

Reflections

Acts of Grace Foundation • Small Deeds, Big Difference

Volume 2 • Issue 1 • January 2010

Mar's Message: A Note from the Founder

It is better to give than receive! Our 2 year old experienced this on Christmas Day as she went door to door giving gift bags to bed resting women. She proudly knocked on each patient's door, entered their room, and joyfully handed each patient her gifts. Once out of the room she would run to the delivery cart to get the next set of gifts. Thanks to the creating and giving of Living Savior's (Littleton, CO) Church Ladies group and Sunday School children, all 15 high risk pregnant women at P/SL in Denver, CO were able to receive these gifts!

Also, thanks to all those who participate in our **\$7 on the Seventh** giving program, those who have donated at various times of the year, and our fabulous volunteers; the women at P/SL have been able to participate in social activities such as BINGO Nights, Craft Nights and Sundae Sundays! Due to the generosity of our donors, bed resting women have been able to consistently receive gift bags and floral arrangements at P/SL, Sky Ridge, Swedish and Littleton Adventist Hospitals. Also, let's not also forget the ladies bed resting at Aurora Women's Pavilion at West Allis Memorial Hospital in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and the women we sent care packages

to in California, Tennessee, Maryland, and Oregon. Twitter has helped us make long-distance connections that even a year ago may not have been possible.

Our fabulous volunteers, generous donors, and Board of Directors have enabled *Acts of Grace* to extend services to other women locally and nationally. We thank them for allowing Acts of Grace to transform a small deed into a big difference for pregnant women on hospital bed rest!

For those that are able to give, now is a great time! Go to www.actsofgracefoundation.com and join our **\$7 on the Seventh** giving program.

For those able to donate their time or are interested in *Acts of Grace* coming to your area, please email us at volunteer@actsofgracefoundation.com. We look forward to expanding our services in the upcoming year!



The Diedrich family welcomed Baby Cal on September 24, 2009.

Wishing you and yours a Happy & Healthy 2010!

Marlena

A Mom's Story

At 31 weeks, I went into preterm labor and was admitted to Presbyterian Saint Luke's Hospital. After having two perfectly normal pregnancies, this caught me by surprise and I didn't know what to expect. The emotions I was experiencing included being nervous, worried, and scared because I was there without my other 2 children and husband. When the doctor explained the complications of preterm labor and told me I would be in the hospital the rest of my pregnancy, it was difficult to deal with. It was difficult waiting for updates on my pregnancy and not knowing the next step. Acts of Grace Foundation played a large role in helping me through this difficult time. Through different activities AoGF provided, I was able to connect emotionally with other pregnant moms on hospital bed rest. We were all in different situations, but



Katy and her son, Adam.

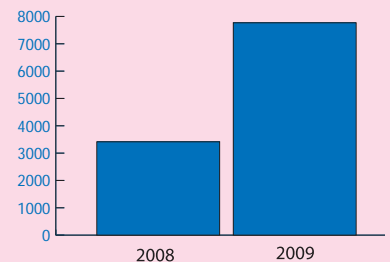
having a connection with them is what helped me get through each day. After two weeks, the doctors said they would have to induce labor. But on May 5th, the doctors sent me home to carry out the rest of my pregnancy. At 37 weeks gestation on June 4th, 2008, my healthy baby boy Adam was born. I feel Acts of Grace Foundation was a cornerstone of helping get through this difficult time and a blessing to have them by our side. Thank You!

Sincerely,

Adam, Katy & The Taylor Family

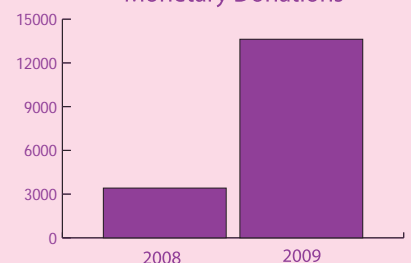
THANK YOU DONORS!

In-Kind Donations



In-kind AoGF donations more than doubled in 2009

Monetary Donations



Monetary donations more than tripled in 2009

Reflections

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Why Are Some Moms Hospitalized?

As families approach pregnancy, there is an expectation that things will move along smoothly and predictably. In the majority of pregnancies and deliveries that is true. However, in a small percentage of pregnancies, unexpected and unplanned complications may arise. In some of these situations the mom may need to be hospitalized for a variety of reasons. Hospitalized pregnant women are often called "ante partum patients," referring to the time before delivery. The decision to manage an ante partum patient in-house has the potential to create a number of stressors on the woman and her family. It is in these circumstances that Acts of Grace hopes to make a difference in how families experience this crisis. The following are a few of the reasons that a mother might be hospitalized during her pregnancy. We will explore these complications in this edition of Reflections and in upcoming newsletters. I will explain how and why the following conditions can occur in some of the healthiest moms around: Preterm Labor, Preterm Premature Rupture of Membranes, Third Trimester Bleeding,

Preeclampsia/HELLP Syndrome.

PRETERM LABOR:

The most common reason for in-patient management of a pregnant woman is preterm labor (PTL). Sometimes we confuse preterm contractions with PTL. The difference is that true PTL actually causes cervical change, either significant shortening of the cervix or premature dilation (opening up) of the cervix. This is more common in women who have multiples ~ twins, triplets, or more. We may manage these moms with oral or intravenous medications in an attempt to slow contractions, but in general we are not very good at stopping true PTL. There is one thing we do very well in patients who have PTL and who are threatening to deliver prior to 32 weeks gestation. We give betamethasone (steroid injections) to mom in an attempt to better prepare her baby's lungs for life outside of the uterus. These moms may be discharged to home if they reach 32-34 weeks without having delivered.

PRETERM PREMATURE RUPTURE OF MEMBRANES:

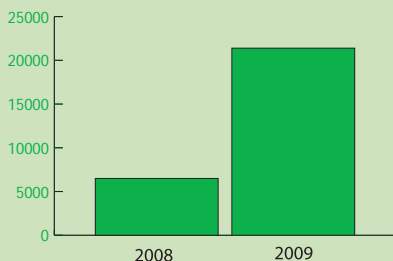
Some women will experience the unfortunate complication of preterm premature rupture of membranes, also referred to as PPROM. There are several potential reasons why this may happen in a given pregnancy, and we'll discuss those in a later issue of this newsletter. The majority of women who have PPROM will labor and deliver within 48 hours of rupturing membranes. If there is no overt evidence of intra-amniotic infection we will attempt to get betamethasone on board given the high likelihood of early delivery. In the situation of PPROM we would never stop labor because labor may be the best and earliest sign of the presence of infection. Moms with PPROM will never be managed at home and will remain hospitalized until the delivery of their baby(ies).

In the next edition of Reflections, we will explore Third Trimester Bleeding and Preeclampsia/HELLP Syndrome.

Karen Zimmerman, MSN, PNNP

THANK YOU!

Total Donations



— Total donations more than tripled in 2009

In 2009, AoGF supplied **120** floral arrangements and **575** gift bags to moms on bedrest.

THANK YOU DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS!

moments
photography

FUNDRAISER!

NOW IS YOUR CHANCE TO UPDATE YOUR FAMILY OR CHILD'S PORTRAITS!

For a small donation of \$10, you will receive 30-40 minute portrait session and a FREE 5 x 7 print.

Every penny of your \$10 donation goes directly to AoGF, so please PASS THE WORD to as many friends and family as possible!

The fundraiser will take place on February 20, 21, and 24th at Moments Photography in Littleton from 9am-6pm.

SPACE IS LIMITED!

Please call 303-956-5534 or 720-273-5360 to reserve your session today!

www.momentsphotographyco.com



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 reoccurring 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!