

O. T. and Pat Ryan

O. T. and Pat Ryan have made lasting contributions to generations of local youth. O. T. enriched the musical lives of thousands of students, and Pat was an elementary school teacher here for 20 years.

O. T. Ryan was born in Livingston, Texas in 1927. The family moved to Lubbock, and he graduated from Lubbock High before serving in the Navy in World War II. After the war he earned his B.A. (1949) and M.A. (1950) in music at Texas Tech. He later did graduate work at Columbia University and the University of Texas.

Pat Ryan has deep roots in the Plainview area, where her maternal and paternal grandparents and great-grandparents lived. Born here as Marjorie Lowe to Vernie and Everett Lowe, she was later adopted by W. K. McCaskill. Pat McCaskill was a twirler in the Plainview High band. After she graduated in 1946, she attended Colorado Women's College and then Texas Tech as a business major.

O. T. and Pat met at Tech and married in 1950 in the First Baptist Church in Plainview, where they are still members. They have four children, ten grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

In fall 1950 O. T. became director of the Plainview Junior High band and assistant to the legendary "Chief" Davidson with the high school band. O. T. succeeded Davidson in 1964, and under his directorship the band racked up 29 straight years of Division I honors in University Interscholastic League marching (a string that began under Davidson, had grown to 70 by 2007, and is believed to be a national record). The school district's instrumental program (sixth grade through high school) grew as high as 900 students annually.

Pat Ryan returned to college and graduated from Wayland with a degree in elementary education in 1967. She taught second grade at Hillcrest from 1967 to 1981, then language arts at the Ash Sixth Grade Learning Center. She retired in 1987 and joined Billington Real Estate, where she has worked for more than 20 years. She has served as board member and president of the Plainview Association of Realtors, was Realtor of the Year in 1991, and received the Pinnacle Award in 2006. She is a charter member of the Gamma Delphin Study Club and a longtime volunteer for Meals on Wheels.

O. T. retired in 1993 after 43 years in local music education but continued to assist with Plainview school bands. He was an adjunct professor of music at Wayland and occasional guest conductor of the Plainview Symphony Orchestra. He served as the University Interscholastic League's Region XVI executive secretary of music for nine years, retiring in 2007. He volunteers for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Meals on Wheels, and the hospital auxiliary.

O. T. served in numerous offices in and has received many honors, including the presidency of the Texas Bandmasters Association and being named Texas Bandmaster of the Year in 1982. His name adorns the Ryan-Davidson Band Hall at Plainview High, whose Class of 1972 funded scholarships in his honor. He was named Plainview's Man of the Year in 1993 and received the Plainview Cultural Council's Silver Star Award in 2006.