

Sleep is for the weak

Story by: Cara Brashears

Saturday: lifeguard, babysit. Sunday: private swim lessons, lifeguard, waitress. Monday: school, waitress. Tuesday: school, babysit, swim lessons. Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: repeat. For junior Hallie Breidenthal, this is a typical week.

Breidenthal started working at age 11 as a babysitter for neighborhood kids and family friends. Since then, she has progressed to having up to five jobs at one time.

The summer before her sophomore year, Breidenthal started her first full-blown, tax-paying job as a lifeguard at Tomahawk Ridge Aquatic Center. According to Breidenthal, she enjoyed the seasonal work, but decided to also take on a year-round position teaching indoor swim lessons at Lifetime Fitness Center.

"I wanted not only the year-round stability, but the extra income too," Breidenthal said. "The flow of money really helps me pay for car insurance, gas, clothes, and everything else. It means a lot more to me to be able to use my own money for those things rather than relying on my parents."

Along with swimming lessons, Breidenthal said she wanted to take her work one step further, and began to teach independently.

"I called family and friends to let them know I was doing it, and it kind of took off from there," Breidenthal said. "I love teaching the little kids, it's really rewarding."

Even with babysitting, lifeguarding, and swim lessons independently and through Lifetime, already cramming into her schedule, Breidenthal took on one more job this past July at Jon Russell's (JR's) Barbeque. Breidenthal's boss, Jon Niederbremer, said she is very charming and accommodating to the customers and doesn't let any other job interfere with her position at the restaurant.

"All that matters is what she does for me during my time, and she does a great job at it," Niederbremer said.

The cashier/waitress position is different than what she is used to doing at her other jobs, but Breidenthal said she absolutely loves the environment.

"My favorite job is definitely JR's," Breidenthal said. "I love interacting with and meeting new people. It's much more fun than sitting watching water, like in lifeguarding."

According to Breidenthal, the last few weeks of sum-

mer and the first weeks of the school year were probably her busiest. Juggling five jobs as well as her junior year homework load put a lot on Breidenthal's plate.

"Because she's so energetic, sometimes I think she takes on too much," Breidenthal's mom, Joni Breidenthal, said. "I really want her to enjoy her high school experience. We have set a few boundaries for her, but Hallie is independent and pretty much determines her own schedule."

Breidenthal's typical work schedule could be anywhere from 20 to 40 hours a week of waitressing at JR's, four to seven hours of combined private and Lifetime swimming lessons, eight to 12 hours of babysitting, and 12 to 16 hours of lifeguarding. This amounts to 44-75 hours, on top of school as well.

"I've cracked a few times, but I've learned how to handle the stress. When I have time I try and do yoga, it helps me unwind," Breidenthal said.

The stress may press on, Breidenthal said, as junior year of high school is known for the most rigorous and time-consuming classes. Joni said as long as she can keep it all in balance, it will be fine.

"I was most worried about how Hallie was going to handle it all. But for the most part she has juggled it all very well," Joni said.

Breidenthal did ensure, however, that her scheduling has a lot of variance week-by-week and should simmer down with the start of school.

"I've already stayed up until two in the morning doing homework," Breidenthal said. "Hopefully I'll get more free time soon, since lifeguarding season will be over and I won't be needed to babysit as much."

Even with the expected free time to come, Joni said

she still has doubts about her daughter taking on so much.

"I just want her to have a normal high school experience," she said. "But even so, we support her because this is what she wants to do, and it's good experience."

Although Breidenthal said some people may think she's crazy for doing this much, she appreciates how it keeps her busy doing positive things and builds her character.

"It's not only for the money, it's for myself. I've improved my time management, work ethic, and patience," Breidenthal said. "They're fun jobs, and I'm proud to be one of the few people that can say I really love going to work."

Left to right: While working at Jon Russell's, junior Hallie Breidenthal gives change to the customer. "I love working there and being able to meet new people," Breidenthal said (photo by Riley Obetz). Drawing with the children she babysits, Breidenthal keeps the girls busy. Breidenthal has been babysitting since she was in fifth grade (photo by Riley Obetz). Spraying down the tables, Breidenthal opens another table for more customers. "When you come into JR's it is really small, but everyone is really friendly," Breidenthal said (photo by Riley Obetz).

