

HAVELOCK NEWS

Wives, children see deployed Marines through satellite

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Ken Buday/Havelock News

Stetson Tiffin, 19 months, waves to his father, Cpl. James Tiffin, while sitting in the lap of his mother, Michelle Tiffin, as the family reunited through satellite Friday morning. James Tiffin is currently deployed to Iraq.

James Tiffin played peek-a-boo with his son Friday morning. It somehow didn't matter that he was in Iraq while his 19-month-old son Stetson was in Havelock.

Tiffin visited with his wife, Michelle, and son for 30 minutes via a satellite feed at Cherry Point Dodge Chrysler. The feed was set up through the Freedom Calls Foundation.

James Tiffin, a corporal with Marine Aerial Refueler Squadron 252 at Cherry Point, has been in Iraq since July.

Michelle Tiffin said she and her husband e-mail back and forth nearly every day. Still, she said she hadn't seen her husband.

"It's nice to see him again," she said. "I've talked to him a lot, but seeing him is a good thing.

"It's especially nice for him to see Stetson. He's changed so much."

The young boy pointed out his ears and nose to his father, and then pulled up his shirt to reveal his belly.

Michelle Tiffin, who is pregnant with the couple's second child, said this was her husband's first deployment.

"It's been hard, especially with a toddler," she said.

Christmas music played over speakers at the car dealership as she sat to talk to her husband. She said seeing him right before Thanksgiving was a special treat, but that anytime would be a good time to see him.

He is scheduled to return sometime in the middle of February, about a week after her due date.

"We're hoping he can work something out to get back sooner," she said. "I know he hopes he can be back."

Six wives of deployed Marines with VMGR-252 had 30 minutes each to talk and see their husbands through the satellite feed. The Freedom Calls Foundation has also arranged meetings for deployed Marines to see their newborn children at Craven Regional Medical Center in New Bern.