

Outstanding Alumnus 2008

Richard D. Orr



A native of Independence, Richard D. Orr was one of five children born to Leon E. and Wilma C. Orr, he is a descendant of E.B. Carpenter, one of the founders of Independence in 1869. He attended local schools and was a member of the last freshmen class to attend Independence Junior College at Old Nees Hall and a member of the first sophomore class to attend at ICC's next location with the high school on North 10th Street. He worked a variety of jobs while going to school but credits his time in the oil fields as his direct motivation to pursue additional education and enrolled at Kansas University. There he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Chemical Engineering with a minor in Nuclear Engineering in 1958. After working several management positions in the food industry, in 1979, he was looking to buy a small company and be his own boss. It was then with his partner he bought Marie's Quality Foods Inc. In 1995, the business began to grow and Richard purchased the Marie's Franchise in the northwest division which included nine states, from Alaska to Arizona. In 2003, he sold his company to Dean Foods to join the ranks of the retired. He bought a house in Independence to be close to family and friends. Current project is the renovation of the Miami Golf and country Club in Miami, Oklahoma.