

From the Last Frontier to the Sooner state

Alaska couple calls Owasso home

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Life has been filled with changes lately for new Owasso residents Doug and Stefanie Jones, and the odometer on the couple's pickup truck shows just how far they've come.

"With all the traveling and looking at places and practices in the northwest and down here," Doug said, "we've put almost 30,000 miles on our truck."
"We didn't spend more than a week or two in one place for several months," Stefanie added. "It was pretty chaotic. It's nice to be settled somewhere."

The newlyweds traveled around the U.S. this spring, scouting out different locations, searching for the perfect place to begin their married lives and open their first chiropractic clinic. After considering a practice in

Seattle, the couple eventually chose Owasso and in September opened Northside Family Chiropractic on East 86th Street North where they both practice.

"When we finally decided on Oklahoma, we looked at all the locations that were needing chiropractors or growing pretty fast, somewhere that we could grow with it," Doug said.

"And Owasso is growing really fast," Stefanie said, "but it still has kind of that small town feel. Coming from a town of 30,000 it's nice to have the access to people and to Tulsa and things, but it's also nice to have more of that community, small town feel that we grew up with. It's important to us."

Both Doug and Stefanie grew up in Juneau, Ala., but Doug is an Oklahoma native. He was born in Ada and moved to Alaska at age four with his mother, who left Oklahoma to pursue teaching opportu-

nities in the Last Frontier. Stefanie, a fifth generation Alaskan, said Juneau, her family's hometown and the state capital, has about the same population as Owasso.

"It has 30,000 [people]," Stefanie said, "and it's isolated. There's no road out of town, so you either have to take a ferry or a plane to get in and out of the town."

"We can't even keep a Taco Bell in town," Doug added. "... We used to have two Subways, now we have one. We have one McDonald's. Its really more specialty stuff up there. They're into the arts and everything, so we have a lot of specialty restaurants... no real big [chains]. You know we don't have a Wendy's or Burger King up there. They all shut down within a couple years of coming up."

After their cross-continental move, the couple's fast food options have certainly changed, but



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Doug and Stefanie Jones both grew up in Juneau, Ala., an isolated town accessible only by ferry or plane.

Stefanie said the biggest difference between Owasso and Juneau is simply the weather.

"Up there they get about a hundred inches of rain a year," Stefanie said. "You could pretty much count on the days being rainy and kind of gray. Here you can pretty much count on it being sunny for the most part."

"Last summer, there were only two days of sunlight," Doug added, "the rest was rain."

Despite the cold, rainy weather, both Doug and Stefanie said they enjoyed growing up in Alaska, especially the hours they spent outdoors riding horses, skiing, snowboarding, hunting and fishing.

"You've got to be pretty creative," Stefanie said, "as far as things to do. We don't have huge concerts and big malls and things like that. If you're not into being outdoors, there's

not a whole lot to do."

Stefanie, the daughter of a chiropractor, spent much of her youth outdoors and in doing so, discovered a way to combine her interest in chiropractic work with her love of animals.

"I wanted to be a veterinarian from a very small age," Stefanie explained, "and I got exposed when I was about 12 or 13 to a man adjusting horses and doing animal chiropractic. That kind of made me think that I could meld two things—meld the family business with something I was really passionate about."

After completing chiropractic school, Stefanie took a course in specialized animal chiropractic. She is now internationally certified and treats horses, cows, dogs, cats—"anything with a spine"—in addition to her human clients.

"I really enjoy working

with kids [and] pregnant moms, I get a lot of personal joy out of helping people like that," Stefanie said. "But there's something really special about working on a dog or a horse, the gratification you get from that, they're so happy afterwards."

Life has been filled with changes this year for Owasso's Alaskan transplants—they got married, finished school and moved more than 3,000 miles from their family and friends in Juneau and opened their first chiropractic practice. But Doug and Stefanie's adventure is not over yet.

In less than a month, Doug said the couple plans to close on their first house, and it's going to be a true family home—Stefanie is 15 weeks pregnant with their first child.

The news, Stephanie said, has prompted her parents to consider retiring in Oklahoma, something Doug's parents have planned all along.

"Her dad actually called me yesterday and wants to know about the licensing process," Doug laughed, "because they want to move down and retire in the next five years and work with us, so I think the whole family is moving down."

"It's been very exciting," Stefanie said, grinning. "There's a lot going on."



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The couple works together to put the finishing touches on their new Owasso office.

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