

Lars Vistnes, M.D., 1927 to 2016

Vincent Rod Hentz, M.D.
Stanford, Calif.

Lars Vistnes, M.D., Professor of Surgery, Emeritus at Stanford University, passed away March 28, 2016, at age 88 at the San Francisco home he shared with his wife Carol. His career as a plastic surgeon spanned many decades, and each decade saw Lars accepting new leadership challenges and responsibilities (Fig. 1).

Lars was a Canadian midwesterner who obtained his medical degree from the University of Manitoba. He completed an initial internship year at Winnipeg General Hospital, and then, after a period of community service in Canada, moved to San Francisco to complete a residency in general and plastic surgery at Saint Francis Memorial Hospital and St. Lukes Hospital under the leadership of Dr. Mar McGregor. His colleagues there included notables such as Mark Gorney and Ed Falces.

Lars was recruited by then Stanford Department of Surgery Chair Robert A. Chase and Stanford Plastic Surgery Division Chief Don Laub to accept a full-time Stanford faculty position, as the first chief of plastic surgery at the Palo Alto Veterans Administration Hospital. Lars eventually became the chief of the Veterans Administration surgical service. His clinical interests included oculoplastic surgery and reconstruction of the anophthalmic orbit, and he achieved an international reputation in this field.

Lars succeeded Don Laub as the chief of plastic surgery at Stanford. He was instrumental in the development of the Stanford Plastic Surgery Board Review Course and a strong proponent of international surgical volunteerism.

Lars was very involved in the education of plastic surgery residents and in the promotion of plastic surgery as a specialty. He served as president of the California Society of Plastic Surgeons, and was chairman of the American Board of Plastic Surgery. He was the founding editor of the *Annals of Plastic Surgery* and served as Editor in Chief for the journal's initial 10 years. He eventually became



Fig. 1. Lars Vistnes, M.D., 1927 to 2016. Used with permission from Carol Vistnes.

acting chair of the Department of Surgery at Stanford and was instrumental in the development of the “out of the box” concept of a Department of Functional Restoration. Although Lars had many retirement parties, he never really retired from Stanford. His final role was mentoring young Stanford faculty.

Lars will be remembered for his dry Canadian humor, his absolute integrity, his strength of character in seeing family members through serious illness, and his stoical acceptance of the progressive loss of vision over the last years. Lars is survived by his lovely wife Carol, with whom he traveled the world; and sons Rick and Greg and son, Dean, himself a graduate of the Stanford plastic surgery program.

Vincent Rod Hentz, M.D.
Stanford University Medical Center
770 Welch Road, Suite 400
Stanford, Calif. 94305
vrhentz@stanford.edu

From Stanford University Medical Center.

Received for publication April 26, 2016; accepted July 21, 2016.

Copyright © 2016 by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons

DOI: 10.1097/PRS.0000000000002787

Disclosure: The author has no financial interest to declare.