

Tut Tawwater

Tut Tawwater has been one of Plainview's most active citizens for six decades. He plunged into civic affairs almost immediately after being transferred here by his employer, the Fort Worth & Denver Railroad, in 1948. Among his many accomplishments are helping change Plainview's city government from a mayor-council to a city manager-council structure and serving on the commission that redrew the city charter. Perhaps he was best known for broadcasting Plainview High football, basketball, and baseball games for 36 years on KVOP Radio.

Wilton Lewis Tawwater was born in Quanah in 1923, grew up there, and graduated from Quanah High in 1941. His father called him "King Tut" when he was a baby, and "Tut" stuck with him his whole life. He married Dorothy Hendrix of Quanah in 1943. They have two children and two grandchildren.

Serving as a B-24 radio operator in the Air Force during World War II, he was shot down in a bombing raid over Germany in 1944 and was a prisoner of war until 1945. After the war he went to work for the railroad and eventually moved to Plainview. Besides broadcasting high school sports, the "Voice of the Bulldogs" worked in sales and management at KVOP. The home broadcast booth at Bulldog Stadium is named in his honor.

As president of the Chamber of Commerce, Tut helped promote the change to a city manager-council form of government in the 1950s. He served on the Chamber's sports committee when it launched two annual women's college basketball tournaments and was an early chairman of both competitions. He was on the committee that re-established the YMCA program here and was part of a group that helped promote Plainview's membership in the newly formed Canadian River Municipal Water Authority. He served for 11 years as chairman of the Chamber's Convention and Tourism Committee and for six years as chairman of the City Parks and Recreation Committee, which sponsored a successful parks bond and built new parks including Running Water Regional Park. Tut was named Plainview's Outstanding Citizen in 1958.

Much sought after as a toastmaster and M.C., Tut was president of the Plainview Toastmasters' Club, lieutenant governor of the Toastmasters' West Texas District, and winner of Toastmasters' speech competitions at the local, district, and state levels. He helped found the High Plains Cotton Festival and directed the Miss High Plains contest. He has played a leading role in fund drives for the YMCA and the Plainview United Fund, forerunner of today's local United Way.

The Lions Club is the civic organization to which Tut is most dedicated. He has been a Lion for 57 years, serving in various leadership roles, including president of the Plainview club and chairman of its Queens contest for 30 years. He also held various offices at the district level and was chairman of the Texas Council of Governors, the highest position in Texas Lionism. He is a member of the Texas Lions Hall of Fame.

He has belonged to the First United Methodist Church for 60 years, taught an adult Bible class there for four decades, and served on many of its committees. Now in his mid-eighties, Tut is treasurer of Hale County Meals on Wheels. He also edits a weekly newsletter for the Plainview Lions Club and another for the Hub of the Plains Ex-Prisoner of War Chapter.