

Postcards from Iraq

The Third Time is the Charm!

by Paul S. Whitmer

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They say the “third time’s a charm” – and in this case they were right.

For my third tour in Iraq I was fortunate to be selected to fill a Construction Representative/Quality Assurance position for the Gulf Region North, at the resident office in Sulaymaniyah (SRO).

Having served two previous tours in southern Iraq, once in 2003 with Task Force-Restore Iraqi Electricity in Basrah and again in 2004 with Gulf Region South in Nasiriyah – I was looking forward to a change of scenery. I was not disappointed.

The mountains here along the border with Iran are simply breath taking. In addition to this, the Kurdish people in this region are very friendly.

While I am escorted by a very competent and professional security detail, I still feel so much more at ease with my surroundings. Additionally I feel that my efforts to aid in the construction of several Primary Health Clinics, electrical substations, schools, border forts, and water projects are appreciated.

These people have been through a lot – more than we can ever imagine. To come here and help with this mission is an honor and a privilege. I will return to my job in the states in a few months knowing that we did some good here. That’s all the reward I will ever need.

While I will once again miss the chance to spend Christmas with my family, the third time in the past four years, I know that my family and friends support what I am doing. Without this support I do not think I would be able to focus on the mission and achieve the results my Area Engineer expects of me. It’s a team effort – and the team is not just in Iraq.

I’m proud of my service here, and honored to serve along side others dedicated to such a noble and worthy cause.

Merry Christmas!

Paul



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