

Online, in utero becomes in publico

BY HILLARY RHODES
Associated Press Writer

Social networkers have found a new frontier for the ever-blurring line between inner and outer worlds: ultrasound photographs.

Browse through MySpace profiles or the blogosphere and you can find an expansive collection of in utero snapshots at various stages of the fetus's growth, from grainy, barely readable pictures to the much more vibrant 3D and 4D pictures that show depth and movement.

Many moms-to-be say posting ultrasound photos is an easy way to announce an exciting piece of information to lots of people all at once. But some warn that sharing fetal pictures could be oversharing — like posting drunken makeout photos — and fret about what happens if the pregnancy goes wrong.

Ultrasounds are used to examine, among other things, the health, growth and gender of a fetus. The process involves reading sound waves to create an image or video.

Moms-to-be post the prenatal shots with adoring comments like, "Here you can see the spine and little riblets," and, "Cute little foot!"

Laura Cooke, 25, from Frostburg, Md., says her blog, Facebook and MySpace pages are meant for family and friends scattered around the country, and everybody enjoyed seeing her ultrasound photos.

"My grandmother was just tickled pink," she said. "They didn't have that when she was having kids."

For Melissa Hemrich, 29, from Marysville, Wash., it was a matter of convenience more than anything else.

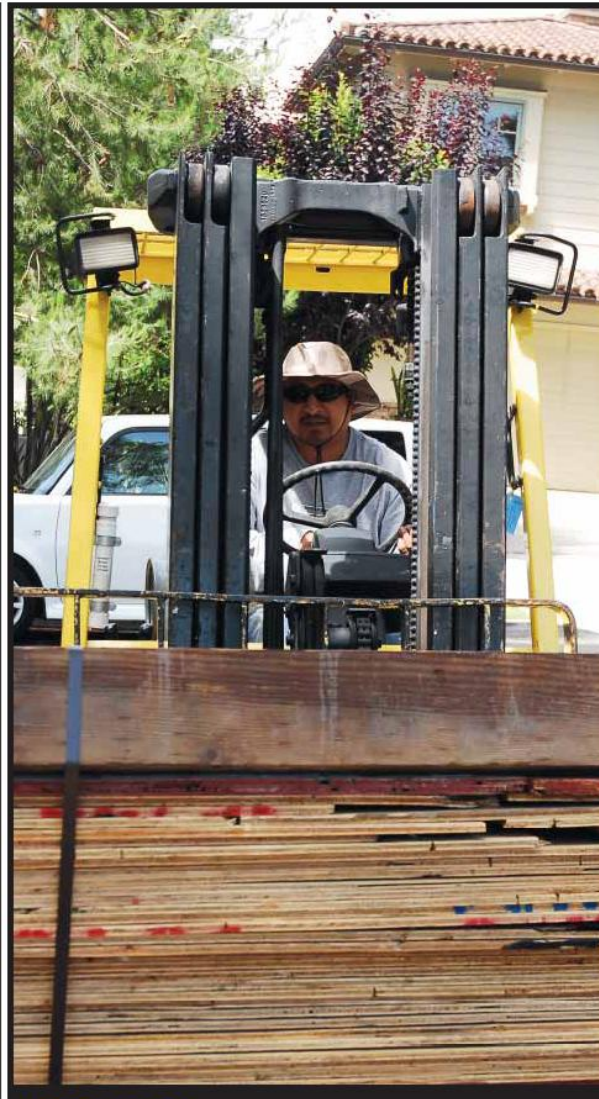
"When you're pregnant, everyone's excited and wants to see pictures," she says. "Everyone's going to ask you to send it anyway."

More expectant parents are sharing minute details of pregnancy over the Internet and exchanging information with family, friends and other expectant mothers. Facebook offers applications such as pregnancy tickers that allow users to post updates throughout the nine-month process.

Pregnant bloggers can join conversation groups based on their due-date month, and compare their experiences with others going through the same thing. And networking sites for new parents abound, bursting with message boards, baby shower registries, expert advice and other information about what to expect.

TheCradle.com, which caters to an audience of women from pre-pregnancy through

SEE ULTRASOUND PAGE 9



LONG HAUL

Morgan Genser news@smdp.com
Juan Pajarito hauls recycled wood last week that was donated by the Deconstruction and ReUse Network to Corazon, a company that provides assistance to Mexican families in need.

Comic book artist Turner dies at 37 in Santa Monica

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SANTA MONICA Michael Turner, a comic book artist who drew covers for major titles such as "Superman/Batman," "The Flash" and "Civil War," has died. He was 37.

Turner died June 27 at a Santa Monica hospital of complications related to cancer, said Vince Hernandez, editor in chief of Aspen MLT, the Santa Monica publishing company Turner founded in 2003. Turner had battled bone cancer for eight years.

Through his company, Turner created online comic adaptations for the NBC series "Heroes" and published his own titles, including the best-selling "Fathom," a deep-sea story about a female superhero.

He also drew covers for large projects such as DC Comics' "Justice League" and Marvel's "Civil War" and was a regular cover artist for "Superman/Batman" and "The Flash."

"He was definitely one of the most popular and influential comic-book artists working right now," said Andrew Farago, curator of San Francisco's Cartoon Art Museum. "He was very, very much in demand as a cover artist on high-profile projects."

Ryan Liebowitz, general manager of the Golden Apple Comics store in Los Angeles, said Turner's name was synonymous with special-edition covers that often became collectibles. The milestone 500th issue of "Uncanny X-Men," due out next week, will feature a special-edition cover by Turner.

Turner was also known for drawing female comic book characters that evoked both innocence and sex appeal and exuded energy.

In 1994, the budding artist was hired by Century City-based Top Cow Productions after an editor saw his work at the Comic-Con convention in San Diego.

At Top Cow, Turner co-created "Witchblade," a comic about a voluptuous female detective who fights evil after discovering a mystical glove. The comic went on to make Top Cow's name and set the standard for Turner's future work.

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