

Postcard from Iraq



Hello friends and loved ones,

I'm LTC Bob Ruud from North Dakota and I've spent the past year in Iraq with 45 other North Dakota Army National Guardsmen from the 34th Engineer Brigade in Bismarck. I'm assigned to the US Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division, with duty in Kirkuk, Iraq. Our Corps of Engineers Area Office here manages over 40 construction projects designed to rebuild the Iraqi infrastructure.

Our slogan is "Making a Difference" and I will say we certainly are making a difference in the lives of the Iraqi people. Since I arrived here the quality of life in the Kirkuk Province has improved markedly.

Our hope is that once the Iraqi people know their new government can and will provide essential services, they will develop a sense of self-sufficiency, which they've never had. We've helped provide more clean water for the Iraqi people; electricity, schools and clinics, to mention a few of our projects. The average living conditions for people in Kirkuk is still low by American standards, but things are getting better and people are optimistic about the future of Iraq. I'm proud of the work the US Army Corps of Engineers is doing, and knowing I contributed in some small way makes the time I spent in Iraq worthwhile.

As I prepare to hand off my mission to the next group of Soldiers and redeploy back to the States, I look forward to returning to my family and my civilian job at the Case IH Tractor Factory in Fargo...and I have a new appreciation for all the freedoms and services we have in America. See you soon!

LTC Bob Ruud