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# The Party Animal News

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## Carol

She was the first voice heard for decades when a homeowner called us trying to find a pest control company. Many who talked to Carol did not realize they had been talking to my mom. She passed away on December 23rd last year at 85 years young. In the state of Texas, to give a price and to diagnose a pest problem over the phone you needed to have a technician's license and for many decades, the industry would see my mom at the local continuing education classes. She even attended the first entomology class held for pest control operators in North Texas with me and my dad, Homer, at the Texas A&M extension service building at Coit and Campbell in 1977.

I listen to Mark Davis many mornings on 660AM the Answer as I drive to appointments, and sometimes I luck out with his common emotional take on various subjects. One morning this year, he shared a clip from the show *Landman* that had a guest appearance from Jerry Jones. It is easy to find the clip on YouTube, but I will paraphrase it for you. Jerry Jones is visiting a friend in the hospital and giving him some advice. Jerry basically states that on your death bed you will be surrounded by your relatives, but he realized early in his life that he wanted to have his family around more than that, so he set up his companies so that his family was always around. Jerry states "they were there when you fell down and were there when you got back up".

If you see the clip you will say to yourself that either Jerry Jones is a great actor or he was speaking from the heart. I think the latter. My mom and I, beginning in 1987, worked together to get A-All back on its feet. Some issues had occurred. There was a lot of hard work in those years and I remember even my mom working on Saturdays because every job counted. Once we had more employees she had many hats as she sold jobs over the phone, set up all the technicians schedules and dispatched all the jobs.

Of course, she was a Mom and I think she worried more than necessary. She would tell me that it was too windy to do a job. She was the first to hear a technician was in an accident, had locked their keys in their vehicle or some other upsetting event. During all the national crises we all have felt over the decades, such as the 2008 crash, when the phone calls stopped and there was spare time at the end of the day she would tell our techs to go clean their trucks. We had the cleanest pest control trucks in Dallas.

Having a Mom as the first contact was also advantageous for the customer. My Mom was momma bear for her family and technicians, but her role was no different for the customer. Many years ago a new customer contacted our office with a problem that was not being solved by a national company. It was the Monday before Thanksgiving and time is always tight for everyone. My mom let me know the customer was upset and we needed to figure out how to solve the problem. We worked it in the schedule and solved the problem before Thanksgiving. That was decades ago and they are still customers today.

Over the years, I would walk by her desk in the front of the office and think she was talking to a relative. She had a connection with the customers. She helped make A-All special. A couple of times in my interviews with the older pest control operators, the wife let me know how they were an important part of the company. There are many important moving parts to a company. Once you have been one of those parts it is very difficult to let go. Family companies are especially unique in that way. My mom retired at the age of 79, a year before the pandemic hit. Health issues prevented her from enjoying retirement. However, she always asked me what I had done that day and if I happened to see a customer she knew. She could relate more to the service I provided if she could connect it to someone she had known. My mom and dad gave me opportunities in the field of pest control with our family company that I will always cherish. As so many of you know from your own experience of loss, she is greatly missed. - David



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**Vacation Time**

*At the end of May it will be time for us to have another vacation. We will be closed the last week of May, beginning Memorial Day. We will be back open the first Monday of June. Have a wonderful holiday!*

