

STNG **SUN-TIMES NEWS GROUP** Your local news source :: Select a community or newspaper  Select a STNG publication or site



**food.suntimes.com**

**CLASSIFIEDS**  
 HOMES JOBS AUTOS ADS

**The Courier News**  
 CourierNewsOnline.com Member of the Sun-Times News Group

**75°F**  
 Mostly Sunny  
 Weather • Traffic

Search »   
 Site  STNG

- Subscribe
- About Us
- Customer Service
- Email newsletters

Home | News | Sports | Business | Entertainment | Classifieds | Lifestyles | Ebert | Search | Archives | RSS

Web only :: Video • Blogs • TV Listings  
 CENTERSTAGE  
 Yellow Pages ::  
 Obituaries ::  
 RogerEbert.com :: Movies & more  
 Eating In

- Lifestyles  
 Focus  
 Food & Recipes  
 Keepsakes  
 Columnists  
 Dear Abby  
 E.C. "Mike" Alft  
 Betty Brown  
 Dave Gathman  
 Dr. Peter Gott  
 Howard Ludwig  
 Cathy Morelli

**LIFESTYLES ::** [PRINTER FRIENDLY »](#) [EMAIL ARTICLE »](#)

## Egg donors help prospective parents conquer infertility

June 27, 2007

By **Stephanie Kohl** Special to the Courier News

Having a child is not always as easy as knowing about the birds and the bees. For some couples, it is difficult. For others, it is impossible.

Infertility affects nearly 6.1 million women and their partners in the United States, according to the National Survey of Family Growth. The statistic leads many women to egg donor agencies -- women who want to get pregnant, and women who want to help others become pregnant.

For Rachel, a 24-year-old Chicago resident, donating her eggs was an easy decision after a family friend with fertility problems was able to have a child with the assistance of an egg donor.

"It's just one of those things where, just because you can't have a kid, doesn't mean that you shouldn't have a kid," she said.

Rachel made her first donation at 22 and since has completed three donations. She has never worried about someone else experiencing the results of her DNA.

"I am proud of who I am and I really love the fact that somebody is going to be able to have the same color eyes and the same hair and the same personality and it is going to be somebody else's problem, not my parent's and not mine," she said with a laugh.

### 'The chance of a family'

Rachel made her donation through Alternative Reproductive Resources, a donor agency in Chicago. ARR works with endocrinologists throughout the Midwest and reaches out to many different areas, including Elgin and surrounding communities, said Mary Ellen McLaughlin, a partner with ARR.

"We think that these young women who become donors are tremendous people," McLaughlin said. "To give someone this gift, the chance of a family, is amazing."

For many, infertility is a long, heartbreaking road.

"For us, it just sort of made sense," said a Chicago egg recipient who would not disclose her name. "I was sort of ready to be done with the pain of infertility."

McLaughlin said one reason people tend to use ARR is because they like the anonymity of it. The Chicago egg recipient not only wished to conceive but also wanted to be in control of the pregnancy.

"I very much wanted to be pregnant," she said. "I wanted to experience pregnancy for the sheer experience of it."

ARR matched the couple with a donor and in 2005, they became parents of a baby boy. They plan to go through a second cycle for another child.

"There is some faith in the situation," she said. "I really do feel like I



**DUMM**  
 101 WAYS TO INCREASE ENERGY EFFICIENCY.  
  
 FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO [WWW.ENERGYHOG.ORG](http://WWW.ENERGYHOG.ORG)  
 U.S. Department of Energy

**VIDEO ::** [MORE »](#)

- Pregnant USA Today Delivery Woman Murdered
- Wildfire Jumps Fireline in Lake Tahoe
- Emotional Tahoe Residents Survey Fire Ruins

**TOP STORIES ::**

- NEWS**  
 Defense due next in trial of Homatas
- BUSINESS**  
 More gyms emerge to pump up the senior set
- SPORTS**  
 Cubs post 5th straight win
- ENTERTAINMENT**  
 Paris Hilton released from jail
- LIFESTYLES**  
 Greenery & Scenery

**1 PRICE. 3 SERVICES.**  
  
**INTERNET**  
 Just **\$90** PER MONTH  
  
**RCN**

have the child I was meant to have."

### Twice the success

For Cheryl, 46, of Willowbrook, trouble conceiving led her to try many methods. Her first in-vitro attempt failed and she knew the second attempt, this time with frozen eggs, would be her last chance.

"In the end you are just holding your breath because of all the failed attempts in the past," Cheryl said.

However, within days of the second attempt, she knew she was pregnant. She later found out she was expecting twins.

Cheryl's pregnancy was considered high-risk. At 20 weeks, doctors closed her cervix and put her on bed rest. At 25 weeks, she began experiencing contractions. Medication was continuously injected to suppress them.

As time went on, the babies started responding to noise and music.

"I couldn't even watch ER because they both started bouncing around when the ER music came on," she said.

Finally, the babies were ready to come. Cheryl went to the hospital four days in a row, but the nurses kept sending her home and telling her she wasn't ready. On the fourth day, her water broke at 4:45 a.m. and she had twin boys at 10:10 a.m. and 10:20 a.m.

"Everything I do is multiple, and that's normal," Cheryl said.

### Becoming families

Working with donors is "a strange place to be in," Cheryl acknowledged. She wondered throughout her pregnancy what her babies would look like. But once they were born, they began in their own ways to resemble her and her family.

"You attribute their personality to yourself," she said. "They are definitely your family."

Both egg donor recipients plan on telling their children about the entire process in the future.

"Families are blended and developed in so many methods these days, between remarriages and adoption and fertility, that I don't think there is a stigma attached any longer," Cheryl said.

"They know I'm mommy and they know their dog is their dog and they don't know any differently."

#### Ads by Google

##### Contractors Supply

Rental, Sales & Service You Need It? Call Way-Ken Today  
[www.way-ken.com](http://www.way-ken.com)

##### HasProz Installations

IL - Home Theater, Satellite, Cable Telephone, Surveillance Experts  
[www.hasproz.com](http://www.hasproz.com)

##### Hotel In Downtown Chicago

Charming Boutique Hotel Downtown/Michigan Ave. Area  
[www.senecahotel.com](http://www.senecahotel.com)

##### Assisted Living

Providing Assisted Living & Memory Care To Seniors In Illinois (IL).  
[www.ParadiseParkALF.com](http://www.ParadiseParkALF.com)

##### AAA®

Official site. Get car insurance through AAA. Free instant quotes!  
[www.aaa.com](http://www.aaa.com)

[couriernews.com](http://couriernews.com): [Feedback](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [About Us](#) | [Advertise With Us](#) | [Media Kit](#) |

[Courier News: Subscribe](#) | [Online Photo Store](#)

**Affiliates:** [RogerEbert.com](#) | [SearchChicago - Autos](#) | [SearchChicago - Jobs](#) | [NeighborhoodCircle.com](#) | [Centerstage](#)



© Copyright 2007 Sun-Times News Group | [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)