

Wilson: Small contributions add up to big differences

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 She's also volunteered on the Dallas Community Foundation Board, the Chemeketa Community College budget committee, and a group organizing building a new senior center in Dallas.

She attends Dallas Downtown Association meetings and is participating in efforts to jump start economic development in town.

That's probably not where Wilson envisioned herself when she and her family moved to Dallas from Seattle in 1971. Her husband, Bob, was transferred to Dallas to manage the former J.C. Penney's store in downtown. The move was a big change for Wilson, and it took her a few months to adjust.

"Bob just finally said, 'You just need to get out and meet people. Just don't stay here (at home),'"

Wilson recalled. She took his advice, volunteering at first. Soon she was asked to serve as a teacher's assistant, the beginning of a nearly 30-year career with the Dallas School District.

Former Superintendent Gordon Kunke asked Wilson to help with accounts payable at the district office. She was promoted through the years, ending her career



COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

as the district's business manager and deputy clerk. Wilson said she was always encouraged by others to take on a new challenge, even when she didn't believe she had the ability.

"I really appreciated the people who gave me opportunities and had the faith in me that I could do the job," she said.

Thirty-two years ago, someone suggested she take on another role she hadn't considered: city councilor.

She gave a familiar reply: "I've never done anything like that. ... I didn't think I would win."

She gave it a go, putting out 22 signs — the most campaigning she's done — and won a seat.

Wilson said her first meeting was a little intimidating — she sat closest to the audience and was keenly aware that she was being observed. Always a team



LaVonne Wilson was honored at the awards banquet. Itemizer-Observer file

player, Wilson found the role she needed to fill on the council.

In her opinion, a councilor — or any kind of board member — needs to be a good listener.

Listening to fellow council members, citizens and city

employees is the first critical step in decision making. The second piece is more of a philosophy.

"You also need to be an independent thinker," she said. "An independent thinker to me is someone who has no self-serving. You

are not for yourself. You are basically there to think about what is the best for the people — all of our citizens."

Her tenure on the Dallas City Council is a stretch unmatched by anyone except Ken Woods Jr., who has her beat by two years. Woods said Wilson was gracious, even when debating a point of contention.

"She was very polite and let others speak," he said. "She would sit there quietly until something needed to be said. Then she said it."

-- has experienced the same.

He said Wilson often "put her cards on the table," but placed the interest of the organization before her own.

"We will miss that in Dallas," he said. "It will take some time to replace LaVonne."

Mayor Brian Dalton, who worked alongside Wilson for 17 years on the council, said her long and extensive community involvement allowed her to add the perspective from other groups into council decisions.

"She brought a sense of history to the group's endeavors," he said. "Sometimes that's very valuable. I've learned from it."

That's likely to continue in one form or another. Wilson said she doesn't know what to do with slow days. She prefers playing her part.

"I think the greatest gift that anyone can give in their life is service to others, just knowing that made you a difference in small ways," she said. "You are not making major differences, necessarily, but anybody who steps up and take on something, will have a reward that is everlasting."

Coffee: \$900 for public workers

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 "Anyone who thinks they're deserving of it, go for it," Smith said.

Some departments have had trouble using the card, or have refused because of rules against accepting gifts.

Smith said the donations have all been anonymous, and she is trying to figure out a way that the intent of the card — to show appreciation for public employees — to be delivered to those who have done so much for the public.

She said the card is being used by county and city workers.

"It's about the spirit of giving," Smith said.

She hopes the tradition will continue beyond the holidays somehow, but hasn't worked out the details yet.

Smith said she was just a match, and it was the community of Dallas that lit the fire.

"This community really

bands together," Smith said. "I moved here 10 years ago from Seattle, and I wouldn't move out of Dallas for the life of me. My mom said, 'if you see someone frowning, give them the biggest smile ever — give them your smile. I knew it was tough, and some of these guys weren't smiling. I was just trying to give them a smile.'"

A card has also been established at the Monmouth Dutch Bros. for police and firefighters.

Anyone can donate to either location.

Sudoku solution

3	8	6	5	4	7	9	2	1
9	1	2	3	6	8	4	7	5
7	4	5	9	2	1	6	8	3
2	6	8	1	3	9	5	4	7
1	3	7	6	5	4	8	9	2
4	5	9	8	7	2	1	3	6
8	2	4	7	1	6	3	5	9
6	9	3	2	8	5	7	1	4
5	7	1	4	9	3	2	6	8

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I was the night before Christmas
 And all through the house...
 Everyone was freezing & sneezing,
 Even Great Grandpa Clouse.

The furnace was roaring,
 even louder than Aunt Mabel's snoring;
 Yet the house was colder
 than the punch we were pouring.

The turkey was frigid
 and the yams hard as rock candy.
 The dinner was almost a disaster,
 when in walked Joe Flande.

"Why all the shivers and
 why all the tears?
 I have a Lennox heat pump
 to solve all your fears!"

With that he installed the heater
 in a lightning-quick flash,
 And just like that
 we enjoyed a warm Christmas bash.

As he then leapt out the door,
 I thought I heard him say,
 "May you be warm and comfortable,
 And have a Merry Christmas day!"

Merry Christmas!

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 — Donna

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Matinees are all shows before 6pm. New pricing for matinees are: Adult \$8.00 Children \$7.00 - Senior \$7.25 Pricing does not reflect 3D showings.

Friday - Saturday • December 23 - 24

WHY HIM? (Digital) (R)	(1:40 4:15)	7:05	9:40+
MOANA (Digital) (PG)	(11:15 1:50 4:25)	7:05	
OFFICE CHRISTMAS PARTY (Digital) (R)			9:40+
PASSENGERS (Digital) (PG13)	(11:10 1:50 4:30)	7:15	9:55+
SING (Digital) (PG)	(11:25 2:00 4:35)	7:10	9:45+
*ROGUE ONE (Digital) (PG13)	(10:00+ 1:00 4:00)	7:00	10:00+
*ROGUE ONE (Digital) (PG13)	(9:30+ 12:30 3:30)	6:30	9:30+
COLLATERAL BEAUTY (Digital) (PG13)	(12:25 2:45 5:05)	7:25	9:45+
ASSASSINS CREED (Digital) (PG13)	(12:35 3:40)	6:45	9:50+

+ NOT SHOWING DECEMBER 24th

Sunday (Christmas Day) • December 25

WHY HIM? (Digital) (R)	(1:40 4:15)	7:05	9:40
MOANA (Digital) (PG)	(1:50 4:25)	7:05	
OFFICE CHRISTMAS PARTY (Digital) (R)			9:40
PASSENGERS (Digital) (PG13)	(1:50 4:30)	7:15	9:55
SING (Digital) (PG)	(2:00 4:35)	7:10	9:45
*ROGUE ONE (Digital) (PG13)	(1:00 4:00)	7:00	10:00
*ROGUE ONE (Digital) (PG13)	(3:30)	6:30	9:30
COLLATERAL BEAUTY (Digital) (PG13)	(2:45 5:05)	7:25	9:45
ASSASSINS CREED (Digital) (PG13)	(12:35 3:40)	6:45	9:50

Monday - Thursday • December 26 - 29

WHY HIM? (Digital) (R)	(1:40 4:15)	7:05	9:40
MOANA (Digital) (PG)	(11:15 1:50 4:25)	7:05	
OFFICE CHRISTMAS PARTY (Digital) (R)			9:40
PASSENGERS (Digital) (PG13)	(11:10 1:50 4:30)	7:15	9:55
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ASSASSINS CREED (Digital) (PG13)	(12:35 3:40)	6:45	9:50

* NO PASSES

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