



A Mile Wide and an Inch Deep



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



Powder River officially takes on mission



2nd Lt. Christian Venhuizen/2-300th Field Artillery

IN CHARGE — The colors of the 2-300th Field Artillery fly on Camp Virginia, Kuwait as the unit formally takes on its mission, on Aug. 8.

CAMP VIRGINIA, Kuwait — A simple rolling of one flag and unrolling of another signified a new dawn for the Wyoming Army National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery, 115th Fires Brigade. The flag ceremony represented the transfer of authority from the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry, to the 2-300th.

"This is what we were working towards since arriving at Fort Hood, Texas, in April,"

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Sen. Barrasso tours the 2-300th

CAMP VIRGINIA, Kuwait — The joyful welcome the 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery Soldiers had for U.S. Sen. John Barrasso wasn't politically motivated,

See SENATOR Pg 4



MISSION BRIEF — U.S. Senator John Barrasso, talks with Staff Sgt. Bruce Dempster, B Battery, 2-300th.

"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 thing to do when you're off duty?



**Spc. Derek Santos,
Headquarters:**
We have a great gym here.



Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Gillespie, A Btry:
I'll have to say, talking to my wife.



Sgt. Kathaleen Cassedy, Headquarters:
Read books. My favorite author is Deidre Knight.



Spc. Bobby Gray, Headquarters:
Call home, talk to my wife and son.



Sgt. 1st Class Robert Canal, D Company, 100th-442nd Inf:
Basically sleep and go to the gym.

Notes from Powder River 6



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

August 19th finds the Powder River Team 34 weeks from completing this deployment. That may seem like a long time to some, but I can vividly remember my wife writing me an e-mail in mid April telling me "only 52 weeks left". That wasn't long ago and I remember it like it was yesterday.

Our Soldiers continue to be very engaged in the additional challenges of beginning a new mission, learning a new area of operations, and getting settled into some type of a rhythm.

The 100th battalion, of the 442nd Infantry, transferred their authority to execute the missions to our command, on Aug. 8, during a ceremony at Camp Virginia. Like the 2-300th Field Artillery Battalion, the 100th Battalion has a long and proud lineage and history serving America in past conflicts. We are proud to have this mission in common with them.

This transfer of authority marks the beginning of an era where our unit will shape our missions and the conditions our Soldiers operate under, based on the changing geo-political factors and the evolving environments in Kuwait and Iraq. We are definitely up for the challenge

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Notes from Powder River 7

Another newsletter means another month closer to coming home. This deployment has brought many changes from previous deployments that our Soldiers have been on. I believe one of the biggest changes is the ability to stay in touch with home.

We have internet access in the tents, internet cafés, calling centers, USO calling centers, web cameras, some of our Soldiers even bought cell phones. It's a good thing to have a friendly voice or face for our Soldiers and I know that seeing our Soldiers doing well helps reassure the folks back home.

This past month has been busy training with the unit that we are replacing. As "Powder River 6" stated, they are a very proud unit much the same as us. I have enjoyed working with and learning from their command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Glenn Gomes. He is a great noncommissioned officer that I wish the best for.

As was also mentioned, our battalion continues to grow in the number of Soldiers we are responsible for. I mentioned to our executive officer, Maj. Cudney, that we could well be one of the most diverse units to deploy. One thing is for certain, we will treat all new soldiers to the "Powder River" Battalion as well as we treat our own.

It was a pleasure to see U.S. Sen. John Barrasso as he

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

Transfer of Authority



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

CAMP VIRGINIA, Kuwait — The Powder River Cowboys of the 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery Regiment, 115th Fires Brigade, Wyoming Army National Guard, are joined by the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry of the U.S. Army Reserves. The 2-300th inherited the 100th's mission in Kuwait to provide convoy escorts and base security, during a ceremony, on Aug. 8., 2009.

POWDER RIVER 6 continued from Page 2

and glad to be out of the “preparation mode” and into the “execution mode.” Our missions and the operating environment have already changed to some degree, in the short time we have been here.

One significant change we face on a daily basis is found in the Iraqi Security Agreement. Some may wonder how a presidential level and U.S. Secretary of Defense level agreement impacts us and our missions. The Iraqi Security Agreement lays the ground work for the Iraqis to continue to take control of THEIR country. It requires us to step back into more of an advisory role and to share the roads with Iraqis.

The roads belong to the Iraqis now and we have to abide by this principle. It is key to our nation's success and to the Iraqis' success. This practice of sharing the road is significantly different from how our soldiers were trained in their previous deployments.

Those prior deployments to a much more hostile Iraq are forcing some of our Soldiers to make difficult adaptations to our nation's less invasive role. Despite these challenges, our Soldiers are putting forth the Powder River effort to accomplish their missions in accordance with the directives of their commanders and the changing environment.

The size of the Powder River Battalion is another significant change over the past month. Several new missions were assigned to the battalion and along with new missions, came more Soldiers. The battalion received more than 100 new soldiers, already deployed, who volunteered to stay in theater for an additional nine months.

These are Soldiers who were conducting missions in Iraq and Kuwait since last fall, and will now become part of the Powder River Team for the next several months. These additional Soldiers bring a wealth of experience and knowledge that will greatly help us with the nuances of our missions.

The battalion is now over 800 soldiers strong, including our rear detachment in Wyoming. The battalion now has soldiers that come from 40 states, three U.S. territories and foreign nations, making us a very diverse group. TEAM BUILDING has become an even more critical skill for our leaders to know and they are executing brilliantly.

The unit continues to be well supported from our teammates in Wyoming and elsewhere in the United States. We've received dozens of care packages, cool ties, magazines and letters. We also had a visit by U. S. Sen. John Barrasso a couple of weeks ago. He spent time with our Soldiers here at Camp Virginia, attended church with Chaplain Sawyer and received mission briefs from my leaders and I. The senator placed several photos of his visit on his official website for public viewing. The Powder River Cowboys welcomed Sen. Barrasso and were glad to see someone from home.

As always, I sincerely appreciate all of your support from home. Our Soldiers are grateful and your support contributes to our overall efforts to serve the greatest country and state in the world.

TOA continued from Page 1

Lt. Col. Brian Nesvik, 2-300th commander, said. “We spent a lot of time working with the 100th to make sure the transition is smooth and the missions we inherit are accomplished.”

By rolling and then casing their battalion colors, the 100th signaled the end of their nine month assignment at Camp Virginia, Kuwait, and Camp Cedar, Iraq. The missions included convoy escorts and base security.

To complete the transfer, and allow the 2-300th to uncase their battalion colors, the 100th provided on-the-job training, referred to as a relief in place. Soldiers from the 100th paired with their counterparts from the 2-300th to ensure all tactics, techniques and procedures were transferred over. That meant there was a 100th Soldier riding along with 2-300th teams on convoy escort missions, while command teams, battery commanders and first sergeants, were



RIP — Sgt. Jason Leonard, left, with the 2-300th, and Spc. Jeremy Crawford, with the 100th, work through the relief in place process in the communications office.

paired up and briefed on the missions they’ll face.

“The transition was smooth,” Staff Sgt. Trimoni Ianu, with C Company, 100th Battalion, said. C Company worked with B Battery, 2-300th Field Artillery. “We had each guy build continuity books and the continuity books really helped.”

Finding ways to pass on the knowledge gained over nearly a year of run-

ning the mission is why the Army requires the relief in place process. Although some may argue the 40 days of transition was more than enough.

“It didn’t even take a week,” Ianu said. “Pretty much, we did a show and tell of how we did things and our counterparts soaked it up and ran with it.”

Now that the Soldiers of the 2-300th claimed ownership of the mission, they’ll begin to incorporate their own ideas and make adjustments dictated by threats, new equipment, the physical environment and more, said Nesvik.

“The 100th had a lot of good ideas and good practices, and we intend to build on that, to take this mission to the next level,” he said.

The 2-300th will be on the reverse end of the relief in place process in approximately seven months and units are already adding to their own continuity books to pass on when they roll up and case their colors.

SENATOR continued from Page 1

they were just glad to see a face from Wyoming.

“It blew my mind to see him here. It’s the last thing I expected to see while preparing for my mission,” B Battery Staff Sgt. Jake Dempster, of Lander, Wyo., said. Dempster is a convoy escort team commander. “He’s from back home. It’s good to talk to someone from back home.”

Talk is what the senator did. In true small town Wyoming fashion, Barrasso was able to identify with each Soldier personally. In some cases he knew them or their family, sometimes he knew their next door neighbors, sometimes he knew their bosses and he always had an anecdote to share. The meetings with the Soldiers were unscripted and mostly unplanned. Except for the opportunity the battalion’s senior officers and enlisted had for a question and answer session.

2-300th Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Brian Nesvik expressed his desire to continue to deploy as a group, under



KEEPING COOL — U.S. Sen. John Barrasso sports a 2-300th ball cap after noting how strong the sun shines in Kuwait.

their own command, as opposed to deploying under another active duty unit, or being separated under different commands.

The 115th Fires Brigade commander, Col. Richard Knowlton, directed his concerns to the home front. “When you have a community event, an ice cream social, or whatever, make a concerted effort to invite these (deployed military) families,” he asked.

“I think a lot of times, some people don’t ask for help, but I like your idea of the outreach being there,” Barrasso said. “I hope your families are feeling there are people there ready and willing to help.”

The senator noted his own family’s military history, his father-in-law’s service with the 300th Armored Field Artillery and presented the battalion with a new Wyoming state flag.

Barrasso was presented a 2-300th Commander’s Coin from Nesvik and a Powder River Team ball cap.

We do not advocate the theft of state property

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

CAMP VIRGINIA, Kuwait — Traditions sometimes have a dubious past. A sly prank, an off color phrase, or rituals that were once steeped in adolescent humor become the staple for good luck charms, well wishes and cherished memories.

The 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery's long history of heroic men isn't without a few of its own — shall we say interesting moments that now are parts of its history, lore and deployment traditions.

Possibly the most visible of the modern traditions is the "Entering Wyoming" sign that all Wyoming Army National Guard units deploying to war take with them.

The current signs are products pro-

duced specifically for the deploying units. They're signed by well wishers, senior officers and enlisted, families and many elected officials.

The key to the history of the signs is spelled out at the start of that last paragraph. These signs were given to the units, well all but one of the signs were "given" to the units.

See HIS-TORY Pg 6



COURTESY

ENTERING WYOMING — (Above) A Soldier with the 300th Armored Field Artillery stands with the sign in Korea. (Right) The latest sign, pictured at Fort Hood, Texas, now resides in Camp Virginia, Kuwait.



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

Roadside Service



2nd Lt. Christian Venhuizen/2-300th Field Artillery
KUWAIT — Spc. Derek Paxio and another 2-300th Field Artillery Soldier inspect a tire that ran flat on a Kuwaiti roadway. Two convoy escort teams worked to repair the broken truck and resume the mission.

HISTORY continued from Page 5

The unit in question is among the most storied incarnation of the 300th Field Artillery Regiment. The 300th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, otherwise known as the Cowboy Cannoneers, returned from the Korean War with stories to make your hair stand on end, and the medals, ribbons and battle streamers to prove it.

This is the group of men that stared down thousands of rushing Chinese soldiers, aimed their 105 mm self propelled cannons and began firing an onslaught of rounds never before or since fired by a Wyoming unit.

This is the same unit awarded the U.S. Presidential Unit Citation and the Republic of Korea Presidential Citation for actions taken at the Battle of Soyang.

This same unit had to cross into Montana on its way to Fort Lewis, Wash., the site of its mobilization. Upon reaching the Montana-Wyoming border, the sign welcoming motorists to the Cowboy State disappeared for a time. It appeared later in photographs from Korea.

Of course, this story does little to discourage vandalism by current and future Soldiers, hoping to create a tradition of their own. However, since the state provides these signs, it's one less the state needs to think to replace when a unit deploys.

Wyoming's colors always fly high above the 2-300th's compound



2nd Lt. Christian Venhuizen/2-300th Field Artillery

CAMP VIRGINIA, Kuwait — Day or night, sand storm or a still day, Wyoming's state flag flies on the flag poles of the 2-300th Field Artillery's area of operations on Camp Virginia. (Left) Command Sgt. Maj. Troy Guimond, command sergeant major for the 2-300th, and Lt. Col. Brian Nesvik, 2-300th commander, raise the Wyoming flag over the 2-300th's area for the first time, July 29, 2009. (Right) The flag still flies at night, through the haze created by the blowing sand in the air.

POWDER RIVER 7 continued from Page 2



FACE TO FACE — Command Sgt. Maj. Troy Guimond, left, Sen. John Barrasso, center, and Lt. Col. Brian Nesvik have a quick discussion after lunch at Camp Virginia, Kuwait, on July 26, 2009.

visited the Soldiers from the 2-300th Battalion here, at Camp Virginia. Pfc. Tyler Lawson, from Bravo Battery was extremely excited to talk with the senator. He spent so much time with the senator, I now consider him a celebrity. The Dempster brothers also visited with Sen. Barrasso. They did not embarrass us as much as I thought they could or might. Of course, I'm only kidding around. All three Soldiers gave the senator a firsthand account of what it means to be a Powder River Cowboy.

On a more serious note, Sen. Barrasso mentioned, during his visit, that the great thing about Wyoming is its people. The people from Wyoming are genuine and down to earth. A few years back I had a very successful career as an active duty Army Soldier.

One of the biggest factors for my decision to leave active duty and join the Wyoming Army National Guard was that I missed the people from the great state of Wyoming. I have never looked back on that decision. I also would not have met my wife, which was also a cool thing. I would like to give a shout out to my wife Amy. I hope the remodeling projects are done before I come home on leave and there are no more new dogs in the house.

A quote from a third country national (TCN) from India who works at the fueling point, "happiness makes you healthy." He made this comment to the commander and I as he was filling our vehicle, in the heat of the day, with blowing sand and a smile on his face. I asked "you seem happy today" and that was his response.

Until next month, this is "Powder River 7" saying so long and God Bless.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

By now most of us are settled in at our new positions and ready to take the reins full time.

Our counterparts have done a great job training us to take over and assume the mission. For them it's time to get ready to go home.

We, by now, also may be thinking of our home and wishing it was us instead of them that was going home. For most of us, we will be going home on R&R (that's rest and relaxation) starting in September.

It will be a great time of joy and excitement, but for some their whole family structure has changed.

As we face these times we need to remember that in all things God stays the

same. His love for us never changes and because He is, God will never fade away.

We

sometimes want change in our lives so

we want things that are harmful to us. When we get involved with those harmful things, we often find change we did not anticipate. Change is good, but only when it helps others whom you love. If you are looking for change that counts, look to the one who never changes for He will always be there for you when you call on His name.



2-300th FA Chaplain (Capt.) Randy Sawyer

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 Capt. Kevin Messamer, A Battery commander, and 2nd Lt. Tony D. Gerrell, A Battery platoon leader

You cannot imagine how glad I am to see another newsletter going out to all of you as it signifies another month gone by. I love the Army and all that it stands for, but there is something about the awesome vacation spots they send us to that makes us miss all of you!

Please recognize all of your Soldiers for the amazing job they are doing over here during an extremely tough time as we transition into this mission and experience some growing pains. They have taken a very non-standard mission and are performing at a level high above what we are used to, while maintaining a positive attitude, and somehow finding some reminders of home to keep their sanity. Hopefully, in the near future, you will have a chance to talk to them a lot more and receive more mail as we make our operations more efficient and they get some down time, instead of the fast paced mission tempo we currently have.

I would also like to thank you for everything you do that keeps your Soldier happy and motivated even though many times you have a harder day than we do.

Take care and God bless. BOHICA

— Capt. Kevin Messamer



Photos courtesy of A Battery

WE DON'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP — Spc. Chad McKen (right) models the Army Combat Shirt, worn by Soldiers on missions that require the use of body armor. A convoy (above) escorted by A Battery Soldiers demonstrates a type of mission that could require the use of body armor by Army crews.

A Battery cont'd

Hello,

Well we are finally here and for much of Alpha Battery, nothing much has changed since we last left this part of the world. On the other hand, it is amusing seeing the look on the faces of those that are here for the first time in a desert environment and usually the first thing out of their mouths is “it’s hot here,” or “that’s a lot of sand!”

The battery is getting settled in and, within our first month, besides the missions that we are running, much of the time is trying to get comfortable and make our home for the next several months, like our homes in the States. Don’t worry, the Army has given us some of the same accommodations that we have at home, such as McDonalds, Pizza Hut, Taco Bell and Subway ,so we don’t feel too alienated here in the middle of the Kuwaiti desert. When you see the golden arches lit up at night, high above the camp lights, somehow you don’t feel so far away from home!

You never realize how funny something is when a group of people have been thrown into situations like we have been introduced to everyday. You never go through the day without someone just make’n you about fall down on the sand and bust a gut laughing.

Not only do we have Soldiers from the great state of Wyoming, but we are fortunate enough to have a group of amazing Inactive Ready Reserve Soldiers and Soldiers that have voluntarily extended their tours to stay with us from the outgoing units. They help to maintain our manning strength and help ensure we all get home.

The men of Alpha Battery, in the last month, have worked some stressful situations, but have dealt with it in a comical manner, while maintaining their bearing, to carry on with what needs to be done.

Our hearts miss our families and friends back home in the U.S. and can’t wait until we are back together with y’all. Though friends and family back home can never be replaced, Alpha Battery is a close family and, for the time being, we are enjoying our time together.

— 2nd Lt. Tony Gerrell



THE LT — (Above) 2nd Lt. Tony Gerrell soaks up an intelligence briefing. (Below) Convoys are lined up ready for convoy escort teams to roll with them.





B Battery

Relief In Place

2nd Lt. Casey Henry, public affairs officer, B Battery

We have been here for a month now and the days are falling off the walls and are blowing in the sand. We have completed the relief in place (RIP) and are not far from completing the transfer of authority (TOA).

The RIP consisted of three missions that were accompanied by Soldiers from the 100th Infantry Battalion. Once the right seat/left seat ride missions were completed, we were able to take all the information along with the tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) that we learned from the 100th, and mold and tweak them to make this mission our own.

My Soldiers are excited to tell all their stories to their friends. As soon as they see me they pour around me with pictures of spiders and funny things Soldiers do. I laugh and make sure everything is going good with the mission and their families back home.

Morale is high. I also have high expectations of our guys, and they have never let me down. We have trained for this mission for the last seven months and we are ready to put our skills to use.

Our infantry friends are leaving soon with smiles on their faces and sand in their hearts. They shake our hands, wish us luck, we say goodbye then get back to work on our trucks. We have been blown away by the weather, disrupting our missions and movement times. Our counterparts tell us the weather will get better and the temperatures will start to fall.

Regardless of the temp or the amount of sand in our eyes, we carry on with the mission. We prepare our equipment and gear and laugh in the face of the unforgiving desert because we are prepared for anything and look forward to the challenge.



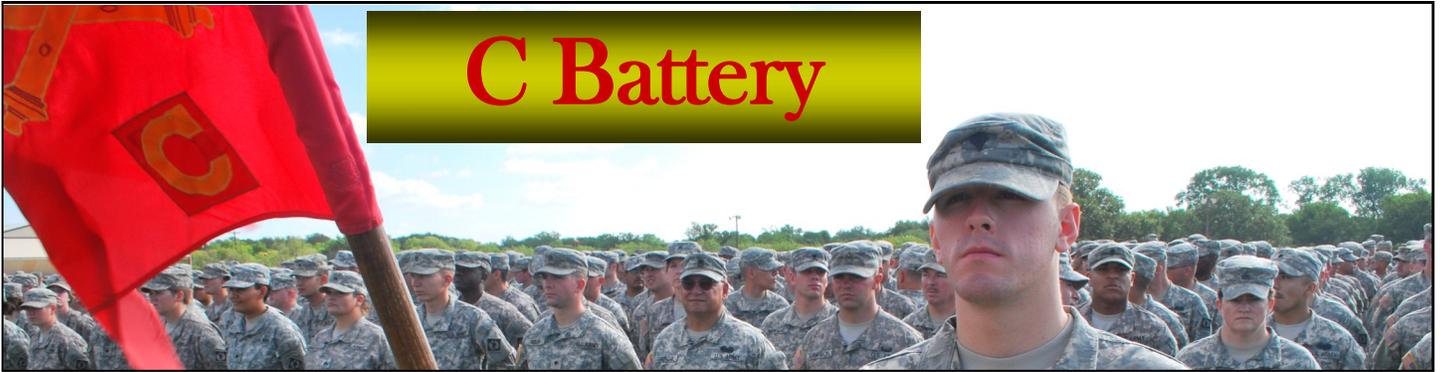
Photos courtesy B Battery

MOUNTED — Sgt. Peter Brown, left, and 2nd Lt. Casey Henry, right, pose on a mine resistant ambush protected vehicle.



WATCH DOG — (Left) Sgt. 1st Class Adam Ross holds a thermometer reading 120 degrees Fahrenheit. (Right) Sgt. Mario Bull takes a look around a military base before he and his team, prepare to move on to Iraqi roadways, on their way to Kuwait, July 31.





Communicating with Charlie

Capt. Glenn Nicholson, C Battery commander

Greetings to the family and friends of Charlie Battery, I hope you all are enjoying the summer months. I know my family has had an eventful summer. However, my boys are not looking forward to the thought of going back to school.

It is my understanding that the mother of nature has been quite cooperative, giving Wyoming an abundance of moisture; reservoirs are full, grass is plentiful and the temperatures are cool. Rest assured it is not cool in Kuwait. Temperatures are 115-125 Fahrenheit.

This time of year is the sandstorm “shamal” season. The mornings are very pleasant, but as the temperature warms, the wind starts to blow and a sandstorm ensues. The sand is so fine it coats all surfaces inside and out. It is a daily, sometimes hourly task to dust horizontal surfaces.

Charlie Battery has had a busy month as we have accepted full responsibility of the mission. Our counterparts from Hawaii, Guam and American Samoa have started their transition back to the civilian world. They had a

very successful tour. We appreciate the effort to share the knowledge gained over their tour.

The battery is divided into nine squads called convoy escort teams, or CET's. Each CET is responsible for escorting several tractor-trailers, “white trucks”, from our location, into the country of Iraq. This has been a very enlightening experience for the Soldiers, considering most of the truck drivers are from foreign countries, and do not speak any English.

This support mission is a vital component to the health and welfare of Soldiers throughout Iraq. Since early August, Charlie Battery has driven over 54,000 miles while escorting over 3,000 white trucks. The Soldiers have done an excellent job managing this mission and have settled into a stable routine.

It is hard to believe we have been in-country over a month. Despite a heavy work schedule, many Soldiers in the battery have found time to use the fitness facilities, the library, watch movies and play games at the “Man Cave” (a facility designed and built by The Learning Channel). Several Soldiers will start college classes at the end of the month.

Other soldiers have been involved in recreational pursuits. 1st Lt. Robert Lejeune, Staff Sgt. John Mickelson, Spc. Joseph Mock, Spc. Tyrell Gullickson and Pvt. Timothy Dehoe competed in a 5K run. They proudly sported their hard earned t-shirts following the race. Platoon sergeant Sgt. 1st Class Scott Dillon competed in a dead lift competition.

He received a \$30 gift certificate for first place. Events such as these, whether sponsored by the camp or derived from Soldiers' creativity, have kept the crew in good spirits. The men and women of Charlie Battery have done their best to settle in here. While they might not be calling the sandy landscape of Kuwait their home, the Citizen Soldiers from Wyoming remain in good spirits, here in the Middle East.



UPARMORED — C Battery commander Capt. Glenn Nicholson notes the little things, like his portable potty is critical to mission success.



MEAL TIME — 2nd Lt. Marcus Neiman, of C Battery, has lunch with U.S. Sen. John Barrasso at the Camp Virginia Dining facility, July 26, 2009.



Notes from Alpha Co.

Capt. James Ezell, A Co. commander

1st Sgt. Michael Strasser, A Co. first sergeant

First and foremost we want to let everyone know that we miss them and the great Wyoming summers that we have each year! The company as a whole is doing very well.

Some of our soldiers are spread out over a few different locations but everyone is still in great spirits and has taken on the mission without missing a beat.

The good news, we received some new Soldiers from Hawaii, Samoa, Guam, and Micronesia that have extended their stay here in Camp Virginia and make up our 4th Platoon! They are all highly motivated soldiers and are fully nested within the Alpha 960th family.

We want to thank everyone for their support and kind words and we'll see you all soon!

— Capt. Ezell



2nd Lt. Christian Venhuizen/2-300th Field Artillery

FIRST WORDS — Newly promoted 1st Sgt. Mike Strasser addresses the Soldiers of A Company, 960th Brigade Support Battalion, July 26, 2009.



2nd Lt. Christian Venhuizen/2-300th Field Artillery

UP TO THE FRONT — Then Master Sgt. Mike Strasser is called to the front of the A Company, 960th Brigade Support Battalion, formation to be officially pinned as the unit's new first sergeant

Hello Everyone,

I am very excited to be accepted to become the new first sergeant of A Company, 960th Brigade Support Battalion. It has been a great couple weeks with A Company thus far.

We wrapped up our training with the unit we are replacing and running our missions on our own now. Like Capt. Ezell said, we gained 62 new soldiers, many from the Hawaii Army National Guard.

While we gained new Soldiers, we were able to promote two of our Wyoming soldiers to the rank of sergeant. I would like to congratulate Sgt. Eric Ridgeway and Sgt. Daniel Provost as the newest noncommissioned officers inducted into the NCO Corps. They are going to be a strong asset for us!

I do look forward to interacting, training and missioning with all of the Soldiers while we are deployed. I am also looking forward to returning to the 960th BSB when I return back to Wyoming.

Thank you for all your support!

— 1st Sgt. Strasser



Let'r Buck!

Capt. Troy Wacaser, Headquarters Battery commander

Soldiers in HHB have been very busy the last month. We have arrived in Kuwait and assumed our duties of running, tracking and supporting missions run by the battalion.

We have also added to our numbers, here in Kuwait. We have taken in soldiers from the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry Battalion; 1st Battalion, 487th Field Artillery; 1st Battalion, 299th Cavalry; and the 29th Brigade Support Battalion. These Soldiers chose to stay in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, to serve with the 115th Fires Brigade and were assigned to 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery for the time we are deployed.

For some of these Soldiers, it is their third tour in a row, here. We have welcomed these Soldiers and are grateful for there service and sacrifices.

Our Soldiers have also been participating in Morale Welfare and Recreation events, here on Camp Virginia. We have had Soldiers in soft-



A PRAYER BEFORE WORK — Capt. Troy Wacaser, commander of Headquarters Battery, bows his head as a chaplain provides an invocation for the ceremony marking the 2-300th's official take over of all assigned missions in Kuwait and Iraq.

ball, volleyball, dodge ball, ping pong, Cribbage, and bingo. MWR and the USO have video game consoles so the Soldiers can play with the other military personnel here on camp.

Our Soldiers are being well taken care of and are in good sprits. I am honored to lead such a high quality group of Soldiers.

I thank you all for your support as we accomplish the mission our nation has asked us to do.



A LITTLE LOVE BEFORE WE GO — Spc. Jason Pepin gives Spc. Zachary Jerry a little brotherly love before the pair rejoin their squad to head out on a convoy escort mission in Kuwait. Headquarters Battery Soldiers perform a variety of services, including maintenance, medical, operations and escort for the battalion.