

FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE



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Abstract: **Delbert Wendt**

Mr. Wendt was a Christmas baby in 1934. His ancestors migrated from Germany to the Needville area in the late 1800s. Growing up in the farming community of Needville, Delbert enjoyed playing in the school band, working on his parents' farm, and making life-long friends.

He spent his career in the auto financing business for local car dealers. After 47 years as finance manager, he retired. Delbert has served as Mayor of Needville since 2003 and on city council since 1984. He has such a commitment to his city, that he has served without opposition or spending any money to campaign.

While growth is slowly making its trek to Needville, Delbert shares stories of farming with a mule, wearing clothes made from feed sacks, canning food, candling eggs and earning \$7 for a 12-hour work day that included lifting 100 pound feed bags.

17 Pages

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Interview Summary

People (in order mentioned in interview)

Edwin Wendt – father
 Rosa Blome Wendt – mother
 Clara Narramore – 103 yr. old aunt
 William Blome, Sr – maternal grandfather
 Kenneth Bryce “Buddy” Otto – friend
 Edgar Wendt – brother
 Ralph Wendt – brother
 Rose Marie Wendt – sister
 Ernest “Stubby” Wendt – brother
 Louis Ludwig – Needville HS school superintendent
 Leroy Mische – Needville HS school superintendent
 Curtis Rhodes – Needville HS school superintendent
 Shirley Kageler Wendt – spouse
 Delbert C Wendt – son
 Tammy Wendt Miller – daughter
 Pam Wendt Sullivan – daughter
 Tommy W Wendt – son
 Janet Raesner – daughter
 Joe Grillo – car dealership owner
 Juanita Todd – Real estate business owner
 Pete Vacek – hay farmer
 Don Drachenburg – Triumphs band player
 Tim Griffiths – Triumphs band player
 Tom Griffiths – Triumphs band player
 Teddy Mensik – Triumphs band player
 Carl Lehman – CIT Financial
 Don Wenzel – businessman

Bob Hebert – Fort Bend Count Judge
 Roland Adamson – WFBC Water Authority
 Richard Morrison – Commissioner
 Glen Gilmore – former Richmond City Manager
 Joe Gurecky – former Rosenberg mayor
 Ike Fredrickson, Ron Pope, A. J. Dorr – regional political associates
 Gary Jansen – Justice of the Peace, Needville city judge
 Alan Ray Schmidt – friend
 Freund, Beard, and Mueck – farming families in the area

Places / Businesses

Needville, Texas
 Brenham Texas
 Germany
 Rosenberg, Texas
 Mr. Ralph Dress Shop
 Etta Mae’s Dress Shop
 Fort Bend County
 Brenham, Texas
 San Bernard River, Texas
 Farmers Market, Rosenberg
 Needville High School
 N. A. Allen School
 St John’s United Church
 Durham Business School
 Hopmann Motor Company/Hoppman Chevrolet

Gulf Coast Loans	Boling High School
OPEC – Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries	The Triumphs Band
Home Rule Community	Freeport, Texas
Richmond, Texas	TXDOT – Texas Department of Transportation
Hitchcock, Texas	West Columbia
Ladd’s Grocery, Needville’s	Houston, Texas
HEB Grocery	Sugar Land, Texas
Los Charros Mexican Restaurant, Needville	Beasley, Texas
Texas Burger Restaurant, Needville	Uticon
36 Bar & Grill, Needville’s	West Fort Bend County Water Authority
Lifecheck Drug Store, Needville	Brazos River
W. T. Fence Company	Fort Bend Subsidence District
	Fairchilds, Texas

Events

Born on December 25, 1934, he was the family’s Christmas gift. Raised in Needville, his family farmed rented land. They had no electricity or running water until he was in the 8th grade.

After graduation from high school in 1953, Delbert attended Durham Business School. He never had to apply for a job because he was hired immediately to start a finance company for a new and used car dealership in Rosenberg. After 47 years, he retired as finance manager.

Being civic minded and wanting to share in the direction of Needville’s growth, Mr. Wendt began his political career in 1984 on Needville City Council. In 2003, he was elected Mayor without opposition or spending any money to campaign.

He and his wife of 59 years, Shirley, raised 5 children in Needville before her passing in 2015. Today, Delbert continues his duties as mayor as well as enjoying his 9 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.