

Bennett Awards Set

One man who distinguished himself as a leader in the petroleum industry and another who used his journalistic skills to promote development of Oklahoma's agricultural and rural sectors will receive Oklahoma State University's highest honor during commencement ceremonies on May 7.

The Henry G. Bennett Distinguished Service Award for 1983 will go to T. Boone Pickens Jr., of Amarillo, Texas, and Ferdie J. Deering of Oklahoma City.

Pickens is founder, president and chairman of the board of Amarillo's Mesa Petroleum Co.

Deering is secretary and editorial director of the Farmer-Stockman Publishing Co., a subsidiary of the Oklahoma Publishing Co.

This annual award is named for the OSU president who distinguished himself during a tenure which began in 1928 and ended when he was killed with his wife in a 1951 plane crash over the Middle East. At the time, he was on a mission as director of the U.S. government's Point Four foreign aid program.

Recipients are chosen who, like Dr. Bennett, have an outstanding record of achievement and qualities of leadership.

And in accordance with the award's citation, recipients must have "the high ideals of citizenship and service and those qualities of character which exemplify the life of the person in whose name this award is made."

Pickens is a native of Holdenville and a 1951 graduate of OSU, receiving a bachelor's degree in geology.

Shortly after graduation, he began working for Phillips Petroleum, but soon struck out on his own. In 1956, he signed his name to a \$2,500 note to pay for 50 percent of the stock in Petroleum Exploration, Inc. His only other asset was a \$100,000 line of credit.

He served as president of Petroleum Exploration until 1964, when he founded Mesa Petroleum. Today, Mesa is one of the nation's leading petroleum companies.

His talent, innovativeness and overall excellence as a chief executive officer have brought recognition to him on many occasions. Among his honors is being named the Best Chief Executive Officer for Oil Producers by the

Wall Street Transcript.

Pickens is a strong supporter of higher education. In 1982 he made a substantial gift toward construction of a building to house a school of geology at OSU.

His civic and charitable activities include chairmanship of the board of regents for West Texas State University; he is chairman-elect of the University Cancer Foundation Board of Visitors, M. D. Anderson Hospital, Houston; vice chairman of the Texas Research League, Austin; a member of the National Corporate Cabinet for the American Heart Association, Dallas; and a member of the Advisory Council for the Boy Scouts of America in Dallas.

Deering is a Texas native, but spent most of his early years in Ada, Okla., attending public schools there and graduating from East Central State University.

In 1934, he was appointed night editor of the Ada News, and moved to Oklahoma City to become associate editor of the well-known Farmer-Stockman magazine in 1937. Six years later, he became editor.

During his 30 years in that position, the magazine was expanded to include separate editions for Oklahoma, Texas and Kansas. Its all-time high circulation was 435,000.

Deering used his journalistic skills to promote rural community improvement, soil and water conservation, crop and livestock improvements, utilization of modern farming methods and more.

Deering was a member of the board of directors for the Oklahoma Publishing Co., for 18 years, a member of the OPUBCO management committee for 27 years and continues to write twice weekly editorials for The Daily Oklahoman and an agribusiness column for The Sunday Oklahoman.

Books he has written include "USDA, Manager of American Agriculture," "Look at Oklahoma," and "From the Grassroots Up."

In 1979, he was honored as a distinguished alumnus of East Central. He has received the Reuben Brigham Award for Agricultural Communications in Education and special recognition from other organizations.



FERDIE J. DEERING



T. BOONE PICKENS JR.