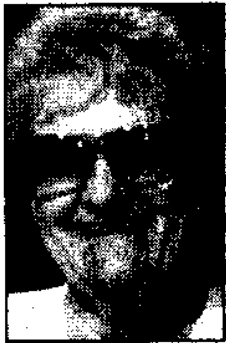


Faith Cordary, 79, Edco founder

Had passion for showing shepherd dogs

BY NOREEN MARCUS
STAFF WRITER

Faith Cordary, the co-founder and force behind a Broward County company that sells awards and promotional materials, died Friday, about 3½ years after she was diagnosed with colon cancer. The Davie resident was 79.



Cordary

Though hobbled by cancer and chemotherapy, Mrs. Cordary continued to work every day until about four months ago with her German shepherd Jesse constantly by her side, Rick Cordary said.

Jesse was a pet, but for more than 40 years Mrs. Cordary was deeply involved in the world of German shepherd breeding and showing.

"She showed on a national level and she had many champions," including dogs named John Denver and Dolly Parton in the 1980s, said Joan Turner

of Atlanta, a fellow breeder who knew Mrs. Cordary for more than 30 years.

"It was probably, other than her children and her work, the greatest love of her life," Turner said.

She was born Faith Springer in New Jersey and grew up in Point Pleasant. After receiving her registered nursing certificate from Monmouth University in West Long Branch, N.J., she relocated to South Florida in the early 1950s.

Soon after arriving she married Edward Cordary, who made industrial brooms and street and floor sweepers, working out of a garage. Soon he moved the operation to a building on Ravenswood Road in Fort Lauderdale and stayed there for 25 years. Mrs. Cordary worked as a nurse at Broward General and Provident hospitals and did the books for Edco Brush Manufacturing Co.

She also became active in the German Shepherd Dog Club of Miami, and one year when she was trophy chairman, she had a bad experience with the two area trophy companies. So, according to her son, she got the products directly from the Miami manufacturer and finished the trophies herself.

In 1969 another business was born: Trophies by Edco. Nine years later, when the Cordarys divorced, it was Mrs. Cordary who paid to take charge of the company, where their son already was working.

"She was a very, very strong woman and she would do anything for anybody, although when it came to money, she wouldn't even give her friends a discount," Rick Cordary said.

The business grew to include about 35 employees and, in addition to the main store in Fort Lauderdale, branches in Hollywood and Pompano Beach. The name Edco Awards & Specialties reflects its expansion into promotional materials like glassware and pencils with company logos, T-shirts and signage.

Now a third generation, Rick Cordary's stepson Mike Szczesny, 25, is active. He is general manager and pushing to expand up the East Coast, Cordary said.

On Saturday Edco will close — "and I keep this place open in a hurricane," Cordary said — as employees pay final respects to the founder.

In addition to her step-grandson and son, of Hollywood, Mrs. Cordary is survived by her longtime friend Sig Johnson, of Texas; her daughter, Patricia Hartnett, of Davie; and a granddaughter.

A funeral Mass will be celebrated at 10 a.m. Saturday in St. Joseph Polish National Catholic Church, 5401 SW 64th Ave., Davie. Instead of flowers, the family requests memorial donations to the church.

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