



□ *Editor's note: This is the one in a series of feature stories about people who have returned with their families to their hometown of Imperial, after working in other communities.*

By Carolyn Lee
The Imperial Republican

The four sisters were congregated in the kitchen Sunday night, waiting for mom Kristi to feed them. It was a special treat, as she was blending ice cream, milk and chocolate sauce into a malt.

Sitting on the counter or standing around talking, they admired each other's milk mustaches and demolished the treat.

It was probably a typical evening for the McNairs. Alex and Kristi are on the go a lot with their girls' activities. The day before they'd participated in a district swim meet in town, Taylin swimming, Mallie missing out on the meet due to an injury, and Alex timing swimmers.

Both Alex and Kristi are area natives who moved back to Imperial in May of 2001. Alex, 32, graduated from Chase County High School in 1995, and Kristi graduated from Wauneta-Palisade High School the same year.

They lived in Lakewood, Colo. from 1997 to 2001, where Alex attended school and worked as a painter in Highlands Ranch, while Kristi, 32, was a cosmetologist in Boulder.

The main reason they moved back, Alex said, was that his family firm, McNair Agency, Inc., needed help. Grandfather Bill McNair died in January of 1999, and another agent was needed at the insurance agency.

In addition, their daughter Taylin was two and one-half, and the couple didn't want to raise her in a city.

In Denver, the couple worked one and one-half hours apart, and it took about that long for either one of them to leave their job after work and pick Taylin up at daycare.

Now, they work across the street from each other, and carry on an easy bantering—I can see you're not busy, so could you cut so-and-so's hair.

Kristi is a cosmetologist at Hair Effects Unlimited and can see Alex through the window at McNair Agency. He is a property-casualty and crop agent.

Now the couple has four daughters: Taylin, 10; Mallie, 7; Bryn, 4 and Landree, 3. The family is always busy.

Alex is a soccer coach, as well as high school boys and fourth grade basketball coach. He is a member of Jaycees, is on a golf league, and participated in a city economic development project, DAN, designed to create a plan to entice young adults back to the community to live.

Kristi also coaches soccer, is the fourth grade volleyball coach, volunteers at the Food Pantry, is a Sunday School teacher, has volunteered at SCORE science camp, and plays coed softball

and golf.

The family attends Imperial Bible Church.

Since both McNairs grew up in the area, moving back to Imperial wasn't a big adjustment. Kristi missed the 24-hour grocery stores until both local stores extended their hours.

"The traffic is so much easier," she said, rather than the 30-45 minute drives to work. "When we went to working across the street from each other rather than one and one-half hours away, it was nice."

Alex replied, "And Kristi gets to spend more time with me!"

Kristi enjoys all of the activities in which she and the children are involved. Alex also enjoys the family time, and "It's where I grew up, and you know everybody."

How would they sell someone else on moving to Imperial? Alex said the children get to become involved in so many more things than children in cities do, where they're limited to participating in one sport in high school.

Kristi said the value of the time spent with her children outweighs the convenience of shopping at 24-hour stores.

"I don't know if I'd have any regrets about moving back," Kristi commented, "once you put in traffic and all the negatives."

"I wouldn't either," Alex replied.