

### Barbara and Norman Kanter, Jan and Louis Thompson



Behind the scenes of *Grand Square*, Co-Editors Norman and Barbara Kanter and Louis and Jan Thompson donate countless hours and their expertise to assembling our publication. They work tirelessly to keep the northern New Jersey square dancing community abreast of opportunities and issues that are important to us. [Photo: Barbara and Norman, top; Jan and Louis, bottom.]

**The Kanters** met after Barbara responded to Norman's personal ad in the *Jewish Week*. They feel that finding each other has to be one of the most unlikely and amazing things that happened to them. The two discovered many shared interests such as involvement in their synagogue, volunteer work, and travel. Presently, Norman volunteers as a tutor for prison inmates preparing for the high school equivalency exam; Barbara is a volunteer librarian at a high school for handicapped students. Their travels take the Kanters to locations both fun (Disney World with the grandchildren) and exotic (Machu Pichu in Peru and the Galapagos in Ecuador). Their only repeat destinations have been Disney and Israel. They combined two of their interests when they square danced in Belgium.

Barbara, who had always loved to dance, learned about square dancing on Staten Island while shopping for a petticoat for her wedding dress. Norman agreed to try it as a new activity for their new life together. Three months after their wedding in 1987, Norman and Barbara joined the Staten Square Sets where they served as treasurers and presidents. They later joined Richmond Dancers, serving as class coordinators, and now belong to Al e Mo Squares. After personally teaching Mainstream lessons in their living room, the Kanters proudly watched their graduates join Al e Mos.

Norman's pre-retirement work was editing the *Journal of Taxation* and other tax magazines. Barbara was a teacher of grades K-2, music, and library. They have three married children and four grandchildren. Barbara and Norman feel very blessed with their lives overall, and they hope their grandchildren find spouses who will provide them with marriages as happy as their own and their children's have been.

**The Thompsons** met when they worked as physical therapists at a general hospital in Brooklyn. Both went on to specialize in working with children with developmental disabilities. They are avid theater-goers, subscribing to three different companies each year. Their special pleasure is attending script readings at the New Jersey Repertory Company, where they give feedback on new scripts directly to the playwrights. Louis also enjoys playing racquetball and Jan loves Jazzercise.

While attending the summer bluegrass concerts on the South Street Seaport pier, Jan and Louis were introduced to traditional square dancing. After moving to New Jersey, they enrolled in lessons through their local adult education program. They joined Star Thru Squares, and later, Country Promenaders, where they held six different positions, including presidents. The Thompsons currently serve as reporters and ad makers for Motiv8ors. Jan and Louis round dance at the Phase VI level, and their traveling is generally connected with square and round dance events. Their sons Scott (20) and Brian (22), square dancers for 12 years, are part of this dancing family.

The Thompsons fondly remember Jan's Celebration of Life, when they hosted a grand DBD Plus dance and luncheon with their favorite caller, Tony Oxendine. They also treasure performing at two National Square Dance Conventions with Red Rose, New Jersey's exhibition team for which Jan also served as artistic director. Louis and Jan have both global and national wishes: peace on this Earth and resurgence in popularity of square dancing in the USA.

**Grand Square:** When Charlie and Kathy Porter retired as editors of the *Grand Square* seven years ago, both the Kanters and the Thompsons offered to take over but only if another couple shared the duties. Happily, the two couples teamed up and work well together. Rumor has it that the women do 90% of the work while the men pitch in as needed with solving computer problems, proofreading, and providing transportation for the issues. When asked what brings a smile to their faces when they think about their labor with the *Grand Square*, each couple named the other pair. They also appreciate their hardworking production staff. High points are hearing people refer to the *Grand Square* as their square dance bible, saying they would be lost without it, and seeing people rush to read their new copies. Groans result from late-breaking modifications that require a great deal of re-working, losing Internet service, and printer errors such as missing pages. The couples express awe for the former editors who did an admirable job without benefit of computers.

The only "pay" our editors receive is a publication of which they are (justifiably) proud and the appreciation of their dancing colleagues. Let's double their pay by expressing that appreciation often!

Lise Greene