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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

North Dakota brother, sister helping Iraq move forward

By Norris Jones
Gulf Region Central

Baghdad, Iraq –They’re overseeing some of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers key projects rebuilding Iraq.

Lt. Col. J.P. Moszer and his sister, Lt. Col. Jan Carter, deployed with the North Dakota National Guard Engineer Brigade, 34th Infantry Division, in April.

Moszer is the Officer in Charge of the Baghdad Area Office responsible for 150 projects valued at \$600 million. He’s working with seven Brigade Combat Teams and 53 Battalions improving essential services to residents throughout the Capitol. “We’re building water, sewer and electrical networks, courthouses, schools, clinics, renovating hospitals, and repaving roads.”

As USACE’s Security and Justice Program Manager and Military Construction Program Manager in southern Iraq, Carter is responsible for 60 projects valued at \$500 million including courthouses, detention facilities, and Iraqi Army camps. Working out of Tallil Air Force Base near Nasirya, she says part of her efforts is helping establish the Rule of Law, providing facilities where those arrested can be held and their case adjudicated in a timely and fair hearing. “We’re making a difference in helping the Iraqi people regain control of their country,” she added.

Moszer is proud of his older sister. He points out she enlisted in the National Guard in 1975 and received her commission six years later. This is her second de-



A brother and sister, North Dakota National Guard officers Lt. Col. J.P. Moszer and Lt. Col. Jan Carter, are deployed with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers overseeing the construction of a number of essential service projects in Iraq. [U.S. Army photo]

ployment to a war zone. Activated for Operation Desert Shield/Storm in 1991 as an operations officer, she earned a Bronze Star as well as a field grade promotion. She later became North Dakota’s first female Battalion Commander. “She’s a true patriot. She does great work and I’ve always looked up to her.” (In her civilian career, Carter works for the U.S. Postal Service in Glendive, MT, where she has

resided for over two decades.)

Moszer says it was his sister and her late husband, Col. (Ret.) James Carter, who mentored him in his formative years. "They would come to Bismarck once or twice a month and stay at our house during drill weekends. It was Jim who talked me into enlisting in the National Guard in 1980 and it was my older brother, Lt. Col. Rick Moszer, who officiated at my oath of enlistment."

So being in the National Guard definitely seems to be a Moszer family affair and Jan's children are following in that tradition. Her daughter, Barbara, is a 1st Lieutenant and her son, James Robert Carter, a Specialist 4. "They're both very supportive of our deployment to Iraq," Carter noted. "They know our mission and what wearing the uniform is all about."

Carter says, "J.P. had a huge influence on my children and their decision to volunteer. It all goes back to the family thing. J.P. is a little intense at times but he likes to be around people and is very knowledgeable about his job. I am so proud of him."

Moszer does know construction. He worked as a brick mason, with concrete and structural steel for over a decade. He then made a career change and for the past three years has worked for the North Dakota Association of Counties in their Homeland Security Training and Exercise Program. He's responsible for training emergency responders in western North Dakota including law enforcement, ambulance squads, and fire fighters.

He's a lifelong resident of Bismarck and this is his second deployment to a war zone. Four years ago, he was the Senior Engineer Officer in Bosnia. As the Brigade Engineer, he was responsible for minefield extraction operations, route clearance, and demolition work as well as ongoing reconstruction efforts including water and sewer lines, bridging, road building, schools, and clinics.

"The difference between Bosnia and here is that our work in Baghdad is on such a massive scale. Iraq's infrastructure

obviously had little or no investment for decades. We're doing projects in all parts of Baghdad and residents are seeing that their government is working and things are getting better."

Moszer was hesitant to single out any one project as a favorite because "they're all great." But he did mention three as examples of the positive impact they're having on the community.

He noted that the \$2.9 million renovation of the Alwaiya Children's Hospital in east Baghdad is nearly finished. That hospital sees an average of 350 patients daily with 30 to 35 admitted to their 217-bed facility. "It touches your heart every time you visit there. Doctors and nurses are now using equipment that was simply unavailable before we started." The project includes a new water purification system, new mechanical system (both air conditioning and heating), medical waste incinerator, oxygen plant and central vacuum system, nurse call system, intercom paging system, data communications network, new restrooms, new exhaust system to remove unhealthy air and odors, a new generator for emergency power, new lighting, and structural repair. "It serves some of the poorest families in east Baghdad and they're now able to get health care at the same high standard as private hospitals."

Another one he mentioned is the installation of a whole new water network in Sadr City benefiting over two million residents there. "In addition we've nearly completed a new water treatment plant that will serve that area, capable of producing over 25 million gallons daily. Good, clean drinking water is a necessity for everyone."

The final project he listed was the two-year \$1 million renovation of the Student Center at Mustansiriyah, one of the oldest universities in the Islamic world. "That student center was burned and looted in 2003 and was unusable until we finished the project last month. It is a key structure on that campus especially during graduation festivities where families and

students can once again gather to celebrate that special day." The project included new air conditioning units and ductwork, new skylights, roof repair, new marble interior walls and floors, new plumbing and electrical, new doors and windows, plastering and painting, and rebuilding the cafeteria kitchen and dining area. In addition, the university's soccer field was reseeded and irrigation system installed. "Education is a priority for every Iraqi family. This project along with the new elementary and high schools we're building in Baghdad are providing a brighter future for the children here."

Moszer pointed out he has a total of only 23 U.S. military and civilian personnel managing the work, most of whom are located at his Resident Offices in the International Zone and at Loyalty Forward Operating Base (south of Sadr City). The IZ office is responsible for projects west of

the Tigris River, the Loyalty Office projects in eastern Baghdad.

He credits the Iraqis on his staff as the single reason USACE is able to oversee such a robust reconstruction program. "We have over 70 Iraqi associate engineers and quality assurance representatives who work out of our offices. They visit our projects on a daily basis, verify construction quality and progress, check on adherence to safety regulations, and provide project engineering. There's no way we could do this without them. They not only report problems, but propose solutions. They're the ones who will help Iraq continue to take steps forward long after we're gone. They courageously report to work every day, because they want to provide a brighter future for their children and grandchildren."

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