

**Weather**

Partly sunny

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# LEADER-TELEGRAM

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## Father's return makes for special delivery

### Soldier arrives just in time to see birth of first child

**By Troy Espe**

Leader-Telegram staff

Eau Claire soldier Brian Russell desperately wanted to see the birth of his child. However, he was more than 500 miles away and on active duty with the National Guard.

"I didn't think there was any chance of making it home," said Russell, a first lieutenant with the HHC 732nd CSSB headquartered in Tomah.

He leapt into action as soon as he heard his wife, Cate, had gone into labor Wednesday morning. Russell, who was stationed at Camp Atterbury in central Indiana, rented a car and drove more than 12 hours, braving Chicago rush hour.

He arrived at Sacred Heart Hospital about an hour before his son, Maxwell, was born at 10:32 p.m. Wednesday.

"It was everything to have him there," Cate, 32, said Friday while holding Maxwell. "I left it up to God. He took care of it."

Maxwell is the couple's first child together. He weighed 6 pounds and 14 ounces and measured 18½ inches long. The Russells have been married for two years.

Russell, 30, didn't speed on the interstate. He called to update his

**Staff photo by Andi Stempniak**

The Russell family of Eau Claire celebrated the arrival of their son, Maxwell, who was born Wednesday at Sacred Heart Hospital. Brian Russell, a first lieutenant with the National Guard, drove more than 500 miles from Camp Atterbury in Indiana to witness the birth with his wife, Cate.

whereabouts. In Eau Claire, he drove straight to the hospital and stayed in the delivery room.

"There's a lot of soldiers that sacrifice being able to see the birth

of their son or daughter," he said. "The fact that I was stateside and could make it was huge."

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## Baby/Russell is headed overseas soon

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While in labor, Cate, who teaches first grade at Northwoods School, was surrounded by friends. Medical staff kept her abreast of the baby's — and her husband's — progress.

"I keep calling it the God-blessed day because everything happened perfectly," she said. "It was just a mazing."

Russell, an Army logis-

tician with nearly 13 years of service, is scheduled to return Sunday to Camp Atterbury. His unit will be deployed overseas in the coming months.

He expects to be gone about a year. The family looks forward to his safe return and telling Maxwell about the day he was born.

"It's going to be an amazing story," Cate said.

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