



No portion of this article may be reproduced without
express written permission of Style Publishing Group, LLC.
©2007 • All rights reserved.



Style Publishing Group
P.O. Box 1676
Frisco, Texas 75034
Phone: 972.335.1181
Toll Free: 877.781.7067
Fax: 214.722.2313

E-mail: info@friscostyle.com
Web: www.friscostyle.com

Ad Sales: (972) 335-1306



*Rich Kinnunen with Felisha and Cody
photo by Chris Johnson*

a father's day to remember

by jackie beynaerts

MOVE OVER MR. MOM, THERE'S A NEW CROP OF DAD'S POPPING UP who have traded working in the office for staying at home with their children, a job that well exceeds an 8-hour day. Just like Michael Keaton's character, they juggle kids, housework and homework. Yet some dad's, like Frisco's own Rich Kinnunen, are going above and beyond the call of "dad duty". Not only does Rich stay at home with Felisha, 13, and Cody, 12, he is also involved in everything they do from driving them to and from school to being the president of the school PTA. And don't think for a moment that Rich has had over a decade of fatherly experience; he just officially became a dad on May 14, 2004.

Four years ago Rich and his wife Stephanie, were going through invitro fertilization treatments, when they decided to pursue adoption. After a disappointing start, they were surprised when

their social services representative called and told them about two children in Utah who needed to be adopted quickly. There wasn't much time to think about it as Stephanie jumped on a plane, and Rich and the family dog began the long journey by car that very same day. As Rich was driving through Denver, Stephanie called him on his cell phone and excitedly exclaimed that these were their kids!

Rich wasn't treading on familiar territory as he introduced the children to their new home and schools, but he assumed the position of dad remarkably well. By becoming involved with the school, Rich is Christie Elementary School PTA president and parliamentarian of the Staley Middle School band, he is able to talk to the children's teachers on a daily basis and stay informed. With not much education behind them and the lack of a stable family, including a father figure, Felisha and Cody could have easily fallen into a downward spiral. However, the children have thrived thanks to the loving home Stephanie and Rich have provided for them. Felisha plays the French horn in the school band and also helps Stephanie, who is a financial advisor for American Express, with office work. Cody is part of the all city choir and children's workshop theater.

Rich has had many jobs over the years, including being in the army, but the most challenging and rewarding career, by far, has been being a parent. His outlook on life has changed dramatically. Aside from changing the way he views television and movies, he also tries to look at things through the eyes of a child. Rich knows that his kids are watching his every move, so he makes it a priority to be a good role model while instilling good values. Bypassing the baby stages and parenting young teenagers is definitely not easy. Shying away from taking too much credit, Rich says he and Stephanie couldn't have raised their children without the unwavering support of their church, the schools and the great community of Frisco.

The adoption process was long and filled with obstacles, but after three years of caring for Felisha and Cody, the Kinnunens are now a permanent family. As far as Rich is concerned it feels like Felisha and Cody have always been his children, and finalizing the adoption makes this Father's Day even more special.

"... finalizing the adoption makes this Father's Day even more special."

Jackie Beynaerts is a freelance writer living in Frisco.