

The Thrasher Newsletter

Volume 44. No.2

Summer 2025



L-R: Paula Thrasher, John Paul Thrasher, Caroline Thrasher, Susie Thrasher, Jennifer McGrath, Peggy Thrasher Law, Don Law, Linda Bishop, Charity Wang, Celestea Sharp, Jacob Wang, Steve Wang

Tennessee Waltzin'

By PAULA THRASHER

The 2025 Thrasher Family Association Reunion held May 30-June 1 in Chattanooga, Tenn., will be remembered for:



- Sleek silver sharks gliding through blue water, gnarly-looking alligators galumphing in a recreated swamp and delicate bioluminescent jellyfish flashing in technicolor at the Tennessee Aquarium.

Caroline Thrasher does her best her best shark imitation.

- The mostly useless but much-coveted door prizes. (So, Steve Wang, how's your official Rock City bottle opener working out? And Susie Thrasher, has your turquoise sea turtle magnet found a home on your refrigerator?)



Steve Wang, the proud owner of a Rock City bottle opener

- Those tiny potted succulents and pink flamingo pens and other goodies Linda Bishop so generously gifted to us from her Temu stash. (Whose plant is still thriving?)
- John Thrasher's long-winded account of how "Cousin" John is connected to Chattanooga at the annual meeting. (Oh, wouldn't our vaunted "cousin" be so proud!)

- Our final celebration at the Riverport Grille found us filling our souls with

shared friendship and our bellies with fried pickles, lobster ravioli, NY strip steak, pan seared salmon, Cajun pasta and, for desserts, peanut butter pie, bread pudding and brownie a la mode.



Clockwise from top: Susie Thrasher, Jennifer McGrath, Linda Bishop, Celestea Sharp, Paula Thrasher, Caroline Thrasher, John Paul Thrasher, Peggy Thrasher Law, Don Law, Steve Wang, Charity Wang and Jacob Wang



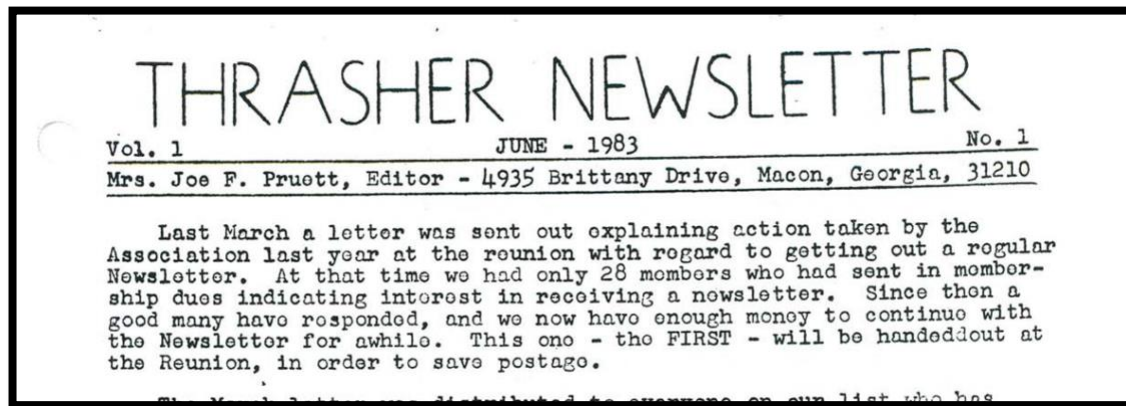
Don Law and his peanut butter pie

But the most vivid memory must be the ear-piercing roar of motorcycles varooming through downtown streets as we dined alfresco at the Mexican restaurant Fonda San Jose on Friday, struggling to carry on conversations. The cacophony of super-charged engines shattering the calm of a clear late May night nearly drove us all to distraction.

These are just a few of our recollections from the reunion. But if a picture tells a thousand words, we offer thousands of words in a gallery of photographs posted at the end of this newsletter -- keep scrolling.

TFA final newsletter, the end of an era...

By SUSIE THRASHER



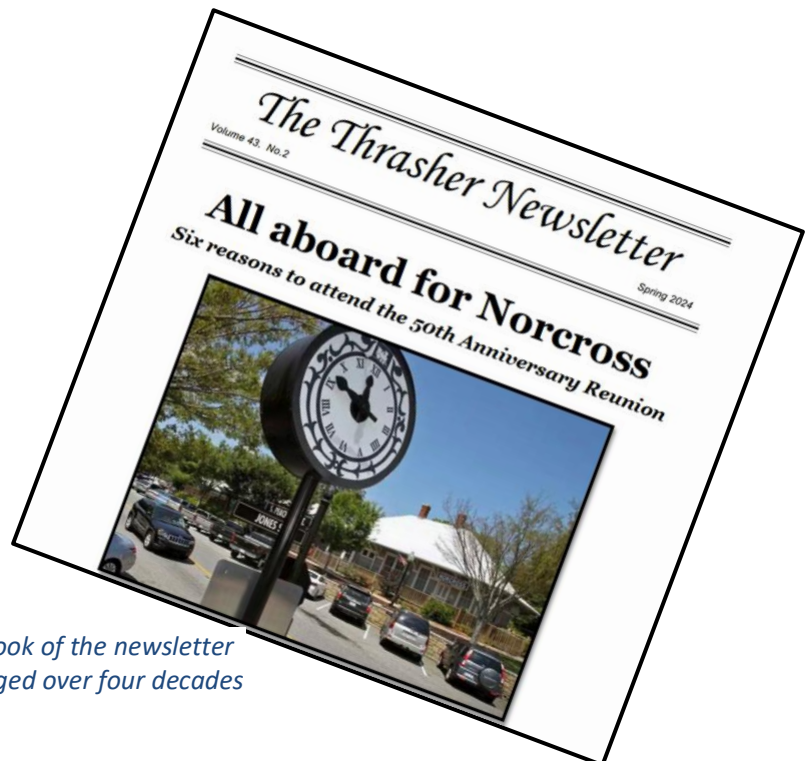
A clip from the first Thrasher Newsletter, June 1983

It was June 1983 when the young Thrasher Family Association published its first newsletter. Dot Pruett typed it herself, passed out copies at the business meeting in Macon, Ga., and then hand-stamped and mailed the rest to our small membership.

Since then, the newsletter has been faithfully published, on paper and then by email, for 42 years. In addition to Dot Pruett, Barbara Eger played a huge role in editing the newsletter for decades. Other editors and contributors to the TFA Newsletter were Nancy Cherry, Susie Thrasher, Jeff Thompson, Paula Thrasher, David Sumner, John Paul Thrasher and, of course, John E. Thrasher.

Never fear, even though there will be no further quarterly newsletters, we will continue to maintain our website where research and family news will be available online. Please email photos and articles of interest to pthrasher@numail.org so they can be added to our website. Most of our newsletters are currently on our website:

ThrasherFamilyAssociation.com. All of them will be available soon. I encourage you to view or print previous newsletters. They are a rich source of genealogical information.



The look of the newsletter changed over four decades

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

THRASHER FAMILY ASSOCIATION

CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE

MAY 31, 2025

Attending: Linda Bishop, Athens, Ga.; Peggy & Don Law, Watkinsville, Ga.; Celestea Sharp, Oconee County, Ga.; Caroline Thrasher, Los Angeles; Paula & John Paul Thrasher, Newnan, Ga.; Dr. Sue Thrasher & Jennifer McGrath, Watkinsville, Ga.; Charity, Jacob & Steve Wang, Buford, Ga.



Welcome and Call to Order: John Paul Thrasher, Chairman of TFA, welcomed everyone and called the business meeting to order at 9 a.m. The meeting was held in the Chestnut Room of the Downtown Courtyard by Marriott in Chattanooga, Tenn. **Door Prizes:** Before and between business discussions, Paula Thrasher passed out tickets to all members present and held drawings for door prizes.

Approval of 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes: In the absence of TFA Secretary Nancy Cherry, TFA Vice-Chairman Celestea Sharp read aloud the minutes of our 2024 business meeting, which was held on in Norcross, Ga. After the reading, Dr. Sue Thrasher made a motion for the Vice-Chairman to make an addition to the minutes to commend Tanya Gilmer and the Lionheart Theatre Company for providing historical reenactors during the walking tour of Norcross. Steve Wang seconded this motion. John Paul Thrasher moved to accept the minutes as amended. Steve Wang seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted unanimously.

Program: "Cousin" John Thrasher's Connection to Chattanooga. John Paul Thrasher gave a very interesting presentation that included historic photos of Atlanta, including photographs and pen and ink drawings of Cousin John Thrasher, the Monroe Railroad Embankment, and the area known as "the Railroad Triangle." During his comments, John Paul mentioned that Atlanta historian Franklin Garrett noted in his book, "Atlanta and Environs," that Terminus and Thrasherville (named for "Cousin" John Thrasher) were "unofficial names for the settlement that was incorporated as "the town of Marthasville in 1843 and reincorporated as "the town of Atlanta" in 1845 and "The City of Atlanta in 1847."

Cousin John Thrasher Postmaster of Poolesville

John Paul said he recently discovered that Cousin John Thrasher had briefly served as the postmaster of Poolesville in the early 1840s. Poolesville was the unofficial name of a rural

settlement that was located about nine miles south of the railroad terminus in present-day Fulton County, Ga. According to Garrett, he met and in 1844 married a “Belle of Old Poolsville,” Margaret Bethuel Scaife. Bethuel Scaife’s mother was a Poole.

Jesse Scaife Thrasher

The first child of Bethuel and John Thrasher, Jesse Scaife Thrasher, was born in 1845 on the Scaife family plantation near Marthasville which later the same year, was renamed Atlanta by the state legislature. After the outbreak of the Civil War, Jesse, age 16, enlisted in Co. K “Davis Infantry” of the 7th Georgia Regiment. The 7th Georgia was attached to the Army of Northern Virginia, CSA. Pvt. Jesse S. Thrasher fought in the Battle of First Manassas (Bull Run) in July 1861. In December 1861, Jesse was stricken with pneumonia and was hospitalized in a Confederate hospital in Charlottesville, Va., and was not expected to live. His father received a telegram about his son’s condition and traveled to Charlottesville to bring Jesse back to Atlanta, where he was nursed back to health. While in Atlanta, Jesse helped organize Co. A, 64th Georgia Regiment serving the regiment as a 2nd Lt., then a 1st Lt. and eventually a Captain. In 1863, the regiment was transferred to Florida. Jesse fought in the Battle of Olustee (Ocean Pond) where he was wounded. In May 1864, the 64th Georgia was ordered to Virginia and shared in the battles, skirmishes and hardships of the Petersburg siege and the Appomattox operations.

After the war, Jesse returned to Atlanta. In 1866, he married Mary McCamey, the daughter of Col. Samuel R. McCamey and Elizabeth Bishop. They had two children, Frank and Samuel. According to a family genealogy written by founding TFA member Vessie Thrasher Ranier, both boys died young. Their mother predeceased her sons, dying in 1872 at age 27. She is buried in Gainesville, Ga.

In 1876, Jesse married Lillie James Wilkes, the daughter of Rev. William Clay Wilkes, a renowned religious leader and educator. Rev. Wilkes founded the Monroe Female College, Spalding Seminary and Brenau College in Gainesville, where he served as the first president.



Jesse and Lillie had eight children, many of whom lived children lived in Chattanooga, including their second son Wilkes T. Thrasher (1893-1960). Wilkes was a lawyer, judge, and prominent citizen of Chattanooga. Judge Wilkes T. Thrasher was largely responsible for convincing the federal government to build a bridge over the Chickamauga Dam on the Tennessee River in the 1950s. The Tennessee state legislature named the bridge The Wilkes T. Thrasher Bridge in his honor. In addition, there is an elementary school in Signal

Mountain and a VFW post named in his memory of in Chattanooga. Wilkes T. Thrasher's son, Wilkes T. Thrasher, Jr. (1921-1984), followed in his father's footsteps serving as a lawyer and a judge. Wilkes T. Thrasher, III (1944-1965) was studying pre-law when he died tragically while attending college at the University of Mississippi.

The Thrasher descendants of Cousin John Thrasher and his son Jesse Scaife Thrasher made an important contribution on the City of Chattanooga.

Approval of Treasurer's Report: Thrasher Family Association (TFA) Assistant Treasurer Steve Wang gave the Treasurer's report in the absence of TFA Treasurer Warren Thrasher, Jr. Warren had forwarded the TFA Treasurer's Report to Steve. Steve stated that, as of May 6, 2025, TFA's checking account balance stood at \$5,379.70. Steve told us that Bank of America requires a minimum balance of \$5,000 or we are charged fees. The TFA Bank account was opened at Bank of America in November 2023, after the TFA became a legal entity. Dues remain at \$20 for 2025, and members can give Steve a check for 2025-26 annual dues at this reunion. He also stated that TFA's fiscal year runs from July 1st to June 30th. Celestea Sharp made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Paula Thrasher seconded the motion, and the report was approved unanimously.



Moment of Silence: John Paul Thrasher called for a moment of silence at our meeting in memory of several TFA members who passed away during the past year: Joan Stine, wife of Joseph P. Stine; Mikki Thrasher McFatter, sister of Grady Thrasher III; Jeff Bishop, brother of Patti Bishop Saville; and John Edwin Thrasher, former President of Florida State University.

Reunion Schedule Update: Paula Thrasher reviewed the reunion schedule for today. She said that we would meet in the hotel lobby at 1:30 to walk to the Chattanooga Aquarium. Caroline Thrasher held the tickets for everyone. Our dinner will take place at 7 p.m. at Riverport Grille.

Membership Report: John Paul told us that we need to encourage our members to pay their \$20 yearly dues. Dues and the occasional donation are the only source of revenue for the TFA. donations. He also said that he met with Bank of America reps to discuss the \$5,000 minimum balance requirement. At the time, the TFA account balance was less than \$100 below the \$5,000 minimum and we had been charged account fees for several months. John Paul and TFA Treasurer, Warren Thrasher, bought several new family

memberships that put our balance over \$5,000, and Bank of America refunded some of the fees they had charged TFA.

Newsletter Update: Newsletter Editor Paula Thrasher stated that the newsletter would like members to write about anything and anyone having to do with our families. As she did last year, she stated that if a member has a genealogy question, he or she can send it to her and she will see if any of our TFA members (“the usual suspects”) can provide an answer. If a member has a question about the Thrasher/Thresher DNA Project, those questions should be addressed to Nancy Cherry. Finally, Paula added that we can get in touch with her by emailing her at: pthrasher@numail.org

Website Update: John Paul thanked the TFA webmaster Dr. Sue Thrasher (aka Susie Thrasher) for her work on the association’s website. Susie provided an informative overview of the TFA website. She logged onto the website and then provided a tour of the site for the group. The website “landing page” provides information about the Thrasher Family Association and how to contact the TFA if you are interested in becoming a member or where to send dues payments. Susie showed the group how to access the newsletter archive and index that John E. Thrasher created. She also shared obituaries that had been submitted by members. The site also lists all the TFA Reunions going back to the first TFA reunion in 1974. In addition, Susie has uploaded several articles and a list of books written by TFA members. Susie also created a gallery of photographs provided by TFA members. She would like to add to this gallery in the future. Susie said that the website (currently) offers unlimited space for accompanying pictures. Pictures should be sent to Susie via email, each with a description of the individuals, date, and location.

She concluded her website update by suggesting that we might consider ending the quarterly e-newsletter and instead post new content that normally would be in a newsletter directly on the TFA website. One major advantage is that the new content would immediately be available online and could more easily be accessed by our members and genealogy researchers. We then could send an email to our members to advise them of new content on the website.

Jacob Wang then moved that after publishing the summer 2025 e-newsletter, we switch from publishing (emailing) quarterly newsletters to our members to posting content directly on the website. The motion was seconded by Paula Thrasher and after discussion by the group approved unanimously. The summer 2025 TFA Newsletter will be the last quarterly newsletter emailed to members.

Oconee Enterprise Article: Celestea Sharp and Linda Bishop will be writing an article on the Thrasher Family for the Oconee Enterprise, published in Watkinsville, Ga,. Celestea will also ask the newspaper’s editor for permission to post Oconee Enterprise articles on the TFA website.

NEW BUSINESS: John Paul Thrasher announced that Warren Thrasher, Jr. had informed the board that he would be stepping down as Treasurer effective July 1, 2025. He plans to work with the new treasurer to ensure a smooth transition. John Paul commended Warren for his excellent work as TFA Treasurer for the past two years. Warren established the first bank account in the association's name when the TFA became a legal entity in November 2023. He also provided regular financial reports to the board of directors during his tenure. Thank you Warren for your service to the TFA!

Election of Officers: The officers for the 2024-2025 fiscal year (July 1-June 30) are John Paul Thrasher, Chairman; Celestea Sharp, Vice-Chairman; Nancy Cherry, Secretary; Warren Thrasher, Jr., Treasurer; and Steve Wang, Assistant Treasurer. All the 2024-25 officers, except for Warren Thrasher, Jr., expressed a willingness to serve in 2025-26. Jacob Wang conducted the election of officers and opened the floor for nominations from the floor. There were no nominations from the floor for the positions of Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary. Charity Wang motioned to elect the current officers holding those positions by acclamation. The motion was seconded by Peggy Thrasher Law and passed unanimously. Susie Thrasher then nominated Steve Wang as Treasurer and Warren Thrasher, Jr. as Acting Assistant Treasurer until a new Assistant Treasurer could be named. No other nominations were made from the floor. Linda Bishop motioned to elect Steve Wang as Treasurer and Warren Thrasher, Jr. as Acting Assistant Treasurer by acclamation. Peggy Thrasher Law seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.



Marker for Patriot John Thrasher Jr: John Paul suggested that we place a marker, specifically called a cenotaph, to honor and commemorate the place of residence and final resting place of John Thrasher, Jr. and his wife Susan Barton. They are considered the progenitors of the Georgia Thrasher family. John Thrasher Jr. was a veteran of the Revolutionary War, having served with the North Carolina militia. He moved to what was the Georgia frontier in the 1790s with his wife and family and settled in present-day south Oconee County on land near the historic Salem Methodist Church. We have firm evidence that John Thrasher Jr. and his wife Susan Barton settled on land that was located near the church, but no one has ever located their actual burial site. John Paul will talk with the Trustees of the church to ask for their approval and possible locations for the marker.

TFA Reunion 2026: John Paul suggested that we hold next year's reunion in the Athens/Watkinsville, Ga. Area. He and Steve Wang are working with the Clarke County Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) to have them participate in the placement of a marker for Patriot John Thrashe Jr. Celestea Sharp and Linda Bishop will be working with the Clarke and Oconee County Chapters of the Daughter's of the American Revolution (DAR) to involve those chapters in the planned grave marking. Members on the reunion committee will include Steve, Charity, and Jacob Wang, Celestea Sharp, Linda Bishop, Peggy Law, and Dr. Susie Thrasher. The committee members will investigate the best date for the reunion and provide an update to the membership.

Adjournment: Jacob Wang made a motion to adjourn the business meeting, and Dr. Susie Thrasher seconded the motion. Then, the group voted unanimously to adjourn. The meeting ended at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted, Celestea Sharp, Vice-Chairman
In absence of Nancy Cherry, TFA Secretary

Thumbs up for latest Sumner book

By DAVID E. SUMNER



David & Elise Sumner during a tour at the Better Homes and Gardens Headquarters in Des Moines, Iowa

Most people outside of Florida have no idea of the extent of devastation of the state's citrus industry in the past 30 years or that its future remains in doubt. Total production in boxes is less than 10 percent of what it was in the late 1990s. I wanted to write a book that explained what happened, why it happened, and what the future looked like. Another reason I wrote "The Rise Fall, and Future of Florida's Citrus Industry" is because my father and grandfather grew oranges and grapefruit, and I grew up on 150 acres surrounded by citrus groves. So, this book has a deep personal meaning. I wanted to make it fun and easy to read so that people from Los Angeles or Kansas City could enjoy it even if they had no connection to Florida citrus.

I wrote this article because Paula Thrasher, the Thrasher Family Association newsletter editor, asked me to write about the “positive reception the book has received.” Based on feedback so far, all evidence suggests I achieved those goals. I even used a larger-than-average type size to make it easy to read. “What a fun ride through the business, creative, personal, and biological stories of Florida's most famous 20th century industry! And growing evidence too for science coming to the rescue in the 21st century,” a five-star review at BarnesandNoble.com read.

The August issue of Citrus Industry magazine featured a two-page article about the book and the keynote speech I gave at the Florida Citrus Industry Annual Conference on June 11 in Bonita Springs (scroll down for that story). Florida Citrus Mutual sponsored the conference and purchased 150 copies to give to everyone who registered for the conference. In a speech titled “Florida Growers: Resolved and Resilient,” I tried to offer encouragement and hope to an industry struggling to survive and overcome the citrus greening disease. The speech received a standing ovation, which brought tears to my eyes. My father and grandfather would have been proud.

A friend at church, and Missouri native, bought the book and spent half an hour asking me questions about it and my experiences growing up in the family business. Here are some other comments from Facebook.

Matt Joiner, CEO of Florida Citrus Mutual: “A great book about a great industry.”

Susie Thrasher, Watkinsville, Ga.: “Bought my copy. It’s great! Easy to read. Informative. A real contribution to Florida history. Well done!”

Jeffrey Carr, Los Angeles: “I love the chapter on all the different types of citrus, their name origins, including the kumquat!”

Judith Ide, Dade City, Fla: “Finally finished your book. I will never remember all the dates and names, but I learned a lot and appreciate all of your hard work.

Fernando Alferez, University of Florida citrus horticulture professor: “I am enjoying reading your book, and I find it really encouraging for all of us involved in saving our citrus industry.”

Articles or reviews about the book have appeared in Fort Myers News Press, Naples Daily News, Central Florida Ag News, Highland News-Sun, Citrus Industry, and Stetson University Alumni Magazine (my alma mater). You can order paperback copies of the 326-page book for \$14.95 and hardbacks for \$24.95 (plus shipping) from www.bn.com or Sumner-Books.com

New book chronicles Florida's citrus history

BY FRANK GILES

During the Florida Citrus Industry Annual Conference in June, David Sumner spoke about his new book, "The Rise, Fall, and Future of Florida's Citrus Industry."

The 326-page book chronicles the history of Florida's signature crop back to its earliest days. Sumner interviewed 53 growers and industry leaders to tell the story, which features disasters, good times and today's troubles with HLB.



David Sumner has authored several books, including the "The Rise, Fall, and Future of Florida Citrus," which was released this spring.

BORN TO TELL THE TALE

Sumner was born into a citrus-growing family, so he said this book was personal to him and fueled his desire to know more and share the story. During his speech, he recollected on how much people's lives and the economy revolved around citrus.

"My father grew orange, grapefruit, tangerine, lime and kumquat trees on 150 acres near Dade City," he said. "As a boy, I remember getting up with him about 5:00 a.m. to haul a truckload of limes to the Tampa Farmer's Market. I helped with hoeing and fertilizing trees, picking fruit, driving the tractor and irrigating. My father proposed to my mother in an orange grove since both their fathers owned orange groves near each other. The Dade City economy revolved around citrus, which included growing, harvesting, shipping and processing fruit at Lykes Pasco and Evans Packing companies."

"Although I didn't realize it at the time, I grew up during

the Golden Era of citrus between 1950 and 1980, which I described in a chapter by the same title. It was an era when everyone was making money. Five hundred truckloads of fruit came into Pasco Packing every day in 1952, which forced Dade City to build a truck route. During these 30 years, citrus production tripled from 88 million boxes to 272 million boxes."

COLD REALITY

As Sumner recounted, not all times have been good in Florida citrus. Some of the worst periods were marked by freezes that occurred over the years. One of the hardest was the freeze of 1895.

"When the Great Freeze of 1895 came, the industry was shipping fruit throughout the United States. But the Great Freeze of 1895 caused citrus production to plummet from 7 million boxes in 1894 to 146,000 boxes in the 1896 season, a 95% decline," Sumner said. "Does that sound familiar?"

"Massive unemployment occurred as packinghouses closed their doors, banks failed, and growers sold or abandoned their homes and moved back north. Home values plummeted to 20% of their original value in North Florida."

But the industry bounced back. By 1910, production had returned to levels prior to the freeze. More freezes would come, notably in the 1980s. But again, the industry bounced back.

BATTLING DISEASE

In the early 1900s, citrus canker emerged. It would be a plague for many years to come, and the claims of the demise

of Florida citrus rose. Yet again, the industry bounced back.

The book goes into some depth about the current fight the industry is engaged in with HLB. It details innovations growers have implemented in their groves to remain viable and research to mitigate or defeat the disease. The final chapter chronicles "The Road to Recovery."

A STORY OF RESILIENCE AND HOPE

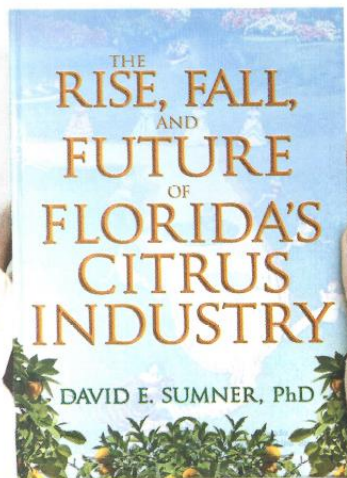
Sumner concluded his speech by reminding the audience of a thread that has followed Florida citrus throughout its history: resilience and bouncing back from adversity.

"By now, my main point should be clear. Citrus history gives us hope," Sumner said. "Florida citrus growers have rebounded from disastrous circumstances many times over the last 100 years and will do it again. Florida growers are courageous, they are strong, and they never give up."

Sumner's book can be purchased online at BarnesandNoble.com or at his website Sumner-Books.com.

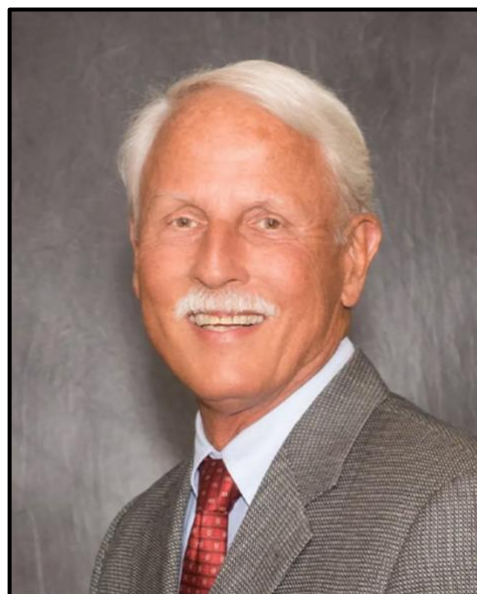


Don't miss the digital edition to see a video of David Sumner discussing his new book on Florida citrus.



IN MEMORIAM:

Lanier Jefferson “Jeff” Bishop, Jr. **(December 30, 1944 – May 5, 2025)**



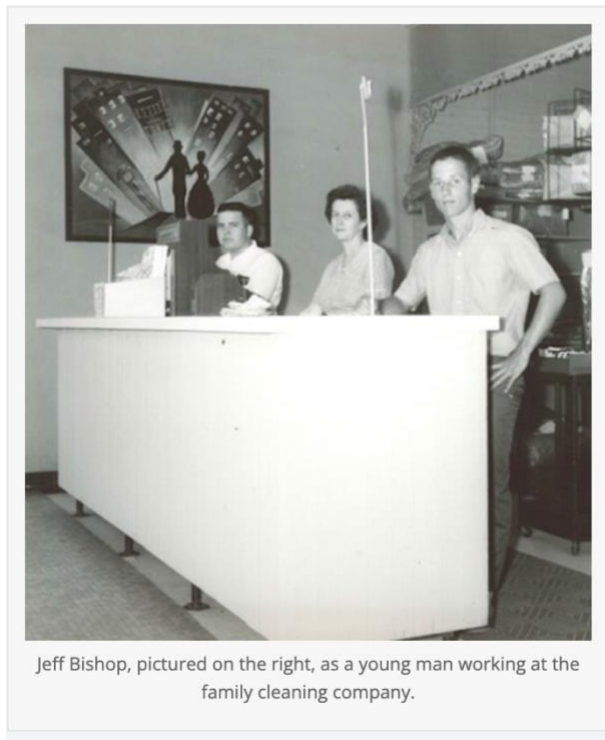
Jeff Bishop passed away peacefully on the morning of May 5, 2025, in his home in Abbeville, Alabama at the age of eighty.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Eva Parrish Bishop Fitch (Bill) of Albany, Ga., and Lanier Jefferson Bishop, Sr. (Katherine) of Dothan, Ala. Jeff is survived by his wife, Cindy Linden Bishop of Abbeville, Ala; daughters Cindi Bishop Ramsey (Michael) of Dothan, Ala, and Lisa Bishop Currie (Eddie) of Salem, Ore.; stepchildren Marcus Paul Faye (Sarah) of Headland, Ala, and Mara Lee Floyd (Lane) of McDonough, Ga. He is also survived by his sisters Patricia Bishop Savelle of Albany, Ga., and Nancy Bishop Ponder (Gene) of Bainbridge, Ga. and Marilyn Bishop, the mother of Jeff’s daughters.

Jeff was a proud and devoted grandfather to fourteen grandchildren: Rebecca Lanier Ramsey (Richard Chastain), Wilson James Ramsey (Eunice), Sara Elisabeth Rowell (Tate), Lauren Margaret Fowler (Jake Lewis), Caroline Elisabeth Fowler (Hunter Evangelista), Katherine Emilie Fowler (Alec Winder), Mary Helen Fowler (Marcus Morgan), Lillian Brooke Fowler, Emily Currie (Elijah Moran), Katherine Currie (Luke Urban), Westin Faye, Parker Floyd, Harrison Floyd, and Ripley Floyd. He also leaves behind beloved nieces and nephews Susan Savelle Mathis (Steven), Judson Savelle (Jenny), Joseph Brent Martin (Jana), James Lanier Martin, Paul Joiner III (Julie) and Bret Joiner (Rachel), along with their children.

Raised during an era shaped by the Great Depression and WWII, Jeff learned early the values of perseverance, enterprise, and service. He developed a strong work ethic by sweeping floors and washing trucks at his father’s business for 10 cents an hour. After graduating from Elmwood Park High School in Chicago, where he was co-captain of the swim team, Jeff earned a business degree from the University of Georgia.

He went on to serve in the U.S. Army from 1968–1971. A Distinguished Military Graduate from North Georgia Military College, Jeff also earned the honor of Outstanding Cadet at Fort Bragg and completed both Army Basic Training and Ranger School at Fort Benning, Ga. He began overseas service in Germany, where he trained in tank gunnery and served on the General’s Staff.



Jeff later trained as a helicopter pilot and flew Hueys in Vietnam with the 158th Aviation Helicopter Battalion, Alpha Company (“Ghost Riders”), where he also served as an instructor pilot. His military honors include two U.S. Army Commendation Medals, eleven Combat Air Medals, the Vietnam Service Medal, and the Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Silver Star. His service reflected John 15:13, “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

Jeff returned to civilian life in 1971, joining the family carpet and upholstery cleaning business in Albany, Ga. In 1974 he and Marilyn moved to Dothan, Ala. and founded Bishop Clean Care (1974). From such small beginnings came Clean

Care Seminars (1977), and ProMaster (1992). The Bishop home often welcomed guests from across the country and around the world who came to learn about carpet cleaning but left having experienced genuine Southern hospitality.

Jeff’s professional legacy reached far beyond Dothan. As a founding voice in the IICRC (Institute of Inspection Cleaning and Restoration Certification), Jeff helped shape standards and practices still in place today. He authored training manuals, developed educational programs, and conducted seminars that elevated the industry. Jeff believed deeply in excellence, integrity, and mentorship—principles he lived out in every business interaction. As he often said, “Anything worth doing is worth doing well.”

Yet Jeff’s most transformative experience came through his faith in Jesus Christ. This personal relationship shaped the remainder of his life. He became a student of Scripture, engaging in deep Bible study, mentoring others, and bringing spiritual conversations into everyday moments. Whether at church, in business, or in casual conversation, Jeff sought to reflect the love and truth of Christ to everyone he met.

In retirement, Jeff and Cindy split their time between Abbeville, Ala., and Riverside RV Resort in Arcadia, Fla. They formed meaningful friendships at both Calvary Baptist Church in Abbeville and First Baptist Church of Fort Ogden, Fla. Jeff volunteered with Friends of Army Aviation in Ozark, Ala., assisting with community helicopter rides and supporting aviation history and education.

Known for his sharp wit and love of storytelling, Jeff made a lasting impression wherever he went. His Tuesday morning announcements at Riverside always ended with a “true

story,” delivering humor with heart and often laughter through tears.

A memorial service was held at Calvary Baptist Church in Abbeville, AL, on Sunday, May 18. The service was officiated by Reverend Wayne Earnest, Senior Pastor of FBC Fort Ogden, along with Wilson Ramsey, pastoral assistant at Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, DC.



The Thrasher Family Association

Mail your \$20 dues and contributions to:



Steve Wang, TFA Treasurer
1815 Brickton Station
Buford, GA 30518

stevenjwang68@gmail.com

Note

The Thrasher Family Association newsletter has ceased publication with this issue. In the future, family news and stories will be posted directly on our website:

ThrasherFamilyAssociation.com

We still need your input. Share ideas for stories – or better yet, send an article you'd like to see on our website. We're looking for profiles of TFA members, articles focused on family history and heritage, obituaries, genealogy, photographs, reviews of books on topics related to the family, features on books written by members, and news about people and places. Get in touch with Paula Thrasher at pthrasher@numail.org if you have something to contribute for our website.

TFA website committee:

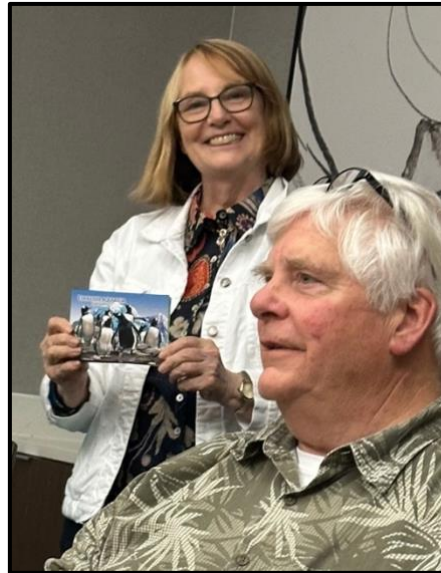
Paula Thrasher, content editor

David E. Sumner, chief contributing writer

Sue Q. Thrasher, webmaster

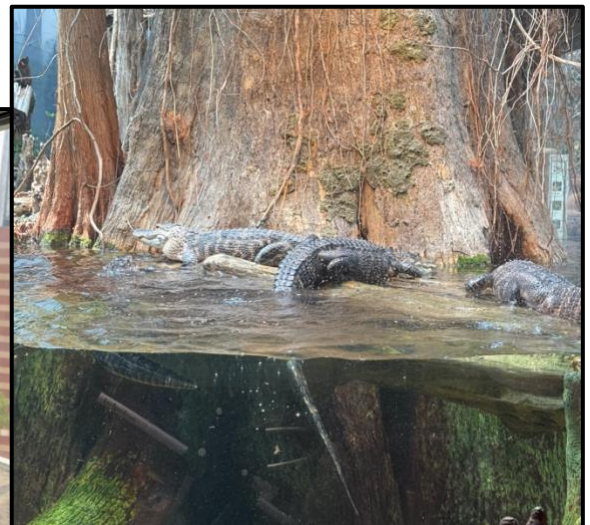
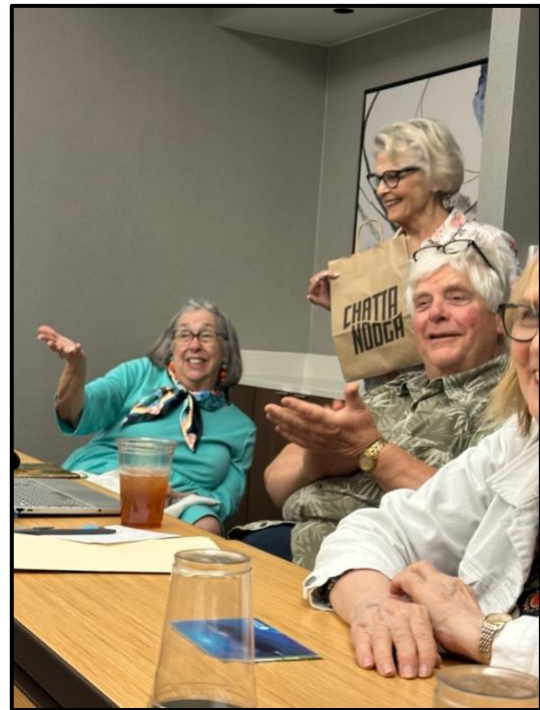
John Thrasher, chairman

Photo Gallery











The End