Matt F. and Patty Crandall Gorges, A Dynamic Team

A nomination submission by Norman Rozeff for the 2011 Rotary Club of Harlingen Walk of Fame:

1. Building a strong business and agro-industrial presence that benefited Harlingen and the Valley with employment, development, physical plants, and industries was to lay the foundation for Matt and Patty Gorges to be able to support their community in numerous and widespread contributory and philanthropic endeavors. The record that they have achieved is remarkable, all the more so because of their modest and quiet work while offering this support.

Matt Gorges was born in San Antonio in 1936. His family moved to Harlingen in 1944. He has been married to Patty for 51 years, and they are the proud parent of five children. In 1958 he was to receive his B.A. in Economics and Finance from Rice University. As a guard on the football team he was selected to the All Southwest Conference team, and Rice won the SWC championship in 1958 while he was on the team.

His business career commenced with Gorges Foodservice, located in Harlingen. He was its majority owner for 36 years until the firm was sold to Tyson Foods in January 1994. His business activities have encompassed a wide spectrum of activities. Among them are as an investing partner in the construction of two high rise condominiums on South Padre Island and also in a 1,200-acre subdivision project in eastern Cameron County; he served on the Board of Directors of the First National Bank of Harlingen from 1970 to 1988 and the same at the Texas Commerce Bank, Brownsville 1989 to 1999; Board of Directors the National Association of Meat Purveyors 1970-1986; and Director of the San Antonio Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas 2003-2008. He was recognized for his business accomplishments by being elected to the Texas Business Hall of Fame in 2004.

Patty Crandall was born February 23, 1936 in Omaha Nebraska. Her family came to Harlingen in 1948 when she was twelve. She attended Harlingen public schools. In 1957 she went on to receive a degree from the Hermann Hospital School of Nursing in Houston as a registered nurse. She and Matt Gorges were married in St. Anthony Church on January 31, 1958.

2 & 3.
Matt Gorges's civic and societal involvements are lengthy. He served on the Board of Trustees for Rice University in the years 1996-2000; was a member of the financial Advisory Council, Diocese of Brownsville, 1990-2000; chairman of the Harlingen Performing Arts theatre, 1993-2000; Board of Director of Loaves and Fishes, 1998-2000; member of the Harlingen Rotary Club; chairman of the Gladys Porter Zoo Endowment fund 2000/2003 and on its Endowment Investment Committee, 1994-2003; and chairman of fund-raising and building committee of the Harlingen Performing Arts Theatre that opened in May 1996. Over the decades Mr. Gorges ahs served on numerous elected and appointed boards including: City Commissioner of Harlingen; Harlingen Chamber of
Commerce; Rio Grande Valley Partnership (Valley Chamber of Commerce); Harlingen Beef Club; and Valley Baptist Health Systems' Foundation.

When Matt was at Gorges Foodservice, he generously donated food to the Loaves and Fishes Mission.

Patty Gorges strongly supported youth activities while her children were growing up. These included being a back-boned volunteer in the St. Anthony and public school PTAs, room mother for many years, Girl Scouts, Cub and Boy Scouts. She participated in the children's area at the Harlingen Public Library, Maggie's House Children's Advocacy Center, Junior League, on the Board of Directors of the Gladys Porter Zoo, and PEO Chapter T. As a first-hand victim of cancer, she became a major organizer for local fundraising for the American Cancer Society.

Jointly Matt and Patty Gorges have the following civil and societal accomplishments: founders in 1982 and major contributors for over the past 22 years of the St. Anthony School Endowment Fund; establishers of the Gorges Foundation dedicated to reaching out and assisting the poor and needy of Cameron County and enhancing educational and cultural opportunities in Cameron County and the Rio Grande Valley; founders of a Diocese of Brownsville Endowment Fund with the purpose of further developing church-related resources.

They were the donors of the many attractive works of sculpture in the courtyard and within the Harlingen Public Library together with numerous children books.

4. It is clearly evident from the foregoing that the Gorges husband and wife team of Matt and Patty have had an enormous positive impact not only on their immediate community of Harlingen but also Cameron County and the Rio Grande Valley. They couldn't be more deserving of recognition.

Walk of Fame Committee
Rotary Club of Harlingen
PO Box 1987
Harlingen TX 78551

September 30, 2010

Dear Committee Members,

Earlier this year when you were soliciting nominations for the 100 candidates of the inaugural Walk of Fame, I submitted information for the team of Matt and Patty Gorges. Somehow it got lost on its way to you. Someone else, however, submitted a nomination for Matt, and he was selected.

Attached you will find a copy of my original submission. I ask that you consider the nomination of Patty Gorges to the Walk of Fame. She, as much as her husband, has been, most quietly, instrumental in effecting numerous charitable donations to our community.
Her concern for the Harlingen Public Library and gifts of public art to the library have been an inspiration. She is very deserving of recognition.

Yours truly,

Norman Rozeff
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