

# How to have a baby in the digital age

**Kathy Hedberg/Lewiston Tribune**

This is how the baby arrived a generation ago:

A call in the night - the parents-to-be were on the way to the hospital. Mama was wheeled into the delivery room attended by doctors and nurses all dressed up in their blue and white sterile outfits. Family members gathered with the soon-to-be-dad and spent the night in the hospital waiting room, drinking stale coffee until the doctor in his sterile uniform came out of the sterile operating room and said all was well.

This is how the baby arrives today:

I was conducting an interview, talking about cows and fences and manure, and I got a text from my son: "Contractions started at 3 a.m. We're at the hospital now. Go live in a few hours."

It's hard to get your concentration back after a message like that, but when it comes to cows and manure I can hold my own. The interview goes on.

A little later another text: "Epidural in."

The extended family was scattered from Hawaii to Southern California to Boise to Clearwater and to me, now driving south on U.S. Highway 95, trying to stay calm and under the speed limit. But we were all connected for the play-by-play.

Childbirth in this day and age is generally so safe few of us stop to consider that even in the best of circumstances there's risk involved. A human being is popping out of the body of another human being, and even as long as that has been going on, it's still a wonder and a miracle.

Human beings aren't like cows who are standing contentedly in the field, chewing grass, when suddenly they begin to hump their back and groan and in a few moments a slimy thing slides out of the back end like a cabbage roll. Cows make it look so easy, but even so, it's a wonder and a miracle.

By the time I hit Ferdinand, there was another text from my son: "Pushing has begun."

I thought of the cows. And I just hoped they would send their good karma to Simi Jo, my daughter-in-law.

Forty minutes later, I was back home and a grandma - again. The whole family - from Hawaii, Boise, Southern California, Clearwater and Grangeville - began yakking back and forth through text messages like a flock of chickens. I sent emails crowing: "I had a baby!!"

"I didn't even know you were pregnant," writes back one of my music buddies.

I was slow in coming to appreciate the digital age, but when a whole family scattered around the globe can be connected at a time like this, it's a marvelous thing.

So, to the family of Matthew, Simi Jo and Henry is added a new little boy, Micah Earl Hedberg, 8 pounds, 8 ounces, or, as my son, Danny, put it: beast mode.

Welcome to the world, Micah. Your family has been waiting for you.

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