

# Beeline



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# What's Buzzing?

By EQCM Hank Barstow

For the past two years, we have spent a lot of time and energy on the new Navy—the new brigades, closing bases, decommissioning units, reorganizing billets and relocating people and jobs. And it's not over yet. Many articles are written to update us on changes. I would like to take this opportunity to talk about our responsibility in the enlisted ranks.

**Focus.** Focus on yourself. Ask, "What am I doing for me? What can I do to better my profession, my growth as a petty officer or a chief?" We get good advice on the airlines: "If you need to help someone next to you, put on your own oxygen mask first!" Helping yourself to survive and be happy allows you to help others.

**Professional Growth.** Really do your rating courses. There are many more besides the ones you must do for the test. Anyone can benefit from basic courses. You should do Yeoman, Personnelman, Storekeeper and other support rating courses. If nothing else, you will gain respect for your shipmates' professional ability. Above all, if you really do the course, you can't help but learn and be better able to help your career and others around you. Taking care of yourself is leading by example.

**Job Security.** If you can honestly check off your personnel advancement requirements, combat warfare skills and leadership course, you will have a job no matter what

happens to the command structure. A sharp, professional third class petty officer who can do all this can do it anywhere in the world, and that goes for any rating at any level.

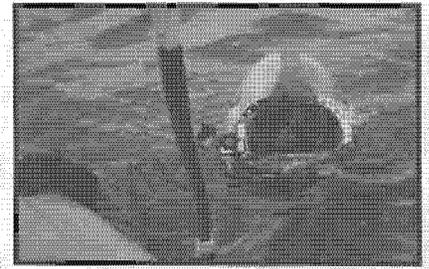
Don't blame the system. In almost all cases you can do these things on your own. You don't need permission to help yourself.

**Total Quality Leadership.** It starts at the top. You are the top to those below you. We look to our admirals and captains to start TQL. TQL starts with the fireteam leader, squad leader, platoon chief, company chief. TQL starts at every level.

**The Chief.** When I was a nonrate, the chief was a god. My world stopped at the chief. Has that changed? Why? TQL to that young person who came in yesterday means you will help set the course for his personal and professional confidence.

**Identity.** The One Navy concept is total integration of active duty and reserve, full-time and part-time. Whatever you are, be proud. I carry a reserve ID card now, and I understand my obligation to the Seabees. I don't run the Navy every day. I'm there in case the full-timers need me. If they do, I'm ready in professional knowledge and military bearing. I am very proud to be a Seabee reservist.

**Barstow is the command master chief for the Reserve Naval Construction Force Support Command.**



## Interior View

### ON THE COVER

*A diver from UCT 2 repairs underwater cable during deployment. Story on page 3.*

### PUSHES AND PULLS

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### NEW BRIGADE BOSS

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*NMCB 3's EO1 John Collins sings with the stars. Page 8.*

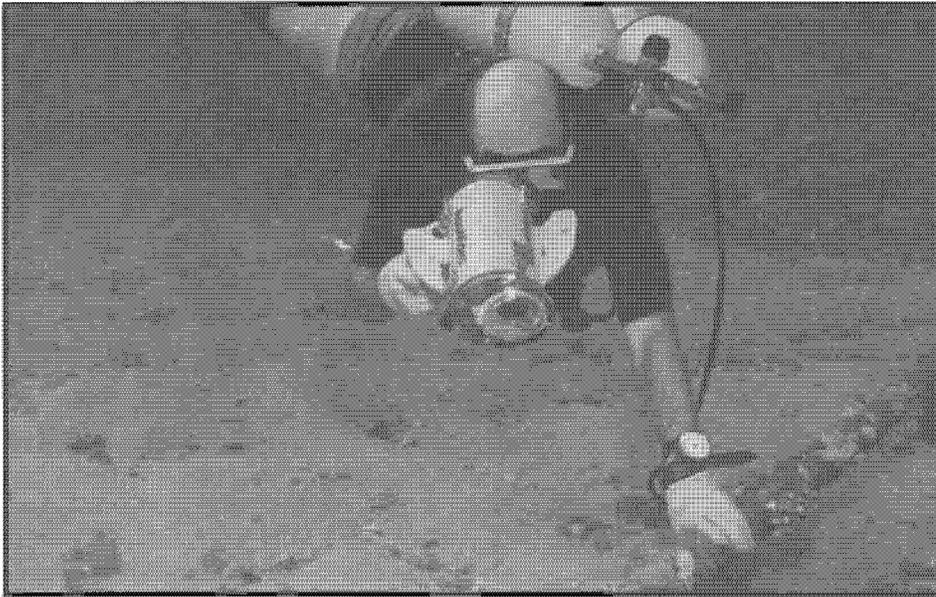
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HMCS Leland Betsill uses some of the Navy's high-tech underwater equipment to inspect a submerged cable. (Photo by PH2 Thomas Dolan)

## Arctic to Hawaii:

### *UCT 2 divers wrap up deployments*

**PORT HUENEME, Calif.**—Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 2 recently ended deployments ranging from the Arctic to Hawaii. The team's three air details did construction, inspection and maintenance work in support of Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard operations.

Air Det Alpha installed an aid to navigation off Catalina Island, Calif., where boat groundings occurred the year before. The det then inspected fleet moorings and an underwater surveillance cable near Seal Beach and San Clemente Island, Calif.

**While preparing** for their next job, Air Det Alpha helped the island of Guam in the aftermath of an earthquake. Within days of the earthquake, a detail performed underwater inspections of waterfront facilities.

Air Det Alpha completed their deployment by doing hydrographic surveys at several overseas locations. Information from the surveys will be used for upcoming exercises.

Air Det Bravo's deployment began off the Hawaiian Islands. Bravo

inspected waterfront structures and an oceanographic cable on the island of Oahu. Next, they completed maintenance and repairs to an underwater range off the island of Kauai. From Hawaii, Bravo went to the frigid waters of the Arctic Ocean to inspect and repair underwater facilities.

**While Air Dets Alpha and Bravo** traveled, Air Det Charlie performed four underwater construction projects on the West Coast. Beginning in San Francisco, they repaired a pier at Treasure Island. This involved encasing 14 piles with concrete and wrapping 178 piles with plastic to extend the pier's life.

**Det Charlie then went** to Washington to inspect a cable at Pacific Beach and a pier at Whidbey Island. The team also installed an oceanographic cable from a naval facility to the water's edge and from a ship to the beach at Whidbey Island.

*Story by UCT 2 public affairs staff.*

## NMCB 18 to build new headquarters

By Ensign Mike Lukshin

**FORT LEWIS, Wash.**—Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 18 Seabees recently broke ground for a new \$7 million, 70,000-square-foot home.

The new headquarters space, scheduled for completion in October, will be shared by Seabees and the Marine Corps Reserve's 4th Landing Support Battalion (LSB).

This project started in 1988 with the decision to close Naval Station Puget Sound, Wash. The NMCB 18 commanding officer at that time began searching the Puget Sound area for a relocation site. Because Fort Lewis offered the most advantages, negotiations began for building approval. In 1992, the Seabees and Marines Corps Reserve agreed that it would be cost-effective to combine the headquarters of NMCB 18 and the 4th LSB into one location.

When completed, the new site will offer the reserve Seabees and Marines separate administrative, warehouse, and vehicle maintenance spaces, but combined classrooms, locker rooms, and drill hall. This shared headquarters will also provide joint training opportunities for the Seabees and Marines.

*Lukshin is the public affairs officer for NMCB 18.*



BU3 Jeffrey Miller and two youngsters work at the Snug Harbor Cultural Center. (Photo by EA2 Tina Lin Keon)

## The Big Apple:

### CBU 423 takes on projects in New York

By EA2 Tina Lin Keon

**STATEN ISLAND, N.Y.**—The Seabees of Construction Battalion Unit (CBU) 423 recently overhauled the botanical garden pond at the Snug Harbor Cultural Center here. This took 4,000 man-hours and saved the center thousands of dollars.

**The work at the center** also served as a training project for troubled youth interested in the construction trades. The Snug Harbor work-study program enhances the lives of the youths by providing stable role models and hands-on training.

The Seabees' efforts did not go unnoticed. Often the cultural center staff would personally deliver sodas and water to the job site, and they threw a pizza party for the

construction crew. The construction crew and supporting personnel were also recognized by the executive director of the botanical gardens at an awards presentation and luncheon.

**The men and women** of CBU 423 completed many civic projects for the community of Staten Island as well as the unit's normal construction projects and camp maintenance. CBU 423 has built an observation deck at a wetland sanctuary; upgraded a local Boy Scout camp; revitalized two Little League ballfields; constructed an environmental shelter at Blue Heron Park that allows local school children to study nature; and performed many other civic projects.

*Keon is a public affairs representative for CBU 423.*

## Seabees take part in school science project

By J02 Luis M. Luque

**ROTA, Spain**—When asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" eight-year-old Nicole Briggs responded, "I might want to be a Seabee."

During a recent field trip to Camp Mitchell here, Nicole and her classmates saw what Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133's Seabees do on the job. "I thought it was neat," she said. "I liked the big machines and everything."

**Carol Worby**, a third grade teacher at Naval Station Rota's David Glasgow Farragut Elementary School, got the idea for the field trip when she began teaching a science unit called "pushes and pulls." The unit teaches kids about simple and compound machines and gives them hands-on exposure to machinery and science in general.

The NMCB 133 Kangroos showed the kids how bulldozers, cranes and other vehicles use pulleys and levers to lift and move things, just like the students learned in their textbooks. After the demonstrations, the children were allowed to climb aboard the vehicles and sit in the drivers' seats.

**The children were** curious about everything, asking questions like, "Do you use guns and weapons to fight back?" and, "Why do you wear a hard hat?" But after two hours, as most eight-year-olds are apt to do, the kids became a little fidgety—just in time for the arrival of Santa Claus, played by BU1 Frederick Seemans, who provided candy and small iron-on Seabee logos for everyone.

*Luque is a public affairs representative for NMCB 133.*

## CBU 409 Seabees help battle California fires

By Lt. J.Y. McGarry

**LONG BEACH, Calif.**—On Nov. 2, the California Office of Emergency Services asked Construction Battalion Unit (CBU) 409 to help fight fires that burned 18,000 acres in southern California.

Two 1,000-gallon water trucks from the 63rd Army Reserve Command were loaded for the drive to Malibu. The CBU 409 crews were assigned as strike teams 81 and 82. Another water truck was delivered to CBU 409 by the 31st Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) and was assigned to strike team 83. Strike teams 81 and 82 resupplied fire trucks fighting structural fires. Strike team 83 was assigned to a fire station in the Fernwood area.

The 31st NCR delivered a fuel truck and crew at 1:30 the next morning. Assigned as strike team 95, they were dispatched to refuel fire trucks. By noon, the second shift of CBU 409 Seabees arrived and relieved their shipmates and the crew from the 31st NCR. The Seabees continued to refill and refuel fire trucks throughout that day.

By Nov. 4, the Seabees shifted to refueling trucks in the staging area. There were over 1,000 fire engines and only a few fuel trucks. The 'Bees delivered 8,000 gallons of diesel fuel to the fire crews. On Nov. 7, the Seabees were released and returned to Naval Station Long Beach.

*McGarry is the officer in charge of CBU 409.*

## Heine assumes command of 2nd NCB

By Cmdr. Richard L. Thompson

**WASHINGTON**—Rear Adm. William A. Heine III relieved Rear Adm. Melvin H. Chiogioji as commander of the 2nd Naval Construction Brigade (NCB) in ceremonies at the Navy Yard here Sept. 17. Chiogioji, of Silver Spring, Md., retired from the Naval Reserve after serving as the first commander of this integrated active duty and reserve brigade.

Chiogioji received the Legion of Merit for "beginning the transition to a completely new way of managing and employing reserve forces which is now viewed as the model for other warfare communities." During his tour, 2nd NCB Seabees supported Navy and Marine Corps units over-

seas and in the United States. They also provided disaster recovery and humanitarian aid worldwide.

Heine was previously Commander, Reserve Naval Construction Force (RNCF) Support Command, program manager of the Naval Reserve Contingency Engineering Program, and commander of the Reserve Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command.

A 1962 Naval Academy graduate, Heine has served with Public Works Center (PWC) Subic Bay, Philippines; Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 62; Construction Battalions Pacific (CBPAC); PWC Detachment 120; PWC Yoko-Pearl; Reserve CBPAC; 9th Reserve Naval Con-

struction Regiment; and RNCF. He holds bachelor and master of science degrees from Purdue University.

**Heine's decorations** include the Bronze Star with Combat "V," Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal, Navy Unit Commendation, and Meritorious Unit Commendation. He also earned an Army Meritorious Unit Medal, Combat Action Ribbon, Vietnam Service Ribbon, and other service ribbons.

Heine is chief executive officer and president of American Constructors, Inc., which he founded in 1982.

*Thompson is the public affairs officer for the 2nd NCB.*



Construction Battalion Unit 406 Seabees built this memorial for a utility greens burial ceremony in Lemoore, Calif. SW1 Rodney Appleby fabricated a soft cover out of sheet metal for the monument.



EO1 Robert Lake checks leveling on water pipe the Seabees are installing at a Pearl Harbor golf course. (Photo by JO1 Rebecca Fox Newsom)

## NMCB detachment tackles projects at Hawaii bases for CINCPACFLT

By JO1 Rebecca Fox Newsom

**PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii**—Due to a shrinking budget, the commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT) set up a Seabee site here in October to meet construction needs in Oahu's Navy community. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4, homeported in Port Hueneme, Calif., has 13 men at the site.

The Seabees removed fencing and poured a sidewalk at the submarine base here. The men will also replace the fence surrounding nearby Merry Point Landing.

**An environmental project** is underway at the Navy-Marine Corps golf course. "We're laying in 165 feet of eight-inch iron water pipe," said project supervisor, EO1 Robert Lake. Connecting the new pipe to the city's existing ones will enable the Navy to use nonpotable water, instead of processed drinking water, to irrigate the golf course. The Honolulu Board

of Water Supply estimates this will save more than 250,000 gallons of processed water a day.

**The ditch** for the new line is four to five feet wide and seven feet deep. About three feet down, the Seabees hit concrete, and had to remove it with a jackhammer.

"We're putting in iron pipe and the line we're tying into is steel," Lake said. "Because the two pipes are different, the joints don't fit together just right, so we've had to order a special joint. That's going to take about six weeks to come in."

In May, the NMCB 4 detail will be replaced by a larger detachment from NMCB 5.

"Seabee labor is certainly cheaper than trying to contract the work out," said Lt. Steve Bertolaccini, staff civil engineer for the sub base.

*Newsom is a public affairs representative for Naval Base Pearl Harbor.*

## Blood, guts, and gore... but it's fake

By JO2 Randy Bagoly

**CAMP MOSCRIP, Puerto Rico**—The scene was grim. Injured people lay scattered around the immobile truck. The driver was slumped over the steering wheel. The horn wailed like a call for help.

A tragic accident? Not exactly.

The scenario was part of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7's mass casualty drill held here Jan. 26.

**The "victims"** were volunteers. The blood was fake, but the value of the training was very real. A team from the 2nd Naval Construction Brigade (NCB) controlled the drill.

The first medical team arrived on the scene just under five minutes after the battalion quarterdeck was notified that the drill was to begin. Faced with 12 "victims," the medics decided to call for an additional ambulance. The second ambulance was dispatched from the battalion aid station and arrived as the patients were being readied for transport.

**The 2nd NCB team** had a few surprises for the medical personnel. A volunteer played the part of an uninjured Seabee who became more agitated as the drill progressed, becoming a hindrance to the medics.

As "patients" began arriving at the aid station, battalion doctors diagnosed injuries and simulated treatment.

When the drill was done, 10 of the 12 "victims" had been treated and either released or transported for further care. Two were "dead" when the team arrived on the scene.

*Bagoly is a public affairs representative for NMCB 7.*

# 'Bees finish new fire station

By J02 Luis M. Luque

**NAVAL STATION ROTA, Spain**—Navy Secretary John Dalton and Commander in Chief, Naval Forces Europe, Adm. Mike Boorda, awarded over 20 Navy Achievement Medals to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133 Seabees for building a new fire station here.

Three different battalions have worked on the \$270,000 fuel farm fire station since 1991. Originally, NMCB 1 was to finish the project started by NMCB 3, but NMCB 133 took over when NMCB 1 deployed to Somalia.

The Naval Station has two fire stations. The flight line fire station

protects the airport and industrial area, while the fuel farm fire station protects the fuel farm and housing area.

The new fire station will be home for a four-man Spanish fire team and a two-man fire inspection branch. Because it is manned 24 hours a day, the 11-room station is complete with showers, sleeping quarters, kitchen and laundry facilities.

"When we took over, the frame and skin were in place," said project supervisor BU1 Michael Hutton. "Half of the drywalls were up. The brick walls were about a foot high. The foundation and the plumbing in the foundation were done. We were

left with the finish work. Finish work is more time-consuming and requires more attention to detail. When you do finish work, you're dealing with a lot of little things like tiles, fixtures, doors and windows, painting, the details."

To make the job even more difficult, materials were hard to get. "It was more demanding because we were short on supplies," said UT3 Frank Lozano, one of the crew's plumbers. "We had to work around things. If something didn't work, we'd make it work."

*Luque is a public affairs representative for NMCB 133.*



CM2 Lawrence Leonard donates to the Naval Hospital Rota blood drive.

## Big Seabee turnout for Rota blood drive

By J02 Luis M. Luque

**ROTA, Spain**—"Because Seabees give," Cmdr. Richard McAfee said, shrugging his shoulders. McAfee, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133's commanding officer, was at a loss to explain the large turnout of his men at a Naval Hospital Rota blood drive.

"It's the best drive I've seen since I've been here," said HM2 Lew Knack. The 36 units are the most collected by the hospital in one drive in more than two years.

The accomplishment is even more significant considering how many couldn't give. A third of the men are on details in various locations from Scotland to Italy. Over half of those left at Rota cannot give blood until August because they were given antibiotics and antimalaria tablets before deploying to Iraq. About two out of three who could donate did, and many more wanted to give.

UTCN Jermon Carter joked that he did it "for the free cookies and liberty." CM2 Lawrence Leonard said, "It makes me feel better about myself."

*Luque is a public affairs representative for NMCB 133.*



SR Brian Coleman of Amphibious Construction Battalion (PHIBCB) 1 undergoes military training at Camp Pendleton, Calif. Shore operation indoctrination in November included personnel from PHIBCB 1, Naval Beach Group 1, Amphibious Construction Unit 1, and Beachmaster Unit 1. Among the training topics covered were crew-served weapons, first aid, perimeter defense, and other military skills. School of Infantry Marines taught most of the courses. (Photo by PH2 Ted Banks)

## *John Collins: The Singing Seabee of NMCB 3*

By JO2 Dan Tillman

**GUAM**—Eric Clapton, B.B. King, Boy George, Meat Loaf and EO1 John Collins of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 3. Sounds like an interesting combination for a band, huh?

Actually, Collins' voice has earned him working relationships with all these artists and many more.

Collins joined the Navy in March 1976 and started making dents in the music world in the 1980s while sta-

tioned at a NATO base in Iceland. After hearing Collins sing, the base commanding officer invited him to sing for the American ambassador to Iceland.

**Before long**, Collins was singing for the Reagans, Mikhail Gorbachev, the Queen of Denmark and several diplomats. He then began singing with a local band, touring the island as Brother John and the Albinos.

He later left Iceland for Detroit, but not before working with some

major recording stars—like Europe, A-ha, Uriah Heep, KISS, Meat Loaf and B.B. King, to name a few.

"We were playing in a club one night," Collins said, "and the manager came to me and said someone who really enjoyed my show wanted to meet me. As I approached the bar, my heart skipped. It was Eric Clapton!"

Clapton liked the show so much, he invited Collins to sing with him on

(See "Singer," page 17)

# NMCB 133 undergoes cold weather training

By JO2 Luis M. Luque

**ROTA, Spain**—Master Sgt. Patrick Mooney, chief of the Army's 10th Mountain Division Light Fighter School, has spent 14 of the last 18 winters in extremely cold places—including nine in Alaska, where the mercury can dip to 78 below zero.

Mooney is the Army's cold weather expert. Recently, Mooney and his team of instructors shared their expertise with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133 during two days of cold weather training here.

The course normally takes a week, but a lack of cold weather and the logistical problems in transporting demonstration gear to Rota prevented the usual field training.

Still, many said the course was very valuable. "I found it useful, something to look forward to in case we redeploy," said CE3 Larry Sanders. "It gave us a good heads up."

Lt. Richard Taylor, NMCB 133's training officer, said, "Even though it would have been better if we had gotten the chance to practice it in the field, it was still valuable. It got people thinking about deploying to a cold weather environment and the precautions that come with it."

Perhaps the most important lesson was one that only a few people knew: dehydration, according to Mooney, is a contributing factor in 99 percent of cold weather injuries. "Everything can be traced back to dehydration," said Mooney, who has been teaching the course off and on for 11 years.

The Seabees learned how to build shelters from available materials, how to build fires, what to eat and what to avoid eating, what to wear and how to prevent and treat hypothermia and frostbite.

*Luque is a public affairs representative for NMCB 133.*

## The Seabee Chief

By BUC J.J. Angello

From the twinkling of our history, our Navy strong and bold,  
The best and strongest leaders, wore anchors made of gold.  
By leadership and loyalty, we'll stand for all that's right.  
A Seabee Chief will firmly state, "We build and we can fight."  
From the bloody sands of Midway, through history till today,  
A Seabee Chief was always there to guide history on its way.  
The badge they wore denotes their rank, these gallant men I'm told.  
They wore a fouled anchor, that's worth much more than gold.  
For on their shoulders rests the weight of Honor tried and true.  
No matter what our nation asks, our mission we "Can Do."  
Now through these 50 years or so as Seabee history's told  
You cannot buy at any price these anchors made of gold.

*Angello is assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 13.*

## NMCB 13 is named Reserve Best of Type

By Ensign Bernard T. Donohue Jr.

**CAMP SMITH, N.Y.**—Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 13 was named Atlantic Fleet Best of Type reserve battalion for Fiscal Year 1993.

NMCB 13 worked with active duty Seabees on projects overseas. At home, the "Black Cats" built a rappelling tower for Army cadets at the U.S. Military Academy. Although construction was hampered by a blizzard in early March, the tower was completed on time and stands as a monument to the hard work of NMCB 13.

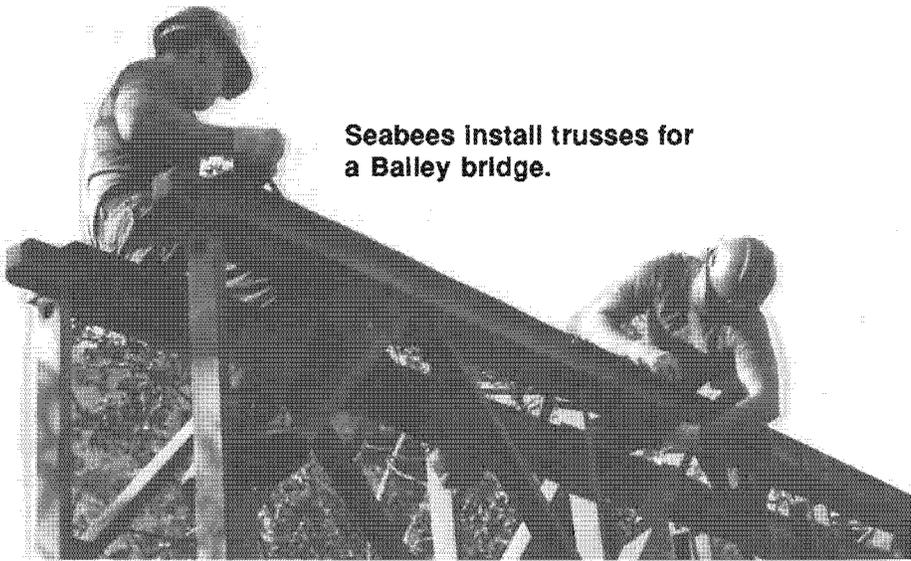
In July, the battalion conducted a mini-Greenstinger exercise. They built and transported pallets to Stewart Air Force Base, N.Y., for loading aboard an Air Force C-130 aircraft under simulated tactical conditions.

NMCB 13 is headquartered in Peekskill, N.Y., with nine detachments in New York state.

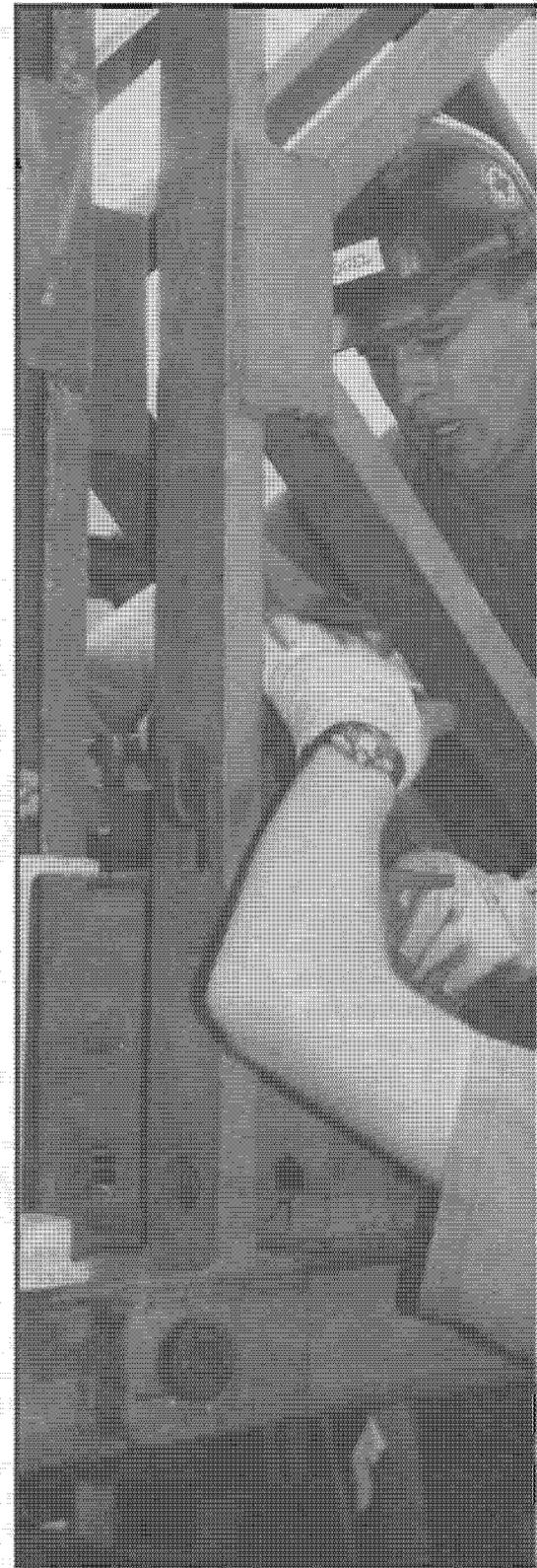
*Donohue is the public affairs officer for NMCB 13.*



A Seabee from NMCB 13 works on roadway construction for Operation Northern Viking in Iceland.



Seabees install trusses for a Bailey bridge.



SWCN William Logel and BU3 William B.



A bridge crew from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 5 takes apart a launching section.



... assemble a section of bridge truss.



CM2 Andrew Sutton tightens a bolt for one of the trusses.

## *Seabees help battle fire as it roars through California*

Story by JO1 Paul Russo  
Photos by PH2 Larry Ciullo

**PORT HUENEME, Calif.**—Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5 and the 31st Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) helped the Ventura County fire fighters battle the fire that roared out of control in October 1993.

In fear that the fire might cross the Pacific Coast Highway, officials called on the Seabees for help. The 'Bees responded by sending a 40-man detachment to expand a firebreak along the highway. The break, measuring 500 yards by 30 yards, stopped the blaze from spreading into Naval Air Station Point Mugu.

In the aftermath of the blaze, the Seabees were called for help once again. The city of Malibu asked for a temporary bridge to replace a bridge destroyed during the fire. NMCB 5 transported and assembled a Bailey bridge for the city. The temporary bridge will save motorists a 30-mile detour to another bridge to cross a creek and reach the highway. The 90-foot, 44-ton prefabricated bridge will be disassembled and returned to Construction Battalion Center Port Hueneme when Malibu completes construction of a new bridge.

*Russo and Ciullo are public affairs representatives for NMCB 5.*

## Martian invaders?

# Men in white suits

By BU3 Chad D. Fleming

**MILLINGTON, Tenn.**—The men in white suits look like characters out of an old science fiction movie. Have no fear, they are typical Seabees, attached to the asbestos abatement team with Construction Battalion Unit (CBU) 404 at Naval Air Station (NAS) Memphis.

On most mornings when other Seabees are picking up hammers and starting their heavy equipment, this special team is inspecting their respirators and putting on white Tyvec suits. With many buildings at the air base built during World War II, the amount of asbestos-containing material requiring encapsulation, repair or removal is enough to keep the team very busy.

**One job is that of removing** the floor from the communications center. Other jobs have included encapsulating asbestos pipe insulation in various mechanical and boiler rooms. With demolition of old structures also part of CBU 404 tasking, the asbestos abatement team is responsible for removing all asbestos-containing material before the buildings are demolished.

Under close supervision of Lee Barker, NAS Memphis asbestos manager, the team has saved the Navy a total of \$145,050 since Jan. 1, 1993, on the projects assigned to them. The team consists of three builders, one utilitiesman and a construction electrician.

*Fleming is project supervisor for the CBU 404 asbestos abatement team.*

## Adm. Kelso visits Seabees in Greece

By J02 Luis M. Luque

**SOUDA BAY, Greece**—Adm. Frank B. Kelso III, Chief of Naval Operations, spent part of Christmas visiting Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133 at the Naval Support Activity here.

Kelso and Commander, Fleet Air Mediterranean, Rear Adm. Jon Coleman, ate breakfast in the galley, then gave a 15-minute presentation to base personnel. A reenlistment ceremony and a brief question-and-answer session followed the talk.

Responding to a question on personnel cuts, Kelso said that although some cuts are inevitable, "Every base commanding officer wants more Seabees."

*Luque is a public affairs representative for NMCB 133.*

## Seabees build housing project for counterdrug troops in Panama

By Lt. j.g. Laura C. Moore

**NAVAL STATION PANAMA CANAL**—After nine months of construction, the Lacona housing project here is open. The \$4.5 million project will house personnel, supporting Southern Command's counterdrug mission, who now live in substandard Marine Corps expeditionary shelters.

Naval Mobile Construction Battalions 4 and 5 built con-

crete pads and installed the electrical, water, and sewer lines to support the project.

The facility can house 224 people and includes 74 single-occupancy officer units, 75 double-occupancy enlisted units, eight laundry units, and three recreational units.

Each 10-by-20-foot room includes a toilet, shower, television with cable, phone, microwave, refrigerator, and furniture. Each recreation room has a lounge,

wet bar, ice machine and game tables.

Capt. Arthur N. Rowley III, Naval Station commanding officer, said, "As we draw down from Panama, our demand for quarters to house personnel on temporary additional duty is going to increase, and this facility is going to support that."

*Moore is a public affairs representative for Naval Station Panama Canal.*

# Culture shock in Africa

*Seabees get a first-hand look at primitive conditions, poverty, material shortages and just plain 'roughing it' during deployment to Third World countries.*

By JO2 Luis M. Luque

**ROTA, Spain**—Lt. Andrew Trotta, officer in charge of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133's West Africa details, knew he was in for an odd experience after explaining his work schedule to a Ghanaian Army colonel.

"Usually we work six or seven days a week when we go on detachments like this," Trotta said. "Weekends, holidays, whatever it takes to get it done." Not this time. The colonel would have none of that. "What? Aren't you a Christian? Don't you go to church?" The schedule was adjusted...a little.

To do the humanitarian construction projects, the battalion deployed 29 men, divided into three groups, to Ghana, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. Weeks before their departure, the team knew the work would be difficult when, for one project, all they received were some sketchy blueprints, written in French.

**They expected poverty**, strange languages, and alien customs. What they got was culture shock.

"Roughing it" is a mild description for living conditions in Guinea-Bissau, the most underdeveloped of the three countries. "Their homes were adobe, with thatched roofs and open drainage," Trotta said. "We were almost always without power or water. Everything was done by flashlight and bottled water."

In Guinea-Bissau, where the official language is Portuguese, UT3 Frank Lozano, a native Spanish speaker, was the closest thing to a translator. But if living conditions were primitive and challenging, the men weren't complaining. The people they encountered more than made up for the hardships.

"I've been to a couple of countries, and these are the friendliest people I've ever met," BU2 Chris Musso said of his hosts in Ghana.

**And forget about** public transportation. "They had these little minivans called 'cho chos.' They'd be stuffed full of people, maybe 30 inside, and some others, four or five, would be hanging on the back or the roof," Trotta said. "Few people have their own vehicles because they have something like a 300-percent tax on fuel."

Danger wasn't limited to transportation, though. "The people in Ghana eat really spicy food," Trotta said. Musso agreed. "Even the candy was spicy," he said, fanning his

mouth. "They made these little peanut butter balls, full of cayenne pepper."

In Senegal, where the work was being done near the crew's living quarters, the men got along well with native soldiers, who also live nearby.

While the visitors learned about African culture, they also learned about masonry from Senegal's soldiers. "They're incredible masons," Musso said. "I'd say we learned as much from them as they learned from us."

*Luque is a public affairs representative for NMCB 133.*

## 'Major Dad' star visits NMCB 133 Seabees

By Lt. John Korka

**SOUDA BAY, Greece**—Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133 had a visit in November from Gerald McRaney, star of the TV series "Major Dad." USO Man of the Year, McRaney stopped by during a USO Mediterranean tour.

McRaney, who was raised near Gulfport, Miss., where Atlantic Fleet Seabees are headquartered, inspected the Seabees' work. While at the work sites, he posed for photos with the men and signed autographs. The Kangroos asked McRaney many questions and were pleased to hear about the reunion episode of the hit television series "Simon & Simon" currently in production.

McRaney said he heard about the "Can Do" Seabee tradition while growing up and was happy to see the Seabees living up to their motto by making a difference for Naval Support Activity Souda Bay.

Despite the brevity of McRaney's visit, the Seabees were glad to have something special to write home about. The only disappointment: his wife, Delta, wasn't traveling with him.

*Korka is a public affairs representative for NMCB 133.*

## Extended exercise:

# Extra days add realism

By JO1 Ron Schafer

**GULFPORT, Miss.**—Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1 recently completed its home port exercise (HEX) at Camp Shelby near Hattiesburg, Miss.

The HEX included a mountout of the battalion's air detachment to Camp Robinson near Little Rock, Ark.

To make training more realistic, the exercise was extended from five days to 10. "We wanted to make it as real as possible and improve our military skills," said Lt. Cmdr. Francis Castaldo, NMCB 1's operations officer. "You just can't do everything in five days."

**Castaldo** said that there were other training goals a longer HEX made possible to achieve. Among them were contingency construction

crew training, command and control, and proper weapons accountability.

Introducing a separate security company also worked well. "In the past," said Lt. Peter Lynch, NMCB 1's training officer, "Charlie Company, with some additional personnel, provided security." According to Lynch, the battalion used the new concept in Somalia for Operation Restore Hope.

"The security company did a tremendous job," said Lynch, "but I think they were overextended. We need to clearly define their mission and lessen its scope a little. But, we will definitely continue to use the security company idea."

The air det conducted their home port exercise at Camp Robinson. Three C-130 aircraft and two ground convoys carried personnel and equipment to the camp. Upon arrival,

the 91-man detachment set up their defensive perimeter and camp. About a week into the exercise, however, the det moved to a new site. The Seabees set up new fighting positions and rebuilt the camp.

**Military exercises** included simulated terrorist actions, civilian protests, drive-by shootings and gas attacks. The det also conducted a live-fire exercise with M-16 rifles.

The det worked on construction projects during their HEX. They built a large (80-by-130-foot) wooden pavilion, installed lights and fans in existing pavilions, did interior demolition on the former officer's mess and removed a decorative arch from the camp's main gate.

*Schafer is a public affairs representative for NMCB 1.*

## *Dream job...or nightmare?*

By Lt. John Korka

**SOUDA BAY, Greece**—After working around-the-clock breaking through rock, the Kangroos of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133 have finished the sewer line for the Naval Support Activity (NSA) here.

The project consisted of a 45,000-gallon concrete septic tank, a lift station, 31 manholes and a mile of trenches ranging in depth from eight to 22 feet. Making matters extremely difficult, the trenches were dug into solid rock.

The subsurface conditions were a utilitiesman's dream, an equipment operator's challenge and a construction mechanic's nightmare. The 'Roos had to buy a special hydraulic hammer to help blast through the rock, and three excavators had to be operated 24 hours a day to complete the project.

The Kangroos turned over the project to the NSA after excavating for about 2,900 feet of pipe, placing 16 manholes and completing the septic tank.

Capt. Marsall Fenn, NSA Souda Bay commanding officer, commended the Seabees for their diligence and professionalism in completing the project despite obstacles. He commented that while quality of life improvements at other Navy bases are often seen in child care and other facilities, at Souda Bay a functioning sewer system is extremely important.

*Korka is a public affairs representative for NMCB 133.*

### Fla. det moves

**KEY WEST, Fla.**—Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7's Detail Jacksonville recently moved from Naval Air Station (NAS) Cecil Field, Fla., to NAS Key West to serve as a "duration force" working with reserve Seabees on construction projects.

The duration force supports the reservists during their active duty training in areas such as safety, quality control and timekeeping. The force also provides toolkits, construction vehicles and equipment.

*Story by NMCB 7 public affairs staff.*

Seabees from Amphibious Construction Battalion (PHIBCB) 1 place sand berms at recreational beaches at Naval Air Station North Island, Calif. The berms provide protection for shoreline structures. The Seabees are in the final stages of building a half-mile-long barrier, eight to 10 feet high and approximately 30 feet wide. (Submitted by EO1 T. Gullmette. Photo by PH2 Ted Banks)



## A real Mickey Mouse operation

By Rudi Williams

**WASHINGTON**—Military personnel and their families now have a recreation center on the grounds of Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla. Reservation lines opened Nov. 25.

The Army garnered a 100-year lease for the Disney Inn. The hotel's new name is Shades of Green on Walt Disney World Resort. It is the first armed forces recreation center in the continental United States; others are in Germany, Korea and Hawaii. No taxpayer dollars are involved.

**Room rates are on** a sliding scale based on rank. The rate for junior enlisted service members—E-1 through E-5—is \$49 per room per night. That's for up to two adults and three children with no added cost for cots and cribs. The rate for E-6s, E-7s, O-1s, O-2s and WO1s is \$73. O-3s through O-5s, chief warrant officers, E-8s and E-9s pay \$85; O-6s and above, \$92.

That's compared to Disney's

nightly rates, which run from \$140 to \$195. "In addition, we'll be offering discounted admission tickets, which are 8 to 23 percent off the regular price," said Keith Craig, who oversees the armed forces recreation centers. "We computed the cost of a four-night stay and four days' admission to Disney World attractions, and the savings to junior enlisted people with a spouse and two children is 55 percent for the whole package."

**First priority goes** to active duty and retired military personnel and their family members, Craig said. Ready and Selected Reserve personnel, their family members and those retired without pay and their family members are also eligible. Department of Defense civilian employees can stay on a space-available basis.

The three-story hotel features 288 spacious rooms outfitted with two queen beds, a convertible couch and crib. Other features include two heated swimming pools, two lighted tennis courts, a children's pool and

play area, health and fitness center, two restaurants, a snack shop and cocktail lounge, gift shop, arcade and an in-house laundry. The hotel is adjacent to two golf courses.

The hotel is close to the Disney monorail system, shuttle buses and boat transportation.

**Having a center** at Walt Disney World is based on responses to a market survey of more than 7,000 active duty and retired military personnel. Advertising for a hotel to lease in Orlando newspapers resulted in 40 proposals, but "we were completely surprised when Disney made an offer," Craig said.

You can make reservations at 1-407-824-3600 or fax requests to 1-407-824-3665. Overseas members can write to: Shades of Green on Walt Disney World Resort, P.O. Box 22789, Lake Buena Vista, FL 32830.

**Williams is a writer for the American Forces Information Service.**

# Short Bursts

**ANNIVERSARY**—Underwater Construction Teams (UCTs) will celebrate their 20th anniversary Feb. 18-19 in Port Hueneme, Calif. All former UCT members are invited.

During World War II, groups of Seabee divers, called underwater demolition teams, combined blasting and diving to clear beaches in preparation for amphibious assaults.

Today, the UCTs perform underwater construction, inspection, repair and demolition of the Navy's in-water facilities worldwide.

For info on the anniversary celebration, contact CUCM Joel Hierholzer at 805-982-5948. *(By Doris Lance, Construction Battalion Center [CBC] Port Hueneme, Calif.)*

**DISASTER RELIEF**—Sailors from several commands in the Port Hueneme area provided disaster relief in response to the earthquake that recently shook the area.

Seabees from CBC Port Hueneme delivered water distribution equipment to the Simi Valley city hall to aid residents without water, while Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 40 set up water tanks at schools throughout the area.

CBC Port Hueneme is planning to build a train platform and parking area south of Palmdale to help relieve traffic congestion resulting from the earthquake.

Seabees from Construction Battalion Units 405 and 409 provided water tankers for areas where fire mains were out of service.

Sailors from the frigate USS Ford helped repair ruptured water pipes and a damaged water heater at Naval Shipyard Long Beach, after inspectors found the leaks had flooded the rooftop utility area and two floors in a building that housed electronics workshops. *(Navy News Service)*

**FLAG PICKS**—The Naval Construction Force has two new selectees for promotion to rear admiral: Louis M. Smith and Thomas J. Gross.

Smith is director of programs at Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) and also the comptroller at NAVFAC.

Commissioned in 1967, Smith has served in assignments with NMCB 53; Public Works Center, San Diego, Calif.; Naval Air Station Brunswick, Maine; at the headquarters of the Strategic Air Command; Naval Station Keflavik, Iceland; and Western Division, NAVFAC.

Gross is a department head for Commander, Reserve Naval Construction Force Support Command (RNCFSFC). Commissioned in 1965, he was assigned to Naval Communications Station, Washington, D.C. In April 1967, he reported to Udorn, Thailand, for work on construction projects in northeast Thailand.

Gross later served with Reserve NMCB 23; Regional Wartime Construction Manager, Mediterranean; the 8th Reserve Naval Construction Regiment; and Assistant Chief of Staff for Engineering, Commander in Chief, U.S. Naval Forces Europe. Since that time, he has been with the RNCFSFC in Gulfport, Miss.

**SCHOLARSHIP DONATION**—The 78th U.S. Navy Construction Battalion recently approved a \$1,500 contribution to the Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association. This contribution will once again designate the 78th Seabee group as a "King Bee" and four-star donor to aid this scholarship fund. Over \$4,000 has been donated by the 78th to various Navy Seabee affiliates in recent years of reunions. *(78th Navy Construction Battalion)*

**FAMILY SUPPORT**—Reservists and staff from Naval Reserve Center (NRC) Columbia, S.C., and Naval Construction Force Support Unit 3, Fort Jackson, S.C., helped make Christmas a little better for two families whose children are being treated for life-threatening illnesses.

Due to expenses that occur while a child is receiving chemotherapy or radiation, Christmas just becomes another day with little or no money for presents. The families were given clothes, toys, and gift certificates to use at a local grocery store.

The reserve center also makes donations each year to the Harvest Hope Food Bank. This year, reservists and staff donated 156 pounds of clothes and 236 pounds of food. *(By DTC Pat Sullivan, NRC Columbia)*

**BEELINE IS #1**—*The Beeline* has won the Chief of Information (CHINFO) Merit Award as the best news or feature magazine in the U.S. Navy for 1993. The CHINFO Merit Awards program honors media achievements by Navy commands and individuals.

*The Beeline* has just finished its first year of publication as a bimonthly magazine for the Naval Construction Force (NCF). The magazine publishes articles and photographs from both active duty and reserve units throughout the NCF.

**Editor's note:** *It was the outstanding input from the field units that enabled us to capture the CHINFO Merit Award our first year out. Our thanks to the writers and photographers who helped; you are the real winners of this award. Thanks also to the commanders and unit skippers who have given The Beeline their wholehearted support.*

# Environment:

## *NMCB 24 brings its headquarters up to standards*

By JO2 Bob Harvey

**ATLANTA**—Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 24 is bringing its headquarters at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., up to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards.

Last summer, the battalion operations department and Redstone Arsenal set up an environmental inspection of the drill site. Several areas needed attention: storage of waste oil and fuel; decontaminating equipment wash water; protecting the fuel tanker parking area against hazardous material (HAZMAT) leaks; building two HAZMAT storage buildings; and upgrading the area where wet cell batteries are kept.

The battalion lacked an approved waste-oil storage tank in the Alpha Company yard where heavy equipment is kept. If a tank ruptured, waste oil could leak through the soil and contaminate the ground water. After studying several civilian-manufactured products, the battalion found a 300-gallon tank that could meet the Navy's and the EPA's standards.

The second project concerns the equipment washrack. Construction equipment is usually washed after

each use. In the past, wash water went into a sump that took out the mud. Lubricants, paint, oil and fuel also went into the sump, then were discharged into a nearby drain field. The battalion bought and installed a 500-gallon underground oil separator tank which collects and separates all contaminants from the water.

The floor of the battery storage room was cleaned of loose concrete and sealed with epoxy to protect against acid leaching through the concrete.

**Project four is** to build a retention basin and shelter for the maintenance truck, which has a 300-gallon fuel tank. A parking ramp and a built-in sump were designed to contain the fuel if a leak occurs. A canopy will keep rain water from mixing with oil in the sump.

The fifth project involves two HAZMAT buildings—one for storing lube oils, and the other where combustible or toxic materials are stored. Both have eye-wash stations, showers, explosion-proof electrical switches and alarms in case of an emergency.

The battalion is also installing an exhaust system, with backup, in vehicle repair stalls.

**Harvey is a public affairs representative for NMCB 24.**



**An equipment operator looks on as the new oil-water separator is lowered into position.**

## *Seabee singer performs with the stars*

(Continued from page 8)

some of his studio work in Iceland.

Later, in Detroit, Collins discovered karaoke, the art of singing along with recorded hit songs. He went on to win many contests before he was transferred again.

In February 1992, he was assigned to NMCB 3, headquartered in the Oxnard/Ventura area of California, a hotbed for karaoke singing. Collins soon began hosting at Yolanda's, a popular Mexican restaurant.

Collins was selected as Ventura County Male Vocalist of the Year for 1993. Judges included names like Frieda Payne and Lamont Dozier.

**However, construction** battalions have a habit of deploying around the world, and Collins found himself going to places like Greece; Spain, where he sang in front of 5,000 people at the 1992 World's Fair; and now, Guam. In all these places, Collins has attained some measure of success with his voice.

Here on Guam, he is again singing in clubs and winning nearly every karaoke contest he enters.

"The talent has always been there," he says of his skills, "and everyone seemed to notice that but me. Once I joined the Navy, though, I learned that I could succeed anywhere I go. The Navy, and the Seabees in particular, gave me self-confidence."

**Tillman is a public affairs representative for NMCB 3.**

# Driller 'Bees go to Guatemala

By JO2 Bob Harvey

**ATLANTA**—"You can stand on this narrow mountain road, 200 kilometers southeast of Guatemala City, and look down into a valley that seems to go on forever," said EOCS Otis Graham, describing his predeployment inspection of water-well drilling sites.

Graham was also there to survey treacherous mountain roads to be used by detachments from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 24 during a joint military exercise and humanitarian effort.

The exercise is the result of an agreement between the United States and Guatemala to repair and improve roads, schools, and medical facilities, and to drill water wells to improve life in rural areas of Guatemala.

The U.S. Army asked the Seabees for well drillers, and Commander, 2nd Naval Construction Brigade assigned NMCBs 7, 14 and 24 and Naval Construction Force Support Unit 3 to take part in Joint Task Force Dirigo. NMCB 24 was tasked with drilling four wells to supply fresh water for rural areas.

The road to the first drill site at Paoux is the most difficult of the journey, according to Graham. The narrow, winding and mountainous road skirts alongside 1,000-foot

drop-offs. Graham said that by widening a few turns, the Seabees can get the water-well drilling rig and the tractor-trailer through. "But it will be a tedious, painstaking operation," he said.

After completing the well, the crew will move to Xococ. "That stretch of road is just a trail," Graham said. "There are only about 45 people living there, and the well is to be located at the edge of a local beanfield."

**Leaving Xococ**, the crew will travel to Picheo. The third well will be drilled in the school yard of this small Guatemalan community.

"Well number four is to be drilled in San Miguel," Graham said. There is a church located in the town square. "The locals use it like a park," he said. "They meet for dancing and for special occasions."

If the first four wells are done in time, another will be drilled at San Miguel and two more in the village of El Tunel.

Graham looks forward to the exercise. "We have an opportunity to promote goodwill between the U.S. and Guatemala, while achieving the Navy's tasking," he said.

*Harvey is a public affairs representative for NMCB 24.*



**CECA Tracey L. Lamanque helps a student during a visit to an elementary school adopted by Construction Battalion Unit 404. As part of the Adopt-A-School program, participants tutor children and hold special events.**

## NMCB 7 Seabees find way to streamline work process

**ROOSEVELT ROADS, Puerto Rico**—The Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7's Alpha Company are using new ways to deal with the heavy work load here.

Maintaining Civil Engineer Support Equipment (CESE), providing vehicles and operators for construction projects, expediting parts and providing technical guidance for battalion detachments, Alpha Company finds its skills tested just about every day.

**Alpha Company** is instituting the "service shop concept," which will be mandated by the latest revision to the NMCB equipment management instruction. The concept streamlines the process of getting vehicles in and out of the shop for preventive maintenance. This streamlining is done mainly by doing paperwork and having parts ready before pulling CESE into the shop for maintenance.

Crucial to the success of the service shop concept is close coordination among the shop supervisor, customer, equipment dispatcher, and equipment inspector. Such coordination ensures that equipment flows through the shop with little time wasted waiting for the next step in the process.

*Story by NMCB 7 public affairs staff.*

# News to Use

**SPIT IT OUT**—Use of smokeless tobacco is rising, particularly among young men. While some think "spit-tobacco" is a safe alternative to smoking, it contains nicotine, is highly addictive, and can cause oral cancer and other serious conditions.

The Navy prohibits use of this type of tobacco during briefings, meetings, classes, formations, inspections, during watch, and in all other situations where proper decorum is required.

For info on programs to help kick the habit, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Bureau of Naval Personnel, Attn: Pers-601D, 2 Navy Annex, Washington, DC 20370-5000. *(By Denise Vigneault, Bureau of Naval Personnel)*

**VETERANS TREATMENT**—President Bill Clinton signed a bill requiring the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to treat Persian Gulf veterans for diseases that may have resulted from exposure to toxic substances or environmental hazards.

Upon return from Desert Storm, some veterans experienced fatigue, painful muscles and joints, bleeding gums, skin rashes, short-term memory loss and hair loss.

The legislation also extends VA's authority to:

- Furnish Vietnam veterans with care that may be related to their exposure to Agent Orange.
- Give veterans who participated in nuclear tests or occupation of Hiroshima or Nagasaki care that may be related to radiation exposure.
- Provide women veterans with sexual trauma counseling.
- Maintain its regional office in the Philippines. *(By Rudi Williams, American Forces Information Service)*

**TRAVEL REQUESTS**—Applications for reserve Seabee orders must be entered by the regional representative office into the Reserve Financial Management System (RESFMS) as follows: individual duty training travel (IDTT) inside the continental United States (INCONUS) and outside the United States (OUTCONUS), two weeks in advance; annual training/additional duty training, four weeks in advance for both INCONUS and OUTCONUS. Hawaii and Puerto Rico are OUTCONUS.

Applications not meeting lead times must go through the Seabee program manager for approval. Plan ahead because short leads backlog the travel system. Not all requests with short leads will be approved.

If you want your travel arrangements to meet your needs, fill out the Request for Training Orders, NAVRES 1571/15 (2-93). This form, in use since May 1993, allows you to give (in block 12) the times when you need to leave for your travel. If you have specific needs on your return times to your home, you can place this information in block 17. *(From The Flag Holst)*

**FINANCIAL AID**—All Ahead is a private, credit-based education loan program for civilian, active duty, reserve, retired and former members of the Navy and Marine Corps who need assistance paying for college, graduate school or private high school. The program may be used to supplement other forms of financial aid, or used alone to finance the entire cost of the approved school of your choice.

For information about eligibility, application forms, disbursements or borrower obligations and responsibilities, call 1-800-767-5626. *(Navy News Service)*

**SEABEE STAMP**—The Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee is proposing a stamp to honor the 55th anniversary of the Seabees in 1997.

A petition for the stamp is being submitted to the Postal Service. To add your name, write to: Roland A. Swanson, R.D. 1, Poland Center, Falconer, NY 14733-9801.

**SPORTSWEAR**—As part of a Seabee ball fund-raiser, sportswear featuring the Seabee Combat Warfare Specialist emblem is now available. The sportswear consists of T-shirts, sweatshirts and baseball caps. Items will be available in several colors.

For details on how to order, contact your Seabee ball representative, or BUC Daniel Groff, 20th Naval Construction Regiment, Construction Battalion Center Gulfport, MS 39501.

## Kudos

### Navy Commendation Medal

Capt. Samuel A. Yellin, Naval Reserve Civil Engineer Corps Volunteer Training Unit 0655

### Navy Achievement Medal

CM1 Michael L. McClellan, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 133  
Lt. Cmdr. Paul F. Krug, Reserve Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command

Send information for this column to Editor, *The Beeline*, 5000 Marvin Shields Blvd., Construction Battalion Center Gulfport, MS 39501-5016.

# A note from the Force Master Chief

By CUCM P.L. "Rick" Race

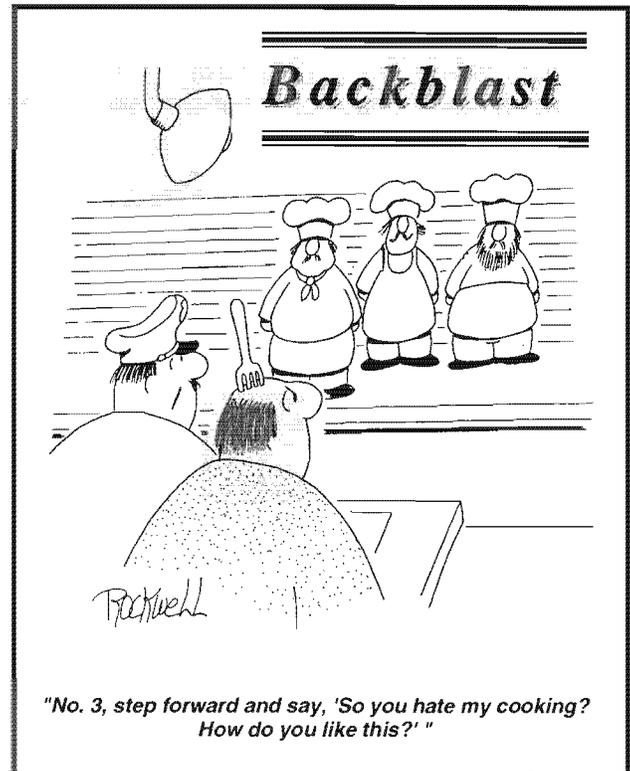
**Greetings!** Seems like it was just yesterday when I wrote my last article telling you about the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy's advisory panel to the Chief of Naval Operations. The next meeting is scheduled for March 21-25. If you have something that you would like to see brought up at that forum, send a point paper to: Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Headquarters Code OOE, 200 Stovall St., Alexandria, VA 22332.

You probably heard a rumor that the Navy Home assessment could go up to \$2 per month. It's more than a rumor. I recently visited the home in Gulfport, Miss., to see firsthand what goes on there. The home was opened at Philadelphia, Pa., in 1834 and moved to Gulfport in 1976. The Armed Forces Retirement Home Act of 1991 disestablished the home as a naval command and converted it to a trust-fund operation along with the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home in Washington, D.C.

**The downsizing of the armed forces** has had a significant effect on the two largest sources of income for maintaining the trust fund: pay deductions, and fines and forfeitures. The bottom line is that the income is no longer enough to cover the operations and maintenance cost. The trust fund will be insolvent by Fiscal Year 1999 without additional funding solutions.

Proposed alternative funding initiatives include a request to increase user fees and raise active duty pay deductions to \$2 per month. The original idea was to create a "family" of retired and former members of the armed forces where "taking care of our own" is personified. It would be a shame if our facility in Gulfport had to close due to lack of funds. I would like to hear your thoughts on this issue. Write to my office or call me at (703) 325-8557 or DSN 221-8557 and tell me what you think. That's about it for now. Hope you have a great 52nd Seabee birthday.

*Race is the master chief of the Seabees.*



The Beeline  
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