

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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In Memoriam: Richard Hurley, Jim Lee

Chris Beytes

Western Pulp Products lost two of its stalwarts in March: Richard Hurley, owner and Chairman of the Board, and Jim Lee, Marketing & Sales Manager.

Richard Hurley passed away on March 11 after a long battle with prostate cancer. He was 82.

A Stanford football player and civil engineering graduate, Richard joined his father-in-law's paper-recycling business, Western Pulp Products, in the '60s. He spent nearly 50 years there and was Chairman of the Board at the time of his passing. Richard was also a skilled woodworker and craftsman who built fishing boats, fly rods, professional-quality drum sets and golf clubs.

Jim Lee, the well-known and well-liked marketing and sales manager for Western Pulp, passed away March 31 after a brief battle with cancer. He was 66.

Jim had retired at the end of 2021 after a 32-year career with Western Pulp. We learned of his passing from Craig Anderson, a senior sales rep for the company.

"All of us at Western were shocked and saddened by the news," he said.

Western Pulp wrote the following about Jim: "Jim was an enthusiastic champion of Western's molded fiber nursery containers and a well-known friend in the industry. He was also a wonderful mentor and leader at Western Pulp Products, having a straight moral compass and at the same time a fun-loving attitude. Jim will be greatly missed and those of us that were able to work with him, greatly appreciated the opportunity we were given."

Dave Holley, General Manager of Moss Greenhouses in Jerome, Idaho, wrote of both men's passing: "I had the pleasure of working for these gentlemen from 1999 to 2009, and from my perspective were both giants in the manufacturing of nursery containers. For years, Western Pulp talked about the qualities of a molded fiber container as compared to plastic, and as I can speak from experience selling them and still currently using them, they are a superior container." **GT**