



2015

National Association of Medical Examiners

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In this issue, we pay tribute to and highlight a longtime NAME member and NAME Foundation leader, James Luke. We hope you enjoy the article about our friend and colleague. Remember that past issues of the Newsletter are available on the NAME Foundation webpage, which exists on the NAME website (www.thename.org). Thank you for your support, and please continue to support the NAME Foundation.

James Luke, M.D.

Jim Luke was born in Cleveland, Ohio and grew up in New York City. He returned to Cleveland in 1956 for medical school at Case Western Reserve University, where the school had recently initiated a revised curriculum, integrating the basic sciences with clinical medicine. As part of those changes, forensic pathology was made a required course for second year students. Dr. Lester Adelson, the Chief Deputy Coroner, taught the course. During that time, Dr. Alan Moritz, who had previously established the department of legal medicine at the Harvard Medical School, was the chairman of the department of pathology and gave the second year

lectures on cardiovascular pathology. Dr. Luke graduated from the medical school in 1960.



He had an internship in pathology at Yale and returned to Case Western Reserve for his pathology residency, which he completed in 1963. He satisfied his military service commitment in the U. S. Public Health Service as a staff researcher

in the Laboratory of Experimental Pathology at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. It was toward the end of his research time that he decided he would pursue a career in forensic pathology as a way to “combine academic pathology with the pathology of the streets”.

He spent the next two years, from 1965-1967, as an associate medical examiner at the

New York City medical examiner’s office, where Dr. Milton Helpern was the chief medical examiner.

In 1967, it was time to try it on his own, and Jim was offered the position as the first chief medical examiner for the State of

Oklahoma and professor of forensic pathology at the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine. He held these positions for four years, where, as he says, “We had every problem known to man, but it was a real-time learning experience I wouldn’t trade for anything.”

In 1971, when the DC Court Reform and Criminal Procedure Act converted the District of Columbia coroner’s office to a medical examiner system, Dr. Luke became the District’s first chief medical examiner, with appointments as clinical professor of pathology at the medical schools of Georgetown, George Washington and Howard Universities. He held these positions for twelve years. A new facility was constructed, and educational, training and research programs were started. With the aid of a newly designed data system, epidemiological clustering of narcotic-related overdose deaths was identified. After consulting with the Centers for Disease Control, a project was initiated between the CDC, the DC Narcotics Treatment Administration and the medical examiner’s office to study

the epidemiology of drug abuse in the District. Other similar projects spanned the duration of Dr. Luke’s tenure as chief medical examiner.

In 1983, Jim was offered a position at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP) as a Distinguished Scientist, where he participated in the forensic pathology-related activities of the Department of Forensic Sciences. In 1987, he was appointed chief medical examiner for Connecticut and professor of pathology and laboratory medicine at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. With a daughter still in high school, Jim indicates, “Commuting proved more difficult than we had previously anticipated.” For family reasons, he resigned and returned to the Washington area after his second year in the position.

From 1984-2000, Dr. Luke served as a forensic pathology consultant to the Behavioral Science Investigative Support Unit at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia. From 1993-1997, he directed an interdisciplinary research project to study the pathology

of implanted silicone in the Department of Environmental and Toxicologic Pathology at the AFIP.

Dr. Luke is certified by the American Board of Pathology in anatomic and forensic pathology. He has served on the NAME Board of Directors for four terms and as a member of the NAME Foundation Board of Trustees from 2007-2014. He was a member of the Board of Editors of the American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology from 1992-2004 and a member of the Editorial Board of the Journal of Forensic Sciences from 1979-2000.

Over the course of his career, Dr. Luke has published numerous papers in various medical, scientific and forensic journals. He has been an invited speaker for forensic pathology-related meetings and conferences in the Washington area.

Among the awards that Jim has received that have particular meaning to the forensic pathology community are the Milton Helpern Award from the Pathology/Biology Section of the American Academy of

Forensic Sciences (1998), the Outstanding Service Award of NAME (2001) and the Milton Helpern Laureate Award of NAME (2002).

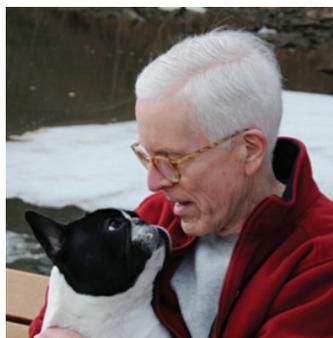
Many of us in the world of FP have had the privilege of being mentored by individuals who have, in one way or another, played a prominent role in the evolution of the specialty. Regarding Dr. Adelson, Jim says, “I would have known very little about forensic pathology had it not been for his course. The lectures were also an introduction to Dr. Adelson, the person, who became a role model for many of us fortunate enough to have known him.” Regarding Dr. Moritz, Dr. Luke recalls, “Dr. Moritz was an early advocate for medical examiner systems nationally. Research was a long-standing commitment of his. His paper, Classical Mistakes in Forensic Pathology is as timely now as it was when it was written in 1956.” In reference to Dr. Helpern, he says, “Dr. Helpern loved the challenge of the case material and the camaraderie of his staff. The door to his office was always open. His job was his life. He was in the office seven

days a week. However, it was his philosophy of the specialty and its place in the public health and justice systems that stood him apart for me and made the New York City experience unique.”

Dr. Luke was asked to describe his view of forensic pathology as a career choice for a newly trained FP. “I would say forensic pathology is a demanding, always interesting specialty, with a 24/7 commitment and where no two days are the same. The rewards, to me, are in explaining to families and in court what happened, to the extent that can be determined. They are in identifying public health and safety risks. They are in recognizing and stimulating collaborative projects for research purposes. They are in teaching and training.” As Jim puts it, “It doesn’t take many investigations to make the point that one of the fundamental attributes of the specialty is in the humanity inherent in our caseload. It is present in the circumstances of the cases, and it provides depth and meaning to the experience of serving as a forensic pathologist and medical examiner.”

Jim met his future wife at a CWRU nursing school

mixer in 1956, when he was in his first year of medical school. He and Marcia were married the next fall. They have three grown daughters, four grandchildren and one “four-legged son”, Simon, their French bulldog. Jim spent a year learning the how-to-walk-and-chew-gum-at-the-same-time specifics of the bagpipes, then played with a local DC pipe band for the next 25 years before having to give it up because of hand issues (Dupuytren’s). He currently enjoys photography, writing occasional poems and taking piano lessons.



Dr. Luke with his dog, Simon.



Jim (2nd from L in front row) in the DC pipe band.

The NAME Foundation Board of Trustees is honored to have served with Jim for many years. During his tenure on the BoT, the foundation has undergone the beginnings of a transformation from a newly formed entity with limited resources to an institution with demonstrated dedication to education, research and history preservation within the world of forensic pathology and death investigation. We know that Dr. Luke will continue to support NAME and the NAME Foundation, and we look forward to many more years of working with him.

A medical examiner’s office requires participation on the part of individuals both from within and outside the specialty of forensic pathology. In this regard, Jim indicates, “I am grateful to the many people who guided me

along the way. Some are the colleagues and mentors with whom I trained. Others helped in establishing and operating the offices that were my responsibility. I treasure their friendship and am very much in their debt.”

Reminder: Hisako Noguchi Memorial Fund Donations



NAME Foundation members are reminded that the Foundation is still actively seeking and accepting donations to the recently-established Hisako Noguchi Memorial Fund, which has been established in honor and memory of Hisako, Tom Noguchi’s late wife.

Announcing the NAME Foundation Advocate: Jan Garavaglia (Dr G)



The NAME Foundation is proud to announce that Jan Garavaglia, known to many people as “Dr. G,” has agreed to become the NAME Foundation’s official Advocate. As Jan has recently retired from her position in Orlando, FL, she is excited to pursue this new role. The NAME Foundation Advocate will assist the Foundation in meeting its goals of facilitating research for the betterment of death investigation, preserving the history of medical death investigation in the United States, raising funds for such purposes, and distributing charitable funds to meet the Foundation’s goals. We are excited that Dr. G has agreed to become our Advocate. The next issue of the NAME

Foundation Newsletter will highlight Jan and her new position.

NAME Foundation Board of Trustees Update

The BoT continues to meet twice at face-to-face meetings (at the Annual and Interim NAME meetings), and intermittently (typically every other month) by conference call throughout the remainder of the year. A bulk of the work of the BoT is being done via specific committees. A list of the various committees and a basic summary of their current activities is provided below. As always, we welcome ideas and input from all NAME Foundation members.

NAME Foundation Committees:

Membership and Nominating Committee (John Butts, chair) – Actively recruiting new NAME Foundation members, including newly-established corporate members.

Bylaws/Policy & Procedures Committee (Greg Schmunk, chair) – Addressing pertinent issues related to the official bylaws, policies,

and procedures of the Foundation.

Finance/Investment Committee (Michael Graham, chair) – Keeping track of and responsibly investing the resources of the Foundation.

Fundraising Committee (Peggy Greenwald, chair) – Actively seeking additional fundraising activities and opportunities in order to grow the Foundation’s resources.

Advocacy Committee (Michael Rieders, chair) – Officially announced Jan Garavaglia as the NAME Foundation Advocate.

Newsletter Committee (Joe Prahlow, chair) – Producing 4 issues of the NAME Foundation Newsletter per calendar year.

Silent Auction Committee (Amy Martin, chair) – Coordinating the popular fundraising event, and others, at the NAME Annual and Interim Meetings.

Education Committee (Mary Case, chair) – Advocating educational activities supported by the NAME Foundation.

Research Committee (Joe Felo, chair) – Working to establish the formation of research grants to be made available to the forensic pathology and death investigation community.

History Committee (Greg Schmunk, chair) – Working with NAME’s Past Presidents’ Committee in preserving the history of FP and death investigation.

Long Range Planning Committee (Tom Noguchi, chair) – Working to establish the future direction of the NAME Foundation.

Awards for Paper Presentations

One of the more “visible” functions of the NAME Foundation is its annual sponsorship of awards presented for “Best Papers” at the NAME Annual Scientific Meeting, including Best Resident (Platform and Poster) and Best Affiliate Paper. Winners of the awards are provided with a financial award, which, in recent years, has been provided by the NAME Foundation.



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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

NAME Foundation Board of Trustees

Chair – Joseph A. Prahlow, MD

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Secretary – Gregory A. Schmunk, MD

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Ex-Officio: Marcus B. Nashelsky, MD, David R. Fowler, MD, Gregory G. Davis, MD

NAME Foundation Membership Criteria

The NAME Foundation is proud to offer membership to any member of the National Association of Medical Examiners who makes an annual contribution to the NAME Foundation. The following minimal annual contribution qualifies membership in the NAME Foundation:

NAME Members: \$50.00

NAME Affiliates: \$20.00