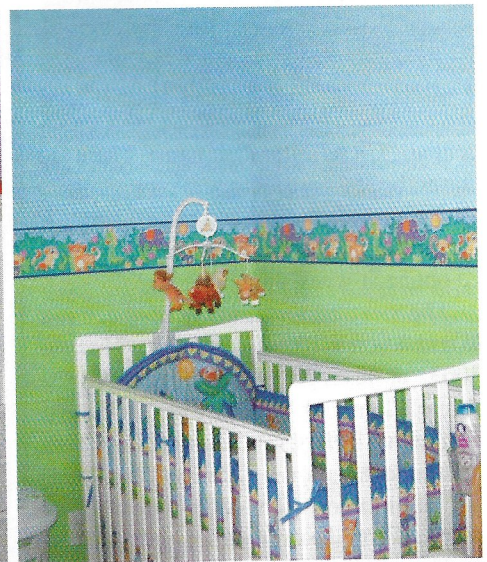
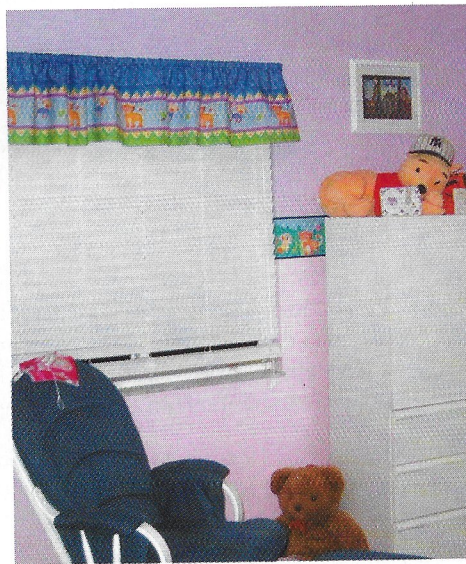
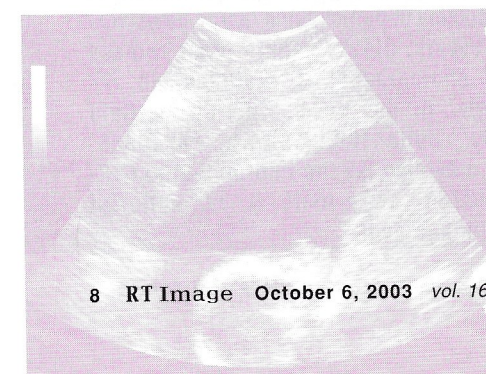


Congratulations! It's a Girl!

No, wait... It's a boy!



*The Lombardi baby's room before the birth (above left) and shortly after the delivery (above right);
Opposite page: Dominic Lombardi*

As a director of managed care and business development for Orion Medical Management, Tampa, Fla., Michael Lombardi, MHA, is familiar with ultrasound technology. And as an expectant father seeing four ultrasounds performed on his wife, Heidi, Lombardi learned what to look for on the images.

But on April 5, 2003, Michael and Heidi learned another valuable lesson: Don't believe everything you hear — or see! Told throughout most of the pregnancy they would be having a girl, the couple was dumbfounded when the big day finally arrived and out came a baby boy.

At 19 weeks, Heidi had her first ultrasound by a radiologist who knew the Lombardis. He interpreted the results and said he was 99 percent certain the baby would be a girl, although it was still early in the pregnancy.

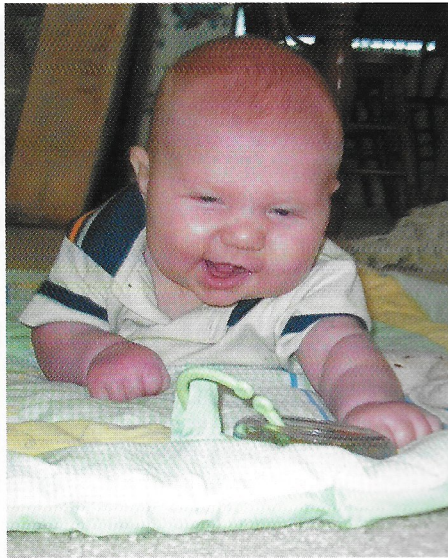
The next day, Heidi had her first "scheduled" ultrasound at the obstetrician's office.

"We didn't tell them we had [an ultrasound] done the previous day," Lombardi says. "The tech there said she was 'positive' it was a boy. We were quite surprised."

The third ultrasound was later performed in an outpatient diagnostic center. The sonographer there did not see any male genitalia, so the Lombardis were convinced the baby would be female. A sonographer performing the fourth and final ultrasound at Heidi's obstetrician's office also believed the baby to be a girl.

Making Room for Baby

"Since three out of four ultrasounds confirmed that we were having a girl, we were pretty convinced," Lombardi says. "We painted the nursery pink and purple. We purchased an entire wardrobe of little girl's clothes and received many more girl-related gifts from family and friends."



On the night of the delivery, Heidi's obstetrician was the physician on call at the hospital. As they waited for the delivery, the Lombardis anxiously told the nursing staff they were about to have a baby girl.

"When the baby was delivered, the physician immediately handed the newborn to the nurse," Lombardi says. As the nurse held up the baby, she said, "Your daughter is beautiful," but quickly retracted the statement when she noticed the infant was a boy. "This isn't a girl," she said. "Everyone had a good laugh, and Heidi and I were very surprised," Lombardi says.

Lombardi says he and his wife decided on the name Julia Sophia halfway through the pregnancy, and from that point on until the birth, everyone referred to the baby by that name. "We did have the name Dominic picked out as a boy's name, but didn't give it a second thought once we were convinced we would be having a girl," he says. "It took us a moment in the delivery room to remember what name we had chosen for a boy."

The Lombardis were later told that the mistake in gender was a result of their child's genitals not being clearly visible on

the ultrasounds due to the positioning of the baby.

Joyce Gottesfeld, MD, and her husband Marshall Gottesfeld, MD, obstetricians practicing in Denver, Colo., report on www.babycenter.com that "starting about 18 to 20 weeks, your practitioner or [technologist] may be able to identify

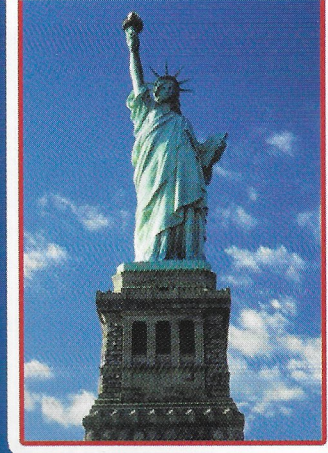
As the nurse held up the baby, she said, "Your daughter is beautiful," but quickly retracted the statement when she noticed that the infant was a boy. "This isn't a girl."

your baby's genitals during an ultrasound. However, your baby has to cooperate. He or she has to be in a position to allow visualization of the male or female parts. Even if the technologist gets a good view of the baby's genital area, the image may not be clear and there are still no guarantees. We recommend leaving the tags on all of the pink or blue baby gear you buy or receive until you see the real parts."

While Heidi was recovering, Lombardi's mother had the unenviable task of trying to return all of the baby girl clothes and toys to the stores — and in many cases, with no success.

"Most likely, we will not find out the sex of our next child," Lombardi says. "That way we can have a 'planned surprise' next time. Obviously, we were not meant to know the sex early."

— Tom Schaffner



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