

Her Chicken Tender Is...

Ferdinand



Maggie Shoobridge/CITIZEN

HAYLEIGH, 2, is the chicken tender in the Watson family. Each of the seven children has a special farm chore and Hayleigh is the only one who can catch Ferdinand, so she does the tending.

Maggie Shoobridge
IREDELL CITIZEN

WHERE MUCH IS GIVEN, much is expected. This is just one of the philosophies Tim and Candice Watson embrace and teach their seven children to live by. Living in the Cool Spring area now, they moved from Pennsylvania in 1997.

The Watsons lay claim to being blessed, and they are, with strong work and family ethics. Tim is self-employed which allows him to work from home and still have time to tend the 70-some acre farm. Candice is able to work at her stamping, cross-stitch and scrap-books between her four daily loads of laundry, meal preparations and childcare. And the children, oh- the children.

Let's start with the fact that they all play soccer. The ones who are old enough, Brandee, Kyle, Tyler and Keenan, have all made challenge teams with the Charlotte Soccer Club, considered one of the most outstanding clubs in the country. Ethan and Dallin play on the youth development league and Hayleigh has her own soccer ball, just her size. Honor roll is standard in the Watson home and at eight, piano lessons begin. Each child has at least one farm chore and one or more house chores.

How can a family of nine do all this while driving to Charlotte soccer practices and games six days a week?

With careful planning, books on tape, not wasting time and using a spreadsheet. Summer schedule begins at 6:45 a.m. with "ball work." (Soccer talk for mastering the basics.) 7:45 a.m. is family prayer time. Each child has a day to be responsible for the daily devotions (handy that there are seven, days and children). Then comes breakfast, farm work, lunch and house chores.

Everyone, even Hayleigh at two years old, is old enough for chores.

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