

BCCC Foundation Honors Distinguished Service Award Recipients

Cecil and Virgie Burton and Neva and L.E. Brocher were named the recipients of the Distinguished Service Award at the annual Barton County Community College Foundation Hilltop Dinner May 3.

This is the first time the award has been given since 1981 when J.A. Mermis and Paul Conrad were honored. The purposed of the award is to provide recognition for any individual in the community who has demonstrated genuine regard for, and outstanding service to BCCC.

The recipients are chosen by a selection committee made up of the chairman of the BCCC Board of Trustees, the college president, the president of the Foundation Board of Trustees, the executive director of development and the director of college communications.

Cecil and Virgie Burton began contributing to the college even before there was an established foundation. Two major purchases made possible by the Burtons were a \$5,000 kiln for the art department in 1971 and a Rodgers three-manual organ in 1977. The organ, which had a retail value in excess of \$30,000, was a joint effort between the Burtons and Security State Bank. Cecil also was instrumental in helping the college acquire Camp Aldrich by joining with Joe Mermis to put up \$20,000.

In 1986, in memory of her husband who died in Feb. 28, 1983, Virgie purchased the Burton Carillons for the BCCC campus.

Besides the college, Cecil was interested in hunting and fishing but most of his time was spent working in the oil business. He was owner and partner of Pickrell Drilling Company and Mobile Drilling Company. He was a "pioneer oil leader" for the state of Kansas and he served as vice president of the Independent Petroleum Association of America. He also was a member of Kansas Industrial Oil and Gas Association.

On March 31, 1990, Cecil was honored at the Kansas Oil Pioneers Hall of Fame Awards Dinner.

He was born January 30, 1911, on a farm in southern Missouri and spent most of his life in the oil fields. As a teen-ager, he worked in Eureka and in Burrton, and during World War II, he worked in the Hugoton oil fields.

Other responsibilities Cecil had included being chairman of the board of directors of Security State Bank and vice president on Timken State Bank. He also was a member of the Masonics Lodge.

Virgie was born in Alva, Okla., and moved to Great Bend in 1937 and worked at the telephone office. She and Cecil were married Feb. 6, 1940 in Lyons. Virgie is now a

member of the Presbyterian Church and the Eastern Star. Among her interests are playing bridge and she belongs to the garden club.

The Burtons have two daughters, Jean Ann Fausser, and Tammie Maloney, both now living with Tulsa, Okla., and four grandchildren.

Neva and L.E. (Leslie Ernest) Brocher set up a scholarship fund to help students with a financial need to obtain a college education. Although both Brochers died before the college was fully underway, it was both their wishes to help the college.

“Red” Brocher, so-called because of his pale complexion, was born March 7, 1905, at Beeler. A resident of Great Bend for 15 years, he had been a building contractor. He was also a member of the Masonics and Elks Lodge. He died Sept. 29, 1969.

Neva was born Feb. 10, 1918 in Thomas County. Before her death July 4, 1968, she worked as an abstractor with the firm Boyd and Brown Bonded Abstractors.