

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1994

# COMMUNITY LIFE

## Twins give parents twice the love, work

■ A group for parents of twins offers much more than a gathering place for tots and their moms and dads.

By DIANE HANSON  
STAFF WRITER

For 10 years, Sharyl Pridmore and husband Kit of Novi tried to start a family. Sharyl suffered four successive miscarriages and

the couple was told that they would never be able to have children.

That news was dispelled when Sharyl became pregnant with twins and the Pridmores became an instant family of four when David and Stephanie were born in April 1982.

"When we had David and Stephanie, we thought they were perfect," Sharyl said. "We've doubled our pleasure."

When her twins were six months old, 12 years ago, Pridmore joined the Farmington Area Mothers of Twins Club and is president of the club this year. Pridmore finds it to be a great social group for both the children and the mothers as well as a wonderful support group. Her mother died this year and she found comfort from club members.

"If it weren't for my twins club, I probably would have fallen apart," Pridmore said. "They were there for me."

The club's motto is: "God Chooses our Mothers." One of God's most recent choices was Ellen Chmielewski who, along with husband, Gary, have one month old Andrew and Sarah. Ellen joined the twins club while still pregnant to become acquainted with the other moms and to get practical advice.

"People have told me that the first six to eight weeks are the hardest," said Chmielewski, a Farmington Hills resident. "You can't imagine what it is like no matter how much you try to prepare."



AMH HEALEY/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Double pleasure: Brandon and Jonathan Ciolfi, 7-year-old Farmington Hills twins, play football during a play group for twins.

Her advice is: "Accept as much help as you can possibly get."

Farmington resident, Kathy Ciolfi agreed. She and husband, Jim, are the parents of 7-year-olds, Jonathan and Brandon and their 4-year-old Natalie.

"If somebody came to the door, they automatically got a baby and a bottle," laughed Ciolfi. "I always felt

kind of guilty not being able to hold them as much as a single so, that way, you get help and they get that human contact."

Many people have said to her, "I couldn't imagine having twins." But she feels with the recent triplets birth of Gov. John Engler and wife Michelle, it's just all in your perspective.

"We're all saying, 'I couldn't imagine having triplets.' Ciolfi confided. Ann Marie Pedersen is the mother of 7-year-old twins Elizabeth and Nicholas and a 2-year-old daughter. In retrospect, the Farmington resident said that "one is a cinch."

One thing that may be particular

See TWINS, 16A



MARY ANN WADE

## She conquers her fears one by one

I cut a comic out of the paper about 10 years ago that showed a baby trying to walk, saying: "I can't, I can't, I can't." Well, he kept trying and finally he could.

I chose to make it my philosophy of life. For the first 10 years of my life I was afraid of everything. People, places, things. You name it, I was afraid of it. Although my parents loved me, they instilled all of their fears in me. Then, in 1964, when I was a sophomore in high school, two very scary things happened.

I had to take swimming class and I had to take speech class. Well, I managed to pass swimming, although I still do not like water. And to this day, I can still see my speech teacher, a man who had a reputation as being very gruff, and who knew I was scared to death to be there, telling me, "Take a deep breath, stand-up straight and make good eye contact. You can do it."

For the next 20 years, I didn't have much chance to practice his lessons, and then in 1984, it happened. I wanted to be involved in my boys' school, so I signed up to work on the scenery committee for a talent show we were putting on. Our first task was to create a movie marquis using two-foot high letters.

While everyone sat around asking how we were going to do it, I picked up some sections of newspapers and started cutting out patterns for letters. Soon we had all 26 letters each two-feet high. Well, the talent show was great and the scenery was even better. Then I started thinking, "Maybe I have some creative qualities to offer. Maybe I can do it."

The same year, because no one else wanted the job, they asked me to be president of our Parent-Teacher Guild. My stomach said, "Oh no."

See WADE, 16A



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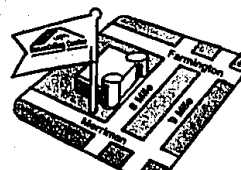
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