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Albert Lea area moms share how their lives and families have changed since giving birth to twins

A typical morning in Emelia Gaudan's home begins like many others. She and her three children wake up and eat breakfast — most of the time it is oatmeal with a little bit of yogurt. After breakfast, Gaudan and the children read books and play before eating a snack and then taking a nap. Though this could be a routine for any

parent with children, what sets Gaudan apart from most other parents, however, is that she is the mother of twins. Gaudan, 28, has a 4-year-old son, Isaiah, and 2-year-old fraternal twin girls, Alvia and Josephine. She is one of three Albert Lea area mothers Albert Lea magazine interviewed about the ups and downs of raising twins.

While the moms agreed there were definitely challenges to raising young twins, they said they wouldn't trade their experiences. "I never in a million years imagined I would have twins," Gaudan said. "I've always been fascinated with twins."

"It's not for the faint of heart. It's hard to sometimes balance what everybody needs, so you just have to do what you can at that moment. It's a give-and-take among everybody."
— Jen Zeller

Finding out
Gaudan said she and her husband, Carl, found out early on in her pregnancy they were having twins. When she was about 13 weeks pregnant, they had an ultrasound done, and she knew the image looked different from the one she had when she was pregnant with Isaiah. The ultrasound tech was silent for two or three minutes.

"We were so excited," she said of when she found out the reason why. "I felt like

After she had her son, Isaiah, Emelia Gaudan said she hoped her best friend would be a twin. She is now one of the wall having twin girls.



MEET THE MOMMY

Emelia Gaudan, 28, and her husband, Carl, have 2-year-old fraternal twin girls, Alvia and Josephine, and 4-year-old son, Isaiah. They live right outside of Albert Lea. Though the Gaudans have a different routine on both sides of the family, Emelia Gaudan said she "never in a million years" imagined she would have twins. "They're as different as night and day," said the stay-at-home mother.

PEOPLE

Here in Albert Lea we care about the people that make our community a home. Everyone has a special story to share, look for features on these great people

FASHION

We know our readers want to know where to buy the latest fashion trends locally so we feature local boutiques, shops and more.

HEALTH & FITNESS

We know health is important to our readers. We feature where readers can find new, fun fitness classes and healthy foods, and inform them about the latest gear for the activities they enjoy.

We also talk with doctors and therapists about health issues that matter to our readers.

BEHIND THE SCENES AT A LOCAL BOUTIQUE

STORY BY SARAH STULTZ
PHOTOS BY COLLEEN HARRISON

HEALTH & FITNESS

BY SHAWN BROMELAND



Find progress in 5 ways other than on the scale

Shawn Bromeland and his husband, Bill, have been the spokespersons of *Active Fitness in Albert Lea's Northridge Hall* for nearly five years.

For years, people have been using the scale as their main way to measure progress. We've harked tears and profanities at that thing when our weight doesn't move like we'd like. But the truth is, you are more than just a number, and there are many other ways to measure your physical progress that are actually better indicators of your overall health and wellness. Before we dive into those, the first thing we need to touch base on is the subject of self-efficacy or self-worth. It represents your belief in your ability to do something. When your self-efficacy is high, you make bigger goals because you know you can crush them. When it's low, you set too small goals you know you can accomplish, and build from there. The more goals you can accomplish, the better you feel, and the higher you should aim the next time. Studies have shown it is better in the long run to start small and build self-efficacy than to start with a big goal that is hard to accomplish, because if you start big and fail, you may not get back on the horse any time soon — or at all. The point is: Easy goals begin bigger goals! When you cross one off, move on to the next and you'll start noticing progress in spades.

Here are some good things to try: **Chip away at a bad habit** Find a habit that is hard to kick and then chip away at it. If you drink five Cokes a day, bump it down to four. It doesn't matter if you're still drinking. Make a month from now: what matters is that you're drinking less, and your willpower is getting stronger!

Track performance In the gym, measure your performance in a training session or average workout. Are you less fatigued than you used to be? Have you increased your weight in resistance training or completed a cardio task quicker? Think about some specific exercises you can track to gauge your progress as well. For example, see how long you can hold a plank, or a wall squat. Or try to do as many push-ups as you can in one minute. Then try again each month and write down what you complete. When you're at home or work, there are other indicators of your improved fitness level. It is easier to walk up the stairs. How about walking your dog or playing with the children? Are you generally more active around the house? Are common tasks like filling laundry bins or pushing the lawnmower easier? Your average day should actually illuminate lots of ways you can progress.

Keep an eye on your clothes Full disclosure: If you're weight lifting, regularly, you may lose fat and gain muscle, but your weight stays the same. But your clothes will fit differently! How are those pants fitting? Do your clothes look oversized or shabby? Break something out of the closet that you haven't tried on in a while. You may be surprised.

Schedule a regular doctor visit There are many reasons to have regular contact with a primary care physician, but a simple benefit is seeing those key numbers change. How is your blood pressure? Are you taking the same level of medication? As risk for diabetes? Regular exercise and a good diet help improve a lot of health-related things they'll be tracking. You can also request blood work if you want to get even more detailed.

Watch other measurements Depending on your goals, weight may still be a good number to track, and that's fine. But there are additional beneficial measurements like waist, bust, or belly circumference. You could also track your sleep quality and length, which is important for your overall health. Ultimately, if you don't measure where we started, and where we're going, we can't fully celebrate how far we've come! So go out there and try these, and let us know how it goes.

LIVEN UP THE GARDEN

Working as a freelance illustrator for several large companies, Angie Douthett of Kinkadee, takes creative juices in her blood. Aside from her job, Douthett enjoys refurbishing furniture and creating signs and chalkboards.

What you will need:

- Chicken wire, 12 1/2-by-14 inches
- 1 pine porch spindle
- 1 wooden finial
- 1 wooden ball
- Spool of wire
- Small wooden dowel
- Finger paint
- Paintbrush
- Staple
- Wood glue
- Wire cutters
- Screw driver
- Pliers
- Saw

1 Cut off both ends of porch spindle. Drill hole in top of spindle and in wooden ball. Join pine spindle and wooden ball using small wooden dowel.

2 Glue finial onto bottom of spindle using wood glue. Let sit to dry.

3 Draw a template for two sizes of dragonfly wings. Cut chicken wire for two wings of each size. Cut chicken wire about a half inch larger than the template on all sides. Bend wire from spool into shape of wings. Again, make two of each.

4 Attach chicken wire to other wire using pliers and wire cutters as needed. Complete all four wings.

5 She took us step-by-step through how to make this decorative garden dragonfly.

THINGS OF & FOR THE HOME

Each issue highlights "Things You Didn't Know You Wanted" and features where to buy products and services locally in Albert Lea.

We love offering readers a chance to go inside unique homes, gardens and yards to give them tips for how to create those looks themselves.

PARTY & EVENT PLANNING

Fine foods and spirits are featured, as well as ways readers can entertain friends and family.

We tell you how to throw the best party, whether it's at home or at an upscale local venue.

A FUN SEAFOOD DELIGHT

Shrimp Boil Foil Packs

Prep time: 10 mins
Cook time: 40 mins
Total time: 50 mins
Serves: 4

Any Gaudan is a mother's friend and working in Albert Lea. She loves to make new friends.

Of all of the foil pack options floating around the web these days, this one was an instant favorite! This dish is best on the grill, of course, but it's nice that we have the oven as a backup. We all know how Minnesota grill smelt the snow flakes, and then we just keep getting! This is a dish to share with friends. Hope you enjoy the Shrimp Boil Foil Packs as much as we did!

Ingredients

- 1 pound shrimp, peeled and de-veined
- 2 ears of corn on the cob, husked
- 1/2 pound andouille sausage
- 1 pound baby red potatoes or baby yellow potatoes
- 1 tablespoon Old Bay seasoning or homemade seasoning
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 3 tablespoons melted garlic
- Juice of half a lemon, plus lemon wedges for serving
- 1/2 cup butter, divided
- Chopped fresh parsley, for toasting

Directions

Chop corn into thirds, then chop each third in half lengthwise. Chop potatoes into 2-inch pieces. Boil corn and potatoes for 10 minutes. Drain and set aside.

In a large bowl, combine shrimp, sausage, corn and potatoes. Set together melted 3 tablespoons butter, Old Bay seasoning, garlic, juice from half a lemon, and salt and pepper to taste and pour over shrimp, sausage and veggies. Stir to coat.

Divide between 4 12-by-12-inch sheets of aluminum foil. Fold edges of foil up around the food to create a closed packet.

Cook on preheated grill over medium-high heat for 8 to 10 minutes on one side, then flip and cook another 5 to 6 minutes on the second side. Alternatively you can bake the packets at 400 degrees in the oven for 15 to 20 minutes until corn is tender and shrimp are pink and fully cooked.

While packets are cooking, melt remaining butter in a medium sauce pan over medium-high heat. Once melted, continue to stir gently over medium heat for 3 to 4 minutes longer until color changes from pale yellow to a golden amber that is careful not to burn.

Serve shrimp foil packs topped with chopped parsley, lemon wedges for squeezing and melted butter for drizzling over the top or dipping.

Recipe by Corrie de la Cruz at www.livewellanddelicious.com.

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