

# State of The City Address



**Mayor Eric Hogue**

**February 23, 2010**

## **Introduction**

Citizens, friends and neighbors of Wylie...Today it is my honor and privilege to deliver, the annual State of the City address.

As we have just see in the pictures, I hope 2009 will be remembered as the year of Action and Urgency. The activities and actions that occurred over this past year have been very exciting, and will benefit Wylie for many years to come.

I'd like to begin by thanking my fellow City Council members for their dedication and commitment to our community. *Mayor pro tem Red Byboth, Councilman David Goss, Councilwoman Kathy Spillyards, Councilman Bennie Jones, Councilman Rick White and Councilman Carter Porter.*

As a team, we have come together with different ideas, different beliefs, different points of view and we have worked together for the betterment of our community. I'm thankful to be part of such a committed team.

My appreciation also extends to our City Manager: Mindy Manson, our Assistant City Manager: Jeff Butters, our directors and the entire city staff, who go to work everyday in our city and make a difference.

They implement the City Council's and the community's vision and they made unbelievable progress in achieving that vision during 2009.

Part of what make our city run so smoothly is the longevity of our employees. Two individuals reached a milestone in 2009 with their careers and I'd like to introduce these employees.

Celebrating 20 years...

**Jeff Scribner**, one of our Fire Department Captains. Twenty years ago, Jeff became a volunteer Fire Fighter for Wylie and then was one of the first firefighters to put on the payroll...and Jeff was also one of our first captains to be named. Over the years, Jeff has exemplified what it means to be a Wylie Fire Firefighter through his self-less

service to others and his giving heart. We are proud to have Jeff as a member of our team.

**Mike Atkison**, one of our Police Lieutenants has faithfully served the citizens of Wylie for 20 years...you will see Mike sitting behind a desk, sitting in a squad car and sitting at an animal control board meeting...he is a hands on leader and Wylie is fortunate to have him.

Please join me in honoring these two men for their dedication and commitment to our community

This past year has been an exciting time for Wylie, Texas. It was the year that we put ***talk into action***. We have talked about a new city hall, it is under construction. We have talked about a third fire station, it is now open for business, We have talked about a recreation center, and it is under construction. We have talked about a new library, it is under construction. We have talked about FM 1378, it is under construction.

On November 8, 2009, Wylie turned 122 years old. We were a railroad town...but in a few weeks you will no longer hear train whistles in Wylie, Texas. Quiet Zones have been installed at 12 of our intersections and the Federal Railroad Administration has been informed soon train whistles will be a thing of the past.

We were a farming community and once known as the Onion capital of the world. We were “wide awake Wylie” so the farmers could come in at night and shop after a long day of farming.

Today, we are a bedroom community, and we are still “wide awake in Wylie”...so that our commuters can come home at night and still shop and eat dinner out with their families.

122 years ago, 42 people voted to incorporate and make Wylie a town...today we boast a population of nearly 42,000 with over 16,000 registered voters and has been named as number eight of the top nine most notable high-growth areas in the United States by the Gadberry Group.

Each year our city grows stronger as we continue to work toward the vision and the achievement of our goals.

This past year, Wylie embraced the many challenges for the betterment of our city and for each of our citizens....and truly made 2009 the year of Action and Urgency...

### **Business Development**

While we have all be affected by the current economic downturn, Wylie continues to buck the trend...

Over this past year, our sales tax receipts increased by 3.6%, and while that is a smaller amount over 2008...it was still an increase and also the ninth consecutive year that Wylie EDC sales tax receipts have increased from the previous year.

On July 21<sup>st</sup> Super Target opened the doors of their new 185,000 square foot store right here in Wylie, Texas at the Woodbridge Crossing Shopping Center. And, after only one month of being opened Target increased their sales estimates, because they were exceeding their forecasts by 35%, and they continue to meet those adjusted projections.

In July: the City, the Wylie EDC and Direct Development, the developer of Woodbridge Crossing, revised our public-private partnership agreement to better protect Wylie's interest as we move forward with this shopping center.

Additionally, several other spaces have officially opened including ViewPoint Bank, MooYah Burgers and others. We are also actively working with Direct Development to secure additional businesses in this project.

Wylie EDC is also busy on other retail fronts...the staff is in contract negotiations with a "sit-down restaurant" which will fulfill a need for our growing community.

**On the Industrial Development side...**

Sanden International is investing \$9.25 million in retooling an existing compressor line. With the help of the Wylie EDC, in the form of a \$300,000 Performance Agreement, the new line will fortify Sanden's position in the global compressor business which will create stability and yes – growth in the Wylie plant.

Sam Satterwhite and his staff have done an outstanding job over this past year. Tough times, requires innovative people and we are fortunate to have Sam and Gerry on our side.

### **Road Improvements**

To keep up with the demands of a population growth of 170% increase since the year 2000; to maintain a high quality of life; to provide better access to schools and to promote economic development within our community, Wylie is investing in more than 21 miles of new and reconstructed roadways amounting to over 50 million dollars in road improvements.

FM 1378 from Brown to Parker Road is under construction.

FM 1378 – FM 544 to Brown – Bids were opened for the project on January 21<sup>st</sup> and the cost to improve this strip of 1378 will cost \$3.2 million. Construction should be started and completed by the time, 1378 from Brown to Parker Road is completed.

Brown Street – FM 1378 to Ballard – Plans are 60% complete and a contract for right of way acquisition will be presented to Council within the next month.

Brown Street – SH 78 to Wylie East High School – Right of way acquisition is approximately 50% complete and as soon as it is finished utility companies will be notified to move their facilities. Construction plans are 60% complete and will be finalized in a couple of months.

SH 78 will soon have Additional Lanes. Construction has started in Garland and Sachse and will progress northward to Wylie. The project is estimated to be completed in 18 months.

And still to come is:

- Highway 78 - six lanes to State Highway 205
- Stone Road – Akin to WA Allen
- McMillen Road
- Ballard Avenue – Alanis to the County Line
- Country Club/Woodbridge Parkway
- Parker Road improvements and expansion
- And we are planning now of how we will be impacted by the George Bush Tollway extension.

As you can see from this map, showing our planned and completed road improvements, we are positively impacting our major thoroughfares through out the city.

As you can see, our City Engineer, Chris Holsted has his hands full, as we continue to re-shape and re-develop the roadways of Wylie.

### **Fire Department**

The Wylie Fire Department was established in 1909 and serves approximately sixty square miles of Southeast Collin County.

This past year, we opened our third fire station, which is a “state of the art facility located at the Brown and W.A. Allen intersection.

And in October, Wylie Fire Rescue celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Today, I have brought with me a very old set of documents.

This is one of a few books we have that remind us of our city’s history.

We are so fortunate that these documents preserved and available for us to learn about our community’s past.

I would like to read to you some of the minutes from the city council meetings regarding our fire department which took place in 1909.

***July 17, 1909***

The Town Council of the Town of Wylie met at City Hall. Mayor J. B. Baskett presiding. Being a special called meeting, the object being to consider proposition of Mr. H. M. Minnis.

On motion that the Town Council purchase a fire pump to be made by H. M. Minnis. When the machine is made and operates as successfully as his model and when said machine is securely and suitably mounted on truck or wagon.

Motion carried unanimous.

No other business the meeting closed.

Signed...Lloyd Nelson, Clerk

***August 4, 1909***

Wylie Town Council met in regular session at City Hall.

All members of the council being present the minutes of previous meeting were read and approved.

Next was the appointment of the fire company officers.

- C. M. Gallagher—1st Chief
- J. A. Harwell—2nd Chief
- Lloyd Nelson—3rd Chief
  
- Ira Blay-lock—1st Hose-man
- V. B. Gallagher—2nd Hose-man

Resolution passed that the fire boys be exempt from street tax.

Signed...Lloyd Nelson, Clerk

***September 1, 1909***

Motion was made that ten buckets be purchased to equip the fire engine.

J. A. Harwell was instructed to carry buckets to L. L. Gant's Shop to be painted.

Motion was made that an ax be bought to go with fire engine. Motion carried.

**(READ SLOWLY)** Motion was made and carried that the city attorney communicate with the Attorney General and elicit an opinion as to the legality of the city council passing an ordinance preventing persons from teasing another person of and unsound mind.

No other business, the meeting closed.

Signed...W. F. Duncan Clerk

Things sure have changed in the last 100 years. But Wylie Fire Rescue is still here serving our community.

During this past year, they answered over 3,000 calls for fire protection, automobile accidents and emergency medical services,

Chief Corbin and the men and women, who serve as our firefighters, are to be commended for a job well done.

**Police Department**

Our state has a saying, "Don't Mess with Texas" I think that it really should be, "Don't Mess with Wylie!"

In 2009, Wylie's crime rate dropped more than 4 percent.

The city also recorded a 41 percent reduction in violent crimes.

These numbers are incredible when you compare them to how fast our city has grown.

And while we should feel safe in Wylie, Texas...

I do want to point out that Wylie faces the same types of crime that any other city faces, yet we continue to see the unwavering commitment and dedication of the Wylie Police Department for the safety and well-being of our citizens and our community.

The Wylie Police Department continues to have a positive impact within our community.

Chief Duscio and his officers are to be commended for their outstanding efforts in protecting our city.

### **City Planning**

In 2009, our Planning and Zoning Department recommended the creation and implementation of the Historic Downtown District, the expansion of the district to north of Brown, and the creation of the South Ballard Overlay.

This is just another example of how our city is planning for the future, by putting standards in place that will assist in the preservation of our downtown and the re-development of South Ballard in the coming years as our city grows.

Wylie's own Planning Director, Renae' Ollie, was elected President of the Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association.

We completed two more neighborhoods with the Accountable Communities Through Involvement Of Neighborhoods Program, better known as the Neighborhood A.C.T.I.O.N. Plan.

We were able to address specific needs in another aging community, from structures, to streets, alleys, curbs and sidewalks. Additionally, this year, the city council has identified three more neighbors for the ACTION plan.

The goal of this program has successfully empower residents to get involved with their neighborhoods and work together with City staff in an effort to greatly improve the quality of life for all residents of Wylie.

In 2009, we amended our sign ordinance to create a kiosk program, and the city has taken a stance on the direction we envision for our street-scape, and provide direction signage to our city buildings and parks.

Renaë Ollie and her staff, sometimes have a very difficult job...but they make it look so easy as they make a difference in helping the City Council shape the look, feel and future of our city.

### **Rita and Truett Smith Public Library**

In Wylie, we are fortunate to have The Rita and Truett Smith Public Library, which is an award winning library having been honored with an "Achievement of Excellence in Libraries" Award.

Our Library had another banner year in the services they provide to our citizens!

From October 2008 to September 2009 our library saw a 10% increase in materials borrowed.

Last year, we had over 165,208 library visits...also a 10% increase.

We have 24,494 registered Card Holders in other words: more than half the city's population has library cards...that's an additional 2,817 new library card holders from the previous year.

The Summer Reading Club had a kick-off party with over 850 people in attendance.

The staff continued to host the Teen Programs, Be-Tween Book Club, Author visits and many other fun and educational events.

The Friends of the Library has also been working diligently to raise additionally funds for materials in our new 45,000 square foot library currently under construction.

Rachel Orozco and her staff continue to do an amazing job for our community.

### **City Finance**

This past year, our Finance Department received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association for the 19<sup>th</sup> year in a row.

Moody's investment services upgraded Wylie's Bond Rating, just another sign of how well our Finance Department is doing in handling our money.

And our new Finance Director, Linda Vaughan, was hired

This year the city staff cut their budgets and did not take a pay increase to insure our city's taxes would not be raised during these tough economic times.

While other cities are struggling and facing financial problems, I want to thank Linda and our entire Finance Department, with their help and support, we are right on track and right on the money!

### **Public Services**

The Public Services organization, which includes: Parks and recreation, events, public works and our seniors program made huge strides this past year in supporting the our community...

In 2009 we saw the completion of improvements to Olde City Park including a new parking lot, restrooms, sidewalks, landscaping, benches and tables. We were able to make these improvement in part from a \$330,000 matching grant from the Collin County Park and Open Space Program.

We also received a \$267,500 in a grant from Collin County for improvements for Community Park's walking trails and restrooms.

The city received a \$150,000 in a grant from North Central Texas Council of Governments increase citizen participation and involvement in residential recycling.

The Wylie Wave Program averaged more than 200 campers each week in their summer program.

The daily attendance of our senior citizen programs increased 50% over the previous year.

Also...the Public Works team was very busy with cleaning of all of our water storage tanks. Repaving many of our neighborhood streets with nearly 4,000 tons of asphalt, replacing nearly 3,000 linear feet of concrete sidewalks and nearly 2,500 linear feet of curbs and gutters.

It continues to be a job well done by Mike Sferra and this team for their efforts in making our city a safe and fun place for the whole family.

### **Employee Recognition:**

Our city staff is the key to the ongoing success of our community programs and activities around Wylie. And this past year, we had a number of employees who went above and beyond in their jobs.

You may or may not know them by name...but their dedication and efforts allows the inter-workings of our city to continue to move forward! I want to recognize a few of these individuals for their contributions:

Newcomer of The Year Award:

### **Recreation Supervisor: Carmen Powlen**

This newcomer has brought a sense of happiness and fun to her division. She comes to the City of Wylie knowledgeable in the current trends for her field and the energy to execute the program. She is thoughtful and her progressive attitude has transformed our community center!

Customer Service Employee of The Year:

**Police Records Clerk: Alicia Barbosa**

This person is said to help with everything! She has been instrumental in the success of the Citizen Police Academy and the alumni group. She is well known for doing numerous “behind the scenes” tasks and always does them with a smile. She never complains and is very deserving of the title of 2009 Customer Service Employee of the Year!

And finally...

**Employee Of The Year: Cheryl Smith**

It is hard to begin describing this individual who has an amazing ability to keep a multitude of balls juggling in the air...all at the same time. Cheryl manages to keep a very fast paced department in check and in budget,

Cheryl puts countless hours into work for the Wylie community coordinating the documentation, collection and distribution of toys and funds for needy families. Her co-workers say that the *Reach For A Star* program could not happen without her coordination and management. 2010 also marks her 10 anniversary with the City of Wylie...

Please help me congratulate Cheryl Smith as our 2009 Employee of the Year!

**Communications:**

Open communications is one of the major keys to our city’s success as we continue to mature and grow as a community.

In 2009 we continued to focus on finding ways to better inform the citizens of our city.

From working with our local newspaper, to producing the *Wylie Living Newsletter*, that is included in your utility bill each month, to providing

the Mayor's Monthly Update email, to the newly revamped City website...communications is an ongoing effort on the part of our city.

Our City Secretary's office scanned: over 112,000 pages into Laserfiche, totaling nearly 14,000 documents...which means documents and records are available to the public through the city's website including City Council Meeting Minutes from 1907-2010, Ordinances from 1911-2010 and Resolutions from 1959-2010.

These are just some of the ways we are looking to communicate and provide a more open government to our citizens and our neighbors.

### **Community Involvement**

Community involvement is so important if you really want to make a difference in our city...

We have 10 volunteer boards in which nearly 70 citizens can get involved and help shape the future of our city.

We've had three Citizen's Police Academy Classes, with 60 graduates and an active Alumni Association, which volunteers their time to assist our officers with Public Safety at various events in our city.

We have the CERT program, The Citizen's Emergency Response Team, which has trained over 40 citizens how to help and support our Public Safety Departments.

As mentioned earlier, The Friends of the Library, which is composed of people in our community who believe in the importance of books, reading and learning for people of all ages.

The Friends of Wylie Fire Rescue, a group of volunteers who made the department's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration is an outstanding success.

In other words your city is not just shaped by your seven city council members...or the 200 employees...but also by the hundreds of volunteers who give of their time to help Wylie grown forward.

All coming together to make Wylie the best it can become...

The City of Wylie works with the Wylie Independent School District. Character Counts is the district's educational program which encourages teachers, students, and staff members to recognize and demonstrate their own strengths in a positive and caring school environment.

At the end of each six weeks of the school year, we recognize students who have shown outstanding character traits such as: Responsibility, Respect, Caring, Trustworthiness, Fairness and Citizenship.

Character Trait: Caring

Be kind. Be compassionate and show you care. Express gratitude. Forgive others. Help people in need.

***From Wylie East High School:***

**Angelo Hadnot**, a Sophomore, nominated by his teacher, Coach Smith

Angelo has helped one of his fellow students every day of this semester. I appreciate his compassion and concern for his friends and classmates.

**Madyson Spangler**, a Sophomore, nominated by her teacher: Ms. Johnson

Madyson is such a sweet and caring person. She is always helping other students with their work when they have questions. She always has a smile on her face and never puts anyone down.

***And from Wylie High School:***

**Braedon Taylor**, a Senior, nominated by his teacher: Coach Rose

All semester Braedon has gone above and beyond caring about freshman SLAM class. In his free time at school he tutors the students in his class. He knows their schedules, their teachers, and keeps frequent contact with them about their grades and life. I am amazed by Braedon's patience and caring.

**Denise Henderson**, a Junior, nominated by her teacher: Mrs. Knipp

Denise is genuinely concerned about her fellow man and looks out for those who are being mistreated. As an athlete, Denise is active in FCA. She has shared stories about feeding the homeless at Christmas and I am honored to have her in class the year. I am a better person for having gotten to know Denise.

*Congratulations to these four outstanding young people.*

Over this past year, I have also had the honor and privilege to speak with students from Akin, Birmingham, Cox, Hartman and Whitt Elementary schools about our local government and how it works.

We've had two junior mayors from Hartman Elementary and one from Smith Elementary. These three students had the opportunity to help with one our city council meetings.

We hosted Student Government Day, in which our high school students could come in and also learned about our city and our local government.

In 2009, the city of Wylie supported a number of major events

At our annual July Jubilee we had over 2,000 people in attendance in downtown Wylie.

The Wylie Independence Day Fireworks show held in Founders Park drew a crowd of over 4,000 people.

Boo on Ballard brought in over 3,000 trick-or-treaters

And the first annual Wylie Arts Festival, the annual Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting Ceremony *rang in* the Christmas holidays on a cold

December weekend with thousands of our residents and neighbors in attendance.

Our Arts Festival had over 60 arts and crafts vendors, five food vendors, three chefs providing demonstrations, entertainment throughout the day and the festival paid for itself without costing the city any money.

Hats off to Carol Ehrlich, Craig Kelly and Mike Sferra and their staffs for creating, implementing and working this successful event. This year's Arts Festival is already scheduled for December 4<sup>th</sup>.

In 2009 we had a recording breaking year for our **Reach for a Star** program. The city of Wylie was able help out over 600 children and their families to have a good Christmas.

**And...The KCS Holiday Express** stopped in Wylie, Texas again this year during the Christmas holidays. With thousands of children, parents and grandparents walking through the train and having an opportunity to visit with Santa and his elves.

These are just some examples of the events and programs that make Wylie unique and special.

### **City Municipal Complex**

In 2009, construction began on our new City municipal complex.

This complex was approved by voters during the 2005 bond program, and includes a nearly 46,000 square foot City Hall, a 47,000 square foot Recreation Center and a nearly 45,000 square foot Library. Our estimated completion goal is December 2010.

Not only will the new City Hall, Library and Recreation Center enable us to provide an enhanced level of service to our citizens, but the buildings and the city property will be a community gathering place for all to enjoy for many years to come.

### **CLOSING:**

As we close today, I want to challenge you, our citizens, to stay involved in your city. We will continue to face some very important challenges as the future unfolds and I would urge you to be a part of the discussion. We need your voice to be heard as we chart the course for the future in very uncertain economical times.

The City has made tremendous progress over the last year...ACTION and URGENCY will continue to be our attitude as we grow forward.

I would like to again thank and recognize the members of the City Council, the City Executive Staff and the City Employees for their dedication to the City of Wylie.

In reviewing our accomplishments for the year, I realize just how much we all care about our community and how hard we all work to make this city such an amazing place.

I would also like to thank the many citizens who have also contributed to our success – whether you serve on an advisory board, attend public meetings or just call or email with an issue or an idea – you are a part of what makes our community strong.

May God continue to bless each of us and the great City of Wylie, Texas as we move forward...thank you.

Thank you.