

Reflections

Acts of Grace Foundation • Small Deeds, Big Difference

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Mar's Message: A Note from the Founder

It is hard to believe it is already August . . . Fall is just around the corner and many exciting changes are on the way. To begin, our family is joyfully preparing for the arrival of a baby boy at the end of September! We are grateful for the opportunity to experience a pregnancy outside the confines of hospital bed rest. I am also enjoying some of life's simple pleasures (exercising, going for walks outside, etc) that I was unable to take advantage during the last few months of my previous pregnancy. I have been able to spend time shopping for



things he will need, get his room ready and just enjoy the comforts of home. Of course, the moms at P/SL and Skyridge have been on my mind a lot recently. I continue to pray for positive outcomes and comfortable hospital stays for these women and their families.

In other news, we are thrilled to announce the official receipt of our 501(c)(3) status (see page 2 for details). This means all donations are now tax deductible! Please spread the word on how we can all help our P/SL and Skyridge moms while saving some money at tax time--a true win/win for all!

Last, we are also excited to introduce AoG's new fundraising campaign called "\$7 on the Seventh." Please consider donating just \$7 a month to the Acts of Grace Foundation. Of course, automatic withdrawal is available for your convenience. We are confident this program will make a huge difference to women on hospital bed rest and bring some of the desperately needed comforts of home to these precious families. I highly encourage you to participate!

Please enjoy the latest issue of *Reflections*. I look forward to addressing you in the next *edition*...with our new **ADDITION** by my side.

Best,

Marlena and Family

Service With a Smile

In the beginning stages of the Acts of Grace Foundation, I began thinking about how I could be a part of such an uplifting and needed service. My background in the floral industry, prompted me to make simple flower arrangements for the expectant moms at Presbyterian/St. Luke's Hospital. I am able to deliver the arrangements monthly, and as I go from room to room, I observe different circumstances in each mom's life. Some rooms are bright and filled with photos, homemade cards, family and friends. I am greeted with a smile, and an enthusiastic, "thank you!" But, other rooms are dark and empty of any comfort.

These women are somber, and often have eyes filled with tears. It is wonderful to place the vase of

flowers next to them, and bring cheer to their tired faces and brighten their rooms. Although each room looks different to



Amy and her daughter, Kiah.

me, each mom shows strength and courage. Their sudden hospital stay is filled with uncertainty and fear, but Acts of Grace is there, fulfilling a real need in the lives of these women.

I am so honored and thankful to be a part of these simple acts of service. I know that all the volunteers bring so much joy to the women, their families, doctors, nurses and hospital staff. Acts of Grace is a blessing in my life, and it has been a privilege to serve in this way.



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Double the Blessings

At 24 weeks of my pregnancy, with twins, was air lifted to Presbyterian/St. Luke's hospital from my hometown North Platte, NE. At the time I was experiencing strong

pre term labor with a shortening cervix and my local O B G Y N decided that these complications coupled with my high risk pregnancy warranted a transfer to PSL. This decision was reinforced by the fact I was already in my fourth week of bed rest.

After my transfer to Denver, I was put on two different medications that helped stop or reduce my contractions. This regime entailed taking a pill every two hours. After the first six days of hospitalization, I was allowed to leave and stay locally at my

sister's house where the plan was to stay until delivery. I was able to attend doctor appointments, but that was the extent of my outings.



Happy at home with Scarlett and Tucker.

During the ensuing 2 month stay at PSL, I kept busy monitoring the babies 3 times a day or relaxing and gossip-

ing with the other mothers during the pool time that we coveted so much. I was forming friendships with other mothers who were dealing with the same issues as mine. We talked about family, children, husbands, how far along we were, and what the doctor said during the last ultrasound.

We always looked forward to Thursday night bingo given by Joe, Marlana, Elle and of course other Acts of Grace volunteers. They always made sure everyone who wanted to attend was able to participate. It was our social event of the week. I will never forget the fun we had carving pumpkins for Halloween and during Thanksgiving break decorating picture frames that could house the ultrasound pictures of our children. All of these activities helped in coping with my personal anxiety and anticipation.

Our special day came on Dec 3, 2008 with a scheduled c-section for 8:00 am. Scarlett Frances Read and Tucker Robert Read were born at 8:20 am. They were both over 5.5 pounds and very healthy. Four days later we were making the four hour trip home. I will never forget my time at PSL. My husband and I would like to thank all the wonderful doctors and nurses who took so very good care of me and my babies. And of course, to Acts of Grace for helping me get through a very tough time with a smile on my face.

Its Official!

The Acts of Grace Foundation is honored and excited to announce our official federal tax exempt status per section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to the **Acts of Grace Foundation** are deductible under section 170 of the Code.

Acts of Grace Foundation has received a determination letter that provides written assurance and is now qualified to receive tax-deductible charitable contributions as a public charity. For reference, this document can be found at

www.actofgracefoundation.com under the *Finances* section.



What does this mean for you? It means you can claim every penny you donate to AoGF on your 2009 (and beyond) federal income tax return. Of course, this will ultimately reduce your taxable income and result in lower tax payments for

you.

Thank you for your support to date...every penny and minute you have donated have made a tremendous difference in the lives of our moms and their families.



Join us on the **SEVENTH** of every month by donating **7 dollars** to help pregnant women on hospital bedrest. Go online to www.actsofgracefoundation.com, click on **donate now** and sign up for recurring donations. Sacrifice one trip to your favorite fast food restaurant or two grande lattes per month and help us purchase gift bags, ice cream, crafts, meal vouchers, and more!