

TRAGIC LOSS OF DR JOHN R LEE

With great sorrow and sadness, we report that our much esteemed and trusted associate editor, John R Lee, MD, died unexpectedly of a heart attack on October 17, 2003. Dr Lee was born in 1929. In the 1950s he earned his BA in mathematics at Harvard and his medical degree at the University of Minnesota. After military medical corps service in the Far East, he spent the next 30 years in family practice in Mill Valley, California.

In the 1970s he served on a local Marin County study panel to evaluate water fluoridation. His analysis of foods and beverages for the panel revealed that the children were already ingesting more fluoride than was recommended from fluoridated water.¹ In 1978 he collaborated with Dr GL Waldbott, our founding editor, in presenting an account of industrial poisoning from repeated exposure to hydrogen fluoride.² Five years later he published a seminal report on subjects with Gilbert's liver disease showing a direct connection with fluoridated water.³

To most of our readers, Dr Lee was probably best known for his keen understanding of how fluoride causes bone disorders, especially in relation to osteoporosis, beginning with his masterful 1990 editorial in *Fluoride*.⁴ In the next decade he made numerous contributions to this important subject. During these years he discovered that transdermal administration of natural progesterone was a safe and very effective remedy for post-menopausal bone loss, in contrast to conventional estrogen-based hormone replacement therapy. This work and his subsequent publications in this area brought him many invitations worldwide to speak on women's health issues (see: <http://www.johnleemd.com/meetdrjohlee.html>).

Having been a long-time friend and admirer of Dr Lee through our shared interests in the International Society for Fluoride Research, I can only express my deeply-felt sorrow over his untimely passing. Throughout his life he brought enormous benefit to the lives of others. Further tribute will be paid to him in the next issue of *Fluoride*.

Albert W Burgstahler
Editor, *Fluoride*

REFERENCES

- 1 Lee JR. Optimal fluoridation, the concept and its application to municipal water fluoridation. *Western J Med* 1975;431:122-5.
- 2 Waldbott GL, Lee JR. Toxicity from repeated low-grade exposure to hydrogen fluoride – case report. *Clin Toxicol* 1978;13:111-4.
- 3 Lee JR. Gilbert's disease and fluoride intake. *Fluoride* 1983;16:139-45; 242cn.
- 4 Lee JR. Fluoride and osteoporosis [editorial]. *Fluoride* 1990;23:51-4.