

# Postcards from Iraq

"Could not have picked a better assignment"

*By MSG Curtis R. Freeman  
Baghdad Area Office NCOIC  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*



I saw the Great Pyramids in Cairo with my first military overseas deployment in 1981 and have returned to the Middle East 25 years later and seen the Ziggurat by Iraq. Having processed over 1200 Soldiers from my Home Station for deployment in support of the Global War on Terrorism since 11 September 2001, it wasn't a question of if I would be deployed; rather when.

I could not have picked a better assignment if I tried, even though more is done here in a week than is attempted in a month in the States. Our mixture of outstanding individuals from the Army, National Guard, Army Reserve, Navy, Naval Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Civilians from within USACE, Civilians from other government agencies, Civilian contracted personnel, as well as Personal Security Details are all working together as Teams of Teams assisting with the reconstruction of Iraq. As for living conditions, my running joke is "I'm not sure who has it worse, USACE or the Air Force".

In addition to completing daily reports and maintaining construction database integrity, being the Baghdad Area Office NCOIC included the duties of providing for the transportation, life support, and welfare of 27 US civilian and military personnel stationed at 6 different locations throughout Baghdad Province. With the assistance of 78 Iraqi Associates, our Resident Offices completed 288 projects valued at \$330 million and started another 226 projects valued at \$285 million over the last 12 months.

When you consider that there is no Home Depot just down the street (in fact most of the construction material and equipment is imported), it is amazing that we have provided so many schools, fire stations, health clinics, roads, sewer systems, water systems, and electricity lines to the very appreciative people of Iraq. Please visit [www.grd.usace.army.mil](http://www.grd.usace.army.mil) for more detailed information.

This has been a long year successfully completed only by the support of my Family, old friends, and new friends. For my wife and daughters who have paid for my absence, I love you and will be home soon. For those who kept me in their prayers, my eternal thanks. For those who continue this important mission, trust but verify and remember 1LT Tyson. Essays.

**MSG Curtis R. Freeman  
Engineer Brigade 40th ID  
California Army National Guard  
HQ 578th Engineer Battalion**



MSG Curtis R. Freeman



**Remembering  
1LT Andre D. Tyson, Riverside, CA  
KIA June 2004 in Iraq**



Egypt's Great Pyramids



Iraq's Ziggurat