

## Carol's Corner

When is the next newsletter?? I hear that quite often. Although I do not write this newsletter frequently, you can always stay up-to-date by checking out our website. With the reminders I receive from our webmaster on a regular basis, the website remains a great source for current events in the world of Building Families. I have arrived from what seems like prehistoric times to finally embrace the world wide web and all its wonders. Thank you Keith! The format of our future newsletters will change as it will only highlight each of our Surrogate Mom's journeys as their entire story including lots of pictures will be posted on our website.

As many of you already know, I spent 5 weeks in Spain this past July. It was the best trip ever for myself and my family! Although the sights were incredible, the most memorable moments for us revolved around the time we spent with the families we helped to build. I say we in a very broad sense. We, as in

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Alvaro & Ignacio

## Three's Company



Chase

Chase arrived December 26, 2000 after a fun-filled and exciting 9 months...plus a week! His parents, like many of our other new parents, knew he would not be an

only child. Their eagerness to start again overshadowed any doubt that sooner rather than later was what they wanted.

So as Chase was rapidly approaching his "Terrible Twos", so was



the due date of their twins! November 12, 2002 marked the end of Chase's only child syndrome, and soon thereafter changed his life forever. He was curious and intrigued at first, but after a while, he was ready for them to go away!

Fortunately, he now has taken nicely to his baby brother, Kyle and baby sister, Ella. They weighed in at 6lb 1oz and 6lb 6oz, respectively.

This second pregnancy was quite the media event. I had to call Sam's "people" in order to get an appointment to speak with her! No, it wasn't like that, but we sure

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## A Riddle

What do you get when you combine the birth weights of this Mom, Dad and their dog?

Still less weight than their baby girl who weighed in at 8lb 4oz!!



Chris, John and their girls Brooke and Nicole came through once again, bringing yet another baby girl into this world. You'll



recall from her last birth story that Brooke & Nicole believe that their Mom only knows how to make girls. They were proven right again on November 5, 2002 when Emma arrived.



While Chris was pregnant, her Couple called me with the desire to do something really special for Chris. I was thinking flowers or a day at the spa, but they came up

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## Marta's Vacation

I wonder if Marta initially understood why she traveled from Spain to California. Although everyone kept speaking about the baby that was coming, she was busy having such a good time visiting the many places that Southern California offers. All she seemed to know is this was the best vacation she had ever had. Then suddenly on August 28, 2003 things changed in a big way.



At first she was only slightly interested in her new baby sister, but as the days passed she became very possessive of little Ester who weighed in at 5lb 8oz. I'm sure the day will come when she will realize how important this trip was to her and her family. It brought her a sister to share her life with and

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## Dr. Rad's News and Views



### "Our Newest Addition: The Egg Donor Program"

As is almost always the case, the Egg Donor Program was developed out of our reaction to not having any reliable program that we could use for our Intended Parents who needed this service. When Carol and I discussed adding this service to Building Families, I remember wondering if we could manage this new program without affecting the quality of work we were doing with the Surrogacy Program. After many meetings, we decided that not only could we do it, but we would do it well and be the best in this field.

Similar to the Surrogacy Program, all Intended Parents and Egg Donors must meet a strict criteria to participate in our Egg Donor Program. Carol Weathers performs all of the initial screenings and then once they are approved, Melissa Lund takes over the management of each individual case. Melissa is truly a fantastic case manager! We have staff that are dedicated to the recruitment of the Egg Donors that is primarily run by Tami Reyes. The process is explained thoroughly to each Egg Donor applicant to ensure they are aware of and in agreement to the commitment involved.

The process of the Egg Donor Program begins with a rigorous psychological screening for the Egg Donor applicant. In addition, the Intended Parents are counseled throughout their participation to ensure they are prepared to embrace the fine gift of egg donation without any psychological issues. Once they have cleared the initial psychological screening, then they proceed to the medical side of the process.

Indeed, the high standards that we have for our Surrogacy Program continue in the new Egg Donor Program. We are excited about this new addition and expect that it will thrive with the same quality as has the Surrogacy Program. We appreciate everyone's feedback on all aspects of our Programs. It is you that help us to refine our work at Building Families. We value all contributions as it helps us to promote the very best services available. Thank you for your support as we grow yet another valuable program. Have a happy and safe Holiday Season. As Always,

*Dr. Rad*

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



### Pregnancy Update

*Here are our pregnant surrogate moms and their due dates:*

<i>Vanesa</i>	<i>Nov. 16, 2003</i>
<i>Noemi</i>	<i>Feb. 3, 2004</i>
<i>Holly</i>	<i>Feb. 14, 2004</i>
<i>Miriam</i>	<i>Feb. 18, 2004</i>
<i>Michelle</i>	<i>Feb. 25, 2004</i>
<i>Jennifer</i>	<i>May 4, 2004</i>
<i>Leticia</i>	<i>June 18, 2004</i>

*And we are waiting for several results, so keep your fingers crossed!!!*

### Carol's Corner

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Building Families which includes the professionals and most importantly the Surrogate Mothers. But also "we" as in my husband, John and our kids, Jenny & Johnny. Their support has allowed me to be personally involved in every case that enters our program and together we establish beautiful relationships with many of the new parents of our program.

Our trip began in Madrid where we were so well taken care of by the family of Jaime, Alvaro & Ignacio. They hosted a reunion for the families who lived relatively close to Madrid which was absolutely wonderful. It was amazing to see these kids ranging from 1 to 4 years old and their very, very proud parents. Dr. Diana Guerra asked that I participate in the ESHRE conference in Madrid. That was very enlightening as I met with professionals that described to me how difficult it is and in some cases impossible to offer surrogacy and egg donation to their patients in their different countries. It was clear how fortunate we are in California as we have world renowned infertility specialists and a

legal climate that is favorable to surrogacy and egg donation.

Then Arnau's parents gave us a car and a map and sent us on our way to visit the rest of Spain. Oh, and a cell phone! Which came in handy when we were lost in the middle of the night. Since Arnau was still getting up at night we didn't feel too bad calling at 1:00am asking for directions! Haha!

Eventually we made our way to Barcelona where we had another reunion hosted by Arnau's parents. There were many kids there too ranging from 6 months to almost 6 years old! I thought I was dreaming! Every moment was so wonderful. I want to thank all of the families we visited for hosting myself and my family during our whirlwind visits to your cities. And more than that, I thank you for continuing to share your precious lives with me. Also, the pictures and notes you send throughout the year bring so much joy! Thank you, thank you!

You will see some pictures throughout the newsletter, but to see the many pictures I take, log on to our website at [www.bldgfams.com](http://www.bldgfams.com).



Carlota



Arnau & Irene hanging out

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### Hand-Me-Downs

It seems like our babies get little use from all of their clothes before they outgrow them. We have all either received or have given away these clothes, so another baby could get good use from them. Well, Arnau's grandmother had a slightly different idea. She saved the clothes that she treasured the most from her son's childhood. She saved them specifically for the grandson that she knew she would have one day. That day came on January 8, 2003 when Arnau arrived weighing 9lb 6oz.



Dr. Carlson giving Angelic the great news that she is carrying a healthy baby boy!

Arnau should take good care of his things, because in 2004 he will be handing down some things to his little brother.....or little sister. That's right! Angelic is going to help her Couple add to their family and they hope the addition arrives in late summer 2004.



Dr. Kaminsky all smiles with Angelic!



Good luck!!



Dr. Garzo is always happy to share his time to see the new parent's greatest treasure

### Three's Company

(Continued from page 1) enjoyed pretending it was. CNN participated in an embryo transfer and a cameraman followed Samantha for months. That was totally tolerable because he also



brought along a hair and makeup person! The day after the delivery, CNN and the local television



Thanks Dr. Lafferty!



news in San Diego came by the hospital for more interviews. Then we wrapped up with a story for Ladies Home Journal that is the feature story in their May 2003 issue. Wow, do these kids have



Kyle

agents yet??



Ella

### Perserverance Prevails

Perseverance. I can't think of a better way to describe Sylvia and Luis in their trials through surrogacy. They only wanted to help bring a child into the hearts and lives of their Couple, but success would elude them.

It would have been understandable if Sylvia decided to stop her participation in the program as surrogacy had consumed their lives for so long. But the desire to help someone in this way didn't diminish. So Sylvia made up for lost time and delivered twins!!



Dr. Hummel gives his A-OK

The twins were born on October 31, 2002 with Carson weighing in at 5lb 4oz and Harper weighing in at 4lb 9oz, making Madison a very, very happy big sister.



Tamera explains the process.

### Marta's Vacation



(Continued from page 1) another daughter for her parents to treasure forever.



Marta & Ester visit Dr. Garzo's clinic where their parent's journey to parenthood began.



Ester's First Family Picture

### A Riddle



(Continued from page 1) with something so incredible. They came to town and we arranged an afternoon of celebration in Chris' honor. Many of those that love her were there. It was truly wonderful. This gesture was so, so sweet and touched my heart as it did many others in attendance.

December 21, 2002 is also a special date as Jackson Evan was born weighing in at 7lb 3oz. Sylvia's first couple had stopped all medical treatment and one day discovered that they were pregnant!! Congratulations to all of these families!!



### Hilarious Moments

I can't remember one moment during any of the conversations or times together that we weren't a little laughing hysterically. Rachel & Dave's sense of humor so perfectly matched that of their Couple. So good times were had during these nine months together. It didn't seem to matter that they were on different continents, between e-mail and the telephone, they were able to still tell their jokes and



Dr. Wong sharing good news with Rachel & Dave

share the laughter. And share in the pregnancy too, of course! Although the parents were disappointed that they could not arrive in time for their son's birth, they were not worried. They told me that Rachel had taken such great care of him for so long and they knew she would continue that care until they arrived. Mom & Grandma arrived in the evening that Eley was born, June 15, 2003 and Rachel was proud to introduce them to their newest family member. Eley weighed 6lb 4oz.



Chris amazed at how much Rachel has grown!



Eley

## A Champion

Connie had so many hurdles to overcome once she decided to be a surrogate mom, I was sure she would quit. I would not have blamed



Dr. Zaruskie & LeeAnn sharing great news with Connie and the excited parents-to-be!!

her if she did. But she refused to let anything stop her. She was determined to help a Couple achieve what she and Vincent knew was the greatest thing on earth....parenthood!



Her last embryo transfer was given the same odds as the previous....Little hope. But Connie followed the instructions regardless of the odds but was as surprised as the rest of us when I screamed, "You're pregnant!" Then we called the parents to let them know.



At this point with each prior attempt, they were disappointed but handled the news well. This time when we called with the positive result, the Mom started crying so hard and hysterically that the Dad thought it was negative again and that she had snapped! As he was embracing her telling her how sorry he was, she between sobs was able to mutter, "No, no...that's not it. She's pregnant, she's pregnant!"

Although Reagan came a little earlier than we had planned, she arrived as healthy as can be on April 28, 2003 weighing in at a petite 4lb 2oz.



## No Language Barrier

Piya was so happy to learn that the Mom of the babies would be staying in California for the duration of the pregnancy so they could share in the pregnancy together. "Mom" was from a foreign country, living in Los Angeles and traveling to San Diego for doctor's appointments and other visits.

It was quite overwhelming at first for her. But soon she adapted to our culture and language. In a short time, where there was once a language barrier was forever broken. Piya was so supportive and helpful to this "Mom" throughout that year. Then on March 17, 2003 she gave her and her husband the best gift in the world when she delivered Ji & Seung. Congratulations for making such a difference Piya!



## Mutual Longing

Tracy & Jim wanted to have a baby, but the only way to achieve this goal was through IVF. After meeting with Dr. Garzo, they were sure this was something they could do, but they also knew it would take a few years of saving to be able to afford it. As with most couples facing infertility, their insurance did not cover IVF.

In their research though, they discovered the world of surrogacy. They realized that this could be the opportunity for two couples with the same longing for a baby, to help each other. Tracy already had children so she knew that she basically qualified as a surrogate mom. She called us with her idea and, well, the rest is history. Tracy gave birth to Paula on November 1, 2001 who weighed in at 9lb 7oz and making two people the most proud parents in Europe. Then on November 21, 2002, Tracy & Jim's dreams came true when Bruce James arrived weighing 8lb 14oz. Congratulations to all!!



## Birthday Party

A birthday party at Sharp Mary Birch Hospital started on Monday evening. Little did the invitees know, but this party was going to last more than 24 hours.



The guest of honor finally made his appearance late Tuesday night at

almost midnight! Emilio Manuel

Nicolas arrived on March 4 weighing a whopping 8lb 10oz. Although Leticia, his parents, his Aunt Rosa and Chris were very tired, the party continued for several more hours. I think this party will be continuing for many more years to come. His big sister, Elenita, is awaiting his arrival to Europe so she can join in the celebration of his arrival.



## Jackie's Journey Part 2

In our October 2001 newsletter issue, you can read in Jackie's own words about her beautiful experience that brought Baby Angel into the world on June 17, 2001. Although it was no big surprise that Jackie wanted to help again in this special way, it just surprised me



Graduation Day! Dr. Garzo expresses his best wishes to Jackie

that she mentioned it within hours after delivering!!

As soon as she recovered, Jackie was back in the program and was looking forward to helping Max be-



come a big brother. So, on October 14, 2002, Max's baby brother was born and the proud family named him Luke. Luke

was quite a big boy, weighing 8lb 14oz. Congratulations to Jackie and her family for their truly wonderful contributions to these two families and our program.



### Mission Accomplished

This year brought many challenges to several Surrogate Moms and Rosanna was no exception. She too was put through many trials before she could finally achieve a pregnancy for a special Couple. Then during her twin pregnancy, her husband Sid was sent to Iraq



Rosanna saying hello to Holley!

to assist our country in its mission there. I was amazed at how well Rosanna handled every situation that was handed to her. Even with the complications that a twin pregnancy brings, she managed beautifully.



Jenny went with her mom to San Diego.

Rosanna brought endless joy to her Couple's hearts and lives on August 3, 2003 when Holley & Corey were born.



### What to do??

Melissa delivered Marta on June 12, 2000. These very happy new parents knew they wanted another child, but would have to wait about 3 years. Melissa wondered what to do in the meanwhile. Hmmmm? Well, be a surrogate mom for another special couple, of course!! So, that's what she did.

On January 31, 2002 she delivered a gorgeous little guy named Joshua Busby and he weighed in at 7lb 8oz. And guess what?? Marta's sibling is due to arrive in August 2003!



### Small Circles

When I matched these two together, I didn't realize how much they would have in common. They shared some friends and co-workers too. It was a pleasant surprise to us all!



Dr. Daneshmand taking great care of Lisa.

The involvement of the extended families made this journey a truly enjoyable one. So it was no surprise that the grandma-to-be attended the birth of her grandchildren along with the proud parents. On June 2, 2003 the hopes and dreams of Lisa's Couple were fulfilled when she delivered Nicholas Dean weighing 6lb 10oz and his bigger sister, Natalie Rose who weighed in at 7lb 2oz.



### Hope

Desiree brought not only hope to two couples, but proof that with enough faith and perseverance dreams do come true. In August 2001, Desiree delivered twin girls with record breaking birth weights of 8lb 10oz and 7lb 10oz to a Couple who were on their last try to have a baby.

If that wasn't enough pressure, I then matched her with a Couple who came to us from another program. Not only had they experienced more unsuccessful attempts than they care to count or remember but their hearts were broken and their faith was weak. So, Desiree gave her heart and offered her faith to get them through the next attempt. Their baby boy, Luciano, arrived 9 months later on February, 21, 2003 weighing 7lb 10oz.



### Girls X 3

Girls, girls, girls. Three to be exact. Ericka's first surrogacy experience blessed her Couple with a beautiful, baby girl named Irene. Ericka & Keith were so moved by this experience, they knew they wanted to help another special Couple before adding to their own family.

So, on September 17, 2002, two new parents were thrilled to be holding their new baby girls, Marissa and Elena, who arrived weighing 4lb 13oz and 5lb 3oz!! So the question remains.... Will the girl trend continue for Ericka? Will Alexander have a baby sister or two?? We'll know in 2004. Stay tuned!



### No Longer Little

Baby Justin was born on December 1, 2000, answering his parent's prayers of 18 years. These new parents didn't want too much time to pass before adding to their family, so they eagerly waited the time they could start again.

Well, they were surprised when the news came that they were to be blessed with not one more child, but two! Melissa delivered Justin's brother, Jason, and his little sister, Catherine, on March 24, 2002. Now this family is not so little any longer, but truly happy and definitely complete!



Jason & Catherine

### Carol's Corner

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This past year has also brought some difficult times to those near and dear to us. We offer our condolences to all those in our program who have suffered a loss this past year and to everyone who has ever lost a loved one. Dr. Dru Carlson was an amazing woman and doctor. She has touched many lives in our program and will never be forgotten. I won't name each of you to preserve your privacy, but you know you have the thoughts and prayers of all of us.

However, I will name my husband, John and his sister, Marion, as they and their families all suffered a great loss this year. Their dear Mother, Hilda Weathers, passed on to life eternal in February 2003. I pray that they are every-

one who has suffered such a great loss find comfort in their faith now and always.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to take a moment to recognize a few persons and say a few words. I have already mentioned my incredible family and how much I appreciate them. I want to also recognize Chris Dacquist and her exceptional husband, John and their beautiful girls Nicole & Brooke. I know I don't say how much I appreciate all of you near enough. (See Chris' story on page 1 "A Riddle") Although Samantha (Continued on page 6)



Paula & Angel



Marilyn & Shelly

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Wood's time in our program was brief, in that short time her contributions were significant. Our lives and hearts were touched forever by Samantha, Tristan and their boys Aidan & Kail. Good luck in Virginia! (See Samantha's story on page 1 "Three's Company") Melissa Lund has been instrumental in the creation of our new Egg Donor Program and maintaining its integrity. Truly this program would not be what it is today without you Melissa! Thank you! And she managed to do this while helping Marta become a big sister (See story on page 1 "Marta's Journey") with the constant support of her family Dennis, Amanda and her mom Micki. Dr. Radojevic, you have my endless gratitude for your constant dedication to not only our Programs but to the support you give to every individual you encounter. I wish to welcome Tami Reyes, Ericka Menor & Jenny Weathers to the Building Families team. Your efforts are already so appreciated by every one of us!

I wish you all a Joyous and Beautiful Holiday Season.

God Bless,

Carol



*Guillem, Xavier, Clara, Carol holding Arnau, Marta Roger, Gerard and Arnau.*

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