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**Forsyth surrogate, family celebrate baby's arrival
Couple will return soon to South Georgia**

By Jennifer Sami

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Jensen Martinez was born Tuesday at Northside Hospital-Forsyth. The son of Jessica and Alonso Martinez, he was carried by surrogate Leslie Bell of north Forsyth.

felt when we embarked on this journey. It's their baby, and this is what I wanted to see — him in their arms."

Alonso Martinez joked that the child looks just like his wife.

"He is everything I expected and more. He is definitely his mommy made over. All of his little features are mommy's, down to the toes," he said. "I truly felt my world change as soon as I had seen him."

Jessica Martinez, who is no longer able to have children of her own, was in the room when Bell underwent a C-section and slept by Bell's side Tuesday night.

CUMMING — North Forsyth resident Leslie Bell gave birth Tuesday to a healthy 7-pound, 3-ounce boy named Jensen.

But when she leaves Northside Hospital-Forsyth in the coming days, the infant won't be going home with her.

Bell carried Jensen, the child of Jessica and Alonso Martinez, as a surrogate for nine months. On Wednesday at the hospital, she said she couldn't have been happier to give the gift of life to the Martinez family.

"He's here. This was the moment that made it all worth it ... seeing them as a family together," she said. "I'm as much in the right place emotionally as I



Jessica and Alonso Martinez, holding son Jensen, visit with Leslie Bell on Wednesday at Northside Hospital-Forsyth. Bell served as a surrogate for the couple's child, who was born Tuesday.

Since meeting through the Surrogacy Experience, a gestational surrogacy agency, the two have become close friends. And that's not going to change when Jensen Martinez returns to South Georgia with his family.

"I want him to know who helped him come into this world," Jessica Martinez said. "They played a big role in his life, so there's nothing I don't want him to know about."

"Look what she's done for us. I don't see how any intended parent could just walk away from the surrogate and be OK. I couldn't do that."

Bell, who has a 7-year-old son and 4-year-old daughter, said she was thrilled to continue to be a part of the family's life.

"We're all just regular people that God brought together," she said, adding that having become so close with the Martinez family has made the experience even more special.

Added Alonso Martinez: "We are extremely blessed and grateful for her and her family being on board with doing this. They have been everything we hoped for and more."

According to Bell, becoming a surrogate was uncharted territory for both families,

"Some people were afraid as it went further along that I would feel attached," she said. "But I still feel the same. He's theirs and I'm so happy I could help bring him here into the world."

"It would be harder if I wasn't going to stay involved because the sense of purpose it's given me ... but it helps to know it's definitely not over. This is the beginning of the best part — the beginning of his life with them."

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