



A Field (and Neighborhood) of Dreams

by Matt Beardmore | photos by Maija Martin Photography

As a young Chicago Cubs fan growing up in Rock Island, IL, Benjamin Yeager dreamed of one day living within walking distance of Wrigley Field. All these years later, that dream has become a reality as Benjamin and his wife Juliana, along with their three children, Holden (13), Ava (10), and Ethan (7), reside in West Lakeview, less than a mile from the historic ballpark at Clark & Addison.

Juliana, from suburban Inverness, and Benjamin met through mutual friends while they were both in their early 20s and living in Chicago. They have now lived in West Lakeview for 18 years after residing in East Lakeview for three years and Lincoln Park for a short time.

"We absolutely LOVE where we live," Juliana said. "The sense of community is incredible in our neighborhood and we love that there are so many families that attend the local schools and are affiliated with the local kids sports leagues."

The Yeagers' children all play Little League baseball and are affiliated with the Hamlin Park Baseball Association. Holden was in the program for eight years – most recently on the Hamlin Park Grey Travel team – and now plays for the Sluggers 13U

team. Ava is on the Hamlin Park 10U Travel softball team and Benjamin is the head coach, and Ethan and his Hamlin house baseball team just finished in first place this past summer.

All three of the Yeagers' children have worn (or currently wear, as in Ava's case) the number 8, which was the number former Cubs slugger and Baseball Hall of Famer Andre Dawson—Benjamin's favorite player—wore during his six seasons (1987-1992) playing on the North Side.

The Yeagers recently had an opportunity to see Dawson's plaque at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum during a trip to Cooperstown, NY, where they went for Holden's 12-U travel baseball tournament. Before arriving in Cooperstown, the Yeagers' first-ever road trip started with visits to Toronto and Niagara Falls.

"It was magical to see such a special place with all of our kids," Juliana said of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.

With the baseball season over and with no Wrigley Field date nights and family outings scheduled until the 2024 season, basketball is now a big topic of conversation inside the Yeager

household – Holden plays for the LVL Travel Basketball Team, Ava trains at the Chicago Sky Academy, and Ethan plays at the Lakeview YMCA. The family loves attending Chicago Bulls games at the United Center.

"We feel very fortunate that we can drive right down Damen Ave and arrive at the United Center in less than 30 minutes," Juliana says. "Family outings are exciting and elevated when you live in the city. It was never easy to pop down to a professional sports game when I grew up in the suburbs."

The Yeagers also support many of their school's events and fundraising organizations.

"We love that our kids go to school right in the neighborhood," Juliana said.

Juliana and Benjamin, licensed realtors since 2004 and 2008, respectively, also love their jobs. They have formed one of the leading real estate teams in Chicago, Yeager Team Realtors® at @properties Christie's International Real Estate. They rank as a top 1% producing team by the Chicago Association of

REALTORS® with more than 700 properties sold at a combined value of nearly a half a billion dollars.

"We joined @properties Christie's International Real Estate a month before our due date with Holden," Benjamin said. "Juliana was very pregnant, but we figured we'd start our new lives as parents also with a new brokerage. Now our son's birthday correlates with our work anniversary."

Back at home, the Yeagers cannot say enough good things about the West Lakeview community where they have established strong roots and watched their family grow.

"Wherever we go we love running into people we know, whether it is on the walk to school, in the grocery store or even while dining out at a nearby restaurant," Juliana said. "We love that small town feel in the heart of the big city. We also love that West Lakeview is right on the boarder of North Center, Southport Corridor and Roscoe Village – we can literally walk to everything. Our favorite place to walk to is Southport Corridor and of course, Wrigley Field