

# Adoptive family shares love

By JOSIE MUSICO  
Staff Writer

Anyone who claims that blood is thicker than water has yet to meet the Contreras family.

Suzanne Contreras' spunky pre-schooler and toddler are the lights of her life, and perfect examples of how adoptive families can be just as close - if not more so - as biological ones.

Stanley is a rambunctious 4-year-old with an interest in horses and trucks. He is normally fairly well-behaved, but his energetic, free-spirited personality occasionally forces him to be reprimanded for jumping on the furniture.

"He's always bubbly and ready to go," Contreras said.

Two-year-old Adrianna, on the other hand, is more likely to be found quietly playing with her dolls. Known as a girly-girl, Adrianna - who also shares the same biological mother with Stanley - loves dressing in pink and never leaves the house without her trademark

hair curls and bows.

Like most siblings, Stanley and Adrianna tend to have their squabbles, but couldn't imagine life without the other.

"They fight a lot with each other, but they defend each other against other people," Contreras said. "They look out for each other for sure."

Contreras and her boyfriend, Jimmy Garcia, adopted Stanley in April 2011, when he was just 9 months old. Adrianna has lived with the family since she was 14 months, but became the newest Contreras just Thursday morning with a formal adoption ceremony.

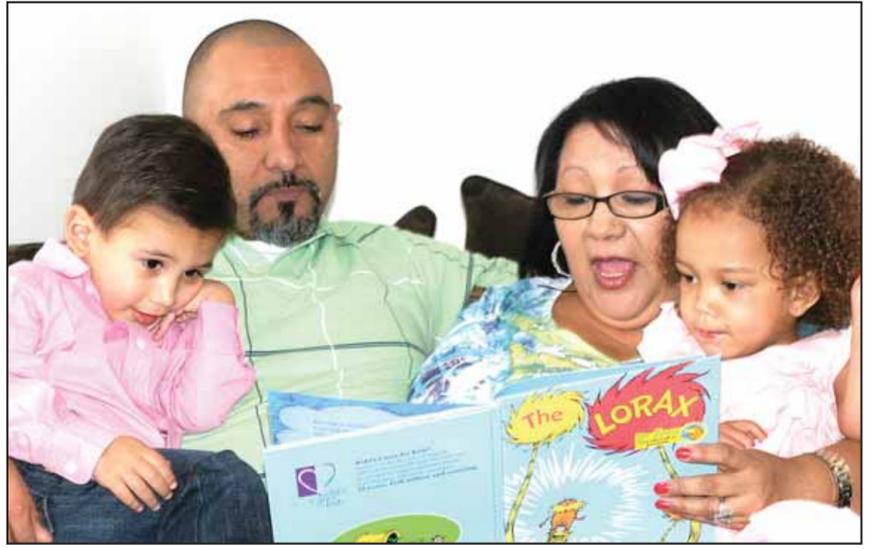
Contreras eagerly anticipated the day youngsters would brighten her home for several years before it actually happened. She grew up in a big family and wanted the same as an adult, particularly after she finished school, gained steady employment and realized she was ready for the incredible responsibility of raising children.

"I never had children of my own, and I always wanted them," she said. "I was ready, and financially I was stable."

Contreras began making phone calls to Child Protective Services to look into her options for adopting a child. The agency conducted multiple home visits and background checks, and eventually introduced her to Stanley, a then-infant who had suffered abuse and neglect at the hands of a biological mother whose parental rights were in the process of being terminated.

Like all new moms, Contreras initially feared the worst about her still-developing parenting skills. But worse, she worried about strains with the adoptive relationship that she thought biological families were less likely to have to face.

"What scared me out of my mind was 'What kind of mother would I be?'" she said. "I was worried they wouldn't bond with me the way a child should bond with the



Suzanne Contreras shares a story in her southeast Brownfield home with Stanley, 4, and Adrianna, 2, while dad Jimmy Garcia observes.

mother."

With help from the family's Lubbock-based caseworker, Sharon Helms; attorney, Barbara Adams and judge, Kevin

Hart, Stanley was soon legally theirs. And thankfully, Contreras soon found her fears were completely unfounded.

Both children had some minor development delays when they were first adopted that caseworkers attributed to the neglectful home environment in which they were previously raised, but have since straightened out remarkably. Contreras understands that being a positive role model

for Stanley and Adrianna will help make up for the care they lacked before she came into their lives.

"I'm not afraid of what they're going to become, because they're raised in a good home," she said. "I want to set a good example for them to be respectful of other people and loving and kind. I want them to grow up to be good people."



Local mom-to-be Marisa Morales (front, center) was honored with a baby shower from the Vasquez family Saturday afternoon at the Coleman Park Party House. Host, hostesses and special guests included (top row, left to right) Chris

Vasquez, Rebekah Rivera, Angie Garcia, Teresa Ramon, Billie Elizardo, Cristela Vasquez, Mary Valdonado, (front) expectant grandmother Reyna Vasquez and great-grandmother-to-be Olivia Vasquez.

**Bridal Selections**  
Katy Pinkerton & Nathan McCravey  
Jacque De Long & Brad Yowell • Kryst'n Beal & Tyler King  
Lyndi Roden & Derek Young • Jacey Dorsett & Chano Soliz

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## News Briefs

**Cub, Bronco and Wildcat fans** - Like what you see in the *Brownfield News'* sports pages? Call Brian or Josie at 637-4535 to order color photos in any size.

**Softball Coaches Needed** - Sign up to coach Terry County Girls Softball by calling Ben Carreon at 891-0956 or JoAnna Dawson at 448-8954.

**Energy assistance** - The South Plains Community Action Association has received additional funding this year for the Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program. To apply for help paying for your energy costs, call Monica Warren at 637-3712 or visit the local branch of SPCAA at 111 Ave. D between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

**Style Show** - The Chamber of Commerce Red Skirts' annual Spring Style Show will be held at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, March 19 at First Baptist Church. Tickets are \$10 each and available at the Chamber, Nelson Pharmacy, Classics Hair Design and Heartfelt Designs.

**Commissioners** - Terry County Commissioners will meet at 10 a.m. Monday, March 11 in the City Hall board room.

**City Council** - Brownfield City Council will meet at 7:30 a.m. Thursday, March 7 at City Hall council chambers.

**Basketball tournament** - A three-on-three basketball tournament to benefit local students will be held March 8-10 in Brownfield. To register, visit UCanBDa1.com.

**Computer classes** - Kendrick Memorial Library, 301 W. Tate St., will offer a series of free computer classes. They include Computer Basics from 10 a.m. to noon and Internet Basics from 2-4 p.m. March 13 and Microsoft Word from 10 a.m. to noon and Microsoft Excel from 2-4 p.m. March 14. For more information call 637-3848.

**Art Show** - The Brownfield Art Association's Spring Art Show will be held March 19-23 at their headquarters, 1103 W. Main St.

**Marketing workshop** - "Advertising: The Who, What, Where, When, Why of Advertising," the second in a new series of marketing workshops, will

be held from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday, April 5 at City Hall. Admission is free and lunch will be provided. RSVP to 637-4060 by April 3.

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**SUMMERTIME**

**ATTENTION LIFEGUARD POSITIONS AVAILABLE**

The City of Brownfield has openings for **9 Lifeguards** to work at the Brownfield Family Aquatic Center.

**To be considered applicants must:**

- 1) Be at least 16 years of age
- 2) Pay for CPR/Lifeguard Class \$150 due to City Hall by March 8, 2013 at Noon. Class necessary unless certified within last 2 years.
- 3) Pass the CPR/Lifeguard Certification Test (\$150 - March 11-12)
- 4) Applications must be received by Wednesday, March 6, 2013 at 5:00 PM at the Brownfield City Hall

Starting pay \$7.25/hour for first year guards

Depending on experience:  
Returning Guards pay as much as \$8-9/hour

**RETURN Your Application to Brownfield City Hall 201 W Broadway**  
Ask for Mary West