

## S. William Pelletier

S. William Pelletier, professor emeritus of chemistry at the University of Georgia, died on Feb. 21 [2004] at the age of 79. A native of Kankakee, Ill., Pelletier served in the Navy in the Pacific theater during World War II. He received a B.S. degree (summa cum laude) in chemical engineering from the University of Illinois in 1947, then completed a Ph.D. degree in 1950 at Cornell University.

In 1951, Pelletier took a staff position in the organic chemistry department at Rockefeller Institute in New York. He assumed the position of head of the chemistry department at the University of Georgia in 1962. As head, Pelletier increased the university's chemistry faculty from 14 to 30, the number of chemistry graduate students from 30 to 102, and the number of departmental papers published per year from 15 to 100. He also achieved a 20-fold increase in the department's external grant support.

Pelletier stepped down as head in 1969 to serve as the provost of the University of Georgia for seven years before becoming director of the Institute of Natural Products Research, a position he held until retiring in 2000.

As a researcher, Pelletier was an authority on the isolation, structure elucidation, and synthesis of natural products of biological interest, particularly diterpene alkaloids. In recent years, his research focused on the alkaloids of *Aconitum*, *Consolida*, *Delphinium*, and *Garrya* species. Pelletier edited a widely used series of books on the chemistry of alkaloids and published more than 360 manuscripts.

Pelletier served as president of the American Society of Pharmacognosy (ASP) and was a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and of the Royal Society of Chemistry. In 1991, he received a top research award from ASP for his lifetime work on alkaloids. He also won the 1971 Hefty Award from the Georgia Section of ACS and the 1972 Southern Chemist Award for distinguished achievements in chemistry from the ACS Memphis Section. He helped form the Northeast Georgia Section of ACS and served as its first chairman in 1968.

In his private life, Pelletier was an astute art collector. His collection includes etchings by renowned artists such as Rembrandt H. van Rijn, Adriane van Ostade, John Taylor Arms, and James McNeil Whistler. Pelletier authored 36 publications about the history of these and other artists.

Pelletier was preceded in death by his wife, Lee. He is survived by six children and 20 grandchildren. Joined ACS in 1949.

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