



## Joel T. Janvier, MD

### In Memorium

1914-2002



JOEL T. JANVIER, MD, passed away at home on September 13, 2002, six weeks following a stroke.

He was the 90th President of the Medical Society, in 1962. During his tenure, "Sabin-oral Sundays" occurred, where members of the Society volunteered to supervise administration of the vaccine at multiple locations in the Sacramento area. Recipients paid only 25 cents for their dose, but many organizations donated money to the project. By agreement with donors, the fund surplus was used to establish the Medical Society Scholarship Program (later named The William E. Dochterman Medical Student Scholarship Fund).

Under his direction, the Society in 1962 formed the Foreign Medical Services Committee, a program pioneered by Drs. Bill Murphy and John Babich. For many years, our members gave free medical care to the Indians of Chichicastenango, Guatemala. Dr. Janvier (accompanied by his wife) was one of those doctors. Also in 1962, Dr. Janvier led the Society's support for the establishing a medical school in Sacramento.

In remembering Joel, though, my mind goes to the man that he was: Courageous, physically and morally strong, firm in his beliefs, a standard of honesty and integrity, reverent, compassionate, patient philosopher, wise counselor, loving husband, father and friend.

He loved his country. Before he was a doctor, he graduated from the Navy's Officer Training School, and on December 7, 1941, was an Ensign on the Battleship Mississippi. He served four years of combat on that ship (the full duration of the war), and was proud of having been aboard the Mississippi in history's last battleship-to-battleship fight in the Sarigao Straits. He was a Lieutenant Commander at discharge.

He then entered the University of Vermont Medical School, thanks to financial help from the Veterans' Bill of Rights, along with work on the side to support his new family (he and Miriam married during the war). He interned at Sacramento County Hospital.

Joel was an avid hiker. He backpacked often with his family in the Sierra, the Himalayas and the Andes. On one Sierra trek, he and his family lost their way in Desolation Valley, surviving a cold night by a dreary campfire, with a boulder as a wind break. The U. S. Forest Service found them the next day. He enjoyed traveling to exotic, out-of-the-way places. His travels were more "adventures" than "trips."

Joel spoke and wrote eloquently. Here is part of his first "President's Page" in the Bulletin of the Medical Society in 1962.

*"Freedom...The word itself conjures up lofty thoughts of liberty. Of openness. A bird soaring in a vast expanse of sky and sea. To those who have it — gratefulness and thanks. To those who have it not — a desire and a hope. For those who have lost it — frustration and despair.*

*"It is a blessing not to be taken lightly, this heritage that was given to us for it must be*

*maintained not as a right but as a responsibility. Eternal vigilance still is the price of freedom...*

*"Medicine has never been sacrosanct, never infallible. Our profession is composed of persons. It is here, perhaps, that human relations may become public relations. And although man's future may be inexorably carried on the flood tide of the human predicament, not necessarily so his destiny. The mind remains forever free."*

— Richard E. Kendrick, MD

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