

# Postcards from Iraq

## Iraqi Americans Return to Serve Their Native Country

I will always have cherished memories of the many new friends I have made here in Iraq. Among them are the Iraqi Americans who work long, tortuous hours as interpreters for the Coalition Forces and the various reconstruction organizations.

These people left Iraq a few years ago to find better lives for themselves and their families in the USA and Canada. Now they've returned in hopes of making a contribution to the reconstruction of their native country. They've found a better quality of life for themselves, and now they want to help make a better life for the people of Iraq.



There can never be enough said about the sacrifice and dedication of our military men and women who face the task of liberating and rebuilding Iraq.

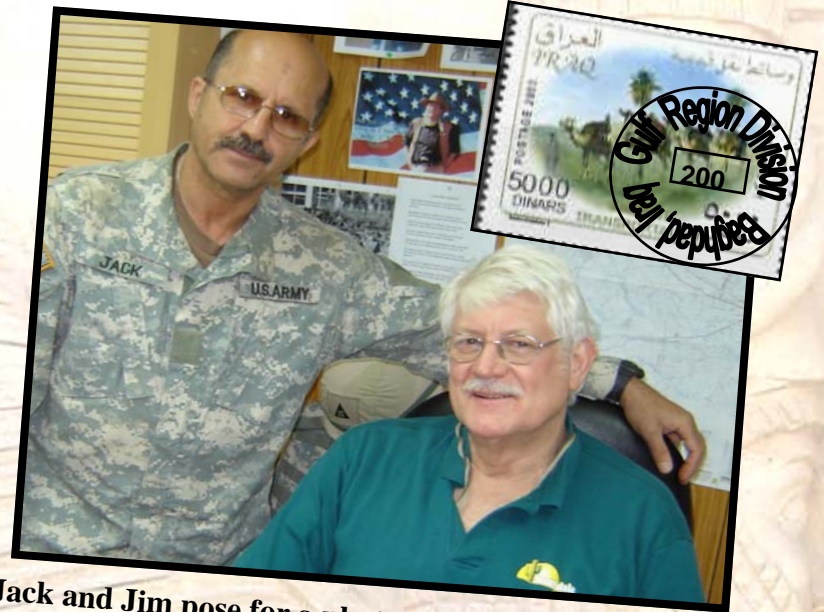
But most people back home don't realize that a very essential part of the military mission here is the grueling task of blending languages and cultures. The ability to speak both English and Arabic and to understand the diversity of these two cultures is rare, and this is where the Iraqi Americans make their indispensable contribution.

These Iraqi Americans make a big sacrifice when they leave their families to come back here. They are very dedicated to meeting the task. They work long, hard hours and risk their lives going into dangerous places with U.S. and Iraqi Troops.

Eventually, they will all return to their families in various places like Michigan, Illinois, Florida and Canada. One man even calls Salt Lake City his home. An Iraqi



Jim, Mansour, and Sam hang out together at Camp Blue Diamond, Iraq.



Jack and Jim pose for a photo during their tours at Camp Blue Diamond, Iraq.

American woman, who grew up in Babylon, recently returned to her family in California after serving three years here in Iraq. I am particularly impressed with the closeness of their associations with one another, even though they come from diverse religious backgrounds, Sunnis, Shiites, Kurds and Christians. They now use Western names that are similar to their Iraqi names, "Jack", "Sam", "Faye."

A regretful part of leaving here is knowing that I will probably never see most of these friends again. But, thank goodness for email and digital cameras.



*Mr. Jim Jackson*

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