

January 9, 2014

It is an honor to be given an opportunity to talk about one of my favorite people and a man that has dedicated many years of his life to our community.

After almost 45 years of service to Houston in various capacities, I am proud to honor tonight's Lifetime Achievement Award recipient to my friend, Don Romines.

Don was born in Springfield in 1949. He attended Houston Schools and after graduating in 1967 joined the MP unit at West Plains while attending the University of Missouri in Columbia and after graduation, he returned to join the family business in Houston.

Don has worked since he was a kid at Romines Motor Company, a family owned and operated business in Houston since 1933 and he is a lifetime member of the Houston United Methodist Church.

In 1972, Don married Barbara Bridges, who is a former Houston Middle School teacher and Texas County Technical College Administrator. Five years later they welcomed Franklin Don Romines II, a Corporate Counsel at Jack Henry & Associates in Springfield who is here with his wife Ashley, and then, Tyler, in 1980, who is a co-owner, at Romines Motor Company.

Don and Barbara are avid travelers and enjoy their home and family. Nothing makes Don happier than his family and a good car deal.

However, tonight we're here to talk about Don's community achievements. His mother, Vera Romines, was the first female Houston Mayor and she and his father, Glen, were both active in the community. Don was raised by parents that believed in community service and Barbara, and he, have raised their sons to follow in that tradition.

In, 1978, Don was first elected to city council, and other than a three year period when his family moved to the country, he has been a Houston City Alderman.

Let me re-emphasize, Don Romines has been a Houston City Alderman for over 30 years. That has never happened in the city of Houston and I can't imagine in many communities.

To bring that number into perspective - here are some statistics. In thirty plus years, not counting any special, budget or committee meetings, conferences or trips to other communities Don has spent more than 720 evenings at regular meetings. That's over 1500 hours of council meetings alone.

And, his volunteerism doesn't stop there. Don was an active member in the Houston Jaycees, the Houston volunteer Fire Department, the chamber of commerce, and is currently a

board member of the Houston Development Company. He has served as a member, as an officer, and President of every board he's ever been on.

Don's accomplishments and civic awards are too many and varied to mention here, and I have to say that I've never heard him take personal credit for any of his endeavors.

Every undertaking by Don is researched, fiscally weighed, and thought through before he takes any action. He agrees to disagree with fellow aldermen and women and while he will fight for something he believes in, he doesn't hold a grudge if a decision doesn't go his way.

I'd like to mention a few of the projects Don's worked on over the years that have brought prosperity to this city and were personal favorites of his:

Airport expansion, Park development, infrastructure development, city streets and sidewalk programs, new treatment plant, Industry recruitment/retainment, and long range planning.

Obviously, Don has joined the ranks of what are considered to be "City Fathers" that came before him, and his tireless hours of community service should be an example for us all.

I've known Don for a many years and I can tell you two things he believes with his whole heart.

1. Community service is what makes a community thrive. He believes a great community is a team of people working together to exchange ideas, to compromise, and to come up with solutions that best serve the people that elected them.
2. While everyone knows how tight I am I don't hold a candle to Don. When someone kids him about his frugality his answer is always – my Ward elects me to serve this city and I will spend their tax dollars as if it were my own money, this kind of service is hard to find today. Selfless service is sometimes thankless, stressful, not always good for business, and time-consuming but necessary - and personally rewarding.

Being able to bounce new ideas, budget concerns and long range city planning off of Don has been especially valuable to me. We have driven the city streets many times over the years so we can discuss city issues, he can show me where various utilities are located, and assisted city crews during ice storms.

I know Don is not finished with his service to this community and I promise you we all benefit from aldermen and citizens like him. His knowledge of the system and years of experience are priceless and valued by the citizens of this community.

That is why at this time, I am happy to present this year's Lifetime Achievement Award to Don Romines for his for his 45

years of service to this community of Houston, Missouri and many more to come.

Thank you