

# PRESS

## 'Miracle babies' arrive after trauma



STAFF PHOTOS: DOUG HOOD

Carrie Ann and Kristopher Ganley of Berkeley with their new daughter, Angelica, the first of triplets, born 48 hours before her siblings at Jersey Shore University Medical Center in Neptune.

# TRIPLETS EASE PAIN OF LOSS

By **ALESHA WILLIAMS BOYD**  
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After months of trials and tribulations, three big gifts came in small packages for a Berkeley family this week.

Ocean Gate Police Officer Kristopher Ganley and his wife, Carrie Ann, a pharmacist, both 31, welcomed triplets — two girls and a boy, a little less than two pounds each — Dec. 11 and 13 at Jersey Shore University Medical Center in Neptune.

Angelica Marie, now 7 days old, Audrianna Maja and Aiden Kristopher, both now 5 days old, were born at 26 weeks following myriad health problems and two months of hospitalizations for their mother. The family celebrates the births as they mourn the Nov. 25 death of Kristopher Ganley's longtime partner and friend, Ocean Gate Officer Jason C. Marles.

"It's the worst situation that could be going on, and it's the best situation that could be going on," Kristopher Ganley said at the medical center Friday.



Angelica Ganley, the first of triplets, remains in an incubator after being delivered at 26 weeks.

Triplets, which once occurred in one out of 8,000 births now occur in about 32 per 1,000 live births since the advent of fertility treatments, said Dr. Steven A. Morgan, the couple's obstetrician.

"They're our miracle babies," Carrie Ann's mother, Marlene McGuire of Howell, said at the hospital Friday.

Carrie Ann Ganley was re-

leased from the hospital, but the babies will remain in the neonatal intensive care until around March 16, their actual due date.

It's been a tough road to the miracle. The Ganleys lived through three miscarriages in two years while trying to have a child.

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# Triplets

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After their first round of intrauterine insemination proved successful, the couple learned in June they would have not one, but three babies.

“What was going through my mind? My baseball team’s here,” Kristopher Ganley said with a smile. “We wanted a boy and a girl, so we got an extra.”

Trouble came when Carrie Ann Ganley was stricken with a kidney stone, and then, as her kidney malfunctioned, with pneumonia. Worse, she went into preterm labor at 23 weeks, just before Thanksgiving.

A baby born at 23 weeks would have only an 8 percent chance of survival, Dr. Morgan said. She was kept on bed rest and magnesium sulfate treatments to stave off labor for the next three weeks, he said.

At that point, “you’re just thinking, what else can go wrong?” Kristopher Ganley said.

But something else would go terribly wrong. Ocean Gate Officer Jason C. Marles, 32, Kristopher Ganley’s partner of six

years, was killed early Thanksgiving morning when the Jeep Cherokee he was driving on the Garden State Parkway in Toms River was struck from behind by another vehicle.

Ganley and Marles had been sworn in together, worked together through 2002, and then again from 2007 until Marles’ death, Ganley said.

“I had to leave for two days to be at the services, to carry the coffin and bury my friend,” Ganley said of Marles, a father of two. “It was like everything hit at once. That was the roughest time.”

But things would get better. At 26 weeks and 5 days, Carrie Ann Ganley went into labor and Angelica — named after the brand of hospital sheets her mother saw so often — was born at 1 pound, 10 ounces at 9:13 a.m. Dec. 11.

She was given more magnesium sulfate to tamp down contractions, and two days later, Angelica’s younger siblings were born: Aiden at 1 pound, 13 ounces, at 2:52 a.m. Dec. 13 and Audrianna at 1 pound, 11 ounces, two minutes later.

The babies are doing well. Already all three have been taken off an oscillator; usually children this premature would use breathing tubes for three to four weeks, Morgan said.

The family marveled and cooed Friday as Angelica, the eldest, reached up and splayed her beet-red fingers inside the heavy-duty plastic of an incubator.

“She’s waving,” Carrie Ann Ganley said, laughing.

The two girls look like their mother, the boy like his father, family members say. Audrianna is the feisty one, pulling out her tubes and monitors, and Aiden’s a little cranky, the Ganleys said as staff passed and greeted them by name.

The triplets may still have developmental issues in the future because of their prematurity. And Carrie Ann will have to address her own health issues once she’s well enough. But they’ll take it one day at a time and count their blessings for now, the Ganleys said.

“It’s been an emotional roller coaster,” Carrie Ann Ganley said. “But it’s just amazing, we couldn’t have asked for this to be more perfect, right before the holidays. . . . We just love them so much. We just want to be able to hold them, take them home.”

Kristopher Ganley still grieves for his friend’s death. He said Marles called him the night he died to check in on the family. But Ganley said he’s taking a life lesson from the loss, too.

“Jay’s death just opened my eyes (to the fact) that anything can happen,” Kristopher Ganley said. “You just take whatever you have right now and you don’t take it for granted. It’s going to be a long road. . . .but I feel like Jay is helping us, too, now, like he’s watching over us.”

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