

Mikaela Skye Ficaro-Jimenez was the first baby of 2013 from Stouffville born at Markham Stouffville Hospital – at 4:45 a.m. Jan. 1. She is held by proud parents Andrea Ficaro and Erik Jimenez in their Expedition Crescent home yesterday.



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

DIFFICULT PREGNANCY FOR STOUFFVILLE MOM, DAD IN CHICAGO

First baby of '13 had plans of her own

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Mikaela Skye Ficaro-Jimenez was supposed to arrive Jan. 14 but medical complications for mom Andrea Ficaro pushed the date to Dec. 31.

At least that was the plan.

In reality, Mikaela was born at 4:45 a.m. Jan. 1. She was the first baby born to a Whitchurch-Stouffville couple in 2013 at Markham Stouffville Hospital and the second baby born in the new year at the Ninth Line hospital, according to spokesperson Alannah Nesci.

Mikaela is Hebrew for Who is Like God and Ms Ficaro and her boyfriend Erik Jimenez chose Skye as the middle name because it fit so well.

The names, perhaps, have another meaning, as Ms Ficaro's pregnancy wasn't the easiest.

The 27-year-old first-time mom had gestational diabetes and about five months into the pregnancy she became severely itchy. She was diagnosed with obstetric cholestasis. And her

'It wasn't planned, but it was a blessing. ... Overwhelming. When I had a chance to be alone, I won't lie, I broke down.'

Andrea Ficaro
on giving birth to first baby of 2013

boyfriend lives in Chicago.

"It was really difficult," Ms Ficaro admitted of the pregnancy.

"It was really irritating to the point I wanted to scratch off my skin," she said of the obstetric cholestasis, which affects the liver and causes severe itching for the mother-to-be.

Although the cause remains unknown, according to BabyCenter Canada's website, cholestasis occurs as a result of the way the body uses bile, a liquid produced in the liver.

Cholestasis affects less than one per cent of mothers-to-be in Canada, according to BabyCenter Canada's website. But those who are afflicted with it are more likely to go into premature labour.

Ms Ficaro's doctor decided it was best to induce her and asked her if she wanted it to be on Dec. 31 or Jan. 1. Ms Ficaro chose Dec. 31 because it was the start of her 38th week.

But six-pound Mikaela waited until Jan. 1.

It was once thought, according to BabyCenter Canada, that obstetric cholestasis may slightly increase the risk of delivering a stillborn baby. However, mothers with this condition are no more likely to deliver a stillborn than women who do not have the condition.

"It wasn't planned, but it was a blessing. ... Overwhelming. When I had a chance to be alone, I won't lie, I broke down," she said of Mikaela's arrival.

Mr. Jimenez is currently working on obtaining a visa to live and work in Canada, she said.

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Resident takes Main St. development to OMB

A local resident has filed an appeal with the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) against the town's approval for a subdivision on the northeast corner of Main Street and Baker Hill Boulevard.

Stephen Mak has launched the appeal, claiming Minto Communities' proposed subdivision plan did not undergo an environmental impact assessment on the adjacent natural features; some of the town homes' designs fail to blend in and property values will be negatively affected due to noise and the "peculiar aesthetic appeal" created by the developer, according to the town report.

Town staff support Minto's motion to dismiss. Council approved the recommendation.

Staff also recommend the town support Minto's position if a hearing is needed.

The proposed draft plan of the subdivision was approved by council in September.

The plan calls for about 273 residential units, a park, commercial space, an open area and easements within the approximately 23 acres of land.

The OMB will hear the motion by Minto representatives to have Mr. Mak's appeal dismissed Thursday.

Family loves the library

The Cheng family has been named the 2012 Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library Family of The Year.

The award honours a family in the community whose members all make use of the library's resources.

The entire family uses the facility for different reasons.

Chun Ling attends ESL conversation classes, while Yibo regularly participates in the after-school chess club. Yibo and Dean also participate in the library's summer reading club.

The award has been given out since 2005.

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