

## Iredell's first baby of the New Year



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Published: January 01, 2011

While everyone else was celebrating the New Year, Stephanie Penninger was in Storks Landing at Lake Norman Regional Medical Center, celebrating her own new beginning.

Penninger's family said they wished each other Happy New Year only a minute before the newest member of their family, Giuliana Grace Penninger, made her entrance in the world at 12:01 a.m. on Jan. 1.

At six pounds, four ounces, Giuliana, who is the first baby born in Iredell County in the New Year, was 12 days earlier than expected. Her family and the nurse midwife said little Giuliana had already made up her mind when she was going to be born.

"Babies come when they want to and she wanted to be a New Year baby," said Nurse Midwife Beverly Holmes. "I've done OB for 25 years and this is the first time I've ever had one that close."

Penninger, a Cornelius resident, said right before she went into labor at 5:30 a.m. on Friday, she had a dream of someone telling her she would give birth that day.

She said she came into LNRMC and was sent home until she dilated a little bit more, around 8 p.m.

"I always felt like something like this was going to happen," Penninger said. "I had plenty of people tell me that she was going to be born on New Year's."

Penninger said she decided to give birth naturally. Her mother had gone through natural childbirth three times, and Penninger doesn't like needles.

Penninger said she is looking forward to seeing what kind of faces her daughter makes. On Saturday, the infant was opening her eyes and grunting.