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IPSWICH

N E I G H B O R S

THE FROST/SILVA FAMILY

VIBRANT & UNIQUE

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Photo by Terri Unger

THE FROST/SILVA FAMILY



By Terri Unger

Towards the western edge of Ipswich, acres of forest sheathe an extensive network of wooded trails where outdoor enthusiasts walk their dogs, mountain bike, run, and cross country ski. Conversely, at the eastern-most point where the sandy white dunes dip just south to Essex Bay, bird watchers and hikers enjoy vast open skies and the feel of silky sand underfoot.

The diversity of the Ipswich landscape draws many to visit, explore and for some, like the Frost/Silva family, to stay. “We didn’t set out to live in Ipswich per se, said Betsy Frost, “We ended up in Ipswich out of sheer luck as we found a house in our price range!”

Betsy and her husband Jeff Silva, a real estate appraiser and agent at Windhill Realty, had been living in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood of Boston when their first son Connor was born in 2000, and were ready to get out of the city. “We started looking at houses from Roslindale to Newburyport. We concentrated on the North Shore because my husband Jeff is from Lynnfield,” Betsy explained.

They fell in love with Ipswich. “There are the obvious reasons,” said Betsy, “The beach, beauty, history, but Jeff and I still comment on how lucky we are to have chosen Ipswich because of the wonderful people. Everyone is so

nice. Really. Ipswich is made up of all types of people with different socio-economic backgrounds, which makes for a great mix.”

Communities like Ipswich thrive on this diversity. Artists, fishermen, business people, newcomers, families with deep ancestral roots, all contribute in their own unique ways, making Ipswich as vibrant and diverse in its landscape as it is with its people.

Betsy and Jeff are a blend of rural and suburban upbringings. Betsy, from a large family in the village of North Bennington, VT, and Jeff, three hours southeast from a small





family in Lynnfield, MA, appreciate the differences between them. “Jeff and I get along very well because we are complete opposites. Jeff is easy-going and laid back and I am more of a “work hard-play hard” type. I think opposites tend to attract and I couldn’t imagine sharing my life with anyone else.”

Together with their two sons, Connor, 14 and Rowan, 12, the family has found a deep sense of place and belonging in Ipswich through a combination of civic, philanthropic and community involvement. The boys are active in local youth sports, both of them playing Ipswich lacrosse and summer swim and tennis teams at the Ipswich Country Club.

Jeff has been coaching both boys’ lacrosse teams alternatively for years and is now VP of Ipswich Youth Lacrosse. “This is my 6th year coaching. I love being involved hands-on with my kids and getting to know their friends. I enjoy the feeling of having a positive impact and teaching them to be good sports so they can carry that with them into adulthood,” commented Jeff.

Connor also plays on the Ipswich travel basketball and

Ipswich youth football teams. “I love being on a team and contributing,” expressed Connor. “I was quarterback for the football team, it was a great group of guys. Kevin Murphy was an awesome coach and we had a really fun 5-4 season. In basketball we won the championship with coach Gary Finkst. Rowan plays ice hockey for the local youth team, Agawam Chiefs. “My coaches call me Rowan the barbarian because I score a lot of goals. I really like my teammates because they are really good friends of mine. Hockey is my favorite; I want to be in the NHL when I am older,” said Rowan.

Aside from volunteering as a coach, Jeff’s civic engagement as a member of the Ipswich Rotary Club and VP of FRIES, a parent/teacher fundraising group at Doyon Elementary School, has been personally gratifying and impactful on the broader Ipswich community. “Ipswich is an interesting town. Everyone knows everyone, so joining the Rotary Club helped me to meet many people. Their positive influence throughout the spectrum of Ipswich is really cool,” Jeff said. “When working with FRIES, we raised much needed funding for technology in the schools. It was very rewarding to contribute in some way to the education





of our children.”

Charitable acts run in the family. Betsy, a successful jewelry designer who sells her work in retail boutiques nationwide, volunteers her time and donates her jewelry to raise money for schools, hospitals, churches and many non-profit organizations and causes. For the past four years, she’s been volunteering with the Service Dog Project (SDP), a non-profit organization in Ipswich that breeds and trains Great Danes to improve the quality of life for individuals who are mobility impaired.

“I grew up on a gentlemen’s farm with 9 brothers and sisters and we always had about 6 dogs at a time (we also had horses, chickens, snakes, birds, a pet crow and skunk). I rode and trained horses and bred Golden Retriever puppies to raise money for college, so when I met Carlene White, director of the SDP, and her daughter Megan, who founded the Equine Rescue League (ERL), I was excited to learn they were right around the corner from us. Connor, Rowan and I biked there and all fell in love with the place from the get-go. Connor and I have been volunteering there ever since.” It was the perfect match for the Frost/Silva family, who all share a deep love and natural affinity for dogs. They have since adopted two of the Great Danes: Scarlet (4 years old) and her daughter Mischa (18

months old) from the first of her two litters. “The beauty of it all is these dogs change people’s lives,” said Betsy. “It’s nice to play a little role in that,” added Jeff.

“I like volunteering there,” said Connor, “because it’s a great environment of people, really unique, and the dogs are amazing. I’ve seen my dog Scarlet give birth and named one of her puppies Gronk after New England Patriot player Rob Gronkowski. The puppies from Scarlet’s second litter, known as Starlets, are all named after movie stars. Rowan got to name the first puppy from that litter. “I named him Bing, after Bing Crosby because I was born exactly one hundred years after him. My birthday is May 3, 2003 and his was May 3, 1903!”

Ipswich is fortunate to have a big-hearted family like Betsy, Jeff, Connor and Rowan who contribute so much to the vitality and character of this town. “When I think of our Ipswich community,” Betsy remarks, “We all seem to be in this together, and that is a good feeling.”

“There’s no place I’d rather live than Ipswich,” concludes Jeff.



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