

Dear fellow CHS classmates,

Seems like just yesterday we were actively taking CHS to a new level in scholastics, sports and attitude...

I've had a blessed life since those HS days and traveled and lived extensively around the world due to His grace. I graduated from the U of A after lettering in track, making 1<sup>st</sup> team All American and anchoring the U to its first of several college national championships in 1970. Since that time, I co-founded a shipyard – navy repair facility – in San Diego but was lured to the Greater China region to train for the 88 Olympic games by my younger brother and a close archery friend from Texas who was Taiwan's Olympic coach. I did not make the US Olympic team that year – was a finalist 5 times; close but no cigar – but won the gold when I met and married my wife, a former Miss Taiwan and well known basketball player whose father was the “Billy Graham of Taiwan”. We married in 1990 and I taught her archery which resulted to date, in her taking four world championship golds including the last three in Australia and Namibia Africa. We have lived around the world in the past 18 years including Taiwan, China, Australia, South Africa and Budapest Hungary. During that same time, we both made the US National team collectively 10 times and won 11 world archery championships on four continents including earlier this past April in Namibia Africa where my family won five golds and one silver at the IFAA world field championships.

We are raising four children who are presently 9, 11, 13 and 15, four of which are presently world champions while my 9 year old son is the IFAA world silver medalist against teenagers twice his age. Rachael, our oldest, was named to the Jr Olympic team several weeks ago and she and her siblings are training under Kisik Lee, the renowned Korean Olympic coach who has recently moved to the US to coach the US Olympic team. He has told Rachael that she and her sisters will be our best chance at a gold medal in London in 2012. Rachael, like her siblings, is a gifted student having a lifetime straight A GPA in a top 10 HS in the US while finding time to be a class officer, varsity softball and cross country team leader and top 10 ranked violinist. (Heather, a freshman this year, is also a class officer and top ranked in sports, violin and scholastics.) Rachael is aiming for Harvard Med and Heather U of A engineering, though it is early in that game. Our entire family of six made the US national team this summer – one third of the US team – and flew to Wales two weeks ago to compete in the FITA world field which unlike Namibia this past April, had team competitions. 11 year old Miriam made the finals along with her 13 year old sister Heather where, like March madness in the US, you shoot til you lose. She took out China's top junior in the semis while Heather lost to England in a close contest (on Britain's ESPN). Miriam then played for the gold medal against England and Heather for the bronze against China. Miriam lost on the final target as did Heather but in settling for a silver medal, Miriam was the talk of the tournament: reason? The junior division at this worlds was for 18 and under and 11 year old Miriam came close to winning it all against England's top junior who was 18. Likewise, 13 year old Heather shot against China's top junior who was 17. Hardy, at 9 ended up 9<sup>th</sup> in the world in the 18 and under class and Rachael top 10 as well. All four children are now poised to be the US top Olympic archers in the next several Olympics and my wife and I will most likely get to live our Olympic dream through our children in the coming years. One of my proudest moments was seeing the girls play the Star Spangled Banner for their teammates in Wales during each of three gold medal ceremonies won by members of the US team.

From a career standpoint, I have been the global president of several large US foundry groups which is why I have traveled and lived overseas so much. At the same time, I have stayed in the army reserve for 36 years and counting, made colonel and have been assigned to the Pentagon for many years. At this time, I am global president of the largest foundry in the US and live in Louisiana, not far from where Bill Thweat grew up. Li Ping and I are very involved in our church here as well as many non profit organizations who aim to improve the life of those less fortunate. Li Ping plays piano and Chinese harp almost every day at local nursing homes and our four children and I all play string instruments whenever possible at functions throughout the parish.

Our focus today is our family's relationship to God, creating learning opportunities for our children and preparing them for an increasingly globalized world in which they will excel in their careers, sports and music, regardless of which country or language they eventually settle in and use. Life is good...



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## Outdoors: Family competes in Africa

Jimmy Watson • jimwatson@gannett.com • May 21, 2008

And then there were six world champions.

In the Skip Trafford family that is.

It took a recent daunting trip to Nambia, Africa to do it, but Miriam Trafford, the only family member without a world title, captured one at the World Field Archery Championships by defeating European champion Daisy Clark of England 2473, to 2,423 in Bare Bow recurve.

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The Skip Trafford family recently captured five gold medals and one silver in the World Field Championships in Africa. Family members include Charlene, Rachael, Heather, Miram, Hardy and Skip. (Special to The Times)

Three additional members of the Trafford family won WFAC titles in Africa, including mother Charlene, who defeated the German champion Nicole Wiersch 1,666 to 1,460 in the adult female division.

Skip Trafford won the adult men's division with 2,183, while Heather won in junior females with 1,634 points and Rachel won in freestyle limited recurve with 1,906 points. The only Trafford not to get a world title was 8-year-old Hardy, who has a previous world title to his credit, who was defeated by 12-year-old Karlis Akots Gribulis of Latvia 2,109 to 1,950.

Other accomplishments of the Trafford family includes:

- Charlene Trafford was named to the U.S. National Team on Saturday. She is the defending world champion for barebow and is one of the few women ever named to the seven-person U.S. squad. She has won three consecutive world championships.
- This is the second time all the Traffords have traveled to Africa for the world championships in the past decade. Skip and Charlene both won in South Africa in 2000.
- Rachael won the Olympic (sight) division world championships, her fourth world championship in a row. She is ranked No. 2 in her class at Caddo Magnet, is on the varsity softball team, a class officer and a state-ranked violinist.
- Miriam's title not only came against the previously undefeated Clark, it came in record fashion. Miriam tied Heather's world record of 500 on the final day.
- All six Traffords have now won at least one world championship in field archery. Miriam previously had to shoot against her older sisters who now have moved into the 13-18 division (junior or young adult).
- Heather won her second world championships in the barebow girls 13-17 division, having won her first in Australia in 2006.
- Skip Trafford won his eighth world championship in the men's barebow division. He narrowly missed breaking his own world record in the animal round on Wednesday, missing it by one arrow.
- Skip and Charlene have duplicated their 2000 dual gold medal win for the Men's and Women's barebow division: the only husband and wife combination to win the world barebow title.
- At this world championships, the Traffords took five gold medals and one silver, the highest harvest of medals ever taken by a family in IFAA history.
- The IFAA world field archery championships are held every two years and rotate from continent to continent. Europe will host this tournament in 2010 and then it will move to Yankton, South Dakota in 2012. All three Trafford girls will be aiming for a gold medal in the 2012 Olympics during that time.
- Louisiana had more contestants at this world championships than any other U.S. state (this was also true in Australia in 2006). Scott Bradford from New Iberia took eighth in the men's compound bowhunter division.
- There were just under 300 contestants from 23 countries competing in the world championships.
- Rachael was invited by Olympic Coach Kisik Lee to attend the NAA's Junior "Dream Team" training camp on June 1 in San Diego.

**In your voice**

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*Trafford girls playing national anthem for gold medal ceremonies*

## Interview with the Trafford family—six archers competing at the World Field Championships

Llwynypia Wales – 16 September 2008

The Trafford Family in Llwynypia

**At the recent Field World Championships in Llwynypia (GBR), we had the chance to meet with a wonderful family of six, all of them competing! Explanations with Skip TRAFFORD, the father!**

### Skip, how is it possible that your entire family has shot in this event?

I actually have been in archery for 47 years. I had the pleasure of meeting former FITA President Jim EASTON and even his father. When I met my wife Charlene, I figured out that the only way for me to keep shooting was to get her excited about archery too. Fortunately, she was a sports woman already (playing basketball) and she really enjoyed archery. When our three daughters came, Rachael, Heather and Miriam, as well as the little boy, Hardy, we had them try archery at a pretty young age and obviously they liked it too! Although some categories are not official here, we all had the possibility to earn a place in the US team. It may seem like a family trip but in fact we do take this competition seriously.

### Have you done this before?

Yes! I have been travelling and living abroad for a long time due to my work (retired army colonel, now in the steel business). For instance, we have lived in Budapest for six years and we had the chance to do some tournaments in Eastern Europe, including the Field World Championships in Croatia in 2004. We also took part in a major competition in South Africa. Again, although it's a wonderful family experience, we really don't take it as a vacation. We want to compete the best we can.

### How do you all get ready for competition in the early morning?

Well... it takes some organisation but here I must thank my wonderful wife and the kids. Sometimes, Hardy and I must be really, really, quick in the bathroom in order to free the place for the ladies, but overall they do a wonderful job to get ready on time. I guess when you have a passion for archery it also helps you going out there early, ready to shoot on the course.

Multi-talented: Rachael and Heather playing the USA national anthem

### Five of you shoot barebow and Rachael does recurve, why?

I think barebow is the easiest way to learn archery when you are a child. It's also a bit more instinctive, a lot fun. Miriam for instance is a very fast shooter with her barebow. Archery is a school for life. The kids learn how to set goals for themselves, how to handle their own equipment. Then, when Rachael turned 14, we wanted her to try shooting recurve, because it is the Olympic discipline. She is doing pretty well and she is now in the US youth team and trains with the famous coach Kisik LEE. Heather actually will

have an interview this fall with the coach to see if she can enter the team as well. We all dream that one or some of them will make it to the London 2012 Olympic Games or later.

### How do you train at home?

We actually have a very large place behind our house in Louisiana, where we could install a 16-target course! So we are all ready to shoot at home whenever we want. I just hope the hurricane will not destroy everything right now... (Redaction note: at the time of the interview a hurricane was on its way there).

*Here comes Hardy, the son, running around from one bow to another!*

### Hello Hardy, how did you enjoy the competition today?

I just love shooting at targets! Unfortunately, I aimed a bit high a couple of times but overall it was a lot of fun.

### Do you think you are in vacation here or in a competition?

For me it's a kind of vacation but I want to shoot well. I am always in a bit of a kind of competition with Miriam who is only two years older than me.

### What do you expect for the future?

It would be cool to be a famous archer one day, to shoot really well. I watched the Olympic Games last month, it was awesome! I hope I will be there one day!

*Turning back to Skip*

### So Skip, Hardy is quite a boy... anything to add?

Sometimes, he has won the top actor position in his school play... He was actually named after Hardy Ward the 1969 World Champion. Back then, it was common to have big families shooting altogether on the range. Right now, a family of six seems a bit fantastic, but somehow it is a tribute to these families back then. It perpetuates the tradition of archery! So thank you for interviewing us and putting this tradition forward!

### Thank you Skip!

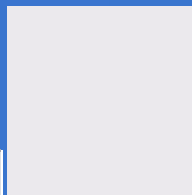
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## Family of archers targets Olympics



Several members of the Trafford family — (from left) Rachael, 12, Heather, 11, Miriam, 8, Skip, Charlene and Hardy, 6 — have won world titles in field archery. "Field archery is the hardest of all archery disciplines, bar none," says Skip Trafford, the children's father. (Greg Pearson/The Times)

#### The Trafford family file

**Skip:** 7-time world champion; 8-time U.S. National Team member; 5-time North American champ; 3-time European champ shooting for England (1 time); Hungarian National Team member (1999); 5-time U.S. Olympic Team finalist **Charlene:** 4-time IFAA world champ; 3-time European champ; 3-time North American champ; 1-time U.S. National Team member; 1-time Hungarian National team member **Rachael** (12): current world champion in juniors; holds every existing junior world record in barebow field archery; 3-time European champion, 3-time North American champ; Runner up to Heather in U.S. National Team champs **Heather** (11): 1-time world silver medalist; 3-time European silver; 3-time North American silver; 1-time U.S. National Team (adult) member as 9 year old U.S. National champ **Miriam** (8): World bronze medalist; 3-time bronze at North American championships **Hardy** (6): World champion in cubs at 4 years old; North American champ 3 times; Holds every North American barebow record in under 12 age group at 6 years old

By Jimmy Watson  
[jimwatson@gannett.com](mailto:jimwatson@gannett.com)

#### The Traffords are grooming their four children as Olympic competitors.

If you're driving through southeast Shreveport and you hear the William Tell Overture being played on outdoor speakers or you see a house with the Olympic rings displayed in the front yard, you might be seeing the Trafford house.

Members of the Skip Trafford clan don't shoot apples off each other's heads and they don't yet have any Olympic rings, but when it comes to overachieving families, the Traffords may have a corner on the market.

The sixsome are not only some of the best field archers in the south, not only some of the best in North America, they're some of the best with a bow and arrow in the world.

Dad, along with mom, Charlene, 12-year-old Rachael, 11-year-old Heather, 8-year-old Miriam and 6-year-old Hardy are currently in training for the International Field Archery Association World Championships June 11-17 off the Great Barrier Reef in Australia.

Rachael already has three world titles, as does mom, while Skip has seven and Hardy already has one under his young belt. Heather could take home her first world in Australia after finishing second to her older sister the last three years.

"I'm turning 13 this year, so Heather and I will be in different classes," Rachel said. "She's won the silver medal three times, but she should be the favorite for the gold."

Field archery isn't the same archery you see on television during the Olympics, and it's not easy to master.

"Field archery is the hardest of all archery disciplines, bar none," Skip Trafford said. "It is highly competitive and basically shot on a 'golf course' in the woods."

Numerous sized targets set at various distances over a prescribed course are used. The course difficulty is determined by the features of the terrain at the venue holding a specific competition.

"I have shot competitively for 45 years and have shot straight down out of trees in Slovenia, shot straight up standing in a stream next to the Matterhorn in Switzerland," Trafford said. "I've shot while being devoured by mosquitoes in Southeast Asia, shot next to cobras and baboons in South Africa and stood in water up to my hip during a U.S. Team trials in Ohio."

Their move to Shreveport a few years ago had little to do with his work and nothing to do with archery.

"We wanted to move to Shreveport because it is in the Bible belt," Trafford said. "That was very important."

Charlene Trafford, a former Miss Taiwan, is the daughter of a man who has been called the Billy Graham of Taiwan.

"He's a retired protestant pastor, but he was in charge of 135 churches in Taiwan," Charlene said.

Also important to the family was choosing a home that would enhance the Olympic archery aspirations he and Charlene have for their children.

"We bought a tract of land near Wallace Lake and intentionally chose the house to train the children because it was in the country . . . and the address was 10320 Goldsberry Road," Trafford said. "In archery, a 10 is the points awarded for a perfect shot and, of course, gold is the medal goal in the Olympics."

The Trafford children have been groomed for the Olympics since they were two, according to their father, and they've shot in world championships in Scotland, Hungary, Croatia, Australia and South Africa.

The children have attended school in Taiwan, Budapest, Hungary, and in Tucson, Ariz., but they currently attend Caddo Middle Magnet, Youree Drive and Fairfield Magnet. All of them are straight-A students in the gifted program and each plays the violin in the parish's honor orchestra under the talented arts program. All three girls are in all state with top chairs in violin.

"I've played the violin for five years. Since both archery and violins have bows, I love playing both," Rachel said.

Even though she isn't yet a teenager, Heather has endured her share of international controversy. When she became youngest athlete - at 9 - to make any U.S. National Team in 2004, she flew to Croatia with her father to compete at worlds.

But once there, the youngster was immediately disqualified by officials, who determined at 9-years-old she was too young to shoot on the field course in the Julian Alps. With support from

the US Olympic coach Sherrie Rhodes and officials at the U.K., France, Germany and Italy, the Traffords won their protest and Heather was allowed to compete.

"She then went out and beat a large number of adult women and ended up No. 22 in the adult division in the world," Skip Trafford said.

When Hardy was just 4-years-old, he was the youngest competitor to enter and finish the week-long world championships. He won the title, beating Heather for the youngest champ ever, after she had won at 7.

"He is one tough little boy and a tenacious competitor in a variety of sports," Trafford said.

The elder Trafford has been coaching his children but is preparing to turn that job over to former Olympic Taiwan coach and world champ Hardy Ward, the namesake of his son and the best man at his wedding. According to Trafford, Hardy Ward is the one of the finest archery coaches in the world and may be the children's ticket to the Olympics and a match made in heaven against the dominant Koreans.

Currently ranked first in the IFAA world junior division, Rachael has lost only four times in her life, while No. 2-ranked Heather has lost only to Rachael. Miriam is ranked third and Hardy is No. 1 in the world in his division.

All four children are now taking golf lessons and softball as a cross training exercise for archery. And they don't spend much time on a daily basis shooting their bows.

"The children actually prepare for any important tournament by picking up their bows a month before the shoot, and at that point they shoot every day," Trafford said. "But our family is too involved in work, church, school, music and cross training to train every day . . . and I don't want to burn the children out."

Charlene Trafford said she makes sure everything is kept on an even keel. "Our children definitely have a lot of potential, so we provide as much of an opportunity as we can for them to reach their goals," she said.

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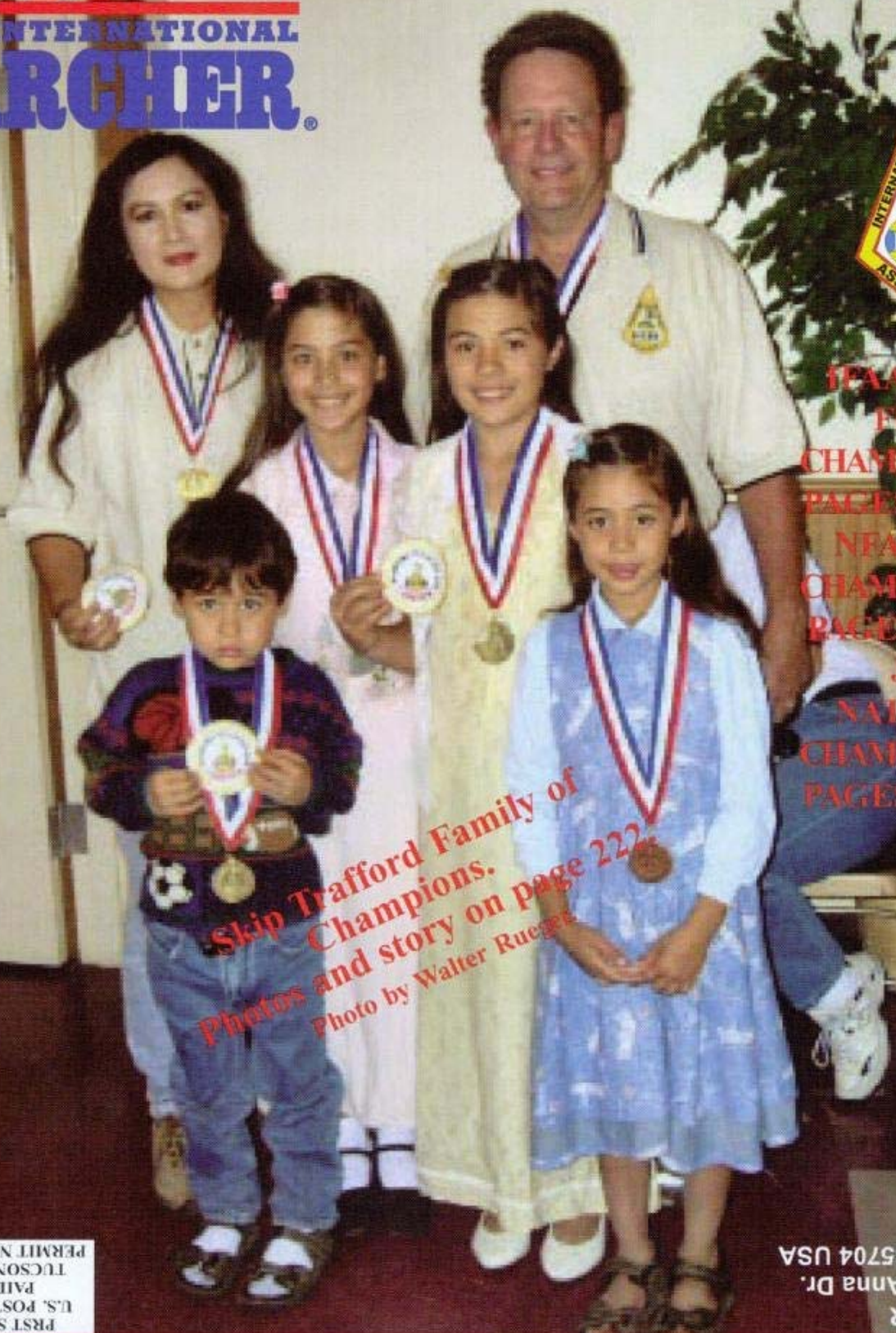
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**United States Team wins the International Field Archery Association Team Championships in the Republic of South Africa**

Photo by Walter Rueger

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