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# *Blake W. Nordstrom, Scion of Retail Family, Dies at 58*

By Michael Corkery

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Blake W. Nordstrom, a co-president of Nordstrom, the chain of upscale clothing and shoe stores that grew out of a single establishment founded by his great-grandfather, died on Wednesday in Seattle. He was 58.

His death was confirmed by the company, which did not disclose a cause. Mr. Nordstrom revealed last month that he had recently learned that he had lymphoma, but that his doctors had told him that it was treatable and that he would continue to work during chemotherapy.

His brothers, Peter, 56, and Erik, 55, who served as co-presidents with him, will continue to run Nordstrom, the company said in a statement.

With his brothers, Mr. Nordstrom had been steering the company through a difficult period in retail, as the rise of e-commerce has challenged the company's traditional focus on building a successful national network of premium and discount clothing and shoe stores.

Nordstrom upgraded many of its stores with the latest technology and high-end services, but those investments have dampened profits and the company's share price. Despite the pressures, the Nordstrom family has said that it is investing in stores and its online business for the long term.

Blake Willard Nordstrom was born on Oct. 4, 1960, to Bruce and Frances (Wakeman) Nordstrom. He attended the University of Washington, where he rowed crew, from 1978 to 1982 before leaving to work full-time. He received a bachelor of arts degree in sociology in 2015, the university said.

Mr. Nordstrom started his career in the 1970s as a schoolboy, working in the stockroom in the company's downtown Seattle store. In high school and in college, he worked in the women's shoe department.

Over the years Mr. Nordstrom assumed increasing responsibility in the company, holding various positions in stores and regional management and as a buyer. He became president of Nordstrom in 2000, and his brothers joined him as co-presidents in 2015. He was also a former director of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco.

Founded as a shoe store in Seattle in 1901 by John W. Nordstrom, a Swedish immigrant, and a business partner, Carl F. Wallin, the company expanded nationally over the decades, although relatively slowly compared with other retailers. Still based in Seattle, it now has 122 full-line stores and 244 Nordstrom Rack stores, a discount chain. In the third quarter, its profits totaled \$67 million on revenues of \$3.7 billion.

Last year, Blake Nordstrom, together with other family members, set out to acquire all of the company's shares and take it private.

The Nordstroms wanted relief from Wall Street's relentless focus on short-term profits, but an independent committee on the company's board said that the family's offer to buy it was too low. The company remains publicly traded, though the family has left open the possibility of making another buyout attempt. The family now owns about a third of the retailer's shares, the largest block.

Mr. Nordstrom married Molly A. Lewis in 1988, and she survives him. In addition to his brothers, he is also survived by his father and two children.