

ROME MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

NEWS RELEASE

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Special Delivery

Hospital's new wireless internet allows dad to be at birth

ROME – On March 30, Matthew and Caresse Schwock of Schuyler welcomed the birth of their son, Lucas Matthew into the world just as they planned – together. The only change in plans was dad was at his Army base in Texas and mom and baby at Rome Memorial Hospital. But, with the hospital's new wireless internet and the video conferencing software, Skype, this first-time dad was able to be present at the birth of his son from over 2000 miles away.

Army Spc. Matthew Schwock received his orders just three weeks ago to report for training in Texas and is waiting deployment to Iraq.

“When we weren't sure if Matt would be able to come home for the birth, we thought Skype was the next best thing,” Caresse said.

The hospital began offering free wireless internet service to patients and visitors in March, so this was an exciting first-time event in the Maternity Department.

“Technology is amazing especially when you can use it to bring your family together at just the right moment,” Caresse said. It is common with military families, she explained.

While Diana Fitzgerald, CNM, a midwife who works with doctors Ankur Desai, MD and Lauren Giustra, MD at Mohawk Valley Women's Health Associates, and the maternity nurses attended to Caresse and the baby, they were also able to keep dad up to date. Diana said it was an exciting and emotional time.

“I have to admit, this birth made me a little teary,” Fitzgerald said. “Because this was a natural birth and not a surgical procedure, we were able to accommodate the family. It's wonderful to be able to bring family together when it matters the most.”

“Diana and the nurses helped me call Matt when the time was right,” Caresse said. “He was with me for the last two hours of labor. He coached me and encouraged me.”

“Matt was delighted he was able to be right there when Diana placed Lucas in my arms,” she said.

In a telephone call from his Army base, Matt said, “I felt like I was right there.”



SPECIAL DELIVERY – Caresse Schwock dressed her newborn Lucas Matthew Schwock in red, white and blue in honor of his dad, Army Spc. Matthew Schwock who is in Texas preparing for deployment to Iraq. Through Rome Memorial Hospital's new wireless internet services and Skype video conferencing software, Spc. Schwock, although over 2000 miles away, was able to see and talk to his wife during the birth of their son.

Matt's face and voice on the computer screen helped Caresse through her labor and delivery. She was able to hear all his positive and encouraging words, the same words he would have said if he was with her in person. "She a trooper!" he said.

Matt wasn't alone during all of this, either. He explained, "It was personal time. But a good friend stood by in the wings and was there to congratulate me when my son was born."

The hospital's guest network is like any public hotspot. Patients and visitors can access the free wireless network using their personal wireless-enabled device, a standard internet browser and a Wi-Fi card almost anywhere in the hospital.

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