



Ray Harrigill, 36, Owner, The SunRay Companies, LLC, in Jackson.

The year 1998 was particularly challenging for Ray Harrigill, and the road didn't straighten for his family until mid-1999.

"In February 1998, I opened my second restaurant in Pearl," explained Harrigill. "In April, I had a direct competitor open two doors down, who substantially impacted my volume. In May 1998, I became the proud father of twins. I was the youngest child in my family and had no clue! However, I learned to feed babies, change diapers and deal with sleep deprivation."

Three months later, Harrigill's daughter, Tori, developed a spontaneous gastric perforation — a hole in her stomach — and became critically ill. After emergency surgery, she spent more than six weeks in intensive care. In the year-long recovery, the baby's care required the use of feeding pumps, in-home physical therapy and in-home speech therapy to return her to a normal happy and healthy little girl.

Intensity

"The pressure during this time of trying to build a new business, being a new father and caring for a critically ill child was intense," Harrigill admitted. "Obviously, necessity of survival required hard work. More importantly, my wife, Monica, worked tirelessly to support my needs, take care of our children and home as well as maintain her own career. We both focused on one day at a time and trusted our faith in God."

Harrigill grew up in Southwest Mississippi surrounded by a family of entrepreneurs. His father, Don Harrigill, grandfather and great grandfather owned a variety of businesses that involved retail, transportation, welding, government contracts, funeral homes and real estate.

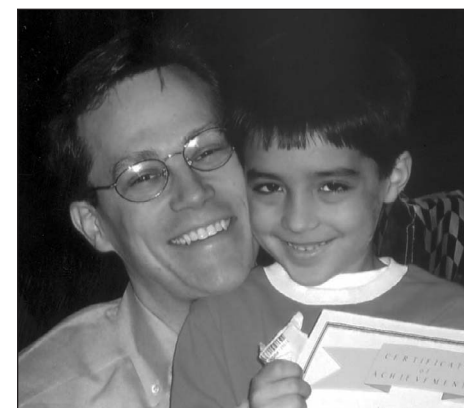
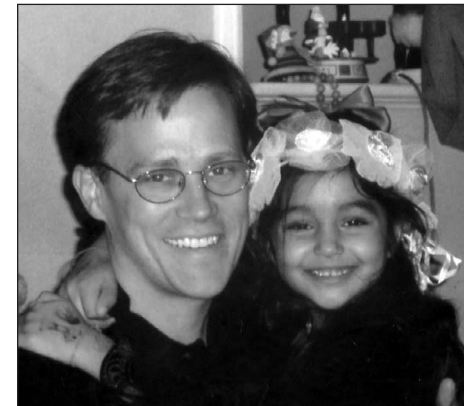
"I always believed that I would be in business for myself," he said. "My father always urged me to earn a professional degree so that 'when you get up in the morning and tie your shoes, you can

decide whether you want to work for yourself or someone else.'"

After graduating with honors from Brookhaven High School, Harrigill earned undergraduate and graduate degrees from Millsaps College in 1990 and 1991, respectively. In 1994, he earned a law degree from the Mississippi College School of Law, where he served on the Moot Court Board. From 1992 to 1996, as vice president of operations for the Pizza Inn division of the the family-owned Jackie's International, he supervised 26 Pizza Inns located in Tennessee, Arkansas and Alabama.

Diversification

In 1996, Harrigill established The SunRay Companies, a single-unit franchise of Bumpers Drive-In in Jackson. Today, the management group owns and operates nine units and employs more than 100 people in Central Mississippi through Bumpers Drive-In, Blockbuster



Video, Sunray Check Cash Advance Plus and Palm Beach Tan.

Harrigill, who has been awarded Bumpers Drive-In Franchisee of the Year, Palm Beach Tan Rookie of the Year and various regional awards by Blockbuster, is also developing Bellamare residential subdivision in Madison County and a four-store agreement with Palm Beach Tan.

"I get to pick a different career every time I start a new project," said Harrigill. "My newest 'career' is that of a residential subdivision developer. While I have some experience in real estate, I have no previous experience in developing a subdivision. I've learned a lot, but still have a long way to go."

Harrigill's twins, Max and Tori, are now active seven-year-olds students at Madison-Ridgeland Academy, where he is on the board of trustees. A member of Madison United Methodist Church, India Association of Mississippi, Madison-Ridgeland Rotary Club, Pearl Chamber of Commerce, Ridgeland Chamber of Commerce and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Harrigill is president-elect of the Ronald McDonald House board of trustees, co-chair of the Millsaps College annual fund giving committee and the 2004 co-sponsor of the University Children's Hospital Telethon in Jackson.

"Most everybody I know would be surprised to learn that I went to the Richard Petty Driving School for a day," said Harrigill, with a laugh. "I am not much of a NASCAR fan, but I sure learned that it is a serious sport. I can tell you it is a lot faster in person than on television. When I hit 140 miles an hour, I thought I was doing 240. When I took my first pit stop, they told me I was going to have to speed up if I was going to get my money's worth."