By Jim Langham

She was a little while getting here, but on Jan. 14, 2010, a bubbly little girl was born to Jason and Cindi. I had always heard about grandchild moments, but from personal experience, I was going to be able to experience those moments on my own.

Recently, at age 22 months, our granddaughter has begun to talk effectively, in her own language and in her own way, but with communicative authority that really wins the hearts of her grandparents, Papa (that's me) and either Moo Moo or Gamma (that's Joyce).

This past weekend, I was busy part of the day while other family members enjoyed and entertained her. Late in the afternoon I was able to join up with the rest of the family.

When I called Gamma and told her I was on my way, she was holding Kirsten and reading a story to her. But, Kirsten also heard my voice on the phone.

"That Papa," I heard in the background.

"Yes, that's Papa," Joyce said to her.

"Papa coming," she said.

"Yes, Papa is coming," replied Moo Moo.

Admittedly, a feeling of tenderness melted into my heart in ways I couldn't describe without experiencing the moment. As I drove into Fort Wayne anticipating the pitter patter of those little feet, I kept thinking, "So this is what they are talking about," referring to the grandparents who have expressed such unique love.

And then it happened. I opened the door and tiny footsteps came running toward me, "Papa here, Papa here."

But that didn't last long. Her aunts came into the room and her vocabulary changed to, "Want Burt, want Ernie."

To me, such a request still means reading a book about Sesame Street. To our high tech children, that meant going to the computer and bringing up all kinds of dancing songs, portrayals of that energized hand clapping, jumping, running and other bouts of joy that can only come from a tender grandchild, new in this world, discovering the joys of family fun and love.

The most exhilarating moments, I learned, were those when spontaneity took over, such as the moment when I sneezed and she, without a flinch, simply stated, "Bless you!" Surprise moments, when they share things we have no idea are coming, revealing things they've already learned by tuning in to statements we had not known were sinking in.

And then "the look" from Gamma, that "see," look as she rolled her eyes to me and said, "See, you really have to be careful about what you say, you never know what she's going to pick up."

Who me? I? I would say something that child shouldn't pick up? Never! Just then she said, "Gamma talk? Gamma talk?"

A smirk came across my face and one more time I got that rolled-eye look, the precious lessons about to be taught by a granddaughter absorbing all she can from the world of her family.

And finally bedtime story time with “Dada’s” story, “Good night, little kitten, good night, little sheep, good night, little dog,” and finally our version of the Waltons: “Good night, Dada, good night Gamma, good night, Papa.” All is well in the sleep of an innocent child.