Cherry Blossom Festival Brings Record Days for Public Transportation and Garbage

Peak bloom and perfect weather meant lots of public transit and lots of trash.

Domino’s Unleashes Its Fried-Chicken-Crust Pizza

The Specialty Chicken combines your two favorite junk foods into one.

Food Diaries: How Registered Dietitian Amaris Bradley Eats for a Day

Healthy and convenient is the focus for this busy health professional.

Lookbook Love: Old Town’s Inaugural Cobblestone Runway

This way for stylish bloggers, cute puppies, and to-die-for shoes.

Here’s What Our Top 25 Very Best Restaurants Have Planned for Easter

From festive prix-fixe meals to casual brunches.

What would make a woman want to go through pregnancy and childbirth to carry a baby—or three—for a couple she just met?

By Alexandra Robbins, Ali Eaves

In a dimly lit exam room, a sonographer at the University of Maryland Medical Center’s Center for Advanced Fetal Care points to a bright spot.

“See this right here?” she asks. “This baby’s intestines look a little brighter than the other ones.” The discrepancy could be nothing, she says. It could also be a marker for Down syndrome or cystic fibrosis.

Kathy Powers stares at the screen. Naturally calm and optimistic, she has faith in the results from the amniocentesis, which showed that all three of the babies were healthy.

But she’s already worrying about how she’ll relay the news to the babies’ biological mother, whom she’ll call the moment she leaves the appointment.

As the sonographer prints out images of the ultrasound, Powers, a mother of two from Odenton, wipes the warm gel from her stomach and hikes down her shirt. She glances at

Kathy Powers, far left, was a surrogate for Kim Crane and her husband, Jody. Powers first gave birth to Max, now seven, and later to triplets—Flynn, Jude, and Mae. The couple already had a daughter, Charlotte, now nine.

Photographs by Jeff Elkins.
So she presented her husband with a compromise: Instead of having a baby of their own, she says. “I’m the happiest I ever can be in life.”

“My hormones are perfectly, 100 percent in line with the universe when I’m pregnant,” Powers says. “I knew right away, in the delivery room, that I wanted to do it again.”

Now Powers holds fast to her belief that everything will be all right: “I choose to think positive and believe they are strong little miracles and nothing bad is going to happen to them.”

In deciding to become a surrogate, Powers joined a small but growing contingent of women. Nationwide, the number of gestational surrogate births rose by 122 percent between 2004 and 2011, from 530 to 1,179, according to the American Society for Reproductive Medicine.

DC is the only jurisdiction in the country in which all surrogacy contracts are prohibited. Any party involved can be imprisoned for up to a year and fined as much as $10,000. Maryland has no statutes or limitations governing gestational surrogacy and has become one of the world’s hot spots for surrogacy. Virginia is another relatively surrogacy-friendly state.

For would-be parents—especially couples with fertility problems, gay couples, and single dads—surrogacy’s appeal has grown as both domestic and international adoptions have become harder.

**There was a 122% increase in the number of gestational surrogate births nationally between 2004 and 2011.**

But the reasons women decide to carry someone else’s child are less obvious, especially when they do it for a stranger. Who would endure the morning sickness, weight gain, out-of-control hormones, and constant doctors’ appointments—not to mention labor—without the payoff of a new baby at the end? For a mere $20,000 to $30,000?

The answer, in part, is women who love being pregnant, suffer few of the unpleasant side effects, and even enjoy giving birth.

The idea of becoming a surrogate occurred to Kathy Powers after she turned 40 and told her husband she wanted another baby. He wasn’t receptive—another child would mean spending money on fertility treatments, risking the birth defects more frequent with older mothers, and managing a new college fund when they already had two great kids. He didn’t want to tempt fate.

After some soul-searching, Powers realized that she craved pregnancy, not another child. With no morning sickness and with easy deliveries, her pregnancies had been dreamy. “My hormones are perfectly, 100 percent in line with the universe when I’m pregnant,” she says. “I’m the happiest I ever can be in life.”

So she presented her husband with a compromise: Instead of having a baby of their own,
she would carry one for someone else. They'd had difficulty conceiving their second child, and they decided that she would be a surrogate only for someone who had struggled as they had. "I didn’t want to be pregnant for a movie star who didn’t want to be fat," Powers says. "It had to be someone we could relate to, who we really feel like we’re helping, because we’ve been there."

She placed an ad on three surrogacy websites, received 30 replies within two days, and felt an immediate connection with Crane and her husband, who already had one adopted child. "It was one of those meant-to-be things," Powers says. "We agreed on every term." Three months after they met, a reproductive endocrinologist transferred Crane and her husband’s embryos.

After Powers gave birth to the couple’s baby boy in 2006, the endocrinologist gave her phone number to another Virginia couple interested in surrogacy; in 2008, she delivered their first child, and two years later their second.

By then, Powers figured she was done. But when Kim Crane asked her to help find a surrogate for her leftover embryos, which had been frozen for 6½ years, she offered to come out of retirement. She felt a responsibility to the couple and couldn’t imagine someone else completing their family.

The second embryo transfer was successful, but joy turned into shock when the five-week ultrasound showed three heartbeats. For the first time in her life, Powers hasn’t had an easy pregnancy—suffering through nausea, bleeding, and exhaustion. She has already been restricted to some bed rest and been told to expect more.

“And then," she says, “there’s the emotional part.”
Infertility brings so much heartache and it is nice to see a light at the end of the tunnel.

\[\text{Jan Stewart} \rightarrow \text{Surromom} \rightarrow \text{HappyMama ago}
\]

Thank you!!

\[\text{Jan Stewart} \rightarrow \text{Surromom} \rightarrow \text{8 months ago}
\]

why dont the children have a voice in any of this......how are they going to feel in 15 ye them? It is all about overly entitled people who think they can have everything and no or into the world in such a way...

\[\text{Tummymummy} \rightarrow \text{jan stewart ago}
\]

I would imagine in 15 years time the "children" may not yet be able to conceive!
20-25 years and I would imagine most would be awed by the fact that they would have a HUGE hearted surrogate.

Surromom posted: Thank you for your very kind and positive comment!! :)  

jan stewart posted: so which parent are they supposed to be grateful too? any one of up to 4 seems a trifle creepy......

Lynn posted: Surrogates are not a child’s PARENT. A parent is one who raises a child to learn about life! 

Surromom posted: I truly cannot take anyone seriously who has nothing positive to say and too!

jan stewart posted: seriously.......a typo offends you? I have nothing positive to say about this.....

Surromom posted: "If you can’t say something nice..." I read all of your responses to say something positive to say about anything!!

jan stewart posted: wow seeing a little theme here are you......follow the money trail....

Surromom posted: I didn't say I was offended, I just said I cannot take you seriously and proud that surrogacy exists today!

Lynn posted: Do the children have a voice when someone gets pregnant in a traditional situation?

jan stewart posted: they dont need one do they? There are two parents......not 4......

Surromom posted: I agree with Lynn, you have much to learn about life! Just because they should become parents. Some are unfit, some abuse I sometimes it’s too late! Surrogate children do NOT have two sets...
like nieces and nephews to me. There is no confusion about who t

jan stewart → Surromom ago
maybe not for you :) wait til these children who are experiments i

athursto ago
This story was really touching…it's amazing to do that for another person.

Surromom → athursto ago
Thank you!

SimonAlpipo ago
Wow 9 children sold at a minimum $23,000 a piece. Selling human flesh is a big business
economy. Already one baby farming company is quoted on the stock market.

Lynn → SimonAlpipo ago
Ignorance is bliss, isn't it Simon? I guess you'd know. :)

Just wondering.. ago
Are there any age cutoffs for surrogate mothers? I imagine it is not so healthy for a 48-
I have no problem with surrogacy otherwise, but I am somewhat surprised that women
health. Triplets at 48? 12 pregnancies at 44? Just out of 'love of being pregnant' and a 'c
Something is amiss here.

Surromom → Just wondering.. ago
No, nothing is amiss!! First and foremost, all surrogates go through extensive me
healthy and no obvious health risks! At 48 yrs old, I was at no higher risk than a
a proven track record of uncomplicated pregnancies! No one sets out to get preg
is a failure in their eyes! In my previous surrogate pregnancies, we had always tr
ONE baby! So for two embryos to result in 3 babies is very rare!! We consulted v
factor, and they in fact said since I had a proven uterus, I was a better candidat
carried a baby to term. So we took the pregnancy one day at a time, and becau
to the pregnancy and each other; three miracle babies were born!

Shim ago
The University of Maryland DRUGGED ME TO THE POINT OF STUPOR AND TRIED TO
ONLY MEDICALLY NECESSARY BECAUSE THEY DRUGGED ME. I COULD NOT EVEN CR
THEM WHISPER THAT MY REFLEXES WERE FAILING. THEY ARGUED AGAINST LESSO
THEY INSISTED THAT I MUST STAY THERE FOR SEVERAL WEEKS BUT BE MOVED FF
THAT I WAS RISKING THE LIFE OF MY BABY FOR WHICH I SIGNED IT SAYING THA
LIVES SO THEY CAN PAY FOR THEIR SPORTSCARS. THEY THEN RETALIATED AGAIN:
CLAIMING THAT I CHECKED MYSELF OUT BECAUSE I FELT BAD. THESE PEOPEL ARE
DECIDED TO PLACE ME AND MY INFANT ON THEIR MAILING LIST. NO I WILL NOT F
THE WOMAN WHO WILL MAKE SURE IT IS KNOWN THAT THE U OF M FORCES WO
AND DRUGS THEM TO MAKE IT NECESSARY. OH AND THEIR CEO IS A WOMAN WHC
CHILDREN ARE ENDANGERED FOR SURGERIES THEY DO NOT NEED.
I'm sorry that happened to you. This article is not about UMD, but I personally had the best care for myself and the triplets! I witnessed many, many women have natural births during my three weeks in the hospital! That they can do this to even 1 person does not make all the good they do justified that the bad should be ignored. The article is not about them but here they are not acknowledging the great pain they cause women. All I asked for was acknowledgement and an apology but they can't do that because they know they were in the wrong and that they would lose a lawsuit especially since the statistics show I am not the ONLY person that has been through this.

Worldwide Surrogacy Specialists is working with a high profile couple who live in CT. "B" and "G" were friends for years who fell in love after the cancer death of "B"s wife. They have a child with autism and their last baby was born premature and died from bacterial meningitis. They have turned to surrogacy and feel that while some families can be torn apart by their challenges, theirs has only grown closer.

"B" is a famous composer and music publisher and owns his own music business in NYC and is 100% committed to growing his wonderful family. "G"s passion is fashion and photography and she has had careers in magazine/media world. They have resources to pay you a generous fee in addition to all medical, legal, travel and other miscellaneous expenses. If you'd like to learn more about "B" and "G" please respond to this ad by emailing Serena at: slugo@victoriaferrara.com or apply online at: http://www.assistedreproduction.com