

# A Rainbow of Cultures

by Alex Griffin



Immigration - it's an issue of many facets. This article presents five Texas-based individuals who, like myself, have lived the experience of this process. They have all come here from different parts of the world, bringing with them diverse backgrounds, interests and abilities that contribute to the fabric of making this country one of open arms.

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## Dora Nemeth Parrish

**Q:** Your history prior to arriving in the United States?

**A:** I was born in Budapest, Hungary. In 1984 my family and I moved from a city of 2 million people to Georgetown, Texas. Quite the culture shock. I did not speak a word of English, so my sister and I both were forced to learn the language promptly in school. Currently my parents and sister all live here in Austin; the rest of my family is back in Europe.

**Q:** What values did your parents instill in you as a child?

**A:** They have taught me the importance of a close knit family. We always had weekend family functions. We were very close to our grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. Overall, family was a priority.

My parents had always shared their love for music, art and theater with their children. From early childhood, they have introduced me to the symphony, ballet, museums, and theater productions. We had annual season tickets to the Budapest Symphonic Orchestra, and every summer we would go camping and attend the outdoor summer musicals.

Last but not least, my parents have instilled dignity and hope in me. They taught me to never give up and always follow my dreams. My dad is one of the hardest working individuals I've known. Due to his consistent and diligent work ethic, he has excelled throughout his career as one of the greatest entrepreneurs in his industry. He has been a great influence in my life.

**Q:** What do you do to continue the traditions of your old country in your home?

**A:** I speak a lot of Hungarian to my children to help foster their language development.

We keep an abundance of Hungarian children's books, DVD's and CD's in our home. On Christmas Eve, we sing Hungarian Christmas songs around the tree before the presents are opened.

They love to watch me cook and are already very familiar with baking Hungarian goodies. My mom loves to get them involved in her kitchen as well, especially in making "pogaacs", a type of biscuit.

Also, during the summers, my whole family goes to Budapest and spends quality time with all our relatives. This is priceless and is the most important aspect of honoring my birth land, allowing us to bring important traditions back into our home.

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