

Hey its ISG Gadzinski again from Kirkuk, Iraq. The last few months have been interesting to say the least. We made it through Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years and are now starting a new decade. The weather here is fabulous, in fact I am thinking about getting some property here and building my winter home so all you snow birds heading to Florida every winter can come on over and see our place, only 6000 plus miles further to travel: the beer is in the low to mid 70's which is warmer than usual, especially when we had snow here in 2008 at this time.

The bad guys, well the bad guys, what bad guys? We have only had one mortar round shot at us in the last few months, it is just like being in the states on any other army post, but different. Heck I even get to watch American Idol here! Now that I have told you how easy it has been as far as the war is concerned, I get to tell you what happens to troops when it is too easy, which makes my job hard. Well this is what I have been doing for one soldier who thought the rules did not apply to them. This individual has had me doing paperwork for the last two months with an Article 15, which turned into a Chapter (getting kicked out of the Army) then into internal Army complaints and eventually a Congressman was involved.

Last weekend I flew for seven hours over two days and ate four consecutive meals in four different bases, from Mosul, all the way down to Baghdad (where I did experience a rocket attack while there) just to get signatures from two Full Bird Colonels so I could send this soldier home. Well I have almost 21 years in the Army and the soldier has two, who do you think won this round? With that said and done; the flying was awesome all in the back of a CH-47 which is that big boy with two rotors you see flying over Peck from time to time. I was able to sit next to the ramp on one of the flights. The ramps are left open and one of the crew sits on it at 500 plus feet at 200 plus MPH with his feet dangling in the wind, what a rush. Oh yeah, I have video!

This one goes out to all the Vietnam Vets out there, remember the Huey's? The wonderful THUD THUD THUD you could hear from miles away? Well, come to Iraq and get some nostalgia. The new Iraqi Army has a brand new state of the art helicopter that looks and sounds just like a Huey. Ok, It is a Huey, who am I kidding? They now have one of the best helicopters ever built as their main transport bird. I have been watching them fly over almost every day this week on training flights. I have not seen any M-48 or M-60 tanks yet but I am sure that will be next for their new armor force.

Well, I better get going for now. The next leg of my tour will include a visit deep into Kurdish country to the city of Irbil where we have a team stationed and probably another visit to Tikrit (Saddams home town). The elections will be coming up soon around the 1st of March. Being Civil Affairs, we will be heavily involved in that process. Predictions are things may get a little rough during that time so keep watching the news. Thanks to the Auxiliary for the Christmas care package the socks came in real handy. I should be able to get out another letter before we leave. We will be extremely busy the months of April and May inventorying and returning gear home collected from the last seven years due to the draw down. Yes! It is happening, we are coming home for good. Anyone up for Afghanistan? What do ya say Kim? Can I? See everyone later and give my Kimmi a hug forme.

Mike.