

# Postcard from Iraq

LTC Chris Felchlin



*Hello from beautiful downtown COB Speicher in Tikrit, Iraq...*

To all of you at home, I've been here since April; as the deputy commander in the US Army Corps of Engineers' Gulf Region North District. It's not home...but it's not bad. Our mission at GRN is project and construction management in Iraq's seven northern provinces, or states. Iraq's infrastructure suffers from more than 35 years of neglect and conflict. The spirit behind the Iraq Reconstruction Program is that the people's basic and essential needs must be met before they can focus on a new democracy and government.

Our district has constructed or reconstructed schools and primary health care clinics; courthouses and police stations; water and sewage treatment plants; Iraqi Army training bases; and has enhanced electrical services to villages and cities alike.

Since 2004 and to date, the district's service members, civilians, and contractors have completed more than 1,500 reconstruction projects in the seven provinces, totaling over \$2.4 billion.

Another important part of our mission is capacity development for the Iraqi people—assisting the new provincial (state) governments as they assume responsibility for managing their infrastructure development and the capability to sustain it.

There is good news in Iraq which the American public is not receiving from our national media, but please know that your positive thoughts and support to our efforts here are very much appreciated.

Take care!

*Chris*