**Stefanie's Bradley Birth Story**

**(May 13, 2012)**

 It all started at 3am on Mother’s Day morning when I awoke to what I believed was my water breaking. I quickly woke up daddy, telling him that I was pretty sure my water broke. Now, the birth center policy was to contact the midwife if your water broke just to update her and to verify the liquid was clear. She told my partner that I needed to go back to bed because since I still wasn’t having contractions, it would probably be anywhere from 24 to 48 hours before Cash was born. I tried to lie down, but due to just plain excitement, this woman was NOT going back to sleep. Adam, my partner, got up and we decided that I should probably eat something so he made me a sandwich and brought me a Gatorade. Within 30 minutes of my initial onset of labor, the breaking of my water is when I experienced my first contraction. Adam then went to his labor app he downloaded on his phone and started timing. I then decided that I was going to get up and take a shower just to get washed up. While in the shower, I continued with contractions and we quickly realized that they were about 5 minutes apart, but not consistently 1 minute in duration. Some were less, some were longer. Now, we knew about the 5-1-1 rule. The birth center did not want us heading they were consistently 1 minute long, 5 minutes apart, for a whole hour, but since my contractions started out on that pattern, it through us off a bit. Adam contacted the midwife, Michelle, to let her know and she still insisted I needed to get some sleep and to not come to the center until contractions continued on that pattern for the whole hour. I of course, could not sleep, so after getting down with my long shower and getting dressed, I sat on my birth ball for awhile.

 Now, in the meantime, I had contacted my parents who were planning on coming to our house to stay with my oldest child that day I went into labor. At around the time I got out of the shower, we all agreed it would be best for them to just head over (they live a good 30-40 minutes away) and just plan to be at our house for awhile. After I rocked on my birth ball for awhile, they soon arrived. I went out to the living room and talked to them a bit. All awhile, still contracting every 5 minutes, but not consistently 1 minute long for each. Also, each contraction was bearable. They were never too intense that I had to stop talking for too long.

Not too long after my parents arrived, we decided that we should take our chocolate lab for a walk. Our walk did not last too long. We made it a few feet out of our subdivision. Now, it’s important to add that our house was only the 2nd house on the right as soon as you turn into the neighborhood; so needless to say, we didn’t make it far because this is when my contractions became intense. Twice we had to stop to do the baby dance. At this point, I wanted and needed to return because I had to use the rest room. As soon as we made it back, I went to the bathroom. While in there, I experienced my first contraction that was so intense, I couldn’t even communicate with Adam to let him know that it had even started or ended. After it had finished, I came out into our room. Adam suggested I lay on my side so he could massage me, but that was not comfortable for me. I then got into the all four position on our bed which is when the infamous contraction started. The contraction started and after a few minutes, Adam had asked if it had stopped yet, but my answer was a no. The contraction went on for a whole 9 minutes. He called Michelle to tell her that I had just experienced a 9 minute contraction. During this contraction and while Adam was on the phone is when the sensation changed for a normal contraction to the sensation of my body pushing and Cash descending. In my head, I knew that this was it and we were not making it to the birth center and Cash was coming right now. I soon was able to communicate this with Adam and told him I needed him to take my pants off right now. He removed my pants, but said we needed to go right now. I told him we were not going to make it, but he basically carried me out to the car. I couldn’t sit down on the front seat. The only comfortable position in the car was on my knees facing Adam as he was driving. With every contraction, I would bend over his lab into the all four position feeling my body pushing involuntarily. At one point, I felt a new sensation and decided to feel with my hands. When I did, I felt Cash! He was already coming out. I then said, “Baby, he’s here!” I rolled back into a more squatting position so Adam could see who at this time was driving quickly to get to the birth center. With the next contraction that was about 30 seconds after this, Cash was born! At 6:15am, 3 hours and 15 minutes after my initial onset of labor, Cash was born on the front seat of our Tahoe.

Adam caught him so he didn’t fall on the floor. I quickly picked Cash up and put him to my breast where he immediately began to nurse. Adam was about to pull over, when I pointed out that there was no point. He was born and we needed to just keep going since we still had about 15 minutes before we got there. He called Michelle who was at the center awaiting our arrival and told her that Cash was with us. She was waiting for us in the parking lot with a wheel chair when we arrived. Adam had to cut the cord before we could even get out of the car. Once in the room, Michelle attended to the last stage of labor all awhile Cash was nursing like a professional and my placenta was delivered within 15 minutes. And that was it. I was done! I had my perfect 8lb. 1oz baby boy in my arms breastfeeding. I stayed at the center until about 11am. They made me a wonderful breakfast and made sure I drank my orange juice. We walked through our front door on that beautiful Mother’s Day morning at 11:30am with our perfect baby boy with a birth story that couldn’t have gone better.