



RED BULL EXPRESS

Serving the 1/34 BCT Soldiers at Camp Rileley, Minn.

July 15, 2009

Headlines

Minor damage in west-central Minn.

Roofs, doors and signs were damaged, trees fell and boats overturned, but there were no injuries in Spicer, Swift Falls or Staples.

All feared dead in plane crash

A Russian-made Iranian passenger plane carrying 168 people crashes shortly after takeoff.

Al Qaeda message urges Pakistanis to back militants

The people of Pakistan must back Islamic militants to counter the influence of the United States in their country or face punishment from God, Ayman al-Zawahiri, al Qaeda's second in command, said in an audio message released early Wednesday.

NH man charged 23 quadrillion dollars for smokes

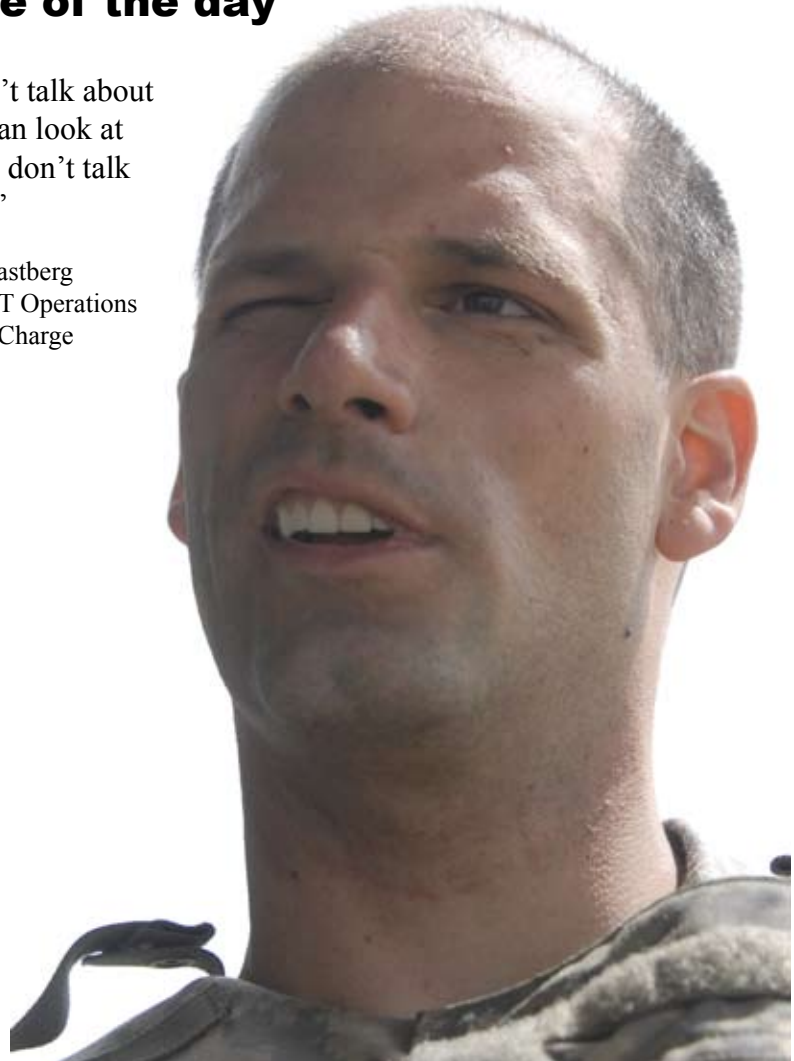
A New Hampshire man says he swiped his debit card at a gas station to buy a pack of cigarettes and was charged over 23 quadrillion dollars.

Senate panel passes \$600 billion health care overhaul bill

Quote of the day

"We don't talk about it! You can look at it but we don't talk about it."

- Lt. Col. Randall Kastberg
1/34th BCT Operations Officer in Charge



Staff Sgt. Kent Hecker pauses in thought during a weapons range July 13.

Chaplain's Corner

Chaplain (CPT) Buddy Winn



Spiritual Fitness Events
July 16
Film and Theology
8 a.m. - 9 p.m.
July 19
Protestant Worship Service
7 p.m. - 8 p.m.
July 21
Nooma Bible Study
7 p.m. - 8 p.m.



Sports

AL 4, NL 3: Mauer ties game; Nathan preserves lead

The Twins' Joe Mauer drove in a run with a double, and Joe Nathan worked through a precarious eighth inning to preserve a one-run lead.

Vegas has Woods as huge favorite to win British Open

Martinez signs with Phillies, placed on 15-day DL

Clips' Griffin shines in summer debut

Weather

July 16

High 68 degrees
Mostly sunny and breezy
Low 51 degrees
Cool with patchy clouds

July 17

High 68 degrees
Nice with some sun
Low 51 degrees mostly clouds

July 18

High 74 degrees
Abundant sunshine and nice
Low 55 degrees
Clear

Minn. National Guard's 1/34 BCT receives new commander

Photo and Story by
Sgt. Daryl G. Sanford
1/34 BCT PAO

Col. Kevin Gutknecht officially relinquished command of the 1/34th Brigade Combat Team to Col. Eric Kershka in a change of command ceremony July 12, 2004 at Camp Ripley, Minnesota.

Gutknecht took command of the brigade soon after they returned from a 22-month deployment, and was charged with restructuring and reforming the brigade.

"(The) last few years of the brigade has been focused on the future; preparing the brigade for a future for whatever mission that may be," said Gutknecht in his farewell address to the Brigade. "The command's mission was to reset, refit and get the brigade back into the fighting form. I am here today to tell you that the mission is fulfilled, or well on its way to being fulfilled."

Gutknecht attributes the success of the mission to the dedication of the Soldiers and leadership of his battalion commanders.

"The future is bright for this Nation, and the future is bright for the 1st Brigade Combat Team."

"There is really no doubt that the 1st

Brigade Combat Team is now the flagship of the Minnesota National Guard," said Brig. Gen. Joseph Kelly, Assistant Adjutant General-Joint Staff, Minnesota National Guard, during the ceremony. "How you do, how you go, so goes the Minnesota National Guard.

During his time as commander, Gutknecht saw his brigade called upon for both state and federal missions, including flood fighting in the Red River Valley, assisting with the Republican National Convention and providing security during the inauguration of the President of the United States.

Kershka, who has been associated with the 1st Brigade Combat Team for more than 26 years, said he was rendered speechless in the honor of leading the Brigade.

"With the exception of my family, my 26-year association with the First Brigade has meant more to me than anything else in my life," he said.

"Most of you served in Iraq when you showed the world what a National Guard Brigade can do. That 23-month period and the associated pain was the defining period of my life. The relationships that I built and the relationships that I made defined who I am. To be given the opportunity to serve for

even one more day fills me with emotion that words ...can't possibly describe."

Kershka thanked his family for their understanding and supporting him through the years.

"For you cannot fully understand the term 'brothers in arms' or what it really means, you smile when I leave you, and you smile when I come home," he said. "That is good enough for me."

"To the Soldiers of the First Brigade; the road ahead of us is steep, twisty and full of potholes," he said, addressing his Soldiers standing in formation. "During the many challenges that lie ahead of us, never forget that we are Minnesota Soldiers. That has always meant that we are something special, something special that our communities, state and our Nation can always count on when the chips are down. There is absolutely nothing that you can't do when you pull together. Few in this world understand what you do... or why you do it..

Kershka concluded the ceremony by addressing his Soldiers, "Don't tell me this generation doesn't have what it takes. Gone are the summertime soldiers. What is left is this ... you. The brightest and the best this country has to offer."



Photo by Sgt. Daryl G. Sanford

Col. Gary Olson calls the 1/34th BCT to attention during the 1/34th Brigade Combat Team Change of Command Ceremony July 12, 2009, at Camp Ripley, Minn.