

# Postcards from Iraq

## Oney, on Ogden

by Oney Pruett  
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I first saw Lt. Col. Jeffery Ogden's name when I arrived at the Gulf Region Division and assumed the duties of mail handler. I had a lone box addressed to me, surrounded by numerous boxes bearing his name.

I finally met him weeks later when he returned from a mission here in Iraq for the Directorate of Restore Iraqi Electricity, or RIE, for which he is the director. This is an important--\$1.5B—program here in Iraq. As he approached the mail room one morning, he walked like a man with a purpose. He confronted me with an out-stretched hand and broke into an infectious smile.

"Hello, my name is Lt. Col. Ogden and I hear I have some mail."

"Yes sir, you do have quite bit of mail here this morning," I said, and we began to talk. I asked him about the boxes and he told me about many very poor children smiling or waving as he drove through the war-torn countryside of Iraq during his 10 months of service here.

"Completing these essential power projects and providing something the Iraqi people have never had or had very little of during the prior regime..." Ogden said.

It was obvious by the strength of his words that his heart has gone out to the people of Iraq.

He told me he was talking to his wife one day and they decided to try to do something about it. They would ask her school, Forestdale Elementary in Sandwich, Mass., (near Cape Cod) to help do something about the plight of the Iraqi school children. I expressed my interest in this cause, too, and told him about the International Zone School. He readily agreed to help.

Ogden said, "The seeds of democracy were planted during the historic free elections in January 2005, and you can see the future in the eyes of the children – a free and democratic Iraq."

Lt. Col. Jeffery Ogden is indeed a man of purpose, and that purpose is to help rebuild the country and the soul of Iraq.



Lt. Col. Jeff Ogden, right, hands out school supplies to children in the Green Zone school.  
(Photo provided by Oney Pruett)