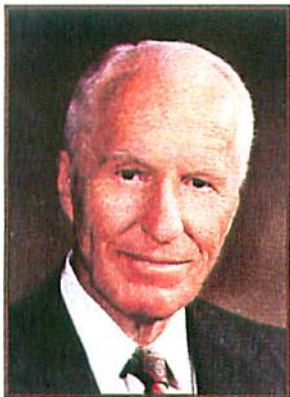




CONTRACTING BUSINESS HALL OF FAME...

As part of *Contracting Business Magazine's* 50th Anniversary editorial coverage, this ongoing column honors professionals who have made significant contributions to the HVACR industry. The people profiled here have been selected by their peers as outstanding individuals who have raised the level of the industry and who have made it a more lucrative field for all those involved.



Robert H. Owens
Chairman and CEO
Owens Services Corp.

A pioneer in offering preventive maintenance and service contracts and an early crusader for single-source responsibility, Bob Owens is a respected and well-known member of the HVACR industry.

Bob is an engineering graduate of the University of Minnesota and a veteran of World War II and the Korean War. After serving time in the military, he became a sales engineer and then a franchise holder/district manager of the Trane Twin Cities Office.

In 1957, Bob formed Owens Trane Service Company. Because of the opportunities he saw in building a professional, full service/single-source service organization, Bob left Trane in 1973 and renamed his company Owens Services Corp.

The Bloomington, MN Design/Build firm was one of the first to offer full service capabilities, including temperature controls, energy management, water treatment, and building operation.

Always active in industry, Bob was a founding member of the Service and Maintenance

Bureau of the Mechanical Contractors Association of America. In the early 80s, he was one of a small group of ACCA (Air Conditioning Contractors of America) members who successfully challenged three major chiller manufacturers to obtain for all contractors access to factory training, access to parts and service literature, and parity in parts pricing.

Other associations Bob has been active in include MSCA, SMACNA, and ASHRAE. On a local level, Bob has been named Small Business Person of the Year and has been honored for his contributions to local charities. Additionally, he's been a speaker and has led numerous industry-related workshops. He's also been a contributing writer to *Contracting Business Magazine*.

Bob is a father of six and grandfather of nine. His son John is active in the family business, and last summer was promoted to president of Owens Services Corp. Even still, Bob remains active in the company's activities. He's a visionary leader who helped shape and professionalize the HVACR industry. [C]



Wallace Lee
Chairman
Lee Company

A popular *celebrity* in the industry, Wallace Lee has appeared before thousands of contractors nationwide, teaching and speaking about a variety of topics — succeeding in Design/Build, manufacturer/contractor relations, doing business in foreign markets...the list goes on.

Chairman of the Lee Company, Nashville, Wallace joined the business in 1958 after obtaining a mechanical engineering degree from Vanderbilt University, working for DuPont for two years, and serving as a training officer in the Navy. His father, Leon Lee started the company out of the back of a Chevy sedan in 1944.

Wallace has been involved with various industry associations, yet his major contributions to them have been made through ACCA (Air Conditioning Contractors of America). Here, he was one of only two people to serve two terms as national president. And that was at a critical time in the industry, when manufacturer/contractor relations were at an extremely "low" point. Wallace served on ACCA's industry relations committee, and was part of the group of contractors (including Bob Owens, also honored here) who

worked to improve industry relations between manufacturers and contractors. Additionally, Wallace has served on management education, executive, utility, and national affairs committees.

In addition to his work at Lee Company, Wallace and his family own a cattle ranch where they are involved in selective breeding and other agricultural projects. He has always believed that personal lives and interests should be developed as fully as people's professional lives.

The Lee Company, which in 1984 received *Contracting Business Magazine's* Commercial Contractor of the Year Award, is still a successful firm. The company has branched out into residential service and replacement — areas that Wallace has focused on as of late, in addition to marketing and promotion. Wallace has also written numerous articles for *Contracting Business* and has served on the magazine's Board of Advisors since its inception.

For those who've had the privilege to meet Wallace, one image remains: A dedicated industry figure, warm yet powerful in personality, never hesitant to share in experience, always willing to listen and assist. [C]