

Postcards from Iraq

Getting to tell the whole story ...

By Troy Rolan
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The folks here are great. I've only been here for a short while and already I've experienced several unit cook-outs, movie nights and lots of Iraqi food. It's going to be hard going home and telling my friends and family that this deployment was hard and keeping a straight face. Even worse I can't imagine taking advantage of the many deployment perks available stateside for those serving here (i.e. discounts at theme parks, hotels, restaurants). Our mission is a reward in itself.

Regarding job satisfaction, I can only say my stuff is out there! I've had my footage and stories shown on CNN, NBC, the Discovery Channel and even arranged interviews for USACE personnel to be seen and heard on national and local networks and publications. I've even had the pleasure of surprising a USACE mother with the Christmas gift of her son arriving here from Kuwait for a live interview.

I've learned many things since I've been here and I've seen the stories being told on networks in the US and I have to say most of their stories are one-sided. The great thing is I get to tell the whole story. I get to live and be a part of this life-changing event for the people of Iraq.

I know we're doing the right thing and making a difference. How? I've seen the children of Iraq, watched them play, talked to them, even held babies. I've shot video of their beautiful faces and seen the joy a simple pencil can provide to them, let alone a new school. I think that is what this whole thing is about, helping the children here. It's wonderful to see girls, who previously were not allowed to attend school, chanting "With education and work we will build our country!"

You don't know what you're missing until you've seen it for yourself. Come on out and join me. You can help too. Who knows, I may get to do a story on you...

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Broadcast Journalist Troy Rolan visits a project site in Baghdad