

CAROL'S CORNER

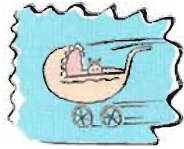
Although my surrogacy program has recently changed its name from *Creating Families, A Surrogate Parenting Program*, I am delighted to report that the most important part of this program has not.

I am still surrounded by wonderful surrogate moms, their special couples and the dedicated psychological, medical and legal professionals who assist this program to succeed in its mission.

This year has been filled with so much joy and excitement.

The surrogate mothers amaze us all, by their will-

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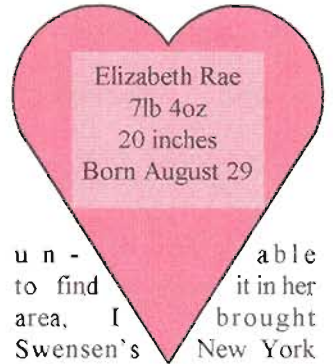
Special Delivery From The East Coast

In June 1994, Tammi delivered her couple's first child, Samantha Rose. Their lives were changed forever and it didn't take too long before Samantha's parents knew they wanted another child. Although Tammi wanted to be their surrogate mom again, there were two things preventing her from doing so. First, Tammi was pregnant with her own child and secondly she was moving to the East Coast. It appeared that it would not work out.

Well, after Tammi gave birth to her daughter, Hayley, she discussed with her husband, Carl and their son, Jacob the idea of helping her couple have another child. They were very much in favor of it, so she called to see if they still needed her. They were so delighted that she would be the one to help them complete their family. After all the arrangements were made for Tammi's medical treatment on the East Coast, she immediately became pregnant with Samantha's soon to be "baby sister"!!

With the signs of early labor, Tammi and her family

flew to Southern California as her couple and I anxiously awaited their safe arrival. Knowing that Tammi had a craving for her favorite ice cream and she was



unable to find it in her area, I brought Swensen's New York Cherry Cheesecake flavored

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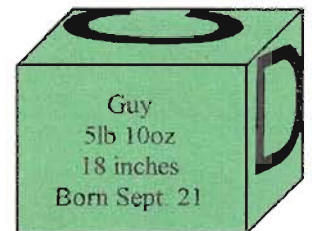


Stork Delivers Twin Boys In September

Many surrogate moms find the "idea" of a twin pregnancy exciting. They especially want twins for their couple, so they can give them twice the blessing of parenthood. But as we all know, a multiple pregnancy, as exciting as it sounds, can bring more than a surrogate could bargain for. Debbie's dedication and commitment to her couple and their twin sons she was carrying was limitless.

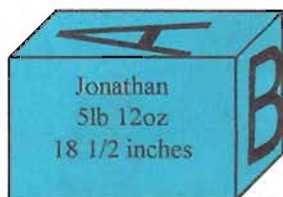
Soon after the pregnancy confirmation, Debbie was put on bedrest. There was a risk of miscarriage and Dr. Garzo wanted her to go home and do as little as possible. Debbie was completely dedicated to the pregnancy and wanted a happy and healthy outcome so she took time off work and followed the doctor's orders. When you feel perfectly well, it is so difficult to stay lying down. Not to mention, her children Kelsey and Colton, couldn't fully understand why Mommy couldn't get up and play.

When Dr. Garzo finally



ended her bedrest sentence, Debbie, her family and her couple were relieved. At this point, Debbie said she felt she had been pregnant for at least 6 months, and couldn't believe she was just ending her first trimester! Big Thanks to her husband, Mike, who was very supportive and understanding

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Dr. Rad's News and Views

"Well-Being and Surrogacy"

Building Families joins the surrogate moms in wishing Dr. Want much success in her future endeavors and many thanks for her participation in the monthly group meetings this last year.

Beginning in November, Dr. Katie Devlin will be taking over the monthly group sessions.

Welcome Aboard
Dr. Devlin!!

Also, beginning in November, the monthly group sessions will be held on the third Tuesday of each month. Fliers will be mailed to remind everyone of this change.

Vesna Radojevic, Ph.D., is a clinical psychologist who directs the psychology component of Building Families Through Surrogacy

Fulfilling the dreams of couples who wish to become parents is the mission of Building Families Through Surrogacy and our Surrogate Mothers. The psychology component of Building Families has had a busy year as we have evaluated, with care, who can become part of this valuable program. In fact, we have to date accepted only 50% of those we have evaluated. This stringent criteria reflects our concern for both the surrogate's as well as the couple's emotional well-being.

How important is the emotional well-being of the selected Surrogate Mothers? We define well-being as a sense that life has purpose, daily existence is experienced as meaningful, and a positive self-image. We strive to promote this emotional

state through stringent pre-selection, phone contacts, and our support groups. We believe that surrogacy is an enormous gift to our couples and we work to protect our surrogates from undue stress, while promoting an environment of support and belonging. Given all the potential "hassles" that accompany surrogacy, we feel strongly that our support groups and availability facilitate the transitions from conception to delivery in a community of caring, support and concern.

It has been our privilege to be a part of this program. The psychology team is here to help and for you to "lean on" when you need us. In addition, we are extremely grateful to all of you and Ms. Weathers. Finally, to help us continue to grow and develop, we are eager to hear from you. Let us know if you would like us to address specific topics in the future publications of this newsletter.



Pregnancy Update

The Stork obviously wants to work very hard next summer. We are currently awaiting 3 pregnancy test results and will have 3 more embryo transfers before the year end. Good luck to those awaiting their results and to those currently undergoing their medical treatment.

Here are our pregnant surrogate moms and their due dates:

Kim January 7
Shirley January 23



Happy Birthday!!!!

Jennifer Sept. 17
Christine Dec. 24
Jen Jan. 23
Shirley Jan. 29
Carolyn Jan. 31

Best Wishes to everyone celebrating in the next few months.

WELCOME ABOARD!!!

We welcome these surrogate moms and wish them speedy success!!!

Jen
Christine Monica
Michele Jennifer

East Coast

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ice cream to her once she was settled in the condo. I doubt that she was able to eat much of it as she delivered soon thereafter!

Tammi's wonderfully attentive husband, Carl, stayed by her bedside throughout her entire labor. After her new best friend arrived, the anesthesiologist, we all stepped out of the room so he could work his magic and relieve her of the labor

pains. But only seconds later, Carl runs out of the room yelling for us to come back NOW! as Tammi was delivering at that moment.

Luckily, Elizabeth Rae's parents, grandparents and I made it back into the room in time. Even at her birth, Elizabeth was pulling a fast one on her parents. I wonder how many more surprises she has in store for her

parents?! We'll check back and ask in about 15 years!

Congratulations to Tammi and her couple in creating such a beautiful family!!



SPECIAL THOUGHTS

When I heard this very happy Grandma share her gratefulness with Debbie, I was reminded again of how many lives are affected by these wonderful surrogate moms and their beautiful selfless act of giving. There are so many anticipating the birth of these children. Besides the couple, there may be a sibling anxiously awaiting their new brother or sister to come home. And of course there are grandparents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, friends... the list is endless. I have only endless praises for these truly special women and their families who support them in making the dreams of so many come true!!

Carol Weathers



Stork Delivers Twins

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throughout this difficult time.

Debbie faxed and called to Israel regularly to communicate with her couple. It was easy to see that a relationship was developing that would last a lifetime. Her couple traveled to Southern California several times during the pregnancy and came several weeks before Debbie's due date to await the arrival of their sons. They were amazed at how Debbie was still so active. We were all amazed!!

We all got together on a Saturday afternoon to take our kids swimming and to play at the park. I will always remember how Debbie was pushing the kids on the swings, helping them up and down the slide, while the rest of us just watched her in awe. She never seemed to tire. But, that is how Debbie handled herself throughout her entire pregnancy. With ease and style!

Well, that very night,

Debbie's labor began. The doctor arrived and told Debbie that they could attempt a vaginal delivery as the babies were positioned perfectly, which made her very happy. Our amazement of Debbie continued as she labored for many hours without an epidural! When the doctor finally told Debbie she could push those babies out, Mom was right there when her first son, Jonathan, was born and both Mom and Dad were there when Guy was born. Neither parent could find the words to describe their experience. Carolyn, Debbie's sister, was an outstanding coach who stayed by Debbie's side throughout her labor and delivery.

Jonathan & Guy's grandmother, aunt and uncle anxiously awaited their arrival in the waiting room. At one point, Debbie's entourage of fans occupied all the space in the waiting room! When Debbie was resting in her room, Jonathan & Guy's

Grandma asked me to take her to Debbie as she had to speak with her right away.

She touched Debbie's face, held her hand and began to cry. Through tears of joy, she told Debbie that she had waited 12 years for her grandsons and wanted to thank her from her heart.

Wow, Debbie, Way to Go!

Congratulations to you
and your couple!!



Happy Holidays !!!

Building Families wishes everyone a joyous holiday season. May Santa be generous to you and your children and may the New Year be filled with many "little" blessings!



Carol's Corner

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ingness to do all that is necessary to achieve the pregnancy and maintain it. There are many sacrifices that are made by everyone involved, but when we see Mom & Dad hold their baby for the first time, we know it was all

worthwhile.

I wish to thank all those who shared their time, support and expertise with me this past year. Your efforts have improved the quality of this program at least a hundred-fold!!!

Special thanks to:
Susan and Kim for their daily assistance,
Shirley for sharing

her computer talents,
Andee for creating a website that I am very proud to have,

My husband, John and my kids, Laura, Jennifer and Johnny for your continued involvement and support of Building Families.

Carol