

Postcard from Iraq



What I did on my "summer vacation"

Hello from Tikrit, Iraq. My name is MAJ Bob Schwartz. I'm also known as "Bayji Bob" due to my work managing many projects rebuilding the Bayji Oil Refinery—the largest refinery in Iraq and the greatest source of income for the new Government of Iraq.

I deployed here in March 2007 with the 416th Engineer Command, and for the past year, I've been assigned to the Gulf Region North District in Northern Iraq.

First, let me say this has been no vacation; i.e., an average of 14-hour "Ground Hog" days, seven days a week, facing the amenities shown to us by the natives is no picnic. We have persevered and constructed hundreds of infrastructure projects to improve the quality of life for millions of Iraqis who had little or no basic services before these projects were built.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has constructed new schools, hospitals, health clinics, clean water supplies, power generation and distribution plants, oil refineries, police stations, courthouses, and army bases for the people of Iraq. It's been a good run and I'd like to thank all of my co-workers—military, civilian and security forces—for their bravery despite the challenges. I'd also like to thank all Americans who support us in your deeds, thoughts and prayers. We have offered this nation an opportunity like they've never seen in their history. Peace out!

MAJ "Bayji Bob" Schwartz

