

The Dr. John A. Chapin Agriculture Scholarship of the Greater Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce



Dr. John A. Chapin • 1921-2015

John A. Chapin was born October 5, 1921, near West Plains, Missouri. He was the youngest of six children and was reared on the family's small farm which he loved. Early in life, he knew he wanted an agriculture-related vocation.

Dr. Chapin received a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from Oklahoma State University. He graduated with a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from Colorado State University (CSU), Fort Collins, Colorado. Dr. Chapin was a Captain in the United States Army, Veterinary Corps during World War II.

In 1948, he purchased the veterinary practice of Dr. Earl Hutcherson. Dr. Chapin practiced large and small veterinary medicine in the Clinton area for more than 30 years. His first clinic was a small office off the Clinton Square. Later, he bought acreage on the north end of town where he converted a large chicken barn into a clinic with boarding facilities. In the 1960s, he built a new clinic on his property.

His "flying" pickup, usually fire-engine red, was a welcome sight to many farm families who urgently needed his help to deliver a calf or diagnose and treat an ailing sow. After long days working farm calls, Dr. Chapin would return to his clinic to care for the dogs and cats entrusted to him. While growing up, his four daughters loved riding along on calls or attending their Dad in surgery.

Throughout his career, Dr. Chapin was well-known and respected for his professionalism, directness and integrity. His advice on new treatment products was sought by pharmaceutical companies.

Dr. Chapin enjoyed and deeply valued friendships with so many of his clients and their families who knew him best as "Doc".

He was beloved as a husband and father. In 1947 he married Helen Corley of Lubbock, Texas, and she preceded him in death in 1957. They had four daughters: Dee, Carol, Marsha and Lana Jo. In 1976 he married Bettie Lewis Sadler of Clinton and was a father to her children, Kurtis and Lisa.

In addition to serving the Henry County area as a veterinarian, Dr. Chapin also was an entrepreneur. In the 1960s, he built and owned Meadow Lark Lanes Bowling Center, the Best Western Vagabond Motel and The Inn Restaurant, in Clinton. He also designed and built houses on his north Clinton property for several years.

Dr. Chapin was named the 1998 "Agri-Business Person of the Year", sponsored by the Clinton Chamber of Commerce. He was especially honored and humbled by this recognition from his former clients and their families. He was a life-time member of the American Veterinary Medical Association and a member of the United Methodist Church for almost 60 years.

Until his last few years, Dr. Chapin remained active. Even then, he took a keen interest in farm life and livestock. Checking cattle with his step-son Kurt gave him great joy. Dr. Chapin died Friday, August 21, 2015 at his home.

The Dr. John Chapin Agriculture Scholarship was established by his daughters and is supported by his friends and family. The Scholarship is administered and awarded through the Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce Agri-Business Committee.