

Katy ISD Education

Love Stories

Husband and wife teams who share a love of education, make the grade both in and out of the classroom as they nurture their marriages and Katy students

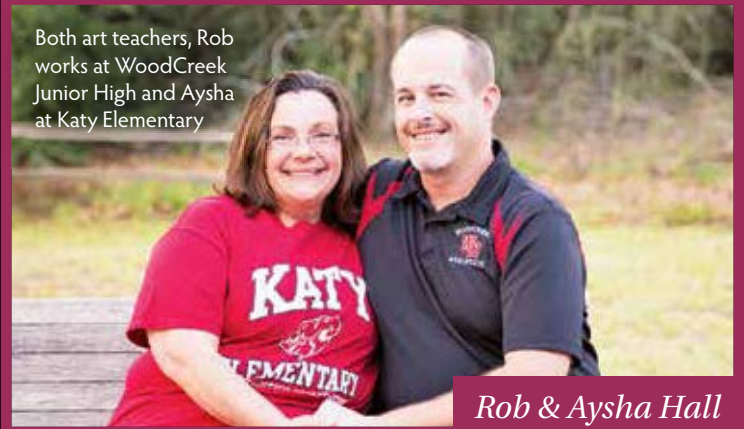
Written by Tassie Hewitt | Photography by Anetrius Wallace

Jim is a coach at Morton Ranch High School, and Crystal is a principal's secretary at Tompkins High School



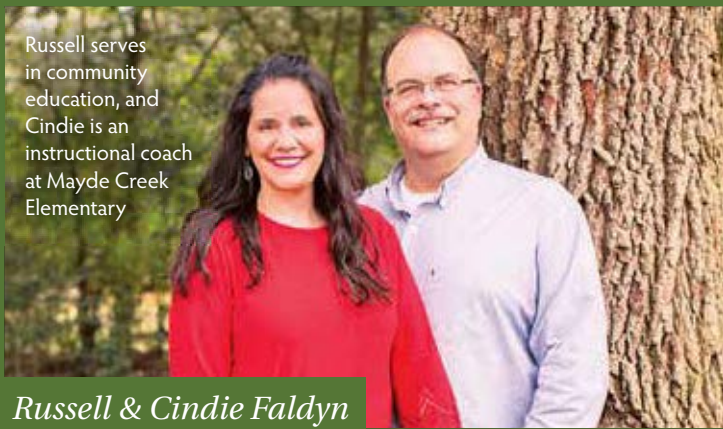
Jim & Crystal Janczak

Both art teachers, Rob works at WoodCreek Junior High and Aysha at Katy Elementary



Rob & Aysha Hall

Russell serves in community education, and Cindie is an instructional coach at Mayde Creek Elementary



Russell & Cindie Faldyn

Fredy is a Cinco Ranch High School Coach, and Carrie is a Katy ISD technology designer



Fredy & Carrie Sanguinetti

Both at Morton Ranch High School, Mark is a coach and Kelly works as a nurse



Mark & Kelly Balsler

H.C. works as a coordinator for Katy ISD, and Beth is a principal at Katy Elementary



H.C. & Beth Grimet

Jim & Crystal Janczak

Married: June 21, 1986

He: Morton Ranch High School head baseball coach

She: Tompkins High School principal's secretary

A Home Run

Crystal and Jim Janczak met as students at Sam Houston State University. Jim, who was on the baseball team, did not try to conceal his passion for the sport. "On our first date, he taught me how to tamp a pitcher's mound," says Crystal. "I knew from the beginning what I was in for and loved every moment." Years later, baseball still plays a big part in their lives. Jim coached and taught English at Memorial Parkway Junior High School, then coached for 15 years at Taylor High School, and today is the only original coach remaining at Morton Ranch High School since it opened in 2004.

The couple have two children, Jaime and Christina, who are both graduates of Texas State University. Crystal and Jim look forward to anniversary dinners at Taste of Texas, eating out at Carrabba's, and watching the Astros or Houston Texans play.

They attend school athletic events together and have worn almost every Katy ISD school color in their education careers. Their advice to couples is simple. "Enjoy it all," says Crystal. "We both love our jobs. We enjoy seeing students succeed at their dreams."

Rob & Aysha Hall

Married: June 7, 2000

He: WoodCreek Junior High art teacher

She: Katy Elementary School art teacher

Artistic Love

A shared love of art brought Aysha and Rob Hall together. They met at Iowa State University where they both pursued art majors. They married at a gallery surrounded by their own artwork and now reap the rewards of a common career. "We're each other's sounding board," says Rob, who says the couple often discusses project ideas. "We can really connect with the subject matter. We understand what the other is going through." Aysha adds, "Being a teacher is one of the hardest, but most rewarding careers. If you don't experience what it's like to be in a classroom for eight hours, it's hard for someone to completely comprehend."

"Watching my students grow, stick with it, work hard, and then reaping the rewards of their success is really good to see," says Rob. His students previously placed first and second in the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo art competition. "What I love is the excitement of the kids," says Aysha. "It melts my heart when kids say, 'I love you, Mrs. Hall,' and I tell them I love them right back."

The couple has two daughters: Emma, a third-grader at Katy Elementary School and Graycen, a seventh-grader at Katy Junior High School.

Russell & Cindie Faldyn

Married: July 30, 1988

He: Katy ISD community education and elections director

She: Mayde Creek Elementary School math and science instructional coach

Working Together

Russell and Cindie Faldyn met at Sam Houston State University where they were both studying education. Today, the pair has dedicated their lives to the education of Katy students. "It's home to us," says Cindie, who has taught math and science at the elementary level for 25 years. "We love the access to great places and the sense of community that embodies this area. We feel that serving in Katy ISD is truly our ministry in life."

The pair's excitement for education has spread to their children as well. Matthew is a student in the PhD program at Louisiana State University and hopes to teach at the university level one day; Kourtney is a graduate of Texas A&M who teaches at Mayde Creek Elementary School; and Makayla is a freshman at Texas A&M.

"Having similar careers helps to bind our marriage together," says Cindie. "We truly understand each other's daily strengths and struggles. We are able to walk in each other's shoes, give empathy to one another, and show pride for each other's accomplishments." As much as they have taught others over the years, the couple has learned a lot from each other. Russell says, "Patience, truly listening, respecting each other's opinion, laughing together, and most definitely growing in faith together," is what makes their marriage work.

Fredy & Carrie Sanguinetti

Married: January 9, 1993

He: Cinco Ranch High School girls' soccer coach

and teen leadership teacher

She: Katy ISD classroom technology designer

Designed to Last

Carrie and Fredy Sanguinetti went to the same high school. He voted for her for cheerleader, and she knew him as the cute goalie on the soccer team. They did not date until they were in college when he asked her to the movies. "*The Little Mermaid* had just premiered, so I accepted with the request we go see it," says Carrie. "When he confessed he liked Disney movies, too, I knew we were destined to be together forever."

"I knew I always wanted to be a teacher," adds Fredy. "The blessing is watching students grow up to be a great young man or woman." The couple helps each other both in and out of the classroom. "She is my everything during soccer season," says Fredy. "I cannot begin to tell you how she keeps our family together during this time."

No matter how busy they are, they make sure at least one of them is always available for their three children: Arielle, a senior at Full Sail University; Trey, a freshman at Full Sail University; and Roger, an eighth-grader at Cinco Ranch Junior High School.

They believe communication and faith in God is the cornerstone of their marriage. Fredy shares, "I try to tell her three things on a daily basis - how much I love her, how beautiful she is, and how much she means to me."

Mark & Kelly Balser

Married: August 13, 1988

He: Morton Ranch High School head wrestling coach and U.S. government teacher

She: Morton Ranch High School main campus nurse

Forming an A-Team

Mark and Kelly Balser met when he was 15 and wrestling for his high school team, and she was 16 and keeping score for hers. They married when they were 18. The couple both came to Morton Ranch High School when it opened in 2004. "A lot of people say they wouldn't want to work with their spouse, but to me it's an asset," says Mark who is the head wrestling coach and U.S. government teacher, while Kelly is the main campus nurse.

"This is the best nurse job to have," says Kelly, who graduated from University of Texas at San Antonio. Mark, a graduate of Ball State University, gets to know his students in and outside the classroom. "The sport of wrestling lends itself to a lot of things that helps these children in life," says Mark. "They learn values about hard work, dedication, determination, and commitment."

They attribute the success of their marriage to communication and humor. "We discuss everything with each other, no matter how small or large," says Kelly. "When you're married a long time, there are ups and downs. If you can bring humor into it and see the other's perspective, I think that's the key."

H.C. & Beth Grimet

Married: June 15, 1991

He: Katy ISD physical education health and outdoor learning center coordinator

She: Katy Elementary School principal

Elementary Sweethearts

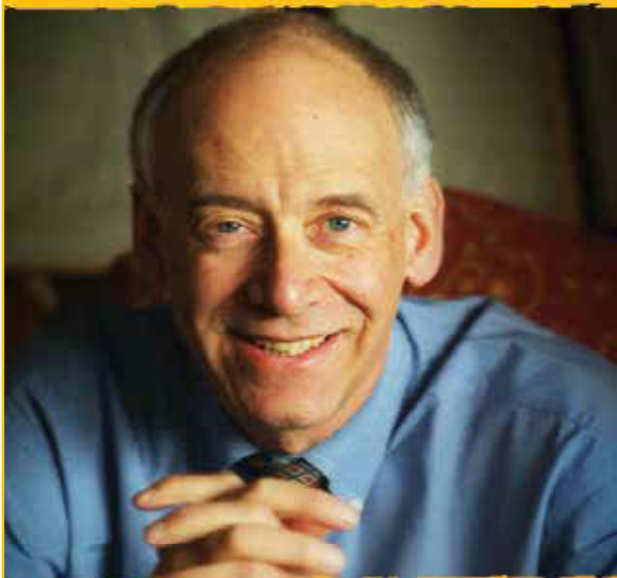
Beth and H.C. Grimet met in second grade and have been in school together almost ever since. They began dating their sophomore year in high school, attended college at Sam Houston State University, and even went on their first job interview together where they were both hired as teachers at the same elementary school. "The thing that brought us here originally was the legacy and commitment to excellence in education," says Beth. "We're both passionate about what we do as educators."

As principal, Beth enjoys the ability to help make a difference in the lives of students and staff members. H.C. values introducing students to new experiences, such as fishing and other outdoor activities. The two benefit from having similar schedules, which give them time to spend with their children: Conley, a freshman at Katy High School, and Logan, a freshman at Blinn in College Station.

The Grimets credit the success of their relationship to communication and a strong sense of family and faith. "We have that commitment to one another that we made all those years ago that we were going to stick it out through good and bad," says Beth. "We're always there for each other." **KM**

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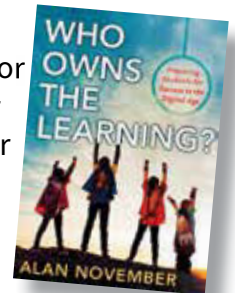


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