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## All in the Family

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# All in the Family

**Fitting 14 at dinner table is just one challenge for the Rueggs.**



**The Ruegg family is headed by two alumni, parents Tim and Peggy (above middle).**

a music major and Peggy majored in elementary education. Tim came from a family of six and his wife from a family of four.

When they were first married, Tim wanted four children and Peggy wanted six.

“We used to tell people we had my six and his four,” she says. “Then we had more than that.”

From oldest to youngest are Courtney, 22; Bethany, 21; Eryn, 19; Abigail, 17; Jordan, 16; Douglas, 14; Hannah, 13; Isaac, 11; Kevin, 10; Lucas, 9; Felicity, 8 and Noah, 4.

After graduation, Tim entered the Air Force and was stationed at Offutt Air Force Base. He started playing trombone in the Air Force Band and then began composing, two hobbies he still enjoys.

The family moved to California to start a music program at a Bible college, but longed to return to the Midwest. Now, the Rueggs have settled in Seward, Neb., where Tim is the minister at Calvary Baptist Church and Peggy makes use of her education degree to home school most of their children.

To help support his family, Tim is also the meat manager at the local WalMart. Though Tim has two jobs and many of the older children work full- or part-time, the Rueggs almost always find time to eat dinner together at their 14-person dining room table.

“It’s tight, but we all fit,” Peggy says.

Though 12 mouths to feed may seem like a lot, Tim says, “children are not expenses, they’re people.”

Tim Ruegg ’82 is used to getting double-takes from strangers when he goes out with his family. It’s not all that surprising, since Tim and his wife Peggy ’82 are the parents of 12 children

“We get everything from shock and awe to downright disgust,” he says. “When we go into a restaurant you see people stand and count us with their fingers.”

The Rueggs married after graduating from Illinois Wesleyan, where Tim was

His wife agreed, laughing about the two to three grocery carts the family fills per shopping trip.

“There’s not one [child] we would trade in,” Tim says. “And if another one came we wouldn’t refuse them.”

Tim appreciates the value of his family, the uniqueness of his situation and the blessings God has given him as a father.

“I would encourage dads to see beyond the here and now and look ahead, down a couple of generations to see that their impact as dads will last longer than one generation,” he says.

*This story was adapted from an article by Stephanie Effken originally published in the Seward, Neb., Independent.*