



# News Release

**US Army Corps  
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## **Iowa man returns home after serving in Iraq with Army Corps of Engineers**

**By Eric Cramer**

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It's been said war is just as tough on the home front as it is in the combat zone. That's as true for deployed civilians in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as it is for their military counterparts, even though actual warfare in Iraq has been declared over for months.

For the Morrows, who live near Centerville, Iowa, both civilian and military experience in Iraq is a family affair.

Darrel "Butch" Morrow left his home near Centerville, Iowa, and his job as a maintenance mechanic at the Rathbun Lake project to serve 120 days in Iraq. That left his wife, Becky, to serve 120 days alone in Iowa. She wasn't surprised.

"We had talked about him volunteering ever since Sept. 11," Becky said. "I knew it would happen one day. He was raised in a military family."

Butch isn't the only member of the family to serve in Iraq. Butch and Becky's son Caleb, 23, is also there as part of his service with the 2133<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Co., Iowa National Guard.

"I volunteered for duty in Iraq to support the troops and have a little adventure at the same time," Butch said.

He said he did more supervisory work, which was sometimes difficult.

"My job was trying, due to language barriers and security issues, and a people who have had little for many years. It was somewhat 'stone age' engineering many times, but I fell that I accomplished my mission for the Corp," Butch said.

His wife said his messages from Iraq frequently dealt with on-the-job difficulties.

“Part of his job was to get workers through the security gates. A suicide bomber killed people he knew, but not people on his crew, at one of the gates,” Becky said.

“I feel very safe as long as I am on base but have to be cautious while traveling through out in the country. Being an American civilian in Iraq is much like being in the military. You have some 99 percent of the people who are glad that we have liberated them, but 1 percent that would like to kill you. I have witnessed anti- American activity quite often. It is usually in the form of small arms fire, mortars and improvised explosive devices,” Butch said before returning home in February.

While working in Iraq, Butch and Caleb met each other at Al Assad, about 130 miles west of Baghdad, at a former Iraqi air force base.

“Butch has kind of a dark complexion, and Caleb told him it helped him ‘blend in.’ Butch said Caleb told him, ‘Dad, keep that look,’” Becky said.

She said e-mail was very important.

“It was the ideal way to keep in touch with Butch. We could keep in touch every day. Caleb writes a letter once a week, but he doesn’t have good access to e-mail.

Becky and Butch were not together for Christmas because of his deployment. She sent care packages. In Iraq, Christmas was “just another day” according to Butch.

“Other than a special meal at 1500 (3 p.m.) with a two-hour long line it was business as usual. We work seven days a week, as do most of the Iraqi contractors. We all enjoyed the care packages and gifts sent to us from our loved ones and friends and coworkers in the states,” he said.

Packing a “care package” takes a little planning. “It seems like the smaller the package, the faster it goes through,” Becky said. “Send an international phone card, and make sure it has a lot of minutes. Some of the phone cards here don’t have as many minutes once they’re in Iraq, so make certain it’s an international card.”

Care packages can only do so much.

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**Editor’s Note:** *Photographs are available to run with this story by contacting Public Affairs Director Mitch Frazier at (816) 983-3486.*