

# SARATOGIAN

## A moment not to be missed

JIM KINNEY, The Saratogian  
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SARATOGA SPRINGS -- Spc. Jarod Barber's tears streamed past a grin that looked as wide as the computer screen Thursday as he saw his daughter for the first time -- via satellite from Iraq, where he's been serving with an Army Reserve unit since June.

For her part, Fyona Lyn Barber cried and squirmed for the camera, then sucked on her mother's finger and let her dad get a good long look at all 6 pounds 15 ounces and 21½ inches of her.

'Hey, Sweets,' Jarod Barber kept repeating over and over.



Nicole Barber holds her newborn daughter, Fyona, Thursday at Saratoga Hospital.

His wife, 22-year-old Nicole Barber, asked if they'd done OK as she held her baby up to the webcam set up in her Saratoga Hospital room.

'I feel like I've missed the greatest thing that's ever happened to me except for marrying Nicole,' Spc. Barber said. 'Imagine every great thing happening to you and it hits you at the same time.'

'Don't worry, everything will come together soon,' he added, addressing the baby now rather than the reporters gathered in his wife's hospital room.

The transmission was made possible by the Freedom Calls Foundation. It's the first time Saratoga Hospital has participated, said spokeswoman Ellen Kerness. Josh Maines, the hospital's network analyst, said he made an Internet connection with the Foundation's Brooklyn Heights headquarters, which paid for the satellite time. The hospital had to buy a \$99 webcam.

Spc. Barber said he's amazed by the technology.

'Think about 60 years ago, or even in Vietnam, they didn't even have anything like this,' he said. 'I'm lucky I have access to this. I'm better off than a lot of guys over here.'

Nicole Barber said she speaks on the phone with her husband nearly every day and he has access to e-mail. He called Wednesday afternoon soon after Fyona was born and heard her first cry.

Jarod Barber, 22, grew up in Salem and graduated from Salem High School in 2002. He met Nicole, who is from Connecticut, in advanced infantry training. She's a reservist, too, and is eligible for deployment in six months.

'We were both in tanks, then he got transferred,' she said.

Jarod Barber is with the 408th Personnel Services Battalion based in Schenectady.

They married in June, about two weeks before Barber shipped out. He hopes to be back for leave in July. The unit is set to come home in October or November.

In civilian life, Barber works for Bonacio Construction in Saratoga Springs. Nicole Barber works as a medical assistant at Cambridge Family Health.

She and the baby will live with Jarod's parents, Todd and Lynn Barber, until Spc. Barber gets home. Lynn Barber was also at the hospital Thursday and watched her son react to his new daughter.

Nicole Barber's mother, Kathy Lloyd, and sister, Christina Davis, were also there Thursday. They plan a lot of trips up from Connecticut.

'We'll be making a commute,' Lloyd said.

Jarod Barber's thoughts were of home, too.

'I wish I was home three days ago,' he said.

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