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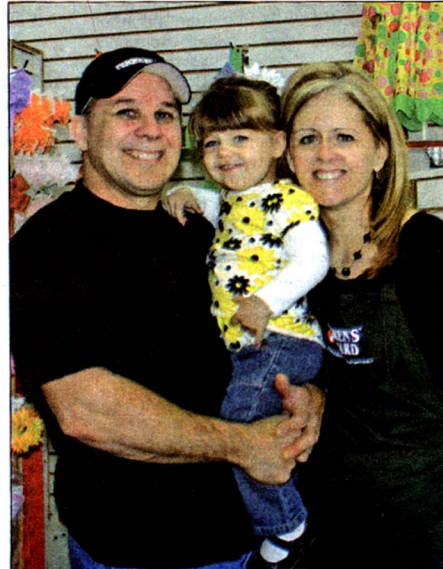
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## Busy mom becomes business woman



DANIELLE PARKER/OWASSO REPORTER



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Kari Hendrix, pictured with her husband Randy and daughter Shayli.

Kari Hendrix is a wife, mom and full-time working woman.

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For some, the thought of turning 40 results in a mid-life crisis. That feeling of reaching "over the hill" can translate into a tattoo, a new car or jumping out of an airplane. For Owasson Kari Hendrix, her "mid-life crisis" meant buying a store. A mom, a wife and a full-time employee, Hendrix recently took on the daunting task of becoming a business owner.

It all started two years ago. She was pregnant at the time and was excited about shopping for baby clothes for her daughter, but was not thrilled about the prices she saw.

"I thought it would be expensive to always buy new clothes for a baby," she admitted. "They grow up so fast, you will end up paying a fortune."

She stumbled upon Children's Orchard, a children's consignment shop, and the little store quickly became a place she frequented.

"I wanted nice things, but I also wanted to be practical," she said. "I realized I could resell items my daughter outgrew and then replace them. It created a cycle for me."

One day while shopping, Hendrix learned the store was up for sale. Immediately, she knew she wanted to be the next owner. While Hendrix's background is in accounting, running a business is not her area of expertise. Still, the idea of entrepreneurship intrigued her.

"I had this gut feeling," Hendrix recalled. "It was the only thing I had, but I couldn't let it go. I saw so many opportunities in this store. And that feeling just stuck with me. I knew I had the personality and drive to make this work."

Finally, she could resist the urge no longer. March 1 of this year, Hendrix became the new owner of Owasso's Children's Orchard.

The first few months were not easy. Much time, energy and sweat equity were invested. However, having her husband, Ran-

dy — whom Hendrix describes as a IT pro — on hand, along with a staff already in place, helped her get things moving quickly.

"Until recently, I was here every night and weekend. But I tenaciously stayed with it. We tackled it as fast as we could, day to day. I knew it would be worth the while and the wait."

On top of bringing the store up to her expectations, Hendrix maintains the position she has had for the past 14 years in accounting, which at times requires more than 40 hours a week. She also cares for her husband and now 2-year-old daughter Shayli.

"I am juggling everything," she said. "I knew it was going to stretch me, but the timing was perfect. I still get to spend quality time with my daughter. I bring her up here, and she plays with the toys while I am working. I have a career, but it's been very flexible. I have used some vacation time, and I can maintain my work from practically anywhere. Be-

ing a business owner has in no way affected me being a mom."

It has been an adjustment, but Hendrix says she could not be happier with all that she has accomplished in these past few months.

"Instead of sitting behind a desk, I get to be hands on and make decisions and apply what I have learned," according to Hendrix. "I've been in the business world for a long time, and it's surprising how much I've learned. And there is still so much to learn."

Hendrix will turn 40 this year, and with a wonderful family and booming business, that is all the thrill she needs.

"This was my mid-life crisis. It was kind of a major change, but it has been incredibly rewarding. It's renewed my spirit. I really believe that I can do whatever I set my mind to. And if I can, anyone can."