

# Patricia Alison "Patty Lee" Brownell-Lee 1923-2012

## OBITUARY

Patricia Alison "Patty Lee" Brownell-Lee, former Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. president, died last month of cardiac arrest during a trip to Mexico. She was 88.



Lee helped write the bylaws for the Ash Creek Neighborhood Association and served as its president for six years. She also served on the SWNI board, including five years as president from 1998 to 2003.

Even after her retirement from the board, Lee remained active, making her house available for retreats and social events. For her efforts she received the Mayor's Spirit of Portland Award.

"Patty's leadership skills allowed her to run efficient, productive meetings," SWNI executive director Sylvia Bogert said. Bogert recalled that Lee would often bring both neighborhood chairs and city officials to her home for private discussions. "She was a generous, caring

person," Bogert said.

Born in Portland to a farming family, Lee graduated from Milwaukie High School and Reed College. She taught health and fitness at Jefferson High School before joining the WAVES and serving in World War II; she was discharged in 1946.

She taught physical education at Reed before marrying Gilbert Prentiss Lee in 1949 and moving to Montana.

The couple returned to Portland and settled in southwest in 1952.

In addition to raising sons Gary, Gilbert and Granville, and her neighborhood work, Lee had extensive volunteer activities. She contributed work for the March of Dimes, YWCA Building Fund, American Heart Association, Multnomah County Medical Society Auxiliary, and Jackson High School PTA.

Lee received the Reed College Foster-Scholz Club Distinguished Service and the Oregon Journal Woman of Achievement awards, and was also honored by the Portland Chamber of Commerce. Lee was preceded in death by her husband Gilbert and oldest son Gary. At Lee's request, no memorial service will be held.

—Lee Perlman

# EARTH TALK

Questions & Answers About Our Environment

(Continued from Page 5)

cleanest of the readily available fossil fuels—as extractors implemented new technologies including horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing to get at formerly inaccessible domestic reserves in shale rock.

In 2001 shale gas accounted for two percent of U.S. natural gas output, while today that number is closer to 30 percent. The result of this increased supply is that the price of natural gas has fallen by some 77 percent since 2008, meaning utilities can produce electricity from it much cheaper as well. "Renewables simply can't compete," adds Swaby.

The final blow to Solyndra was China's creation of a \$30 billion credit line for its nascent solar industry. "The result: Chinese firms went from making just six percent of the world's solar cells in 2005 to manufacturing more than half of them today," says Swaby. U.S. market share is now just seven percent.

Low natural gas prices have also hurt other renewables, especially given the slow economy and its stifling effect on innovation. To wit, the rate of new wind-turbine installations in the U.S. has declined by more than half since 2008.

"The fossil fuel industry and its allies in Congress clearly see the solar and wind industries as a threat and will try to kill [them]," says Representative Edward Markey, a top Democrat on the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

Regardless of the challenges in furthering renewables, the White House remains committed to the greener path. In his recent State of the Union address to Congress, President Obama renewed the call for a federal Renewable Energy Standard that would force utilities to derive significant percentages of their power from cleaner, greener sources.

This would provide much-needed regulatory uniformity and a more robust and consistent market for renewable power, wherever solar panels, wind turbines or other equipment happen to be manufactured.

**CONTACTS:** Solyndra, [www.solyndra.com](http://www.solyndra.com); Wired, [www.wired.com](http://www.wired.com).

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