

Martha and DuWayne Thurman

Perryton Promenaders

When invited to join a group taking square dance lessons, Martha Thurman was less than enthusiastic. She confessed to her husband, DuWayne, "I guess I will try it, but I'm not going to like it!" After a few lessons, Martha admitted that it was not so bad. She never looked back, and now, many years later, one will find Martha still extremely involved in square dancing and all its activities.

In 1989 after graduating from square dance lessons, DuWayne and Martha Thurman were immediately elected to be a club officer and have served as either Vice President or President for over 35 years. Additionally they served as Panhandle District Presidents and Delegates for many years. DuWayne and Martha started filling the unofficial role as "Go to People" for the Perryton Promenaders. The Thurmans were most dependable, and they were notably sought out to "get the job done." To them, there was no difference between small jobs and big jobs. All jobs were important. Sometimes, the job could be as simple as getting to a dance early to make sure everything was prepared, filling in for a Club or District officer, or acting as "Angels" for years when needed during lessons. The answer was always, "yes," when asked to consider driving a

great distance to represent the Panhandle District in an Oklahoma Square Dance Federation meeting. In all cases, their willingness to accomplish a job was a great encouragement and inspiration to our club. With the passing of DuWayne in 2014, Martha's servant attitude continued. She carried the torch alone just as she and DuWayne had done together. To this very day, her willingness to contribute to the good of the club continues.

When the Panhandle District had ten square dancing clubs in their organization, DuWayne and Martha could be depended upon to visit each club which involved a great amount of travel. Additionally, they often attended neighboring club dances in Gage and Woodward, Oklahoma. One time, DuWayne and Martha participated in the Five States in One Day Tour, which was a marathon event in which dancers boarded buses and went to Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Kansas, and Oklahoma—all in a period of twelve hours. DuWayne and Martha, along with several other Panhandle dancers, participated in square dance events seventeen nights in a row. For five years, they were A2 dancers long before A became as popular as it is today. They often traveled with a van full of dancers. Occasionally, the vehicle was so full that extra chairs were added so everyone would have a place to sit. Together the Thurmans took numerous square dance cruises and trips to places such as Hawaii, Pikes Peak, the Grand Canyon, and Las Vegas.

A really talented seamstress, Martha participated in and even led several OSDF Sewing Clinics and Fashion Shows. As an example of her dedication, once Martha was called upon and made 18 club dresses for members of the Perryton Promenaders.

Recently, it was time for the Panhandle District to provide table decorations for one of the federation roundups. Without hesitation, Martha creatively designed, built, and delivered the favors. For many years, Martha could be found at the State festival, hastily preparing her report to be read and turned in to the OSDF Secretary.

It comes as no surprise that Martha has been the Club Sweetheart for the Top Tex organization several times, and recently served in that position for 2023. An incredibly attractive lady, Martha always appears at formal square dance events in full square dance attire.

Because of their dedication, love, and zeal for square dancing, one might consider them as “Institutions” for square dancing in the Panhandle of Texas. Nominating Martha and DuWayne to the Oklahoma Square Dance Federation Hall of Fame is an honor and a privilege for our district. We are extremely proud of both of them and their accomplishments!

Please welcome them to the Oklahoma Square Dance Hall of Fame.