

Last Nevada Guardsman returns from Iraq

By Lenita Powers, Reno Gazette-Journal

When Lt. Col. Troy Ross returned to Reno last month, he became the last member of the Nevada National Guard to return from Iraq after President Barack Obama declared an end to the war on Oct. 21 and announced the withdrawal of all American military personnel by the end of this year.

Speaking for himself and not on behalf of the Nevada National Guard, Ross talked about his experiences during his two tours in Iraq, what he thinks about pulling out troops from Iraq and how he hopes Americans will celebrate Veterans Day this coming Friday during a question-and-answer interview in his Nevada Army National Guard office.

Question: What did you do while you were in Basrah, Iraq, and when did you return to Reno?

Answer: I got back Oct. 26. In Iraq, I was basically a primary care doctor. I worked in the emergency department, the medical clinic, taking care of soldiers, and in that capacity I took whatever came in the door – traumas or minor illnesses, sports injuries. We were the one medical operation in southern Iraq.

Q: What is your most poignant memory from the 15 months you served in Baghdad and your last three-month tour in Basra?

A: I guess I would have to say that both times I was really impressed with the enthusiasm and dedication of the young soldiers that I worked with – the infantry guys out doing patrols every day and the medics taking care of people. It was very encouraging to see, especially with some of them on their second, third or fourth deployments still being very committed to their jobs. They maintained their enthusiasm through all of

it, being in very difficult living conditions – the heat and dirt. The temperature would get up to 120 and 125 degrees in the summertime, and just the time spent away from their regular lives. And when you're out on a patrol operating in those temperatures with all your gear on, it really wears on a person physically, and not having regular access to showers.

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