



A Mile Wide and an Inch Deep



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



MRAP+Sand+More Sand = Kuwait



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

WELCOME TO KUWAIT — (Top) A mine resistant ambush protected vehicle driven by B Battery, 2-300th Soldiers works out of a jam. (Above) Spc. Matthew Burns gets his first look at the Kuwaiti desert.

CAMP VIRGINIA, Kuwait — In a rumbling dust cloud of grainy, gritty sand, operates approximately 600 Soldiers from the Wyoming Army National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery.

Their eventual mission will encompass the protection of convoys from around Kuwait and into portions of Iraq.

Their current mission: to learn everything their U.S. Army Reserve counterparts with the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry can teach them before they return to Hawaii.

"It's actually been going pretty good," Spc. Matthew Graham, B Battery, 2-300th, said of the process to relieve the 100th. "I'm looking forward to getting on a mission, getting a rhythm, getting a schedule."

The transition to Kuwait was marred with the traditional pangs of moving. In fact, many of these 2-300th Soldiers are Powder River Soldiers, from the state of Wyoming, where entire towns (approximately 55 populated areas) are the size of the battalion or smaller. However, it really isn't size, but how these Soldiers perform overseas.

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"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 the best part about leaving Fort Hood for Kuwait?



Spc. Travis Ostendorf, HHB:

We are actually being used for our intended purpose.



Pfc. Kyle Hendricks, A Co., 960th BSB:

The chow here is better (than Fort Hood).



Staff Sgt. Mike Clancy, B Btry:

We finally get to do our mission.



Sgt. Jason Peterson, B Btry:

Less Texans in Kuwait.



Spc. Wayne Jones, A Btry:

Leaving the humidity.

Notes from Powder River 6

The Powder River Cowboys and Cowgirls made it through some deployment defining gates in June.

Early in the month, the unit finished all collective training required to deploy. This included a variety of convoy security tasks, including convoy live fire, where soldiers shot machine guns from the top of a moving gun truck in the day and night. Soldiers engaged moving and stationary targets while they tested equipment, including very advanced night vision and lasers.

While our line units were in the field completing convoy security training, our battalion headquarters spent their time conducting a command post exercise with the help of outside trainers. This training focused how our headquarters dealt with the myriad of issues that arise from providing command and control, logistics, personnel and communications support to approximately 600 soldiers.

All of the training at Fort Hood culminated with a Mission Rehearsal Exercise. This exercise forced our units to bring together all of their training as a final test of our combat readiness. As usual, our soldiers performed brilliantly.

Following training at Fort Hood, soldiers took a well deserved break and took four days off following a short send off ceremony at Fort Hood.

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**Lt. Col. Brian Nesvik
"Powder River 6"**

Notes from Powder River 7

First, I would like to explain some of the terminology that is used in the newsletter. The battalion commander, Lt. Col. Brian Nesvik, uses the radio call sign "Power River 6." My radio call sign, as the battalion command sergeant major, is "Powder River 7". You will see us address ourselves as such in the newsletter.

As Powder River 6 stated, the majority of the 2-300th soldiers have made it to Kuwait. Eight soldiers, in addition to myself, arrived one to two weeks ahead of the majority of the unit. Personally, it was a satisfying and heart warming sight to see my fellow soldiers and friends arrive.

Our soldiers are in the process of learning the duties and missions they will perform during this deployment. I have no doubt that are soldiers will perform our mission as well as, or better than the unit we replace.

The morale of the soldiers is high as we anticipate the battle handover and start conducting missions on our own. As I have talked with many soldiers, the time goes by much quicker when you are engaged and get into a routine.

Many soldiers have linked up with their counterparts and engaged in the "soldier swap meet" buying anything from televisions to refrigerators and everything in between.

The next nine months will pass as all time does.

See POWDER RIVER 7 Pg 3



**Command Sgt. Maj.
Troy Guimond
"Powder River 7"**

A General Goodbye



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

FORT HOOD, Texas — The Powder River Cowboys of the 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery Regiment, 115th Fires Brigade, Wyoming Army National Guard, are joined by Wyoming Army National Guard assistant adjutant general Brig. Gen. Olin Odekoven at the brigade's farewell ceremony at Fort Hood. Pictured in front, from left, are commanders Capt. Glen Nicholson, C Battery; Capt. James Ezell, A Company; Capt. Troy Wacaser, Headquarters Battery; Lt. Col. Brian Nesvik, 2-300th FA commander; Odekoven; Capt. Fred Nasredine, B Battery; and Capt. Kevin Messamer, A Battery.

POWDER RIVER 6 continued from Page 2

Many soldiers remained in Texas and the Fort Hood area after friends and family traveled down to meet them. Several other Soldiers went back to Wyoming or their home state for their time off. Soldiers enjoyed the break and came back ready to get out of Fort Hood and over to Kuwait.

The first plane load of Powder River Cowboys and Cowgirls arrived at Kuwaiti International Airport in late June. The last load arrived in early July after an unexpected 48 hour delay in Germany for maintenance problems with the plane. The unit arrived to a massive "Shamal" or sand storm and intense heat. Soldiers arrived, attended necessary briefings upon arrival in country and got settled in to their living quarters. Many soldiers who have deployed before to Kuwait and Iraq were amazed at the improvements to American infrastructure on American Camps.

Currently our battalion is executing a detailed relief in place with the outgoing unit, the 100th battalion of the 442nd Infantry out of Hawaii. The outgoing unit welcomed us in and was well prepared for our arrival. The 100th battalion is providing key training for our soldiers that is specific to the missions we will conduct here in Kuwait and in Iraq. Our success during the relief in place along with our successes at Fort Hood, will set the stage for entire deployment. As we take over our assigned missions over the next month, we will be at a "high lope". Our soldiers continue to serve with pride and distinction and I am very proud of them.

POWDER RIVER!

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As I talk to soldiers, I ask them when was the last time they contacted their family?

I would also ask the families to stay in contact with their deployed soldiers. Even in this day and age of electronic communication, a letter, or package from home can be much more satisfying. I ask that you keep each of us in your thoughts and prayers.

This is Power River 7 saying so long for now.



KUWAIT continued from Page 1



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

FAREWELL TO THE FINEST — (Top left) A row of guidons from the 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery, stand together in a battalion mass formation, prior to the 115th Fires Brigade’s farewell ceremony. (Top right) Col. Richard Knowlton, 115th Fires Brigade commander, address the troops, including the 2-300th, set nearly center stage, before the unit made its final preparations to deploy to Kuwait and Iraq.

Since April, the 2-300th’s Soldiers spent nearly everyday preparing for the possibility of combat and the missions that would take them into a realm where years of training and rehearsing may finally pay off. Much of the work coming out of Fort Hood, Texas.

However, even the reality of the real job can be monotonous.

“It’s pretty easy driving a truck up and back,” Sgt. Allen Price, said. Price and his squad began escorting convoys, with an instructor from the 100th, within the first two weeks.

Despite the ease, Price said he works with the other Soldiers to maintain their focus during the mission. It’s among the items most stressed by commanders.



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

HERE AND THERE — (Top) Soldiers wait in line at Fort Hood, Texas, to enter the airport. (Bottom left) Sand during a storm covers some of the quarters 2-300th Soldiers are staying in. (Bottom right) Soldiers verified their weapons were still accurate after a long trip across the Atlantic Ocean.



Powder River Let'r Buck!

Bucking Horse and Rider was born in France

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

CAMP VIRGINIA, Kuwait — The Bucking Horse and Rider emblem depicted on everything Wyoming, has its roots in World War I France, with a deployed Wyoming Army National Guard unit.

George N. Ostrom, a Sheridan, Wyo., cattle rancher and a Wyoming Army National Guard supply sergeant was with E Battery, 3rd Battalion, 148th Field Artillery Regiment, 66th Field Artillery Brigade and his unit was right, smack dab in the middle of the fight in France.

Ostrom was alerted to the order for units to design an identifying symbol to mark equipment.

“At this time we were in intensive combat and my battery commander asked me how we could

possibly comply with this request,” Staff Sgt. George N. Ostrom, the battery supply sergeant and Sheridan, Wyo.,



COURTESY

ORIGINAL — The initial design of the Bucking Horse and Rider emblem designed during World War I by Staff Sgt. George Os-

cattle rancher wrote in 1973.

“My reply was [for him] to detail me to brigade HQ and this could be done,” he said. The rest is part of Wyo-

oming lore: The battery commander dispatched Sergeant Ostrom to the rear where thoughts of home

and the state's feisty frontier spirit inspired his design of a rider on a rough silhouette of a bucking horse.

The commander of the 66th Artillery Brigade was so taken by the concept that he nixed all other drawings and had all brigade equipment marked with the “Bucking Bronco.”

State officials were equally enamored of the symbol when the Wyoming Guard returned home to the First Regiment Cavalry, which later became the 115th Cavalry.

The design mustered with the 115th Mechanized Cavalry for World War II. It graced every 105mm self-propelled howitzer belonging to the 300th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, the 115th's next incarnation, when the unit mobilized for the Korean War.

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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

Perfectly Aligned in Mass Formation



FORT HOOD, Texas — Command Sgt. Maj. Troy Guimond aligns the Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery, prior to the start of the 115th Fires Brigade's farewell ceremony at Fort Hood. The brigade deployed in July to various destinations in Kuwait and Iraq.

Sprachen Sie Deutsche?

2-300th Soldiers gain unexpected stay in Germany, extensively tour small section of German airport

CAMP VIRGINIA, Kuwait — The nearly windowless confines of the military transition wing of one of Germany’s airports, became a reminder to the Soldiers within of what preventative maintenance checks and services can help avoid.

The aircraft that transported the Soldiers of Headquarters Battery and some from A Battery, 2-300th, along with Soldiers from Colorado, suffered mechanical difficulties. Those difficulties forced a nearly three-day stay for the Soldiers in the airport.



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

WHO NEEDS BEDS — Soldiers from Headquarters Battery, 2-300th Field Artillery, catch a few winks an airport in Germany. The airport eventually opened a room filled with beds and another room for Soldiers to shower in.

and Colorado guests in the walled area. Shower rooms were opened, along with an extensive sleeping area. Table tennis, television and a never ending supply of airline beverages provided most of the entertainment.

Meals were catered in for break-

fast, lunch and dinner. German staples like sausages, cheeses and eggs became the standard breakfast.

The free cost became a welcomed alternative to the \$5 pocket sized bags of potato chips, or other costs for basics.



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

JUST A BRIEF STOP — (Above) Chief Warrant Officer Richard King grabs a bottle of water from the beverage stand set up for the passengers stranded at a German airport. (Right) Unsuspecting Soldiers anticipate a quick layover in Germany after disembarking their aircraft.

Wanting to avoid sending the Soldiers through customs, the airline maintained the Wyoming



Hope for escape changed, sometimes by the hour, sometimes longer. Eventually, the airline opted to provide another jet, allowing the Soldiers to arrive in Kuwait.

HISTORY continued from Page 5

The “Cowboy Cannoneers” were in the thick of fighting, inflicting “thousands of casualties” on waves of Chinese soldiers at the Battle of Soyang in May 1951, according to accounts.

Their actions helped the 2nd Infantry Division make a stand that allowed the U.S. Eighth Army to regroup and stop an enemy envelopment during a pivotal part of the war.

The 300th left the battlefield as one of the Korean War’s most decorated artillery outfits, earning numerous unit citations, 12 Silver Stars, several

Bronze Star Medals and 183 Purple Hearts.

But before it even reached Korea, the battalion unknowingly started

that continues today.

Now known as the Bucking Horse and Rider, the symbol, after refinement by Sergeant Ostrom, would become the state’s most recognized and treasured trademark. State officials actually copyrighted the mark in 1936.

Today, it appears on every state license plate, on every University of Wyoming football helmet and on every High Mobility Artillery

Rocket System in the Wyoming National Guard.



LICENSE PLATE — (Top left) Wyoming’s new National Guard license plate comes complete with the bucking horse and rider placed prominently before the plate’s number. (Top right) The patch of the 115th Fires Brigade is worn by the 2-300th’s Soldiers and Soldiers with the 960th Brigade Support Battalion.

a Wyoming Army Guard tradition

CHAPLAIN’S CORNER

WE MADE IT! After a long and arduous flight we all made it to our new destination. We were not greeted by any cheering crowds but rather a hot sand storm that was nearly impossible to imagine.

Most of the soldiers were surprised to be hit with such a storm but others were used to it and were able to lead others to get through it. It felt so good to get to our rooms and shake all the dust off us and then get the needed rest. Most of us are now busy with taking over from our counterparts and looking forward to starting our main mission.

I have to keep reminding myself that this is God’s country just as much as anywhere else. Coming from beautiful Wyoming to this is quite the difference. This is the land that the father of our faith lived before he was called away from here.

Abraham was a native of this land and it was here God called him away to begin a new life faraway from here.

We too have been called to begin a new mission faraway from home. Our mission is quite different from that which God gave to Abraham however in both cases God was with us just as He was with Abraham.



2-300th FA Chaplain
Randy Sawyer

Our goal is to do our mission and then go back to where we came from physically, mentally, and spiritually in tact. In a land that seems that God forgot, it is hard to imagine that He is even here. We, like Abraham, must believe that not only is God here but that He actually cares about what we are doing. So as the days go by let us look to God for the strength we need to do our mission and to finish strong.

Care Packages

Care packages, love letters and birthday cards can be mailed directly to your Powder River Cowboys. Send it to:

Name of Soldier
Battery (either HHB, A, B, C, Btry. or A Co.) 2-300th FA
APO AE 09327

If you want to send it to a specific battery, mail it to the same address, but address it to the first sergeant:

A Battery, 1st Sgt. Brian Fawcett; B Battery, 1st Sgt. Robert Butz; C Battery, 1st Sgt. Tim Metro; A Company, Jacinto Garcia; Headquarters, 1st Sgt. Michael Warner.

Packages to the 2-300th as a whole should be sent to 1st Sgt. Warner, with Headquarters (HHB).



A Battery

BOHICA (Because of Honor I Choose Alpha)

From 1st Sgt. Brian Fawcett , A Battery



WELCOME TO KUWAIT — A firing range safety works with Spc. Troy Ross on the .50 caliber machine gun at one of the ranges in Kuwait.

Howdy from sunny Camp Virginia, Kuwait. The main body of Alpha Battery arrived here early in the morning in early July. We were welcomed to Kuwait by a sand storm. Sand in your eyes, nose and ears were the order of the day.

The sand storms we have during this time of year last three to four days, with several days of settled weather, and then the cycle starts all over again. They call these storms “Shamal’s”. It seems just when the guys get their tents cleaned out and sand free, the fore-

JULY PROMOTIONS

Sergeant (E5) Bill Duda was promoted to Staff Sergeant (E6), July 5th.

Private (E1) Troy Shelinbarger was advanced to Private Second Class (E2), July 6th.

Private First Class (E3) William Travnick was advanced to Specialist (E4), July 6th

Congratulations to all three for all their hard work.

cast calls for another storm.

We were also welcomed with 120-degree temperatures. It was hot at Fort Hood, but nothing compares, or makes you ready for that extreme in temperature change. Now that we have been on the ground for more than a week everyone seems to be acclimating, and the extreme heat doesn’t seem to be bothering the guys as much.

Living quarters for the majority of Alpha Battery consists of a G.P. Medium tent (14 feet x 20 feet) that is equipped with electric lights and outlets, and air-conditioning. Most tents have four to five soldiers each, giving each person some room for personal space.

Most of the guys have made their tents pretty “homey” in a relatively short amount of time. TV’s, X-Boxes, and lap-top computers keep guys occupied during down time. Soldiers are pretty enterprising and some of the tents would be the envy of some people’s normal homes. There are several facilities on the camp that keep guys busy when off duty, including two gyms, a recreation center, library, and an internet and phone center.

Over all everyone is in good spirits, the training and preparation for the transfer of authority for missions is going smoothly, and guys are anxious to get to work. I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that the men of Alpha Battery are ready for anything that will come their way.



...Every Day Is A Day Closer

Capt. Fred Nasredine, B Battery commander

After two long months at the “Great Place”, or simply Fort Hood, most of us were ready to move on and begin our mission.

One would think the heat of central Texas would prepare us, or at least get us somewhat acclimated to the heat we were about to encounter. As we arrived at our camp, we were under a blanket of sand and dust, swirling wind and unimaginable heat.



The “Great Place” was not so bad after all!

Later we learned that this was the first bad sandstorm of the season. The heat still, and will remain on until late fall, however, by that time we would be that much closer.

B Battery Soldiers have been doing great work throughout this deployment. No matter what we ask of them, they deliver! As we begin our mission, I am certain that our Soldiers will perform superbly, no matter what conditions we have to operate under.

der.

We all started this journey several months ago, for the Wyoming Soldiers, it started way back in November with the onset of the training for this deployment. For our Inactive Ready Reserve Soldiers that joined us at Fort Hood, their journey began when they were called back to duty.

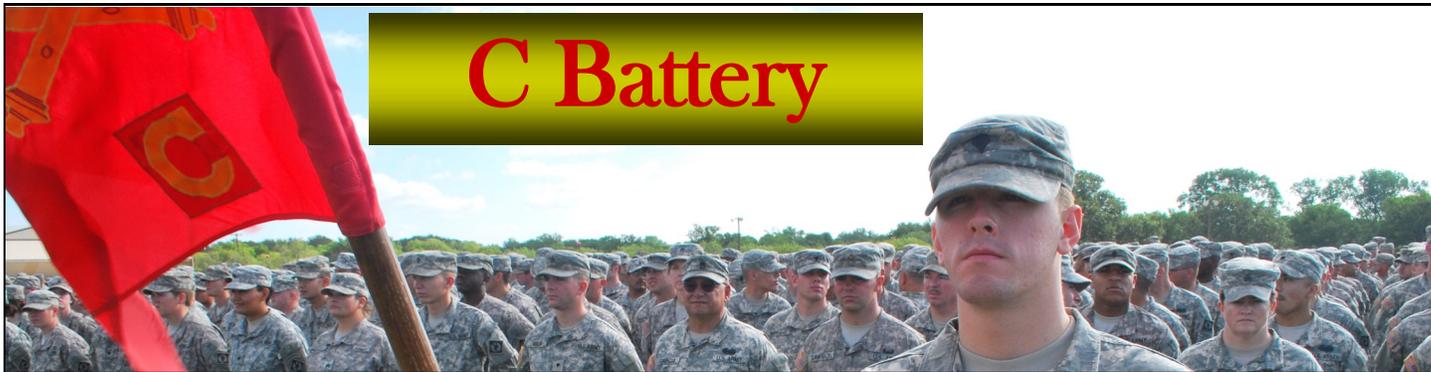
Each of us has different ways of coping with being away from loved ones and home, I look at it from the perspective that every day brings me a day closer to being with my wife.



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

DRIVING COURSE — B Battery Soldier Pfc. Zach Tower, of Scottsbluff, Neb., guides a mine resistant ambush protected vehicle through an obstacle course (top). Sgt. Faustino Hisquierdo, of Torrington, Wyo., waits for an MRAP to head his way (bottom). A B Battery Soldier directs an MRAP through obstacles (left).





Communicating with Charlie

Staff Sgt. Arica Stevermer, C Battery Public Affairs



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

END OF TRAINING — The sun sets on a line of up-armored HMMWVs as soldiers prepare to begin night time mounted gunnery.

As the Soldiers of C Battery, 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery, 115th Fires Brigade, neared the end of their stay at North Fort Hood, Texas, they took part in a brigade-wide examination of mission readiness.

This test was designed to mimic what was expected of the unit once we reached our assigned station overseas. The Mission Rehearsal Exercise was the final test for the Guardsmen before a well deserved four-day pass to see friends and family.



FAREWELL — C Battery stands ready to say goodbye to Fort Hood before they go on pass.

After the much needed break, the soldiers of Charlie Battery reported back to North Fort Hood and prepared for their departure to the Middle East.

Our flight took us to over the Atlantic to Germany and then to Kuwait. Several organizations, to include the USO, waited for our arrival and welcomed us with refreshments and snacks during the layovers while the planes were refueled.



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

WINGED BUS — This was Charlie Battery's home for many hours of flight time to Kuwait.

After many hours of flight time, in the early morning hours, Charlie Battery was welcomed to Kuwait by 100-degree temperatures and a violent sand storm. We consolidated troops and gear, then loaded busses for a two-hour trip to another camp, where we would receive another, much anticipated, welcome brief.

After being officially processed into Kuwait, battery loaded up for the final leg of their journey to Camp Virginia.

Once settled in, the Guardsmen quickly got to work. Now coordinating with their counterparts as they prepare to relieve them and take on the responsibility of the mission.



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

A REAL BUS — Staff Sgt. Justin Pfeiffer expresses his excitement to return to Kuwait on the bus ride from Kuwait City.



Notes from Alpha Co.

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

Over the last month, A Company, 960th Brigade Support Battalion, prepared for a full spectrum of operations in theatre.

The final task before the deployment for A Company was the Mission Rehearsal Exercise at Fort Hood, Texas. The Soldiers of A Company conducted operations as if they were in Iraq or Kuwait. The escort teams were able to gain experience in the most real world environment possible before stepping foot into a combat zone. At the conclusion of the exercise, A Company was validated for deployment and its Soldiers enjoyed a much needed break. A four-day pass was granted for Soldiers to take in civilian life, spend time with their families and clear their heads before heading overseas.

After leaving Fort Hood, A Company landed in Maine, and was greeted by a very special group called the Maine Troop Greeters. At almost midnight, the airport was



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

MRAP EDUCATION — Soldiers from A Company, 960th Brigade Support Battalion, and A Battery, gather for a class on mine resistant ambush protected vehicles in Kuwait.

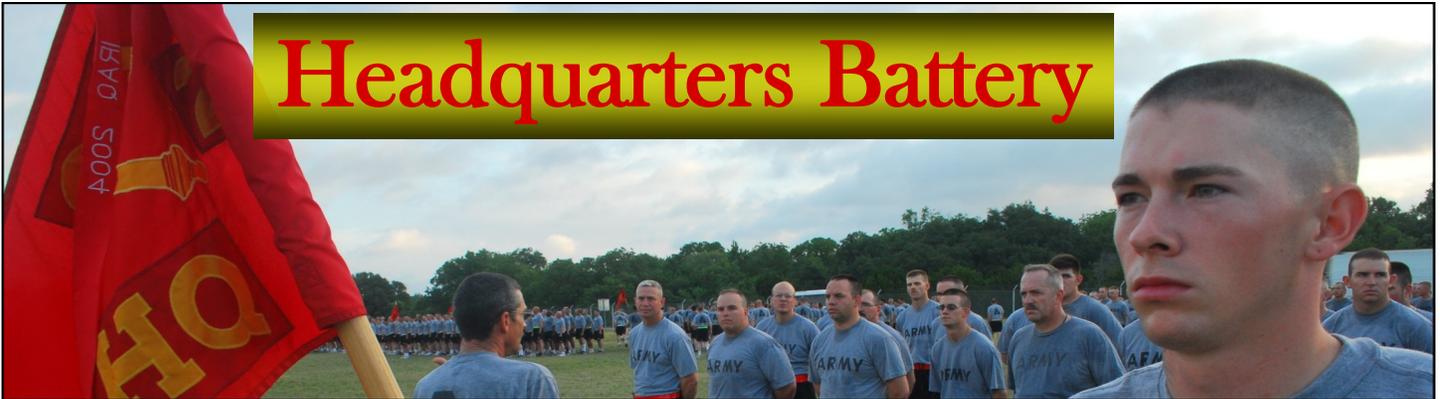
filled with people giving up their time to greet troops leaving and returning to the United States. It was a small reminder for everyone that there are still people who care about what we do.

In early July, A Company landed in Kuwait and the Soldiers began settling in. Many of the company's Soldiers entered a combat zone for the first time. Some were experiencing another tour. Regardless, the company celebrated our nation's birthday by serving our nation.



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

WET — Newly promoted sergeants Christopher Klemme, top, and Jeremy Brown, left, are congratulated with a mop bucket (or more) of water by Soldiers from A Company, before leaving Fort Hood, Texas. The water for new sergeants is a 20-year-old tradition.



Let'r Buck!

2nd Lt. Christian Venhuizen, Headquarters Battery

Moving and settling in are among the two most complex activities devised by man.

Pack box, move box, unpack box.

Seems simple, but when you move a jumbo jet full of Soldiers to a remote location on another continent, in the middle of a war, simple is the name of the only thing we leave behind.

Our Soldiers packed no less than four massive bags and boxes (not to mention those that mailed more “necessities” to Kuwait). There’s also the carry-ons and whatever they could fit into their pockets.

Of course, everyone laughs at the guy whose pants are overflowing with 50 pounds of IPods, Playstations, playing cards, and computer equipment — at least until you’re stuck in a German airport for three days. Good food, but lacking in entertainment variety.

Speaking of German airports, everything from the \$23 disposable razor to the \$150 10-minute phone call put a damper on all of the fun Headquarters had in Leipzig. However, the airline made sure we had all of the sausages, cheese and rolls we could eat (we didn’t smell pretty, but our bellies were full).

Now to the big news...Kuwait is hot. It’s also sandy. Who would have guessed a desert would be like this? However, an informal survey (I asked a couple of guys) showed we prefer Kuwait to Fort Hood. There’s a lot less humidity, a lot more room in our offices, and we don’t have to sleep in one room with 50 other men. All of the tents and trailers have air-conditioning, power outlets, cable TV hookups and internet access.

We don’t have much for indoor plumbing, but I see it as an opportunity to get to know your neighborhood wildlife (camel spiders, toddler sized lizards, and the Soldiers in my neighborhood).

We paired up with our counterparts from Hawaii to bring us up to speed on the missions and the best places to eat, sleep and be merry here at Camp Virginia. There’s plenty of places for us to spend the tax-free money we thought about saving. There’s also plenty of free resources provided by the USO and Morale, Welfare and Recreation.

All told, life here in Kuwait isn’t that bad. We’re performing our duty as U.S. Soldiers and that alone seemed to send morale to an all time high. This is a patriotic group that loves their country, misses their families, but are committed to the sacrifices it takes to keep our homes safe.



ON THE MOVE— Sgt. 1st Class Carl Fox, far, Spc. Travis Millhouse, center, both with the 2-300th, receive a ride around Camp Virginia, Kuwait, from a Staff Sgt. John Wayne Heath, with the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry. The 2-300th is the 100th’s relief. The process of a relief in place is referred to as a RIP, followed by a transfer of authority.



LIKE WE NEVER LEFT — Staff Sgt. James Keller, Sgt. Samuel Bloom and Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Phillips take a moment to admire the scenery Kuwait has to offer. The trio all previously deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom.