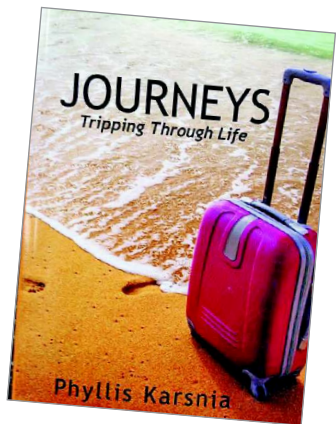


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The Journal



**Wednesday,
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International Falls, Minnesota

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Soldiers with the Minnesota National Guard Troop C, 1st Squadron, 94th Cavalry based out of Cloquet have helped with emergency flood relief.



REPORTING TO DUTY

National Guard gets down to business

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

Last Wednesday, Cody Overton was just getting off work in Duluth when he received a phone call to pack his bags.

In just a few short hours, he had transformed from a father of two who works as a correctional officer at the Pine County Jail to a soldier of Troop C, 1st Squadron, 94th

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Cavalry, also known as Crazy Troop, based out of Cloquet.

"I got the call from my sergeant, he didn't have any details, but he told me to pack my bags," the 21-year-old told The Journal Friday as he tied a bag of sand at Kerry Park.

Overton was among the more than 100 soldiers who arrived in International Falls Thursday evening after Gov. Mark Dayton declared a

Duty to A7 ➤



STAFF PHOTOS BY EMILY GEDDE

National Guard soldiers stack sangbags along County Road 133 Saturday in effort to prevent water from making its way over the roadway.

FLOOD 2014

Officials watch and wait

Rainy Lake expected
to crest Monday

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

Area officials involved in a variety of aspects of emergency flood response met Tuesday for what they hope will be the last morning briefing.

A sense of urgency has been apparent at each of the briefings held daily, except for Sunday, since June 16 and led by Koochiching County Sheriff Brian Jespersen.

While local officials stressed Tuesday the emergency is not over, they said this morning the situation with sand-bagged levies around properties will be monitored as Rainy Lake continues to rise an estimated 5-7 additional inches.

"This is far from being over," Jespersen said, who released 108 Minnesota National Guard soldiers from their duties here Tuesday.

Jespersen said he told state officials he hoped the soldiers wouldn't be needed again. He reported the state officials told him if Mother Nature forces the issue, the soldiers will return.

Board Chairman Rob Ecklund later told The Journal officials are "cautiously optimistic we have a handle on it."

County Commissioner Brian McBride also urged officials not to give the public the perception the emergency is over.

"No," agreed Jespersen. "We're in it for the long haul."



**Sheriff Brian
Jespersen**



**Rob
Ecklund**

Flood to A7 ➤

Franken impressed by local efforts

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

As Minnesota National Guard soldiers stacked sandbags along County Road 133 Saturday, Sen. Al Franken rolled up his sleeves and offered his help.

"That's hard work," he said after tossing about a dozen bags to one of the 108 soldiers of Troop C, 1st Squadron, 94th Cavalry helping with the flood relief efforts in Borderland.

Franken toured areas affected by the flood around International Falls and Ranier Saturday before

shaking hands and offering words of gratitude to volunteers at Kerry Park.

"It's incredibly impressive," the senator said of relief efforts. "It's great to see the community come together."

Franken and his staff have been making their way across the state visiting areas impacted by flooding. Koochiching County is one of 35 Minnesota counties under a

state of emergency, declared by Gov. Mark Dayton Thursday.

While in the southern part of the state, the senator said the damage is extensive, but the fight put up in International Falls is grueling.

"You're putting up the longest fight that I've seen," Franken said of Borderland. "I definitely wanted to get up here."

Franken to A7 ➤



STAFF PHOTO BY EMILY GEDDE

Sen. Al Franken shakes hands with Noah and Grae Shikowsky Saturday at Kerry Park as their father, Chad, looks on.

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