

Postcards from Iraq

Iraq experience — once-in-a-lifetime opportunity

By Sergeant First Class Chris Golden

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division South District

I'm currently deployed with the US Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division South (GRS) District at Tallil Air Base, Iraq. My duties include GRS's Adder Area Office NCOIC and Operations Sergeant as well as a Construction Quality Assurance Representative.

Looking back at the last 12 months, our Office has turned over to the Government of Iraq 40 construction projects valued at over \$400 Million. These critical infrastructure projects provide essential services such as water treatment facilities, schools, electricity, health clinics, hospitals, roads and bridges to the people of Iraq. I'm proud to have been a part of a team of Military, Civilian, and Iraqi Engineering professionals during this historic mission, creating a brighter future and making a difference in the lives of Iraqi people.

I've witnessed first hand the ultimate sacrifice that comes with these assignments. I've personally experienced rocket, mortar, and improvised explosive device attacks. In the past year, I made over 200 Quality Assurance Construction site visits outside the wire. On two separate occasions my convoy was attacked with IED's resulting in casualties. During these site visits you sometimes wonder why you volunteered to come to such a dangerous place. Then you see the smiles on the children's faces that you're helping, and it makes it all worthwhile. I'm going to miss the GRS Family here in Tallil, but I will never forget them. Thanks for your service and your friendships. This deployment has been a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that has helped me grow both personally and professionally. I could not have done it without the support of my wife Dawn, my family, and friends back home in Massachusetts. Thanks for everything.

I'm heading back to finish my Army Career at Ft. Bragg, NC (Airborne) where it all started for me back in 1992.

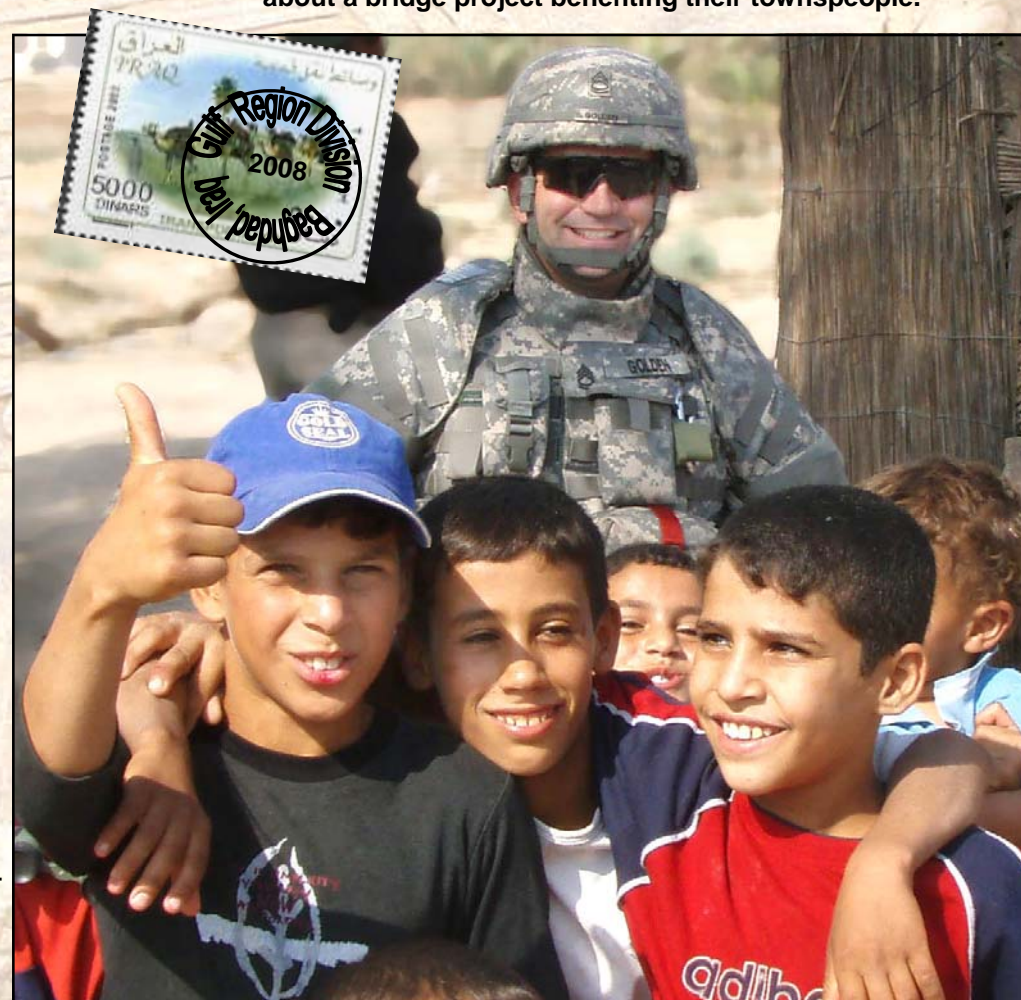


SFC Chris Golden earns the Bronze Star

NCO's Lead the Way! ESSAYONS!



SFC Chris Golden and CDR Michael Lang speak with local Iraqi officials about a bridge project benefiting their townspeople.



SFC Chris Golden visits the village of Al Haboosh in southern Iraq to discuss the location of a new water treatment facility benefitting 5,000 residents. "There's nothing like the smiles on children's faces we're helping to motivate you."