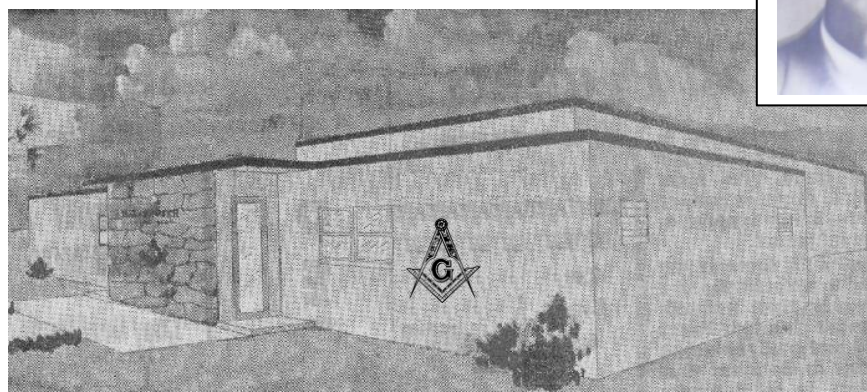
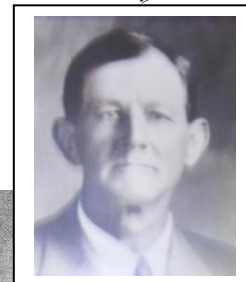


# R. T. SCHAFER LODGE

NO. 350 F&AM

CELEBRATING 41 YEARS OF FREEMASONRY



September 16, 2004

Past Masters Night



## R. T. SCHAFER LODGE NO. 350 F&AM

### 41 YEAR HISTORY 2004



Welcome to R. T. Schafer Lodge No. 350 Free and Accepted Masons. This marks the 41<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of Fellowship and Brotherly Love of R. T. Schafer Lodge. It is with pride and honor we present our history to you. Before we honor those who came before us, we must remember from whence we came.

Paraphrasing from the Silver Anniversary History... It has been said that statistics is the most boring of the sciences but when it comes to the formation, development, and maturity of R. T. Schafer Lodge No.350, Free and Accepted Masons, we find there are some very interesting statistics interwoven with the lives of many of our dedicated Brethren of the Lodge. After 41 years, some of these Brothers have departed to that Great Lodge on High, some are still with us and many new faces have come to join us. We hope this narrative of our history will bring back many memories or inform us about our Brothers and events that shaped our contributions to Freemasonry.

The record of many individual contributions to our Lodge in terms of work, time, money, inspiration, and perspiration has been lost due to failed memories and anonymous donations. Many Brothers were involved in many operations at different times and it was just impossible to catalog all of these events. They worked where needed and when needed for the good of the Lodge. We apologize for any oversight of recognition for these contributions, however large or small.

The Chinese have a saying, "Journey of thousand miles begins with single step." That single step came from the fertile mind of Brother Earl Victory Simpson. Some time prior to 1963, Brother Simpson's dream of a newborn Lodge springing from our mother Lodge, Gainesville Lodge No.41 F&AM began to take shape and become reality. The advice and consent of the officers, Past Masters, and members of Gainesville No.41, F&AM was eagerly sought and much encouragement and support was forthcoming. We especially honor Brother Thomas J. Price, a mountain of Masonic wisdom and experience for his help and cooperation. Shortly afterward, many contacts were made with local unaffiliated Masons from Lodges all over the United States and Brothers Earl Simpson, Curtis Williams, and others encouraging these unaffiliated Brethren to support a new Lodge held informal meetings.

In the spring of 1963, a meeting was held with several Brothers for suggestions as to the selection of a name for the new Lodge. When the members present were polled, without exception, the choice was to name the Lodge after Brother R.T. Schafer. Brother Schafer was one of the outstanding Masons in this area who was affectionately known as "Mr. Mason."

Let us now praise famous men...these were honored in their generations, and were the glory of their times. (*Ecclesiastics 44:1-15*)

### **R.T. SCHAFER**



Roswell T. ("R.T.") Schafer was born 29 September 1874 in Albany Township, Burks County, Pennsylvania, which is near the foothills of the Blue Mountains.

Nine years later, his parents and he came to Florida, settling in Levy County, near the present community of Meredith, between Archer and Bronson. The nearest school in

those days was in Levyville, and the upper storey of the school building served as the local Masonic Lodge. While attending this school, young Schafer had occasion to observe the manners and conduct of the Masons using the upper part of his school, and was much impressed with their quality. (Among the Masons active in that Lodge was N.R. Carter, whose son, Lamar G. Carter, was then engaged in passing through the several Stations of the Grand Lodge.) Young Schafer resolved at that point of his youth that, as occasion would permit, he would someday be a Mason in his own right.

The affairs of an active life saw the career and endeavors of young Schafer progress through many events. In 1885, he moved his place of residence to Gainesville, from which city he would never remove. In 1892, he entered the world of business, establishing a bakery, which he would operate until 1932 (this bakery was located in what is an antique shop on Northwest 10th Avenue next to Central Motor Supply). On 7 June 1894, the young businessman took to wife Miss Mary Agnes Newman; this union endured more than fifty years and was blessed with four daughters and two sons.

Having engaged in affairs of business and the heart, R.T. Schafer next had occasion to consider the promise he had made himself while a schoolboy; in early 1903, he went to Past Grand Master Marcus Endel and asked for a Petition. His knock at the door of Freemasonry met with the approbation of the Craft, and he was received into the companionship of Gainesville Lodge No. 41. His progress through the Degrees took its usual course, he was initiated on 13 May, Passed on 22 July, and Raised to the Sublime Degree on 26 August of that year.

From the outset, notice was taken of this young man and his affection for the Royal Art; in 1905, he received his first appointment to a Chair — that of Senior Deacon. He was elected Junior Warden in 1906 and Senior Warden in 1907. The year of 1908 saw him Inducted into the Oriental Chair as Worshipful Master of Gainesville Lodge.



Up until 1908, Gainesville Lodge had met in a building situated off of what is now University Avenue, which it shared with the Royal Arch Chapter, the Knights Templar Commandery, and the Odd Fellows Lodge. For several years, it had been the desire of the Lodge and the two York Rite Bodies to erect a house in Gainesville where all Masonic organizations might dwell together in unity. This high purpose was realized in the form of the Main Street Temple. The Lodge, Chapter, and Commandery acquired the land, initiated construction, and the Cornerstone of the grand edifice was laid during R.T. Schafer's tenure in the Chair.

During the early stages of planning, acquisition, and construction of the Main Street Temple, R.T. Schafer provided guidance, insight, and leadership; since those days, the common ownership by the Lodge, Chapter, and Commandery continued until 1992.

Following R.T. Schafer's progress through the Chairs, he was selected to serve as District Deputy Grand Master of the (then) Eleventh Masonic District in 1911. It is notable that the Grand Master he so served was Most Worshipful Albert W. Gilchrist, who was at the same time Governor of the State of Florida. Brother Schafer was Senior Deacon five times, Marshall once. Right Worshipful Brother Schafer assumed the duties of Chaplain of Gainesville Lodge from 1920 to 1926 and

again from 1933 to 1961, a total of 36 years; 29 of which were served consecutively.

R.T. Schafer's affection for Freemasonry, however, did not confine itself solely to the Symbolic Lodge. He embraced, and was an ardent member of the York Rite, serving as High Priest and Eminent Commander, respectively, of Gainesville Chapter No. 2, Royal Arch Masons, and Pilgrim Commandery No. 7, Knights Templar. (The third York Rite Body, Gainesville Council No. 27, Cryptic Masons, was not established until well into this century.)

Of particular interest to R.T. Schafer were the Forms and Ceremonies of the Masonic Fraternity. Upon his appointment to the Senior Deacon's Chair, he began an active involvement in matters of Ritual, which endured throughout his life. His first achievement was in the elevation of the dramatic and impressive presentation of the mysteries of the Symbolic Degrees, which he then carried forward into the Degrees of the Chapter and the Orders of the Temple. Hundreds of Masons received their Charges and Lectures from Brother Schafer; for more than an hundred, he also pronounced the sorrowful — but hopeful — words of our Funeral Oration.

The Forms and Ceremonies of our Fraternity remained ever fresh in Brother Schafer's mind. In his later years, he was a great favorite in the ritualistic activities of the area. His York Rite Companions and Fraters called him "Junior," because the freshness of his memory when at "work" made him appear the most youthful of them all. Travelers from the Main Street Temple were always asked if they were bringing "R.T." or "Junior" with them.

Thus, when in the fullness of time, the founding of a new Lodge in Gainesville was considered, it appeared only proper

that it be named for R.T. Schafer as a tribute to his memory. Thus, we now see his face look down from the wall of "his" Temple, as it also looks down from the wall of the Main Street Temple — square of jaw, stern of eye; to all outward appearance a cold and forbidding visage. Yet, his works belie that image, for cold hearts do not inspire love and affection; forbidding looks do not kindle warm memories. The Light of a Master Mason is a warm radiance, not a cold glare; R.T. Schafer radiated Freemasonry — and warmed many hearts.

As to the date and manner of R.T. Schafer's death, we make and need no mention here. What is important is how they live. He so lived that a Lodge and Temple now bear his name; Death took him, but did not dim his deeds.

And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me,  
Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord  
from henceforth: Yea, Saith the Spirit, that they  
may rest from their labors; and their works do  
follow them.

Konx Ompax

So Mote it be

It is easy to see why the acceptance and support of a new Lodge with the name of such a revered Brother as R.T. Schafer was virtually unanimous. Masonry suffered a great loss when Brother R.T. Schafer died on March 25, 1961.

On May 1, 1963, a meeting was called at Gainesville Lodge No.41 F&AM for the purpose of setting to work a U.D. Lodge in Emergent Communications. R.:W.: J. Wendel Fargis was Acting Grand Master under the authority of M.:W.: John T. Rose, Grand Master of Masons of Florida, when the U.D. Lodge officers were installed. R.:W.: Brother James F. Bishop proclaimed that R.T. Schafer Lodge, U.D. was legally set to work.

A resolution was read stating that Gainesville Lodge No.41 F&AM gave unanimous consent to the formation of the U.D. Lodge. On motion, it was voted to hold the Stated Communications on the first Wednesday of each month at 8:00 P.M. and charge \$30.00 for each of the three Degrees. Individual Brothers and other Lodges in the area donated much of the paraphernalia and working tools. On June 5, 1963, the children of R.T. Schafer, Mrs. Helen Hartman, Brother Theodore R. Schafer, Jr., Brother H. Vernon Schafer, Mrs. Lucretia Whitehurst, Mrs. Alice Grubbs, and Mrs. Beatrice Bean, presented the Lodge with an Altar Bible. Brothers T. R. Schafer and Henry Vador as a gift presented a gavel from Air Force Lodge No.1, Maxwell Field, Alabama. Horace Zetrouer, representing the Past Masters of Gainesville No.41, F&AM presented the U.D. Lodge with a set of working tools. Mandarin Lodge No.343 F&AM donated our staffs and the Grand Lodge Committee on Work presented a set of Warden's gavels and columns.

The enthusiasm of the Brothers working in R.T. Schafer Lodge, U.D. was outstanding in developing the ritualistic work and the proficiency of its officers. The results of this enthusiasm and proficiency showed up in the rapid growth of our membership.

On May 16, 1964, at the First Methodist Church, R. T. Schafer Lodge No.350 F&AM was consecrated, dedicated, and constituted by M.:W.: Hobart D. Peihank, Grand Master of Masons of Florida. By this time the Lodge had 121 Charter members including 30 members who demitted from Gainesville Lodge No.41 F&AM, unaffiliated Brethren from other Lodges, and Brothers raised by the U.D. Lodge.

On November 26, 1964, our Lodge co-sponsored with Gainesville Lodge No.41 F&AM the formation of a Demolay Chapter for boys. We have supported the youth groups including the Rainbow Assembly for Girls.

The Lodge continued to grow in membership and proficiency in work and in the latter part of 1967; we began to think about building a new Lodge building. Our membership now totaled 214 Brothers. The Property Location Committee composed of Brothers Earl V. Simpson, E.C. "Curly" Kuehn, and Kirby Green sought and examined several available sites for the Lodge building including its present location on N. E. 9th Street. The property, which was listed with a realtor, was low with some water standing upon it. Brother Kuehn was afraid of the site because he saw wood ducks on it but with fill dirt this location would be satisfactory.

On October 26, 1967, the Building Committee consisting of Brothers Paris Miracle, Kirby Green, George Beazlie, and Chairman Earl V. Simpson, recommended the property at 2505 N. E. 9th St. It consisted of four lots measuring 100' X 165' each for a total price of \$6,000.00. On December 13, 1968, the Lodge members motioned and passed a resolution to pay cash for the property although it would be necessary to borrow money from the First National Bank to pay Grand Lodge per capita tax. The Building Committee continued to work diligently toward getting our Lodge building started and by February 27, 1969, it was proposed that 150 \$100.00 building bonds be issued on approval of Grand Lodge. The bonds were approved by Grand Lodge and sold by Brothers Earl Simpson, Curtis Williams, Ray Williams, and Raymond Langieri.

Ground was broken for R.T. Schafer Lodge on June 11, 1969 and construction begun by September 25, 1969. \$13,00.00 had been raised at this point. Brother Jim Raulerson cleared

the land, furnished and hauled to the site all the fill dirt needed to make ready the foundation. Then came the pouring of the slab with Brother Larry Gocek doing the rough plumbing and Brother Allen Spears helping with the concrete finishing and laying of the 10,569 Cummer yellow blocks.

After the foundation was down, Sam Wall Construction Company filled and leveled the area up to the foundation. Brother George Beazlie contributed to the planning of the electrical with Brother Kirby Green drawing specific plans. Brothers Bill Preston and Bill Samples furnished much of the electrical fixtures and materials. Brother Milton Ryberg helped with the location and placement of the Eastern Star light fixtures. Brother Ray Stanovich of W.W. Gay Construction Co. helped supervise the plumbing. Brother Earl Simpson and Mr. Ed Fowler were instrumental in the carpentry work from roughing of joist and partitions to the inside finish work. Brother Joe Zeigler and his brother donated the beautiful carpet. The cabinets were made and donated by Brothers Dan Lynn and Robert Cooper. Brothers Allen Spears and O.D. Thomas did the decorative stone on the facade. Brother Jack Hyden contributed the terrazzo floor in the dining room and the artistic Square and Compass embedded in the center of the room. Mrs. A.T. Fletcher donated the original drapes. Brother Gene Craig furnished the attractive tile in the bathroom and foyer.

On August 12, 1969, W. Brother Harold Johnson's letter to the Craft gives a good overview of the financial need at that time. Brother Harold, as Worshipful Master, appealed to the Craft to take a minute of time and help with a generous donation toward the completion of the Temple. He explained that with the money already contributed the ground had been broken and construction begun. The footings had been

poured, the masonry and underground plumbing and electrical work done, the floor poured, and the block laid for the walls. With our funds nearly depleted, we needed additional moneys for the steel roof supports, the decking and the roof, which would run in excess of \$5,000.00. He pointed out that many Brothers had donated fill dirt, plumbing, electrical supplies, time, money, and labor. He also reminded the Craft that down the road we would need light fixtures and ducts and air conditioning equipment. We would need contributions of the equipment, money, or both on all of these. As expected the Brethren responded to the call with great enthusiasm.

In 1970, the wives of R.T. Schafer Lodge members, who also shared the spirit that was so prevalent among the Lodge Brothers wished to assist them in some way. This group of ladies formed the S.O.S. club, which stood for Spouses of Schafer. The Lodge owes a great debt of gratitude to the Club members for the many contributions they made in the form of furnishings, kitchen equipment, funds, refreshments and meals served, and projects they sponsored to aid our fraternal society.

A committee consisting of Brothers Odel Cauthen, Harold Johnson, Curly Farnell, Paris Miracle, Milton Ryberg, and Kirby Green was appointed to check on chairs that were being offered for sale by the old State Theater. 200 of the theater chairs were purchased and donated to the Lodge by Brother Harold Johnson. Brother Johnson and M.:W.: George Hayes, contributed most of the folding chairs. The theater chairs needed repairs before they could be installed in the Lodge building and many Brothers worked on them from sand blasting, to painting, to assembly, and to mounting them. A very hard, time consuming job. Brother Milton Ryberg

researched the best chemicals to clean the chairs and the paint to preserve and beautify them. The chairs have since been replaced. Chairs from Florida Field skyboxes now reside in our Temple. The original chairs were donated to various lodges around the area.

After the Lodge building was finished, the first meeting was held on September 24, 1970 and on December 11, 1970, Phillip M. Achey was the first Brother raised.



The momentous event of laying the corner stone to our Temple occurred on December 18, 1971 with M.:W.: Wilbur W. Masters, Grand Master of Masons of Florida presiding. At the same time, our time capsule was sealed. It contained a copy of

the first R.T. Schafer Lodge U.D. minutes; a copy of the first R.T. Schafer Lodge No.350 F&AM minutes; a picture of the ground breaking on June 10, 1969; a page from the Gainesville Sun newspaper announcing the event; a Demolay Legion of Honor Medal; and a copy of the membership roster of Rob Morris Chapter, U.D., Order of the Eastern Star; a building bond of Brother J.S. Liddell; and four 1971 pennies.



After the Temple was finished, the members of the Lodge were able to devote total attention to the ritualistic and esoteric work of the Lodge. This work was brought to full achievement by a fine line of Worshipful Masters and their officers up to the present time. The Degree team that had

been previously formed was extremely proficient in all three Degrees and was receiving requests from Lodges to exemplify their work. This Degree team was dressed in full regalia,



simulating the workmen in ancient times. This team was developed and directed by Brother Earl V. Simpson. He brought much credit to the Lodge and the team through this work.

Unfortunately, during our period of greatest growth and enthusiasm, we suffered the loss of our first Past Master, Earl V. Simpson on February 19, 1977 and our second Past Master, E.C. "Curly" Kuehn on February 23, 1972. Both contributed so much to establishing R.T. Schafer Lodge No.350 F&AM. Brother Edward R. Rowe, Sr., for whom our brother Lodge, Edward R. Rowe, Sr. Lodge No.374 F&AM was named, also passed away on September 14, 1974.

On April 22, 1972, Rob Morris Chapter No.310 O.E.S. received their Charter. From the early days of its formation, R. T. Schafer Lodge No.350 F&AM made available its facilities for their use and the Chapter has been most gracious and generous in supporting and assisting the Lodge with funds, equipment, and promoting fellowship among the Brothers.

As evidence of our Brothers' dedication to Freemasonry, the building bonds were paid off ten years ahead of time in 1979.

Let us now pay tribute to our founder, Earl Victor Simpson:

He was born on July 3, 1905 at Tallahassee, Florida. He was initiated an Entered Apprentice on August 13, 1929; passed to Fellowcraft on September 10, 1929; and raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason on October 14, 1929 in Gainesville Lodge No.41 F&AM and was Master of that Lodge three times; in 1938, 1939, and 1951. He was a Charter member of R. T. Schafer Lodge No.350 F&AM in 1964 and of Edward R. Rowe Lodge No.374 F&AM in 1976. He held a Grand Lodge blue

card for proficiency in work. He was appointed Jr. Grand Deacon of the Grand Lodge of Florida on April 27, 1965. Brother Earl received his red cap of the Knights Commander of the Court of Honor of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite on October 18, 1971; and was coroneted to Inspector General of the Honorary 33rd Degree of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite on October 23, 1975 in Washington, D.C. with R.W. Thomas J. Price, 33° serving as his escort.

Brother Earl died on February 19, 1977. He worked tirelessly and unceasingly for the fraternal love of his life -Freemasonry. We pay this tribute to the memory of Brother Earl Victor Simpson because without his inspiration, dedication, energy, and contributions, R. T. Schafer Lodge No.350 F&AM might never have developed into this organization.

T. Ray Williams read the History of the 25th Anniversary Celebration on June 11, 1988. Brothers Paris Miracle, Sam Taylor, Kirby B Green, Jr., Henry E Smith, Alan B Capehart, Harold Johnson, Leo F Farnell, T. Ray Williams and Ronald E Peebles signed the reading of that presentation.

Signatures of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations

<u>Paris Miracle</u>	<u>Sam Taylor</u>
<u>Kirby B. Green Jr.</u>	<u>Henry E. Smith</u>
<u>Alan B. Capehart</u>	<u>Harold A. Johnson</u>
<u>Leo F. Farnell</u>	<u>T. Ray Williams</u> Chairman
<u>Ronald E. Peebles</u> Worshipful Master	

Out of the ranks of R.T. Schafer Lodge, many of our Brethren have gone on to serve the Grand Lodge of Florida in several capacities:

District Deputy Grand Masters:

Brothers T. Ray Williams  
Harold Johnson  
Charles Cromwell  
William Bessett  
Art Culbreth  
Henry Smith  
Mort Wolfson  
Ed Jones, Jr  
Lyn Williams  
Ron Peebles

District Instructors:

Brothers C. R. Perry  
Don Strickland  
Art Culbreth

Our Honorary Membership list includes the following distinguished Masons:

M.:W.: Clyde A. Gleason  
M.:W.: William M. Hollis  
M.:W.: Franklin C. Smith  
M.:W.: J. Roy Crowther  
M.:W.: Roy Conner Sheppard  
M.:W.: George Hayes  
R.:W.: Wallace F. Zetrouer  
R.:W.: Thomas J. Price  
R.:W.: Curtis R. Williams  
W.: Raymond Cecil Morris  
W.: John A. Grubbs  
M.:W.: James H Durham

M.:W.: Elmer G. Coffman  
M.:W.: Robert D. Trump  
M.:W.: Robert P. Harry, Jr.

We are honored to have three 60-year members:  
Brothers Earl Rogers, Milton Ryberg and Charlie Palmour.

Two of our Past Masters have served well in the York Rite. W.: Harvey L Ward was the Past Grand High Priest of Royal Arch Masons of Florida in 1995. W.: Fred Piasecki was the Right Eminent Grand Commander of Knights Templar of Florida in 2003.

Brother Mort Wolfson was honored by receiving the 33° in the Scottish Rite and being elected Master of Kadosh of the Ocala Valley in 2002.

Grand Lodge has awarded our Brother S. "Art" Culbreth with a gold proficiency card. This card denotes proficiency in all three degrees, catechisms, and lectures. In 2001, R.W. Art was presented with a plaque, "Master Builder of the Craft." This was in recognition of his time and labors to the Lodge and Freemasonry. M.:W.: George Hayes, R.:W.: Harold Johnson and W.: Kenny Gotay presented the plaque.



The three York Rite Bodies, Gainesville Chapter No. 2, Royal Arch Masons; Gainesville Council No. 27, Royal and Select Masters and Pilgrim Commandery No. 7, Knights Templar, moved their charters to our Temple. Gainesville Lodge No. 6, Independent Order of Odd Fellows also moved their charter to R. T. Schafer Lodge. The local Neighborhood Crime Watch and AA meets in our Temple and is still used as a voting present by the Supervisor of Elections.

R. T. Schafer Lodge No.350 F&AM has been privileged to contribute to its civic responsibilities by offering its facility as a voting precinct. The Crime Watch Neighborhood and AA are currently meeting here.

We are making strides in Freemasonry. We are proud to be part of this Ancient and Honorable Institution. Let not be supposed that our labors have been in vain. Let us be glad to say, "Happy to meet, sorry to part, Happy to meet again."

Past Masters of R. T. Schafer Lodge No. 350 F&AM

Earl Victor Simpson	1964*
Curtis E. Williams	1965*
Edward C Kuehn	1966*
T. Ray Williams	1967*
Kirby B. Green, Jr.	1968*
Harold A. Johnson	1969
Paris Miracle	1970*
L. L. Curly Farnell	1971*
C. R. Perry	1972*
Dan B. Capehart	1973*
Samuel C. Taylor	1974*
Peter M. Dobbins	1975*
Harley L. Padgett	1976*
Edgar H. Callaway	1977
Donald F. Strickland	1978
William A. Bessent III	1979*
S. Arthur Culbreth, Jr.	1980*
Charles W. Cromwell	1981
Edward A. Slimak	1982*
Sidney W. Bush	1983
Ernest W. Bridges	1984
Roy Wolfe	1985
Henry E. Smith	1986*
Harvey L. Ward	1987
Ronald E. Peebles	1988
Anthony J. Salzman	1989
Dell M. Sanders	1990
Harry Brigman	1996
Don G. Duvall	1992

Fredrick L. Piasecki	1993
Edward C. Jones, Jr.	1994
Raymond D. Harris	1995
Jeffrey G. Norris	1996
William S. Jackson	1997
John W. Mathis	1998
Nelson L. Mathis, Jr.	1999
Harvey L. Ward, Jr.	2000
Kenneth Gotay	2001
A.E. Gene Culbreth	2002
Wayne Y. Thigpen	2003
Mort Wolfson	2004
Daniel F. "Lyn" Williams	2005
Howard B. "Ozzie" Osgood	2006
Daniel L. Williams	2007
Mertin Stewart Collins	2008
Dennis Haskins	2009