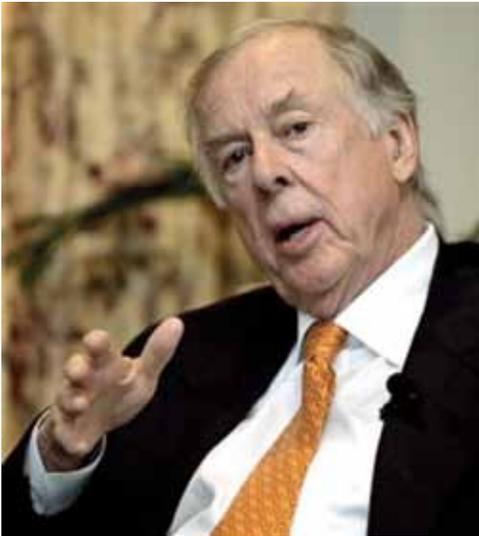


OKLAHOMA ALUMNUS



T. BOONE PICKENS
BUSINESSMAN AND FINANCIER

T. Boone Pickens was an American businessman and financier. He chaired the hedge fund BP Capital Management. He was a well-known takeover operator and corporate raider during the 1980s. His wealth was estimated at about \$500 million.

Pickens was born May 22, 1928, in Holdenville, Oklahoma, the son of Grace and Thomas Boone Pickens. He died September 11, 2019, in Dallas, Texas. His father worked as an oil and mineral landman. During World War II, his mother ran the local Office of Price Administration, rationing gasoline and other goods in three counties.

At age 12, Pickens delivered newspapers. He quickly expanded his paper route from 28 papers to 156. Pickens later cited his boyhood job as an early introduction to “expanding quickly by acquisition,” a business practice he favored later in life.

Pickens’ family moved to Amarillo, Texas. He attended Texas A&M on a basketball scholarship, but he transferred to Oklahoma A&M, which is now Oklahoma State University. He graduated with a degree in geology in 1951. He was employed by Phillips Petroleum until 1954. In 1956, following a period as a wildcatter, he founded the company that later became Mesa Petroleum. By 1981, Mesa had grown into one of the largest independent oil companies in the world. Pickens made numerous buyout acquisitions of oil and gas companies and mergers.

He briefly considered running for president in 1988.

In 1997, Pickens founded BP Capital Management. He held a 46 percent interest in the company which ran two hedge funds, Capital Commodity and Capital Equity, both of which invested primarily in traditional energy companies such as oil, natural gas, and nuclear power.

T. Boone Pickens received the 2009 Bower Award for Business Leadership for 50 years of visionary leadership in oil and other types of energy production, including domestic renewable energy, and for his philanthropic leadership contributing to education, medical research, and wildlife conservation.

Pickens focused his advocacy on alternative energy such as solar and wind.

Pickens lobbied for the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act which would prohibit the slaughter for human consumption and the trade and transport of horse flesh and live horses intended for human consumption.

Pickens was a major financial contributor to his alma mater, the Stillwater campus of Oklahoma State University. Through his contributions, Pickens spearheaded an initiative to create an athletic village just north of the existing campus. In order to do so, hundreds of homes were acquired by the OSU administration — one via **eminent domain** — and were demolished using Pickens' contributions.

Pickens' gift remains the largest donation to a university's athletic program in collegiate history. His total contributions to OSU come to more than \$400 million. More than \$265 million, or 66 percent, of his donations were towards athletics. Pickens also made substantial academic gifts to Oklahoma State University, particularly to the School of Geology, which is named for him.

On December 30, 2005, Pickens made a \$165 million gift to Oklahoma State University. The gift was intended to help fund an upgrade of the football stadium and construction of an athletic village. The donation came after a \$70 million gift from Pickens to OSU in 2003, which was similarly structured using O.S.U. Cowboy Golf, Inc.

In May 2012, T. Boone Pickens was awarded the Albert Schweitzer Leadership Award by the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Foundation for his lifetime of accomplishments and, in particular, for the example that he set for the future leaders of the world.

Pickens owned a Gulfstream V jet that he used to fly to Stillwater for OSU games from his private airport near Pampa, Texas.

Pickens died at his home in Dallas on September 11, 2019.