



A Mile Wide and an Inch Deep



The Powder River, Sheridan County, Wyo., July 1950



Powder River, Let'r Buck is 2-300th's legacy

By 2ND LT. CHRISTIAN VENHUIZEN

2-300th FA Public Affairs

FORT HOOD, Texas – The battle cry of the 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery Regiment, “Powder River, Let'r Buck”, is steeped in war-time heritage.

The cry was heard in

fights in Europe, defending France from Germany with artillery fire to barroom brawls in the Philippines. Today's 2-300th operates the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, a far cry from the 3-inch Hotchkiss guns first used in the state, but the battle cry remains the same.

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Editor's Note: This is the first of four articles dedicated to the traditions of the 2-300th Field Artillery. Articles will run in future editions.

MISSION BEGINS



FORT HOOD, Texas — A Company, 960th BSB, kicks off the 2-300th's Mission Readiness Exercise, June 11. It's eight days of simulated combat missions for the battalion. **Find out more on Pg 4.**

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View more 2-300th pics, news and video

FORT HOOD, Texas — Soldiers, families, friends and media can access 2-300th photos, news, video and more via the Digital Video and Imagery Distribution System DVIDS.

DVIDS is a free site offering media from

the department of defense. Registration is quick and open to anyone.

Go to <http://www.dvidshub.net/units/2B-300FAR> for the latest news, photos and video.

“The Powder River, a mile wide and an inch deep, too thick to drink and too thin to plough.”

- An old timer from Cowboys' past

Soldier in the Field:

What's your favorite training at Fort Hood?



Pfc. Charles Monk, A Btry:
The funnest one for me, personally, was urban ops.



Staff Sgt. Eric Hanson, A Btry:
IED Defeat, they hit us with everything they could.



Sgt. Iesha Diede, C Btry:
Equal Opportunity was great. It was fun.



Sgt. Shannon Cole B Btry:
Blue Force Tracker training. Good class.



Pfc. Justin Jackson, B Btry:
It would have to be close quarters combat.

Notes from Powder River 6

The Powder River Cowboys and Cowgirls completed a busy, but productive month on May 31st.

Most of the month we focused on building teams, developing and refining battle drills, refining processes in our tactical operations center and conducting collective training critical to prepare us for our mission.

While some of these tasks were extremely challenging, our Soldiers performed in an exceptional manner, meeting and exceeding the Powder River Battalion standard. I am confident that the training we have conducted here, at Fort Hood, will prepare us to accomplish our missions in Kuwait and Iraq.

A couple of exciting and challenging tasks for all of our units began right after we hit the ground at Fort Hood.

See POWDER RIVER 6 Pg 3



Lt. Col. Brian Nesvick
"Powder River 6"

Chaplain's Corner

Are you ready? That's the question every Commander down to the last private must answer in terms of being ready for the jump over to Iraq and Kuwait.

For the last few months we have been training, like busy beavers, to get ourselves ready for the reality of an actual mission with live ammo. Some of us were there before but for the majority it will be our first time. For those who were there before, they are an invaluable asset, but for those who have never been, their experience is critical for the completion of our mission. So to answer the question "If we are ready," we will be tested sometime in early July.

When it comes to being ready for the deployment as a whole, both the Soldiers and their families are being tested right now to see if they were ready for this great challenge. Since we have been here some of the relationships have indeed survived and are still very strong. Others have not survived the challenge of this deployment and have failed. So to answer the question "if you are ready," most of us have answered that question with a "Yes."



2-300th FA Chaplain
Randy Sawyer

POWDER RIVER COWBOYS



COURTESY

FORT HOOD, Texas — The Powder River Cowboys of the 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery Regiment, 115th Fires Brigade, Wyoming Army National Guard, are, in front, command staff, rear (from left) Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, A Battery, B Battery, C Battery and A Company, 960th Brigade Support Battalion. Powder River Let'r Buck!

POWDER RIVER 6 continued from Page 2

First, we started the integration of A Company, of the 960th Brigade Support Battalion, into the Powder River Team. This unit was assigned to the battalion to augment our force structure to help ensure that we have enough Soldiers to accomplish our mission. A Company is now fully nested in our unit and performing well. Second, we integrated over 100 Soldiers from the Inactive Ready Reserve into our teams throughout the battalion. These Soldiers came from all over the United States, after being recalled by the Army, to augment our force structure. They are great Soldiers with diverse backgrounds who bring a lot of experience to our unit. The battalion is now 580 Soldiers strong as we wind down our training here, at Fort Hood, and plan for onward movement to Kuwait.

As I have stated many times, support from the entire Powder River Team is critical to our success. I continue to be impressed and humbled by the tremendous support we receive from our home states. A priority for this command is to ensure that we do as much as we can to keep all of the Powder River Team members at home as well informed as possible. We also have a responsibility to do our best to document the history of our unit and this deployment. To these ends, we are using numerous forms of media and documentation to accomplish both historical and informational requirements. This newsletter is one key component of our efforts. We are also using a great resource in DVIDS to post pictures and stories to the internet. I record a weekly message to families, employers and communities on Wyoming's family support "Audix" (866-992-7641, ext. 5099, option 2, option 3). These are just a few of the ways that you can get information on your Soldiers and our unit and I encourage you to use them.

I will sign off by saying that I continue to be extremely proud of your Soldiers and their abilities to accomplish any mission assigned. I remain committed to our mission, bringing our Soldiers home physically, mentally and spiritually healthy and committed to all who make up the Powder River Team.

POWDER RIVER! LET'ER BUCK!



2nd Lt. Christian Venhuizen/2-300th FA

READY FOR THE WORST — (Above) Spc. Josh Thibodeau, B Battery, of Rockhill, S.C., outlines the 9-Line MEDEVAC and 9-Line IED on the windshield of his Humvee before his convoy escort team's practice mission, June 11.

The 2-300th's last major exercise before Kuwait

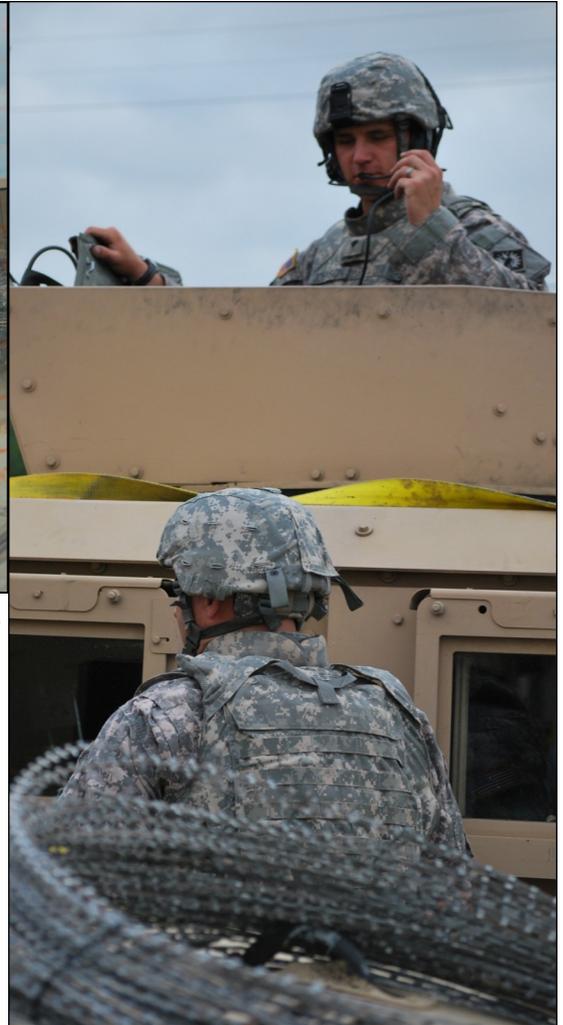
FORT HOOD, Texas — The Mission Readiness Exercise is designed to test the units of the 115th Fires Brigade, including the 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery, before the Soldiers begin escorting convoys in Kuwait and Iraq.

“We always stress to our Soldiers the importance of rehearsing missions before we head out of the gate. This is a rehearsal on a grand scale,” Lt. Col. Brian Nesvik, 2-300th commander said.

The MRE kicked off at 3:30 a.m., on June 11. Convoy Escort Team commanders were briefed on their missions and given the latest intelligence on the opposing force. Within hours, their Soldiers were up and gathering equipment.

The convoys experienced improvised explosive devices (IEDs) using smoke grenades to simulate the blast. The opposing force used paintball guns to fire on the trucks as they were incapacitated or just rolling down the road.

“This is a big step to completing our training mission in Texas and starting our missions overseas,” Nesvik said. “When we take our lumps, we cowboy up and complete our mission.”



2nd Lt. Christian Venhuizen/2-300th FA

READY FOR THE RIDE — (Above) Soldiers from A Company, 960th Brigade Support Battalion, test their communications equipment before embarking on a convoy escort training mission. (Below) Vehicles with A Company position themselves in the order they will travel in while escorting convoys. The missions are a part of an 8-day effort called a mission readiness exercise. It is a part of the training at Fort Hood, Texas.



HISTORY continued from Page 1

The Powder River was described as being a mile wide and an inch deep by cattlemen running herds across the Wyoming's vast wilderness. The river meanders its way through portions of northeast Wyoming and Montana, east of the Big Horn Mountains.

As the story goes, "Powder River, let'r buck" came about in 1893 as a toast to the river's waters by a Wyoming cattleman. It didn't take long for some of the saying to become popular among the cowboys in the region.

Many of those cowboys were members of or soon to join the state's federally recognized militia. Those ranchers turned soldiers were mobilized for the first time in 1898. They headed to the Philippines to fight in the Spanish-American War and stayed on for

the Philippine Insurrection.

Despite their military status, those cowboys managed to keep their frontier roots. Some found the watering holes in Manila had much the same effect as the ones back home. So when the nightlife got too heated, those Wyoming cowboys used their battle cry of "Powder River," answered with "Let'r buck," to secure assistance. The battle cry kept as Wyoming's soldiers were called up for World War I and continued strong through the days of World War II and Korea.

"Our ability to adapt and overcome reaches back more than a century," Maj. Terry Jenkins, 2-300th battalion operations officer, said. "It dates back to our Korean War roots, staring down tens of thousands of Chinese soldiers for days on end. It dates back to

World War I, where we fell in on our French-made guns and laid a world of hurt on those Germans. It all dates back to our history as rugged pioneers, able to capture the richness of the Wyoming frontier."

As official as the old 'pokes thought their battle cry was, the military has a slightly different view of history. Military historians document the first use of the phrase to the 115th Cavalry, in 1924. It took 58 years for Powder River Let'er Buck to become the official motto of the Wyoming Army National Guard's 49th Field Artillery (the addition of the "e" in "Let'er" is the modern spelling). In 1996, 1st Battalion, 49th Field Artillery became the 2-300th Field Artillery, currently deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

A Mile Wide and an Inch Deep is a publication of the public affairs office of the 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery Regiment. The publication is an authorized publication. The views and opinions expressed in *A Mile Wide and an Inch Deep* are not necessarily those of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Army. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the 2-300th Field Artillery public affairs officer. *A Mile Wide and an Inch Deep* is a monthly publication.

All contributions, questions, comments and suggestions should be submitted via e-mail to: christian.venhuizen@us.army.mil. All materials submitted will be screened for security, accuracy, policy, clarity and space.

Battalion Commander: Lt. Col. Brian Nesvik
Public Affairs Officer: 2nd Lt. Christian Venhuizen

Promotions and Hugs

FORT HOOD, Texas — Maj. Terry Jenkins, the 2-300th Field Artillery's operations officer, celebrates his promotion from captain and his birthday with a hug from Command Sgt. Maj. Troy Guimond, the battalion command sergeant major., on June 8. Jenkins received his previous promotion from first lieutenant to captain while deployed.





Alpha Battery

BOHICA

From Capt. Kevin Messamer, Commander A Battery

Hello to all friends, family and loved ones of BOHICA (Because of Honor I Choose Alpha) unit. I apologize for the short narrative and timeliness of this message, but we have been extremely busy here in Fort Hood, Texas, since our arrival in April.

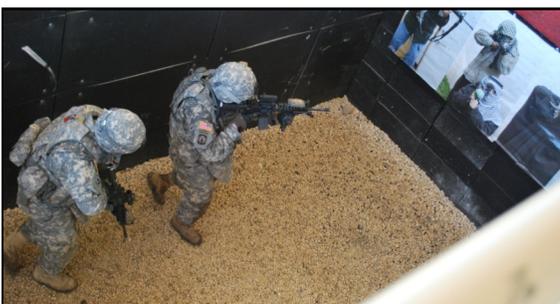
We trained at ranges where we shot machine guns from our vehicles and close quarters combat ranges where we entered and cleared buildings of insurgents from friendly communities. We conducted missions focused on locating enemy personnel and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and we escorted vehicles in scenarios very similar to our Kuwaiti mission.

Fort Hood is definitely not home, but we settled in fairly well and became stronger as a team. We interact constantly due to limited living space. The Morale, Welfare and Recreation facility provides internet connections, TVs, a foosball table, pool tables electronic gaming systems and a small fitness area to help us relieve stress. Many of us spend a lot of time in the main gym that is, literally, full of equipment necessary to build strength for carrying the heavy body armor that we wear.

The recent history of Alpha Battery is a combined effort with Soldiers from the 148th Signal Company who joined us prior to leaving Wyoming. When we arrived at Fort Hood, we were met by a large group of highly motivated and skilled Soldiers from the Inactive Ready Reserve.

I want to personally thank the families and friends of our soldiers, and invite you to utilize the groups and individuals like the Family Readiness Group to address your issues, concerns, or questions throughout this deployment.

Future updates will be written by your Soldiers, but I wanted to ensure you all knew who I am and personally thank you for everything you do for your Soldiers every day. — Capt. Messamer



ALPHA — Sgt. Stephen Green (Top), A Team, 3rd Squad, 2nd Platoon, A Battery, aims through his close-combat optic, May 26. (Left) A Battery Soldiers assault through a live-fire shoot house at Fort Hood. (Right) Soldiers from A Battery practice assaulting without ammunition, on May 26.





Bravo Battery

Notes from Bravo

2nd Lt. Casey Henry, B Battery Public Affairs

Settling into our lives at Fort Hood became easier after we received all of our equipment and finished getting poked and prodded by the medical staff.

Before long, we were out practicing close quarters combat — it's a skill involving standing, even walking and shooting. It's important to know if we ever have to patrol on foot.

We eventually made our way to a military operations on urban terrain site (MOUT). That's where we practiced in a mock city, learning how to cordon areas and serve as the main effort. Our main effort mission was to make contact with the local Sheik and help him rid the town of suspected insurgents. All of that while adhering to the laws that reflect the new political landscape.

"I learned how to set up my escalation of force kit and how to use it properly," Sgt. Davis, one of Bravo's noncommissioned officers, said. Learning the proper way to apply force provides us with tools to maintain positive relationships with the people that we'll meet.

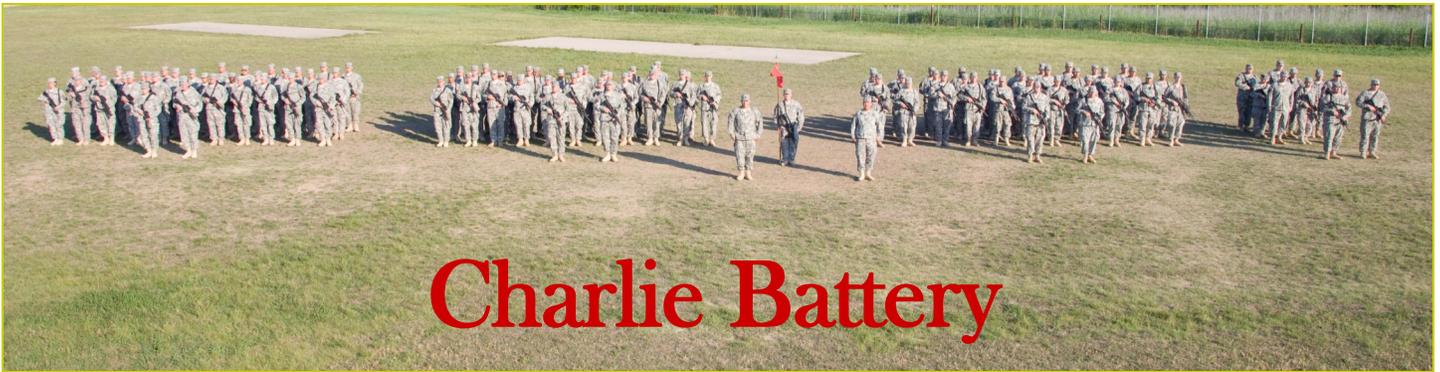
After learning how to walk and shoot, we practiced driving and shooting. Mounted gunnery gave us a chance to fire our machine guns mounted on humvees. We set up a contest amongst the platoons to see who was the best shot. Sgt. Hatcher, of 1st Platoon, scored 897 out of 900 possible points to lead the battery.

The mounted gunnery range also gave us a chance to practice up on our field craft. We left our air-conditioned barracks for tents in the field.

Photos Courtesy of Bravo Battery

BRAVO — (Top) Bravo Battery Soldiers practice clearing a building. (Center) Soldiers from Bravo Battery receive their first hot meal at the mounted gunnery range, May 28. (Bottom) Bravo Soldiers live life in the field.





Communicating with Charlie

Staff Sgt. Arica Stevermer, C Battery Public Affairs

Charlie Battery arrived on April 20 to Fort Hood, in the lovely state of Texas. Known as “The Great Place,” Fort Hood provided us the facilities to welcome in our Soldiers from the Inactive Ready Reserve. They helped complete our unit.

As we set on our adventure here in Texas, the first stop we made was at the close quarters combat range. We focused on entering and clearing rooms and how to quickly discern friend from foe.

We then moved on to urban operations. We learned how to work from the outside in when it comes to having to work in a city.

Then it was off to the mounted gunnery lanes. We improved the way we communicate as a team within the trucks. Our gunners also got to shoot a lot. We were in the field for four days and three nights for this exercise. I have to say, I think the unit really enjoyed this training.



Spc. Brandon Yule/C Battery , 2-300th FA

IED DEFEAT — Charlie Battery Soldiers get a good look at a “petting zoo” of improvised explosive devices they might encounter overseas. The display was a portion of the second day of IED training for the battery.

We followed that with force protection training. We worked on clearing routes for convoys, performing convoy security, setting up traffic control points and more. The final day of convoy live fire missions trained our gunners and drivers to fire (live ammunition) while on the move. We worked all day and late into the night.

We finished our training set with the improvised explosive device defeat course. We learned what to look for to spot IEDs when on a convoy mission and how to react.

Once completed, we were ready to start our mission readiness exercise, which is where we take all of our training and put it together.

Spc. Brandon Yule/C Battery , 2-300th FA

DOUBLE CHECK — Charlie Battery Soldiers become familiar with their .50 caliber machine guns.



A Company, 960th BSB

Notes from Alpha Co.

2nd Lt. Matthew Bullington, A Co.
Public Affairs

The Soldiers of A Company, 960th Brigade Support Battalion spent the past two months at Fort Hood, Texas, preparing for their mission overseas.

Urban Ops: Soldiers learned to operate as a team in an urban environment. They learned procedures for tactically moving through a city and interacting with the people on the streets and in the homes. Soldiers used their knowledge to navigate through a village much like the ones they'll encounter overseas.

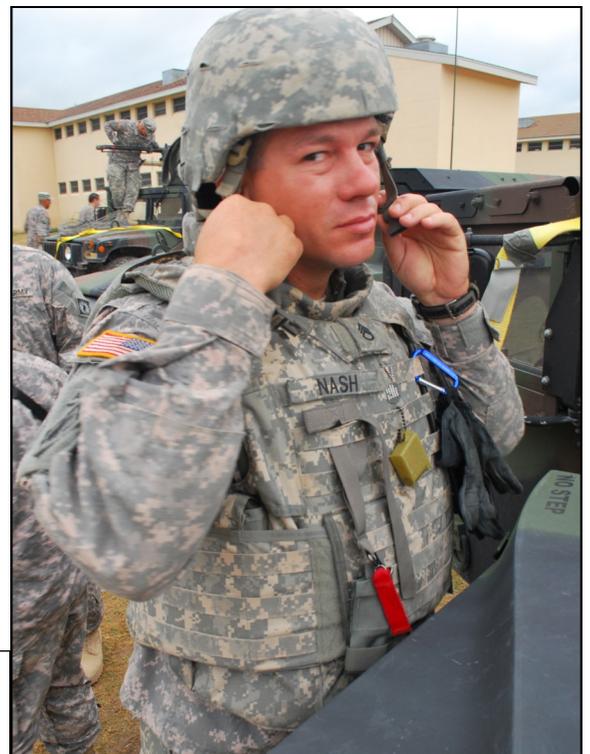
Mounted gunnery: During mounted gunnery training, Soldiers worked together on the team level. Crews learned the proper techniques for identifying and engaging targets from moving and stationary vehicles.

Improvised Explosive Device Defeat: The IED defeat training gave platoons their first opportunity to work on the missions they'll see overseas. Soldiers learned how to identify different types of IED's, and ways to work in an IED environment.

Force Protection: Soldiers learned the fundamentals of protecting convoys while operating on missions, including recovering disabled vehicles and reacting to small arms threats.

Mission Readiness Exercise: A Company was the first unit to roll out of the gate for the 2-300th Field Artillery Battalion during the 115th Fires Brigade's large exercise. The MRE simulates convoy missions.

MISSION READINESS EXERCISE — (Top and right) Soldiers with A Company, 960th Brigade Support Battalion, attached to the 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery, prepare to roll out on their first convoy escort mission during training at Fort Hood.





Let'r Buck!

From Capt. Troy Wacaser, Commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery

As commander of HHB I want to express my sincere thanks to the Soldiers and to the families of the Soldiers in my Battery. We have had a very successful first month. We completed all individual and collective unit training at the battery level.

Our soldiers performed to the standard that we have come accustomed to in HHB/2-300, that is above and beyond that expected out of the normal Army Soldier. We don't have normal Army Soldiers we have exceptional Army Soldiers. They showed Fort Hood what Wyoming has to offer.

We are in the middle of our Mission Readiness Exercise (MRE). This is exactly what it sounds like it is a battalion collective training event that is run as we will run on mission. We have completed course in IED-Defeat, Force Protection, and many training briefs. Our soldiers are happy and in good spirits.

From THE GREAT PLACE
— Capt. Wacaser



HHB — (Above) Headquarters Soldiers walk through an improvised explosive device course after driving through it in Humvees, on May 28. (Left) Spc. Robert Disney takes out his target during close quarters combat training on May 25. (Right) Capt. Rory Williams and Capt. Scott Morey ensure they complete their rest cycles after a hard fought day on the range during close quarters combat training, on May 25.

