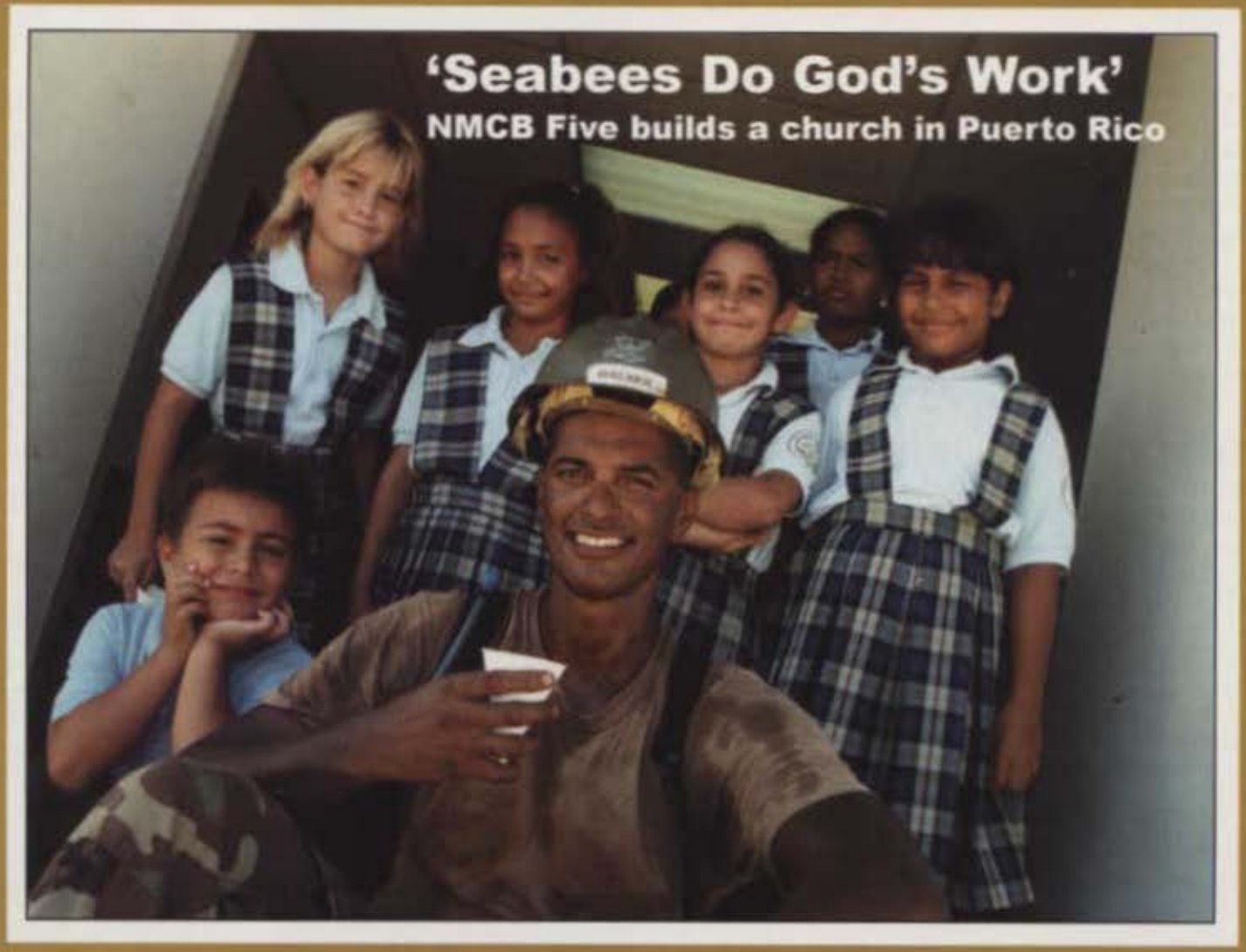
Total Force Spring 2001

Beeline

U. S. Navy Seabee Magazine



'Seabees Do God's Work'

NMCB Five builds a church in Puerto Rico

Operation Chupacabra

NMCB One 1, Mother Nature 0

Rapid RUNWAY Repair!

Seabee Dad

What's Buzzing?

EO1 Cape is 2000 Marvin Shields Award Recipient

The Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) selected Equipment Operator 1st Class (SCW) Terry R. Cape as the recipient for the 2000 Marvin Shields Award. He distinguished himself while assigned to NMCB 74 from January to December 2000.

Cape was the Assistant Officer in Charge and Lead Blaster for the Deployment for Training (DFT) Alaska, which was assigned to the Walton Point Road Project as part of Joint Task Force Alaska Road. The project involves constructing a 14 mile, two lane road connecting the village of Matanlakala to the northern end of Annette Island, Alaska. He led 18 Seabees in one of the largest drilling and blasting operations undertaken by the U.S. military since World War II. For seven months his detail conducted drilling and placing of 172,000 pounds of explosives in more than 75 blasts which produced 240,000 cubic yards of rock, a 141 percent increase over the previous DFT, without mishap or misfire.

He also took charge of the equipment program for the entire Joint Task Force, making improvements that reduced maintenance and equipment downtime by 50 percent.

Under his direction 73 percent of the Seabees assigned to DFT Alaska became Seabee Combat Warfare qualified, and 75 percent that were eligible to take the Navy wide advancement exam were advanced.

The annual Marvin Shields Award recognizes a Seabee who has made exceptional contributions to military construction, facilities maintenance, training and readiness. ⚓

EO1 Terry R. Cape
2000 Marvin Shields
Award Recipient

NMCB 40's Wynia Honored With Stetham Award

When Utilitiesman 1st Class Courtney Wynia was contacted by Fighting Forty's commanding officer from Spain, he naturally thought something was wrong. Wynia, one of NMCB 40's Fleet Support Personnel, was in the field at Fort Hunter Liggett near Monterey, Calif., supporting NMCB Five's homeport field exercise. Wynia was surprised, however, to find that the purpose of the call was to congratulate Wynia on his selection as the 2001 winner of the prestigious Robert D. Stetham award for his service during contingency operations in strife ridden East Timor during NMCB 40's previous deployment to the Pacific theater.

Each year the Civil Engineer Corps/Seabee Historical Foundation honors one outstanding Seabee in the Naval Construction Force with the SW2 (DV) Robert D. Stetham award. The award is named for Stetham who was tortured and shot to death in June 1985, while returning from an Underwater Construction Team project in Greece when terrorists hijacked TWA Flight 847. Stetham was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star and advanced to Steelworker Second Class. The Stetham Award is presented annually to the Seabee who best exemplifies outstanding individual moral courage in the course of actual contingency operations, so that SW2 Stetham's service, courage, and sacrifice will never be forgotten. ⚓

During an NMCB 40 deployment to the Pacific theater, UT1 Courtney Wynia was congratulated by Admiral Dennis Blair, commander in chief, U.S. Pacific Command, for work done in East Timor.

Check out http://www.staynavy.navy.mil

This new web site features high-tech, timely and accurate career information for Sailors and their families. Information on the site includes online access to the Enlisted Summary Record (ESR), a pay and compensation calculator, a REDUX vs. High-3 retirement comparison, and rating and assignment research aids. The site was developed by the Center for Career Development (CCD) at Navy Personnel Command in Millington, Tenn.

Thrift Savings Plan Coming

Service members can sign up for the Uniformed Service Personnel Thrift Savings Plan (USP-TSP) beginning Oct. 9, 2001. The TSP is a retirement and investment plan. The open season for signing up will run from Oct. 9, 2001, through Dec. 8, 2001. Deductions start Jan.1, 2002. In 2002, service members can contribute up to seven percent of their basic pay. The program also applies to reservists.

Find out more at http://www.tsp.gov.

DoD Launches DeploymentLink

Http://deploymentlink.osd.mil is a resource tool for active duty service members, family members, National Guard members and reservists, veterans and the general public looking for information on deployment-related matters. It provides valuable deployment preparation, medical readiness, and deployment and family services information. The site is maintained by the Office of the Special Assistant for Gulf War Illnesses, Medical Readiness and Military Deployments located in Falls Church, Va.

Beeline
Total Force
U.S. Navy Seabees

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On The Cover

CE3 Maxie Walker takes a break from the Maranatha Baptist Church and Academy project with some new friends, students who attend class at the academy in Puerto Rico.
Photo by JO1 (SCW/SS) James G. Pinsky

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Beeline is intended for regular and reserve personnel of the Seabees and U.S. Navy.

2000 CHINFO MERIT AWARD WINNER

Tactical Trucks to Replace Commercial Vehicles in NCF

Seabees of the Naval Construction Force (NCF) will soon operate tactical trucks versus the commercial trucks they now use thanks to the foresight of logistic planners and a partnership with the U.S. Marines.

MTVRs (Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacements) will replace the commercial vehicles and 800/900 series tactical vehicles that are currently in the NCF inventory.

During Desert Shield/Storm, Restore Hope and Provide Comfort, NCF units experienced an unacceptably high rate of commercial truck failures. The failures were further compounded by repair parts incompatibility with other in-country units of the Army and Marine Corps.

Commercial trucks are not suitable for forward combat deployments. Tactical trucks operate much more effectively in tactical environments and are compatible with other services. As a result, the NCF has decided to replace the current fleet of commercial vehicles with tactical vehicles.

A major factor supporting the decision is interoperability and the reduction in repair parts inventory. With the vast number of commercial vehicles Seabee units currently have in use, it is very difficult and inefficient to maintain in-stock repair parts.

How is this change going to be accomplished? Procuring equipment to ensure the Seabees in the field maintain interoperability with the Marines is the role of the Naval Construction Battalion Center (NCBC), Port Hueneme, Calif. NCBC, whose mission was realigned in October 2000, is designated as the full service provider for logistic support for the NCF. The Seabee Logistics Center, which formerly provided this support, was disestablished.

The NCBC's job is to procure equipment to ensure Seabees in the field can maintain interoperability with the Marines. There was no way for the Seabees to make the transition to tactical vehicles in the next few years using conventional methods. Oshkosh is producing the MTVR under a contract initiated by the Marine Corps. If NCBC were to order new vehicles from Oshkosh, it would take several years to fulfill their responsibilities with the Marines before they could consider an order for the NCF. Mike Knight, Civil Engineer Support Equipment (CESE) Division Department Head, and his staff of CESE managers have partnered with the Marine Corps to purchase MTVRs under the existing contract. "The first MTVRs are planned to arrive in October 2001," said Knight. Within the next five years, the NCF expects to receive approximately 500 MTVRs. The partnering between the Navy and Marine Corps is moving the NCF to interoperability sooner, benefiting both organizations.

The Naval Construction Battalion Center's website is http://www.ncbc.navfac.navy.mil. ⚓

Story and photo by
CECS (SCW) Lawrence J. Guarnero

On the Run

An avid runner, CUCM (SCW) Horace Ellis, Naval Facilities Engineering Command Reserve Affairs, has run 20 marathons in the last seven years, as well as around a hundred other races over the last 10 years. Recently he placed 341 out of 6,000 runners and third in his age group in the Nashville, Tenn., Country Music Marathon. Here he is pictured running in the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C.

MTVRs (Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacements) will replace the commercial vehicles and 800/900 series tactical vehicles in the NCF inventory.

NMCB Five Tests Prime Vendor

Story by LTJG Lara Shean

As Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) Five arrived in Puerto Rico, the primary methods to acquire local materials and equipment were through the base supply system and micro purchases with a credit card. When the battalion was tested with responding to urgent operational tasking on Vieques Island and remote Deployment for Training (DFT) operations in Tobago and Antigua, neither of these methods could effectively support them.

In response to these urgent requirements, the Material Liaison Office pioneered the use of Prime Vendor and proved that it could be used effectively to support Naval Construction Force (NCF) operations throughout the Caribbean.

The Prime Vendor process for a given project begins with the Defense Logistic Agency formulating a supply contract based on economic analysis. The supplier that can deliver the most advantageous combination of price and delivery time is selected. Products may be taken from the Prime Vendor's own inventory, or the Prime Vendor may acquire the necessary materials from virtually any source. During a six month period, NMCB Five purchased and delivered a total of $2 million in project materials, equipment and services. About $1.3 million in time-critical acquisitions were made for Vieques, $450,000 in remote acquisitions were made for DFT Tobago and DFT Antigua, and another $300,000 in acquisitions were made for regular main body projects.

Within the NCF, NMCBs have become more and more independent in obtaining their logistical support. Prime Vendor has proven to be a highly effective tool that gives them sufficient purchasing power relative to their growing, flexible level of tasking. It enables them to deliver large volumes of material quickly and cost effectively. The program has been available for more than two years, but NMCB Five was believed to be the first construction battalion to put the program to the test in the Atlantic.

NMCB Five set up a six-person logistics cell that supported its own operations as well as those of several other tenant activities. Most large purchases were completed within a matter of days, which made the high pace of operations possible. In one notable example, more than $60,000 worth of concertina wire was purchased and delivered in less than three days for the construction of a seven-mile long security fence. As a result, the project was completed in less than three weeks to support a vital carrier battle group exercise.

NMCB Five demonstrated that Prime Vendor could be used to support operations on an even broader scale, primarily on two DFT's to the islands of Antigua and Tobago. According to the Material Liaison Office's LT Brian Nicholas, short-term Caribbean detachments used to be very frustrating because battalions had no way to purchase large volumes of material on foreign shores. The battalions would have to take all of their materials with them. Prime Vendor gave them the ability to quickly purchase and deliver materials throughout the region, something that no other acquisition vehicle can do. ⚓

Past and Present Seabees Honored during 27th Annual Seabee Memorial Service

On March 17, current and former Seabees gathered at the Seabee Memorial by Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va., to honor those who served in the past and those serving now.

Seabees from CBU 422 attend the Seabee Memorial Service in Arlington, Va.

CUCM (SCW) Rich Iannucci (left), Second Naval Construction Battalion Reserve Affairs, stands with Vietnam Era Seabees (from left to right) H. Tripp Hines, NMCB121, Bruce MacDougall, NMCB 40, Curtis "Doc" Tamminga, NMCB 121, Wayne Clayton, NMCB 74, Bob Vanatta, NMCB 121, and Bob Koch, NMCB 9, behind a wreath placed at the Seabee Memorial by the Vietnam Era Seabees to honor their fallen brothers.

CHINFO Merit Award Winners

Congratulations to all involved in making these Seabee publications winners in the 2000 Chief of Information (CHINFO) Merit Awards. The program recognizes exemplary achievements in internal media products by Navy commands and individuals.

Military Funded Newspaper (magazine format)
First Place, Beeline, Naval Facilities Engineering Command
The Beeline subsequently represented the Navy for this category in the Department of Defense Thomas Jefferson Awards, the interservice competition.

Familygrams, Large Commands
First Place, The Beehive, NMCB 74
Third Place, Focus On Four, NMCB Four
Honorable Mention, Magnificent Moments, NMCB Seven

Sailors Can Boost Their MGIB Benefits

A provision of the recently enacted Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act of 2000 permits certain Sailors to increase their monthly Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) program benefits by making an additional contribution to the program. Only Sailors who entered active duty after July 1, 1985, and enrolled in MGIB during their first two weeks of active duty are eligible.

Effective May 1, each additional contribution of $4 will increase the monthly MGIB benefit by $1 under the terms of the Act. The maximum additional contribution possible is $600. Sailors contributing the maximum would realize an increase to their MGIB monthly benefit of $150. In other words, Sailors who make the additional maximum contribution, and are enrolled as full-time students following active duty, will receive a total benefit of $800 monthly.

There are specific limiting eligibility requirements that apply to this provision. One constraint is that members who elect this option can contribute the additional amount only while serving on active duty. This is the law and is not waiverable. However, eligible Sailors who were on active duty on the Nov. 1, 2000, enactment date of the legislation and separated prior to the effective date of May 1, have until July 31 to contribute. Separated members should make payment directly to the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). Affected members should contact the DVA at 1-888-GIBILL1, or 1-888-442-4551.

Personnel who are enrolled in the MGIB program by reason of involuntary separation, conversion from Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) or Vietnam-Era GI Bill, and those who enrolled in MGIB during the open enrollment period of Dec. 1, 1988, through June 30, 1989, are not eligible for this option.

"A nine-to-one return on your investment is possible," explained Kathy Wardlaw, branch head of the federal education programs branch (PERS-604) at Navy Personnel Command in Millington, Tenn.

Further details regarding necessary action for participation will be announced soon via Navy-wide message.

Additional information is available by calling PERS-604 MGIB program customer service representatives at DSN 882-4258 or 1-800-962-1425. Kathy Wardlaw can be reached at DSN 882-4275 or (901) 874-4275, or by e-mail at p604@persnet.navy.mil. ⚓

By Michael McLellan, NPC Public Affairs

Roman Martin, St. John High School 7th grader, explains his project about a water plant in Chicago, Ill., to NMCB 74 judges, during a science fair in Gulfport, Miss. Photo by JO2 Pat Pawlowski

Navy Takes Care of its Own with FSSA

The Department of Defense's new compensation initiative, Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance (FSSA), became effective May 1. The program is designed to bring the military member's household income to 130 percent of the federal poverty line and remove them from the food stamp eligibility list. FSSA is a voluntary and nontaxable monthly supplemental allowance.

The maximum amount of FSSA is $500 a month. The amount received is based on monthly household income and family size. FSSA is available stateside and overseas to active duty, including Coast Guard, members of the Reserve components when on active duty, and their families.

Even if members did not qualify or participate in the Food Stamp Program, they still can apply for FSSA. FSSA is different from the Food Stamp Program in several ways, one being that it is a cash allowance that does not have restrictions placed on its use. The program also relies on a commanding officer's involvement for proper oversight and care of service members that are on the program.

The sum of the supplemental allowance awarded is determined by calculating the total amount of the member's household monthly gross income and family size and comparing it to the USDA Food Stamp gross income limit tables.

Additional information can be found in NAVADMIN 107/01.

Applications are available on the PERSNET web site at http://www.persnet.navy.mil/pers33 (under "What's New") or on the DoD web site at http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/fssa. ⚓

By JOC Milinda D. Jensen, NPC Public Affairs

Navy Announces New Requirements for Next of Kin Documentation

Navy officials recently announced a policy and procedure change designed to provide more rapid primary and secondary next of kin (PNOK and SNOK) notification whenever a Sailor is involved in an emergency situation.

Effective immediately, Sailors are required to add the names of PNOK/SNOK, addresses and telephone numbers to the DD 93 Record of Emergency Data or NAVPERS 1070/602 Dependency Application/Record of Emergency Data.

For more details, please see NAVADMIN 098/01.

Additional guidance regarding listing next of kin information can be obtained from Sandy DuBois, Pers-621, assistant head casualty assistance branch at Navy Personnel Command at DSN 882-4299 or (901) 874-4299, or by e-mail to Sandy.DuBois@persnet.navy.mil. ⚓

By Michael McLellan, NPC Public Affairs

NEOSH Survey Shows Progress

The 1999-2000 Navy Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment Survey (NEOSH) results indicate the Navy has made progress in providing all Sailors with equal opportunity and a harassment-free work environment. Additionally, the results reveal certain areas where the Navy will focus actions to remove inequality from its ranks.

The NEOSH survey, administered every other year since 1989, was mailed to 15,103 Sailors representing all

pay grades, genders, and racial and ethnic backgrounds. Navy leaders received feedback on the progress made in areas of equal opportunity (EO), sexual harassment, gender equality and fraternization, as well as on additional needed training and educational programs.

"The good news is that, across all demographic groups, enlisted Sailors tend to have neutral-to-positive perceptions of the Navy's equal opportunity climate," said LT Heather May of the Navy Personnel Command's professional relationships division (PERS-613) in Millington, Tenn. "The gender gap between female and male Sailors has virtually disappeared. This means the perception may be either good or bad, but all Sailors seem to feel the same way about it."

The survey indicates other good news, as well.

"Since 1991, there has been a significant increase in awareness of the Command Managed Equal Opportunity (CMEO) Program," May added. "And just about everyone understands the definition of sexual harassment, as well as what behavior constitutes sexual harassment."

Sailors also indicated a good understanding of fraternization policies. Less than 15 percent of enlisted and seven percent of officers indicated fraternization was a problem at their command.

While Sailors are aware of appropriate professional behavior, racial and ethnic gaps in perceptions of discrimination still exist, especially between whites and blacks. Offensive speech is the most common form of unprofessional behavior cited, and more than one-third of female enlisted respondents were subjected to negative comments or jokes within the past year. About one-third of enlisted black and Hispanic Sailors also indicated discriminatory behavior through negative comments or jokes.

However, the Navy needs to improve in the areas of sexual harassment aboard ships, in dining facilities and at base clubs, according to the survey results. Other noteworthy items include a lack of confidence in the grievance system and fewer officers attending EO training than in previous years.

Navy leadership recognizes that equal opportunity and diversity have a direct impact on readiness. In a recent message to all hands, Vice Chief of Naval Operations (VCNO) ADM William J. Fallon challenged deckplate supervisors, chief petty officers and officers throughout the chain of command to become active proponents of EO and to become directly involved in monitoring their command's climate. The VCNO emphasized this includes ensuring the effectiveness of command EO training, and publicizing command policies against comments and jokes of a racist or sexist nature.

Commands throughout the Navy have the tools to raise equal opportunity and sexual harassment awareness. All Sailors are required to participate in annual EO/sexual harassment/fraternization training, which is available in GMT through a web site developed by the Chief of Naval Education and Training at www.cnet.navy.mil. Instructor guides and lesson plans are also available for download. For the future, the Navy is exploring the possibility of an interactive, computer-based training program.

The Navy's goal is to ensure every Sailor works in a professional environment, free of discrimination and harassment.

For more information, please see NAVADMIN 070/01, or contact LT May (PERS-613) at DSN 882-4283 or commercial (901) 874-4283, or by e-mail at mp613@persnet.navy.mil. ⚓

By NPC Public Affairs

Master Chief's Corner

By CUCM (SCW) Kennie Nowlin

Greetings once again from the Naval Facilities Engineering Command. It has been a busy time here in Washington, D.C. Since the last Beeline article, our ability as Seabees to "Build and Fight" has once again been enhanced. The hard working people here and around the world continue to develop new ideas. You will see some significant advances in construction and combat technologies in the near future.

First, four new Ultimate Building Machines (UBM) have been delivered to Gulfport and Port Hueneme. The new UBM is the replacement for the old Automatic Building Machines (ABM), better known as the K-span machine. The new machine has several advantages over its predecessor. A computer was added to assist with design and operations functions. With this computer assistance, vertical walls can be fabricated eliminating the unusable floor space created by the ABM's curved walls. This new technology will permit Seabees to build structures in contingency environments faster with smaller footprints.

Second, marksmanship training has been enhanced with procurement of the new state-of-the-art Combat Skills Trainer 300 Digital (CST 300D), better known as the FATS Trainer. The FATS Trainer will support training from individual marksmanship skills through team and squad level tactical exercises with all weapons in the Naval Construction Force's Table of Allowance. The complete system will be introduced to the training regiments over a period of two years, with Port Hueneme receiving their large unit this year and Gulfport receiving its large unit in 2002.

Lasty, I would like to congratulate Chief Equipment Operator (SCW) Daniel O. O' Neal of NMCB Seven and Utilitiesman 1st Class (SCW) Courtney J. Wynia of NMCB 40 as the recipients of the 2000 Rear Admiral Lewis B. Combs and SW2 (DV) Robert D. Stetham Awards, respectively. These awards are given annually by the CEC/Seabee Historical Foundation and recognize outstanding contributions to the legacy of the Civil Engineer Corps and Seabees. ⚓

Master Chief Nowlin is the NCF Training Program Manager at the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Washington Navy Yard. (202) 685-9498 or DSN 325-9498
NowlinKJ@navfac.navy.mil

Operation Chupacabra Operation

EA1 (SCW) Alex Tayag instructs Seabees on land navigation.

Aggressors BU2 (SCW) Barry Moyar and GM3 Marlin Norris put on face paint to camoflage themselves from Seabees on patrol.

NMCB Seven tests tactical skills

Story by MR1 (SW) Michael Cunniff (ret.)

In the early morning hours of Jan. 11, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) Seven launched Operation Chupacabra, a three-day tactical exercise designed to test readiness as well as provide training for personnel assigned to the battalion main body.

During the operation, NMCB Seven Seabees were exposed to a large variety of training topics, including medical first aid, fighting positions, chemical, biological and radiological warfare, convoy instruction and deployment, communications, command and control, and reconnaissance patrols. Embedded in the foundation of the exercise was the concept of small unit leadership, offering the junior troops of the command an opportunity to showcase their leadership abilities in simulated combat situations. Some Seabees were exposed for the first time to some of the scenarios and information presented. For others, the exercise was a chance to pass on their hard-won knowledge to personnel who might accompany them during a contingency operation.

The first day of training began before the sun came up. At the top of the list was a muster and assignment of duties.

The battalion companies broke down into platoons and marched off into the dark to begin training. Personnel set out to erect antennas and communication gear necessary to maintain organization and control throughout the training evolution. Others headed off to instruct or set up as aggressors for the patrols and the convoys.

The exercise was organized as a round robin. In layman's terms, each group moved from one training station to another, followed or preceded by another group at the same station. Combat patrol was one of the most demanding areas of the training offered. The troops were given instruction on day and night land navigation and were then sent out on patrol with assigned weapons and blank ammunition through the wilds of Puerto Rico. During the course of the patrol, members found themselves trapped in different combat scenarios, forcing patrol members to assume a defensive posture in response to simulated booby traps, live fire from snipers also packing ammunition with blanks, and hostage situations. Other training scenarios included mortar fire and civilians protesting the passage of the patrol. Meanwhile, the patrol leader maintained communication with the battalion headquarters which offered the officers-in-charge of the Command Operations Center an opportunity to experience a simulated contingency operations environment.

At noon on the second day, the embarkation portion of the exercise began, focusing on the skills required to ensure the appropriate packing of equipment and items necessary for deployment.

The training continued around the clock. Whether a Seabee was sitting in a classroom environment or testing their practical skills in the field as an instructor, aggressor or patrol member, everyone benefitted from this first-of-its kind training for NMCB Seven. ⚓

Chupacabra Operation Chupacabra

Photos by JO1 Evelyn F. Biskeborn

EOCN Bradley Gayer (right) exercises a hand signal. MSSA Ray Ycong (left) and SK1 Alan Merrick stand by for instructions.

NMCB Seven Seabees practice the Fireman's Carry during training at the medical department.

SKSN Melissa Kubick simulates being on the alert during patrol.

Above: SK3 Valencia Nicholson (right) and EOCN Bradley Gayer move cautiously while on patrol.
Above, left: IT2 (SW) Steven Dyer (left) and EACA Andrew Young learn to use the radios during Command Operations Center communication training.
Left: (left to right) LCDR Lewis Hurst, LT William Duerden, ENS Andrew Sonier and BUC (SCW) David Near (sitting) study status charts during Operation Chupacabra.

NMCB One 1, Mother Nature 0

Seabees train through rain, tornadoes, cold

Story and photos by JO1 (SCW) 'Drew Scharnhorst

Below, right: YN2 Scott MacDonald cleans the disassembled components of his M-16 equipped with a M-203 grenade launcher during NMCB One's field exercise (FEX) at Camp Shelby.

Below, left: An unexploded bomb sits half-buried in the soft ground of Camp Shelby, awaiting removal by the explosive ordnance disposal crew, as members of NMCB One's rapid runway repair damage assessment team check for more unexploded ordnance in the background.

Seabees from NMCB One scan the treeline for signs of a possible ambush to their convoy on their way to their FEX bivouac site at Camp Shelby.

They were gone only 10 days, but what a 10 days it was.

After three months with little rain or inclement weather of any kind, the Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) One faced all manner of weather in a very short period of time while deployed for their homeport field exercise.

The first main convoy of personnel and equipment left for Camp Shelby, Miss., on Nov. 4 – a beautiful day. On Sunday, Nov. 5, everyone else left – and the rains came. And it rained all the next day, and Tuesday and Wednesday as well. Then came the tornadoes, late Wednesday night, followed by several days of cold. And then the rain returned.

However, none of it was enough to stop "The First and The Finest" from completing its training mission: to see how the battalion handles itself in a contingency environment, even while beset with such 'distractions' as groups of local protesters, enemy infiltration, aggressive media representatives, and combat action.

"[NMCB] One did extremely well. We were very pleased with their motivation," said LCDR Deborah E. Roe, assistant chief staff officer for training, 20th Naval Construction Regiment. "The staff down to the troops were motivated from start to finish. Despite all of the weather, and some of the things that they had to overcome that were not planned into the scenarios, they maintained that high morale. It was amazing; down to the last day, they were still working hard."

Roe, who was at Camp Shelby to observe and evaluate the battalion, said the inclement weather didn't deter "The First and The Finest" in the least. "From an operational standpoint, surprisingly, they came right through it with very little delays," she recalled. "The first weather hit them right on the camp setup, and their convoying in. They made very little adjustments because they had everything planned out, and well-planned, it was obvious, from the beginning."

She noted also that even though the camp area itself was "a muddy mess," she was most impressed by the overall welfare of the battalion. "They didn't have very many casualties from the cold weather or dehydration or anything like that. They did well with their safety, as far as taking care of their people."

Even the wind, which kicked up quite a bit during the first few days, couldn't slow NMCB One down. "They worked around adversity and used the old Seabee ingenuity, and worked around everything to take care of their people, and to get the job done during that time," Roe remarked. "They had their front lines set up, they had their fighting positions in place, they had the camp set up, the galley was up and operational with some hot meals – things that really affect Seabees and their morale were still up and running. Putting the sand in the galley, making their little [pallet] bridges and stuff. Things like that really help. And they

Above: A camouflaged Seabee peers through the Camp Shelby foliage along NMCB One's Alfa Company defensive lines.

Below: From a hasty fighting position, BU3 (SCW) Melissa McLaughlin performs her routine checks on her M-2 .50-cal machine gun guarding the lines for NMCB One's Bravo Company.

NMCB One's Water Well Team works to fit a new length of drill steel to their water well rig during their FEX at Camp Shelby.

did that all in the same time frame as getting in and getting the job done."

Roe added she was impressed by the battalion's level of training and expertise. "I know they practiced and planned, did a lot of training ahead of time, and it showed in their performance there," she stated. "Particularly their COMM [communications] platoon excelled; they did very well."

Roe also said, "I think what impressed me most was despite the fact that what was thrown at them, the battalion took it in stride and did very well ... they had the rain, they had the mud, plus they had all these new initiatives that were thrown at them. And so they were doing a lot of things for the first time, but they kept going through that and they got it right."

Some of those things were new to the regiment, too. Roe said the observers also had to work as a team to find the best use of some things, like the "jump vehicle" used as an alternative Command Operations Center (COC) when the COC itself should fail or, much worse, fall into enemy hands.

"They utilized that vehicle, and they were able to maintain [communications] throughout the entire operation, from the time that they arrived at the Motor Pool Seven and arrived at the AOR [Area of Responsibility]," she said. "That vehicle was up and running with COMM continuously, and when they got their COC up, there was no interruption in COMM between time."

Roe also praised the rapid runway repair's (RRR) damage assessment team on their part of the exercise, saying they "worked very well." Running a RRR exercise on the FEX site was also somewhat new to the regiment, as it hadn't been done in years. Usually, RRR exercises are conducted aboard the Construction Battalion Center. She called it "kind of a learning episode" for both units, but said it worked extremely well.

"Their performance on it was outstanding," Roe said of the battalion. "I think it kind of added to the realism of the exercise, doing it on the FEX."

It was obvious to the observers that NMCB One had planned ahead of time. "It came out the way they wanted it," Roe remarked, "and all the way down to Seabees in the fighting hole [who] knew what was expected of them. So by the time they were through with the FEX, they had outstanding small-unit leadership going. A very challenging thing to obtain with the battalions. So their leadership down to the smallest unit, down to the fire team, was really good." ⚓

NMCB Three Seabees dismantle a satellite dish in the Republic of Seychelles as a Deployment for Training project.

"Dishing it Out" in the Seychelles

NMCB Three Seabees dismantle Cold War relic

Story and photos provided by LCDR Meg Reed, NAVFAC Reserve PAO

Twenty-two Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) Three, Port Hueneme, Calif., participated in a unique dismantling project last summer. They joined a reserve civil engineer corps officer, an Army expert and six contractors to take apart a satellite dish that had become a Cold War relic in the beautiful tropical island paradise of the Seychelles Islands, located in the Indian Ocean between Diego Garcia and the coast of Kenya.

The satellite dish, or Indian Ocean Station (IOS), was part of a U.S. satellite tracking system built in the early 1960s. When the Republic of Seychelles (ROS) and the United States decided to dismantle it, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) suggested a Seabee training project to remove the radomes and their antennae. The project was assigned to the Naval Construction Force, which organized a special task force led by CDR Jon Roby, a naval reserve civil engineer corps officer attached to NAVCENT Det 108, MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa, Fla.

Equipment, including a 200-ton crane, 44-meter and 35-meter manlifts, and 12 pieces of construction equipment, was transported from Bahrain to the Seychelles' site on an Army vessel. The Seabees cut the radome and 60-foot antenna into sections and lowered them to the ground. They used power saws to cut the frames into beams that were moved with the antenna pieces by loader and truck to nearby warehouses for storage. All the material was left with the ROS for disposal.

Roby said, "I had a wonderful opportunity to help strengthen U.S. - Seychelles ties. It was a truly joint effort and the task force components gained invaluable training in dismantling large structures, operating large equipment, open ocean steaming, working with civilian contractors, and the logistics of working in a remote location."

CDR Jon Roby, project leader, discusses the satellite dismantling project with NMCB Three Seabees.

The station first became operational in August 1963 and was well positioned to observe the orbital insertion of satellites and spacecraft launched from Cape Canaveral and Vandenburg Air Force Base. The largest antenna (60-ft diameter) was an X band antenna for tracking U.S. and NATO satellites. It was part of a global program that detected nuclear events from space. The station's most famous historic moment occurred in 1979 when the station monitored satellite information of a nuclear event over the ocean near South Africa. Scientists at Los Alamos, N.M., said it was proof of the testing of a nuclear bomb, which was officially confirmed years later in 1997 when South Africa admitted that it was indeed a nuclear bomb test.

In 1976, the Seychelles became an independent country. In August 1993, the station was upgraded to an Automatic Remote Tracking Station configuration and was part of the U.S. Air Force Satellite Control Network until 1995 when the Department of Defense declined to renew the lease, resulting in the closure of the IOS and subsequent plans to dismantle the antennae. ⚓

NMCB Four Seabees in Japan

Three NMCB Four project sites at the White Beach Naval Facility add up to hard work, quality construction, and camaraderie. The White Beach Naval Facility is a primary staging area for Marines and their equipment based on Okinawa.

At the White Beach Retaining Wall project, EO3 Gordon Santos spreads concrete in the form with a float. The Retaining Wall will prevent further erosion of a hillside overlooking the vehicle staging area.

Photos by JO1 Rich Henson

UTCA Gregory Feliciano (left) and CECN Thomas Thoun check the condition of shoring supports at the White Beach Sewer Line project.

SW3 (SCW) Karen Grose ties down a welded wire fabric, or "WWF," at the PAVE (Precision Acquisition Vehicle Entry) Staging Area project. The PAVE Staging Area will expand the parking area for Marine vehicles waiting to be loaded aboard amphibious assault ships.

EACA Nghiep Huynh surveys the Pave Staging Area in preparation for a concrete placement.

SWCN Travis Maxwell bends the rebar for the catch basins at the Pave Staging Area.

NMCB 74 brings airstrip

An airstrip is a vital lifeline in war. If it is destroyed, planes can't land to drop off life-sustaining supplies and troops can't be dropped off easily. Damaged planes returning from combat missions will have nowhere to safely land, and pilots may have to eject into the sea. Conversely, U.S. fighter aircraft can't get off the ground to retaliate with air-based attacks or get to a safe area to get injured troops medical attention. The U.S. military can have the strongest, fastest and most lethal planes in the world, but it does the nation absolutely no good if it has no way to get them on and off the ground.

Based off past wars, "after a place has been bombed, it takes the enemy four hours to go back, refuel, reload, come back and bomb again," stated Construction Electrician 1st Class Lonnie Ransom, observer and instructor from the 20th Naval Construction Regiment.

In preparation for any possible situation where an airstrip may need repairs, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74 went through a demanding rapid runway repair (RRR) and chemical, biological and radiological (CBR) exercise Feb. 7.

"This is the second-most important thing that the battalion's do as far as their evaluation prior to deployment," stated Ransom. This exercise is part of the battalion's Readiness for Deployment Evaluation. The RRR/CBR exercise is second only to the battalion field exercise (FEX).

NMCB 74 is placed in a scenario where an airstrip has just been bombed. There's a crater large enough to house five well-fed elephants, ordnance scattered everywhere like toys in a toddler's room and plenty of unknown chemicals spread nicely throughout the entire strip. It's NMCB 74's mission to get the minimum operating strip (MOS) operational in under four hours. The MOS is 50 feet by 5,000 feet for certain tactical aircraft to safely land and take off.

From the first footstep to the last, each move has to be made carefully. Just like in a contingency, there are many unknowns when first entering a particular area. That's why the security force steps in first to make sure the area is free of any enemies. They're in Mission Orientated Protective Posture (MOPP) level 4 gear to protect them from any CBR contaminants that may be around.

They also establish the entry control point (ECP). Anyone entering and leaving the airstrip *must* go through the ECP. That allows the battalion to control who comes and goes. With the area properly secured and free of any immediate hostilities, the damage assessment teams (DATs) and CBR teams work their way to the damaged airfield.

With a specific and thorough technique, the DATs record all bombs, ordnance, craters and spalls (small potholes that don't penetrate the initial pavement or asphalt) found on and around the airstrip. The CBR teams concentrate solely on harmful chemicals. While doing so, the DATs and CBR teams will relay all of their information to the RRR and CBR command posts.

As part of the damage assessment team, CE3 (SCW) Rodney Johnson (left) and BUCN Matthew Mallory document all of the damage they find on the airstrip. NMCB 74 only has four hours to repair the airfield, so quick and accurate work is very important in successfully completing the exercise.

Ground Guide EO2 (SCW) Shane Breyette acts as a second set of eyes for the bulldozer operator to safely fill in the crater.

Rapid RUNWAY Repair!

Relay of this information is essential. If what's recorded isn't accurate, higher headquarters, the facility that will direct the mission, won't be able to properly assess the situation. Time is limited, but the DATs and CBR teams were thoroughly briefed to minimize the possibility of mistakes.

When the DATs and CBR teams finish their part of the mission, it's time to return to safe ground. Before doing so, they need to be decontaminated. They'll go through a decontamination line that will rid all of their clothing of lethal chemicals before leaving the ECP.

The RRR command post has a small group of Seabees that make up the MOS selection team who plot all of the information on a scaled-down representation of the airstrip. "The MOS selection team will sit down, after all this plotting, and figure out the least area of damage on that airfield, and that's where they would set up their 5,000 feet by 50 feet," said Ransom. A representative from the MOS selection team will suggest to higher headquarters personnel where the MOS should be. This is where the Seabees will go to repair the runway and make it operational again.

The MOS has been determined, so the explosive ordnance disposal team is quickly taken to that area to look over all the ordnance. They will decide what can safely be removed and what has to be handled with extreme caution. With their thumb of approval, the runway clearing crew drives out to the airstrip and picks up the ordnance and debris.

With each team fulfilling their vital part in the mission, all that's left is getting the craters filled, leveled and covered in order to bring the runway back to life.

Bulldozers, front-end loaders, graders and any other necessary construction vehicles roll onto the airstrip and work their magic. Heaps of earth are scooped up by a front-end loader and put into the craters while the dozer pushes it into the debilitating opening. The smaller craters are taken care of with a grader by leveling off the ground.

Reinforced fiberglass matting is used to cover up the craters to make the MOS fully operational.

Each team is graded on their ability to accurately and quickly communicate with each different facet of the operation and on how well they execute their portion of the mission.

"It is critical that we train, and we are proficient in this area due to the fact that we only have four hours to complete this operation," said CWO2 Stephen Legg, rapid runway repair officer in charge. "We are the force that would go in there with the technical expertise for the United States Navy to perform this type of operation.

"I think overall we did well as far as once we got to the portion of troops being on the ground, going out plotting the runway, checking for chemicals in the area, doing what the troops do," said Legg.

In the past, rapid runway repair has been a crucial link in winning wars, so continuous training is necessary now to prepare for the possibility of another contingency.

back to life

During World War II, Guadalcanal was the tip of the Japanese thrust down the Solomon chain, separating the United States from allies, Australia and New Zealand. The need to destroy the Japanese airfields nearing completion on Guadalcanal was imperative. The Seabees of the 3rd Construction Battalion Detachment were instructed to build a countermanding Allied bomber strip as rapidly as possible. Within a remarkable 20 days, the detachment had constructed a 6,000-foot airstrip where a jungle once stood. With this newly constructed airstrip, the Allies were able to mount large scale air attacks against Guadalcanal and destroy the Japanese air base under construction there.

When the Marines finally invaded nearby Guadalcanal, the Seabees of the 6th Naval Construction Battalion followed them ashore and became the first Seabees to build under combat conditions. They immediately began the arduous task of repairing the airfield, now named Henderson Field that they had earlier helped to destroy. This became a never-ending job because as fast as the builders leveled the strip and put down Marston matting, the Japanese would send bombers overhead to drop high explosives on their work. Nevertheless, in the midst of battle, the Seabees were able to repair shell and bomb holes faster than the Japanese could make them. The Allied pilots desperately needed the use of Henderson Field, so the Seabees kept this precious airstrip in almost continuous operation.

If a contingency erupts in the future and an airstrip is in dire need of repairs, the Seabees will be ready and able to fulfill their mission, and NMCB 74 has that training to do so.

Story and photos by JO2 Pat Pawlowski

The damage assessment team looks over the enormous crater while relaying the location, diameter, depth and other pertinent information to the rapid runway repair command post.

Seabees Train for Urban Warfare

NMCB Four gets a taste of MOUT

Unlike any other deployment, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) Four took on a new concept of contingency training at Camp Shields, Okinawa, Japan. Military Operations on Urban Terrain (MOUT) enables the Seabees of NMCB Four to be more effective as a combat unit.

Apart from the normal field training exercise, MOUT teaches survival skills enabling the battalion to be combat ready in urban environments. Increased population and accelerated growth of cities have limited the ability to avoid combat in built-up areas and provides a reason to give more attention to urban combat. Though this may be a last resort and considered unavoidable, urban war fighting is different from the training the battalion is accustomed to receiving.

Getting involved with MOUT changes the rules of engagement. The use of combat power is normally more restrictive than in other conditions of combat. Due to geopolitical change, advances in technology, and the military's role in maintaining world order, urban combat now takes on greater dimensions than before.

MOUT training, conducted during NMCB Four's first training day of the Okinawa deployment, was a sure success. The battalion emphasized movement between buildings to achieve a level of proficiency at this kind of training. In order to be proficient in MOUT, the battalion must understand how the enemy fights, focus on the relationship between weapons fire and movement in cities, and the requirement to maintain continuous security as well as a sense of tempo and tactical patience. If the battalion is successful throughout the MOUT process, its Seabees will be able to minimize casualties and succeed as they encounter the enemy. NMCB Four is on the way to accomplishing a new mission of fighting combatants housed amongst noncombatants.

The instructors, Marine Gunnery Sgt. John Corvin, NMCB Four's military advisor and ENS Nicholas Reid, NMCB Four's disbursing officer and former enlisted Navy SEAL, provided exciting hands-on training. The Seabees of NMCB Four eagerly embraced the new training and its crucial war fighting benefits.

Senior Chief Equipment Operator (SCW) Bill McKenzie, Alpha Company's leading chief petty officer, said, "The MOUT training we received was as realistic as possible. Young Seabees who have been around urban areas know how valuable this training is because we could end up in a geopolitical hot-spot in a moment's notice. And suddenly, 'You better be an urban warfare expert!'" ⚓

Above, top: EOCN Mark Emery and EO2 Fernando Alverez take a defensive position while waiting for the assault team.
Above: A fireteam of Alfa Company personnel storm toward the maintenace shop after taking a simulated casualty.
Right: A rifle platoon runs up the hill toward the enemy's position.

MEDEVAC

NMCB Three practices lifesaving skills

Story and photos by JO2 Maria Blanchard

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) Three recently got some hands-on medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) training in Guam during the Military Block Training week in preparation for the battalion's Deployed Field Exercise.

With the help of HC-5, which is stationed at Anderson Air Force Base, Guam, the medical team and training department went through all of the steps involved in a field MEDEVAC.

According to LT Tammy Penhollow, NMCB Three's medical officer, a lot goes into a MEDEVAC. "For us a MEDEVAC starts with the injury," explained Penhollow, "getting on the helicopter is where it ends."

In between receiving the injury and getting the patient to safety, a corpsman must follow many steps. These steps are what Penhollow and her corpsmen went over and practiced before the helicopter began its preflight operations.

"All of the corpsmen were involved in the decisions that had to be made. We decided together what the injury was, in this case a sucking chest wound, and how best to handle the situation," said Penhollow.

There are five MEDEVAC categories ranging from routine to priority. In this case the patient was put in the urgent category. "We practiced on the spot nine-lines (MEDEVAC request) and then sent the request up for approval," said Penhollow.

From here LT Russell Rang, NMCB Three training officer, and the communications shop called HC-5 for helicopter support and prepared a landing zone.

"We took the initiative and successfully completed all necessary tasks to perform the MEDEVAC from identifying and marking a landing zone, sending out the MEDEVAC request and landing zone brief to the incoming CH-46 helicopter, and using proper arm and hand terminal guidance. The whole training evolution was very educational and exciting," explained Rang.

These training evolutions help all parties involved to learn exactly what each person needs to accomplish the mission. This way, should an actual emergency arrive and someone needs to be flown to the hospital, it can be done quickly and safely. ⚓

The litter bearers and corpsman wait for the helicopter to arrive. According to LT Tammy Penhollow, this is the hardest part of the MEDEVAC, being patient while you wait for it to arrive.

LT Russell Rang uses hand and arm signals to safely land the helicopter at the NMCB Three landing zone.

(From front to back and left to right) UT3 Eric McCallister, BUCN Aaron Kiehl, HM3 Chris Thomas, HM3 Derek McGinnis, EA3 Antonio Buenrostro, and EA3 (SCW) Andy Davenport run off the helicopter, carrying the patient, upon arriving at the medical facility.

UCCM (SCW) Rick Bravo, CBU 417's command master chief, helps push the main bulk of Rosie into the building where she will be housed.

What a Tale They'll Have to Tell

CBU 417 Seabees transport whale bones

Oak Harbor and Coupeville, Wash., whale-watching enthusiasts got a rare sight the afternoon of Nov. 17.

More than a few heads turned when the 29-foot, 6-inch skeleton of Rosie the Gray Whale traveled through downtown Oak Harbor on the back of a Seabee flatbed.

Members of Construction Battalion Unit (CBU) 417 took a break from their busy schedule to aid the University of Washington Extension Service Island County Beach Watchers in moving the bones of the gray whale. In fact, Naval Air Station Whidbey Island biologist Matt Klope said the Seabees were the "backbone of the project." Klope, who directed reconstruction of the skeleton added, "Wherever we needed technical help, they were there. We relied a lot on these guys."

Klope and Beach Watcher volunteers helped transport the skeleton of the whale to the Seaplane Base, where the bones were suspended in barrels below the fuel pier to be naturally cleaned by the local invertebrate population.

The bones were then washed and scrubbed by Beach Watcher volunteers, many of them retired Sailors and Marines. After drying and bleaching a bit in the sun, the bones were taken to a room in the basement of the radar dome building on the Seaplane Base to be painted with a mixture of Elmer's glue and latex paint.

People from the Navy base helped with the project in any way they could, according to Beach Watcher volunteer Mary Jo Adams. "The wife and son of a deployed pilot even came and helped to paint the bones to pass the time while he was away," said Adams.

Seabees helped to shape and weld the steel rod that supports Rosie's spine, in itself an innovative design, giving the bones the appearance of swimming, fins outstretched and tail swooping.

But the big assist was the crating and moving of Rosie, and the help in getting the bones up in the "rafters" of the Coupeville Wharf.

"It was unbelievable. You couldn't have asked for better help," said Beach Watcher Gerry Smith. "The men who helped work on it were so enthusiastic!"

According to Master Chief Utilities Constructionman (SCW) Rick Bravo, CBU 417 command master chief, it wasn't hard to find volunteers to help with Rosie.

"Anything construction-related, Seabees love that stuff," he said, noting they have different motives for volunteering to help as often as they do, but "I guess it kind of boils down to the stories you have to tell later on."

Seabees who volunteered to help stayed late into the night to ensure Rosie was securely hanging from the ceiling of the historic building.

While volunteers helped move the pieces of the skeleton into the wharf warehouse, visitors came to see what all the commotion was about. Coupeville Mayor Nancy Conard was among the first to view Rosie in her new home.

"This [project] is a perfect example of the island community," said Conard of the cooperation between NAS Whidbey Island, CBU 417 and the Beach Watchers.

"Everyone working together," she added. "This really was a community effort."

Rosie is on permanent display in the Coupeville Wharf warehouse and will soon be joined by plaques describing the gray whale and its place in the local ecology. ⚓

Story and photos by JO3 Joaquin Juatai

Seabees CM2 Gary Hankins and SW1 Michael Chaplin are joined by Matt Klope in carrying Rosie's spine to the waiting flatbed.

A contracted crane lowers the cofferdam into position over the sensor.

UCT One Divers Replace Sensors

Story and photos by Daryl Smith, Public Affairs Officer, Second NCB

Working from a barge in the Norfolk , Va., harbor, Seabees from Underwater Construction Team (UCT) One replaced six underwater sensors for the Magnetic Silencing Facility last fall.

The sensors are used to read the electromagnetic signatures of Navy vessels. They are about 20 to 30 feet apart in plastic tubes imbedded in the channel floor off the waterfront of Naval Base Norfolk and are connected by a buried cable.

The process for recovering and replacing the sensors requires a good deal of planning and coordination. After locating the malfunctioning sensor, a contracted crane lowers a cofferdam over the area to shield the diver from the strong currents. "The current's ripping down there. If it wasn't for the cofferdam, it would pull you off the bottom," said Construction Electrician 1st Class (DV) Todd J. Horne, project supervisor.

The diver then enters the water and descends about 60 feet to the bottom. Working in zero visibility inside the cofferdam, he uses a water jet to clear away several feet of mud and gravel to locate the concrete cap covering the sensor tube.

"The hardest part is locating the sensor," said Horne. "Once it's found, the rest is not as challenging."

The sensor assembly is then hauled to the surface, where contractors test and replace it. It is then lowered back in the water, where the diver inserts it back into its tube and replaces the cap. Working in total darkness, even the simplest tasks can be difficult. And, because of the many hoses and lines involved, there is always a danger of becoming entangled. "You have to figure out what you have to do without being able to see anything," said LCDR Gregory J. Zielinski, UCT One's commanding officer.

Back on the barge, other UCT One members perform a variety of support functions. "To put one guy in the water takes a minimum of seven or eight people," explained Master Chief Constructionman (DV) Davy J. Daniels. These include a diving supervisor, diver tender, standby diver and tender and log-keeper, as well as air control and communication personnel.

Each dive usually lasts more than two hours. Because of the strong currents, the divers are brought straight to the surface, undressed and taken immediately to the recompression chamber for surface decompression procedures using oxygen.

The crew replaced one sensor per day. This type of work is fairly routine for the UCT One members, who have performed similar work in Mayport, Fla.; Kings Bay, Ga.; and Charleston, S.C. ⚓

Far left: CM1 (SCW/DV) Chris Halford dons his diving helmet in preparation for retrieving the last sensor.
Left: Halford is helped onto the barge after replacing the last sensor.
Above, left: CM2 (SCW/DV) Isaac Williams maintains voice communications with the diver.
Above, right: BU1 (SCW/DV) Michael Johnson monitors the diver's air pressure.

"Seabees Do God's WORK"

Sammy Popwell, the church's pastor, throws some steaks on the grill during lunch for the Seabees who helped build Maranatha's church.

"Seabees do God's work."

So reads a log book entry by Master Chief James L. Herdt, the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) during a visit last summer to the United Services Organization (USO) facility project site at Naval Station Pascagoula, Miss.

The Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Five ensure that the MCPON's words have never been truer.

In addition to placing concrete for an airstrip and renovating barracks for Sailors, the men and women of NMCB Five poured sweat for and touched the lives of the citizens of Puerto Rico. The Seabees helped to build a church for Maranatha Baptist Church and Academy, located just outside the gates of Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.

"What would have taken us months to accomplish, the Seabees are doing in a matter of days," said Sammy Popwell, Maranatha's resident pastor and a retired Marine warrant officer.

"The Seabees' effort will allow the church's congregation to move out of a temporary wooden structure to a more stable reenforced concrete and steel building that is not only safer, but more accommodating to people who attend here," said Popwell.

Popwell, whose office walls bear both biblical passages of inspiration and a Marine retirement shadow box, was excited to have the Seabees help out his church because of his church's ties with the military and the Seabees' reputation.

Left: An army of Seabees worked tirelessly for nearly two weeks at Maranatha Baptist Church and Academy so that the Puerto Rican church members could get into their concrete and steel building sooner.

Above: CE3 Maxie Walker takes a break from the church project with some new friends, students who attend class at the Academy.
Right: NMCB Five Seabees, deployed to Camp Moscrip, Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, helped Maranatha Baptist Church and Academy build their new church. Maranatha is located just outside the gates of Roosevelt Roads.

"It's refreshing to see the Seabees out here doing this for us," said Popwell. "They have an unparalleled level of professionalism. About 80 percent of the people who attend Maranatha are from the naval base. Because of that, we try our best to cater to the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen who call Puerto Rico home."

Maranatha offers several single Sailor programs in addition to weekly service shuttles to and from the base so that anyone from Naval Station Roosevelt Roads can attend.

Maranatha was not the only one getting something out of this project.

"Seabees do a lot of projects," said Construction Electrician 3rd Class Maxie Walker, one of the crewmembers on the church project. "But community projects just like Maranatha are by far the most rewarding for us because we get to help the people who live here. I wish we could do more projects like this one."

Walker's stomach may have made that last comment because the Seabees who worked out at Maranatha were rumored to be the best fed Seabees in Puerto Rico.

"Oh man, the food," said Walker. "The preacher and his wife are taking real good care of us around lunch time. We get a home-cooked meal almost everyday."

A great meal wasn't the only treasure that awaited the Seabees. For every bead of sweat that fell from the well-tanned skin of a Seabee, there was a child's smile to make all the hard work seem effortless.

continued on page 24

Story and photos by JO1 (SCW/SS) James Pinsky

Far left: Strong, well-seasoned hands from an NMCB Five Seabee tiewire re-enforcing steel together that will help the concrete placed later remain strong and rigid.
Left: NMCB Five's ENS John Jeffrey and Maranatha Baptist Church and Academy pastor, Sammy Popwell, discuss the church's progress near a model of the proposed building.

'Fearless' Seabees meet the Sea Wolves

Story and photos by JO2 Pat Pawlowski

NMCB 74 Seabees reenlist before hockey fans

Most people go to hockey games to enjoy some element of the game. The intense energy on the ice as the teams force their way onto the scoreboard. The excitement exuding from the thousands of fans rooting for their hometown Mississippi Sea Wolves hockey team. Getting a chance at winning various prizes and money during the intermission. Having the unique opportunity to reenlist in the Navy.

Reenlist in the Navy at a hockey game? For nine Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74, that was exactly what they did.

Nov. 11 was Veterans Day. It was also Military Appreciation Night at the Sea Wolves game. In honor of the military and its service members, the Sea Wolves treated military personnel to a two-for-one deal on tickets and a once-a-year chance to say the oath of reenlistment at a hockey game.

"We need to show people that we appreciate what they do and the sacrifices they make. So when they're home and not deployed, we want to have someplace fun for them to go and have a good time," said Rich Beard, director of corporate sales for the Mississippi Sea Wolves.

During the intermission after the second period of the game, nine Seabees marched onto the ice to reenlist in the Navy. In front of more than 5,000 people, they swore in for a combined 35 years of service. Commanding Officer CDR Fran Castaldo gave the oath of reenlistment. There was also a group of people that enlisted into the Air Force.

"It was a chance to do something spectacular, something different," said Machinery Repairman 1st Class (SW) Stephen Whitehead, who reenlisted for three years. He brought his wife and three kids along to enjoy the game and be a part of his career move. According to Whitehead, his entire family had a great time.

"Even my little daughter, she's only 2 years old," he said. "She was into the game. She normally never just sits there. She was really watching it."

"The military is a real big part of our community, and so are the Sea Wolves," said Beard. "It's a natural combination because a lot of guys and girls in the military are sports fans, and [the Sea Wolves] are the best thing on the Coast when it comes to that."

As a retired Navy chief petty officer, Beard feels it's important for the community to show their thanks for what the military does. The Military Appreciation Night does this, and he hopes to make it an annual event.

"It's something that we're going to continue to do. As long as I'm here, there's always going to be a Military Appreciation Night," stated Beard.

The Sea Wolves skated their way to victory, and the 'Fearless' Seabees committed to serve their country for several more years. Fans had a great time watching the Sea Wolves beat the opposing team, and they applauded the Seabees in appreciation for continuing to serve their country. ⚓

Right: MR2 Lee Cash repeats the oath of reenlistment to NMCB 74 Commanding Officer CDR Fran Castaldo. Above, center: In front of more than 5,000 fans, nine 'Fearless' Seabees reenlist in the Navy.

Above, left: CE2 Tammy Baerwald sends CM1 (SCW) Jimmy Tate to the mats during a training session.
Above, right: Sensei Ken Klunder demonstrates a takedown maneuver to Baerwald.

WHAM!

Seabee learns self-defense, self-discipline through Aikido

Before the opponent who tried to attack Construction Electrician 2nd Class Tammy Baerwald had realized it, he was flat on his back looking at the lights from his position on the padded gym floor.

"Whoa!" was the only word that Construction Mechanic 1st Class (SCW) Jimmy Tate could say. Baerwald's moves were so fluid that Tate didn't know what was happening until it was too late.

For Baerwald, the supervisor of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) Four's Construction Electrician's Shop, discipline, self-defense and concentration are things she worked on twice a week in an Aikido class she attended at the Camp Shields gym during the battalion's deployment to Japan.

"I've been attending classes since our arrival last October," explains Baerwald. "I initially took up the class for self-defense, but over time it has taught me how to concentrate using my mind and body for good."

During each Aikido session at the gym, students watch as the teacher, or sensei, demonstrates each move. Attentive students are picked at random to participate with the sensei in demonstrating the move and allowing them to execute it.

"Aikido is a non-competitive martial art that emphasizes blending with an opponent's attack," said Sensei Ken Klunder, who teaches Aikido at the Camp Shields gym. "The movements are designed to coordinate both defending and attacking bodies in order to redirect the attack's flow of energy and to neutralize it."

"For me it's another form of strength conditioning," adds Baerwald. "Since I've taken up Aikido, I've found that its mental and physical benefits have made me a better person."

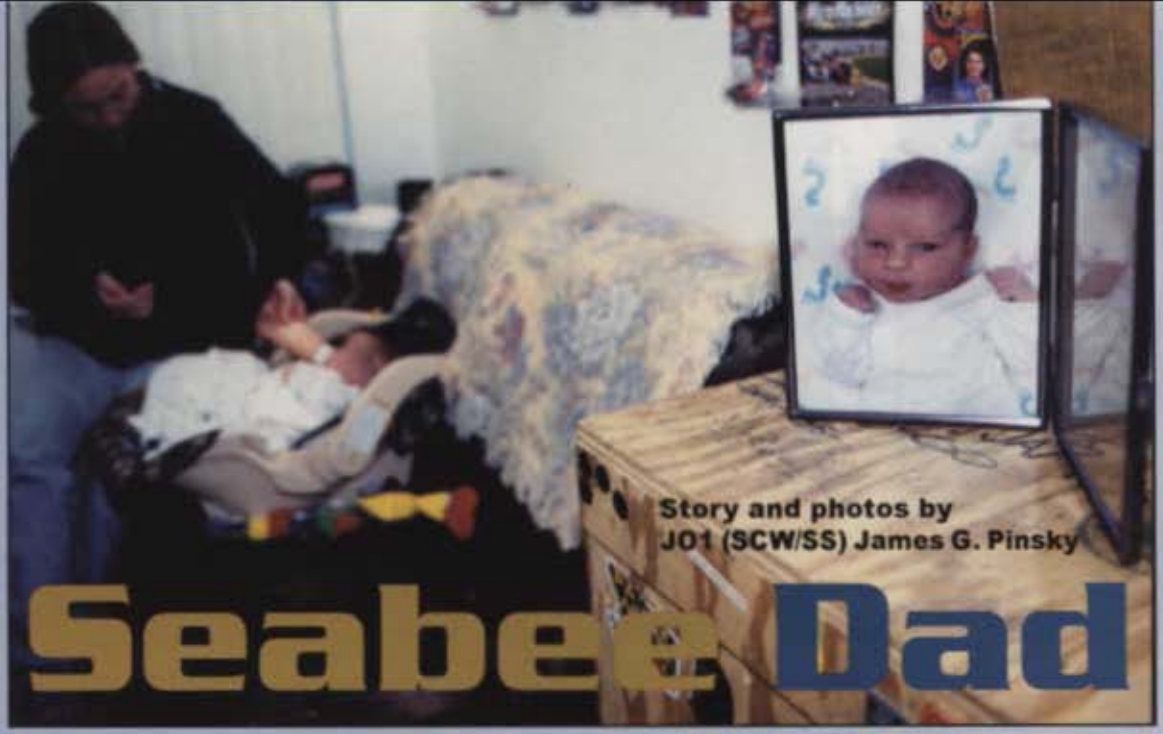
"The purpose of Aikido is not to build a better fighter, but to build a better person," Klunder added. "Aikido is a character builder through the use of sensitivity and flexibility; you are taught not to hurt someone but to redirect your opponent's energy to your advantage."

"I would recommend this class to anybody," Baerwald remarked. "Since taking up Aikido I've done things I thought I could never do."

As the Seabees of NMCB Four continue their "We Build, We Fight" mission, there are a few, like Baerwald, that if aggressed, can and will place their opponents flat on their backs and staring at the sky. ⚓

Baerwald (right) sends Aikido instructor Ken Klunder to the mat during a training session.

Story and photo by JO1 Rich Henson



Christa, SW3 James Ross' wife, and his daughter, Hannah, share some time together in much the same way the mother and daughter team did to cope with daddy being deployed.

Story and photos by
JO1 (SCW/SS) James G. Pinsky

Seabee Dad

When Steelworker 3rd Class James Ross stepped off the plane from his seven-month-long Puerto Rican deployment, he may have thought the hardest part of his job was behind him.

And it may have been, if all he had to worry about was welding. But Ross had a new tasking waiting for him back in Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) Five's homeport of Port Hueneme, Calif., helping his wife, Christa, take care of their brand-new baby girl, Hannah Inez.

Hannah Inez Ross was born on Aug. 14, 2000, at Saint Vincent's Hospital in Portland, Ore.

Thanks to prior planning, a supportive chain of command, and a baby that kept her scheduled birth, Ross was able to take leave in time to be at his wife's side throughout the delivery.

"We are very thankful that the battalion was able to support me being home for the birth of Hannah," said Ross.

The Seabees have been involved with Christa and James' lives longer than they have been involved with each other. In fact, Christa and James' ties to the Seabees may very well be to blame for them being in the delivery room.

"I was at a party and one of my friends grabbed me," said James. "He told me that he had the perfect woman for me since I was a Seabee. He introduced me to Christa, who had career intentions of being a Seabee as well."

After a brief introduction, James and Christa found that they had a lot more in common than just the Seabees. They both enjoyed auto mechanics, watching professional car racing, and now each other's company. It wasn't long before the new couple found themselves in love and as the nursery rhyme goes, first comes love then comes marriage and then comes...

"I found out I was pregnant right after James came back from NMCB Five's last homeport's field exercise (FEX)," said Christa, a Sandy, Ore., native who stands a few red hairs taller than her husband.

"We were trying for a baby so it wasn't a total surprise," James added.

Christa shed a little more light on the magic moment.

"He was a lot better after he picked his jaw up off the floor," she said.

It wasn't long before homeport came to an end and James, along with the rest of NMCB Five's main body was off to Puerto Rico for their seven-month-long Caribbean alert deployment.

"Deployments are hard on everyone," said James, "but, this one was especially difficult because I knew I had a baby on the way. I worried about Christa on a daily basis."

"We took things one day at a time," said Christa.

Day by day, Christa moved closer to her due date in August. Eventually, James quit marking the days off the calendar so he could pack his seabag for a privileged trip home on what is known throughout the battalion as "baby leave."

Once back in Portland, it wasn't long before the big day finally arrived, and Christa and James found themselves the proud new parents of a baby girl, Hannah Inez. With both mommy and the new baby doing well, James begrudgingly headed back to Puerto Rico to finish out NMCB Five's deployment with one more title to add to his lifetime resume, which already included son, Sailor, Seabee, and husband. He was a daddy.

Daddy. It was a name James liked hearing, but once he got home from deployment it became a name he earned.

James' time apart from Christa and Hannah meant he had some catching up to do.

"Some of the most important things that James missed after he returned to Puerto Rico was the initial bonding Hannah and I had," said Christa. "James was gone for two months before he saw Hannah again and to her, he was a stranger until he took the time to bond with her all over again."

James did have quite a bit to learn about Hannah. Christa had a two month start on him, but James proved to be a quick learner.

"He picked up on Hannah's habits quickly," said Christa. "He

learned what made her happy and what made her mad. He learned what each cry meant and what to do about it," Christa said proudly.

And what was the most important thing that James learned about being a new daddy so far?

"Navy-issue brown t-shirts aren't thick enough to keep baby puke out," said the enlightened new daddy.

As fast a learner as James seemed to be, his first real test as a new daddy came when he was left alone with Hannah for a long period.

"I really thought I was ready to be left alone with Hannah," said James. "I knew all her cries, how to get her to sleep and change the nastiest of diapers."

Hannah proved to be a tough judge of James' progress.

"When I came home both Hannah and James were in tears," Christa grinned.

"Hannah was hungry so I went to feed her," James professed. "No big deal, I thought to myself. I had watched Christa do it plenty of times. The only problem was that there wasn't enough formula already made and I had no idea where she kept more mix," James admitted. "I looked all over the apartment that day, I have never felt so helpless in all my life."

After, what to James and Hannah seemed like an eternity, Christa came home and showed James where she kept the formula and all was well with the Ross family. James' experience helped both parents understand how important communication is between both parents, and the couple worked even harder to become good parents.

"Being good parents is all about teamwork," said James.

"We learn as we go," said Christa. "With James back, there's a lot of things he does that makes my job as a mother easier. If I'm changing the baby, he might be making more formula, or if he knows I'm tired, he may take over all of the baby's responsibilities so I can take a nap."

James compared a busy day with the baby with that of a pit crew with their racecar.

"While I'm changing the baby, Christa might be getting formula ready," he said. "If I finish before she does, then I might start packing extra clothes or double checking Hannah's car seat. Everyone has a job to do and you do it. As well as you can, as fast as you can."

Christa and James' team attitude is something they promote wherever they go.

"When I went to a baby education course called Baby and Mom, I told them that it should be called *Baby and Me* because fathers need to be there just as much as mothers do," said Christa. "James was the only father at the class. I was very proud of him."

James' studious nature and hard work is slowly beginning to pay off as he recalls a recent milestone with Hannah that he regards as his proudest moment to date as a new father.

"Right after I returned from Puerto Rico, whenever Christa would leave the room while I was holding Hannah, the baby would cry," said James. But, one day Christa went into the bedroom and Hannah didn't cry. It meant, at least to me as her father, that she finally trusted me. I've never been prouder."

Christa has her own ideas as to what her proudest moment is with James.

"Despite all the hard work this baby has meant to us, James hasn't given up on us. He copes with whatever is thrown at him, and there are a lot of men who can't say that."

As James continues to bond with Hannah and earn more credits in his lifelong degree in fatherhood he begins to talk less about the things he does wrong and more about the things he does right.

"I like to sing to her," James said. "I know I'm no great singer, but she loves it and it makes her laugh. You know that big, loud laugh that stays in your head all day long. Yeah, that's cool." ⚓

Left: Hannah is bottlefed by her daddy, SW3 James Ross, weeks after he arrived home from NMCB Five's seven-month Caribbean deployment last fall. Feeding his daughter is one of the many things Ross does to bond with her.
Above: Held by her mother, Christa, Hannah reacts to her daddy when he smiles.

With children from the Maranatha Academy playing in the background, a Seabee from NMCB Five works on the Maranatha Church building project outside Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.
Photo by JO1 (SCW/SS) James G. Pinsky

continued from page 19

"The kids at the academy are always smiling when they walk past us," said Walker. "It's refreshing."

Maranatha serves both as a Baptist church and a private K-4 through high school academy. American military influence flows freely there as well. Many of the students have parents who serve in the military, and one of the teachers at the academy, Cherie Simmons, is the wife of an Army soldier stationed at Naval Station Roosevelt Roads.

The Seabees' assistance in building the church was not the first time the neighboring military populace has helped the church out.

"Hurricane George wiped out our first church here," said Popwell. "The military helped rebuild us then, and they are helping us now."

In addition to the construction that the Seabees provided, there were times when the Bees' mere presence was a help.

"I was walking through the lunch room on a break," said Constructionman Recruit Joshua Eichelberger, "and I noticed that one of the ladies was having trouble putting some cans back on the top shelf so I put them up there for her. It was no big deal, but she wouldn't stop thanking me. You'd think I had just saved her life or something from the way she reacted."

Eichelberger's gesture of good will showed that Seabees bleed more than just blood; they bleed humanity. And that's what projects like Maranatha are all about. Seabees helping others do what they can't do for themselves.

Maybe that's what the MCPON meant when he said "Seabees do God's work." ⚓

Right: Tents covered the mountainside in the Kurdish refugee camp of Yekmel. Refugees were transported from Yekmel to the newly established camp at Zakho during Operation Provide Comfort, an Allied effort to aid the refugees who fled the forces of Saddam Hussein in northern Iraq.
Below: NMCB 133 Seabees use a 600-foot water well drilling system as they drill a well near a Kurdish refugee tent city.
Photos by PH2 (AC) Mark Kettenhofen, taken in 1991

From The Archive

Operation PROVIDE COMFORT

Following Desert Storm, the Kurdish minority living in northwestern Iraq rebelled in an attempt to win independence. The Iraqi government responded harshly and a gigantic refugee problem developed as hundreds of thousands of Kurds fled their villages into the mountains. The United Nations intervened to protect the Kurds, and an Allied-occupied, protected enclave was established around Zakho, Iraq. A relief operation, Operation Provide Comfort, was launched to provide facilities for the refugees until they could return to their villages.

On April 11, 1991, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133, deployed at Rota, Spain, was ordered to send its Air Detachment to Zakho. This was followed on April 22 with orders for the battalion to recall all its details and to redeploy its main body to Zakho. While in Iraq, NMCB 133 was under the tactical command of the U.S. Army 18th Construction Brigade, consisting of the U.S. Army 94th Heavy Engineer Battalion, a British army engineer squadron, a Dutch engineer battalion, and several smaller U.S. Army logistical units. NMCB 133's camp was established in a walled compound which was also the headquarters of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit and the 18th Engineer Brigade. The Seabees were immediately over-tasked and went to a 12-hour day schedule, providing support to the refugee camps in the area. Work consisted of latrine construction, electrical and water-well support, road grading, forklift support, berm construction, and wash-rack construction. In general, the work could best be described as emergency service relief work.

It was originally anticipated that the Seabees would remain at Zakho for three months. It turned out, however, that they were able to leave after only eight weeks because during that period upwards of 300,000 Kurds were convinced that it was safe to return to their homes. The displaced persons camps near Zakho which had held as many as 60,000 Kurds at the midpoint of the deployment, saw this number drop to less than 15,000 by the time NMCB 133 departed. ⚓

From a Seabee history prepared in 1997 by Dr. Vincent A. Transano, former Naval Facilities Engineering Command historian in Port Hueneme, Calif. This history can be found at the Naval Historical Center website http://www.history.navy.mil.

FACTS ABOUT OPERATION PROVIDE COMFORT

Operation conducted by U.S. European Command, Army Lt. Gen. John M. Shalikashvili commanding.

11,936 U.S. personnel engaged at peak, May 21, 1991.

Total allied coalition personnel involved at peak, 21,701.

Relief supplies delivered: 4,416.6 tons by ground transports and 12,683.2 tons in 3,901 air sorties.

Maximum Kurdish refugee count in tent cities, 57,350, May 24, 1991.

U.S. relief: 4.79 million prepackaged ration meals and 2,687.5 tons of bulk food; 200,717 gallons of water; 211,788 blankets; and 23,500 tents.

From the 1991 Defense Almanac

Refugee children smile as a companion carries supplies delivered by U.S. military personnel during Operation Provide Comfort, an Allied effort to aid Kurdish refugees who fled the forces of Saddam Hussein in northern Iraq.
Photo by PH3 James R. Klein, taken in 1991

Short Bursts

FY00 Battle "E" Battalions

The Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCB) Five and 18 were selected as Pacific Fleet's best of type active and reserve Seabee battalions. NMCB 74 and NMCB 23 were selected as Atlantic Fleet's FY00 active and reserve recipients of the Battle "E." Battle "E" recognition signifies the highest levels of performance in battle efficiency and contingency mission readiness. ⚓

Peltier and Perry Awards for FY00

NMCB Five and NMCB 23 were named as the FY00 outstanding Naval Mobile Construction Battalions in the active and reserve components, respectively. NMCB Five is the recipient of the Society of American Military Engineers' Peltier Award, and NMCB 23 is the recipient of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command Perry Award. Principal selection criteria for both awards include excellence in command leadership, readiness, construction, safety, equipment management, logistics, retention, and human resources. ⚓

NMCB 133 Seabees Remember Fallen Brothers

During NMCB 133's deployment to Naval Air Station, Sigonella, Sicily, it was noticed that a memorial to three fallen Seabees from NMCB 62 had fallen into a state of disrepair. The Second Class Petty Officer Association for Detail Sigonella took it as their mission to repair the memorial to their fallen brothers. On Friday, Jan. 12, 2001, the memorial was rededicated in a short, yet appropriate ceremony.

The memorial was erected in 1989 to remember three Seabees who, while deployed to Sigonella, lost their lives in a vehicle accident at the site of the memorial. The accident occurred when a crew truck rolled after exiting the roadway, killing the three Seabees and injuring several others. Over the past 11 years, the memorial had slowly become overgrown and forgotten. At the beginning of NMCB 133's deployment, the memorial could hardly be seen through the overgrown weeds. The Second Class Association gave the memorial a much-needed facelift and brought it to a state better than when originally placed. ⚓

Provided by ENS Mike Meiggs

LT Peter H. Rosa, former NMCB 133 chaplain, reminded that "..we can never forget those who came before us" in a memorial rededication ceremony.

Camp Mitchell Speaks to the World

Since mid-November, Seabees deployed to Rota, Spain, have enjoyed the use of Camp Mitchell's newest communication and entertainment center. NMCB 133's Bravo Company divided a pre-engineered building's empty half into three rooms: a Cyber Shack, a telephone center, and a small movie theater. The other half of the building is the Seabee gym.

The Cyber Shack houses six computer workstations. Seabees can use them for personal email or web-surfing during their off-time. The telephone center houses seven booths, each with a telephone, allowing battalion members to call family and friends at their leisure. The movie theater has more than 600 movies available, boasts a projection screen TV, surround sound, and sofa and recliner seating for about 40.

Other improvements to the camp have included the construction of new offices for the Alfa Company Commander and Company Chief, a rehabilitation of the old office spaces to be used as the company dispatch office, the conversion of the old phone center into a dry storage facility, the construciotn of a new office for the Information Systems department, the building of a video teleconferencing room, and the installation of a new multi-purpose meeting room in the old Silver City building. ⚓

Provided by LTJG John R. Withers

Seabees praised by National Geographic Society

Seabees from NMCB 23, based at Fort Belvoir, Va. were praised by the National Geographic Society and Earth Conservation Corps (ECC) at a December ceremony in Washington, D.C., for their efforts in constructing the new Matthew A. Henson Earth Conservation Center. NMCB 23 Seabees contributed more than 2,000 man-days in the renovation of an abandoned pumping station that now houses the center. Over eight months, the Seabees poured new concrete floors, installed a boiler, replaced windows and doors, installed heating and cooling systems, constructed office spaces and an observation deck, rewired the building's electrical system and installed tile flooring, wooden cabinetry, steel countertops and two stainless steel fish tanks.

Using a concept widely used for years in Germany, the Seabees created a "green roof" for the pumphouse. Shallow-rooted vegetation planted in a thin layer of soil helps cut water runoff into the Anacostia River, reduce heating and cooling expenses for the building and improve quality of air by naturally filtering out pollution. A section of the green roof area includes a wire cage to provide shelter for injured birds such as eagles, hawks, falcons and owls.

This is the second such renovation by NMCB 23's Seabees. They rebuilt the Old Capitol Pumphouse, now a headquarters for ECC, farther up the Anacostia River last summer. Founded in 1989, ECC is a nonprofit organization providing young, at-risk adults the chance

to succeed in the face of violence, educational barriers and lack of work experience often seen within inner cities, and providing environmental education and restoration efforts. ⚓

Provided by JOCS (AW) Terie Hynish, NMCB 23 public affairs

NMCB 25 Conducts Joint Airlift Exercise with Air Force Squadron

Seabees from NMCB 25, Fort McCoy, Wis., participated last November in a joint airlift exercise, named Operation Green Stinger, with the Air Force's 440th Airlift Squadron, Milwaukee, Wis. at Fort McCoy. Air Force pilots and crew practiced airlifting the Seabee's personnel and equipment while the Seabees used the exercise to test and train the battalion's mobilization readiness and capability.

The 440th trained NMCB 25 personnel how to properly load troops and equipment, which included a sport utility vehicle, a humvee, a two-and-one-half ton truck, and a four-wheel drive rough terrain forklift, into two Air Force C-130 airplanes.

Following the training, the aircraft took off and flew over south and southeast Wis., including over a Veteran's Day parade in Oshkosh, Wis., for approximately one to two hours before returning to Fort McCoy. For many of the Seabees, it was the first time they were able to fly in a military aircraft.

In addition to the airlift, NMCB 25 Seabees used Operation Green Stinger to enhance Mount Out Control Center (MOCC), tactical convoy, and embarkation skills. The battalion's communication platoon improved their communication procedures by using the new AN/PRC-138 radio and SINCGARS (Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio System), marking the first time a naval reserve Seabee battalion used them. ⚓

Provided by NMCB 25 Public Affairs

NMCB 25 Seabees load a two-and-a-half ton utility truck onto an Air Force C-130 at Fort McCoy, Wis., during Operation Green Stinger. The joint exercise is designed to test and train the battalion's mobilization readiness and capability.

NMCB Seven Seabees Save Navy Thousands of Dollars

NMCB Seven Seabees, Petty Officer 1st Class Keith Lee and Constructionman Tavares Anderson saved the Navy an estimated $30,000 by repairing an aircraft crash crane at Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.

According to Jeremiah Glover, Property Disposal Officer for the Defense Reutilization Marketing Office (DRMO), the crane was given to DRMO by the public works department. Unfortunately, the 110,000-pound piece of equipment arrived with engine problems and a flat tire. Glover said contractors estimated repairs to total approximately $30,000. In July 2000, Air Operations at Naval Air Facility (NAF) Atsugi, Japan, contacted Glover regarding the crane. A representative from the facility said they needed the crane to remove disabled aircraft from runways and were willing to pay for its transportation.

Recently, NAF Atsugi was able to obtain funding for the move and asked that the crane be shipped to Japan. DRMO could not move the crane and asked the Seabees for help. Displaying the "Can Do" spirit Seabees are famous for, Lee and Anderson went to work. They fixed the blower on the engine and repaired the eight-foot-high tire.

These Seabees completed the task in three days, and then moved the crane to the pier where the cargo ship, The Clipper, took it to Cape Canaveral. From there, it went by rail to Washington State and then was sent via a carrier to Japan.

Glover said, "The Seabees did a great job, and without their support, the mission of moving the crane could not have been accomplished. A new crane would have cost $250,000!" ⚓

Story and photo by JO1 Evelyn F. Biskeborn

Anderson (standing) and Lee saved the Navy $30,000 in repairs for a crane.

Projects

USO in Pascagoula

Seabees from NMCB Five from Port Hueneme, Calif., NMCB Seven from Gulfport, Miss., and NMCB 26, a reserve unit from Detroit, Mich., contributed to the quality of life of approximately 3,500 military members and their families throughout the Mississippi Gulf Coast by building a United Services Organization (USO) facility. The project was completed in April 2001 with a grand opening in May. ⚓

The Chief of Naval Operations, ADM Vern Clark, visited with Detail Pascagoula Seabees from NMCB Five last August.
Photo by JO1 (SCW/SS) James G. Pinsky

Senator Trent Lott of Mississippi stands with NMCB Seven Detail Pascagoula in front of the USO.
Photo provided by NMCB Seven

Marine BEQ Pavilion

NMCB 133 Seabees improved the quality of life for Marines at their Naval Station Rota, Spain, barracks by constructing a pavilion from October 2000 to February 2001. The project included sidewalks, two horseshoe pits, and a grill. In order to complete the project, 300 mandays of effort with several different builder skills was required. First a 25 feet by 30 feet concrete floor was placed followed by 3,900 brick for the walls. Once the brick was in place, 100 square meters of stucco was applied to the brick and painted. Also during this time, the project steelworkers fabricated the steel frame to support the roof. The next evolution was the hardest part of the project. This was to place the terrazzo tile for the bench seats and the tops of the walls. Crew leader Builder 2nd Class Warren Martin stated, "Installing terrazzo tile is not something Seabees do very often. The crew and I enjoyed the chance to work with it." The concrete floor was then covered with 68 square meters of Gres De Breda Tile, the Spanish name for terracotta tile. The final stage of the project was to install the roof. It was made of steel but designed to look like the classic Spanish tile roof system. ⚓
Provided by BU1 (SCW) Donnie McKinney, Project Supervisor

World War II Bridge

NMCB-18 Seabees from the Naval Reserve Center in Helena, Mont., working under a cooperative agreement with the Montana Department of Transportation, used a World War II-vintage Bailey bridge to temporarily replace a collapsed Lewis and Clark county bridge. The Seabees had the bridge installed and ready for use within eight days of the collapse. The construction coincided with the Seabees' regular drill weekend, saving the state and county from labor costs for assembly of the bridge.

The collapse occurred last fall when a 22-ton excavator attempted to drive over the 100-year-old, 50-foot bridge, the second oldest bridge in the county. (The operator of the excavator received a ticket for being 40,000 pounds overweight.) The Bailey bridge, owned by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDOT) provides access for 14 primary residences and about a dozen recreational properties until the county rebuilds the bridge. First introduced in World War II, Bailey bridges can be built on site in 10-foot increments to meet almost any length and weight load requirements. ⚓
Provided by ENS Michael Sullivan

NMCB 18 Seabees erect a Bailey bridge.
Photo by ENS Michael Sullivan

ACB One Amphibious Assault Bulk Fuel System

Sixteen Sailors from Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) One recently completed a short-notice, mini-deployment to San Nicholas Island off San Diego, Calif.'s, coast. It is home to a small Navy test and missile range facility that was in danger of running out of fuel. The Sailors provided the much-needed fuel to the island's power plant via the Amphibious Assault Bulk Fuel System, a system that takes fuel from a tanker or barge through a hose and puts it ashore. Providing more than 33,000 gallons of fuel through 2,000 feet of hose to the shore allowed the base to continue generating electricity for three to four weeks and gave them time to arrange for repairs to their normal underwater pipeline system. ⚓

ACB One Bravo Company Sailors ready the conduit for transferring fuel ashore to San Nicolas Island.
Photo by LT Erin Sanders

Photo by JO1 Rich Henson

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Four's career counselor, NC1 (SW) Jerod Chavis (left), talks with EO1 (SCW) Willie Williams about Navy career programs.

Take charge of your Navy career. Talk with a career counselor today.

www.staynavy.navy.mil

Busy Bees in Japan

Photo by PH3 Erik Wehnes

Photo by PH1 Richard D. Estep

NMCB Four Seabees worked on a new fitness center at Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, Japan. Above: Seabees begin building the base structure of a wall. Right: BU1 Edward Milteer measures the distance between two stand pipes.
See more photos of NMCB Four projects inside on page 11.

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