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Living

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of PRINCESS ANNE WOODS

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Meet the Rogers Family

of PRINCESS ANNE WOODS

By Lauren Borum
Photos by Sami Roy Photography

JOSH AND MELINDA'S LOVE STORY began in the digital world before blossoming into a beautiful journey that led them to Lodi, New York, where they said "I do" at an inn overlooking Seneca Lake, one of the Finger Lakes. Since their wedding on October 3, 2008, they've embraced each day of their 15-year marriage with unwavering love and commitment. This now family of 5 includes Alex (17), Lilly (15), and Jacob (12), who, like their parents, share a love of music. Like any band, each member plays their unique part in this family. Meet the Rogers family of Princess Anne Woods.

Josh, with his astute mind for numbers, embarked on a career in accounting that has spanned two decades. From his early days as an auditor at Deloitte in Buffalo, NY, to his current role as the Director of Internal Audit at Armada Hoffer Properties, here in Virginia Beach, Josh's professional journey has been one of dedication and growth. Yet, amidst the demands of a busy career, he enjoys playing the guitar nearly every day.

Melinda's path began behind the chair, working as a hair stylist while putting herself through night school to gain her Associates Degree as a Paralegal. She started in Buffalo, NY, before moving away. She continued to work as a paralegal in the northeast before being led back to Buffalo, where fate introduced her to Josh. Once married, Melinda returned to college to pursue a career in education. Since then, she has embraced her role as an educator with passion, touching the lives of young learners first through her work with Virginia Beach City Public Schools and then the Virginia Department of Education's VQB5 project. Melinda also spends time volunteering at her children's schools and serves as the President of the Band of Boosters for Salem High School.

Alex, Lilly, and Jacob each bring their distinct rhythm to the melody of family life. Alex attends the Visual Performing Arts Academy at Salem High School and is a student within the instrumental strand. He plays the French horn, trumpet and mellophone. Not only does he serve as the Field Commander for the Salem Marching Sundevils, he also participates in the pep band, Salem wind ensemble, and the jazz band. Music isn't his only passion. Alex is also an avid gamer and is a member of the e-sports team at Salem. Alex will be studying music in the fall at George Mason University, within the prestigious Dewberry School of Music. Because of his success in music, he was awarded the Dr. Linda Monson Scholarship Award. Lilly, a freshman at Kellam High School, plays the flute for the Kellam wind ensemble. Like any 15-year-old, she enjoys hanging out with friends. Besides music, Lilly's creativity finds expression in jewelry-making and thrifting adventures at some of her favorite thrifting destinations. Jacob, the youngest child, is a sixth grader at Princess Anne Middle where he plays trombone in the school band. He also participated in marching band this year, with an opportunity to play side-by-side with the Kellam Marching Knights. Like his older brother, Jacob is also a gamer and enjoys playing on his oculus. He also loves to hang out with his neighborhood friends, especially in the summer, where the kids swim and play all summer long. And then there's Zeus, the furry addition to their family, whose adoption brought unexpected joy amidst the uncertainty of the pandemic. "The day we adopted him, the news was running a story on a pet food pantry at that location, and we wound up on the news holding our new pet dog," Melinda says.

The family moved to Princess Anne Woods in August of 2020. During the pandemic, they realized that they needed more space and a home office for Josh. They wanted to stay in the Princess Anne Middle School zone but wanted Josh to have a closer commute to work, as they knew that eventually he would go back to the office. "We love living in Princess Anne Woods. We chose this neighborhood because we like how quiet it is, we love having a pond in our own back yard and we love having our own pool. The kids all have friends in the neighborhood, and we are happy they can ride around on their bikes and scooters safely," explains Melinda. Melinda and Josh have become friends with many of their neighbors and enjoy spending time with them. Melinda has also been a part of the neighborhood social committee, helping plan and run many social events like Easter egg hunts, family movie nights and the annual fall festival. The family has

participated in many of the social gatherings in the neighborhood, from Drinks on the Drive to the collection of canned goods at Thanksgiving, and monthly Bunco games. "Our family loves both Halloween and Christmas, but our house is known in the neighborhood as 'the Halloween House' because of the way we decorate it every year," Melinda says.

Their best memories together are when they travel as a family. Throughout the years, they always try and find new places to explore and take new adventures together. "We are always happy when we are adventuring together. When the children were small, we decided that we wanted to give them a yearly trip as a Christmas gift instead of lots of presents," Melinda says. Santa brings the kids gifts, but mom and dad give them a trip. Because of this, they've been on so many fun and interesting trips as a family. It was Melinda's dream to go to Hawaii, where they vacationed as a family in 2022. Josh's favorite trip was when they took the kids to Disney World in 2019. "We feel fortunate that we have been able to give our children experiences that we only could dream of having when we were children. Most importantly, we try and teach the kids that the purpose of work is to earn money to enjoy your life. Working hard is good, but enjoying life is key, especially with family," Melinda says. □

