“If you want to go fast, go alone. But if you want to go far, go together.”

This African proverb stands true in all walks of life, working as a team helps a person persevere and ultimately succeed. You may achieve a goal faster alone, but the journey will be more fulfilling with the help of others.

Cal and Susan Brints have been across the world and back more than once, but it is their bond that enables them to carry out their service to the community and others.

The couple has a heart for serving, and attributes this to their strong faith and healthy lifestyle. They go through life as a team, achieving joy through serving the community and helping others.

The Brints’ rely on faith with everything in life. They are faithful to their family, religion, community, and most importantly each other.

The couple met in their sophomore year at Texas Tech University. Cal was headed to a bonfire pep rally and happened to meet Susan through mutual friends. The couple started dating soon after that, eventually getting married before graduation.

At that point, their journey was just beginning. After graduating from Tech in 1969, Cal in agricultural economics and Susan in fashion design, the couple moved to pursue their graduate degrees at the University of Minnesota. Five years, three graduate degrees and three children later, the Brints’ returned to Texas.

Their entrepreneurial journey was next, the couple moved to El Paso, Texas for a year to work with extension services. Cal was an economic specialist in charge of aiding the expansion of Tabasco Pepper farms throughout the El Paso Valley.

The couple said a year later they decided to move to Lubbock, where Cal taught at Texas Tech and started farming cotton and vegetables. The Brints also started a hosiery manufacturing plant, which grew to a staff of 150 salesmen. The plant has since relocated to North Carolina. Cal and Susan still serve as owners of Oak Creek Products.

“Everything was a team effort,” Susan said. “When we were first married we were nightly custodians. Between scholarships and being custodians that’s how we worked our way through college.”

The couple used their specialties and their bond to be successful in every aspect of their careers, Susan’s knowledge of accounting and textile production went together well with Cal’s knowledge of agriculture and economics.

The couple said they wanted to explore commercial apple production. They wanted something for a hobby for their fathers three months out of the year. The idea of an orchard started out as a pick-your-own operation, but
ended up being a fully integrated orchard with 6,000 trees. The orchard then opened a bakery, restaurant, gift shop, and started hosting events such as the Apple Butter Festival and tours for elementary schools. The concept of only being open for three months out of the year soon evolved into a year-round operation.

Apple Country Orchards became a household name throughout the towns of west Texas. They were one of the first operations in the area to experiment with the concept of letting consumers pick their own fruits. The idea was a hit, and their popularity grew exponentially after a short time.

Susan said the way Apple Country Orchards treated their customers and staff was what made them successful. “When you encourage your employees make the decisions they take ownership of their job and position,” Susan said. “They called us boss, but we called them boss.”

The couple never wanted the fame or recognition that came with owning businesses. They just wanted to help each other and the community.

In 2014 the couple decided to move to the next chapter in their life. They sold the orchard so they could focus solely on helping the community and making a difference in the world.

Cal and Susan continued to devote more of their time and effort to their local Rotary Club, where Susan will soon be the next District Governor of 51 clubs across the panhandle of Texas. The couple said they enjoy traveling with rotary all over the world for service opportunities.

They have been to places such as Scotland, Malawi, India, Australia, New Zealand and the Dominican Republic. This year’s trips include Korea, Japan, China and Europe.

“With Rotarian’s efforts along with the Bill Gates Foundation and the World Health Organization, we are coming close to completely eradicating polio.” Cal said.

The couple said Rotarians around the world are unified by one goal, creating a better life for everyone, everywhere. Rotarians worldwide develop humanitarian projects that partner with local communities to improve lives.

Cal said Rotary accepted a challenge in 1985 to eliminate polio from the world, taking the Brits’ to India to help provide vaccinations and education on the topic.

“We don’t give them fish so they can eat for a day, we teach them how to fish so they can eat for a life time.” Susan said.

Cal serves on the board of the South Plains Food Bank to help give back to his local community, where his knowledge and access to produce helps promote healthy eating habits to people who can not typically afford healthy food.

Cal and Susan also serve as executive directors of the Texas Certified Farmers Market Corporation, helping farmers markets across the state keep values and standards of traditional farmers markets. Cal is also president of the Texas Country Farmers Market in Lubbock.

The couple also runs a produce delivery company named Texas Country produce, which provides local, nutritious food to restaurants and schools across the Lubbock area.

When asking the couple what was next, service is the only thing in their sights. They look forward to being able to travel even more, making a difference anywhere they can.

“We will keep serving until we can’t do it anymore,” Susan said. “I think I can even board a plane with a walker. I’ve seen people do it.” 🛬