

# Woman to bear twins at age 59

By ELLIOTT MINOR  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

**SYLVESTER, Ga.** — A 59-year-old great-grandmother is pregnant with twins and will deliver next month, three decades after she had her tubes tied. "They came untied," Frances Harris said Thursday.

The multiple birth Dec. 21 would break the purported record set this week by a 56-year-old New York City mother of twins.

Harris, of rural Sylvester, Ga., said she wasn't trying to get pregnant — and didn't realize she was — until she started gaining weight and went to see her doctor.

"A lot of things changed about me," she said. "I started craving grapes and apples, things I don't usually crave. By then I was four months pregnant."

When the doctor broke the news, "They had to sit me down. I couldn't even talk," she said.

The news was even more shocking considering Harris — the mother of five, grandmother of 14 and great-grandmother of six — had her tubes tied 33 years ago after the birth of her youngest child.

Harris had her first child when she was 15; 44 years will separate her first-born from the newborns. She was divorced years ago from the twins'



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Great-grandmother Francis Harris is set to deliver twins in December, beating the U.S. record set by a 56-year-old woman.

father, 60-year-old Raymond Harris, a heavy equipment operator. She said they will remarry before the birth.

The oldest American believed to have given birth to twins is Aleta St. James, a single mother who turns 57 on Friday. She gave birth Tuesday by in-vitro fertilization at New York City's Mount Sinai Medical Center.

Statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (news-web sites) show 263 children were born to women between ages 50 and 54 in

2002. The oldest American to give birth is Arceli Keh, of California, who was 63 when she had a daughter in 1996.

Harris said some family members, concerned about health complications, had suggested she end the pregnancy.

"I couldn't live with myself," she said. "I pray we all three pull through. When they're so little, they're so beautiful. I think they are God's gift."

Associated Press writer Pat Milton in New York contributed to this story.

# Plus-size fashions gaining mass appeal with new line

By KATHRYN WEXLER  
KRT CAMPUS

**MIAMI** — Abby Zeichner wears Versace, but only when she daydreams.

That's because Versace doesn't come in size 18. Nor do most designer jeans. Or sparkly camisoles. Or slinky dresses.

"I don't want elastic waistbands and the soccer-mom look," said Zeichner, 37, sitting in a South Beach Starbucks on a recent visit to Miami from New York. "I should be able to get up and feel pretty and sexy."

When Zeichner designed clothing for stores for teens, she couldn't get the stores to carry even a size 14. So last year she launched the Abby Z Collection, with exactly the styles she herself longed for.

In the beginning, most buyers wouldn't return her calls. But somehow all that changed about six months ago.

"I don't know why — people just got it all of a sudden," said Zeichner, wearing three-inch heels and her very own tight jeans and purple print poncho in silk.

Selected Saks Fifth Avenue and Nordstrom stores began carrying Abby Z in the last several months. Her line arrived recently at various Lord & Taylor stores. Bloomingdale's is putting the apparel in three stores later this month.

"We like that Abby Z is the Abby Z customer herself," said Marisa Gottlieb, senior assistant buyer for Bloomingdale's. "We also like that it's a little hipper and more youthful, trendy, yet the fabrics are very high quality."

Describing plus-size clothing as "hip" is a recent phenomenon. Gilda Gevis opened a store by the same name 16 years ago in Aventura, Fla., to dress women who were like herself, a size 20. But back then, most of what she had to choose from were what she calls "fat ladies clothes."

"They were boxy, shapeless and matronly or with big old floral prints," Gevis said. "We didn't have clothes that were the counterpart of the regular marketplace."

When clothing manufacturers realized in the last decade that larger women were happy to pay for nice clothes, often they merely doubled the girth. But without altering the cuts to accommodate different proportions, the clothes were a poor fit — and sometimes still are, Gottlieb said.

The number commonly quoted by those in the fashion industry is that



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Professional Plus Size model Gail Spence models fall fashions at the Lisa Todd store in Merrick Park, Fla. Department stores like Saks Fifth Avenue will start carrying an extended plus-size collection.

more than 50 percent of women in the United States are size 14 or larger. Some higher-end designers like Ellen Tracy and Dana Buchman make clothes for larger women, which are carried in better department stores and boutiques. And I.N.C., at Burdines-Macy's, has a line that appeals to curvy younger women.

Still, when it comes to fashion, being big in America isn't easy. Claudette Armbrister, who was crowned Ms. Plus Florida 2003, is a size 22-24 and usually buys clothes from Lane Bryant, Ashley Stewart and Roaman's online catalog. But when she walks into department stores — other than JCPenney — she feels like a second-class citizen.

That's because the bigger clothes are tucked away on top floors, in basements or far behind the Misses sections.

"It almost seems as if they're

embarrassed of us," said Armbrister, of Miami. "But we are here to stay. So bring our clothes down by the little girls."

The clothing industry is getting wiser, however. Said Marc Shomberg, manager of Gilda Gevis, "My customers are 30 to 60, business women or retired women who have disposable income."

Old Navy now has jeans and separates in sizes 16 to 26. Wal-Mart is adding sportswear to its Just My Size line (JMS) for larger women, and labels will reflect which items are best for a woman shaped like an apple versus one shaped like an hourglass.

"I think more and more we have become aware of the difference of the proportions in terms of women's shapes," said JMS Designer Director Regina Martin. "Before they just defined her as plus."

## Movie Releases

"After the Sunset"

"Seed of Chucky"

"The Polar Express"



## Let Love be Your Legacy

- ❁ FREE Confidential Guidance
- ❁ Continued support after the baby's birth
- ❁ You select the family for your baby
- ❁ Adoption services available

414 Center St.  
West Columbia SC, 29169  
(803) 796-9332

(800) 922-0682 • 1-800-BETHANY (238-4269)

www.bethany.org

**Bethany**  
CHRISTIAN SERVICES

### ■ PEACE

Continued from page 5

Secretary Jack Straw has complained to American officials about their treatment of him.

Gorbachev's foundation and Rome Mayor Walter Veltroni's office, which presented the award, praised Islam for promoting peace and "for having condemned terrorism."

The former Soviet leader alluded to the musician's troubles.

"Cat Stevens' life has not been simple," Gorbachev said. "Every person who takes a critical stance to make the world a better place ... has a difficult life."

The two men kissed each other on the cheek as Gorbachev handed over the prize.

Islam is the founder of Small Kindness, a charity to raise money for children and families suffering from poverty and war in the Balkans and Middle East. It also donated money to victims of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks

and to the fight against AIDS in South Africa.

Islam has largely shunned music in recent years, although he did record a new version of his 1971 hit "Peace Train" last year for the album "Hope," which raised money for Iraqi children.

The meeting of Nobel laureates, which ends Friday, is organized every year in Rome by the Gorbachev Foundation. Besides Gorbachev, other Nobel winners present included Lech Walesa, the founder of Poland's Solidarity democracy movement; Rigoberta Menchu Tum, who fought government oppression in Guatemala; and former South Korean President Kim Dae-jung.

Islam said he was honored to be attending — "not as a rock 'n' roller, but as someone who is sharing a platform with these noble examples."

Other recipients of the "Man for Peace" award included Italian actor-director Roberto Benigni, who won in 2002. Benigni directed and starred in the Oscar-winning film "Life is Beautiful."

### ■ DANCE

Continued from page 5

show's flyer states, "The pulse of the music speaks to everyone because it contains elements of life common to all people." Through their energetic stage show, Price said, Borenya West African Drum and Dance explores the rhythm ever-present within us all.

The show begins at 7 p.m. in the Russell House Ballroom. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for students and \$3 for children under 12. On Saturday, the troupe will hold a drum and dance workshop featuring Fode Camara and Mamady Sano at the Blatt P.E. Center Aerobics Room. The Drum Workshop runs from 1-2:30 p.m. and the dance workshop will take place from 2:30-4 p.m. The participation fee is \$10 for adults, \$5 for students and \$3 for children under 12. Call 782-1964 or e-mail info@borenya.org to register.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecockfeatures@gwn.sc.edu

Omicron Delta Kappa supports and thanks all those who have served our country.

OAK

Active Duty and Retired National Guards ROTC Units

Thank you for serving and protecting our country.