

NEIGHBORLY

By Sherry Lucas

Josh Martin relishes the autonomy of the open road. His role as territory sales manager of dental supplies across Mississippi and Louisiana offers plenty of it. But when it comes to community, the small college town of Clinton has his heart.

Martin met his wife, Mandy, at Mississippi College, and they wed right after graduation, and settled in town. Still in Clinton sixteen years later, they've added Drew, 13, and Laura Claire, 10, to the family.

"It has the resources of a larger city, but it has the feeling of a small town," Martin says of Clinton, "and the people here seem to be level-headed and very down to earth." The family's active involvement in First Baptist Church Clinton is a big reason they stayed, too. "It gave us roots here."

Mandy, with an education degree, taught music at Clinton Junior High at the outset. Though pleased with the school district, she ventured into home-schooling their children four years ago. "It was something we felt

like, as a family, we wanted to do. It's been a great experience," Martin says. "My wife is great at it, and the kids have responded well to it."

Martin has worked with Ivoclar Vivadent, an international dental company, for the

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JOSH MARTIN

past two years and before that, co-owned a paint contracting business for more than a decade (his partner and younger brother, Lee, still operates it). He knew he'd still have plenty of independence with the dental company. With his boss in Metairie, Louisiana, "We're basically on our own," he says, with tools and resources from the company and support from his manager.



"That's what I enjoy most about it, just still having that autonomy — being captain of my own ship, if you will," Martin says. The job requires travel to south Louisiana near weekly and often one to two nights a week out of town. He tries to be back home by dinnertime and for kids' activities as much as possible.

Fabulous food and the unique culture of south Louisiana are among the interesting perks of his current post. "They know how to cook down there, so that's good," he says.

Asian cuisine is his top choice when he's not on the road, he says. In Clinton, family fun includes bowling at Indian Lanes and meals at China Buffet. His daughter has played softball, and his son has been involved in baseball and plays the guitar.

"They're both taking piano lessons, and they have a good ear for it," Martin says. It's a trait likely inherited from their mom, who taught music. He adds, with a laugh, "They certainly didn't get it from me."

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