

UNITED STATES NAVY

SEABEE

FALL 2010

HONORARY MASTER CHIEF (DV)

ROBERT D. STETHEM **ARRIVING**

ALSO INSIDE:

**The Mechanics of
SEAL Mobility Training**

**'Bees Provide
Building Block of Life**

**RDML Katherine L. Gregory:
CEC's First Female Flag Officer**

WE BUILD ★ WE FIGHT

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SW2 (DV) Robert D. Stethem,
pictured in a 1983 dive photo,
San Diego, Calif., is honored
with a posthumous promotion
to master chief.

*Dive photo courtesy of Gina Nichols,
archivist, U.S. Navy Seabee Museum.
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FALL 10



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FINAL WORD

RADM Mark A. Handley, Commander, First Naval Construction Division, Commends Seabee Efforts in Afghanistan Troop Buildup.



Look for the Challenge Coin award in this issue!

CAN DO!

EO2 Padraig Martin, NMCB 5, uses a bulldozer to smooth an area where a cargo plane crash-landed, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, July 28. Seabees removed passengers from the plane and performed first aid until rescue personnel arrived. There were no major injuries sustained during the crash.

Photo by EA1 David Miller





The beauty of the Seabee mascot, the humble bumble bee, lies in how strongly it reflects who the 'Bees truly are.

Regardless of the situation – the symbolic bumble bee tells the dutifully observant all they need to know about whom they're dealing with. Organized, tenacious and industrious, the Seabees have honorably mimicked their six-legged mascot's animal kingdom reputation right down to the tendency to be peaceful – unless maliciously provoked.

Beyond our steadfast work ethic, intense military training and engineering prowess lies a common trait which both Man and insect share and has always been the secret to their success – teamwork.

I'm not talking about a generic pat on the back. No. The teamwork that I speak of goes far beyond what Vince Lombardi wished for, many a business bestseller planned for and quite frankly many whom have failed in their dreams only hoped for. Teamwork for the Seabees isn't polite; it's a way of life instilled in every Sailor who ever succeeded as a 'Bee.

The Seabees have our ratings – our experts – but I've never met a Seabee who didn't want to help his brother or sister and often knows exactly how to do it, whether it meant plumbing, nailing, soldering or measuring. Big Navy calls it cross decking – the Seabees call it CAN DO – and in the Seabees helping our fellow man comes as naturally as flight does to our mascot. I dare call it instinctive if you believe that Seabees are born and not made...

Your Fall 2010 issue of *Seabee* Magazine helps celebrate the true power of teamwork, Seabee-style, with our brothers and sisters



MCC(SCW/EXW/SW/AW/SG)
James G. Pinsky

showcased in a variety of supportive roles – contributors to a greater good.

We begin this issue by honoring one of our legendary Seabees, Steelworker 2nd Class (DV) Robert Dean Stethem (Nov. 17, 1961 – June 15, 1985) who was recently named an honorary master chief by his namesake's ship, USS *Stethem* (DDG 63). SW2 Stethem was murdered by Hezbollah terrorists during the hijacking of TWA Flight 847, after his courage and will proved too strong for the enemy. His legacy will not be forgotten.

In the SPECWAR community Seabees enable SEALs to keep running and gunning with timely, often ingenious Construction Mechanic (CM) support, while in Africa and Afghanistan still more Seabees use their engineering skills to provide developing nations the most essential element of life – water. The Seabee contribution to the greater good comes in all shapes and sizes with 1st Naval Construction Division's RADM Mark Handley spelling out just how much the Seabee mission enables the warfighter downrange.

Since March 5, 1942, the Seabees have made it their mission to help everyone else complete theirs, and like the humble bumble bee, only the observant have noticed. We here at *Seabee* think it's time the rest of the world knows, too.

MCC(SCW/EXW/SW/AW/SG) James G. Pinsky
Editor-in-Chief, *Seabee* Magazine



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EDITORIAL

SEABEE Magazine is scheduled quarterly by the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Public Affairs Office from the historic Washington Navy Yard, "the Quarterdeck of the Navy." Our readership consists of Active and Reserve Seabees and Civil Engineer Corps (CEC) officers and their families, as well as veterans, retirees and the general public. Letters and electronic mail are welcome on all Seabee-related topics and, if published, are subject to editing for length and clarity. Written and photographic submissions that show Active and Reserve Seabees are strongly encouraged. We prefer to receive all written and photographic submissions by e-mail to seabemagazine@navy.mil. Images should include captions and be unmodified; digital files should measure at least 300dpi at 5x7 inches. All submissions must include the author's full name, rank/rate, duty contact telephone number(s) and e-mail address. Submissions by regular postal mail are strongly discouraged due to security precautions that may damage fragile contents. If necessary, send all postal mail to:

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Mobility in a firefight is a key to victory. Without the Seabees, mobility is lost. During desert and mountain training for an East Coast-based SEAL team, Seabee construction mechanics are vital. On the following pages, discover how Seabees support the SEALs...

THE MECHANICS OF SEAL MOBILITY TRAINING





Seabees Provide “Nuts and Bolts” Support to SEALs





Story and photos by MCC(SCW/AW) Stan Travioli,
Naval Special Warfare Group 2

(Previous spread, inset)
SEALs and Seabee mechanics practice movement drills under a couple of feet of snow in the western United States.

(Previous spread, background)
SEALs learn how to navigate extreme terrain and use the necessary vehicles to their fullest abilities. Vehicles are key to getting SEALs to the fight.

(Opposite top)
Hardened steel from a Humvee is no match for a Navy SEAL.

(Opposite bottom) Pre-start checks show the snow and cold created new problems overnight. Broken thermostats, windshield damage and new leaks appeared when temperatures hit 40-below.

(Below) SEALs use a Seabee technique to pull out of a dangerous rut.

During the mobility training phase, SEALs take some invaluable training assets with them – Seabee construction mechanics who teach them the basics and the finer points of vehicle operation and repair. Throughout a training session in the Western United States earlier this year covering Humvees, modified ATVs and just about any other piece of gear that moves, construction mechanics worked side-by-side with the SEALs.

While in the field the Seabees also picked up some combat skills.

“We gave them basic pre-start and post-start training, which includes checking the fluids, lights and vital moving parts that are key to the vehicle running,” said Construction Mechanic 1st Class (SCW) Abel Gutierrez, lead mechanic on the mission. “We also integrated Battle Damage Assessment training and how to quickly repair the vehicle in case of a breakdown.”

Seabees set up a variety of operational stations, and SEALs spent many hours going from one station to another learning how the various vehicles work and practicing repairs. Seabee construction mechanics had stocked stations with spare parts which are prone to breaking, so SEALs could practice changing them out on the spot.

“I had never worked on a car before today,” said a 2nd Class SEAL. “The mechanics broke down how it works, why it works and then showed me how to fix it. It was cool!”

“It helps when the team members who usually operate the vehicle learn how to do quick fixes to get the vehicle back to base,” said CMI Gutierrez.

Getting the team back to base is critical since SEALs are not driving through friendly areas. The ability to fix the vehicle quickly can be the difference between life and death, not just being delayed for a few hours.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 9)





(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

Once the initial training was completed, the SEALs and Seabee mechanics started hitting the road – hard. The SEAL team learned how to drive in extreme terrain, using every ounce of energy and capability the machine provides.

Learning the limitations and uses, while valuable, is hard on the vehicles. But as the training progressed and the SEALs learned, vehicle breakdowns decreased. Which was great, because Mother Nature had a few surprises.

“When we started out it was nice and sunny,” said Gutierrez. “Within 24 hours, we had more than a foot of snow and it was still coming down.”

The wind chill dropped to 40-below at times and the vehicles slowed to a crawl. But, everything kept moving – just at a different pace and using different tactics.

Part of the goal of this exercise was to incorporate vehicles into mission training for the SEALs. The team started planning missions using various motorized pieces of gear available. A long-distance, multi-vehicle convoy into the mountains to grab a bad guy is not a spur-of-the-moment decision.

Some missions had team members traveling more than four hours on an ATV in the bitter cold to reach the target, and then four hours back. On other missions, members would drive out to a spot, hole up for the day and night, push on to the target and return.

Seabees spent many days in a row working, sometimes napping in a corner when tired. At some points, they worked two to three days straight keeping the gear running. They also assisted with logistics and planning. Every action was treated as if it were a real mission and every mission was vital.

“The training and support these guys gave us was incredible,” said a 2nd Class SEAL.

(Opposite top)
SEALs and Seabee mechanics put ATVs through their paces in rough terrain.

(Opposite bottom)
CM2(AW) Mike Weston and
CM2(EXW/SCW) Jon Poston work on
replacing a broken axle on a Humvee.

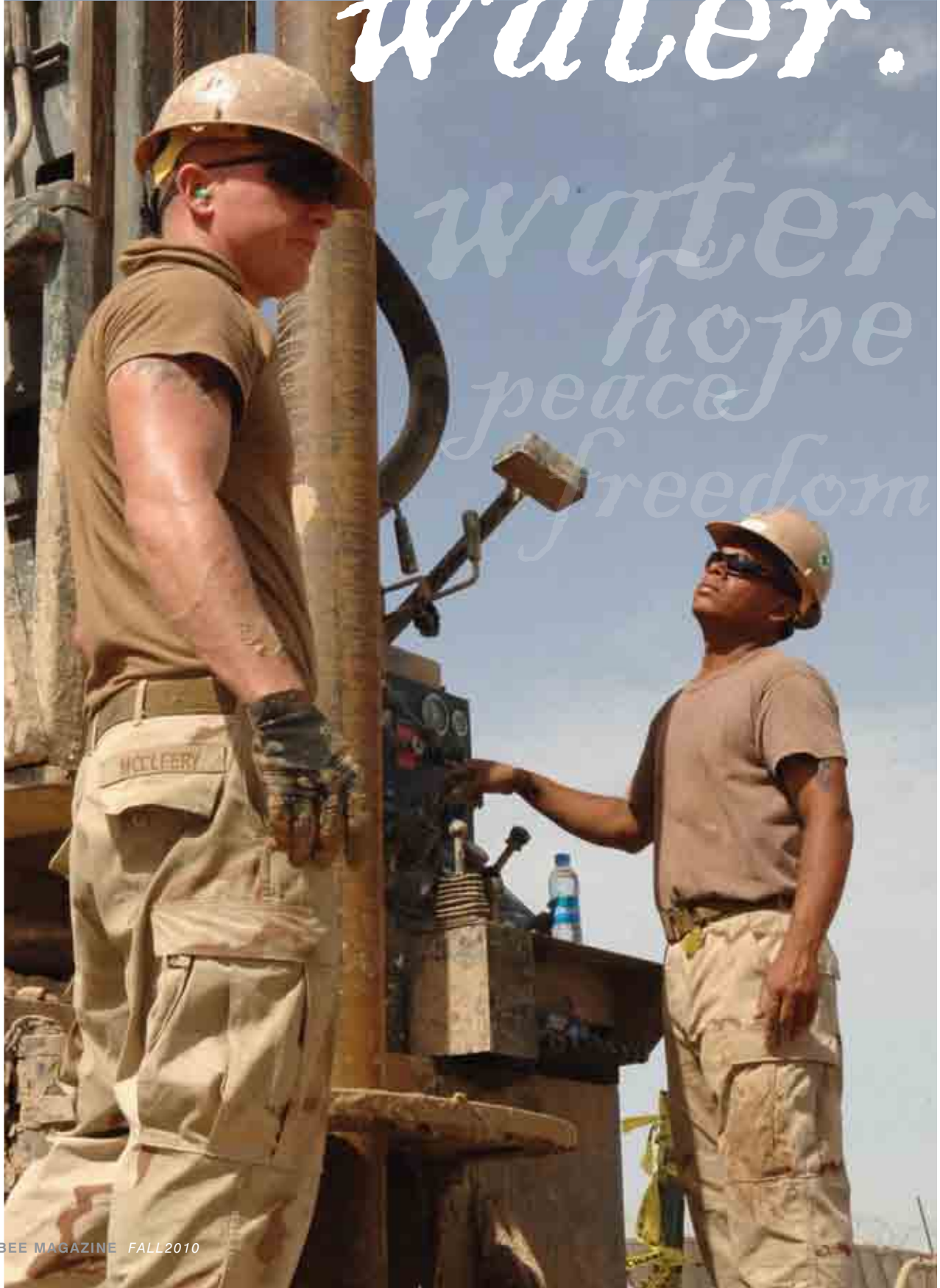
(Below)
CM2(AW) Mike Weston works under a
broken Humvee while in the mountains.



Before there can be freedom,
before there can be peace,
before there can be hope,
there must be

water.

*water
hope
peace
freedom*



M

ore than any dream we want to realize for our neighbors, the need for clean, safe water demotes all other “needs” to “wants.” The Seabees are at the forefront of bringing water to people around the world, and the Fall 2010 issue of *Seabee Magazine* highlights two water well missions in the **Horn of Africa** and **Afghanistan**.

The need for water cannot be overemphasized.

In the United States, water is never more than a fountain, grocery store or kitchen sink away from even the most impoverished American.

We are fortunate and the Seabees, ever the humanitarians, have a unique ability to place water wells in remote locations around the world where water seemed impossible just for drinking, not to mention sanitation, agriculture and even recreation.

As you read through the words of the Seabees who tell the story of two water well teams, think for a moment about what kind of life you would be able to live if water was nothing more than a dream and not a staple, if a bath was a luxury for your child and the thought of pouring your precious drops of water on crops made you question your farm’s worth.

Water is often called the building block of life, and it is a fitting title for something so necessary to be associated with building because that’s what the Seabees do best. CAN DO!

(Opposite)
CM3 Lucas McCleery
(left) and EO1 Jose
Martinez, assigned to
NMCB 133’s Water Well
Detachment, operate a
portable water well rig
while drilling a 1,210
feet deep water well at a
combat outpost in Toor
Ghar, Afghanistan. The
well produces 60 gal-
lons per minute and is
known as an “artesian”
well since the water is
pressured to the surface
without the use of a
pump.

CM3 Lucas McCleery,
assigned to NMCB 133’s
Water Well Detachment,
uses a pipe wrench to
join two pieces of
pipe while drilling a
water well in Toor Ghar,
Afghanistan.
*Photos by
MCC Ryan C. Delcore*





NMCB 7 Completes Dire Dawa Water Well

By ET2 Elizabeth Martin, EA2 Gregg Morris and
HM1 Heather Watts, NMCB 7 Public Affairs

After 672 hours of around-the-clock operations, Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7's Detachment Horn of Africa (HOA) successfully drilled its first freshwater well in the village of Adgia Falima, Dire Dawa, Ethiopia, June 14.

The detail had been tasked with completing construction of seven hand-pump operated wells in the Dire Dawa and Shinele regions, through the use of the mud rotary drilling technique, the most versatile and dependable method for drilling fresh water wells. Each completed well will be able to pump nine gallons of fresh water per minute.

Detail personnel were divided into three separate crews, led by Equipment Operator 1st Class Brad Williams, Equipment Operator 1st Class Jackie Hazeltine and Equipment Operator 2nd Class Michael Chevere. Drilling operations continued 24/7.

The completed well was drilled to a depth of 224 feet, consisting of six-inch PVC casing, two-inch galvanized steel draw pipe, sanitary seals, concrete base with catch basin and a galvanized steel hand pump.

The Seabees' success did not come without minor setbacks. Delays in getting needed equipment across the border into Ethiopia, along with drill malfunctions, were a couple of obstacles the Seabees had to hurdle.

"An important step of the drilling process was monitoring what type of surface we were drilling through," said Equipment Operator Constructionman Justin Flowers, NMCB 7. "Sometimes clay, then sand, but most often we had to drill through solid rock, making the operation very difficult and time consuming."

Security for the water well operation was provided by a 14-man detail of Army Soldiers assigned to the 1st Battalion, 65th Infantry Regiment, also based out of Camp Lemonier.

Once completed, Seabees provided valuable training on operation and maintenance of the well, to prevent misuse and mistreatment which may damage the well or cause a malfunction.

To celebrate the well's completion, ENS Craig Culbertson, detail mission commander, coordinated with the village leader to arrange an opening ceremony. "This is the first well we have completed, but it's more than just a number to us," said ENS Culbertson during the brief ceremony.

(Opposite) An Adgia Falima villager family enjoys fresh water from the recently completed water well in Dire Dawa, Ethiopia.

(Below) Seabees assigned to NMCB 7's Detachment Horn of Africa (HOA) operate an IT2W Water Well Drilling Rig at the Adgia Falima village water well drill site in Dire Dawa, Ethiopia.



NMCB 133 Reaches New Depths

By EO2 Desirre Maybee, NMCB 133

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133's Water Well Team successfully drilled a well for a command outpost (COP) for U.S. Marines at Toor Ghar, Afghanistan, earlier this year.

Due to the expansion of many Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) and COPs, wells are integral to the successful completion of tasks in Afghanistan since many areas are without water. Teams push out to drill wells that will improve a camp's daily operations and quality of life, while saving massive amounts of money spent on bottled water. Well water is used for laundry, cooking, vehicle wash racks and, most importantly, showers for the troops.

While the Toor Ghar well has greatly improved the morale of the local people, it was not without challenges. When the Seabees arrived, the T2W drilling rig was broken and waiting for parts, the backhoe had a flat tire and the 11k Skytrak forklift was leaking hydraulic fluid.

While waiting for parts to arrive, NMCB 133 improved the camp with a gym for the Marines. The gym was crafted from materials found around camp: pull-up bars made from pipe and a punching bag from a sea bag. The 'Bees also secured a tire and chains for building strength.

The camp had a drainage issue that the Seabees corrected by digging up the leech field and placing new pipes underground. They also installed 12 air conditioning units in the Marines' berthing tents.

The drilling process took seven days to be completed, working 24 hours a day with three teams of five people. The well reached a depth of 1,210 feet; the team began "developing" the well once reaching the final depth. Developing is the process of cleaning the hole and placing filtration screens. The screen is a steel pipe with small slits to allow the water to flow into the pipe while filtering out debris, such as sand and clay.

The hole was flushed with clean water after the depth was filled with pipe, and the space around the piping was filled with gravel, sand and concrete to hold the piping in place. Gravel was placed on the outside of the screens to filter large materials from the water. The team placed a concrete pad around the well and a shut-off valve was placed on the well to control the water flow.

Toor Ghar's well now produces 60 gallons of water per minute without a pump, also known as an "artesian" well.

EO1 Jose Martinez (left) and CM3 Lucas McCleery, NMCB 133, raise a section of pipe while drilling a water well at a combat outpost in Toor Ghar, Afghanistan.
Photo by MCC Ryan C. Delcore





Outside Hamramba School, Detail Comoros Seabees present a commemorative plaque to Comorian President Ahmed Abdallan Mohamed Sambi (foreground, right) to be displayed in the school, during the ribbon cutting ceremony, Moroni, Comoros, Horn of Africa.

NMCB 7 Completes First Major Seabee Project in Comoros Islands

By EA2 Gregg Morris, NMCB 7

Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 assigned to Detail Comoros completed construction of the Hamramba School, Moroni, Comoros, Horn of Africa, in June, the first major Seabee construction project in the Comoros Islands.

The Seabees endured countless days of sweat in 120-plus degree heat indexes to ensure the school's successful completion.

"This was an outstanding team effort and partnership with the local military and government of Comoros," said Chief Builder Hippolito Quiles, NMCB 7's mission commander. "The teamwork and hard work to make this project a success was truly impressive."

NMCB 7 was tasked with the completion of two 300-square-meter concrete masonry unit block school buildings with three separate classrooms each. In addition, the Seabees constructed a 25-square-meter male and female latrine facility with electrical and plumbing finish work. The entire project began four NMCB deployments ago, with NMCB 7 completing the final 15 percent.

The capital city of Moroni, located on the Grande Comore Island, is the largest city in the Comoros Islands. Being a smaller, self-sufficient island, the typical construction methods the Seabees regularly use were not available to the detachment.

"Working on a project with numerous challenges, as well as the prevalent language barrier between us and the local military assisting, provided a level of difficulty that many of the young Seabees here have never dealt with," said BUC Quiles.

Upon arriving at the site, NMCB 7 immediately went to work, occasionally using methods that even the more experienced Seabees had never used. For instance, concrete batch plants were nonexistent; instead the 'Bees mixed all concrete by hand. Even equipment such as pump trucks – vehicles used to assist in more difficult concrete pours – were not an option.

After hand mixing the concrete, the crew used two-gallon buckets and wheelbarrows to transfer the material to the placement area.

"This was the toughest project that I have encountered since joining the battalion," said Equipment Operator Constructionman Thomas Welker.

The austere location of the project provided many of the crew a chance to learn all facets of construction techniques. Steelworkers mixed concrete, mechanics operated equipment they typically fix and electricians placed finishing work. This camaraderie was the driving force in completing the project on time.

The Hamramba School celebrated its completion with a special ceremony attended by local officials and RADM Brian Losey, commander, Combined Task Force-Horn of Africa.

**SEABEES:
A Global
Force for
Good...
One heart,
one mind,
one school,
one hospital
at a time.**

HAITI

CONTINUING PROMISE

Seabees and Marines Rebuild Haitian Hospital Roof

By MC2 Bryan Weyers, USS *Iwo Jima* Combat Camera

Seabees and Marines deployed on USS *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7) in support of Operation *Continuing Promise 2010* spent five days reconstructing a hospital in Port de Paix, Haiti, July 27-31.

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7, Construction Battalion Mobile Unit (CBMU) 202 and Marine Logistical Command Element (LCE) built a new roof on the hospital; washed and bleached walls and floors; painted the walls inside and outside the facility; and constructed a shelter over a well behind the hospital where locals wash their clothing.

"We've been tasked to refurbish this hospital and make it a usable facility for the Haitian people," said Builder 2nd Class Thomas J. Camara, CBMU 202's project supervisor.

The medical facility is the only hospital in Port de Paix supported by the local government.

"The community has been really receptive to what we are doing here," said BU2 Camara. "They have actually come out to watch us work everyday."

To ensure the safety of military personnel working on the project, Seabees hired local Haitians to clean the entire facility. It also helped build revenue in the community.

"As a joint task operation for multiple units, we've come together really well to help the Haitian people," said Camara.

BU1 Zachary Vaughan, NMCB 7, replaces a glass block wall with a door during a *Continuing Promise 2010* service project at Northwest Haiti Christian Mission Miriam Center, Saint-Louis du Nord, Haiti, July 27.

Photo by
MC2 Jonathen E. Davis





Members of NMCB 133 work on the Tactical Operations Center in the cannery on Camp Nathan Smith, Kandahar City, Afghanistan.

Seabees Convert Afghan Cannery, Prison to Joint Ops Center

By Spc. Casey Collier, 22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

When you walk into the old cannery warehouse on the western side of the Camp Nathan Smith (CNS) compound in Kandahar City, Afghanistan, you notice a dark expanse dimly lit through broken windows and surrounded by cracked, brick columns that reach from the concrete floor to the 20-foot-high ceiling.

But after an initial inspection of the cannery, something more subtle comes into view – graffiti on the dusty, white walls, scrawled in Arabic script by former prisoners who were chained along the very same walls when it was used by the Taliban as a prison.

The cannery was erected in the early 1970s, funded by Czech investors, and for nearly 20 years was fully operational, employing more than 1,200 citizens of Kandahar City at its peak.

When the Mujahedeen took over in 1992, they closed the cannery and turned it into a prison. It remained a prison for nine years until the Taliban fled in 2001. Then, in 2005 the Canadian government took over the property to build CNS.

Today, the old cannery is changing again.

The sound of pounding hammers and buzzing saws echoes throughout. It is the sound of another incarnation, this time as part of an expansion effort to accommodate the influx of future occupants at CNS.

In charge of transforming the cannery into a Joint Operations and Tactical Operations Center is a group of Seabees – Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133.

“The Seabees on the ground here at Camp Nathan Smith have exceeded my highest expectations and have continued to impress me daily,” said LTJG Craig Lawson, officer in charge, NMCB 133. “Our small unit leaders have taken ownership of this expansion project and are looking to exceed the required quality of construction, while finishing ahead of schedule.”

NMCB 133 began construction June 12. The cannery is only part of a larger expansion project, including six office buildings and widened lanes for vehicle travel, most likely to be

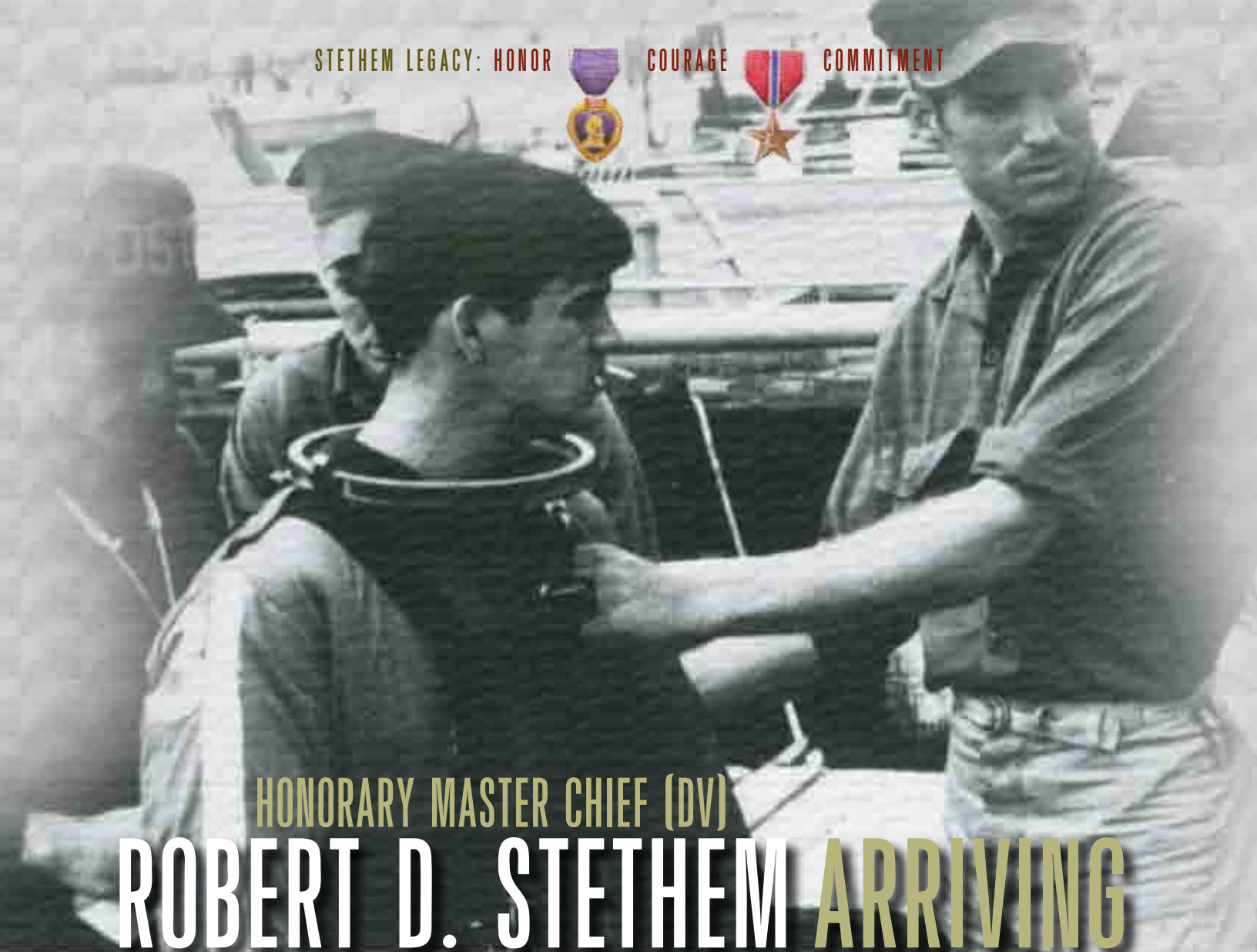
completed before NMCB 133 finishes the entire project. The expansion project will provide 25,216 square feet of space on CNS.

Engineering Aide 2nd Class Zachary Cunningham, NMCB 133, is in charge of quality control at the cannery site.

“As soon as we get to a site, we are expected to make significant progress and it’s normally with short timelines,” said EA2 Cunningham. “Being able to build here, we feel like we’re able to contribute to the mission.”

As the cannery takes on its newest role and goes through its most dramatic physical transformation since original construction, it continues to stand as a symbol of change and progress in Kandahar City.

“I’m really proud to see all these Americans here,” said Cunningham. “We are working to bring peace to this country. We are working to bring freedom to a country that doesn’t have that right now. It’s a really good feeling.”



HONORARY MASTER CHIEF (DV) ROBERT D. STETHEM ARRIVING

SW2(DV) Robert D. Stethem (in dive gear), San Diego, Calif., circa 1983. Photo courtesy of Gina Nichols, Archivist, U.S. Navy Seabee Museum.

“The resilience and courage that Petty Officer Stethem showed while facing a horrific situation that led to his untimely death was the utmost example of our core values of Honor, Courage and Commitment that we as Sailors must live by every day...It was my honor to recognize Petty Officer Stethem’s loyalty, devotion and sacrifice that he made in service to our Navy and our nation.”
Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (SS/SW) Rick D. West

In a posthumous frocking ceremony, USS *Stethem* (DDG 63) honored the ship’s namesake—Steelworker (DV) 2nd Class Robert Dean Stethem—in Yokosuka, Japan, Aug. 24. SW2 Stethem was frocked to the honorary rank of master chief petty officer, 25 years after he was killed by members of the Lebanese terrorist organization Hezbollah during the hijacking of TWA Flight 847.

While returning from a routine assignment in Greece with fellow members of Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1 in June 1985, SW2 Stethem was singled out from passengers as a U.S. Navy Sailor. After being badly beaten, he was killed when the terrorists’ demands to release 766 Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners held by Israel were not met. Throughout his ordeal Stethem did not yield; instead, he acted with fortitude and courage, and helped his fellow passengers endure by his example.

When the USS *Stethem* Chief Petty Officer Mess presented the honorary promotion idea to CDR Hank Adams, *Stethem* commanding officer, he wholeheartedly agreed, signed a request for the promotion and forwarded it to the Office of the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, MCPON (SS/SW) Rick D. West. A few months later, the request was approved and a heroic Sailor was honored.

In a special feature for *Seabee* Magazine, BMC (SEAL/EOD) Kenneth J. Stethem (Ret), reflects on his younger brother, Rob – fellow Sailor, friend and hero.



"We could not be prouder of Robert. He was passionate in life...and demonstrated Honor, Courage and Commitment to the very end of his life...We are extremely grateful that Robert was advanced to the honorary rank of CUCM. He was so proud of being a Seabee and a U.S. Navy diver."

Richard and Patricia Stethem, parents of Honorary CUCM (DV) Robert D. Stethem



(Right) DKCS Richard L. Stethem and family upon his retirement from the Navy, Arlington, Va., 1979.
(From left) Mom, Patricia; Richard; Patrick (foreground); Kenneth (background); Robert; and Shari.
Photo courtesy of the Stethem family

On the 24th of August, I was fortunate and very proud to attend and participate in the Honorary Frocking Ceremony for my brother, SW2 (DV) Robert D. Stethem. His honorary advancement to CUCM (DV) was a wonderful way to remember Rob and the sacrifice he made for our Navy and our nation.

I was very fortunate to be able to call Rob my brother and my friend. We were very close since we grew up just a year apart. At the time of his death, at the age of 23, we were still roommates. Since many never had the opportunity or pleasure to meet him, I would like to share some of the wonderful things about this younger brother that I am so very proud of.

To really know who Rob was you would have to understand how we were raised. Rob, like all of the Stethem children, was born into what we call a "Navy Family." My parents met and were married while they were both in the U.S. Navy. In fact, combined, the Stethem family has more than 105 years of service in the Navy. Growing up, there were many transfers, many changes, but one thing always remained a constant – that was my parents' expectations that we always do the right thing. They instilled in us the values of honesty, integrity, hard work, commitment and determination. They constantly demanded that we give our best, not settle for less than we were capable of...and they demonstrated these same principles in their own lives every day. These values – which are so very important in character development – were fundamental in our household. And Rob learned them well.

Rob was one of the most focused and determined men I have ever known. He was so proud of the rich heritage of the Navy Seabees and his career with them, having made numerous deployments with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 62 and then with Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1. Everyone who met and worked with Rob saw that, even at a young age, he displayed a personal and professional ethos, as well as leadership skills far beyond his years. His dream was to become a Master Diver in the U.S. Navy. He worked every day to prepare himself for this goal. When we were home together, he would constantly ask me to quiz him on dive tables and diving medicine questions so he could sharpen his knowledge, understanding and skills. He was an outstanding diver, whether

By BMC(SEAL/EOD) Kenneth J. Stethem (Ret)
working on, over or under the water. He lived and loved to dive.

The hijacking took everyone by surprise. I was the first in the family to find out that Rob and the team from UCT 1 were aboard TWA Flight 847 in June 1985. It was an ordeal for Rob, and our family, that we will never forget. Those who have read the actual accounts of Rob's actions during the hijacking...the courage he demonstrated...the resolve he displayed...and the sacrifice(s) he made...while enduring brutal beatings at the hands of cowards, have had their lives changed forever. I will never forget the dedication, the dignity and the devotion that this 23-year-old U.S. Navy diver displayed...even to his death. Americans everywhere should know that his captors were infuriated that they could not break his spirit...that they could not get him to cry out...to ask them, to beg them...to spare his life.

His courage and his resolve were born out of the values that were inspired by our parents, grounded while serving in the U.S. Navy and demonstrated in Rob's pride in the United States of America. Americans should know this story about Rob...and

about why he gave his full and final measure protecting our country and guarding our way of life. He took an oath to do so...and he took that oath seriously. And this is why the crest of the USS *Stethem* (DDG 63) bears the words, "STEADFAST" and "COURAGEOUS."

Honor...Courage...Commitment. Rob embodied these core values in his life and in his death. These are the qualities that Rob displayed and in doing so, he set an example for us all. Character does count and virtues do matter, especially in times of trouble.

Our family is extremely grateful to the U.S. Navy and the Seabees for the many ways they have honored and remembered Rob. As our Father mentioned at

the Commissioning Ceremony of the USS *Stethem*, "Carriers are named for presidents, battleships are named for states and destroyers are named for heroes. Robert Dean Stethem is certainly that, an American Hero."

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to CMDCM (AW/SW) Eileen Arthur, former CMC USS *Stethem*, for submitting and MCPON (SS/SW) Rick West for approving the request for Rob's honorary advancement to Master Chief. This is a rare honor that has a very special meaning to the Stethem family. And we are most certain that, somewhere, CUCM (DV) Robert D. Stethem would humbly concur.



BMC(SEAL/EOD) Kenneth J. Stethem (Ret) (center) receives a bronzed master chief cover from ISC Dan Mayfield (left) and CTC (Technical) Jeff Kuhlman, both assigned to the Aegis guided-missile destroyer USS *Stethem* (DDG 63), during a ceremony to celebrate his brother and ship's namesake, Robert D. Stethem's, honorary frocking to the rank of master chief petty officer, Yokosuka, Japan, Aug. 24. BMC Stethem also received his brother's master chief anchors and the certificate of appointment from the MCPON's office on behalf of the Stethem family.
Photo by MC1 Geronimo Aquino



INTEROPERABILITY EXERCISES

Multinational Divers Take to the Water During *Sea Breeze 2010*

By MC1(SW) Gary Keen, Commander,
U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs

(Above) Ukrainian Senior Diver Tkachenko Mihaylo jumps in the water to accompany SW2 Jesse Hamblin, UCT 1, during one of many dive evolutions for exercise *Sea Breeze 2010* at the Ukrainian Western Naval Base, Odessa, Ukraine.

Photo by MC1(SW) Gary Keen

Danish, Ukrainian and U.S. Navy divers participated in a variety of dive evolutions during the multinational exercise *Sea Breeze 2010* at the Ukrainian Western Naval Base, Odessa, Ukraine, in July.

Sea Breeze is an invitational combined and joint maritime exercise in the Black Sea with the goals of enhancing Black Sea national maritime security capabilities and improving related theater security cooperation strategies.

"It's excellent working with different nations," said Chief Steelworker (SCW/DV) Daniel Lowery, officer in charge, Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1. "We are here to become proficient in our job, work with other countries and develop relationships [with other military services]."

Members from the Danish Navy Dive Academy, Copenhagen; Ukrainian dive team, Search and Rescue Center of the Ukrainian Navy, Sevastopol; UCT 1, Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Va.; and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 8, Sigonella, Italy, trained together daily in controlled environments, both in port and at sea.

"Today we are going to dive with some of the guys from Ukraine who have never used or tested dive helmets before," said Thomas Frederiksen, exercise participant and diver from the Royal Danish Navy Dive Academy. "Over the next couple of days we will continue training with the Ukraine divers, and we'll do some underwater welding as well."

Surface supplied diving techniques, equipment familiarization, underwater welding, salvage operations, ordnance identification and disposal, and side scan sonar operations were covered during various diving phases of *Sea Breeze*.

"The training was very interesting," said Ukrainian Navy Senior Diver Tkachenko Mihaylo. "We have many of the same procedures as the other nations, but our equipment is different. It is nice to learn about the different equipment."

Sea Breeze is the largest exercise this year in the Black Sea, including 20 ships, 13 aircraft and more than 1,600 military members from Azerbaijan, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Moldova, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine and the United States.

Seabees Hitch up with RED HORSE Team

By Tech. Sgt. Eric Petosky, *New Horizons Panama 2010* Public Affairs

Two Navy Seabees assigned to the 820th RED HORSE Squadron, Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., worked side-by-side with Army and Air Force engineers during *New Horizons Panama 2010* in July.

LTJG Derek Rinaldo and Senior Chief Builder Shawn Crosby brought almost 40 years of combined Seabee experience to the Task Force *New Horizons* team. Both are assigned to the Air Force as part of a personnel exchange program.

"This is the first time I've worked with an Air Force unit," LTJG Rinaldo said. "It's great to serve in a joint environment, especially with the *New Horizons* mission."

"We get to go out, talk to people and the presumption is 'We're here to help.' The kids are smiling, and the parents and teachers are happy to get new facilities," Rinaldo said. "It's something completely different."

New Horizons Panama is an annual U.S. Southern Command humanitarian assistance exercise, designed to provide medical care and quality-of-life improvements to infrastructure in Central America, South America and the Caribbean. For 2010, the task force is renovating four schools and two medical clinics in the vicinity of Meteti, Panama, and providing five two-week medical missions in the towns of David, Chitre and Veraguas.

Rinaldo is the material liaison officer for the exercise. He works with contractors to make sure the correct building materials arrive on time and are delivered to the six construction sites. The task is not without its challenges.

"Some of the items we are used to working with in the U.S. are just not available in Panama," Rinaldo said. "In those cases, I have to work with the different craft leads to identify a suitable replacement, and then get the materials delivered to the site in a timely manner so work doesn't stop."

BUCS Crosby is supervising the maintenance and improvement of the temporary base camp

housing for more than 250 Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors and Marines during the course of *New Horizons Panama*. He has more than 32 years of active and reserve time in service, and has been involved in various *New Horizons* missions since 1999.

"I'm lovingly referred to as the 'Camp Mayor,'" Crosby said. "I'm responsible for the day-to-day operations, including facilities, utilities, roads and people. Keeping the base camp running smoothly with hot meals, cool tents, showers and recreational facilities is just as important as the work at the construction site."

Both Seabees agree that integrating with an Air Force RED HORSE squadron was fairly seamless. Initially, there was a learning curve to learn Air Force-specific administrative functions and acronym deciphering; but both agree that the squadron welcomed them with open arms.

"There's not been one moment of feeling like the odd man out," Crosby said. "I often tell other Seabees that the only difference between an Air Force RED HORSE engineer and a Navy Seabee is the uniform. It's really that simple. When you're talking about a construction force in the U.S. military, everyone works hard and gets the job done."

The senior chief hopes to one day integrate best practices from the RED HORSE squadron into the Seabee culture. By melding the two, he wants to improve both. Rinaldo will use the experience to help him stay competitive in the civilian sector when he leaves the Navy at year-end.

Until then, each man stays committed to the *New Horizons Panama* mission, and the obvious improvement to remote communities' schools and clinics.

"This is an outstanding mission," said Crosby. "To be able to come to Panama and help the people is definitely rewarding work. This is one of the better things we, as engineers, get to do."

BUCS Shawn Crosby raises the 820th Expeditionary RED HORSE Squadron flag over the base camp in Meteti, Panama, housing more than 250 Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors and Marines taking part in *New Horizons Panama 2010*, a U.S. Southern Command-sponsored humanitarian assistance mission. Crosby is known as the "Camp Mayor" of tent city, responsible for the day-to-day operations of the camp, including facilities, utilities, roads and people.

U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Eric Petosky



ACB 2 Leaves Lasting Impression on Latvian Leaders and Youth Through *BALTOPS 2010*

By LT Andrew Duffe, ACB 2

Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 2 deployed this past June to Ventspils, Latvia, for *BALTOPS 2010*, a Baltic operations exercise in support of the Marine Corps Maritime Pre-positioning Force (MPF) Program. *BALTOPS* is an annual exercise aimed at improving interoperability and cooperation among regional allies.

This year, *BALTOPS* included a joint MPF exercise that brought together Seabees and the rest of the Naval Beach Group (NBG) 2 team, based out of Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek, Va. Their efforts were augmented by the Marines 4th Landing Support Battalion (LSB), based out of Ft. Louis, Wash., and Charleston, S.C.

The mission in Latvia was to exercise and demonstrate the capability of the MPF program, which provides combatant commanders with the tools necessary to rapidly deploy any Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) size element in response to a crisis that affects national interests.

The MPF program combines the capacity and endurance of sealift with the speed of airlift. In late May, the SS *PFC Eugene Obregon* (T-AK 3006) sailed for the port city of Talin, Estonia, on the Baltic Sea from its homeport in the Mediterranean. Following rendezvous with an offload preparation team, the mission was to deliver the pre-positioned MAGTF assets to Ventspils.

Marines from Charlie Company, 4th Landing Support Battalion, backload a Humvee onto an Improved Navy Lighterage System (INLS) causeway ferry, Ventspils, Latvia. ACB 2 and NBG 2, along with the Marines, worked together to offload and backload equipment from the SS *PFC Eugene Obregon* (T-AK 3006) during *BALTOPS 2010*.
Photo by MC2 Meranda Keller

Main body personnel from ACB 2 and other NBG 2 commands deployed with 4th LSB to the theater in preparation for the exercise.

To deliver the MAGTF assets from *Obregon* to the shore required the expertise of ACB 2's Bravo Company. Using lighterage embarked aboard the ship, these causeway ferries are necessary for throughput of all equipment, material and supplies from ship to shore, enabling a MAGTF to be combat effective and self-sufficient for 30 days.

The tremendous success of the exercises culminated in a perfectly executed "Distinguished Visitor Day" that included the President of Latvia, dynamic displays of Navy and Marine Corps equipment, and a heavy local media presence to detail the interoperability of naval and foreign assets.

In addition to the MPF portion of this exercise, a team of Seabees completed two humanitarian assistance projects.

The first was an orphanage restroom renovation project in Ventspils. Prior to its completion, boys and girls between the ages of four and 18 had to share a single shower and lavatory space. Now they have their own restrooms after a complete renovation with new fixtures, shower basins, toilet partitions and tile. Seabees also renovated a school auditorium in the neighboring town of Leipaja, helping to cultivate a lasting relationship with a younger generation of Latvians.



Gold Medal,
Women's 25M
Pistol, 2007 Pan
American Games,
Rio de Janeiro,
Brazil



Navy Petty Officer Has a Shot at the Olympics

By MCC Terrina Weatherspoon, 3NCR Public Affairs

Information Systems Technician 1st Class Sandra Uptagrafft, 3rd Naval Construction Regiment (NCR), had a pretty good day at the Woolmarket Range in Biloxi, Miss. She even had one shot fall just short of the center X ring – the rest landed dead center.

Uptagrafft nailed a perfect 240 score with her M-9 and became the envy of the range with both military and civilian coaches vowing to beat her. The range honored the score by etching her name on the entrance sign at the range. Her skills have been put to good use, not only in her previous career in the Army and currently the Navy, but also in competing for a spot on the U.S. Olympic Shooting Team.



Uptagrafft's Wedding Day

"She is just such a quiet, petite person, with a little voice," said Senior Chief Electronics Technician Steve Stowe, communications chief, 3NCR. "No one expected someone who walks so softly to even carry a gun, let alone be so darn accurate with it."

IT1 Uptagrafft recently broke the record (a perfect 240 with three outside the X ring) for M-9 by shooting a perfect score of 240 at the Woolmarket Range in Biloxi,

with only one shot outside the X ring. Her name will now appear on the entrance sign, and the range coaches—both military and civilian—have made it their goal to beat her.

But shooting wasn't something Uptagrafft felt she was born to do. It wasn't until she shot for the first time in boot camp and was told she had a knack for it that she actually considered it something she'd like to pursue.

Since then she has become passionate about shooting. She has participated in several selection matches and has earned a spot on the U.S. Shooting Team, which will compete in the 2010 World Shooting Championships in Munich, Germany.

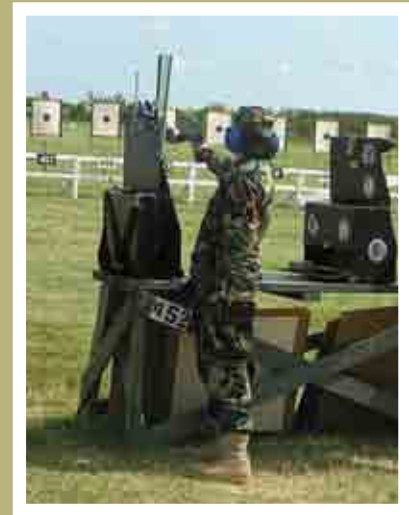
Her husband, Sgt. 1st Class Eric Uptagrafft, whom she met at a shooting tournament where they both qualified for the World Military Shooting Team, has also earned a spot on the U.S. World Championship Shooting Team.

"People ask us all the time if we feel pressure to outdo each other, but the answer is no," said Uptagrafft. "We don't compete in the same categories. I shoot a .22-caliber pistol and he competes with a .22-caliber long rifle."

If Uptagrafft and her husband win during the World Shooting Championships they will earn 30 of the 40 points needed to qualify for the 2012 Olympic Team. Other points can be earned by participating in the four remaining World Cups being held this year and next.

There is just one problem: Uptagrafft is in the midst of preparing for a six-month deployment to Afghanistan with the 3NCR. She has already received special permission to attend the World Shooting Championships, and she knows the deployment will significantly reduce her chances to earn the necessary points.

The 39-year-old realizes that with the Olympics held only once every four years, she is running out of chances. She used to have all the time in the world to prepare for the competitions. In the active-duty Army Uptagrafft was a small arms instructor, as well as a member of the Army Marksmanship Team at Fort Benning, Ga. Now, as an activated reservist her practice time is limited.



2009 NRA National Pistol Championships, Camp Perry, Ohio

"My love of shooting definitely goes beyond just the winning aspect of it," said Uptagrafft. "It teaches me focus and discipline and helps me perform under pressure." It also feels great to know you are good at something and to have a goal outside of your normal job."

"I'm glad she's on our team," said Chief Information Systems Technician Bob Kramer, Uptagrafft's supervisor. "You'd definitely want to meet her, just not in a dark alley."

"Can Do" Builder & Master Craftsman



Senior Chief Builder (SCW) Donald Bankey, Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU) 202, is an accomplished craftsman – both in and out of uniform. You may know him as the man who created the Purple Heart Memorial honoring fallen Seabees... or the builder on the Northwest Bypass Road project in Haiti...or the part-time custom cabinet maker.



BUCS Bankey would simply call himself a Seabee, where talent as a fundamental builder and exquisite craftsman coexist.

By NAVFAC HQ Public Affairs and Communications

BUCS(SCW) Donald Bankey, CBMU 202, uses a scroll saw to create the Purple Heart Memorial, first displayed during the "Year of the Seabee" in 2009.

Bankey mills lumber with a jointer for the Purple Heart Memorial.

Behind the 12-foot bar he built for the CPO Mess, Camp Mitchell, Rota, Spain.





Bankey adds some detail work to the Purple Heart Memorial.



Bankey's rough sketch of EQCM(SCW) Scott Hillanbrand's retirement shadowbox.

Bankey's 23-year Navy career with the Seabees is due in part to his upbringing. His grandfather was an aviation machinist in WWII and Vietnam, with 24 years of service. His father, a Seabee, retired in September 1987 as a chief builder with 22 years of service.

"My dad would get part-time jobs roofing houses, and I was his helper. Ever since I was real young, I knew I wanted to be a carpenter," said Bankey. "My idea back then was to be in the service for 20 years, get out, and then my dad and I could have a business together."

As a teenager, Bankey was a part of the only Seabee Sea Cadet unit, CBC Gulfport, Miss., for three years. There, he completed his military requirements and BU rating manual even before joining the Navy. Once enlisted, he left for boot camp and, consequently, missed his father's retirement ceremony.

Bankey's interest in fine woodworking began with his first deployment. He was an E3 BUCN, and was attached to the builder shop.

"My first SCBT class was woodworking and mill working, which the Navy doesn't teach anymore," said Bankey. "BU2 Scott Mushaw had me making plaques and taught me detail work. I fell in love with woodworking then and there."

During his first tour with the 20th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR), he served as BU/SW Shop Supervisor and maintained the carpenter shop equipment for the homeported battalions to use. In his off-hours, Bankey learned how to make shadow boxes. He also mentored his fellow 'Bees in woodworking, and taught them how to make shadow boxes and plaques.

"Since then I always find there's someone retiring or my name gets around that I know how to make them, and they come calling," Bankey explained. "I just love doing it." Bankey's process is listening to what customers want, and then offering ideas based on input they've shared. At the "absolute top" of his favorite projects list

is the Purple Heart Memorial he created for the "Year of the Seabee" exhibit at the U.S. Navy Memorial in Washington, D.C., in 2009. Second is a bar he built for the chiefs mess in Rota, Spain, made out of solid purple heartwood. Other highlights include a rear admiral's retirement chest (which he taught himself braidwork to complete) and a retirement shadow box for a Spanish admiral in Rota. He's also built ship's wheels and clocks.

Bankey says he typically works on three projects monthly. Currently, he's busy with a new design based on a regular shadow box that incorporates a coin rack at the bottom. He's also had previous part-time work as a cabinetmaker, building custom kitchen and bathroom cabinets for new home construction.

"I could see myself getting into custom cabinet making when I retire," Bankey shared. "All of the basics that a builder works on, I can do. But I enjoy the finish work. The more detail something has to it, the more I enjoy it."

All of Bankey's projects are accomplished, in addition to his day-to-day responsibilities as a senior chief, a rank he earned in 2007. He imparts on his troops the same attention to detail that he maintains.

"One of the phrases I've always disliked, that I've heard throughout my career is 'good enough for government work.' And I can't see it from homeport," he said. "I try to teach my troops to do everything as though they were doing it for themselves."

Bankey admits his role as senior chief is a big responsibility – one that he takes to heart.

"I enjoy affecting the lives of all the troops who work for me," he said. "I feel I'm shaping their lives, their careers, and helping them progress and succeed like I have."

He has completed eight deployments with four battalions (NMCBs 1, 62, 74 and 133), plus a one-year unaccompanied tour to Diego Garcia. Bankey has received three Navy Achievement Medals (NAMs) and two Navy Commendation Medals. He re-enlisted in September 2009 for another three years. In April 2011, he'll return to CBC Gulfport, Miss., with NMCB 11.

Bankey's goal is to make master chief and then retire with 30 years of service – at which point, he concedes, "I'll probably have to make my own plaque."

Bankey with the completed Purple Heart Memorial.



NMCB 5 is 2009 Peltier Award Recipient

By MC2 Ace Rheume and ENS Adrienne Rolle, NMCB 5 Public Affairs

Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) recognized Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5 with the 2009 Peltier Award as the most outstanding active component battalion. The first complete battalion to deploy to support U.S. Forces Afghanistan in Regional Command South, NMCB 5 provided unparalleled engineering support to the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade, a U.S. Army Stryker Brigade and Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force Afghanistan.

The Peltier Award is named for RADM Eugene J. Peltier, former Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks and Chief of Civil Engineers. This Seabee award recognizes the battalion selected as the most outstanding during the prior fiscal year. This is the second consecutive year NMCB 5 has received this award.

"These proud, selfless Seabees have had two consecutive homeports

cut significantly short in order to support Afghanistan surge operations," said CDR Scot Sanders, commanding officer, NMCB 5. "Both times their original scheduled deployment destinations were changed. Each time they tightened their belts and went to work like true professionals."

NMCB 5 Seabees returned from Afghanistan in August. Within a few short months, word spread that they would deploy back to the desert sooner than expected.

"Despite the changes and short homeports they performed magnificently and truly lived up to the Seabee legacy of making the difficult happen now and the seemingly impossible things happen later," said CDR Sanders.

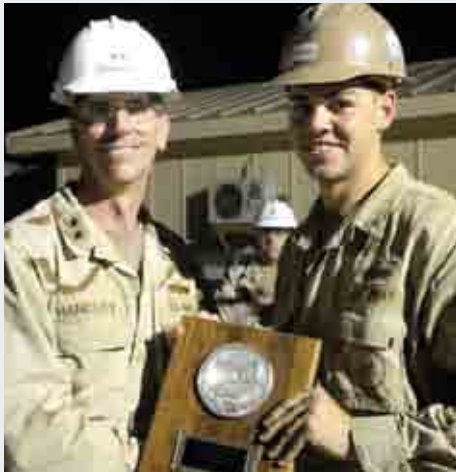
Extreme temperatures and arduous work hours were just a few factors that were common in theater, but proper planning was implemented to ensure everyone in the battalion was ready.

"You can definitely see how we progress as a command," said Utilitiesman 2nd Class (SCW) Ramon Santiago, NMCB 5. "Last deployment, [at the det I was attached to] we built a whole compound from scratch. It was a small crew of only 23 and the compound we finished included SWA huts, a dining facility and showers."

Safety is an important consideration for the Peltier Award. On the left side of every Seabee hard hat it clearly states, "Safety is my responsibility." NMCB 5 Seabees incorporate this motto on an everyday basis.

"These guys had twice the optempo and number of mandays worked of a normal peacetime deployment, yet the safety mishap rate dropped significantly by 46 percent," said Sanders. "[It is] one of the best safety records of any unit I've ever seen; safety mishaps normally go up in a contingency environment.

"Every time I see them working away in a sandstorm or in the desert heat, I think these guys are really a special breed and I'm blown away by their professionalism, their efforts and their sacrifices," Sanders continued. "It is an honor to have had a chance to serve with such tremendous men and women."



RADM Mark Handley (left), Commander, 1NCD, presents CE3 Matthew Tatro, NMCB 5, the Peltier Award on behalf of the entire battalion at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan. This is the second consecutive year NMCB 5 has won this prestigious Seabee award.

Photo by MC2 Ace Rheume

NMCB 24 Receives 2009 Perry Award

By NAVFAC HQ Public Affairs and Communications

Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) recognized Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 24 with the Perry Award for fiscal year 2009 as the most outstanding reserve component battalion. NMCB 24 received the award based on demonstrated superior leadership and technical skill while mobilized in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, providing contingency construction and combat service support in Iraq and supporting operations in Afghanistan.

The battalion's convoy security support element teams logged more than 22,000 miles, ensuring safe and timely contingency construction support to the warfighter. Being a force multiplier for theater changes, NMCB 24 provided critical support to the "lift and shift" of two battalions from Iraq into Afghanistan.

The RADM John R. Perry Award is named for the legendary and distinguished Civil Engineer Corps/Seabee leader. The unit selected for this prestigious award is a recognized leader in the Naval Construction Force in safety, overall performance, readiness, construction accomplishments, equipment management, logistics programs, retention and training.



Seabees from NMCB 24, Al Asad's Base Command Group and 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, pose for a group photo in front of the recently completed Entry Control Point after a ribbon-cutting ceremony aboard Al Asad Air Base, Iraq. NMCB 24 is the 2009 recipient of the Perry Award.

Photo by PO2 Nicole Harmon

Pontoon System Bolstered Seabee WWII Amphibious Operations

Story and historical photos courtesy of Lara Godbille, Director, U.S. Navy Seabee Museum

In the early 1940s, CAPT John Laycock, CEC, USN, invented a pontoon system that made possible many of the most ambitious amphibious operations of World War II.

After graduating from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1914, CAPT Laycock served aboard the USS *Virginia* (SSN 774). He was then promoted to lieutenant, junior grade, and transferred to the Civil Engineer Corps.

In 1939, then-CDR Laycock reported to the Bureau of Yards and Docks to serve as War Plans Officer under ADM Ben Moreell. There, he inherited materials regarding the development of advance base facilities and amphibious equipment comprised of pontoon sections. Laycock sought to develop a fastening system that provided strength, durability and ease of assembly. Using cigar boxes as model pontoons, he assembled them with kite sticks across the joints. This produced a rigid structure without excessive strain on the individual fastenings. So, Laycock developed a system of fastenings and long steel bars to be used on full-sized pontoons, after which he turned to the pontoons themselves. He developed a standard five-by-five-by-seven foot steel pontoon and various pontoon assemblies that could be made from it, known as the NL (Naval Landing) pontoon. Following successful tests of the completed assemblies, the Navy ordered 3,000 pontoon units.

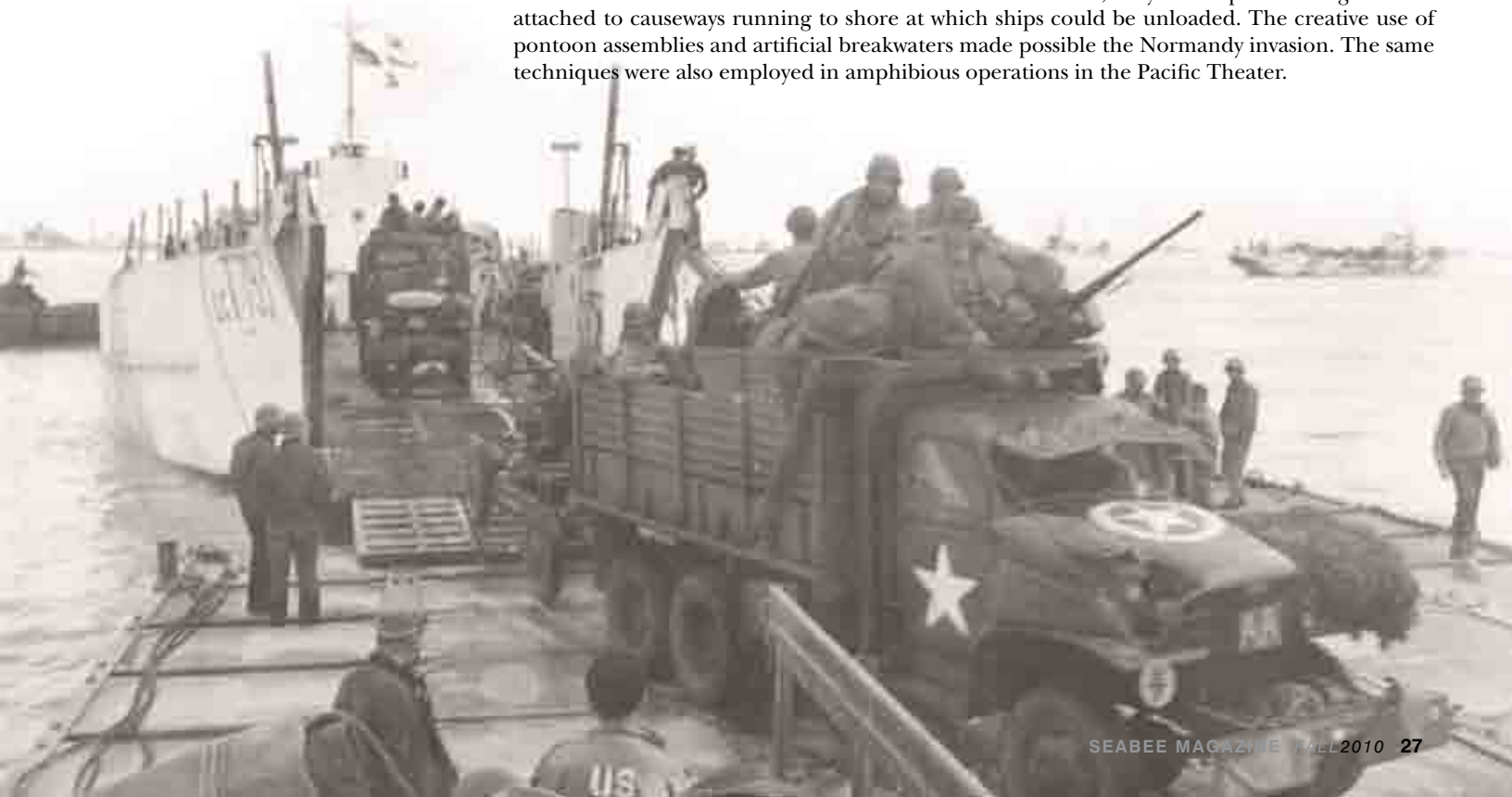
Seabees used Laycock's pontoons during World War II. Seabee units, most notably the 70th Naval Construction Battalion (NCB), became pontoon specialists who participated directly in amphibious landings. Special Seabee Pontoon Assembly Detachments were also formed to assemble and operate pontoon assemblies. After taking North Africa, the Allies moved on to Sicily, the assault of which presented special challenges. Due to shallow water landing sites, Landing Ship Tanks (LSTs) could approach no closer than 300 feet, yet existing pontoon causeway assemblies could only bridge a 175-foot gap. Working with a Royal Navy captain, Laycock used two such causeways slightly overlapped at the joining point, thus producing a causeway 350 feet long – enough to reach from the LSTs to the beach.

Planning then began for landings on the coast of Normandy. Because of tidal forces, it was inadvisable to beach the LSTs at the closest point of approach. It was necessary to develop a way to unload LSTs while they were still afloat. So, Laycock and his team developed the “rhino” ferry, a self-propelled pontoon barge which transported cargo from a moored LST to shore. Laycock and his fellow researchers also conceived the idea of using sunken ships as a breakwater to create an artificial harbor at Omaha Beach. In addition, they developed floating wharves attached to causeways running to shore at which ships could be unloaded. The creative use of pontoon assemblies and artificial breakwaters made possible the Normandy invasion. The same techniques were also employed in amphibious operations in the Pacific Theater.



CAPT John Laycock illustrates the “magic box” concept with cigar boxes as model pontoons.

(Background) The pontoons that transformed naval amphibious operations and the Seabees' role in WWII.





NCTC Changes Hands During Parade Field Ceremony

By LT Rob Guilliams, NCTC Public Affairs

CDR William Whitmire assumed command of Naval Construction Training Center (NCTC) Gulfport, Miss., relieving CAPT Stephanie Jones, June 11.

CAPT Jones served as NCTC commanding officer since June 2008. She is now assistant chief of staff for training, First Naval Construction Division (INCD), Little Creek, Va.

CDR Whitmire arrived in Gulfport from U.S. Army Garrison Vicenza, Italy, where he served as resident officer in charge of construction.

As a tri-service command, NCTC trains thousands of Seabees, Soldiers and Airmen each year. Courses range from basic construction skills in building and steelwork to advanced training in each of the Seabee rates. NCTC is one of the premier training sites in the Navy having won the Naval Education and Training Command, Training Excellence Award for the past two years.

CAPT J.J. Heinzl (left), commanding officer, Center for Seabees and Facilities and Engineering, bids a final salute to CAPT Stephanie Jones (right), outgoing commanding officer, Naval Construction Training Center (NCTC), during a change of command ceremony at the 'Bee Grinder on board NCBC Gulfport, Miss. CDR William Whitmire relieved CAPT Jones.

Photo by EO2 Elizabeth Saranto

NFELC, 31st SRG Welcome New Commander

By Mason Lowery, NAVFAC HQ Public Affairs and Communications

Naval Facilities Expeditionary Logistics Center (NFELC) and 31st Seabee Readiness Group (SRG) held a change of command ceremony as CAPT John W. Korka relieved CAPT James A. Worcester as commanding officer of both commands, Port Hueneme, Calif., June 30. CAPT Worcester is now chief staff officer, First Naval Construction Division (INCD), Little Creek, Va. CAPT Korka arrived at Port Hueneme after a two-year tour as commanding officer, officer in charge of construction, Bethesda, Md.

"Today, our military forces are deployed around the world combating terrorism, engaged in nation building and supporting humanitarian operations," Korka said. "Seabees are at the tip of the spear playing a critical role supporting all of these missions."

CAPT John Korka (at podium) relieves CAPT James Worcester as commanding officer, NFELC and 31st SRG, Port Hueneme, Calif.

Photo by CM3(SCW) Christopher Carson





RDML Katherine L. Gregory's family members attach her new shoulder boards during her promotion ceremony at the First Naval Construction Division, Virginia Beach, Va. She is the first female admiral in the Civil Engineer Corps.
U.S. Navy photo by Daryl C. Smith, 1NCD

First Female CEC Officer Promoted to Admiral

By Daryl C. Smith, Public Affairs Officer, First Naval Construction Division

RDML Katherine L. Gregory, CEC, USN, was promoted to her present rank on June 1 in a ceremony on Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Va., making her the first female flag officer in the Civil Engineer Corps (CEC). In July, RDML Gregory reported as Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Pacific, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Prior to her current assignment, Gregory served as chief of staff for the First Naval Construction Division (1NCD) in Virginia Beach, Va., which oversees approximately 16,000 Navy Seabees worldwide.

This promotion caps a series of firsts for the St. Louis, Mo., native, who was also the first female executive officer of a Seabee battalion and first female commanding officer of an active Seabee battalion.

"This promotion is simply the result of generous mentoring by my chains of command, tremendous help from all the wonderful Navy men and women with whom I've served, friendship of my peers, and unflinching support of my friends and most of all my family. To all of them I am very grateful," Gregory said.

RADM Mark A. Handley, Commander, 1NCD, performed the promotion ceremony. During the ceremony, he also presented her a Legion of Merit Award.

Gregory graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1982 and was commissioned as a Civil Engineer Corps Officer. Her Seabee tours included assignments as a company commander and detachment officer in charge of Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 1; Seabee action officer at Naval Facilities

Command Headquarters; and executive officer of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1. Her first command tour was as the commanding officer of NMCB 133. She also served as Commander, 30th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR), during which she deployed to the Al Anbar Province, Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Gregory's other duty assignments included serving as assistant resident officer in charge of construction (ROICC) in Yokosuka, Japan; ROICC San Francisco Bay, Calif.; and OICC Naples Italy; ROICC and public works officer, Adak, Alaska; executive officer of Navy Public Works Center and NAVFAC, Hawaii; overseas bases action officer, OPNAV N-44; and defense corporate fellow with the Southern Company.

Although the Combat Exclusion Law prohibited women from assignment to Seabee units when she first joined the Navy, Gregory explained that the CEC community leadership was aggressive in getting the units opened as policies changed and has been supportive of women throughout her career.

"I have never felt restricted or precluded by our leadership from any opportunity. In fact, most of the opportunities I've been offered were at the suggestion of my chains of command or peers," she said.

Gregory credits a long list of people who have helped her during her career, including her family, friends and CEC leadership who all encouraged her to not be afraid of change and to never give up. "I think not giving up is the real key to success," she said.

NAVFAC Pacific Holds Change of Command Ceremony

By Don Rochon,
 Public Affairs Officer,
 NAVFAC Pacific

RDML Katherine Gregory relieved RADM Michael Giorgione as Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Pacific, in a change of command ceremony at the command's headquarters in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, July 9.

"Surely the Pacific theater is our Navy's and nation's most important theater, and I appreciate the challenges we all face as we carry out our mission, and as we take care of our fleet, our families and our shore establishments," said RDML Gregory, in her remarks to more than 200 command employees and guests. "We have a lot to do, and I'm ready to get started."

Gregory arrived in Hawaii from Little Creek, Va., where she served as chief of staff for the First Naval Construction Division (1NCD). She is no stranger to Hawaii, as she previously served as executive officer during the transformation of Public Works Center Pearl Harbor to NAVFAC Hawaii.

RADM Giorgione retired from the Navy July 16 in a ceremony at Annapolis, Md., where he was commissioned as a naval officer 29 years ago.

Seabee Instructor's Training Tactics Save Lives

By MC1 Kim Williams, HSV *Swift* (HSV 2) Public Affairs

Equipment Operator 1st Class Daniel Lasich, an instructor based out of Maritime Civil Affairs Security Training Command, Norfolk, Va., is embarked onboard High Speed Vessel *Swift* (HSV 2) for Southern Partnership Station (SPS) 2010. SPS is a deployment of various specialty platforms to the U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) area of responsibility in the Caribbean and Central America with a primary goal of information exchange with Navies, Coast Guards and civilian services throughout these regions.

EO1 Lasich, along with 13 other Sailor and Marine subject matter experts, has participated in this exercise since May and will visit eight countries during the mission.

SPS 2010 is one of several training missions in which Lasich has participated, including other partnerships stations for the U.S. Southern and African Commands. He is tasked with conducting exchanges during this mission focusing on close quarters battle, defensive tactics, boarding operations, and weapons tactics and handling.

"I put a lot of energy into what I teach because that is what's going to save lives," Lasich explained. "I use the most updated tactics and always give 100 percent to make sure the students get something out of it."

"I spent a lot of time not knowing what to expect or what to do in extreme situations and once I learned what to do, I made



EO1 Daniel Lasich (right, center), Maritime Civil Affairs Security Training Command, demonstrates basic take-down techniques with members of the El Salvadorian naval forces during the Boarding Team Officer Defensive Tactics subject matter expert exchange for Southern Partnership Station (SPS) 2010, La Union, El Salvador. Photo by MC1 Kim Williams

it my obligation to pass it on to others," he continued.

The self-proclaimed perfectionist said he demands nothing short of perfection when asked to describe his contribution to the exchanges.

"Instructing puts me in a position to help others," said Lasich. "I know what the end result should be and that's what I expect. I want all of the participants to take away what they didn't have – a new set of tools for their toolboxes."

Lasich has been a Seabee for 12 years and was introduced to the instructor community five years ago.

"The Navy gave me the opportunity to do a different billet at 31st Seabee Readiness Group, which was the launching pad for my career," Lasich said. "The skills I have obtained as an instructor are transferrable, regardless of which community I teach them in."

In November 2010, Lasich will go to shore duty to work with Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU) 303 in Hawaii as the leading petty officer.

"I am excited for what new opportunities my next command will bring and am ready for any challenge that arises throughout the rest of my career. I intend on staying in for the full 20 and am putting in an LDO package this year," Lasich said.

"I hope that upon completion of this mission that in each of the countries I've worked, somebody walks away with some additional knowledge that they didn't have as a result of me," he said. "That is what I would call success!"



A Lesson in Building Bridges

SWC Roderick Reeves (left), an instructor for the Mabey-Johnson bridge class at NCBC Gulfport, Miss., demonstrates to BUCA Jeanine Peoples proper operation of hydraulic jacks used to lift the bridge and adjust the roller. Students learned to construct two types of bridges, and are assigned to NMCB 74's Bridge Detail during the battalion's upcoming deployment.

Photo by MC2 Michael Lindsey

Seabees Demo Capabilities at Fleet Week 2010

By SWC Moshe Alcantara, NMCB 74

Seabees representing the First Naval Construction Division (INCD) met in Norfolk, Va., and sailed to New York City on board USS *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7) for Fleet Week in late May. Seabees from 20th Seabee Readiness Group (20SRG), Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCBs) 74 and 7, and Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 2 participated in the 23rd annual event.

New York City has been celebrating the sea services since 1984. The week of interaction between service members allows the citizens of New York and the surrounding tri-state area the opportunity to meet more than 3,000 Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen.

“This is a big opportunity for the Seabees to let the public know the capabilities of the Naval Construction Force,” said LTJG Victor Wong, NMCB 74’s MWR officer.

NMCBs 74 and 7 brought a loader, Medium Tactical Vehicle



EO2 Luis Bonilla, NMCB 74, Alfa Company, embarks a loader onto USS *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7). The loader is part of the static display the Naval Construction Force uses to showcase the Navy’s construction capabilities during May’s Fleet Week in New York City, NY.

Replacement (MTVR) Cargo and MTVR Dump on board to showcase Civil Engineer Support Equipment (CESE), while UCT 2 displayed a diver’s suit.

According to Seabees who participated, many civilians did not know the Navy has a Naval Construction Force, except for visiting veterans of WWII and Vietnam who served with Seabees during their tours of duty.

No meeting of service veterans would be complete without a couple of “sea stories,” and Fleet Week was no exception.

One Vietnam veteran recounted a meeting between his unit and a Seabee unit while on patrol. He described the battalion’s hospitality and his amazement at seeing bulldozers and graders in the middle of the jungle, wondering how they had

appeared so unobtrusively. According to an eyewitness, he was also utterly shocked when his unit discovered the Seabees had acquired a functioning ice cream machine.

Can Do!

Navy and Marine Corps service members man the rails of USS *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7) as the ship enters New York Harbor during Fleet Week.

Photos by CE1 Gregory Motyka



Meeting the Needs of a **Military** Child

By MCC (SCW/EXW/SW/AW/SG) James G. Pinsky, NAVFAC HQ Public Affairs and Communications

Being a Seabee is tough – being a Seabee’s child can be even tougher. Multiple deployments, constant relocation and the common stressors of being a military child all contribute to your child’s academic world. As military parents there are many resources available to help overcome the hardships children endure as a result of our career choices.

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) recently interviewed Robert W. Blum, MD, MPH, the William H. Gates Sr., Professor and Chair of the Department of Population, Family and Reproductive Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, to gain insight on meeting the military child’s academic needs.



AASA: Does deployment have an impact on kids in the school setting?

Dr. Blum: It can have a tremendous impact and it can depend on the type of school setting. A child who has a parent in the Reserves, for example, may be in a school where there are no other children whose parents are deployed. That child may feel extremely isolated. We often don’t ask if children have parents who are deployed, so at times schools don’t even know about it until a problem arises. Other kids are in Military Impacted Schools, where there are large numbers of children who have parents who are deployed. Those children also face challenges associated with deployment.

AASA: What can schools do to support kids who have parents who are deployed?

Blum: The kinds of things schools can do include:

- Ask kids if they have parents who are deployed, particularly deployed in combat zones in Afghanistan or Iraq.
- Be very sensitive to timing issues, such as when a parent may be home on furlough or when a child may be particularly distressed under other circumstances.
- Reach out to the residual parent [the parent who is not deployed] and see what he or she sees as needed for their child in the school.
- Be sensitive to how current events are taught. Most of us discuss current events, such as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, as relative abstractions. But children talk and think about it in terms of their father or their mother. It is at a very different personal level. This isn’t to say we don’t discuss it, but it is to say we need to be sensitive to those kinds of issues.

AASA: What are some challenges military kids face when transferring to a new school?

Dr. Blum: There are a range of issues... Military families and military children are amongst the most transient of populations. It is not uncommon to see kids who have grown up in military families who have been in 5, 7 or 9 different schools by the end of their high school career. There is very high mobility. With high mobility come issues of engagement, disengagement and reengagement. These are stressful for kids.

Transfer of records from one school to another has historically been very complicated. Delays in transfer of records, which often can take weeks or months, can be problematic and can result in students being placed in inappropriate classes, for example.

Coming into a school at a time of the year when most people don’t come into schools – at the middle of a term, for example – is also very challenging for kids.

State graduation requirements, such as “you can’t graduate unless you take fill-in-the-blank course,” can preclude a student who enters the school in the middle of his or her senior year from graduating.

Joining extracurricular and sports programs can be another challenge. In a previous school, a student may have been a gifted athlete, but in the new school he or she may not have those opportunities.

So I would suggest that schools need to be attentive to all of these complications that military children face.

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CMCS Renato Hidalgo, NMCB 5, and his son, Port Hueneme, Calif.
Photo by MC2 Ace Rheume

Please contact your local Fleet and Family Support Service Center, your Ombudsman, school administrators and local parent teacher associations (PTAs) for more information.



U.S. Navy photo by Gary Nichols

The Path from Enlisted to Chief Warrant Officer/Limited Duty Officer

By NC1(SCW) Robert A. Wetzel, Command Career Counselor, Naval Facilities Engineering Command Headquarters

Chief Warrant Officer (CWO)

“CWOs are important because of the vast knowledge and experience they bring to a unit,” said Chief Warrant Officer Blane F. Meadows, 20th Seabee Readiness Group (SRG). “The Warrant is the key element and has the ability to enhance the cohesiveness of the Wardroom/CPO Mess relationship. Having been a member of the CPO Mess with an understanding of its functions, he can ensure positive outcomes for given situations involving both groups.”

The CWO program provides a path of advancement to officer status for outstanding chief petty officers of the regular Navy and Naval Reserve on active duty for performance of duty in the technical field indicated by their enlisted ratings. To qualify for the CWO program you must be a Chief Petty Officer (E7-E9), including a Petty Officer 1st Class selected for Chief must have at least 12, but not more than 24 years of active duty service, and have no nonjudicial punishments, courts-martial or civilian felony convictions in the last 36 months as of 1 Oct. of the application year.

“For Seabee units who stress Small Unit Leadership (SUL), the Warrant is utilized for his experience and ability to motivate troops,” said CWO Meadows. “He is the Wardroom SME [subject matter expert], the one who trains new JOs and teaches them the Seabee Combat Warfare program to make them even more successful when deployed ISO OIF/OEF.”

Are you up to the challenge and ready to lead troops as an officer? If so, there are several ways for you to advance into the officer pay grades.

Limited Duty Officer (LDO)

The Limited Duty Officer (LDO) program provides an opportunity for appointment to regular commissioned status for selected warrant officer and senior enlisted personnel for the performance of duty in the broad occupational fields indicated by their former warrant or enlisted rating groups. If you are a Petty Officer 1st Class, you must be serving in that capacity for one year as of 1 Oct. of the application year, and meet advancement requirements for E7 except TIR and score high enough to be selection board-eligible on exam.

CWO and LDO are the only two Navy officer programs that do not require a college degree. For more information, contact your Command Career Counselor to get started on the path to the officer ranks.

References:
OPNAVINST 1420.1(series), Enlisted to Officer
Commissioning Programs Application Administrative Manual
NAVPERS 15560, Navy Military Personnel Manual

ACB 2 'Bee Hooked on Classics



By Annalisa Cachin,
NAVFAC Mid-Atlantic
Public Affairs

When LTJG Ian Underwood's father told him that he could have the best car he could afford when he turned 16, he bought himself a 1974 Volkswagen Super Beetle for \$200, got it up and running, and blew out the engine. Then with the help of his father, he rebuilt it and suped it up. "From there, I was hooked," said Underwood.

When he's not leading construction mechanics in Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 2's Alpha Company, Underwood is working in his garage on his latest project. His fascination with rebuilding and restoring vehicles comes from watching his father, a mechanical engineer and car enthusiast, fix all manner of things that needed it.

"It stems from seeing the final product," said Underwood. "It's the culmination of time, patience, creativity, hard work, personal ability and a little luck coming together in something all your own."

Since his first car in high school, Underwood has owned and modified many vehicles, such as his 1959 Dodge Coronet that he's driven to a Winston Salem, N.C. "Rat Rod" Car Show – one in which the cars are more creative than pristine – for the past three years. "There, it's 'go' before 'show,'" Underwood explains. "You see a lot of primer, exposed welds and neat ideas that people have had and made work."

With his Dodge, Underwood has rebuilt the 326 semi-hemi engine, and the push button Powerglide transmission, rebuilt the brakes, put in new carpet and front seat upholstery, made a few bits of electrical overhaul, and refurbished

and repainted the body (to include claws he attached to the grill for a unique finishing touch).

Before the Dodge, he worked on a 1978 International Scout on which he replaced the gas tank and metal hardtop, cut out and welded-in a new floor pan, gave it six inches of lift, installed a T-19, four-speed transmission and oversized clutch, reupholstered the front seat, and painted flat black over its original Smurf-blue body. Before he left his Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, duty station, Underwood's recognizable Scout was made an honorary member of the GTMO Jeep Club and joined them on an organized off-road ride around North Toro Cay.

Underwood's passion for restoration isn't limited to four wheels. He disassembled a 1970 kick-start Ducati Scrambler 450, had the gas tank powder coated to prevent rust, rebuilt the carburetor, replaced the wheel spokes, and rewired the bike from scratch – before he put it all back together again in time for the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Charity Ride that he organized while still in GTMO.

Currently, Underwood has a "fleet" of 10 vehicles. His next endeavor is to take the best parts from the antique Ducatis he recently acquired and build a custom café racer motorcycle.

"People always rib me about how many projects I've got going on at once," remarks Underwood. "It just takes patience to see it through to the end, and it's a great feeling to know that your ability has made it work right."

(Above) LTJG Ian Underwood's 1959 Dodge Coronet after he gave it new body paint and a gloss top.

Photo by LTJG Ian Underwood

(Left) LTJG Underwood with his 1978 International Scout during a 2008 GTMO Jeep Club off-road ride.

Photo by NAVSTA GTMO Public Affairs



Congratulations to NAVFAC Mid-Atlantic's Annalisa Cachin, the Fall 2010 Seabee Challenge Coin recipient for her personality feature on car enthusiast LTJG Ian Underwood. Annalisa's initiative and resourcefulness led to both finding and producing this inside story on one of our own. Can Do!

New U.S. Navy Seabee Museum Facility Construction Complete

By Lara Godbille, Director, U.S. Navy Seabee Museum

In keeping with the “Can Do!” spirit of the Seabees, RQ Construction has completed construction of the new U.S. Navy Seabee Museum in Port Hueneme, Calif. The new facility is approximately 35,000 square feet and will provide a much better visitor experience as a purpose-built building.

The new museum has state-of-the-art mechanical and environmental systems, including temperature and humidity controls monitored with Direct Digital Control and lighting control systems throughout the public spaces. These technologies will not only allow the museum to tell the Seabee story using more interactive methods such as video monitors and hands-on exhibits, but will also provide the ideal physical climate to preserve the historical artifacts and archival material related to the history of the Seabees and Civil Engineer Corps.

Although the new facility is now complete, the grand opening is not scheduled until Fall 2011. The construction of the facility was effectively the first of a two-phase process:

Phase I – “Bricks and mortar;” and Phase II – Exhibit fabrication and installation.

The former museum closed its doors to the World War II Quonset huts that it has called home since 1956 on Sept. 30. The Seabee Museum’s collection, including approximately 12,000 artifacts and 8,000 linear feet of archival materials, will be housed in the collection storage area of the new museum. New displays will be created from the museum’s collection of artifacts and materials, as well as recent acquisitions.

In an effort to share the excitement, the new museum will be open to the public three times each month. Beginning Oct. 5, the facility is open the first and third Tuesday and first Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. These open house opportunities provide a “sneak peak” of the new building and give visitors a “behind-the-scenes” glimpse of a museum opening. Museum staff are available to provide tours and the museum store will be open.



For up-to-the-minute information about the transition to the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum, visit the museum’s Web site at www.usnavyseabeeemuseum.com or become a fan of the museum on Facebook at www.facebook.com/seabeeemuseum.

(Left) Artist’s rendering, courtesy of U.S. Navy Seabee Museum

“Re-built” Seabee Exhibit Debuts at Pentagon

Seabees now have an updated exhibit to call their own at the Pentagon. Four glass cases – filled with large photos, digital photo frames and tools of the trade – tell the story of today’s Seabees in Haiti, the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan and through Joint Operations. The exhibit is sponsored by the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) HQ Public Affairs and Communications Office and the First Naval Construction Division (1NCD).

Visit the ‘Bees outside the Chief of Navy Information Office (CHINFO) at 1200 Navy Pentagon, Room 4B463.

Photo by MC2(AW) Kevin S. O’Brien



Naval Sea Cadets Learn About Seabee Life

BY BUC(SCW) Daniel J. Lynch, NCTC Port Hueneme, Calif.

Naval Sea Cadets representing eight states – including California, Oregon, Texas, Washington and Wyoming – visited Naval Construction Training Command (NCTC) Port Hueneme, Calif., in July to learn about life as a Seabee.

The 36 Naval recruit hopefuls, ranging in age from 13 to 17 years, have visited the men and women of NCTC Port Hueneme for the past eight years. During their week-long summer visit, they are introduced to the Seabee rates: builder, construction electrician, construction mechanic, equipment operator and utilitiesman.

Builder 2nd Class (SCW) Darin Errington served as the lead liaison, ensuring cadets received the VIP tour. He has been assisting the cadets for the past three years and has been a huge factor in their productive visits.

“It is important to show the cadets what Seabees do because we are a small community,” said BU2 Errington. “We want them to understand the proud tradition of the Seabees and the accomplishments we have achieved throughout our history.”

On his first visit to California, Sea Cadet Kyle Wells, 13, Cody, Wyo., said that he thoroughly enjoyed his week at NCTC.

“I have learned a lot about electronics and now I can go back home and help my Dad fix stuff around the house,” said Cadet Wells.

Cadet John Schumacher, San Antonio, Texas, has only been in the Sea Cadets for two months. When given the chance to fly



Sea Cadet Kyle Wells, Cody, Wyo., learns how to troubleshoot electrical problems in the Construction Mechanics Isolation Laboratory, NCTC Port Hueneme, Calif.

U.S. Navy photo by DeAnna Dyresen

out to Port Hueneme to learn about Seabees, he jumped at the opportunity.

“I especially liked learning how to build a heavy timber bridge,” Cadet Schumacher said. “BU1 [(SCW)] Robert Manzano and BU3 Katherine Guffey were excellent teachers.”

The week concluded with a graduation ceremony where the Sea Cadets receive certificates of achievement – and experiences – to last a lifetime.

2010-11 SEABEE REUNIONS

NOVEMBER

NOV. 4-8

114th NCB (WWII)

New Port Richey, FL

George Bowers

727-379-3556

seabee114.cook@yahoo.com

FEBRUARY 2011

FEB. 24-27

NMCB 62

Hampton, VA

Price Richardson

540-389-0555

Price_richardson@

howellsmotor.com

FEB. 24-27

PWD Edzell, Scotland

Hampton, VA

Norm Hahn

715-834-4780

nhahnjr@sbcglobal.net

FEB. 24-27

EAST COAST ALL SEABEE REUNION

Hampton, VA

Bruce MacDougall

804-921-4753

seabeemacd40@verizon.net

For a complete list of reunions, visit www.allseabees.com or the Seabee Historical Foundation at www.seabeehf.org.



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A Surge of Pride

By RADM Mark A. Handley, Commander, First Naval Construction Division



RADM Mark A. Handley,
CEC, USN

As you know, early this year we began a major surge of Seabees into Afghanistan as part of the troop buildup announced by the President. Our mission has been to improve and expand infrastructure to ensure that appropriate facilities were available for incoming troops. I think it is appropriate to pause for a moment and consider not only what we have accomplished in Afghanistan, but what those accomplishments have meant to the overall U.S. mission there.

Command and control of the Seabees in Afghanistan was initially under 30NCR. Through their planning efforts, the initial laydown of two additional Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCBs) provided additional construction capability immediately as units arrived. Then, 22NCR followed and coordinated the complex efforts throughout Afghanistan, balancing tasking, equipment, personnel and material. The Regimental coordination with the operational Commanders enabled each battalion to make a tremendous, positive impact.

Arriving in early January, NMCB 4 has constructed more than 40,000 square feet of command and control facilities for the 1/10th Mountain Division and the 4th Combat Air Brigade. They repaired a major road, which enabled movement of coalition troops and Afghan nationals in eastern Afghanistan.

“NMCB 133...built eight security stations throughout Kandahar City, allowing U.S. and Afghan forces to secure high traffic corridors, disrupt insurgent operations and provide security to the people of Kandahar.”

They also constructed more than 500 acres of Forward Operating Base (FOB) expansions, including the construction of an entirely new facility in Balakh Province, Northern Afghanistan.

NMCB 133 constructed a brigade headquarters and FOB in just two months, allowing the brigade to bed down and gain combat power to begin clear and hold operations to the east of Kandahar City. They also built eight security stations throughout Kandahar City, allowing U.S. and Afghan forces to secure high traffic corridors, disrupt insurgent operations and provide security to the people of Kandahar. These security stations included new solar-powered exterior lighting to minimize the need for fuel resupply missions.

NMCB 74 drilled a number of water wells and constructed more than 30,000 square feet of berthing and command and control facilities. They supported the expansions of Camp Leatherneck and Deleram II, enabling the arriving Marines to quickly expand counter-insurgency operations throughout Marjeh. NMCB 5 has continued the major expansion efforts at Camp Leatherneck and throughout the Helmand province to great success.

NMCB 22 completed more than 50 projects that directly supported the surge, and contributed to the expansion of RC South operating sites. They constructed more than 180,000 square feet of berthing and command and control spaces, and 70,000 feet of new force protection berms.

NMCB 21 deployed more than half a battalion of Seabees to Kandahar and provided direct engineering support to the 101st Combat Air Brigade. They are also constructing a patrol base outside of Kandahar to bed down Royal Air Force members who will patrol this area, as well as serve as a base station for their operations.

Recently, NMCB 40 deployed their Air Detachment several months early to support “Hamkari Baraye Kandahar,” which translates as “Cooperation for Kandahar.” They built several facilities and provided camp maintenance for one of the surge brigades in support of operations in Kandahar.

These are just a few examples of how Seabees have helped make the surge possible by building what needed to be built to help ensure the success of the U.S. mission. They have worked tirelessly in a harsh environment to make living conditions as comfortable and as safe as possible for the troops deployed there. Many of these facilities will continue to be used by the Afghan military to maintain control of these regions after U.S. forces have moved on.

When the Navy and the nation needed the Seabees to support this critical mission, we rose to the challenge. As Seabees, we can all take great pride in the fact that we are providing unwavering support to our nation, and for laying a foundation that will give the Afghan people a fighting chance to determine their own destiny.

BEE  CAM



A Sign of a “Runnin’ ‘Roo” Homecoming

A child stands near the Training Hall marquee before NMCB 133’s homecoming on board Naval Construction Battalion Center (NCBC) Gulfport, Miss. NMCB 133 returned home from a five-month deployment to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Photo by MC1(SCW) Demetrius Kennon