

Accidental Unassisted Birth!

FOOTNOTES

FOOTHILLS MIDWIFERY & the birth cottage NEWSLETTER

"Contending with COVID-19!"

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Precipitous Birth

DID YOU PLAN TO HAVE A BIRTH CENTER BIRTH OR A HOMEBIRTH?

I considered both options but ended up choosing to have a homebirth because I expected my labor to go quickly, which it did and so I was happy with my choice! I likely would've given birth in the car otherwise! I knew from the age of 15 that I would have an out of hospital birth after watching my aunt give birth to my cousin at my house. She lived on an island and so she needed to be "off-island" to have the baby. I stayed home from school that day and my own siblings and my cousins all got to be a part of her birth. It showed me what a women's body is capable of and gave me confidence that I could do that someday too!

WAS IT YOUR FIRST OUT OF HOSPITAL BIRTH?

No, I had my first baby at a birth center. For me, I wasn't comfortable having a homebirth for my first birth and a birth center was the perfect happy medium between home and hospital.

DID YOU HAVE ANY PREGNANCY CRAVINGS?

I didn't have any cravings but I was food adverse in my first trimester to vegetables and salads... anything green! It made me nauseous thinking about those foods and that's not like me!

"She even slept a couple times with a stuffed animal under her shirt the entire night."



WALTER'S AUNT, GIA, WEIGHING IN!

WHAT WAS THE BEST PART OF YOUR PREGNANCY?

The best part was sharing my pregnancy with my older daughter. She is 3.5 and she was so affectionate, curious and involved. I could have never anticipated how much love she would have for something she couldn't see. It was funny when she would tell people, "You know my Mom has a midwife." She even slept a couple times with a stuffed animal under her shirt the entire night.

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LEORA USING COMBS AS A LABOR COPING TECHNIQUE

A First Birth

DID YOU PLAN TO HAVE A BIRTH CENTER BIRTH OR A HOMEBIRTH?

I planned to have a birth center birth because I did not feel comfortable having it at home since I live in the same house as my father-in-law!

WHAT WAS THE BEST PART OF YOUR PREGNANCY?

My husband and I being able to feel our baby move for the first time. I didn't feel her move until I was pretty far along so once I started feeling her move the movement, it was very strong and easy to distinguish.

WHAT WAS THE HARDEST PART OF YOUR PREGNANCY?

My stomach would get so tight and uncomfortable feeling from stretching so much especially at the end of the day when my stomach was full from eating on top of having a baby inside. I felt like if I was poked with a pin I would explode like a balloon!

A First Birth continued from Pg. 1

HOW DID YOU KNOW YOU WERE IN LABOR?

I was sitting on the couch one evening and suddenly started to feeling a different uncomfortable kind of cramping feeling. At first I thought it was just the baby pushing in a new uncomfortable way but then about 45 minutes the same thing happened and I realized I was likely starting to have contractions. So I waited to see if it would happen again in about the same amount of time and it did so I knew for sure I was starting labor an app for counting contractions so I could send it to my Midwife for her to would know how far apart and long they were. I didn't have any leading up to labor.

WHO WAS AT YOUR BIRTH?

My husband Stuart and sister Lirise, as my doula, who also happened to be about 15 weeks pregnant herself.

WOULD YOU DO ANYTHING DIFFERENT IF YOU DID IT AGAIN?

The only thing at my birth I wish I could do different, but isn't in my control, was when the baby was born I was so exhausted from labor that I couldn't enjoy the fact that my little baby girl was born and in my arms the way that I would have liked. I didn't have any feeling of I don't like my baby take her away from me. I knew I would care very much about her and love her deeply but for the time being I just didn't have the energy to really feel anything. I wanted to feel overwhelming joy and love when I held her in the tub for the first time and then later when I was in bed resting but I was just too tired

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING WITH THAT LAST PUSH?

Since there was issues with the baby's heart rate and I had to have an episiotomy firstly I was thinking "there's just no option the baby has to and is going to come out now because I am not going to let her die." Then that it was finally going to be over no more agonizing hours of contractions the baby was coming out and I would finally be able to just rest.

WHAT WILL YOU REMEMBER THE MOST ABOUT YOUR BIRTH?

How impressed I was with my husband and how quickly he picked up on first coaching and supporting me in the way I needed during labor! Also on a more humorous note how much I felt like a turkey being thawed out and prepared for cooking haha! I mean really how much closer does it get, I was laying in a bathtub of water for hours then at the end when I was thawed out I just wouldn't stretch enough so I headed to be cut and the package of innards remove (placenta) dried off and stitched up and ready for the oven haha!



LEORA & STUART DANCING THROUGH LABOR

WHAT WAS THE FIRST THING YOU SAID AFTER YOUR BIRTH?

"I love you."

LEORA, STUART & AMELIA | BORN INTO WATER AT THE BIRTH COTTAGE | 8LB 2OZ | DUE DATE: 5/17 | BIRTHDAY: 5/23

Unassisted Birth

WHY DID YOU PLAN TO HAVE A HOMEBIRTH?

We chose to have a homebirth so our 5 & 7 year old daughters could be involved as much as they want



WHAT WAS THE BEST PART OF YOUR PREGNANCY?

The anticipation. Until the last few weeks, then the novelty wore off.

WHAT WAS THE HARDEST PART OF PREGNANCY?

Symphysis pubis dysfunction and Anemia.

WHAT WILL YOU REMEMBER THE MOST ABOUT YOUR BIRTH?

Realizing that we are catching her on our own!

WOULD YOU DO ANYTHING DIFFERENT IF YOU DID IT AGAIN?

"Not a single thing."

RYANN, GARY & MOLLY | BORN AT HOME | 8lb 9oz

DUE DATE: JUNE 14 | BIRTHDAY: JUNE 10

Unassisted birth continued on page 3

Ryann's Words

Molly's Birthday

It was 8:15 in the morning, my husband, Gary, and I were laying in bed together. Just like every morning for the last few weeks, I was trying to avoid gravity as long as I could. I had felt pretty achy and fatigued the day before, I didn't think too much of it other than being pregnant and near delivery.

As I was laying there, I felt my water break. I immediately announced this to my husband and he responds with "I heard it break!".

I get up and head to the toilet, make sure all is clear and no cord. I send Terah an excited text

"My water just broke, I will let you know when contractions begin!"

I head downstairs to do my hair, because I have done that with every baby. Labor starts, next is hair. Priorities, right? I head back upstairs, I get to the top stair and I am slammed with a strong contraction. I tell myself to make it to the toilet. I get there and time a few more. These contractions are all over the place. One minute, forty seconds, 20 seconds, a minute and a half. All with no rhyme or reason between them. I send Terah another text explaining that I am not getting any breaks on these contractions. She lets me know that she will be headed down shortly.

I manage to make it to the bed.

I shout to my husband to start filling the pool. I am not sure how much time passes, but it becomes very apparent to me that the baby is on her way, and fast! I am trying to cope with these contractions, but I've started to profusely sweat, shake, and lurch all over the place. I try to call down to my husband, I struggled to find words. Finally, I work up a voice (and I think a text to Terah at the same time).

I tell my husband that I'm already pushing, get pads, etc... Gary puts one of his airpods in my ear so we both have Terah coaching us through this. She gently reminds me that I wanted to slow down and remember these moments. Terah is still minutes away, as well as Beth and Tina. We know at this point, we are doing this on our own! My husband has caught all three of his daughters, I was not afraid for even a second. We've got this. Contractions kept coming in a crazy, sporadic pattern. I reached down,

head and was reassured that she would be here any moment, a couple more pushes and she was in her Dada's hands! My water broke at 8:15, and she was in my arms at 9:36!

She instantly begins to cry and Gary passes her through to me. I try to bring her up to my chest, but her cord is so short! I can manage to get her about mid-way up my belly. Our daughters hear her cries and come running up the stairs. A moment I am sure they are never going to forget! Around this time, Beth arrives, helps me into a better position and assists with the delivery of the placenta.

I am not sure who was more in shock about what just happened Gary, I, our daughters, or the baby. It is definitely a day that we are never going to forget! The rest of these moments are shared with our entire family and birth team. My whole family is in bed as we weigh her, burn the cord, gaze into her little eyes, and fall in love with each other. This is exactly why I chose a homebirth.

Our birth plan was nothing like it played out. It is clear that babies do not wait for anyone! I am so glad that we could all "roll with the punches". Although it wasn't what I had pictured, I wouldn't change any part of her birthday.



And now, Gary's Side...

DID YOU HAVE ANY PREGNANCY CRAVINGS?

Sympathy cravings.

WHAT WAS THE BEST PART OF PREGNANCY?

Not being the one who is pregnant.

WHAT WAS THE HARDEST PART OF PREGNANCY?

Seeing my wife being in pain and not being able to walk comfortably in the last weeks before her giving birth

WOULD YOU DO ANYTHING DIFFERENT IF YOU DID IT AGAIN?

More towels.

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING WITH THAT LAST PUSH?

Please dont let me drop this baby on the floor, because i know its slippery.

WHAT WAS THE FIRST THING YOU SAID TO YOUR BABY?

"Hi! It's okay."



Here is my birth story. First of all, I didn't give birth... my wife did, I was just there helping things move along. When we woke up that morning, i heard a pop, like someone rolling over in bed and cracking their back, only it wasn't her back,

"My water just broke" I heard a voice say from next to me in bed.

Okay, so the week of on and off contractions all lead up to this moment, makes sense, so what do we do now?

I asked her that very question. She seemed to think that we would have some time, I ran downstairs to fill up the Aquadoula pool. "Good, I'll get this all filled up in no time, hopefully the water will be nice and warm by the time she gets down here" I thought, and then proceeded to clean the kitchen, putting dishes in the dishwasher and tidying up around me, preparing to have guests over to help with the birth. Oddly, it had been several minutes since I heard from my wife, so I decided to go up and check on the situation, and there she was...doubled over on the bedroom floor, leaning between the bed and the dresser, sweating and panting, not able to speak.

"Oh shit" I thought, "this is happening now isn't it"

I tried to massage her hips, a thing we learned in birth class before our first was born.

"Don't" she said, clearly did not want to be touched, but couldn't manage to really get any words out other than that. Okay, then, I knew things were about to get crazy, so I decided to get down there and assess, kinda like getting under the car to see where the leak is coming from. I got down on my knees and looked under there and saw what looked like a dome shape, poking out a bit, so I kind of...reached out and touched it, to make sure it was what I thought it was. Yep. It was. The head.

I quickly got my airpod headphones in both our ears and called Terah, our midwife, to tell her that the baby was coming and to see when she was going to get there. 30 minutes or more by the sound of it. I was gonna have to go this alone -- er, I mean she was, but it felt in the moment like it was all my responsibility. I had done this before, but only at a birth center, on a bed with supervision. I had never done it at home on my knees behind the bed with a babys head poking out. Then she pushed again, and more of the head came out, I swear the baby turned and looked at me, I could see the whole head, and I remember asking, "Um, is it okay that the head is out, and its just... kinda stuck there hanging out"

Yes, I was told this was acceptable. Good, okay, now we just need to see more.

Then she pushed. I expected a bit more of the baby to appear, like maybe a shoulder or something, but no; the entire baby essentially slid out all at once, and I remember thinking in that moment, "please do not drop your baby on the floor, its going to be very slippery, and wiggly, just do your best to hang onto it!" I did just that. I caught her as a rush of warm liquid fell behind her, and as she cried and got the excess fluid out of her mouth, I smiled and held her, tethered to the shortest cord ive ever seen, behind mama, there on the bedroom floor.

After that everything was a blur. The midwife and the helpers came, we got my wife up on the bed, we took some pictures, we burned the cord, I accidentally dropped the bowl with the placenta in it, leaving the large organ dangling there from my baby by the cord, dripping blood and amniotic fluid all over the floor, as she cried in my arms...

yes, it was quite an eventful morning. But I wouldn't change a moment of it for the world.

Welcome to the world, Molly.

Precipitous Birth Continued from Pg. 1

WHAT WAS THE HARDEST PART OF YOUR PREGNANCY?

Contending with COVID-19! So much anxiety and uncertainty... there still is! I was so thankful for midwifery care and to be having a homebirth during this time.

HOW DID YOU KNOW YOU WERE IN LABOR?

I wasn't convinced my labor was the real thing until about an hour before I gave birth! My contractions started two hours before that but I could cope with them and so I wasn't convinced that they were leading to labor! I knew it was real when I got a couple of contractions back to back that were incredibly painful... that's when I told Terah to, "Yes, come now!" Terah was at my house for 40 minutes and then the baby was here!

WHO WAS AT YOUR BIRTH?

My husband and my sister. I am a "no touch" birther. My husband and sister know this and they sat supporting silently on the couch while I was bracing our living room coffee table. Before my older daughter was born, my husband and I took these extensive birth classes. He was prepared to apply all these physical comfort measures. Little did we know, we would never need them!

WHERE DID YOU DELIVER?

Next to my coffee table in my living room. Not my "Plan A!" I thought I would try a water birth but plans quickly changed.

WHAT WILL YOU REMEMBER THE MOST ABOUT YOUR BIRTH?

The intensity of it! In a post Terah wrote on her Facebook page regarding my birth she called my birth, precipitous labor. I hadn't heard of this term but I learned it describes my labor exactly. Precipitous labor is FAST labor lasting 2-3 hours and it doesn't follow normal patterns. You get contractions that are seconds apart or continuous without any breaks. It can be traumatic for mom and baby because of the intensity of it all. Walter actually had some bruising on his forehead and a small cut from going through the birth canal so quickly. I was prepared for this type of birth because my first baby came pretty fast also with similar patterns and so I knew what to expect.

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING WITH THAT LAST PUSH?

"I did it! Just one more hard thing! Give it all you got!" His shoulders took a little extra push and it might've had something to do with the fact that he was 9 pounds 1 ounce. I was shocked at his size! See Terah's photo to see my reaction at finding out his weight!

WHAT WAS THE FIRST THING YOU SAID TO YOUR BABY?

Not directly to him but I think one of the first things I said in complete shock was, "It's a boy?!" I was convinced it was a girl because at a follow up ultrasound, the technician said "she" while doing the exam, the only reference the technician made to gender the entire scan. A few minutes later I nonchalantly asked, "So do you know the gender?" She said, "Yeah, but I haven't said anything." So I walked out of the appointment disappointed that I wouldn't have a surprise gender reveal at the birth. I told my husband and many of our friends and family that I was 99% sure it was a girl. I even let me daughter think she was getting a sister! So it was an even bigger surprise when the baby came out a boy.

Midwife Notes

In Leora's birth, she mentions that she received an episiotomy. Episiotomy rates are very low in midwifery care and are only utilized with true medical indication, including fetal distress. Amelia's heart rate had dropped extremely low and despite Leora's very strong pushing efforts to deliver her baby, we were worried for Amelia's safety. When Amelia was born, she came out crying! Telling us how happy she was to be out!

Sacred Spark

She longed for something, fevered for someone.

She knew a soul was waiting.

She heard it call, the time had come,
no more room left for debating.

She told her man, he held her tight
he had wished for this day, the day she might
choose him for the honor, the chance to be father,
to love one another, to call out together,

call this tiny spark home
to live in their love.

The simple deed done,
the waiting begun
will it catch?

will she fall?

will the egg hatch?

Will the sacred spark call
her womb home for a time
and live in her love?

Her moon never rose, no blood soaked clothes.

One month, then two, her secret grew. She knew,
knew it was true.

Hands on her belly, his knees like jelly, he prayed.

Gave thanks to the gods as the spark took hold. Pure gold.

Waiting, waiting, as the days tick by

Suddenly, finally! A sign so sweet,
a stuttering, fluttering, was that hands or feet?

Whispers of movement so slight at first.

The truth grows bigger, she's over the worst.

Now undeniable, now understandable.

Hands on her belly, his knees like jelly,

he knows now, she shows now

it's there now, it cares now

to live in their love.

Growing, showing, stretching,

fetching looks and glances she dances through days,

dreams through nights, flights of fancy

fighting fears and winning, heads spinning

in wonder they wander together, biding time

feeling sublime.

The time slows, the spark grows

bigger and stronger, no longer fitting

she feels close to splitting.

She hears the last call, time to surrender it all
for love.

Hands on her belly, his knees like jelly

he stands witness to greatness,

he kisses her brow, tastes the salt of her effort,

her strength, the length

of her journey unknown she walks,

over the coals she walks, back and forth she walks,

the pains roll on, waters spring clear, ancient scent in the air

her tides roll on,

her time has come.

No turning back she stands, she fights,

she roars her might, she squats, no thoughts,

she opens, roars more,

she catches fire, she burns,

the spark turned flesh

slips fresh from within, without fear,

through tears,

she opens her eyes

to see her prize has come home

to live in their love.



By Tina Fulton, Student Midwife | Foothills Midwifery