

## Satellite Link Allows Soldier In Iraq To See His Newborn Baby

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By Robert Rizzuto  
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When Jamestown native Jill Greenawalt found out she was pregnant with her second child, it was only a few weeks until her husband Ryan deployed for his second tour of duty in Iraq.

For the majority of her pregnancy, she lived with her parents in their Jamestown home, along with her oldest child, Ryan Jr. She said that her family made things easier as they could provide a little relief any mother can appreciate, and kept her from being alone.



Jill Greenawalt, Ryan Jr. and Mariah talk with new dad in Iraq

P-J Photo by Robert Rizzuto

Just two days ago, Mrs. Greenawalt gave birth to a 7-pound, 14-ounce daughter named Mariah, but her husband was still in Iraq, and missed the day.

Despite the distance between them, they were united Wednesday afternoon by modern technology provided by a collaboration between government, a non-profit group and industry.

Inside her room at WCA Hospital, Mrs. Greenawalt spent a little over an hour with her family, united, as they were able to catch up face-to-face for the first time since he left the states back in October.

"I am so happy we are able to see his face and talk to him like this," Mrs. Greenawalt said. "This is the next best thing to having him here with us."

In the room, she spoke with him through a webcam and a microphone, hooked up to a laptop computer. The Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center - Atlantic (SPAWAR), the Freedom Calls Foundation and DRS Technologies, along with the U.S. Army and Marines combined their resources and technical skills to provide military families a quality meeting experience using a high resolution satellite video link.

"Wow, she looks beautiful," Capt. Ryan Greenawalt said while looking at his new daughter on his laptop. "I don't want to be biased, but I think she looks like me. Well, maybe she's a good combination of the both of us."

Three-year-old Ryan Jr. also got to speak with "daddy," telling him about a recent lunch outing and his plans for his new sister.

"We went to Applebees and I ate a grilled cheese with french fries," he said. "But pretty soon, I'm going to teach her how to color pictures."

The family enjoyed their time together and according to Mrs. Greenawalt, are counting down the 43 days until Ryan comes home for a visit during his mid-deployment leave.

John Harlow, executive director of the Freedom Calls Foundation, said the partnership is transforming a long-standing family communication paradigm in time of war by enabling soldiers in the war zone to attend and participate in milestone family events.

"Soldiers may now keep their commitments to their families at the same time they keep their commitment to their country," Harlow said. "The long-term vision of our partnership is that our war fighters will be able to come home from a day on the battlefield and spend virtual time with their families every night using state-of-the-art technology. The contribution of resources by community citizens like WCA Hospital enables the foundation to fulfill its mission."