



The Hartjen family shares more than food around the dinner table.

photo by Chris Fritchie

Choosing the Best

By Travis Hartjen

“BEST OF” ISSUES are always fun to read and at times argue about. Oh, you never intend to argue about this kind of stuff but when you put two people in the same room, with differing opinions on what is “best,” you can expect to see fireworks in no time at all.

That’s what happened to me when I twittered my opinion that “Wish You Were Here” by Pink Floyd was one of the five best songs of all time. In a matter of moments a friend was calling me out, disagreeing with my well-researched and proven opinion (sarcasm intended). The fun ribbing quickly turned into a challenge; a few days later, and way too many hours invested, we each revealed our list of “Best Ten Songs” of all time. For the most part, the lists were completely different (when I say different, I mean mine was far superior to his). But we did find some common ground when it came to “Fake Plastic Trees” by Radiohead and a

deep respect for the band Wilco.

So, what about the best of Frisco? What are some of the “Bests” my family and I have found since we moved here about a year ago?

Ask my six-year-old about the best restaurant and she would quickly answer McDonald’s. I think she is motivated more by the playscape than the food, or at least I hope so. Ask my four-year-old the same question and she will say it’s Chick-fil-A most of the time, but not all the time. The mind of a four-year-old is a fickle thing. When it comes to the best play area, our kids agree that it’s found at Frisco Commons, which also happens to be the best place to feed the fish and go on an adventure in the woods.

We also think the best place for a family photo is Central Park just north of Gaylord Parkway on Parkwood Blvd. The Best Coffee joint is Frosted Java and their awesome staff. At the Frisco Ath-

letic Center, Joey is the best guy to check your kids in at the Fun Club.

If you want to take your daughter on a date, Steak-N-Shake is always a win. For the early morning sugar coated carb run, the Donut House is a must. Down Under Pub is a great place for a Pint and the Corned Beef Sandwich at Lochrann’s is by far the best I have ever had.

I could go on and on about the best burger (Go, Go), the best pizza (Chicago), the best place to have a romantic meal (anywhere without the kids) or the best place to pick up free WiFi (Frisco Library), but I won’t. While all these things and places are wonderful, they would be nothing without the people. What makes the park so great? The memories made with family and friends. What makes that pint so nice? The friends that we share stories and laughter with. It is the people in our lives that really make stuff “the Best.”

We have all experienced one of those Clark Griswold-type vacations where everything that could go wrong, did go wrong. I will never forget the family trip to Florida that we took when I was growing up. Our goal was to hit the road at a spritz 4 a.m. (my dad was an overly ambitious man). I had three older sisters who were in the throws of the teenage years at the time. It doesn't take much of an imagination to get the overall vibe of the family when we rolled out of the house at 5:30, had to stop at 6:15 for the first "pit stop" and then hit Chicago for rush hour which put us to our destination three hours late. Was it the best vacation? No and Yes. No, because nothing went as planned but yes, because I have never laughed so hard with my family before or since. Nothing may have gone right but we still talk about it often and treasure it as a family.

Besides giving me some great memories, that trip also reminds me to stay focused on the right things. We thought it would be the best vacation because of the destination. But what made it the best trip was the journey there.

The same can be said of our families today. We think that the best school, the best teacher, the best clothing, the best car, the best house and the best looks are the key to having the best life. We invest in these destinations hoping and praying that all the sacrifice will pay off in the end, only to be left wanting more. What we forget is that the journey is what makes the best life.

I see so many people working so hard to provide so much for those they love and yet they never seem to have time for those they are working so hard to provide for. I have seen it in my own life. Before we moved here, I would be gone four nights a week at meetings or youth ministry events. I remember my wife calling me on the carpet for it once. She had reached her tipping point and it was time for a "Come to Jesus" moment. I remember looking at her and with all seriousness saying, "I just want to be the best youth minister there is." She looked at me with a tear in her eye and said, "What about being the best dad or the best husband?" I didn't say much else for a few days. I had to sit with it and

come to terms with it. God was redefining what I thought was "best."

It has been a long journey to this point and I still don't have it all right. Truth be known, I mess up at it more than I would like to admit but by the grace of God, I am still in the game.

I have realized the best place to grow spiritually is around the dinner table with the family. To know about grace and forgiveness is powerful. To experience it with your wife and kids is far better. The best thing I can do to help my kids grow and mature is to have the best marriage possible.

We all want the best life possible. Be reminded that it is the people on the journey with you, not the destination that makes that possible. If you have blown it like I have, be encouraged that God offers do-overs and second chances. Continue to invest in the things that matter. And, if you are wondering what the best things in your life are, start by looking around your dinner table.

Travis Hartjen lives in Frisco and is a church planter at Water's Edge.



FriscO Women's League
can't wait to welcome you to the 4th Annual

Mother & Daughter Tea

Sold out!

We are delighted by the overwhelming response to FWL's annual event celebrating the relationship between mothers and daughters of all ages. We look forward to raising substantial funds on Saturday, May 9 for Heroes For Children, a Texas charity that helps pediatric cancer patients and their families in need.

FriscO Women's League is grateful for the strong support we receive from the North Texas community. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the following people and organizations for their participation and support of the Mother & Daughter Tea:








The Val & Maher Maso Family
Janet St. James, WFAA Channel 8
Doug Bily - State Farm Insurance
Play For Sport, Inc.

The Jana & Bart Crowder Family
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Danny Wilson - Allstate Insurance
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