



**TOWNSHIP TO DONATE 5 CRUISERS TO N.C. POLICE. A8**



**'JOY TO THE WALD' MAKES HOLIDAYS A LITTLE BRIGHTER FOR LOCAL KIDS. A3**

**FORMER CINCINNATI RED MAKES HALL OF FAME. D1**

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## Event brings National Guard families together

Around 250 people attended a holiday celebration at Armory in Hamilton.

By Michael D. Pitman  
Staff writer

Spec. Benjamin Leimbach was one of scores of soldiers celebrating the holidays at the Charles H. Jones National Guard Armory in Hamilton with their families on Sunday afternoon.

It was his last civil weekend before leaving the military chap-

ter of his life as he can focus on his civilian life and career. Leimbach is a registered nurse in the orthopedic trauma unit at the University of Cincinnati Medical Center's main campus. Sunday was a bittersweet day as it was "an end of an era. I'm very, very proud of and sad to see go."

The Hamilton native enrolled in December 2005, in the middle of his senior year at Princeton High School. He wanted "to be able to do something that was bigger than myself and serve my country in the best way I could." He became a welder, a whelplike mechanic, but his choice was to be

a welder. But his choice to enlist is one he'd make every time again.

"It has honestly shaped me to be the person I am today: determined, hard-working, respectful," he said. "It also helped me get through school and achieve my dream career."

Around 250 people — about a third being a member of either Delta Company 237th BSB or HHT 2nd 107th Cavalry Squadron — celebrated the holidays at the event made possible by donations and community support.

Celebration continues on A8



Soldiers and family members of the 237th BSB Delta Company and HHT 2nd 107th Cavalry Squadron celebrate Christmas at the National Guard Armory in Hamilton, Mich. D. PITMAN/STAFF

## Celebration

Continued from A1

ing it for a by the Ohio VFW and the Fairfield VFW.

"It brings the family together," said Capt. Levi Wick, Delta Company commander. "The National Guard units are a family of families, so it's a chance to bring everyone, all the soldiers to bring in their kids, husbands, wives, whoever, to celebrate."

Being a member of the Army National Guard member can have a disconnect between military and family life. Soldiers come in on assigned drill weekends, do their jobs and go home. Their families may not know exactly what they do, but Wick said "it's not something mysterious; it's people showing up to do their jobs." And family celebration just "opens the doors" because it's important to find ways to bring families into the armory to show support for their soldiers.

They could be deployed at anytime, whether it's an overseas assignment — Delta Company returned in August 2023 after a year-long deployment in support of Operation Inherent Resolve — or they may be



Santa Claus greets children of members of the 237th BSB Delta Company and HHT 2nd 107th Cavalry Squadron at the Maj. Gen. Charles H. Jones National Guard Armory in Hamilton on Sunday. MICHAEL D. PITMAN/STAFF

need to be ready to roll in a matter of hours. Wick said it was akin to firehouse living: always training to be ready to respond.

The community will be invited to attend an open house this summer at the Armory, Wick said, which he expects it to be in June. Sunday's celebration was

Group leader, Angela Leimbach. Each company has a SFRC leader.

She was scared when her son enlisted and had wanted to organize an event like Sunday's celebration.

"I see how hard they work, and the sacrifices they and their families make, and I just wanted to give back," she

them, give them a couple hours of fun and enjoyment."

Angela said she'll stay on as the SFRC leader for Delta Company even with her son moving on to his civilian career.

"If these soldiers can look at me like a mom, it would make my heart happy," she said.

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