

## **Boone Pickens helped Cowboys. Now he's helping disfigured soldiers.**

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Boone Pickens gained acclaim for changing the face of Oklahoma State football, donating funds that permitted the Cowboys to build top-of-the-line facilities.

He's helping to change more faces. And isn't this more important than football?

Pickens is raising money for Operation Mend, which was established in 2007 to assist service men wounded or disfigured in Iraq and Afghanistan. The goal was to give returning service members who sustained several facial injuries access to the Army's best burn center and the nation's best plastic surgeons and reconstructive surgeons. The mission has since expanded to include mental health support and reconstruction of severely damaged limbs.

People with Pickens' financial resources frequently get their door knocked on by representatives from charities. And Pickens decided this was a cause worth supporting. He said it's "incredible" what Operation Mend is doing.

"We did a party for them last night and had over 200 people there," Pickens said Thursday. "I'm having 25 of them over for lunch today."

Pickens said he partnered with a beneficiary of Operation Mend for some TV work Thursday morning. Operation Mend changed this particular soldier's life, according to Pickens. The soldier was shot in the back of the head by a sniper while in the Middle East and has endured 60 surgical procedures on his face, according to Pickens.

The soldier underwent all the surgeries because he had a goal.

Said Pickens, "This guy said 'fix me up so I can go to school and pick up my kids and not scare all their friends'."

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