

Message from the Mayor



Tom Martin ★ Mayor

There are a few moments in a person's life when you remember exactly where you were, what you were doing and what you were feeling even after decades. The tornado that ripped through Lubbock on May 11, 1970, was one of those moments.

I was a young, 21-year-old Texas Tech Journalism graduate who had just accepted a full-time job as the City of Lubbock's first Public Information Officer on a Monday afternoon. That night I had an opportunity to go to the Emergency Operations Center to observe the actions of the city staff during a severe weather event.

At 9:36 p.m., as I was standing in the EOC, an F-5 tornado ripped through the downtown area, hitting among other things, the City Hall, in which the EOC was located. I remember the "freight train sound" overhead, the screams on the fire and police radios, the absolute shock and dismay on the faces of the top city staff.

Immediately, because of two years of training, planning and preparation for such a disaster, the city organization swung into action to deal with the death and destruction.

WHAT A WAY TO START A CAREER!

This website commemorates the city's actions that night and for months and years since this disaster. You will view many, many photographs and first-person stories.

It is hard to believe that this disaster occurred 40 years ago. Many of the key players in this story have passed-away. But through the eyes of those who remain, and a great effort by the City of Lubbock staff and LISD TV students and staff, you will be able to live this experience as if you had been there.

May we never experience this again! But should we....the rest of the story is....."we will survive!"

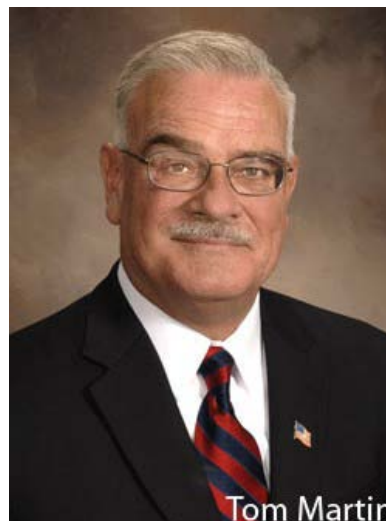
Tom Martin

Mayor

City Hall ★ 1625 13th Street ★ P.O. Box 2000 ★ Lubbock, Texas 79457 ★ (806)775-2010 ★ Fax (806)775-3335
Email: tmartin@mylubbock.us



Tom Martin 1970



Tom Martin