

UNITED STATES NAVY

SEABEE

FALL 2006

Humanitarian Seabees:
**Builder Warriors
Make a World
of Difference**

ALSO INSIDE:

**RADM Greg Shear
Named 41st NAVFAC
Commander & Chief
of Civil Engineers**



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The staff of Seabee Magazine would like to wholeheartedly thank the active duty and reserve officer and enlisted personnel as well as the civilians who provided submissions. We look forward to your ongoing contributions as we continue to tell the Seabee story.

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(This page) The Military Sealift Command (MSC) hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) passes the USS Arizona Memorial as she prepares to moor at Naval Station Pearl Harbor. Mercy is back home in San Diego, Calif., after completing a humanitarian and civic assistance deployment to Southeast Asia. Mercy's crew of 15 Seabees from NMCB 40 assisted local communities by building and repairing infrastructure and hospital facilities, as well as installing equipment and other resources.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist James E. Foehl

(Cover) Builder Constructionman Joshua Harriman, NMCB 1, assists a Philippine Navy SeaBee with squaring off a wall during a construction project at the Mabanengbeng Elementary School in San Fernando, Philippines, in August 2006. The civic action project was part of exercise Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) 2006, an annual series of bilateral maritime training exercises between the United States and six Southeast Asian nations designed to build relationships and enhance the operational readiness of the participating forces.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Ja'lon A. Rhinehart

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FINAL WORD

Rear Adm. Robert Phillips, 1st Naval Construction Division, shares his insight on the role of today's Seabees

Dear Reader:

Over the past few issues, we've showcased many facets of Seabee life. In this issue, we continue this effort by reporting more groundbreaking events that highlight the undying Seabee spirit and chronicle Navy history.

Humanitarian efforts are a cornerstone of Seabee missions, and in this edition we feature the charitable endeavors of several construction battalions around the world. We also tell the story of NMCB 40 Seabees who traveled on the USNS Mercy to assist local communities in the ports of call. Soon to be headquartered at CBC Gulfport, Miss., a new Seabee Regiment and Battalion will be established and is detailed in this issue. "A New Day at Gulfport" chronicles how NAVFAC and the Seabees have helped rebuild the Gulf Coast in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

On October 27, after three years as Chief of Civil Engineers, Rear Adm. Mike Loose relinquished command of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command to Rear Adm. Greg Shear. Rear Adm. Loose is slated to be assigned as the Director, Material Readiness and Logistics (N4), and will be responsible for the strategic planning for all Navy Fleet readiness and logistics programs. We wish the best of success to Rear Adm. Loose and his family as he continues to serve his Navy and our nation in these challenging times. Rear Adm. Shear is a Seabee Warfare Officer who has ably led Seabees at the battalion and regimental levels, and we look forward to working with him on the magazine.

We continue to encourage your stories, comments and candid feedback so that we may continue to provide a well-rounded account of the Seabee story. Send us your story ideas and photos*:

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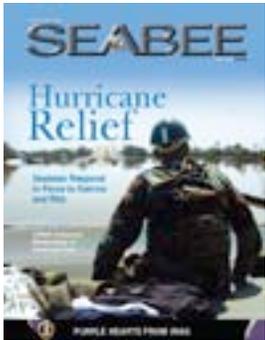
Thank you for your continued interest and for all you do.

Sincerely,
 Editor, *Seabee Magazine*

* Preferred format for photo resolution is 300dpi at 5x7 inches minimum.

Editor's note: As we have updated the look and feel of *Seabee Magazine* over the past year, the production process has also been streamlined resulting in the elimination of a Winter 2006 issue. The next issue of *Seabee Magazine* will be Spring 2007, beginning our annual quarterly schedule.

TO THE EDITOR



Dear Madam,

My name is Lt. Cmdr. Bas van den Akker, Royal Netherlands Navy. In September 2005, the Dutch navy frigate HNLMS Van Amstel participated in the relief efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

I was one of the team commanders who went ashore and worked on various sites around Gulfport/Biloxi. I was surprised to see my name in your *Seabee Magazine*, Winter 2006 that I found on the Internet! On page 10, the Dutch assistance is mentioned and I am quoted twice on the same page. For me, and I am sure for all the sailors on HNLMS Van Amstel, our presence in the aftermath of Katrina in that devastated area had been a short but very intense period of time. Seeing the impact of nature on such a large scale and the people and their towns that have been victim of this force of nature, is something one doesn't soon forget. We still hope very much that we have been able to make a little difference for those people.

I have seen the Seabees at work in many places around the world already: Bosnia, Iraq and last year in your home country in Gulfport. I have always been impressed by the capabilities and the efficient way of operating of the Seabees – a military engineering company that is, in my opinion, not matched anywhere in the world.

Best regards,
 Bas van den Akker
 Lt. Cmdr., Royal Netherlands Navy

Fall 2006

MILITARY RECIPIENTS

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POSTMASTER

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EDITORIAL

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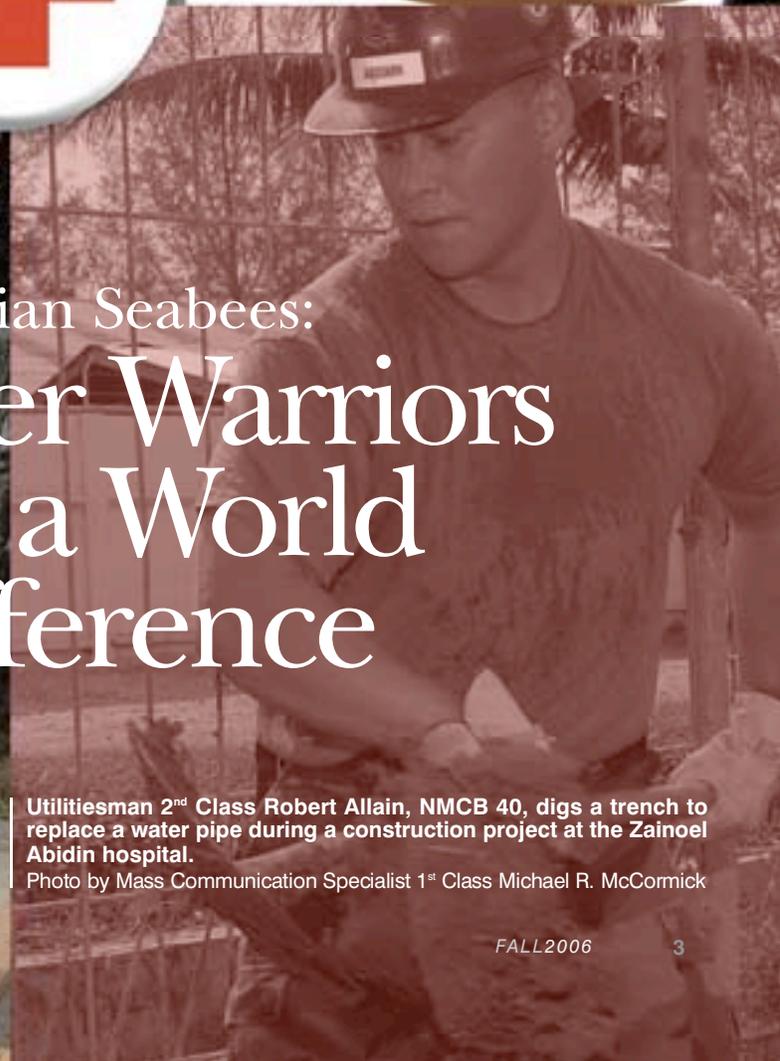
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STAY NAVY. STAY SEABEE.



A small girl proudly holds a souvenir of her visit to a medical outreach project at the Batakte Health Center in Kupang, Indonesia, as part of the Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) visit.
Photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Don Bray

Builder 1st Class Jay Drummonds, NMCB 40, takes a measurement during a construction project at the Gunungsitoli General Hospital at Nias Island, Indonesia.
Photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Joseph Caballero



Humanitarian Seabees: Builder Warriors Make a World of Difference

Builder 3rd Class Adam Kortmeyer, NMCB 40, constructs a foundation brace for a project at the Zainoel Abidin hospital in Banda Aceh, a coastal city in Indonesia.
Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Michael R. McCormick

Utilitiesman 2nd Class Robert Allain, NMCB 40, digs a trench to replace a water pipe during a construction project at the Zainoel Abidin hospital.
Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Michael R. McCormick

USNS Humanitarian



After more than two months of humanitarian assistance in Southeast Asia, the U.S. hospital ship USNS Mercy returned to her homeport in San Diego, Calif., in late September. In complement to the ship's health-based services, Mercy's crew of 15 Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 40, based out of Port Hueneme, Calif., assisted local communities by building and repairing infrastructure and hospital facilities, as well as installing various pieces of equipment throughout the region. Working with Military Sealift Command's civil service mariners, U.S. Navy construction forces performed nearly 200 infrastructure repairs and completed 35 construction projects to improve basic health and living conditions during Mercy's 72-day voyage.

(Right) Chief Construction Electrician Michael Gallagher, NMCB 40, levels out freshly poured concrete for a driveway at a local school in Tarakan, Indonesia.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist
1st Class Troy Latham

(Center) Seabees assigned to NMCB 40 help locals construct a fence outside Dr. Dan's Bairo Pite Clinic in Dili, Timor Leste.

Photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist
Don Bray



Mercy

Seabees

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 San Diego, CA | USA | April 2006 |
| 2 Pearl Harbor, HI | USA | May 2006 |
| 3 Guam | US Territory | May 2006 |
| 4 Manila | Republic of the Philippines | May 2006 |
| 5 Zamboanga | Republic of the Philippines | May - June 2006 |
| 6 Jolo Island | Republic of the Philippines | June 2006 |
| 7 Tawi-Tawi | Republic of the Philippines | June 2006 |
| 8 Republic of Singapore (Logistics) | | June 2006 |
| 9 Chittagong | Bangladesh | July 2006 |
| 10 Simeulue | Indonesia | July 2006 |
| 11 Nias Island | Indonesia | July 2006 |
| 12 Banda Aceh | Indonesia | July 2006 |
| 13 Tarakan | Indonesia | August 2006 |
| 14 Kupang | West Timor | August 2006 |
| 15 Dili | East Timor | August - September 2006 |
| 16 Darwin | Australia | September 2006 |

The Military Sealift Command (MSC) Hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19), shown off the coast of Gunungsitoli City, provided humanitarian and civic assistance to the people of this small Indonesian island.
Photo by Mass Communication Specialist Chief Edward G. Martens



(Above) Builder 2nd Class Shane Murray and Builder 3rd Class Bradley Beeler, NMCB 40, put life saving skills to use as they prepare an accident victim for MEDEVAC to the Medical Treatment Facility aboard USNS Mercy.

Photo by Construction Chief Michael Gallagher



USNS Mercy Chittagong

Seabees Improve Local Medical Center in Bangladesh

By Mass Communication
Specialist 2nd Class
Erika N. Jones

Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 40 offered a helping hand to the hospital staff and patients of the Chittagong Medical College Hospital in Bangladesh by completing many needed repairs in July.

The Seabees, deployed with the U.S. Navy hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19), made numerous improvements at the facility, replacing ceiling fans, repairing air conditioning units, building cabinets and painting the pediatric ward complete with murals of animals and flowers.

Moslehuddin Ahmed, project management specialist with the Office of Population, Health and Nutrition, part of the U.S. Agency for International Development at the American Embassy, observed the work performed by the Mercy team.

“I think this is a very wonderful experience here and the people are really appreciative,” said Ahmed.

As part of a civic action team, 15 Seabees from NMCB 40 deployed with Mercy on her five-month humanitarian assistance mission to South and Southeast Asia, as well as the Pacific Islands,

where the team provided basic construction, utility work, community relations and construction training to host nation people.

“This is pretty exciting and I’m glad we could help,” said Ens. Brian Christner, officer in charge of the team. “Probably the greatest thing we got out of this is friendship — the biggest accomplishment we could ever achieve.”

The Seabees’ efforts are in conjunction with the work performed by Mercy’s medical crew, which treated tens of thousands of patients during the deployment.

“To be able to help people in need by improving living conditions and overall quality of life has been a learning and humbling experience that I will never forget,” said Builder 3rd Class Todd Beeler, NMCB 40.

(Right) Builder 2nd Class Shane Murray, NMCB 40, receives help from a local girl while painting the pediatric ward at the Chittagong Medical and College Facility.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Erika N. Jones



(Top) Builder 3rd Class Russell Reed, NMCB 40, operates a router while building cabinets for the Chittagong Medical College Hospital in Bangladesh.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Erika N. Jones

(Above) Builder 2nd Class Shane Murray, NMCB 40, paints cartoon characters in the pediatric ward at the Chittagong Medical College and Hospital.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Michael R. McCormick





USNS Mercy Indonesia

Seabees and Mariners Build New Hope

By Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Ryan Clement

The sound of school bells rang through the air as Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 40 and Military Sealift Command (MSC) civil service mariners from USNS Mercy stepped out of vehicles onto the grounds of Hang Tuah Senior High School in Tarakan, Indonesia. Students poured from classrooms, huddled together, pushing through the crowd to catch a glimpse of the Americans who had come to help them.

Carrying painting supplies, cement mix, basketball hoops and air conditioning units, the Seabees made their way through the crowd to begin a six-day community relations project at the school.

NMCB 40, homeported in Port Hueneme, Calif., deployed a 15-man civic action team (CAT) with U.S. Naval hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) to provide basic construction, utility work, community relations and training to host nation people. Mercy's civil service engineering department sends personnel ashore to collaborate with the Seabees and aid with complex electrical repairs.

During the six days the Seabees were at the school, they poured a concrete slab for a bas-



Members of NMCB 40 remove a frame from a concrete slab that will be made into a basketball court for the Tarakan School in Indonesia.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Erika N. Jones

ketball court, paved a 200-foot section of road alongside the school and repainted the school's auditorium.

Ens. Brian Christner, officer in charge of the CAT, said it was a terrific opportunity to work for the people of Tarakan.

"The people here are great," said Christner. "It makes our job a pleasure when the people are this friendly and appreciative of what we do."

The Seabees and mariners also tackled major heating problems in the school by installing eight air conditioning units and two fans in various classrooms.

"The teachers here have been having a lot of trouble running their computers because it's so hot and humid, so the air conditioners will be greatly appreciated," said Yusmini Yunus, principal of Hang Tuah.

The mariners also spent a day working on the school's language lab equipment.

"I think that we were able to do some things for the teachers and students that will make their lives a little bit better," said Daniel Zelenka, Mercy's first assistant engineer. "Schools here go without many things that we take for granted, such as basic amenities at home."

Educating the children is a top priority to the people of Tarakan, said Yunus.

"It is the way these kids will carve their future, so the fact that the Navy is willing to come here and help us says a lot about the quality of people in America," she said. "We are forever grateful, and we just hope you guys are able to come back in the future."

NMCB 40 also teamed up with local construction workers on some of the jobs performed at the school and made lifelong friends in the process, according to Christner.

Philippines

U.S., Philippine Navy Seabees Build School Addition During CARAT

By Mass Communication Specialist Chief Petty Officer Steve Carlson, Commander Task Force 73 Public Affairs

Twenty-three Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1, based in Gulfport, Miss., along with 32 SeaBees from the Philippine Naval Construction Brigade, completed construction of a new 800-square-foot, two-room addition at the Mabanengbeng Elementary School in the Philippines, in mid-August.

The \$25,000 civic action project began July 23 as part of the Philippines phase of exercise Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) 2006.

"We feel honored to have been able to provide the students and teachers with much-needed classroom space, in conjunction with the Philippine SeaBees," said the project's Officer in Charge, Constructionman Master Chief Dana Mitchell, NMCB 1.

The elementary school was also the Seabees' 'home away from home' for almost a month. The Sailors set up cots in classrooms and lived on the jobsite for the duration of the project.

"I am extremely humbled to have worked on such a fine project, one that will serve the children of this town for generations

to come," said NMCB 1 Builder 2nd Class Darby McCuller, job supervisor for the project. "I was extremely impressed with the work of my whole crew, especially our junior guys — for five of them it was their first deployment. Everyone stepped up big time and worked in harmony with our Filipino counterparts.

"In my six-year Navy career, this is one of my proudest moments," added McCuller.

The school was originally built in 1976, with an addition completed in 1984. More than 120 children, ranging from grades one to six, attend the elementary school. Due to lack of space, grades one and two were combined, forcing 38 children into one classroom.

"This project is a godsend," said head teacher Orlando Mendoza Cardinez. "Because of the crowded conditions, many of our children were placed in an environment that was not conducive to learning, especially in the early years of development," Cardinez said. "I am so proud of the United States Navy and my own country's navy for their wonderful effort. We will never be able to repay their generosity."

CARAT is an annual series of bilateral maritime training exercises between the United States and six Southeast Asia nations designed to build relationships



(Above) NMCB 1 participates in the traditional 'first handshake' with their Filipino SeaBee counterparts during a welcome ceremony held at the Mabanengbeng Elementary School, San Fernando, Philippines.

(Middle row, left) Builder 2nd Class Armando Camerota, NMCB 1, tightens tie wire while working on a reinforced concrete project. While deployed to the Philippines, Seabees constructed two classrooms for the Mabanengbeng Elementary School

(Middle row, right) Builder Constructionman Joshua Harriman, NMCB 1, works hand in hand with his Filipino counterparts to lay blocks on a project site in San Fernando, Philippines.

(Bottom) Local Filipino children watch Seabees attached to NMCB 1 take measurements and attach c-channel framing strips, while constructing two new classrooms at the Mabanengbeng Elementary School.

Photos by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Ja'lon A. Rhinehart

and enhance the operational readiness of the participating forces.

The Philippines phase is the last of the 2006 series that also included exercises with Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.

Humanitarian Seabees



(Above) Builder Constructionman Apprentice Devin Hennigan, NMCB 1, shows some Filipino children their photos at Mabanengbeng Elementary School, San Fernando, Philippines.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Ja'lon A. Rhinehart



Ethiopia



Seabees Help Flood Victims With Temporary Shelter

By Mass Communication Specialist (DV) Chief Robert Palomares, Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa Public Affairs

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5, assigned to Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) at Camp Lemonier, Djibouti, assembled tents with the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) in August to house approximately 6,000 people left

without homes due to floods in Dire Dawa, Ethiopia.

The Seabees were part of a cooperative effort, which included the ENDF and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), to help the local government provide shelter and other assistance to the flood victims.

Additional services and items, such as food, mattresses, water treatment materials, and supplies to improve sanitation conditions, were provided through partner agencies, including CARE, Population Services International and

the International Rescue Committee.

Cmdr. Paul Vandenberg, CJTF-HOA, and Glenn Anders, USAID's mission director, met with the mayor of Dire Dawa and other officials to make recommendations for additional assistance. A medical clinic was also set up at a nearby school to provide emergency care to victims.

CJTF-HOA medical professionals assisted local healthcare workers, as well as provided education and counseling on basic healthcare.

(top) A team of Seabees assigned to NMCB 5, attached to CJTF-HOA, sets up tents to house approximately 6,000 displaced victims of a devastating flood that hit Dire Dawa, Ethiopia, in late August.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist Chief Robert Palomares

(below) Seabees from NMCB 5, CJTF-HOA, joined a multi-national humanitarian effort following 15 days of heavy rain that washed away roads and homes in Dire Dawa, Ethiopia.

U.S. Navy photo



Horn of Africa

Seabees Act as Ambassadors of Compassion in Dikhil Region

By Mass Communication Specialist Jeffrey J. Pierce, NMCB 7 Public Affairs

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 offered a helping hand to the children and parents of the Dikhil region by constructing a school dormitory facility earlier this year.

As part of their mission for the Combined Joint Task Force, Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) site at Camp Lemonier in Djibouti, these Seabees were dispatched to help the local citizens in the town of Dikhil.

“Now the kids will be able to live in a safe environment right next door to the school itself,” said Utilitiesman 1st Class (SCW) James L. Penney. “This facility will help alleviate the cost and burden on the town for the care and housing of the school kids.”

Before the dormitory facility was constructed, children from families all around the region were required to walk for many miles or be housed by friends and family for months at a time to attend the school in town. Now the children will be together under the care and supervision of school officials throughout the school year, allowing the children to form relationships in a new way.



Construction Electrician 2nd Class Eric Lawrence, NMCB 7, assists his battalion in constructing a dormitory in Dikhil, Djibouti. The dormitory provides a safe, sanitary and comfortable place to live during the school year.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Paul D. Williams

NMCB 7 Seabees erected separate dormitories for the boys and girls, as well as a shower facility for both structures. They completed the foundations, walls, windows and doorways, with only the lighting and finishing items remaining for fit and inspection. The project was completed in early July as NMCB 7 neared the end of deployment.

“Helping to build community is what it is all about,” said NMCB 7 Chaplain Lt. Martie Johnson. “In my short time here, I have watched the people of Dikhil embrace our Seabees and their work. It is amazing to see the effect of mutual cooperation and support between our Seabees and the people of Dikhil. I think all parents love and care about

their children and education. It has been a special treat to be part of the bond developed between the mayor, the Djiboutian army and our Seabees.”

Utilitiesman 2nd Class Josener Jean Louis, who was born in Haiti and speaks both French and English, is one of the critical components of the success in Dikhil. Project site leader Penney remarked, “We are certainly here to get this construction project done, and it is just as important how we achieve it. We are here to make a connection with the hearts and minds of Djiboutian people, and Jean Louis, without a doubt, has been invaluable in our ability to do that.”

Habitat for Humanity

Seabees Demonstrate “Can Do” Spirit at Cesar Chavez Volunteer Project

By Mass Communication Specialist
1st Class Carmichael Yopez,
NMCB 3 Public Affairs

It was a clear and sunny day at the Villa Cesar Chavez construction site. Ten Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 3, Port Hueneme, Calif., and a group of civilian volunteers kept a constant rhythm pounding nails while completing a roof on one of three Habitat for Humanity homes built in Oxnard, Calif., this summer.

Volunteering is nothing new for Steel Worker 3rd Class Anthony Munkholm from NMCB 3’s Charlie Company. At six feet, five inches, he was chosen to hand up plywood sheets to workers on the roof.

“I’ve volunteered to do trail clean-up projects before,” said Munkholm, as he lifted a large plywood sheet, “but this is the first time I’ve volunteered in a building project. It feels great to do something like this, because you are actually building a house that you know a family is going to benefit from.”

After NMCB 3 arrived back home from their deployment in Iraq, the officers and chiefs contacted Habitat for Humanity to offer their assistance. Habitat informed them about the Cesar Chavez project and the Seabees went to work. They helped dig

the trenches and pour the concrete slabs. A few months later, Habitat contacted the Seabees and requested volunteers for roofing and sheet rock work.

“Because of the short notice, I wasn’t sure about the response we would get,” said Lt. Guy Thomson, community relations coordinator and chaplain. “With NMCB 3, I was impressed with the amount of volunteers who signed up. It demonstrates the “Can Do” spirit of the Seabees. It is a great way for them to implement their Seabee skills to impact the community.”

Ernie Robb, a native of Ventura County, Calif., and a retired Army battalion maintenance officer, also helped out. He was there with a group of volunteers mostly in their 70s and 80s, working alongside the Seabees.

“After I retired, I needed something to do, so I have been volunteering with Habitat Ventura County for the past nine years,” said Robb.

He was overcome with emotion as he described how he had also served in the military and knew what it meant to help those in need. In a voice that would thin out as he tried to maintain his composure, Robb added how he enjoyed volunteering in the community and working with the Seabees.

“We love working with you guys. When we needed help, they [the Seabees] poured concrete



Builder 3rd Class Howard Hart, NMCB 3, swings a hammer to set a nail into a 2' x 4' on the roof of a home in Oxnard, Calif. Hart and fellow members of NMCB 3 volunteered to help build three homes for a Habitat for Humanity project upon returning from deployment to Iraq.

U.S. Navy photo

for us. I like to volunteer because I like the friendship with the guys I work with and the fact that I can give something back to the community,” Robb added as he paused for a few seconds to wipe the tears from his eyes.

For Builder 2nd Class Darren Rempp, this is his second volunteer housing project. The experience he has gained as a Seabee allows him to provide the expertise necessary to ensure the job is done right.

“I just like building stuff,” said Rempp. “We can do almost anything they ask us to do. If they need us to do concrete, we’ll do it. If they need us to put up sheet rock, we’ll do it. Pretty much anything they ask us to do, we know how to do it.”

Pakistan Presidential Honor

Lefever, Disaster Assistance Center Pakistan Honored at Embassy

By Lt. Justin T. Cole, Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf presented the Sitara-i-Eisaar Medal, or Star of Sacrifice, to Rear Adm. Michael A. Lefever at a ceremony held at the Pakistani Embassy in Washington, D.C., on September 22 in appreciation for U.S. military support in earthquake relief. Lefever led the Combined Disaster Assistance Center (DAC) in Pakistan during the relief efforts from fall 2005 until spring 2006.

Lefever commanded Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 1 when the earthquake struck in October 2005 and received orders from the Department of Defense to head the disaster relief efforts. He led a group that included more than 1,900 servicemen from 62 different commands and all four U.S. services.

“This award really represents all of the hard work that the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines of the Combined DAC in Pakistan performed,” said Lefever. “The dedication that these young men and women showed was truly inspiring. All they wanted to do was assist those affected by this disaster in whatever way they could. Their dedication was amazing, and I am honored to be associated with them.”

With winter fast approach-

ing, Lefever received orders from the Secretary of Defense to extend relief efforts until spring, turning a normal six-month deployment into a nine-month humanitarian mission.

“This really is the most personally and professionally rewarding experience of my life. We were able to help an important friend in the global war on terror, and more importantly, we were able to save lives,” Lefever said.

During the award ceremony at the Pakistani Embassy in Washington, D.C., Musharraf explained the scope of work done by the military that helped so many of his countrymen.

“They said we would have a large famine, but because of the efforts of these men, we had no famine. They said we would experience an epidemic of disease, but because of their dedication, there was no epidemic. When winter came, they said we would freeze from the snow. Well, we had yards of snow, and because of these men and women, we did not freeze,” he said.

Also receiving the medal were leaders of every service that participated in the relief efforts, including Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74.

“I am very proud to be associated with the Seabees of NMCB 74 and the quality of work they bring to the table,” said Lefever. “At its core, they were doing exactly what we are trained

to do in the Navy. On short notice, we established a command center and immediately began providing aid to those affected by the devastating earthquake in Pakistan.”

President Musharraf thanked the international community for their support. While he praised Lefever for the contributions of all of the American servicemen, he said Pakistan still has a long way to go.

“This is a great and formidable challenge to the government and the people of Pakistan. But we will convert this challenge into an opportunity — an opportunity to rebuild and grow strong together,” he said.

All of the awardees expressed their gratitude to Musharraf for hosting them during the ceremony, but it was clear that the real reward was helping the people of Pakistan.

“The best part of my job is knowing that everything we did made a difference,” said Lefever. “Seeing the appreciative looks on the faces of the citizens of Pakistan affected by this tragedy is why we are in this business. We may not know when or where the next natural disaster will take place, but we can be confident that the proud men and women in the U.S. military will do everything we can to make the world a better place.”

ACB 2 STANDS UP SECURITY FORCE TO TRANSPORT SEA-BASED, X-BAND RADAR

By Ed Quinones, Maritime Positioning Officer, ACB 2



IN SUPPORT OF THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND MISSILE DEFENSE AGENCY (MDA), US STRATEGIC COMMAND (USSTRATCOM) HAS ISSUED A REQUEST FOR FORCES (RFF) FOR THE SEA-BASED, X-BAND RADAR TRANSIT FROM THE GULF OF MEXICO TO THE VICINITY OF ADAK, ALASKA TO SUPPORT FIELDING OF THE BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM (BMDS). MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE BEING REQUESTED TO FILL AN 'IMMEDIATE MISSION NEED'.

Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 2 answered this call, culminating in the successful completion of a seven-month deployment. This high-visibility, stand-alone mission required ACB 2 to stand up a Naval Security Force that would assume all responsibility for the security of Missile Defense Agency's, \$1.6 billion, Sea-Based,

X-Band Radar (SBX), to include 360-degree layered defense during its voyage from Corpus Christi, Texas, to Adak, Alaska.

The SBX is a high-tech, one of a kind, fifth generation semi-submersible oil drilling platform. It is twin hulled, self-propelled and stable in high winds and turbulent sea conditions. The SBX is 240 feet wide and 390 feet long;

it towers more than 280 feet from its keel to the top of the massive, eight-story tall X-Band Radar Dome and displaces nearly 50,000 tons. Larger than a football field, the main deck houses living quarters, workspaces, storage, power generation, a bridge and control rooms, while providing the floor space and infrastructure necessary to

support the radar antenna array, command control and communication suites, and an In-flight Interceptor Communications System Data Terminal.

Although shipboard security is not a primary mission area for ACB 2, in a period of just under two months a highly efficient, 35-member security team detachment was stood up, completing training in all required mission areas in preparation for this short-fused tasking. The team, Detachment Sierra, was comprised of Boatswain's Mates, Enginemen, Steel Workers, Equipment Operators, Construction Mechanics, an Electronics Technician, a Hospital Corpsman and a Gunner's Mate, representing each company within the Battalion. Each member attended Ship's Reaction Force, Basic/Advanced and Armed Sentry Course.

Each member also completed six different small arms and crew-served weapons qualifications.

"Being comfortable with the weapons was the main goal during the intense two months spent training for this deployment," said Gunner's Mate 2nd Class (SW/AW) Carlos Gomez who served as Det Sierra's sole Gunner.

The SBX voyage began in Corpus Christi, Texas, where she was lifted aboard the MV Blue Marlin, a semi-submersible heavy lift vessel. The MV Blue Marlin is the same vessel that carried the USS COLE after it was attacked in October 2000. Although the SBX is self-propelled, it rode aboard the MV Blue Marlin to save time on the trip and avoid wear and tear on the vessel. The massive size of the MV Blue Marlin, measuring 736 feet and with a beam of 206 feet, made it impossible to transit to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, via the Panama

Canal, and was therefore required to transit around South America.

The MV Blue Marlin/SBX transport, which logged nearly 15,000 nautical miles, commenced in November 2005 and ended with its arrival in Pearl Harbor in January 2006. The 52-day transit through the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean, Atlantic and Pacific Oceans included two ceremonies celebrating the crossing of the Equator and then the Straight of Magellan transit through the southernmost tip of South America.



"Our mission of providing 360 degree, layered defense for the SBX was extremely challenging, when you consider the limited personnel and the 12-hour watches we manned 24 hours a day," said Boatswain's Mate 1st Class (SW) Arthur McIntee, Det Sierra's Leading Petty Officer.

Once in Pearl Harbor, SBX was offloaded where she began minor modifications, post-transport maintenance and routine inspections before commencing self-transit to its home port of Adak, Alaska.

Although it will reside in Alaska,

the SBX will be capable of moving throughout the Pacific Ocean to support both advanced missile defense testing, as well as defensive operations. This significant national asset will provide missile tracking, discrimination and hit assessment functions to the Ground-based Midcourse Defense element of the Ballistic Missile Defense System. It will support interceptor missiles located in Alaska and California (if required) to defend against a limited long-range missile attack on the United States. In time, the SBX will support defense from missiles that may be used against our homeland, deployed forces, allies and friends.

The Seabees from ACB 2 proved once again that Seabee "Can Do" is much more than just a catch phrase. Throughout this long and dedicated mission support, ACB 2 provided unparalleled service critical to integrating this vital system into our national defense capability.

"Det Sierra is without a doubt the most motivated Det in the 'Phib,'" said Steel Worker 2nd Class (SCW) James Ockwood. "Every person onboard has given 110% commitment to this mission.

"During this deployment, we have experienced every kind of challenge and never once did we falter. Everyone is honored to be given the opportunity to serve our great nation by protecting a matter of national security."

(Above) The heavy lift vessel MV Blue Marlin sits moored in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, with the Sea-Based X-Band Radar (SBX) aboard after completing a 15,000-mile journey from Corpus Christi, Texas.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Ryan C. McGinley



Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Michael G. Mullen looks on as Rear Adm. Greg Shear, CEC, USN, relieves Rear Adm. Michael K. Loose, CEC, USN, as Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command and Chief of Civil Engineers in a change of command ceremony held at Admiral Leutze Park, Washington Navy Yard, on October 27.

Photo by NAVFAC HQ Public Affairs

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Gets New

By Mass Communication Specialist and Senior Chief Petty Officer (SW/AW) Regina Adams, NAVFAC Headquarters Public Affairs and Communications

RADM Greg Shear Assumes Helm as 41st Commander and Chief of

Rear Admiral Wayne “Greg” Shear, CEC, USN, relieved Rear Admiral Michael K. Loose, CEC, USN, as Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) and Chief of Civil Engineers in a change of command ceremony held at Admiral Leutze Park, Washington Navy Yard, on October 27.

Rear Adm. Shear previously served as Director, Ashore Readiness Division (N46) Staff of the Chief of Naval

Operations and Deputy Commander, Navy Installations Command. As NAVFAC commander, Shear will head the global engineering and acquisition command and lead some 500 active and Reserve Civil Engineer Corps officers, 17,000 civil servants and contractors. For the past two years, NAVFAC has been on an accelerated structural, functional and process-driven transformation to provide more effective and efficient products and

services to Navy and Marine Corps Warfighters, the Fleet and their families.

Rear Adm. Loose is slated to be assigned as the Director, Material Readiness and Logistics (N4) and will be responsible for the strategic planning for all Navy Fleet readiness and logistics programs.

“It’s a high privilege to assume command of such a tremendous organization. Under Rear Adm. Loose’s leadership,

Rear Adm. Greg Shear

Born in Norfolk, Va., and raised in Pompano Beach, Fla., Rear Adm. Greg Shear graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1979 with a degree in Naval Architecture and was commissioned an Ensign in the Civil Engineer Corps. In 1984, he received a Master of Science, Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College.

Upon graduation from Civil Engineer Corps Officer School in Port Hueneme, Calif., Rear Adm. Shear was assigned to Public Works at the Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, Va., and then as Public Works Officer, Naval Hospital Beaufort, S.C.

After graduate school in Colorado, he served as Aide to the Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command. In 1985, Rear Adm. Shear joined Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5 where he served as Officer-in-Charge, Detail Subic Bay, Philippines, Charlie Company Commander and Air Detachment Officer in Charge in Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico. While in Puerto Rico, he redeployed as Officer-in-Charge of detachments to Puerto Cortes, Honduras and Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

After leaving the Seabees, Rear Adm. Shear served at the Civil Engineer Corps Officer School as an instructor in the Facilities Management Division. In 1989, he was assigned as Resident Officer-in-Charge of Construction, Puerto Rico Area. In 1993, he graduated with distinction from the College of Naval Command and Staff in Newport, R.I., and was assigned to U.S. Strategic Command at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., as Chief, Engineering Branch. Rear Adm. Shear commanded NMCB 1 from 1996 to 1998. NMCB 1 received the Atlantic Fleet "Best of Type" and the Peltier Award for outstanding military engineering services for Fiscal Year 1997.

Rear Adm. Shear subsequently served as the Executive Officer at Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Southern Division in Charleston, S.C., and the Commander, 30th Naval Construction Regiment, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and Vice Commander, Third Naval Construction Brigade. While with the Seabees, Rear Adm. Shear served on a temporary assignment as Commander, U.S. Support Group, East Timor, reporting to U.S. Pacific Command. In 2004, he served as Deputy Commander for Engineer Operations, Naval Facilities Engineering Command.

Rear Adm. Shear is a Seabee Warfare Officer, a registered professional engineer in the Commonwealth of Virginia, a member of the Navy Acquisition Professional Community, and a member of the Society of American Military Engineers. His personal decorations include two Legion of Merit medals, two Defense Meritorious Service Medals, three Meritorious Service Medals, two Navy Commendation Medals, the Navy Achievement Medal and various unit awards.



Rear Adm. Greg Shear, CEC, USN, gives his remarks as the new Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command and Chief of Civil Engineers.

Photo by NAVFAC HQ Public Affairs

Leader

Civil Engineers

NAVFAC reshaped and aligned, reduced costs and continued to deliver outstanding facilities planning, engineering construction and specialized acquisition services," said Rear Adm. Shear.

"Our mission is straightforward – ensure success of our supported commanders in the Navy and Marine Corps – at headquarters, at each Region, at each installation. That is why we exist. We will measure our effectiveness through their eyes," Shear said.



NMCB11

Unveiled

NEW SEABEE REGIMENT AND BATTALION ESTABLISHED

By Daryl Smith, Public Affairs Officer, 1st Naval Construction Division

On July 18, the U.S. Navy approved the establishment of the 25th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11 which will be headquartered at the Construction Battalion Center (CBC), Gulfport, Miss.

The establishment became effective Oct. 1 with commissioning slated for October 2007. The additional force structure is required due to the increased demand for the Seabees' unique skills to support the Global War on Terrorism, while continuing humanitarian relief and other construction efforts around the world.

"The significant impact the Seabees are having around the world in the Global War on Terrorism and a wide range of other missions will be enhanced by these additional units, allowing us to contribute on an even broader scale wherever needed," said Capt. Doug Morton, Chief of Staff, 1st Naval Construction Division (NCD).

Currently, two out of three active duty Seabee battalions are deployed to the Central Command Area of Responsibility where Seabees operate under combat conditions. The new battalion will help reduce the stress on active duty Seabees, which will help improve

retention, recruiting and overall community health.

NMCB 11 will include 579 active duty members. The 25th NCR will contain 81 active duty, 16 civilians and 34 reservists. Both units will begin receiving initial personnel in April 2007.

The 25th NCR and NMCB 11 trace their histories back to World War II.

The 25th NCR was formed April 1, 1944, and was charged with planning, training for, and execution of all projects in which Seabees would be involved for the landings at Omaha and Utah Beaches. Seabees under the 25th Regiment were responsible for the rehabilitation of captured ports; manning and operating rhino ferries; manning the phoenixes, pier heads and whale bridges while in tow across the channel; installing fuel facilities at Omaha, Cherbourg and other captured ports; and installation and maintenance of sunken pontoon causeways at Omaha and Utah Beaches. After the assault operation was successfully completed, three battalions from the 25th Regiment opened the ports at Cherbourg and Le Havre.

The 11th Naval Construction Battalion was commissioned on July 27, 1942, and served on Tutaila, American Samoa, New Caledonia,

Auckland, Banika, Los Negros, and Luzon, Philippines. It was disestablished on December 1, 1945.

On September 14, 1953, NMCB 11 was commissioned and sent to Cubi Point, Philippines, for the following two years. In 1955, the battalion was sent to Kodiak, Alaska, and Kwajalein. From 1961 to 1965, the battalion won the Efficiency Award four times.

In 1966, the battalion deployed to DaNang East to build Monkey Mountain Road, the Tourane Bridge and the main hospital. In 1967 at Dong Ha, less than 10 miles from the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), the battalion became the northernmost Seabee battalion in Vietnam. The battalion experienced the large ammunition explosions when the base ammunition supply point was hit on September 3, 1967. In 1968, the battalion was deployed to Quang Tri.

NMCB 11 was also the battalion of Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Marvin Shields, who was killed on June 9, 1965, while serving as a member of Seabee Team 1104 at the Battle of Dong Xoai. Shields was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. The battalion was disestablished on December 20, 1969.



Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Marvin Shields

Marvin Shields, A Seabee Hero

With the establishment of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11 comes further recognition of a Seabee who defied his youth with bravery and heroism during the Vietnam War — 26-year-old Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Marvin Shields.

In June 1965, Shields' unit (Seabee Team 1104, under the original NMCB 11), along with Army Special Forces and South Vietnam Defense Personnel, came under attack by 2,000 Viet Cong at the Battle of Dong Xoai. The young petty officer, who had joined the Navy primarily to build things, soon found himself fighting in heavy combat.

Although greatly outnumbered, the men withstood intense, close-range combat for almost three hours. Early in the battle Shields was wounded, but he continued to supply his fellow Americans with needed ammunition. When the enemy forces launched a massive attack at close range with flame throwers, hand grenades and small-arms fire, Shields stood his ground alongside his shipmates and Army counterparts. Wounded a second time in the assault, Shields nevertheless ignored the mortal danger and helped a more critically injured soldier to safety while under intense enemy fire.

“His heroic initiative and great personal valor in the face of intense enemy fire sustain and enhance the finest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service.”

For four more hours, Shields and the others kept up a barrage of fire that held the enemy at bay. When the compound commander, 2nd Lt. Charles Q. Williams, asked for a volunteer to help him take out an enemy machine gun emplacement that was endangering the lives of all Army and Navy personnel in the compound, Shields volunteered. Armed with a 3.5-inch rocket launcher, Shields and the Green Beret commander advanced on

the enemy emplacement despite heavy fire from several enemy positions. Having successfully eliminated the machine-gun nest, the two men attempted to return to the relative safety of the compound. But the young Seabee's luck had at last run out. He was struck a third time, and

this wound proved fatal.

For his intrepid actions, Marvin Shields was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor — *“His heroic initiative and great personal valor in the face of intense enemy fire sustain and enhance the finest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service.”*

Not only was he the first Seabee to receive the nation's highest award, but he was also the first Navy man to be so decorated for action in Vietnam.

Sources: *History of the Seabees*, Dr. Vincent A. Transano, 1997; *Proceedings*, Lt. Cmdr. Thomas J. Cutler, USN (Ret.), July 2004.





GWOT UPDATE

Seabees Lead the Way in Post-Deployment Health Process

*By Cmdr. Debra Couture, MSC, Medical Planner,
1st Naval Construction Division*

Once again, the Seabee “Can Do” attitude has led the way. The Naval Construction Force (NCF) has piloted the electronic completion of the Post-Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA) program.

A component of the force health protection program, the PDHRA extends the continuum of care for service members’ deployment-related health concerns. The PDHRA provides education, screening, assessment and access to care for a wide variety of questions and concerns that you may have about your health after you return from deployment. The program provides for a second health assessment using DD Form 2900 during the three- to six-month time period after return from deployment.

Deployment-related health concerns may not be noticed immediately after deployment. After service members return home and settle back into life and work, things may not seem quite right. Concerns may be mild or more troublesome, affecting you or your family. This program provides the opportunity to access care once back from deployment.

The following circumstances are all considered types of deployment and require military personnel to complete the PDHRA:

- Troop movement resulting from a JCS/Combatant Command Deployment Order
- Land-based operations for 30 continuous days or more outside the Continental United States (CONUS) without a fixed military treatment facility (MTF)
- Personnel called to active duty for 30 days or more in support of a named contingency at a location not serviced by a fixed MTF
- Personnel aboard surface ships for 30 continuous days or more in direct support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom
- Other deployments/exercises as directed by the deploying authority.

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(Left) Seabees from NMCB 40 prepare a site for bridge construction in Fallujah, Iraq. The new bridge will replace one damaged during fighting that was formerly used heavily by Iraqi citizens. NMCB 40 is deployed providing support to Coalition Multi-National Forces throughout Iraq.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class John P. Curtis





Mandated in March 2005, the NCF and 1st Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) served as the first PDHRA implementation sites. Navy Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7, CBC Gulfport, Miss., was the first battalion scheduled to use the program. However, due to Hurricane Katrina, CBC Gulfport had lost its MWR facilities and did not have computers available. Displaying true military teamwork, the Navy Environmental Health Center (NEHC) donated 10 laptops. More than 400 members of NMCB 7 completed the PDHRA in a three-day timeframe.

NMCB 1 completed the assessments in March 2006, with more than 450 personnel completing the PDHRAs in only two days, setting the Navy standard. NMCB 27 has recently completed PDHRAs.

To facilitate the web-based completion of the PDHRAs, NEHC donated 15 computers to the NCF for use in Kuwait. With the assistance of Capt. Bradley Spangler, 22nd NCR, and his IT staff, computers were up and running at Camp Moreell, Kuwait, in April 2006. NMCB 22 and 133 were the first two battalions to use the web-based system at Camp Moreell. NMCB 7, 25 and 40, as well as the 9th NCR, are scheduled to complete the program over the next few months.

To date, four active duty and three reserve battalions have completed the PDHRA since July 2005. As battalions approach the deployment cycle, each is collaborating with NEHC staff and working with command leadership to ensure the process works, and that the assessments are completed on schedule.

The NCF contact for PDHRA issues is Cmdr. Debra Couture, debra.couture@navy.mil. Additional information is also available on the official website of Force Health Protection & Readiness Deployment Health Support Directorate, <https://fhp.osd.mil>.

Additional sources — Deployment Health Clinical Center (DHCC), www.pdhealth.mil.

(Left) Steel Worker 3rd Class Robert Sprague, NMCB 40, ties together rebar before a concrete placement on the bridge project in Fallujah, Iraq.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class John P. Curtis

Purple Hearts



The Purple Heart is awarded to members of the U.S. armed forces who are wounded by an instrument of war in the hands of the enemy and posthumously to the next of kin in the name of those who are killed in action or die of wounds received in action.

The following Seabee was killed in action* while deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom...

CE2 Charles V. Komppa, NMCB 18
(October 28, 2006)

The following Seabee was wounded in action* while deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom...

EN1 Troy DeVault, NMCB 25

** At time of publication*

Navy Seabee Reservist Remembered in Iraq

*By Marine Staff Sgt. Jim Goodwin,
Regimental Combat Team 7 Public Affairs*

Construction Electrician 2nd Class Charles V. Komppa

Sailors and other U.S. service members remembered Construction Electrician 2nd Class Charles V. “Chuck” Komppa on October 28, during a memorial service at the base chapel in Al Asad, Iraq.

Just two months into an Iraq deployment, Komppa, a Navy Reservist with the Fort Lewis, Wa.-based Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 18, was killed in action October 25 while serving in Iraq’s western Al Anbar Province. Komppa was serving with the battalion’s Detachment 0618, based out of Billings, Mont.

Komppa was a dedicated Sailor, very “intelligent, very knowledgeable of his rate as an electrician,” said Master-at-Arms 1st Class Richard Starks during the service.

It was the 35-year-old’s first deployment to Iraq.

As an electrician for the Navy, Komppa spent his days conducting electrical assessments and repair projects throughout western Al Anbar Province. At the time of his death, he was about to begin an electrical assessment in Haditha, Iraq, a Euphrates River city northwest of Baghdad.

“Chuck loved the military. He loved the job that he was doing,” said Starks, NMCB 18, during the service.

“He knew the job that he was doing was going to make the lives of others safer and improve their standard of living greatly.”

Komppa served five years active duty in the Navy as a machinist’s mate and was discharged in 1995. He rejoined the Navy as a Reservist after the attacks against America September 11, 2001, but this time as a construction electrician.

Starks also said that Komppa was a devoted husband

and father. Komppa is survived by a wife and two children.



Construction Electrician 2nd Class Charles V. “Chuck” Komppa, NMCB 18, is memorialized three days after he was killed in action in Iraq’s western Al Anbar Province.

U.S. Marine Corps photo by Staff Sgt. Jim Goodwin



Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Mullen greets Equipment Operator 1st Class Anthony Alicea, NMCB 133, after an all hands call at Construction Battalion Center (CBC) Gulfport, Miss. Mullen discussed topics particular to Seabee units and their families assigned to the Gulf States region after Hurricane Katrina struck the area one year ago. He thanked the units for their dedication following the storm and subsequent deployments in support of the Global War on Terror.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Chad J. McNeeley

A New Day at Gulfport

How NAVFAC and the Seabees have helped improve conditions since Hurricane Katrina

See stories on following pages



Equipment Operator 3rd Class Paul Johnson, NMCB 74, uses a front end loader to move piles of debris collected from the Gulf of Mexico shoreline. NMCB 74 joined volunteers from the surrounding community and across the nation in a continuing effort to clean up and rebuild the Gulf Coast region following Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Rob Wesselman

Katrina: NAVFAC at Forefront of Response to 2005 Hurricane

By NAVFAC Headquarters
Public Affairs & Communications

Besides the half million citizens along the Gulf Coast impacted by Hurricane Katrina, thousands of Navy personnel, military and civilian, retirees and their families were personally affected at many levels — physically, financially and emotionally. More than 18,000 Navy families assigned to Navy bases in Louisiana and Mississippi were directly impacted by the aftermath of Katrina's devastating force. Many Navy families lost everything they had.

"The Navy is going to reach out and touch them...to make sure

Air Force Base, Miss. In less than five days, the teams assessed more than 750 buildings for damage. Many of the buildings were damaged on a large scale or totally demolished.

Members of the NAVFAC disaster assistance team relied on valuable lessons learned in responding to damaging effects of Hurricane Ivan at historic Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla. Ivan was a Category 3 Hurricane and caused more than \$600 million in damage to the base.

Restoring essential base functions, such as communications, power, water and other critical utilities, as well as removing debris, was also a main concern in the NAVFAC effort. NAVFAC directed construction of a 7,500-person tent

Using NAVFAC's emergency construction capabilities contract, the command awarded more than several hundred million dollars for a myriad of general construction repair work, aeration of stagnant water, unwatering and repair of pumping stations, mortuary affairs, generator support, removal/disposal of spoiled food, waste management, construction of shower facilities and dry in/dry out of facilities.

NAVFAC awarded innovative "turn-key" contracts to small disadvantaged businesses to assess and remediate more than 5,000 housing units of mold infestation to ready them for occupancy.

Turning to the recently published Navy Ashore Vision as its guide, NAVFAC base develop-

"THE NAVY IS GOING TO... MAKE SURE THOSE

those families get back on their feet," stated Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Mike Mullen.

Heeding his call and that of a nation in dire need of help, nearly every component command of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) from the Pacific to the Atlantic — and some 3,000 Seabees based in Gulfport, Miss., and Port Hueneme., Calif. — quickly responded to help families get back to base housing or find temporary shelter, and of great importance, ensure that Navy bases were up and running.

Under the leadership of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and within five hours after Hurricane Katrina made landfall, NAVFAC sent disaster assessment teams to Gulf Coast installations: Construction Battalion Center (CBC), Gulfport, Miss., Naval Stations Pascagoula, Miss., and Mayport, Fla., and Naval Air Station Meridian, Miss.; Stennis Space Center, Miss.; and Kessler

city for recovery personnel, awarded a Base Operating Service contract valued at \$75 million to provide galley services, laundry, showers and minor construction, and dispatched numerous much-needed generators to critical areas.

"I am extremely proud of our Civil Engineer Corps officers, civilians and contractors who worked exhaustively to help others affected by Katrina," said Rear Adm. Michael K. Loose, former NAVFAC Commander and Chief of Civil Engineers. "I'm amazed that despite so many of them personally losing everything they had to Katrina, they carried on heroically, ignoring their own needs to help others."

With the goal of putting businesses to work right away in the recovery efforts, NAVFAC has awarded more than \$250 million in contracts, many of which have been directed to small local businesses. Since Katrina, the contractor workforce has grown to thousands of employees, countless from towns affected by the storm.

ment planners created a recapitalization plan that will result in demolishing badly damaged buildings on affected Navy installations, and reusing buildings where economically feasible, and realigning building occupants.

Finally, NAVFAC's Naval Facilities Engineering Support Center (NFESC) engineers prepared mooring plans for all ships not able to maneuver out of Katrina's storm track. As a result of their efforts, not a single craft was lost and all were immediately operational after the storm's passing. Within days, NFESC personnel also inspected Naval Support Activities (NSA) New Orleans fuel pier for serviceability and functionality. Consequently, there were no pollutants released into the intercoastal waterway, and Navy ships had a place to refuel, allowing the critically needed vessels to remain on station and continue relief efforts.

OICC Katrina Established

*By Jim Beltz, Public Affairs Officer,
NAVFAC Southeast Public Affairs Office*

The Officer In Charge of Construction (OICC) Katrina was formally established on August 1 to provide customers with a unified structure for managing and coordinating the repair and rebuilding projects associated with the Hurricane Katrina recovery effort.

The new organization, under Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Southeast and led by Cmdr. Chris LaPlatney, will serve as the lead facility engineering and acquisition authority in this effort for Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force activities damaged by Hurricane Katrina. It will provide forward-deployed, leveraged engineering support, and an on-site operational com-

Gulf Coast Seabees Remain Strong Community Partners One Year After Katrina

By Lt. Cmdr. Kyra Hawn, Naval Construction Force Public Affairs, CBC Gulfport

One year after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast on August 29, Seabee units assigned to CBC Gulfport continued to contribute to ongoing recovery and restoration efforts in the region.

After the stand-down of Joint Task Force Katrina in October 2005, the 22nd Naval Construction Regiment (NCR), led by Capt. Eric Odderstol, devised a plan to return units to their required homeport training cycle in preparation for regular Naval Construction Force deployment obligations. Each of the four Gulf Coast active duty Naval Mobile Construction Battalions

complex due to the range of missions we are expected to perform overseas.

“We don’t just train for construction anymore. There are convoys, security details and other military requirements that didn’t exist for [Seabees] 10 years ago,” Tracy said.

Tracy is responsible for defining homeport project specifications and developing a coherent strategy to work a community project from start to finish.

“Sometimes one job will have several crews, and the work may extend from one battalion to the next depending on deployment schedules — that’s just the way it has to be if we want to get anything done,” he said.

“I know it’s not easy, but we don’t train for easy,” Tracy added.

Builder 1st Class Dave Franklyn is a quality control supervisor for NMCB 133, and recently returned from a six-month deployment to Iraq. In homeport, Franklyn oversees work at the Volunteer Fire Department in Pearlinton, Miss., where Seabees are building a shelter to house equipment and vehicles.

“Pearlinton was really hit hard,” explained Franklyn. “This crew really sees the importance of their work, and even though they are fighting intense heat and humidity, as well as killer mosquitoes and a one-hour commute from Gulfport twice a day, they look around and see how much their work is appreciated and needed. They stick with it and give it their all.”

Pearlinton Volunteer Fire Chief Ken Jones could not be more appreciative of the talents and dedication of the Seabees.

“Without them, we would be nowhere,” Jones said. “FEMA agreed to pay for materials, but we were up a creek without money for labor.

“They’ve been great — every one of them,” remarked Jones. “It’s astronomical what they’ve been able to do for us, and our community as a whole is so grateful.”

FAMILIES GET BACK ON THEIR FEET.”

— CNO Adm. Mike Mullen

mitment for reconstruction and recovery efforts spanning the Gulf Coast from Pascagoula, Miss., to Port Arthur, Texas.

OICC Katrina will oversee a contract load of more than \$370 million per year, an increase from the historical average near \$130 million per year. The majority of work associated with this large construction effort is expected to take place over the next three years.

Projects will include utilities, barracks, administrative, operational and quality of life facilities. Notable projects include the Ocean Sciences Laboratory at Stennis Space Center (Stennis, Miss.), the Navy Exchange Complex, Naval Construction Training Center (NCTC) Training Complex, and Operational Expeditionary Logistical Facility at Construction Battalion Center (CBC) Gulfport, Miss., the Aircraft Maintenance Facility & Repair, Student Dormitory 9, and Training Aids Facility at Keesler AFB (Biloxi, Miss.); and Crash and Fire Rescue Station and Harden Hangers 3 and 4, New Orleans, La.

(NMCBs) has deployed in the year following Katrina. Balancing training requirements and operational readiness with continued community support has involved constant attention.

Through the homeport projects office, the Seabee regiment has received, processed and resourced requests from community leaders and organizations for projects, such as pier demolition and reconstruction, construction of temporary housing for relief workers and volunteers, and civic-oriented work with volunteer fire stations, schools, the Armed Forces Retirement Home and other Department of Defense installations in the region.

Additionally, Seabees have contributed thousands of man-hours of volunteer time in the community during off-duty hours.

“If the project serves the community and aids those affected by the storm, we do everything that we can to help,” explained Chief Builder Craig Tracy, 22nd NCR homeport projects liaison. “The kicker is, our man-days are limited and battalion homeport training has become increasingly more



BEARING DUEL

Seabees Turn Wilderness Into Bustling Tent City

*By Mass Communication
Specialist 1st Class
Carmichael Yepez,
NMCB 3 Public Affairs*

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 3 turned a desolate area into a bustling city within 24 hours of their arrival to the Logistics Support Area (LSA) at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., in mid-August. NMCB 3 conducted a three-week field exercise (FEX) known as Operation Bearing Duel to test the combat skills proficiency of the battalion.

“It was like the woods bloomed overnight,” said Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Steven East. “When I got here, there was nothing but trees and grass. Now it has evolved into an efficient and fully capable LSA for the Seabees.”

The first portion of the exercise involved setting up the LSA; by the end of the first day, more than 50 tents were up. The combat operations center (COC), the brain of the operation, was established the second day. Before the sun was down, Seabees were eating their first hot meal in a makeshift galley.

Throughout the day, the sound of pounding hammers, buzzing saws and grumbling generators created a symphony that echoed throughout the camp. Seabees dug trenches, placed tactical wire and worked on construction projects until sundown.

Builder 2nd Class Garrett Hartwire was finally able to take a break when he was tasked to watch over the crew’s M-16 rifles. Hartwire’s face and arms were dark red from the beating sun. He sat on a makeshift seat made

TRAINING



out of leftover 2' x 4's. His eyes stared into the horizon, as he kept watch on the weapons.

"This is our second day working on this project," said Hartwire. "We're building a strongback tent [wood-framed structure with a tarp roof] for the dental clinic.

"We ran into a few problems in the beginning because the floor was too high, so we had to lower it," he said. "We should have it done by the end of the day."

At the other end of the camp, Construction Electrician 2nd Class Joseph Soriano directed his crew to dig out the thick cable they had just buried. "The trench is not deep enough," he said. "People will trip over the cable at night."

Without hesitation the construction electricians pulled the cable to dig the trench deeper. The ground was as fine as baby powder, and soon the Seabees were engulfed in a cloud of dirt. They looked like coal miners; their faces were naturally camouflaged with a mixture of dirt and sweat.

"It's a dirty job as you can see," said Soriano, "but that's the least of our concerns. The difficult part is when we run into hard ground; then it takes a little longer to dig."

Earlier that day, Soriano and his crew finished distributing power to the entire camp. They spent the rest of the day digging trenches to bury the thick cables.

"Safety is one of our main concerns," Soriano said. "That's why we've been digging trenches all day. We don't want anybody tripping over these cables when it's dark."

Back at the dental clinic, builders were placing the last trusses on the roof. The sun was no longer beating down on their backs – it was fading behind the mountains.

"The crew is happy to finish the job," said Builder 3rd Class Angela Rudy, crew leader for the project. "The CO came by earlier to look at the project and told us we were doing a great job. That made us feel good and motivated the crew."

When the sun finally disappeared, the bustling tent city by day was now at rest. The chirping crickets replaced the sounds of the pounding hammers. Only the sentry watches and security rovers kept vigil over the camp. Seabees retreated to their tents and tucked away in their sleeping bags to await the next phase of FEX.

(Previous page) Builder 3rd Class Antonio Gonzalez (bottom) wraps a strand of barbed wire to a stake to secure a spool of concertina wire along the outer perimeter of the Logistics Support Area (LSA).

(Left, Top to Bottom) Builder 3rd Class Cori Quillan, NMCB 3, cuts a 2' x 4' for the construction of a strongback tent to be used as a dental clinic.

Builder Constructionman Jonathan Cobb, NMCB 3, digs a fighting position along the perimeter line of the LSA.

Builder Constructionman Thomas Montalvo, NMCB 3, works on the outer perimeter of the LSA during Operation Bearing Duel.

A Seabee from NMCB 3 drives a 4K-forklift to transport spools of concertina wire along the perimeter of the LSA.

Photos by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Carmichael Yezep

Reserve Seabees with NMCB 14 in Jacksonville, Fla., now benefit from this Readiness Support Site (RSS), a high-tech training facility. One of 12 sites to help improve military skills, the facility is equipped with a variety of training systems, a “smart classroom” and a communications suite.
U.S. Navy photo

RSS FACILITY

New RSS Facilities Improve Seabee Skills

*By Daryl Smith, Public Affairs Officer,
1st Naval Construction Division*

Reserve Seabees will soon have access to new, high-tech training facilities at each of their 12 Readiness Support Sites (RSS) to help improve military skills. New 40' x 80' pre-engineered buildings have been constructed for every Reserve Naval Mobile Construction Battalion at a cost of close to \$1 million each.

Facilities will be equipped with a variety of training systems designed to improve military skill levels. Each will include a “smart classroom,” containing 20 computer work stations and audiovisual equipment allowing Seabees to access online courses and to participate in distance learning events and instructor-led training. A complete communications suite provides the capability to use the classroom as a Command Operations Center during Command Post Exercises and other combat-related exercises.

An armory installed within the facility will allow for weapons storage, which can be taken to the range for training qualifications. Up-to-date communications equipment will also be kept in the armory, providing the opportunity for reserve Seabees to become more proficient at battlefield communications.

A simulator room will be included in each facility to allow firearms training in a safe environment. Two distinct systems will be available: the Beamhit Laser Marksmanship Trainer and the Firearms Training System (FATS).

All 12 facilities will be equipped with the Beamhit system, which allows instant targeting feedback to improve shooting skills. The weapon fires blanks to simulate a live-fire experience and includes a laser attached to the lower receiver of the weapon. The

laser is aimed at electronic targets, instantly registering hits and misses.

While the Beamhit system is designed to improve marksmanship, the FATS system is designed to improve reaction time in realistic situations. A variety of different scenarios can be programmed into the system and displayed on life-size screens, which tests a participant’s ability to respond appropriately. Used extensively in the law enforcement community, the FATS system uses a CO₂ cartridge to give the weapon a realistic feel when fired. Simulations can also be tailored to represent the actual deployment environment. For example, a digital photograph of the deployed site can be projected as the background for the simulation.

“This system provides a safe environment to teach escalation of force...when to shoot and when not to shoot,” said Cmdr. George Steffen, Assistant Training Officer for the 1st Naval Construction Division (INCD). Two of these mobile (FATS) systems will be shared among the different RSS sites, with priority given to those units getting ready to deploy.

Due to the fact that reserve battalions are comprised of numerous detachments spread out over a wide area, Cmdr. Steffen sees the new facilities as excellent tools to bring personnel together to practice command and control, as well as military skills. The INCD Training Department will soon be developing a comprehensive employment plan to help ensure maximum use of these new facilities.

“We will provide the guidance and the way ahead to make sure that all 12 sites are going down a line of progression that we want to see,” Cmdr. Steffen said. “This is the wave of the future, and soon our guys are going to be very plugged in.”





Seabee Shines Among Army Comrades, Takes Instructor of the Year Honors

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class (SW/AW) John Osborne, Naval Personnel Development Command

The Army named Equipment Operator 1st Class (SCW) Deanna DeWitt, a Seabee instructor stationed at the Center for Seabees and Facilities Engineering Detachment, on Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., Engineering School Instructor of the Year.

This honor, which came on the heels of being named Instructor of the Month and Instructor of the Year for the 1st Engineer Brigade, has put DeWitt in the running for the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Instructor of the Year next March.

Several factors make DeWitt's recent award an even more impressive accomplishment. She has only been in the Navy six years, having departed for boot camp three days after her high school graduation; she has deployed twice to the Middle East; and she is instructing on an Army base several hundred miles away from the nearest fleet concentration area.

Despite all she had going for her, the award still came as a surprise.

"When the Army came in to evaluate me while I was instructing, they pointed out several things that I did wrong," she said. "Some of it was out of my control, but several things weren't, so I was convinced I would not win. When they told me I won, I didn't know what to say, but it's a great feeling and I am very honored."

And it was a sense of honor that prompted the 25-year-old to join the service in the first place. Her first choice was to follow in the footsteps of her other family members and join the Marine Corps, but the recruiter would not offer her the Marine equivalent to an equipment operator (EO). Not to be deterred, she went next door to the Navy's recruiter and got her wish.

"I've always loved working outdoors and when I was a Sea Cadet as a teenager, I had a Reserve EO as an instructor and he turned me onto it," she said. "When I'm working on a piece of equipment, it is the most relaxing feeling in the world. It's also

rewarding to watch a project go from nothing to something and know you had a direct influence."

Instructing also give DeWitt that same rewarding feeling.

"When you take a student straight out of boot camp who doesn't know anything about the equipment and see them graduate in eight weeks with an understanding and respect for that piece of equipment, it is very satisfying," she said.

As much as she loves her job, she admits it can be dangerous, and teaching her students properly so that they do not hurt themselves or their shipmates is what she considers her greatest responsibility.

"As an instructor, I often have to get my students over their fear of the equipment, but at the same time I have to make them understand that there are so many things in this job that can get you hurt," said DeWitt, who has earned her Master Training Specialist and taught more than 1,000 students since becoming an instructor in May 2005.

"As instructors at EO 'A' School, it's our job to familiarize the students with the equipment and teach them the basics of operation, but above all we teach them how to do everything safely," she said. "I always tell my students that in the field the working environment can change without warning, but your rules of safety must always stay in place."

For anyone who wants to become an equipment operator, DeWitt said there are certain qualities they must have.

"I want to see an EO that is not afraid to get on a piece of equipment and not afraid to get dirty," she said. "They have to be willing to do whatever is asked of them, regardless of the circumstances."

"There are several types of EOs, and on a project you never know what you may have to do, so you have to be able to handle change," she added.

Regardless of how the competition turns out for her in March, DeWitt said she is in the Navy for the long haul.

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Seabees Receive Navy League Sea Services Honors

By NAVFAC Headquarters Public Relations and Communications

Three Seabees have been honored by the Navy League of the United States (NLUS) with awards in recognition of individual achievement in specific military-related areas.

Cmdr. Louis Cariello, USN

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1

JOHN PAUL JONES AWARD FOR INSPIRATIONAL LEADERSHIP

This award for inspirational leadership is presented to a Navy officer who has made an outstanding contribution to the high standards of leadership traditional in the naval service.

As commanding officer of NMCB 1, Cmdr. Louis Cariello prepared and directed contingency construction operations by 680 Seabees at 12 deployment sites on four continents. His training and situational awareness ensured that each of his movement teams in Iraq, which were attacked six times during security escort missions, moved safely through the kill zone, alerted adjacent and higher units to prevent further attacks, and successfully rallied to complete the assigned missions. Stateside, with his own unit and their families affected by Hurricane Katrina, Cariello crafted recovery teams for critical roadway restorations, debris clearance, municipal utility and school repairs, contingency shelter construction and delivery of fuel and water supplies, and created a battalion Task Force Recovery to identify and address the needs of the Seabees and their families.

Capt. Jacob Urban, USMC

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1

GENERAL HOLLAND M. SMITH AWARD FOR OPERATIONAL COMPETENCE

This award for operational competence is presented to a Marine Corps officer who has made an outstanding personal contribution that has advanced the readiness and competence of the naval service in the course of actual operations.

As the officer-in-charge of a large Seabee detail at Forward Operating Base Kalsu and Camp Gannon, Urban led his team on vital mission support projects that enhanced II MEF (Forward) and Army National Guard 155 Brigade Combat Team counter-insurgency efforts. Under the constant danger of indirect fire and ground attack, his detail constructed new helicopter pads and an aviation fuel storage and distribution system, expanded a detention facility, constructed a hardened galley facility, and made significant force protection enhancements. Upon returning to the states, he coordinated disaster response missions in support of federal, state and county relief efforts in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

Lt. Cmdr. William Mock, USN

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 27

ADMIRAL BEN MOREELL AWARD FOR LOGISTICS COMPETENCE

This award for logistics competence is presented to a Navy or Marine Corps officer who has made an outstanding personal contribution that has advanced the logistics readiness and competence of the naval service.

As engineer assessment team leader, Fallujah Reconstruction operations officer and Fallujah Reconstruction liaison officer with the I MEF Engineer Group during the Battle of Fallujah, Mock laid the foundation for the reconstruction of the city. While under hostile fire, he completed 43 battle-damage assessments to acquire critical information about the condition of Fallujah's infrastructure. In addition, Mock used his collegial relationship with the local Iraqi officials and engineers to acquire information necessary for the coalition forces and Iraqi government to restore essential city services.

The Navy League of the United States (NLUS) is a national organization of nearly 65,000 members and more than 275 councils throughout the U.S. and overseas. Each year, NLUS presents awards in recognition of outstanding individual achievements in leadership, maritime affairs, scientific progress, engineering excellence, logistics competence, excellence in intelligence, and service to community and country.



NAVFAC-Built Marine Corps Museum Dedicated

President George W. Bush speaks at the dedication ceremony of the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Va., on November 10, 2006. One of the latest engineering accomplishments undertaken by the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC), the museum is situated on a 135-acre site adjacent to the Marine Corps base at Quantico and is a lasting tribute to U.S. Marines past, present and future.

Department of Defense photo by Staff Sgt. D. Myles Cullen, U.S. Air Force

NMCB 74 DEPLOYS TO WHIDBEY ISLAND

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Bruce McVicar, Northwest Fleet, Public Affairs Center Detachment

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74 deployed to the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI) Sea Plane Base in Oak Harbor, Wash., in November to start a six-month deployment.

The Whidbey Island Sea Plane Base is the detachment site for 15 Gulfport, Miss.-based Sailors who were selected by their commanding

officer to deploy.

“The unit sent a solid crew. It will be challenging here because the rest of the battalion is deployed to Iraq and Guam,” said Steel Worker 1st Class Don Farwell, NMCB 74 Whidbey Island detachment’s petty officer in charge.

Major projects expected to be completed include the construction of several pre-fabricated buildings on the NASWI flight line.

“The Seabee detachments build critical facilities for operational commands deploying to the Middle East. Three Flightline Pre-engineered

buildings (PEB) were constructed for the Electronic Attack Wing and Patrol Wing squadrons. Three additional PEBs are being finished by NMCB 74, including one to support the EA-18G transition,” said Cmdr. Scott Smith, NAS Whidbey’s public works officer.

“These projects could not have been completed through contract methods given current budget constraints. Their ‘Can Do’ attitude has gained base-wide respect and recognition,” said Smith.

“The unit is excited about finishing the first project and

starting up the next,” said Steel Worker Constructionman Thaddeus Newton.

“Continuous construction is the main focus of the Seabees. The primary purpose for our visit here is to complete the buildings on the flight line,” said Farwell.

The Seabees are also planning to build magazine storage lockers on NASWI, as they show off one of the myriad of skill sets they bring to the table. They will also participate in annual flood training, provide disaster recovery support and complete general maintenance repairs.

CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN GATHER TO HONOR 'SEABEE BETTY' AT SEABEE MUSEUM

EXHIBIT HONORS LEGEND WHO SUPPORTED GUAM'S SEABEES FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS

*By Linda Wadley,
Naval Facilities
Expeditionary Logistics
Center Public Affairs Office*

It was a dream come true for Debbie Peredo, daughter of Vicenta Chargualaf Peredo, known as 'Seabee Betty,' when she and 11 family members visited her mother's memorial at the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum in Port Hueneme, Calif.

For more than 50 years, Seabee Betty served the Seabee battalions in Guam, hosting hundreds of fiestas, attending official functions and fostering goodwill among the Navy and Guam communities.

"I made a point that one day I was going to come back and see my mom's photos on the wall," said Peredo who first visited the museum in 1989. "I'm here today with my children and grandchildren. I have one son, Jacob Tenorio, and my fiancé, Joe Lujan, and a son-in-law of mine who is on duty with the military, Hospital Corpsman Elvin Reyes, so I have three more of my family to fulfill my dreams."

Seabee Betty, who died in June 2003, was recognized throughout her service to the military by U.S. presidents, Chiefs of Naval Operations, U.S. senators and military officials. In 1985, she joined ranks with actor John Wayne as the only other civilian to be inducted into the Seabee Museum.

Capt. Kelly Schmader, commanding officer, Naval

Facilities Expeditionary Logistics Center, who hosted Peredo for the museum tour, said that even though his seven deployments never took him to Guam, he felt he knew Seabee Betty.

"If you didn't know about Seabee Betty, then you weren't a Seabee. Her kindness and work are legendary among the Seabees. She was truly a wonderful person," Capt. Schmader said.

Peredo, who has a wealth of memorabilia from Seabee Betty's honors and life with the military, said she plans to share some of these items with the museum for future exhibits.

"It is a great honor to see my mom's exhibit here and I'm very impressed. This is something to savor that she is part of this military museum. She is totally heroic for me," Peredo said.

Peredo, along with her eight brothers and sisters, grew up helping her mother prepare the house and food for the fiestas that became a tradition for their family and the Seabees.

"I know I'm never, ever going to catch up to mom, but I would love to one day just be able to take care of the Seabees the way she could," said Peredo whose goal is to continue her mother's legacy by hosting the Seabees for one of her mother's famous "Chamorro" fiestas. "She has done three and four every year. I want to try and do at least one," she said.



Debbie Peredo (center) completes a lifelong dream with her visit to the Seabee Betty Exhibit at the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum with her children, grandchildren and family members. Capt. Kelly Schmader (center left), commanding officer, NFELC, hosted the visit. Pictured (left to right, front row) Jason Quidachay, baby Janelle Tenorio, Jazzmin Quidachay, Valentina Garcia, Jaylene Quidachay, Javin Reyes; (left to right, back row) Franklin Perez, Jay Tenorio, Capt. Schmader, Debbie Peredo, Joyce Tenorio, Janna Reyes and Arlene Perez.
U.S. Navy photo

30TH NCR OFFICIALLY RELOCATES TO CBC PORT HUENEME

*By Mass Communication
Specialist 1st Class (SW/1MF)
Chad V. Pritt, 30th Naval
Construction Regiment
Public Affairs*

Seabees from the 30th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) officially raised the command's flag over their new headquarters building at Construction Battalion Center (CBC), Naval Base Ventura County, Port Hueneme, Calif., mid-summer, heralding in a new era of Pacific Fleet Seabee command and control.

The 30th NCR staff moved from Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, to be near its six subordinate commands, five of which are located at CBC Port Hueneme. Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCBs) 3, 4, 5

and 40 and Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 2 are currently stationed at CBC Port Hueneme, while Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU) 303, which has detachments throughout the West Coast and Hawaii, is headquartered in San Diego.

"This will move us closer to our subordinate commands," said Commander, 30th NCR, Capt. Kate Gregory. "It will provide us better command and control, as well as unity of command."

The staff of the 30th NCR is relatively small, about 46 officers and enlisted, but that doesn't mean all personnel have made the move to Port Hueneme. About 10 Seabees stayed

(continued on following page)

(30th NCR continued from p. 34)

behind in Pearl Harbor due to operational commitments, as well as the cost and inconvenience of relocating everyone at once.

"It provides a smooth transition to the organizations we support in Pearl Harbor," Gregory said. "They'll still have a face on the island to talk to. Leaving folks behind is a good transitional tool."

Most personnel who moved to Port Hueneme from Pearl Harbor have less than a year and a half aboard the command. The remainder of the personnel in Pearl Harbor will leave at their planned rotation date, allowing their relief to report directly to Port Hueneme. The move is expected to be

complete by the end of summer 2007.

The 30th NCR has been planning its move off the island since before getting the official notice from the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV) in late February. This preplanning has allowed the regiment to efficiently execute the move.

"Commodore Blount and everyone on the staff did a great job minimizing disruption to our folks here and in Port Hueneme; most importantly to our battalions," said Gregory, who relieved Capt. Michael L. Blount as the commodore of the 30th NCR in May.

As the commander of all Naval Construction Forces assigned to the Pacific Fleet area of respon-

sibility, the 30th NCR will still maintain ties to Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet (COMPACFLT).

"[The move] shouldn't affect our relationship [with PACFLT] at all," Gregory said. "We have a good communications plan in place with PACFLT, and it should be seamless with them and the other units we support."

The relocation of the regiment to Port Hueneme has been bittersweet, as the command says "Aloha" to its island host.

"It's impossible to replicate the sense of camaraderie and Aloha tradition," Gregory said. "As eager as we are to move to Port Hueneme, we will always remember and cherish our

Hawaiian history."

Moving is not new to the 30th NCR, which moved many times during the island hopping campaign of World War II, and later during the Vietnam conflict. During its history, the 30th NCR has been stationed on Saipan, Guam and Danang, Republic of Vietnam. The latest iteration of the command, formerly 3rd Naval Construction Brigade, began its tour in Hawaii in 1992. It officially became the 30th NCR in 2002 after the realignment of all Naval Construction Force units under the 1st Naval Construction Division.

A REFRESHING NAVY REENLISTMENT

*By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class (SW) Palmer Pinckney II
NMCB 5 Public Affairs Office*

Construction Mechanic 2nd Class Christopher Shamrell (right), joined by enlisting officer Lt. Michael O'Beirne (left), decided to reenlist in one of the only cool places in the Middle East – a swimming pool at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Shamrell, assigned to NMCB 5, was deployed at the time to Southwest Asia in support of the Global War on Terrorism, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.



CBC PORT HUENEME HOSTS 20TH ANNUAL SEABEE DAYS

Seabees at CBC Port Hueneme, Calif., celebrated the 20th Annual Seabee Days weekend this past summer as the community was invited aboard for a first-hand look at the Navy's construction engineers. Seabee Days highlights the mission and accomplishments of the men and women of the Naval Construction Force.

Seabee Days featured demonstrations of Seabee construction skills, static displays of construction equipment, weapons and field camp construction, hands-on demonstrations and displays. The event kicked off with a full dress military parade of nearly 800 Seabees accompanied by the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Band, followed by a formation fly-over of Navy E-2C Hawkeye early warning aircraft. The public was also invited to tour a Whidbey Island class dock landing ship and an Austin class amphibious transport dock ship.



(Top) Seabee Days 2006 kicked off with nearly 800 Seabees on hand for the military parade.

(Above) Seabees in a High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) demonstrate its functionality to the crowd.

(Left) Seabee Days 2006 visitors at Port Hueneme, Calif., enjoyed Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 2's dive tank.
U.S. Navy photos



By Rear Admiral Robert L. Phillips, CEC, USN
Commander, 1st Naval Construction Division

Looking at what Seabees are doing around the world today, it's apparent that there has never been a better time to be a Seabee. Your skills and abilities have never been more in demand or more appreciated.

This issue of *Seabee* Magazine highlights a number of humanitarian missions in which Seabees have contributed. From the Detachment aboard the USNS Mercy which improved medical facilities at 16 different locations to Seabees helping build a tent city for 6,000 flood victims in Ethiopia, there is no doubt that these and many other efforts are making the world a better place. By showing America's compassion and generosity, you are helping resist the influence of terrorism and giving people in every corner of the globe a chance at a brighter future.



U.S. Navy photo

Your participation in joint exercises and direct support to operations around the world also strengthen bonds with our friends and allies. Seabees in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait are providing invaluable infrastructure support and theater security in that dynamic region. Others in the Horn of Africa, South America and throughout the Pacific region demonstrate the "Can Do" spirit daily.

Your contributions have not gone unnoticed. Seabees continue to receive accolades from the Chief of Naval Operations, Commandant of the Marine Corps and Combatant Commanders. The President of Pakistan recently recognized Seabee support provided following the earthquake that struck in October of last year.

Not only have Seabees received acclaim from the highest levels, but we are now being provided with more resources to help meet the increased demand for Seabees.

Recognizing the need for an expanded force structure to meet mission requirements, the Navy approved the establishment of a new battalion and regiment. NMCB 11 and the 25th NCR will be commissioned next year in Gulfport. The fact that the Seabees are growing speaks volumes about how Defense Department leaders understand your value in today's changing world.

The increased role for Seabees as an important part of the Navy's operational strategy has also resulted in a recent influx of about \$400 million in funding over and above our regular budget. This money will be used for new force protection vehicles, construction equipment, communication gear and personal protective outfitting. While it may take a few months to procure and field the various items, you can rest assured that all hands are working to push these items to the proper locations as quickly as possible.

This funding couldn't have come at a better time. Over the past year or so, we've taken a hard look at what's in our Tables of Allowance (TOAs). We're making changes that improve our readiness by shedding what we don't need, shaping the TOAs to get the right gear and replacing equipment that is antiquated.

While we remain encouraged by the many positive changes in the Naval Construction Force, we also recognize the human cost of our support in the Global War on Terror. As of the time that I write this note, we have lost 14 dedicated Seabees to combat in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. Our hearts go out to all the families and friends, and we honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defending our nation. Seabees have always been a tight-knit group, and each one of these losses hits us hard.

But we always take care of our own. Navy Casualty Assistance Call Officers help comfort the families and ensure that they rapidly receive all appropriate military benefits. Our Seabee Chaplains offer their services as well, and a Civil Engineer Corps Flag Officer participates in every funeral. Fellow members of each individual's unit, their Ombudsmen and other families also provide tremendous support in a variety of ways. For example, members of NMCB 25 recently volunteered to help the family of HM2 Jaime Jaenke finish constructing the horse stables she and her family had started building before her deployment to Iraq.

There is no way we can fill the void left in the lives of those who have lost a loved one. But we can promise to always remember them, to honor their service to their country and to support the families in whatever way we can. These great Americans died in the defense of our nation. We are blessed to have known them, and we cherish their memory. We pay them the greatest tribute by continuing to demonstrate compassion, courage and commitment to our mission as Seabees.

Construimus Batuimus.

Seabee Magazine wants to hear from you!

We are always looking for stories to share with our growing readership about Seabees' duty in support of the Global War on Terror, individual augmentees, exercises and operations, technological advancements, individual/team awards and achievements, unit homecomings, unique hobbies, volunteer work, etc.

Send your articles and story tips via e-mail to seabeesmagazine@navy.mil. Stories should be reviewed by leadership for accuracy, security, policy and propriety. Photo resolution must be 300 dpi at 5" x 7" minimum. Awards must be accompanied by an official citation and may be e-mailed to the address above or faxed to (202) 685-1484.

Show us the Seabee "Can Do" spirit, and we'll feature it in the pages of *Seabee Magazine*!



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