

# Iraq soldier gets pictures of unborn child

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By NICK LUCCHESI  
The Telegraph

GLEN CARBON — Medical technology traditionally used for collaboration among health care workers across the globe found another use Saturday — connecting an expectant mother with her husband stationed in Iraq.

At the newly opened Ultrasound Zone, 20 Junction West Drive in Glen Carbon, workers used that same technology to send real-time images of an unborn girl, already named Ashtyn Rae Lovellette, to her father, Staff Sgt. Josh Lovellette of the Army National Guard.

Ultrasound shows digital images — created by vibrating sound waves — of an unborn child on a computer monitor. The images can be streamed online to anyone with an Internet connection and access to a corresponding Web site.

When the digital shapes began to resemble a face, then hands and arms on Saturday, mother Sarah Lovellette began to cry.

"She's so beautiful," Lovellette said between tears, as diagnostics medical sonographer Regina Maxeiner performed an ultrasound reading on Lovellette's unborn child. She is six months pregnant.

Josh Lovellette was thousands of miles away in arguably the most dangerous locale on the planet — Baghdad, Iraq — watching a computer monitor of the process in his camp. He also heard his unborn daughter's rhythmic heartbeat.

"It's really good to see the images," Josh Lovellette said, speaking via cell phone. "It makes me feel good to see it because I haven't been there to see (the baby) before."

Lovellette was deployed this past September and may not return until September of this year. The baby is due on April 25 or 26.

Back in Glen Carbon, Sarah Lovellette's mother, Suzanne Piper, grandmother, Dolores Hunt, and mother-in-law, Teresa Lovellette, were among those watching the sonogram images, projected onto a flat-screen television. The images were shown in digital clarity because of a new technology called 3D/4D, which shows dimension as well as movement of an unborn child.

Toby Criveau, office manager of the facility, said her experience as the wife of a Navy serviceman led her to offer the extra service to other pregnant women who have husbands or loved ones stationed in distant locales.

"We want to offer this free Baby View Cast to any military person who is stationed out of the area," Criveau said.

The Lovellettes live in Fort Richardson, about 40 miles outside of Anchorage, Alaska. When Sarah Lovellette was visiting family in Florissant, Mo., for the holidays, she arranged a sonography appointment at the Ultrasound Zone. She got to talking about her husband with staff there and they arranged to have the sonogram streamed over the Internet.

The expectant mother will head back to Alaska in a few weeks with her mother, who will help look after her, as well as "spoil" the child after it is born at the military hospital there.

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With her mother, Suzanne Piper, at her side, Sarah Lovellette reacts with tears as she sees the first pictures of her baby while diagnostic medical sonographer Regina Maxeiner performs an ultrasound on Lovellette at the Ultrasound Zone in Glen Carbon.

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