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FWN's plant super dies

By Abby Slutsky | The Journal Gazette

For 34 years Denzil "Denny" M. Cogar took care of more than just the Fort Wayne Newspapers building; he took care of the people inside.

On Thursday, Cogar, 52, succumbed to cancer at his Fort Wayne home.

"He was just a neat man who went out way too soon and way too quick," said Betty Forehand, who was Cogar's supervisor when he first joined the company in 1973.

Fort Wayne Newspapers is the business agent for The Journal Gazette and News-Sentinel.

Before illness required Cogar to leave the company, he had been building and packaging manager and was loved by both his supervisors and employees.

"He was a very caring individual and a dedicated – extremely dedicated – employee," said Phil Haggerty, Fort Wayne Newspapers vice president of operations. "It is difficult to lose a person of his character."

Over the years, Forehand said, Cogar worked his way up in the company from his first full-time position running a machine in packaging and distribution.

"There was no job that was too big that he didn't tackle at the newspaper. He was very hands on, not your typical building manager position," she said.

"He did everything inside, outside, it didn't make a difference. And he took care of everybody in that building," she added.

Cogar, she said, was known to go out of his way to cheer up people in the building who he knew were down.

"He could write poems like you couldn't believe. If somebody would be down, he'd write a poem that he came up with in 10 minutes, just to pep up your day," she said.

And since taking leave from the company this year, Cogar was eager to return.

"I've talked to him several times while he's been out and we were always joking about when he came back in that I wasn't going to give him any time to catch up because he's been reading the (intraoffice) e-mails," Haggerty said.

Though Cogar never got the chance to return to the company, he's far from forgotten.

Fort Wayne Newspapers employees posted messages to Cogar's family on the Thoma/Rich, Chaney & Lemler Funeral Home's Web site.

"I always knew I could count on him to fix any problems we had in our department. He was very friendly and outgoing and has been missed very much," one employee wrote.

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