

OBITUARY

Michael E. Beard 1940 ~ 2008

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The microanalysis world lost one of its friends and champions, Michael Beard, who passed away on October 28, 2008. He was 68 and lived in Raleigh, NC.

Mike was connected to the world of microanalysis through his work with asbestos analysis.

Michael Eugene Beard received his degree in chemistry from North Carolina State University, and after a stint with the U.S. Geological Survey he went to work for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1971, where he became involved with the issues of asbestos analysis and related quality assurance matters.

By the mid-1980's he had become the EPA's main voice to the laboratory and consulting community regarding asbestos sampling and analysis issues. In those days, our understanding of asbestos analysis (bulk and air) was quickly evolving. It was Mike who shepherded the evolving analysis techniques, and it was he who was the voice of reason to those who had to interpret the results.

After 33 years with the EPA, Mike took a position with the microanalytical sciences group RTI International in North Carolina. He was also a member of a

number of professional associations that studied the issues of asbestos sampling and analysis and was a participant and regular speaker at a variety of national meetings, including Inter/Micro, sponsored by the McCrone Research Institute.

Dr. Walter C. McCrone once said of Mike and his asbestos-research presentations at Inter/Micro: "I can't imagine [the] EPA or the asbestos problem without Mike's level-headed influence. Long may he be around to help as a rare, constructive influence."

He lectured to us all, explaining the development and proper use of microanalytical techniques for determining the content of bulk

materials (polarized light microscopy), the analysis of air samples (phase contrast microscopy and transmission electron microscopy) and the ever-shifting science of the measurement of settled asbestos dust.



Photo courtesy of Thomas G. Laubenthal

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To have a better understanding of asbestos bulk sample analysis, Mike took courses under Peter Cooke at the McCrone Research Institute in 1991. Because Mike took the time to become personally involved with asbestos microanalysis, he was able to explain the vagaries of our methods to the researcher and the public alike. This is where Mike made many of his greatest contributions, and he was the keeper of our analytical knowledge—its history, our failures, and our successes.

One of his most memorable contributions to the asbestos-control industry was in serving as chair of the American Society for Testing and Material's D-22.07 committee, which included the development and long-

term stewarding of the Johnson Conference on asbestos. The Johnson Conference is held every three years and focuses on the research aspects of the asbestos issue with an emphasis on sampling and analysis.

Mike will be missed by his professional colleagues and his workmates at RTI. His booming voice and quick wit were a pleasure to everyone who knew him. His even hand guided us through the contentious changes that continue to evolve in the world of asbestos analysis. His love of family and friends, his personal and professional integrity, and dedication to his career set an example for all of us.

Mike is survived by his wife, Betty; son, Michael; daughter, Barbara Ann; and four grandchildren.

Michael Beard's Career Highlights

For much of his long career as an analytical chemist, Mike Beard researched asbestos and related environmental matters. Following is a selection of his numerous career highlights and achievements.

PROJECTS

- Preparation of nonasbestiform amphibole materials for method evaluation and health studies (2006)
- Sampling and analysis of asbestos fibers on filter media to support exposure assessments: bench-scale testing (2006)
- Evaluation of the aerosolization of asbestos and related fibers from bulk materials (2005)
- Development of an analytical method for asbestos in vermiculite (2005, 2003)
- Analysis of crayons for asbestos and other fibrous materials, and recommendations for improved analytical definitions (2000)

HONORS AND AWARDS

American Society for Testing and Materials International Award of Appreciation. For outstanding service to ASTM International Committee D22 on Air Quality and Subcommittee D22.07 in organizing and co-chairing the 2005 Johnson Conference on Asbestos (2007).

Environmental Information Association 2005 Snider Lifetime Achievement Award. For dedi-

cated commitment to the environmental profession (2005).

ASTM Award of Appreciation. For skills in building a consensus among diverse communities who deal with asbestos measurement and abatement and for accomplishments in both ASTM and international standards development (1994).

EPA Bronze Medal. For outstanding service to the public for 12 years of outstanding coordination of various groups who address the development of asbestos measurement methodology and the resolution of asbestos-related issues (1990).

National Asbestos Council Outstanding Achievement Award for 1988. For contributions to asbestos monitoring and QA programs (1989).

INTER/MICRO PRESENTATIONS

- "How Do I Quantify Thee? Let Me Count the Ways" (1996)
- "A Review of NESHAP and AHERA Requirements for Sampling and Analysis of Bulk Building Materials" (1995)
- "Monitoring Asbestos in Settled Dust" and "An Update on EPA Bulk Asbestos Analysis Policies" (1994)
- "EPA Asbestos Monitoring Update" (1993)
- "NESHAP Point Counting Revisions" (1991)
- "EPA Regulations for Monitoring Asbestos: An Update" (1990)