



Ileana M. Murray

October 23, 1926 - December 3, 2013

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“ Ileana "Lee" Murray (1926 - 2013)

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(News Article) Ileana "Lee" Murray, who for many years was president of the Association of Two Toledos and traveled the world, died Tuesday in her South Toledo home. She was 87.

Her daughter, Chris Murray Heyman, said her mother died of pancreatic cancer.

Ms. Murray was born in New York City and was of Cuban and Puerto Rican descent. She moved to Toledo about five decades ago with her late-husband, Paul T. Murray, who worked for the Social Security Administration. Ms. Murray worked for 30 years as a secretary to the plant manager of what was then Hunt-Wesson Foods in Rossford, her daughter said.

When the pair moved to Toledo, Ms. Murray refused to sit back and let her new city come to her; she actively explored Toledo, joining many organizations and clubs. She bowled, played golf, and did work with animals and the arts.

"She found things to do, she didn't wait for somebody to come find her," her daughter said. "She had a zest for life."

She and her husband did many of those activities together. When he died in 1984 at age 57, Ms. Murray did not cut back her activities or turn inward.

Instead, she found even more things to do in Toledo.

The Association of Two Toledos became one of her main passions. The association, which is not affiliated with the Toledo Sister Cities International, promotes cultural programs and exchange between the two Toledos. It was founded in 1931, and the association says it is the first Sister City group in the world.

She joined in the mid-1980s, and stayed active with the group the rest of her life. Ms. Murray served as president several times, ultimately leading the group for about a decade, her daughter said. She was currently vice-president.

Dagmar Varela, a board member of the association, called Ms. Murray a "world traveler who relished experiencing different cultures around the world." Her daughter said she had visited more than 60 countries.

But Spain was likely her most frequent destination, as she'd been there at least a dozen times, her daughter said. Many of those times, she went to Toledo there.

Ms. Murray thought of herself as Spanish, her daughter said, and loved the country's culture. She worked tirelessly for the group, not just on trips, but at home as well.

The association frequently facilitates exchange student visits from Spain, and Ms. Murray was frequently their host.

Family was ever important to Ms. Murray, Ms. Varela said. Her daughter too works with the Association of Two Toledos.

Ms. Varela said Ms. Murray was a humble woman "whose energy, generosity and dedication to the Association was boundless." She said the members of the Sister City Committee in Toledo, Spain were saddened by Ms. Murray's death.

Though not one to be shy and a frequent site and community social events, Ms. Murray did not like to draw attention to herself, her daughter said, and requested there be no funeral.

Her daughter said the family held a small, private service.

Ms. Murray is survived by her daughters Chris Murray Heyman and Gilda Bloom, and by four grandchildren.

As Ms. Murray was involved in so many organizations, the family suggests tributes to any of them, such as the Association of Two Toledos or the Toledo Area Humane Society, or to the nurses of Senior Independence.

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