

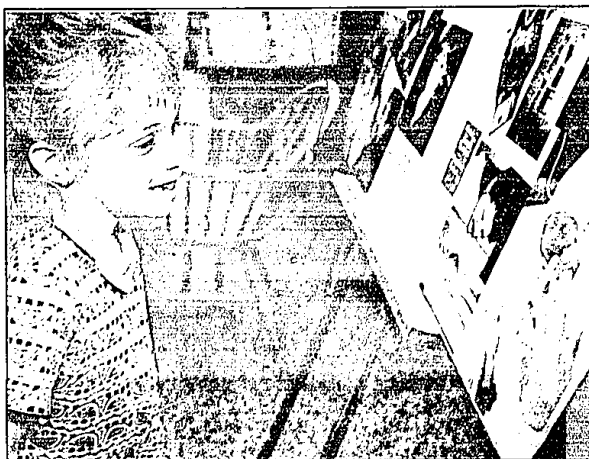
Andrea's saga among those in 'Miracle Birth Stories'

*Local preemie
girl visits
author's book
signing*

The poster collage of tiny babies was something Andrea Volpe couldn't help but stare at, during Thursday night's book signing by Farmington Observer reporter Tim Smith at Borders Books and Music in Farmington Hills.



Making his point: Author Tim Smith points to a picture of his daughter, Elizabeth, during a book signing at Borders in Farmington Hills. Smith also is a reporter for the Farmington Observer.



STAFF PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH CARNIGI

enter first
grade at

The girl shook her head in amazement, as she saw one photo from the NICU where her whole hand couldn't even wrap around a single finger.

Andrea weighed just 2 lbs., 13 oz. when she was born at 26-weeks gestation in March 1993. The rest of the family includes her dad, Kevin and brother, Anthony.

The Volpes were one of several southeastern Michigan families whose stories grace the pages of Smith's book, "Miracle Birth Stories of Very Premature Babies - Little Thumbs Up!" (Hagin & Galt, trade paperback, \$1.95). Smith's daughter, Elizabeth, was born at 25 weeks gestation, weighing 1 lb., 14 oz., in November 1994. The idea for a book was sparked by a photograph he took of Elizabeth, giving a thumbs up sign, while she was still at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak.

Released in late April, "Miracle Birth Stories of Very Premature Babies - Little Thumbs Up!" is expected to go into a second printing in September.

Meanwhile, the book currently is featured on Time Warner community access TV-12's "Potpourri" program, hosted by former Clarenceville High School teacher Elinor Holland. It is scheduled to

RECREATION NEWS

The following are Farmington Hills parks and recreation programs. For more information or to register, call 473-9570.

PUNT, PASS & KICK

Boys and girls ages 8-15 have the opportunity to show their punting, passing and kicking skills in a local PPK competition at 11 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 18 at Heritage Park in Farmington Hills. The deadline to register is Friday, Sept. 17 and the program is free.

FALL REGISTRATION

The Farmington Hills Recreation Division will begin accepting registrations for its fall-scheduled programs at the Recreation office on Monday, Aug. 30. Office hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. You may register in person, by mail or by fax at (248) 473-9577. The recreation office is located behind the city hall complex at 31555 11 Mile Road.

BETTER DAYS

Is there something that you would like to do that we currently don't provide for you? A new program? A new facility? A suggestion? Give us a call or send a letter to 31555 11 Mile Road, Farmington Hills. Or stop in to see us. We want to hear your ideas and thoughts on some better ways you would like to spend your days.

ICE ARINA

Public skating sessions are open to all ages and abilities at the Farmington Hills Ice Arena; noon to 1:50 p.m. Monday-Friday; 7-8:50 p.m. Tuesday, Friday and Saturday; and 4-6:50 p.m. Sunday. Cost: \$3.50 for residents, \$6 for non-residents, \$2 for skate rental. Drop-in hockey is \$7. Call 478-8800 for times.

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