

Baby's delivery for Lake Mills couple assisted by dispatcher

By Amy Smith Union staff writer | Posted: Friday, April 17, 2015 9:51 am

LAKE MILLS — In an upstairs bathroom, scattered with squeaky bath toys, Adam and Katie Renfeldt gave birth to their second daughter, Alyson.

They didn't do it all on their own, however, thanks to Jefferson County 911 dispatcher Rachel Schloesser. At around midnight on Sunday, April 10, Katie started feeling a little uncomfortable, and by 1 a.m. she knew it was time to head to the hospital. The Renfeldts called Katie's mother, who would be driving about 25 minutes to watch their first child, Ella.

When Katie's mother arrived, however, she walked into the middle of her own daughter giving birth, as Katie's water broke shortly after the call.

"It was a good thing she did have about a 25-minute drive over, otherwise we would have been on the interstate, which probably would have been a lot less comfortable," Katie said. "After we called the midwives ... it was very quickly that I realized she was coming whether we liked it or not."

Adam called 911 and reached Schloesser at 1:25 a.m. The baby started crowning at 1:26 a.m., and by 1:32 a.m. he was catching his Alyson, his new baby girl in his arms.

"She was ready to be born, and that was it," Schloesser said.

The dispatcher helped coach Adam through the short birth — something she said she had yet to do in her 16 years with the county.

"I've had dozens of women and dads calling a little on the hysterical side because their wives are going into labor, but usually it's just one contraction here or there," Schloesser said. "I've had to start coaching people through it but never beginning to end."

She added that Adam's composure during the birth was a big factor in their success. After she hung up, the first thing she said to her co-workers was how calm the couple remained.

"You were in the middle of having a baby, and you were still really calm," Schloesser said to Katie.

"I really give credit to Adam for this whole thing going so well because he was so calm, and that really makes the difference," she added. "He really handled the whole situation; I just steered him in the right direction."

Katie said she remembers Adam telling her to breathe "and all those things you think you would remember, but



HOME DELIVERY!

IT'S A GIRL — Adam and Katie Renfeldt delivered their second child, Alyson, in their bathroom on April 10, with the help of Jefferson County 911 dispatcher Rachel Schloesser, above.

you really don't."

She said she also remembers telling Adam that they would be able to laugh about this one day. The new father, Adam, however, said he doesn't even remember thinking during the entire birth.

"I went from just not believing she was coming to being completely terrified that I would be having her in our bathroom," Katie added. "That was not our birth plan, which we did create.

"You have this whole birth plan and this thought in your head, and this certainty wasn't it," she said. "But there are so many things that could have gone differently, so we are just thankful that she is healthy and there were people there who could walk us through it."

The mother said it felt like a really long time before her newborn daughter first cried.

"It felt like an eternity," Katie recalled. "I heard him (Adam) tell the dispatcher that she was blue, but then she did cry, and it was just the best sound we had ever heard."

Lake Mills EMS responded to the call within six minutes, and transported Katie and Alyson to the hospital. Memorable births are not a new concept to the Renfeldts, however, as Katie's first birth to their two-year-old daughter Ella was a traumatic birth. After she was born, Katie recalled Adam saying he might not want to be in the room for the next birth.

"But there were different plans for Adam, and there he was catching the baby," she added with a laugh.

The new mother said her doctor is uncertain as to why the birth happened so quickly and is sending her labs to a pathologist for results. Early on in the pregnancy, Katie said she did have some complications and her doctor had indicated that Alyson might be a pre-term birth, though she did make it one day after her due date. "It was unbelievable; the experience was such a surreal moment," Katie exclaimed. "It took several days to really soak in. I am just incredibly thankful that Adam stayed calm, that the dispatcher stayed calm, and that we had people here in Lake Mills that were so close. Those are the small town things that you just become so thankful for."

Schloesser herself feels thankful that she was the one who was able to assist the family in their time of need.

"It could have been anyone who answered that call ... in this case it just happened to be me, and I feel really fortunate that I was able to help the family when they really needed it," she said.

At the station, Schloesser now is known as the midwife, and when she returned to work the following day her locker and desk were decorated in pink.

As for big sister Ella, she slept through the entire birth in her room just down the hall.

"She went to sleep an only child and woke up a big sister," Katie said. "To her, the miracle of birth is just amazing."