**AWARDS SPEECH**

**FOR**

**SANDY KING**

Hello everyone and welcome to our **NINETIETH** Annual Excellence Awards ceremony. Today’s candidates and recipients represent the very best that our city has to offer and it is really a privilege to be present and to introduce today’s program and proceedings. And while we honor commitment, accomplishment, and dedication to so many aspects and projects that have a tremendous impact on our collective quality of life here in Waxahachie (**Is this correct? I did a little research’s**), it is especially humbling and gratifying to see so many of this city’s leaders all here, together, under one roof (**If there is anyone in particular you want to call out/acknowledge, you can do that here**).

This is definitely **THE** place to be today and I know I speak for everyone here when I remark that we have a very distinguished crowd.... Mayor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, thank you for being here and for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . To \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, it’s a privilege to share this event with all of you\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Each one of you is a strong, inspiring leader in your own right and it is so reassuring to know that we have such an enthusiastic community of educators, merchants, clergy, administrators.... all working together to make this city...**OUR** city, achieve goals way **beyond** its perceived potential.

As a “local” in our community.... I have lived in here for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years and I know this town from many vantage points and perspectives. As a resident, as an active participant in all aspects of daily life, and as someone who really cares about our city, I’ve worked my way from learning about the basic foundational elements of Waxahachie to here, as CEO of our award winning Chamber of Commerce.

Ninety years have gone by since the first Annual Excellence Awards ceremony... **NINETY YEARS**!! That’s almost a century of building relationships and cementing friendships.... of strengthening our businesses and educational establishments and houses of worship. That’s **NINE** decades of celebrating red letter landmarks together and comforting and supporting our neighbors through trials and crises and challenges... and you know what? We may have hit some rough spots over the past few years, but our collective commitment to this city and our way of life prevails.... and it gets stronger. It strengthens because we do the work **together**....

To paraphrase a wise, civically minded man, “We cannot seek achievement and success for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community. Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own.” The very definition of community reminds us that the essence is sharing.... sharing geographic location, government, culture, commerce, and heritage/legacy. The past ninety years have acted as our road map and teacher as well as our foundation as we, and our parents and grandparents before us, did whatever they could to get us where we are today. In turn, we learn from those who preceded us and find the means to build and solidify our relationships, our infrastructure, and our civic commitments so that the next generations will have an even greater guidebook with which to proceed.

Many of you already know that there are exciting new projects in the works and all of those projects will support the growth and prosperity of our thriving city.... from the amphitheater to the new football field (**you can mention other projects that may be more relevant**), Waxahachie is primed for healthy growth and expansion.... from increased employment to added activity in our commercial, industrial, and retail sectors, we will work together to sustain progress and foster well being and enhanced quality of life for all of our residents. Coretta Scott King said, “The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.” Based on that wise observation, we’ve got this **handled**!!!

It has always been an honor and a privilege to serve this city and all of the good work being done here. As time goes on, patterns shift, civic demands change, people may come and go, but one thing is for sure, and that is that this city has a collective heart and a sympathetic soul and they’re shared by all of you.... all of **us**. Every one of us is unique on our own. As pieces of the puzzle that fit to form the leadership and foundation of Waxahachie, Texas, our potential is limitless. Today we honor excellence, but the truth is that you all dedicate your service and hard work to doing excellent things every single day. It may not always look or feel like that, but accountability, responsibility, and caring, all provide priceless lessons on our common road to success. I am so encouraged by your enthusiasm and I know our future is bright as we honor our winners today and work to identify, partner, and support our leaders of tomorrow.... thank you all for being here and thank you in advance for all of the great leadership and teamwork to come as we continue to build and expand our beautiful city! Thank you all!