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Beauty & THE Beat

CREED SINGER **SCOTT STAPP**
AND WIFE **JACLYN** TALK MARRIAGE,
CHILDREN AND EMBRACING THE
SIMPLE LIFE IN WEST BOCA

AUGUST 2011



*IN ITS PUBLISHING CATEGORY US \$3.95

Photo by Amanda Tang



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Beauty & THE Beat

BY DIANNA SMITH

CREED SINGER **SCOTT STAPP** AND HIS WIFE, PAGEANT QUEEN **JACLYN**, OPEN UP ABOUT MARRIAGE, CHILDREN, OVERCOMING OBSTACLES AND EMBRACING THE SIMPLE LIFE IN WEST BOCA

He's a rock star. She's a beauty queen.

But perhaps this celebrity couple's most important role is as mom and dad to their three children.

On this particular summer afternoon, Scott Stapp, the handsome lead singer of the Grammy-winning band Creed, and his wife, Jaclyn, whose many titles include model, author and Miss New York USA 2004, are in their cozy West Boca Raton home, squeezing in a phone interview before their 4-year-old daughter, Milan, and 12-year-old son, Jagger, come racing through the door after a long day at school.

Jaclyn, who's spent a good part of her glamorous life on stage being judged for looks, talent and personality, knows that in a few minutes she'll be stationed at the dining room table, helping with some not-so-glamorous homework. Her designer bag is stuffed with bottles and diapers for their youngest son, Daniel, 1, and even though it's mid-afternoon on a weekday, she's still not sure what the family will have for dinner.

"We'll see what's in our freezer," says Jaclyn, 29.

The Stapps can likely afford to hire a cook and even a few nannies, but they choose to do things the old-fashioned way—taking care of the household themselves. Indeed, instead of opting for the entitled rock star life with hired help in places like Los Angeles, they've chosen to live here, among the manicured suburbs of southern Palm Beach County, where they're surrounded by peace and quiet instead of the drama and paparazzi that life in a high-profile city inevitably brings. And while it's not every day you learn that a rock star and a beauty queen live down the road, it's also fairly rare to learn that this rock star and beauty queen are, well, just like everyone else. Sure, Scott's arms are covered in tattoos and Jaclyn's beauty is so striking that it borders on intimidating, but this couple isn't arrogant and doesn't care if you recognize their famous faces.

Here they strive to be like every other family. They eat at restaurants like Olive Garden, catch the latest flicks at Cinemark Palace in Boca Raton and drive their kids to and from school in SUVs they bought to replace the Maserati and Ferrari they sold when the kids came along.





MEET THE STAPPS:
Jagger, Milan, Scott,
Daniel and Jaclyn



Photo by Amanda Tang

The Stapps spend weekends toting their children to sporting events (Scott coaches some of their teams) and, when they have free time, the family will take in a game or two of paintball at a Wellington park.

Not exactly the kind of jet-setting life you'd expect of a celebrity couple, but that's what makes the Stapp family so unique.

"Our first priority is our kids and the lifestyle we want to bring our children up in," says Scott, 38. "Here they treat us like normal people."

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— Scott Stapp



WHEN SCOTT MET JACLYN

Still, when he's on the road, Scott is anything but a stereotypical soccer dad.

He's known to his fans as the sexy, shirtless rock star women began to swoon over in the late 1990s. Back then he had his trademark long hair and this distinguishable deep voice that sold more than 26 million records in the United States alone and made Creed the biggest band of the decade. One of the band's most notable tunes is "With Arms Wide Open," which won a Grammy award for Best Rock Song in 2001. Scott wrote it after learning he was going to be a father to his first born, Jagger.

Scott's success with Creed has also come with some dark moments, which the media has aggressively reported over the years. Among them was a battle with substance abuse, the reported thought of suicide, an alleged sex tape and the band's

demise in 2004 because of tension among group members.

Then, in 2007, Scott was arrested for domestic assault, though the charges were later dropped.

"I definitely look at those experiences as ways to learn and grow as a human being," Scott says of his challenges in the past. Before anyone judges the Stapps, Jaclyn points out that there is no such thing as a perfect person or a perfect marriage.

"We live through the ups and downs in life," she says. "What you put into something is what you get out of it."

One of the ways that Scott works through certain issues is with his music. While the band was apart, Scott began working on his own solo career and kept writing music. Some of his most personal songs include "One Last Breath," a song where Scott says he bares his soul and inspires listeners to

reach out and ask for help when they need it. Another is "Away In Silence," which was inspired by his love for Jaclyn.

Creed, however, eventually reunited and released a reunion album in 2009. There's talk of another Creed album in 2012 as well as another solo album for Scott. He's already made the demos in his private studio here in Boca Raton. Scott is also working on an autobiography that he calls a summary of his journeys and experiences from his childhood through his career. (He grew up in a very strict and religious family in a small North Carolina town, ran away as a teenager and never returned.)

But he's not the only author in the family.

Jaclyn has also entered the writing world, recently releasing her first children's book called "Wacky Jacky" (available at jaclynstapp.com or on amazon.com). It's a story based on Jaclyn's life as a child, when



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people saw her as anything but a beauty queen.

She was born in New York but raised in a small Central Florida town and says that when she was younger, people thought she was a boy.

Despite her boyish looks, Jaclyn had always wanted to compete in pageants so at 13, she began to reach for her dreams and never looked back.

In 2004, she held the title of Miss New York USA and in 2008 was crowned Mrs. Florida America; she later placed first runner-up in the Mrs. America contest.

"I realized the power of winning a pageant title wasn't just about the crown, it was like a job. I had a responsibility to represent other women," she says. "It's not easy to stand on stage and get judged. It really helped me in all areas of my life and opened so many doors for me."

“When I first met Scott I expected this rock star attitude, but he was a very down to earth guy. When you get to know him and you see his heart, he's not this rock star invincible person you see on TV.”

— Jaclyn Stapp

This included doors in the publishing world. Her book teaches children that they don't need a crown to sparkle. Jaclyn didn't just use her childhood as inspiration; her own kids' stories about bullying were also a big part of why she wrote the book.

"It really hit me hard and it's sad to know how cruel kids can be," she says. "I wanted to share my true story and give a message that no matter what you look like, that you are special and it's OK to be different."

When Scott first met Jaclyn about eight years ago, he says he immediately saw how special and different she was.

The couple met at a Muscular Dystrophy Charity Gala in New York City. Jaclyn was in her final year as Miss New York and the nonprofit organization was auctioning off some of Scott's stuff for charity. The musician was smitten and the pair spent three months getting to know each other over the phone before their first date. Scott, who lived in South Beach at the time, knew Ja-



clyn came from a very traditional family so he flew all the way to Baltimore, where Jaclyn's mother lived at the time, to request permission to date her daughter.

"She just wanted to know who this guy was with tattoos and piercings," Jaclyn recalls with a laugh. "When I first met Scott I expected this rock star attitude, but he was a very down to earth guy. When you get to know him and you see his heart, he's not this rock star invincible person you see on TV."

The couple married at Vizcaya Museum and Gardens in Miami and recently celebrated their fifth wedding anniversary. Next year the Stapps hope to renew their vows—something they wanted to do this year, but couldn't find time between their busy schedules.

That's not surprising.

After all, they both work and are raising three kids. Between juggling Scott's concerts and albums (he performs about 60 shows a year) and Jaclyn's pageants and book tours (her mother, who now lives just a mile away, helps out when needed) the couple lives in a house filled with toys and Baby Einstein videos. Dad walks around the house with a guitar in hand, ready to sing to his children. Family time is and always will be important to them.

"We go to the beach. We play a lot of sports. We do things with our church," Scott says. "We're simple, man. We didn't want fast-paced craziness. We want privacy and serenity."

And in Boca Raton, that's exactly what they have.

KEEPING THE FAITH

The Stapps live in a gated community in West Boca Raton, where six years ago they purchased a large lot at the end of a cul-de-sac (for privacy, we will not reveal the name of the community).

On their property is a pool, a playground, basketball and tennis courts and a home theater. Their house is where their kids' friends like to hang out on weekends and that's exactly what the Stapps had hoped for.

At a prestigious private school in southern Palm Beach County, Milan and Jagger are both excelling. Their classmates are children whose parents are NFL football players, pro-golfers and tennis stars, so having a father as a famous rocker and a mother as a

FROM THE TOP: Milan Stapp; Jagger Stapp; Scott and Jaclyn Stapp at Russell Simmons' Kiss My Art Dinner Reception in Miami Beach; Jaclyn at a reading for her book, "Wacky Jacky."



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beauty queen doesn't seem to faze their friends, the Stapps agree.

"Everyone, at least in the area we live in, is a rock star so nobody treats anybody any differently," Scott says. "Jagger comes home from school and says his buddy's dad got in the NBA Hall of Fame and his other buddy's dad owns a NASCAR team. He's more impressed with his friends."

But Milan, the 4-year-old, is still very impressed with her daddy.

On most mornings, in the car on the way to school, she sings a lullaby Scott wrote for her as a baby and when he picks her up after school, she often announces to everyone, "That's my daddy!"

Says Jaclyn: "She definitely knows that there's something different and special about her parents."

The Stapps often speak openly about the importance of family and helping others (Scott and Jaclyn each have their own charity) and are also very open about their faith. Jaclyn calls herself a Christian woman and says the Bible is "kind of like a foundation for me." The family prays before every



meal, before every bedtime and each morning before school.

Scott has been so vocal about his spirituality that some of it has come through in the lyrics of his music, which has led many to believe Creed is a Christian rock band, but Scott says that has never been the case.

"A Christian rock band has an agenda to make other people believe in a faith," Scott says. "Creed was just four guys making rock songs."

Still, their faith is what's helped the

“ We go to the beach. We play a lot of sports. We do things with our church. We’re simple, man. We didn’t want fast-paced craziness. We want privacy and serenity. ” – Scott Stapp



Stapps grow as a couple and as a family. It keeps them stable and grounded.

Living in West Boca Raton has helped the family remain grounded as well. "People know who we are, but it's not like people have stars in their eyes," Scott says.

To most everyone who knows them around town, Scott isn't the cool rock star with tattoos and Jaclyn isn't the famous beauty queen who just penned her first book.

Here, they are what they strive to be: a loving mother and father.

Two roles they couldn't be more proud to have. ☺

