

Dr David Pothier

15 December 1973 - 27 July 2018



David Pothier passed away on July 27, 2018 in the early hours of the morning following a struggle with recurrent brain cancer. His passing extinguished a brilliant light, the likes of which few of us will witness in our lifetime. **John Rutka** pays tribute.



(L-R) David, Neil Bailie and John Rutka.

I came to know David during the 2008 AAO-HNS meeting in Toronto where he was reporting for ENT & Audiology News. He expressed an interest in fellowship training in Toronto. He later accomplished that goal when he was awarded the TWJ fellowship. He subsequently became a trusted colleague at the University of Toronto and a dear friend to all those who worked and trained with him.

The Toronto years were marked by an endless curiosity regarding the functioning of the vestibular system, the development of new technology for those with bilateral vestibular loss and defining the role of catastrophisation played in those with dizziness. Using existing cell phone and recreational gaming technology, he and his friend, computer engineer Cian Hughes, developed the VESTIO device, a cost-effective balance workshop using a commercially available forceplate and

computerised dynamic visual acuity testing to assist in the prevention of aminoglycoside vestibulotoxicity. David was also a very keen proponent of endoscopic ear surgery and a founding member of the International Working Group for Endoscopic Ear Surgery (IWGEES). His leading role in promoting this surgical technique was accompanied by his popular presence at endoscopic ear surgical courses throughout the world. Before his passing, David and his co-author, Jane Lea from Vancouver, completed their seminal book on vestibular disorders, soon to be published.

On a personal note, when David was diagnosed with brain cancer I decided I would buy him a nice cigar to smoke every month of his life. Never a habit those in the medical field usually endorse, I appreciated the pleasure David always received smoking a good Cohiba. I told him I had hoped it would cost me

thousands of dollars to which the scientist in him scoffed. In the end, delivering more than 90 cigars, including bonuses for Christmas and birthdays, I was able to fulfil my end of the bargain. I only wish, however, it could have cost me tens of thousands instead.

In David's passing, I pause to reflect what he would have accomplished had he not developed a brain cancer a few years into his staff position at the University of Toronto. He accomplished much in his short life and we will dearly miss his presence. Rest peacefully dear friend wherever your final voyage takes you.

John Rutka, Professor of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, University of Toronto, Canada.

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