

UNITED STATES NAVY

SEABEE

WINTER 2007

A New Generation Unfurls

25th NCR and NMCB 11 Commissioned

ALSO INSIDE:

The Road to Achievement

from 'A' School to Chief Pinning



WE BUILD ★ WE FIGHT

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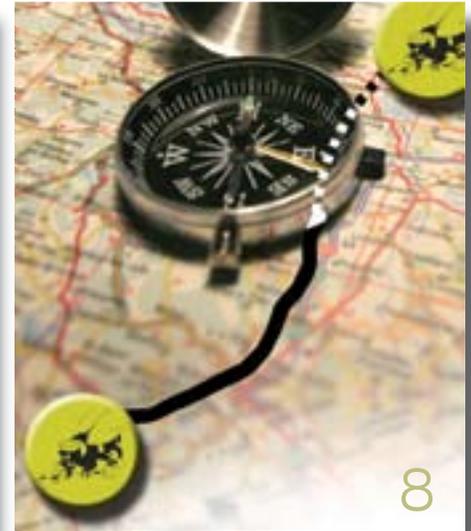


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CMDCM (SCW) Thane A. Halsey, NMCB 11, uncases the National Ensign during the battalion's commissioning ceremony at NCBC, Gulfport, Miss., on Sept. 14. This marks the third time ELEVEN has been commissioned in a wartime response since World War II.

Photo by MC2 Erick S. Holmes

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FINAL WORD

"The Seabee Story Behind the Glory,"
by CAPT Jeff Borowy, Commodore,
25th Naval Construction Regiment

WE BUILD ★ WE FIGHT

We opened the year marking an important anniversary for the Seabees – 65 years of serving our Warfighters, the Fleet and their families with pride.

We close the year with the recommissioning of the 25th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11, both headquartered at Naval Construction Battalion Center (NCBC), Gulfport, Miss. Due to the increased demand for the Seabees' unique skills needed to support the Global War on Terror, this additional force structure is deemed critical.

While the pageantry of the commissioning ceremony portrays the Navy tradition and historical significance, nothing can capture the return of the 25th NCR and NMCB 11 more than the people – from yesterday and today. You'll see many of them on Pages 4-7.

The road to becoming a Seabee is challenging to say the least. In this issue, we follow Seabee recruits from 'A' School to their battalion tours and duty stations to the ultimate goal of becoming a Seabee chief petty officer. We also take a look at how the 'Bees earn the Seabee Combat Warfare (SCW) and Fleet Marine Force (FMF) qualifications. Warfare devices represent initiative and dedication to duty – both qualities of the 'We Build – We Fight' Seabees.

In addition, join us in welcoming a new member to the *Seabee* Magazine Team, Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class (SW) Kurt Riggs, who will function as Assistant Team Leader. Riggs joins NAVFAC from the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy's public affairs staff. He joined the Navy in 1996, and has an extensive background in writing, photography and multimedia production.

We continue our ongoing efforts to improve *Seabee*. In this issue, we have streamlined the Table of Contents to provide a clearer roadmap for our readers. Remember to send us your suggestions, Seabee news and profile subjects, as well as photos*, comments and candid feedback so that we may continue to provide a well-rounded account of the Seabee story. Contact us via...

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Thank you for your continued interest in *Seabee*!

Sincerely,
George L. Markfelder
Team Leader, *Seabee* Magazine

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A New Generation Unfurls

**Historic Regiment and Battalion
Rejoin Active Seabee Ranks**



As the American flag unfurls on the cover of this issue of *Seabee* Magazine, the proud heritage of our Stars and Stripes and the 'Can Do' history of the Naval Construction Force are linked during commissioning ceremonies for a Seabee regiment and battalion.

Called back to fight the Global War on Terror with fellow 'Bees and sister services, for the 25th Naval Construction Regiment and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 11, this unfinished story continues...

PSCM Louis Whitfield (right) unfurls the command flag as the first chief petty officer to report for duty with the 25th NCR. CMC Sean Libby (left) presented the flag to Whitfield.

Photo by MCSN Brian McCarthy



25th NCR – ‘Overlord Regiment’ – Recommissions After 62 Years

By MCSN Jeffrey R. Millitzer, 25th NCR Public Affairs

The 25th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) was recommissioned at Naval Construction Battalion Center (NCBC) Gulfport, Miss., on Sept. 14, becoming an active unit of the U.S. Navy – once again.

The 25th NCR, while new to today’s Navy, is not actually a new unit. During World War II, the original 25th NCR, commissioned in Plymouth, England, on April 1, 1944, was a critical element of the Allied D-Day invasion and the eastward campaign that ultimately resulted in victory over Nazi Germany.

During the Normandy landing of Operation Overlord in 1944, engineers and constructionmen of the 25th NCR demonstrated aggressive ingenuity and courage as they cleared bunkers, eliminated hazards and moved vital equipment on shore. By November of that year, among a long list of accomplishments, the 25th NCR moved more than a third of Allied equipment and soldiers to Omaha and Utah beaches. They constructed ‘tent cities,’ where more than 16,000 personnel were fed and housed, and constructed and maintained critical fuel installations at the beach heads as well.

The newly recommissioned 25th NCR is more than up to the challenge of fighting a new war in the modern era. Its leaders

appreciate how today’s challenges differ from those faced by their predecessors.

In his remarks during the ceremony, CAPT Jeffrey T. Borowy, commodore, 25th NCR, quoted former President John F. Kennedy, “Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans,” he said.

“I certainly don’t want to focus on living up to the original 25th’s ‘legendary’ status. If we do what we are supposed to do to support our subordinate units, and get them the tools necessary to complete their mission, then I think we would be as successful as the original Overlord Regiment,” Borowy said.

He described a vision for assessing the future success of the regiment. “Most likely, there will never be an operation on such a scale as D-Day, but if the 25th can look back at themselves years from now, back at what the 25th NCR’s subordinate units have done, whether it be the Global War on Terror, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, or making the people of some nation somewhere have a better life and a better understanding of the United States, then the 25th NCR would have done its job,” Borowy said.

“The 25th NCR areas of responsibility are Northern



25th NCR

“I am truly envious of the incredible opportunities and future contributions that the 25th NCR team will make to our Navy and the new chapters that you all will write in Seabee history...”

RADM Greg Shear, Commander,
Naval Facilities Engineering Command,
and Chief of Civil Engineers

Command and Southern Command [North America and South America],” said Command Master Chief (SCW) Sean Libby. “The 25th NCR will also take command of its subordinate units, which include Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7, NMCB 133, Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU) 202, and Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1.

“The 25th NCR is also going to assist in the war effort by focusing on the softer side of construction, such as building schools, hospitals, wells and other public-use buildings, in order to influence the people of Iraq in a positive way,” Libby continued. “By helping these people out now, and letting them know that the United States is here to help, they will not feel so inclined to assist terrorists, and may even become an ally to the United States.”

“I am truly envious of the incredible opportunities and future contributions that the 25th NCR team will make to our Navy and the new chapters that you all will write in Seabee history,” RADM Greg Shear, commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, and Chief of Civil Engineers, said. “There will be challenges, but I know that as one team there is literally no limit to what you can accomplish.”

Proud Plank Owners Receive Certificates



(Left to right) PSSN Matthew J. Christian, PSSA Josue L. Almaguerortega and PSSN Anthony D. Brawley receive plank owner certificates as the first of many personnel to join the 25th NCR.

Photo by MC2 Jessica Mclver



NMCB 11 – First Seabee Battalion Commissioned in 20 Years

By MC2 Erick S. Holmes, NMCB 11 Public Affairs

On Sept. 14, the words “I hereby commission Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Eleven [ELEVEN]” were spoken for the third time in U.S. Naval history. The first generation ELEVEN, known as the 11th NCB, served proudly in the Pacific during World War II from 1942-1945. Coincidentally, the second generation ELEVEN, which served in the Pacific including several tours in Vietnam from 1953-1969, was commissioned exactly 54 years ago on Sept. 14, 1953, in Port Hueneme, Calif.

Today, the need for critical Seabee skills to support efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as Theater Security Cooperation Plans in the Horn of Africa and the Pacific, have helped pave the way for the recommissioning of NMCB 11.

“There were a lot of eyes on us up to the commissioning,” explained LT William “Ross” Pitcairn. Pitcairn was the first CEC officer to report to the pre-commissioned NMCB 11 in March when he took the lead in coordinating the planning efforts for the commissioning ceremony.

“Getting everything ready for the 14th of September was a challenge,” said Pitcairn. “We were limited on everything and we had so many people who were new, weren’t familiar with the base or any procedures for commissioning and on top of that, everybody was getting the logistics and structure of the battalion set up.

In the end, the commissioning ceremony was a great suc-

cess. Special guests included approximately 150 members from the MCB-11 Association, veterans who served with NMCB 11 in previous campaigns, as well as Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Marvin G. Shields’ wife, Joan, and daughter, Barbara. Shields, who earned the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions during the Vietnam War, served with NMCB 11. The combination of past and present reflects ELEVEN’s motto, “Constructing the Future, Remembering the Past.”

“NMCB 11’s commissioning was something to be proud of, especially with the reaction from the MCB-11 Association,” Pitcairn said.

As the men and women of NMCB 11 marched the command in review at the end of the ceremony, every veteran stood up to applaud, cheer and call out their old companies.

“We hope that pride stays with the new battalion,” said Joe Mecca, who served as a Builder 3rd Class with NMCB 11 in Vietnam. “We were always proud of our work, our friendship and the history that followed us. That’s what we see in the new guys and gals.”

With the commissioning of ELEVEN, active duty battalions will eventually transition to a six-month deployment and 12-month homeport cycle allowing more time to train and more time to spend with families. NMCB 11 begins a 13-month homeport training cycle in October before deploying to the Pacific next year.

(Left) NMCB 11's organizational colors wave for the first time since being decommissioned in December 1969. The re-establishment of the historic battalion comes with the high tempo of the Global War on Terror and the need for the Seabees' unique skills.

Photo by MC2 Erick S. Holmes



“Constructing the Future, Remembering the Past.”

NMCB 11 MOTTO



EQCM Johnny B. McCully (Ret.) shares advice from his years of service with NMCB 11's chief petty officer selectees during the MCB-11 Association's BBQ Picnic in Gulfport, Miss., on Sept. 12. McCully served with CM3 Marvin Shields, Medal of Honor recipient, during the Vietnam War.

Photo by MC2 Erick S. Holmes

MCB-11 Veterans' Pride Alive and Well

By MC2 Erick S. Holmes, NMCB 11 Public Affairs

Even though Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11's commissioning is now a part of the battalion's rich history, its veterans will forever feel the rush, pride and joy from that special day.

“The new Seabees of NMCB 11 are simply awesome – very sharp, educated, enthusiastic and professional,” said CAPT Bruce B. Geibel (Ret.), who served in ELEVEN during the Vietnam War and is the historian for the Mobile Construction Battalion (MCB) 11 Association. “They look sharp, march sharp and give me the encouragement that the new Seabees are very much like the ‘Bees of old – dedicated, determined and dependable.”

“My first reason for going to Gulfport for the recommissioning was to see two old Seabees I was stationed with, Jerald Robinson and Morgan Coons,” said Boyd Robinson, a former Construction Electrician 3rd Class. “That quickly turned toward meeting [ELEVEN's] new Seabees. We went to the Disabled Veterans Association banquet hall for a meeting and an opportunity to get a first-hand look at the new troops.

“At first I was a little surprised by the turnout, then overwhelmed. Everywhere I looked I could see myself, and the Seabees I served with, when we were so very young. Different faces, same eager expression,” Boyd said.

The latest generation of NMCB 11 had more than 400 Seabees at the time of the commissioning, but one man stuck out over the rest, according to Bob “Marty” Marten, a former Equipment Operator 3rd Class. “CDR Stephen K. Revelas, a commanding officer much like my old CO from Quang Tri, willing to listen to his men, a CO his men would follow through thick or thin.”

During the week, more than 200 MCB-11 Association veterans and their families visited Gulfport for their annual reunion. The veterans presented numerous gifts to the battalion, including a wardroom bell which had been stored in a cruise box for 38 years.



World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War veterans of the MCB-11 Association salute as their recommissioned battalion marches past.

Photo by MC2 Erick S. Holmes

THE ROAD TO ACHIEVEMENT

Seabees Take on Challenging Beginning in 'A' School

By Chaplain (LTJG) Daniel Spies, NCTC Gulfport

For Navy builders and steelworkers, field-specific – 'A' School – training begins at Naval Construction Training Center (NCTC) Gulfport, Miss. However, the road to training at NCTC Gulfport varies.

Most new students have just become U.S. Navy Sailors at recruit training, Great Lakes Training Center, Ill. Others have decided to continue their active or reserve Navy careers as Seabees, and have come to NCTC to learn a new trade. Builder students spend nine weeks at Gulfport, much of their time honing vertical construction knowledge. Steelworker students are in class for about seven weeks, and learn to work with sheet metal and a variety of welding applications.

'A' School classes are noted for teamwork and competition. One might think these two traits would work against each other; however, in these classes they actually work together to make sharper students. Students must trust each other and hold each other accountable in preparation for the future.

Life as a Seabee student definitely has its challenges. Students find that NCTC 'A' School is a physically and mentally demanding environment. They also find it tests their character.

Steelworker Constructionman Recruit Howard Kritzberger says the biggest challenge as an 'A' School student is managing your time. Fitting in time for uniform preparation, PT, cleaning, study and class is not easy. Not to mention finding time to sleep.

'A' School Seabee training in Gulfport is also a unique opportunity to work with fellow service members from the Army and Air Force. Engineering students from these services share the same builder and steelworker classes with the Navy. Seabees, Soldiers and Airmen can be found working and studying side by side in classrooms, building labs and metal shops. Instructors include members from these three services, as well as civilian professionals.

The top 10 percent of each class is eligible for the accelerated advancement program. Awards are also presented for class leadership and military appearance. Graduates leave NCTC Gulfport with a great sense of accomplishment, but are still keenly aware of the greater challenges that lie ahead in the Naval Construction Force.

NCTC's Commanding Officer CDR Darius Banaji, says, "I'm inspired every day as I look at the level of motivation at NCTC...I can tell you, I'm very proud of what I see. I may be biased, but this is a great command!"

(Below, left to right)

Seabee 'A' School students clean up debris from DeSoto National Forest, an ongoing job since Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005.

Photo by BUC Ken Hodel

Steelworker 'A' School students work on sheet metal projects at NCTC, Gulfport, Miss.

Photo by BU1 James LePage

SWCR Chantell Melville (right) shares her pride with Executive Officer LCDR Ricky McGlade (left) and Instructor SW1 (SCW) Jeff Epstein upon receiving her graduation certificate.

Photo by BU1 James LePage





Fleet Marine Force Warfare Device



Seabee Combat Warfare Device

The Warfare Device: A Pinnacle of Your Seabee Career

By MCC (SW/AW) Shane Montgomery, 30th NCR Public Affairs

While in Iraq, many Seabees with the 30th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) worked diligently on the enlisted Seabee Combat Warfare (SCW) qualification and the officer and enlisted Fleet Marine Force (FMF) Warfare qualification. With our recent experience, here is some insight into the road to the warfare device.

Earning your warfare pin means traveling a challenging road. Receiving a warfare device means you are a specialist in a particular field of expertise. For those who serve on a ship, there is the Surface Warfare qualification; for those with an aircraft squadron, the Aviation Warfare qualification. And like those other communities, the Seabees, as well as Sailors in naval rates that support the U.S. Marine Corps, also have qualifying programs.

There are a couple schools of thought when it comes to earning a pin. Seabees with the 30th NCR (Fwd) worked on their Seabee Combat Warfare (SCW) qualifications first with assistance from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 28 in Fallujah, Iraq.

The work is grueling and includes a 100-question written exam and two oral boards with the member facing a panel of four or five SCW-qualified members. The two-hour final oral board determines whether the Seabee has a basic overall knowledge of the warfare qualification, and covers areas that include drawing a fire plan and conducting land navigation as well as other topics.

At the 30th NCR (Fwd), some personnel worked on their SCW device, while others worked toward the FMF warfare qualification. This is a special device worn by Sailors who qualify while working with the Marines (as the 30th NCR (Fwd) did with the II Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) in Iraq.) The program is managed by hospital corpsmen, the largest rating in the Navy currently working for the Marine Corps.

Similar to SCW, the FMF program includes two written tests and two mandatory oral boards, covering everything from Marine Corps history and planning, to first aid and weapons fundamentals.

The Enlisted Warfare programs are slightly different from the Officer Warfare programs. Three officers with the 30th NCR have earned their FMF devices, with several more waiting to board. The enlisted device is the same as the officer device except much of it is silver as opposed to gold.

Warfare devices represent initiative and dedication to duty. With more Seabees going through the program, the 30th NCR will have more than 40 officers and enlisted personnel who have received one or both devices.

(Right) EO1 (FMF) Michael Hall, 30th NCR, receives the Fleet Marine Force Warfare device during a ceremony in Iraq in mid-July.

Photo by MCC (SW/AW) Shane Montgomery



Aspiring for Success: Seabee Earns Fourth Warfare Qualification

By MC2 Gregory N. Juday, NMCB 74 Public Affairs

It is not uncommon for Seabees to study hard and dedicate their time to qualify as a Seabee Combat Warfare (SCW) specialist during a deployment cycle or to earn their Fleet Marine Force (FMF) qualification. However, it is an unusual accomplishment for someone to earn four warfare qualifications during a 12-year Navy career.



**HM1 (SCW/FMF/ESWS/EAWS)
Danny L. Hawkins Jr.**
U.S. Navy photo

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Seabee Combat Warfare (SCW), Fleet Marine Force (FMF), Enlisted Surface Warfare (ESWS), Enlisted Aviation Warfare (EAWS) Danny L. Hawkins Jr., Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74, has accomplished this extraordinary feat.

Hawkins credits his parents' support and nurturing for his accomplishments. "I started my career to make my parents proud," he said. "Now that I know I have, I strive toward aspirations of my own."

Hawkins' father retired from the Navy after 21 years of service and has been an inspiration for Danny throughout his career.

"I know I will make something of myself in the Navy," he said. "One day I would like to serve as the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy."

Hawkins earned his first two warfare devices onboard the USS Enterprise (CVN-65) as a Hospitalman, and earned the second two in a period of five months while deployed to Iraq with NMCB 74.

"During my 22 years serving in the Navy, HM1 Hawkins is the first person I have ever met or known with four warfare qualifications," remarked CDR Craig Prather, NMCB 74's commanding officer. "Not only is this an awesome personal achievement, but it truly sends a strong message to all Sailors and Seabees that our skies have no limits. I am really proud of HM1 Hawkins and his family."

THE ROAD TO ACHIEVEMENT

Young Professionals Make Transition to Khaki: SWC Michael Ramey (SCW/PJ) Dons Anchors at Nine-year Mark

By MCC (SCW/SW/AW) Steve Bansbach, NMCB 4 Public Affairs

Many of us have heard the stories of first class petty officers who have taken the chief exam eight times, submitted their terminal leave papers, and then get a call from their command master chief telling them they have been selected for chief petty officer.

While this still happens today, a more common trend is when a first class makes chief in less than 10 years. With the introduction of many new programs which accelerate service members' promotion chances, more young Seabees are donning anchors and a khaki uniform ready to take the lead.

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4 pinned nine new chiefs on Sept. 21. Of those nine, six had 13 years of service or less and three were classified as early candidates, by Navy standards. One of those early candidates, Chief Steelworker Ramey, who will hit his nine-year mark in January, believes that making rank was never more important than doing his job.

Ramey started in the Army Reserves, attending Army Boot Camp and Advanced Initial Training while in high school. When discharged from the Army Reserves and told he would have to wait an unspecified amount of time to rejoin, he went to the Navy recruiter and was in boot camp within a week.

After boot camp and 'A' School, Ramey did a split tour with NMCB 133 and Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 1. His next duty station was the 31st Seabee Readiness Group (SRG) where he earned his Master Training Specialist certification and was a water well instructor within the Advanced Base Functional Component (ABFC) system. Ramey subsequently joined NMCB 4 in January.

Ramey joined the Navy because he did not know what he wanted to do. "I know that I have done a lot of the right things, but I have always just done my job and never worried about it," he said. "I didn't push myself to make chief in eight years and right now my options are open."

The Navy standard is no more than 10 percent of those advanced to chief petty officer will have less than 11 years. Even though this is a Navy guideline, some military members are skeptical, believing it is too soon to advance personnel because they are not ready for the responsibility.

"The system is not flawed. If you put the standards out there, some people will aggressively go for it," Ramey said. "If the board didn't think I did the right things, then they would not have selected me...that is the system."

He believes that being one of the youngest chiefs will serve him well as he may be better able to connect to junior troops. But Ramey also knows that at times his inexperience may put him at a disadvantage, and he is fine with it.





SWC (SCW/PJ) Michael Ramey (center) passes through the side boys after the Chiefs' Pinning Ceremony. Ramey and two other chiefs from NMCB 4 were early candidates selected for chief with less than 11 years of service.

U.S. Navy photo by Air Force MSgt. Rickie Bickle

"As long as I have my experience and the maturity to realize my boundaries, then I will not become close-minded," he said. "First classes who have been in for 17 or 18 years may know something that I don't. I can't put on blinders and think I know it all just because I have these anchors."

And while Ramey is young in age and military experience, he still knows that taking care of his people so that they can excel and complete the mission is his first priority. He also knows he can count on the Chiefs' Mess to help him.

"Asking questions is the only way I will get the answers I need," he said.

On the flip side, Ramey says he never tires of being asked one question in particular: "How old are you?" Ramey always pauses for a second and replies with a chuckle, "I'm 28."



Maj. Gen. W. E. Gaskin (left), commanding general, II MEF (Fwd), congratulates newly pinned BUC Cary C. Shinn at the base chapel on Camp Fallujah, Iraq.

Photo by MC1 Christine Hannon

BUC Cary C. Shinn Inducted In Battlezone

By BU1 Marcus A. Johnson, 30th NCR

Cary C. Shinn, 30th NCR, was pinned a Builder Chief Petty Officer on Sept. 21 during the Chief Petty Officers' Pinning Ceremony at the Chapel of Hope on Camp Fallujah, Iraq.

"A chief can always go to a chief," said Shinn. "You don't just make it and walk away from it. You come back to it, and you take others with you along the way."

Navy chief selectees are assigned sponsors within the command to help them through the induction process. Shinn's sponsors included Senior Chief Navy Counselor Paul Tyquiengco and Senior Chief Equipment Operator Patrick Duhaime.

"Becoming a chief is my biggest accomplishment so far in the Navy," said Shinn. "I'm looking forward to taking what I've learned and applying it."

GWOT UPDATE

Seabees and Marines Teach Iraqis to Build, Pave Way for Provincial Iraqi Control

By MCC (SW/AW) Shane Montgomery and Chaplain (LT) Peter Ott,
30th NCR Public Affairs

Every action taken by coalition forces in Iraq is leading toward the ultimate goal of accomplishing Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC). Whether it's routing out insurgents alongside the Iraqi Army or helping Iraqi Police maintain peace, much of the recent success in the Al Anbar Province of Iraq can be attributed to Americans and Iraqis working together. Seabees and Marines of the Naval Construction Force in the region are doing their part as they teach Iraqis how to build, maintain and repair their infrastructure.

When the 7th Iraqi Army Division relocated to Ramadi from Fallujah in early 2006, only 25 soldiers manned its engineering company. Since then, recruiting efforts by the Iraqi Army have helped the unit grow to more than 160 personnel. While the recruits are eager to help rebuild Iraq's infrastructure, many of them lack any formal training or construction experience.

"As the number of recruits increased, I knew that I needed help," said Marine Capt.  Donnie Fricks, who leads the U.S. initiative to train members of the Iraqi engineering company. "I asked around and discovered that we had Seabees nearby. Who better to train the Iraqis than Seabees who do it every day? I am grateful to have six of them serving as subject-matter experts. Seabees do hard work. I need more of them!"

Since April, six Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4 have worked alongside members of the Iraqi Army as part of the Seabee Military Training Team (SMTT), passing along their construction skills and leading them in increasingly complex construction projects.

As one of the Seabees from NMCB 4 attached to the SMTT, Steelworker 2nd Class Miguel Rosado has enjoyed the chance to step into a leadership role while helping the Iraqis improve their skills.

"We're not here to do the work for the Iraqis, we're here to advise them," said Rosado. "We show them what to do, then step back and...[guide] them to success."





(Above) SW2 (SCW) Miguel Rosado, NMCB 4, trains members of the Iraqi Army in basic welding skills at Camp Blue Diamond in August. (Opposite) Members of the Iraqi Army are trained in mechanic skills by CM3 Daniel Heavener, NMCB 4, as part of the Seabee Military Training Team (SMTT) Program.

Photos by MC2 (SCW/SW/AW) Ronald Guttridge

The SMTT mission may become a permanent part of every Seabee battalion's tasking in order to continue to provide critical training as Iraq seeks to rebuild and stabilize once-fractured regions.

"The SMTT Program is an important mission for the Seabees in Iraq," said LT Peter Simmons, the 30th Naval Construction Regiment's (NCR's) assistant operations officer. "Training the Iraqi military engineers in various construction fields helps them to better execute successful missions that support their country."

Under the watchful eyes of the SMTT, Iraqi soldiers have completed projects ranging from up-armorizing tactical vehicles for the Iraqi Army, to installing and repairing light fixtures and air-conditioning units, to widening roads and constructing gravel parking lots for the camp.

The ultimate goal, according to Fricks, is to train and equip the engineering company so that it is self-sufficient, able to replicate itself by drawing on the experience of senior members to train new recruits. The training has provided a sense of pride for many of the Iraqis.

"Before the Seabees came, I knew a little about carpentry and construction because that's what I did before I joined the Army," said Ahmed, a junior member of the Iraqi Army engineers. "Since we received help, I know a lot more about carpentry and how to use teamwork to build a house."

Many of the Seabees have a lot of hope for the Iraqis as a

result of their partnership.

"I hope the Iraqis take our training and run with it," said Construction Electrician 2nd Class Marlon Romero. "They have the opportunity to make a real difference in their country after we are gone."

While the Seabees were supporting the Iraqi Army engineers, in another part of Al Anbar Province, Marines from the 8th Engineer Support Battalion (ESB) were also teaching Iraqis from the 7th Division engineers how to make construction improvements.

"We've instructed 22 Iraqis on how to conduct route repair on roads and 30 others on prefabrication of wooden structures," said Marine 1st Lt. Christopher Stokes, 8th ESB. "We've taught them how to repair craters in roads by using a couple of different types of quick fill material and we've taught them how to construct Southwest Asia Huts and Davidson Huts, which are used primarily for their billeting and office spaces and dining facilities."

Stokes explained it is important to provide the Iraqi Army with the skills they need once PIC is established to carry on the missions coalition forces have been conducting.

"We have to set them up for success, or the work we have done here is in vain," said Stokes. "As we get closer to PIC, more and more combined operations will be conducted to ensure they are capable of carrying on the missions once we leave."



BUCN Brandon Whisman, NMCB 4, installs a set of steps in an SWA hut berthing facility.

Photo by MC2 (SCW/SW/AW) Ronald Gutridge

NMCB 4 Constructs Forward Operating Base for II MEF, Iraqi Army



By MC2 (SCW/SW/AW) Ronald Gutridge, NMCB 4 Public Affairs

Since early August, 65 Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4 have been busy constructing Forward Operating Base (FOB) Sedgwick, south of Lake Habbaniyah in Western Iraq for II Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) (Fwd) and the Iraqi Army.

NMCB 4 was tasked with building 42 Southwest Asia huts, two dining facilities, 20 four-hole burnout bathrooms, nine field showers and two entry control point swing gates.

“Even though we’ve been working long hours, the troops are very enthusiastic and motivated,” said Builder 1st Class Ramises Mamhot, mission supervisor. “We know that what we are building and accomplishing will improve the quality of life of the coalition forces and the Iraqi Army conducting operations in this area.”

Long before the first troops pushed out to the FOB, NMCB 4’s Seabees were planning for the mission and prefabricating walls, floors and rafters in the Delta Yard, loading them onto trucks for the convoy.

The operation began with Seabees from Alfa Company turning a barren spot of desert into a force protection perimeter for counterinsurgent operations, quickly erecting earthen berms to provide security for the FOB. Meanwhile, Delta Company’s Seabees built their own living quarters and then started to build the rest of the FOB.

The FOB Sedgwick project was scheduled to take 90 days to complete, but the battalion will complete the project early before returning home to Port Hueneme, Calif., after its seven-month deployment.

“It is inspiring to watch all the hours of planning and fabrication pay off in the incredible pace of construction,” said LTJG Benny Volkmann, Delta Company commander and NMCB 4 FOB Sedgwick officer in charge. “The troops have been so motivated and dedicated all deployment, and to keep this momentum until the end – it’s a great feeling.

“This company is incredible and their ability to adapt to any mission and complete it is phenomenal,” Volkmann said.

NMCB 28’s MSR Repair Team Keeps Convoys Rolling in Iraq

By LT Michael Wilkinson, NMCB 28 Public Affairs

It’s a dark night in the Iraqi desert in early August except for the faraway lights of a small town on the horizon giving reference to the Seabees and Marines on this lonely stretch of roadway. They are conducting route repairs by patching holes in the main supply routes (MSRs) and alternate supply routes (ASRs) so convoys can safely and quickly deliver critical materials and supplies to forces located along the frontlines.

With coalition forces hauling numerous heavy loads, the roadways in Iraq can have considerable deterioration. This can potentially give insurgents more hiding places for Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) which they use to try and delay or stop convoys during their missions. Most IEDs are discovered by route clearance teams, while others are discovered by convoys who call the Explosive Ordnance Disposal units to conduct con-

trolled detonations and eliminate the threat.



Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 28 is responsible for conducting repairs on more than 80 kilometers of MSRs. Marine support from Combat Logistic Battalion 2 and 1st Combat Engineer Battalion enable the Seabee team to go out and patch holes that impede convoy progress.

To make repairs, water is added to

ACB 2's Detachment India Makes Big Impact on FOB Delta

By LT Chris Asper, Detachment India

Seabees from Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 2's Detachment India deployed to Forward Operating Base (FOB) Delta in Al Kut, Iraq, in late July. The 55-man detachment provided the first U.S. engineering support to the newly designated enduring FOB since 2003. ACB 2 hit the ground running and made significant improvements to the base's combat power and quality of life for thousands of U.S. and coalition troops.

ACB 2

Though initially ACB 2's mission was to be a maintenance facilities support detachment for Al Asad Air Base, eight days prior to deploying, the orders were changed. ACB 2 was then directed to FOB Delta in Al Kut where the primary mission would be to provide engineering support to the U.S. Army's 3rd Infantry Division. The battalion's scope of work varies from improving force protection to horizontal and vertical construction projects. In the first three months of deployment, ACB 2 has taken on a total of nine full-scale projects in addition to managing a large volume of service requests submitted on a daily basis.

The 'Alfa Dawgs' immediately started work on three projects simultaneously: a 28-kilometer, 10-foot-high force protection perimeter berm (completed almost two months ahead of schedule); a 17-kilometer security road; and two revetments for the Paladin 155-millimeter self-propelled howitzers. The steelworkers designed, fabricated and welded two swing gates and three drop arm gates out of scrap steel and pipe. In support of the Georgian 3rd Infantry Brigade, the builder's shop converted two derelict buildings into a chapel for the Eastern Orthodox Church and a Level II medical facility. The Seabees demonstrated superior initiative, frequently working with materials scavenged from the local DRMO.

At the same time, another group of builders renovated an old Iraqi bunker that has been home to the 984th Military Police Company. Other projects include the construction of four Southeast Asia huts, a base post office, medical supply building, base chapel and Provincial Reconstruction Team building.

While busy supporting many of the coalition forces at FOB

patch material, the preparation is mixed and then poured into the prepped crater or pothole. The quick-setting mixture enables the road to be open to traffic within minutes after the last bucket is poured.

"Every member of the team knows the dangers involved, but they willingly go out time after time to keep coalition (forces) convoys and the Iraqi people safe and moving," said Equipment Operator 1st Class Jeffrey Binder, MSR repair team leader. "I couldn't ask for a

better group."

The youngest team member, Equipment Operator Constructionman Jorge Perez, is glad to be a part of the process.

"This assignment has really made the deployment worthwhile," said Perez. "It's good to get through with a mission and know you've made a difference. I like this job."

Knowledge may be the biggest asset these reservists bring to the fight. Equipment Operator 2nd Class David

Chuck Norris Visits Camp Fallujah



Legendary martial artist Chuck Norris (center) visited Camp Fallujah, Iraq, in September, to show support for the Sailors, Marines and Soldiers. More than 1,500 military personnel met Norris as he signed autographs and posed for pictures. Meeting the legend are (from left to right) HMC Christoph F. Boening, Combat Logistics Battalion (CLB) 8; BUC Cary Shinn, 30th NCR; HMC Raymond J. Beedle, CLB 8; and HMC Matt Snider, CLB 8.

Photo by MC1 Christine Hannon

Delta, Detachment India was able to find time to renovate a run-down building and turn it into a comfortable living and working area for 55 Seabees. With force protection a priority, ACB 2 went to work filling sandbags, placing Hesco barriers and double-strand concertina wire around the compound. They constructed a Class 4 yard and an Alfa transportation yard, and have turned the building into a four-star hotel.

Overall, ACB 2's Detachment India has made and will continue to make a huge impact on FOB Delta. Their efforts have greatly enhanced the surroundings and force protection for all.

Grey has many years of experience working with concrete and his knowledge is invaluable to every mission. Construction Mechanic 1st Class Theodore Williams tracks the team's progress. He collects their work information for reporting to higher headquarters.

"My job is a small part of the MSR's mission. However, if I drop the ball, their mission can get a whole lot harder," said Williams, who is responsible for maintaining an adequate supply of material to conduct operations. (Continued on following page)



BU1 Kenneth Stallman, NMCB 15, displays the new Lightweight Helmet (LWH).

Photo by MC1 Christine Hannon

New Lighter Helmet Offers Higher Level of Protection



MC1 Christine Hannon, 30th NCR Public Affairs

Under direction of the Secretary of Defense, members of the 30th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) (Fwd) and their subordinate commands stationed in Iraq received the new Lightweight Helmet (LWH) in late August.

“Within the Naval Construction Force (NCF), all personnel operating within CENTCOM were number one priority,” said CAPT Patrick Gibbons, assistant chief of staff for readiness, First Naval Construction Division. “Replacement helmet requirements for Seabees in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait and the Horn of Africa were all submitted as one urgent requirement and were sourced by the Marine Corps simultaneously.”

The Navy relies heavily on the expertise of both the Army and Marine Corps to identify improvements for personal protective equipment. Both the Army and Marine Corps are transitioning from the Personnel Armor System for Ground Troops (PASGT) helmet to the newer design which provides a higher level of protection than the PASGT helmets.

The advanced LWH helmet system, designed for the U.S. Marine Corps, provides improved performance with reduced weight. It not only provides additional security for troops, but also helps communications and morale.

“The new helmet’s layers provide improved fragmentation protection, a 40 percent improvement in impact protection,” Gibbons continued.

“Through this effort to put the latest and the most technologically advanced body armor on all Seabees, it is anticipated that every Seabee will be safer in combat,” he said.

NMCB 28’s MSR Repair Team

(Continued from previous page)

The route repair mission has high priority and is being tracked by the II Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) Engineering Department. Occasionally, the team will have a special passenger. Master Gunnery Sgt. Keith Parshall is one of the driving forces behind the engineers’ efforts to keep these routes open.

“The effort is really two-fold,” said Parshall. “First, to keep the routes open and second to eliminate locations for

placing IEDs and reduce that threat to our troops.”

Despite the daunting challenge of attempting to repair the innumerable kilometers of MSRs and ASRs, the team is determined to go out time and time again to do the behind-the-scenes work to complete the mission.

“The success of this important engineer tasking is truly a result of coordinated security planning with supporting units, allowing the Seabees of

NMCB 28 to focus on the construction and repair of the roadways,” said NMCB 28’s Operations Officer LCDR Daryll Long. “The team has repaired more than 100 holes in the western Al Anbar Province of Iraq since its implementation one month ago.”

In addition to the route repair team based out of Al Asad, NMCB 28 has an identical team based out of Camp Fallujah that works on roadways in and around its area of responsibility.

NMCB 7 Corpsman Breathes Life, Health into Afghan Villages

MC2 Michael B. Lavender, NMCB 7 Public Affairs

After a Special Forces team secured a compound in a local village outside a forward operating base in Afghanistan in mid-August, a medical team prepared to move in for assessment and treatment. The team included Navy Independent Duty Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Jennifer (SW/AW) Kraus, assigned to NMCB 7.

Almost as soon as the move-in was completed, patients began to arrive for much-needed medical attention. After being searched to ensure they were not carrying weapons, patients were moved to the triage area for assessment. For the locals, this was a rare opportunity to receive treatment and medication since their living conditions do not include running water or electricity – let alone medical care. The medical staff was also able to treat children for common ailments due to malnutrition.

“Most of the villagers were not shy and were very curious about the visitors to their area,” said Kraus. “The role of the female providers was instrumental in the completion of this mission as the culture in the area forbids women

from being seen by any man other than their husband. Therefore, we were able to give much-needed medical attention to the women of the village.”

An interpreter was on hand throughout the entire process. Local villagers continued to arrive for treatment until all medical supplies were expended. Throughout the course of the first day, 869 patients received treatment; the most common ailments were fever, chills and headaches. At a nearby village on the second day, 2,084 patients were treated.

“The locals were so grateful for the help that they brought lunch to the medical staff as a gesture of thanks,” Kraus said.

At the end of the second day, the tired medical staff began its convoy back to the base. “Along the way children were running alongside the convoy thanking the staff for all they had done,” said Kraus. “This provided a feeling of fulfillment and pride knowing that we had done well and made a difference in someone’s life.”

NMCB 7

UCT 2 Completes Successful Deployment

By LT Paul Magoulick, UCT 2

Seabees from Underwater Construction

UCT 2

Team (UCT) 2 arrived at Naval Air Station Point Mugu, Calif., on Sept. 16, ending a four-month Iraq deployment attached to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4.

The battalion’s arrival completes a successful deployment that included support of both Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines (OEF-P) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).

While deployed in support of OEF-P, the air detachment constructed critical waterfront facilities to aid and assist the Philippine armed forces and special operations forces in ongoing counter-terrorism operations.

“It was a good deployment, but it’s good to be home at the same time,” said Equipment Operator 1st Class Christopher Amescua. The air detachment, led by Senior Chief Steelworker Leonard Koelbel, also provided critical underwater and waterfront construction for Multi-National Force-West in support of OIF. Seabees from UCT 2 and NMCB 28 completed construction of both shore-based and offshore facilities.

“I think now looking back it was very unique to be able to deploy to both OIF and OEF-P,” said Steelworker 1st Class Nathan Terrazas, “I was proud when I heard we were going to Iraq, and now I’m even prouder to have served in Iraq.”



Independent Duty HM1 (SW/AW) Jennifer Kraus, assigned to NMCB 7, treats an infant boy in the Paktika Province of Afghanistan in August.

U.S. Navy photo



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RADM Garcia Receives Second Star

VADM John Cotton (right), Chief of Navy Reserve, reads the Navy oath to RADM Albert Garcia III during his promotion to two-star as his wife, Cindy, looks on. The promotion ceremony took place on Oct. 5 in front of the Seabee Memorial in Arlington, Va. Garcia has served as deputy commander of the 1NCD since August 2005.

U.S. Navy photo



> NMCB 24 Holds Change of Command and Retirement Ceremonies

In a combined change of command and retirement ceremony held at the Readiness Support Site Drill Center, Huntsville, Ala., on Sept. 22, CDR Frederick A. Mucke, CEC (left), turned over the reins as commanding officer, NMCB 24, to CDR Ronald D. Gruzesky, CEC (center). Commodore R. Scott Newman, CEC (right), commander, 3rd NCR, presided over the day's events. A joint retirement ceremony was also held to recognize the culmination of a total combined 44 years of dedicated and honorable naval service of two career Seabees, CUCM (SCW) Laurence Whisnant and SKCS (SCW/FMF) L. Jay Schmidt.

Photo by CS1 Mary Phillips

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SW3 Doug Horox, NMCB 7, crosses a stream during a jungle warfare training evolution hosted by Marines with the Jungle Warfare Training Command (JWTC) on Okinawa, Japan, in late September. U.S. Navy photo

NMCB 7

Seabees Train for War in the Jungle

By MC2 Paul D. Williams, NMCB 7 Public Affairs

Seabees with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 participated in a jungle warfare training evolution at the Jungle Warfare Training Center (JWTC) on Okinawa, Japan, Sept. 27-28.

JWTC is a training camp run exclusively by U.S. Marine Corps instructors to build confidence by introducing tough, team-building exercises. For this particular exercise, the instructors pushed Seabees through a 3.4-mile endurance course, beginning with a hasty rappel, descending by a fixed rope down a 40-foot cliff.

“Rappelling down the cliffs was scary but thrilling at first; the more we kept rappelling, the more comfortable it became,” said Engineering Aid Constructionman Gayle St. Michel, NMCB 7.

The Seabees then crossed a deep ravine using a two- and three-strand bridge, an exercise meant to conquer any fears early on.

The course also included log obstacles and stream crossings in the jungle. They tackled the Suspension and Traverse Trainer, demonstrating their ability to cross a river with a retrievable rope bridge. The Seabees were also introduced to a 12-foot wall, requiring the members to lift each other up and over without ropes or ladders.

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Seabees Train for War in the Jungle

“To overcome the 12-foot wall, we had four of our strongest members position themselves with two atop the wall and two at the bottom to create a ‘push/pull’ method of moving all of our personnel over the wall,” said Yeoman 2nd Class (SCW/AW) William Weber, NMCB 7.

Moving closer to the finish line, they arrived at the ‘Pit and Pond’ where they low-crawled through muddy trenches and underneath barbed wire obstacles.



An NMCB 7 Seabee negotiates a mud-filled trench during jungle warfare training.

U.S. Navy photo

However, the most grueling part of the course had yet to be revealed: a 600-meter stretcher carry through (affectionately titled) ‘Peanut Butter Mud.’ In some areas the mud reached up to four-feet deep. They were also required to climb up two steep muddy hills to the finish line at the top.

“Even when you are completely exhausted and don’t want to go any further, there is always something that will keep you going,” said St. Michel. “Whether it is a team leader, a team member, or just knowing in my head that I can make it to the end.”

Some may argue that training for war in the jungle doesn’t make sense when the majority of service members fight an enemy in a desert environment. According to Marine Capt. Mark George, JWTC officer in charge, this endurance course is perfect preparation for any battlefield.

“The endurance course is an excellent team-building exercise,” said George. “It allows commanders to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their Seabees and Marines. Ultimately, it will provide a good indication of how well they will function under stress and physical exhaustion.”

ACB 2 Participates

The city of Split, Croatia’s majestic mountains and Mediterranean structures provided a spectacular backdrop for *Noble Midas 2007*, a military exercise designed to test the readiness of NATO’s Response Force (NRF). Comprised of multinational sea, land and air forces, the NRF provides NATO with the ability to quickly respond to a world crisis.

One phase of *Noble Midas 2007* entailed the integration of Maritime Prepositioning Forces (MPF) which include Maritime Prepositioning Squadron One, with USNS *2NDLT John P. Bobo* (T AK 3008) and USNS *LCPL Roy M. Wheat* (T AK 3016), Commander Naval Beach Group (CNBG) 2 as the Naval Support Element, with Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 2, Assault Craft Unit (ACU) 2, Beach Master Unit (BMU) 2, and Naval Cargo Handling Battalion (NCHB) 1, and II Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF).



in Noble Midas 2007

Noble Midas 2007 served two main purposes for these units: enable the Naval Support Element to employ and practice command and control of improved MPF craft in the first instream offload of Marine equipment since 2002; and provide an opportunity to conduct the first deployment of those craft from an MPF ship. The improved MPF craft used during the instream offload included the Improved Navy Lighterage System (INLS) and the MPF Utility Boat (UB). INLS replaces Navy Lighterage (NL) by providing a more powerful, maneuverable barge ferry platform. The MPF UB, with its ability to operate at speeds of up to 40 knots, supersedes the LCM 8 as a personnel carrier.

The partial instream offload involved coordination between CNBG 2 units ACB 2, ACU 2 and BMU 2, along with

NCHB 1 and Marine Offload Preparation Party personnel from II MEF. Over a span of two days, NCHB 1 lifted 50 Marine Corps High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs) from *Bobo* to the INLS barge ferries. The INLS barge ferries then transported the HMMWVs to the Divuljje Air Base where BMU 2 personnel directed them ashore. Once there, the vehicles were processed for use, washed and inspected; the following day, all 50 vehicles were lifted back onto *Bobo*.

During the offload, ACU 2 personnel manned the MPF UB and LCM 8 to provide afloat medical support and numerous personnel transfers from ship to shore.

Another phase of *Noble Midas 2007* entailed the arrival and assembly of the NL Roll-on/Roll-off Discharge Facility (RRDF) contained onboard the MPSRON 1 ship *Wheat*.

Noble Midas 2007 gave Navy and Marine Corps personnel essential training, and integrated the military teams with the MPSRON 1 staff and civilian mariners, establishing a solid relationship for future operations.

In the words of Culinary Specialist 1st Class Neil Russell, "People really came together during this exercise. There were four commands out here, but we felt like one."

Improved Navy Lighterage System (INLS) Power Module gets first-ever operational lift from USNS 2NDLT *John P. Bobo* (T AK 3008) at Split, Croatia, for use by ACB 2 in *Noble Midas 2007*.

U.S. Navy photo





ACB 2's Bravo Company docks an INLS (Improved Navy Lighterage System) craft to ELCAS (Elevated Causeway System) during *Delmar 2007* at Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Va., in August.

U.S. Navy photo

Amphibious Seabees Excel During *Delmar 2007*

ACB 1  ACB 2 

By SWCR Christopher Barker, ACB 2

Seabees enjoyed great success during their *Delmar* exercise conducted August 2007 at Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Va. *Delmar* is an exercise flexing the ability to create access to the land from the sea, facilitating delivery of equipment, supplies and forces in support of operations ranging from humanitarian assistance to war. Exercise participants included Amphibious Construction Battalions (ACBs) 1 and 2, Assault Craft Units 2 and 4, Beach Master Unit 2 and Naval Coastal Warfare Squadron 4.

The exercise revolved around the ACBs' ability to perform one of their primary mission areas: construction of the Elevated Causeway System (Modular) (ELCAS (M)). ELCAS is used to support Marine Corps and Joint Service Expeditionary Force logistic support requirements. An extremely dangerous ACB evolution, it creates the greatest opportunity for throughput operations and is utilized when piers cannot be used. Although ACB 2 physically owns and maintains ELCAS, the actual construction is a combined effort of ACBs from both coasts.

ELCAS is composed of steel pontoon sections which can create a pier 3,000 feet from shore. It is designed to be built in 168 hours. The pier can accommodate three-wide and five-wide barge ferries, as well as Army and Navy landing craft such as the LCU 2000 and LSV.

For this exercise, 63 Seabees built the pier out to 672 feet in two shifts, working around the clock.

Numerous safety and evacuation drills were conducted on each shift.

Safety Chief ITC Lonnie Lavalais said, "Safety was the main priority of the evolution and the crew took it onboard and proved to be very effective, producing zero operational mishaps during the construction of ELCAS."

ACB 2's Bravo Company, responsible for the ship-to-shore movement of cargo, CESE and fuel/water, moved ISO containers and CESE from ship to shore via barge ferries conducting beach landings, and mooring up to the ELCAS for offload of ISOs via 175-ton cranes perched on the pierhead. The cranes then loaded the cargo onto trucks. ELCAS has the greatest throughput capacity compared to other means available, achieving outputs as high as 370 containers per day in Sea State 1, and 220 containers in Sea State 3.

The evolution was a success, with every construction deadline met and each training goal achieved. As a result, all units involved in the exercise have a greater proficiency in the work required to make such a large-scale operation successful.



Lighterage, operated by ACB 2's Bravo Company and carrying ELCAS sections, beaches for offload. U.S. Navy photo

Seabees Train with Air Force Engineers

By MC2 Michael B. Lavender, NMCB 7 Public Affairs

Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 ‘crossed into the blue,’ working with U.S. Air Force personnel during a joint training exercise held Sept. 24-26 at Kadena Air Base, Japan. More than 87 Seabees participated in the Rapid Runway Repair (RRR) and Utilities Training (UT) with RED HORSE (Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operation Ready Squadron Engineers).

NMCB 7

“Rapid Runway Repair is a very important aspect of our operations,” said Air Force Master Sgt. Tommy Lucero, Kadena’s RED HORSE air field damage repair superintendent of contingency training. “Any Airman can tell you why the rapid repair of any runway can vastly affect how our base operates, especially in-theater. We do this type of training ourselves to get our planes back into the fight after an air strike so we can establish air superiority.”

RRR consists of various phases of training, including crater repair from ordnance detonation.

“If there is an attack on an airfield, we have four hours to roll out, check for CBR (Chemical, Biological and Radiological) attacks, fill the craters and cover them with matting so planes can utilize the runway,” explained Equipment Operator 1st Class (SCW) Ben Neher, NMCB 7 RRR team assistant officer in charge. “Additionally, we also clear FOD [Foreign Object Debris] so it doesn’t get sucked into an engine.”

The three-day training evolution occurs only once or twice a year for the RED HORSE Airmen assigned to Kadena Air Base, and they welcome the chance to work with Seabees.

“Training the Seabees with our equipment at our sites is a win-win situation,” explained Lucero. “It creates a cohesive team with our sister services in-theater.”

Working alongside the Air Force offers a new opportunity for the Seabees to see how another service operates.

“This is definitely a new experience for some of us,” said Neher. “We have many new guys in our battalion and only a handful has done this training before. It’s good to be working with the Air Force because we can learn from them, as they do from us. Their training is different, but it is educational.”

The Airmen quickly saw the ‘Can Do’ spirit of the Seabees come forth, with each striving to do his best.

“This is a young team and we’ve seen from day one that they are constantly improving,” said Lucero. “They quickly learn from their mistakes and apply the steps they learn in an expeditious manner. Overall, they’re doing very well.”

This is not Lucero’s first time working or training side-by-side with Seabees.

“Every experience I’ve had working with the Seabees has been good,” he said. “Seabees are well disciplined and you can see that immediately. Their ranks are well organized and their upper chain of command, especially their chiefs, have a commanding presence which we need in every military unit.”

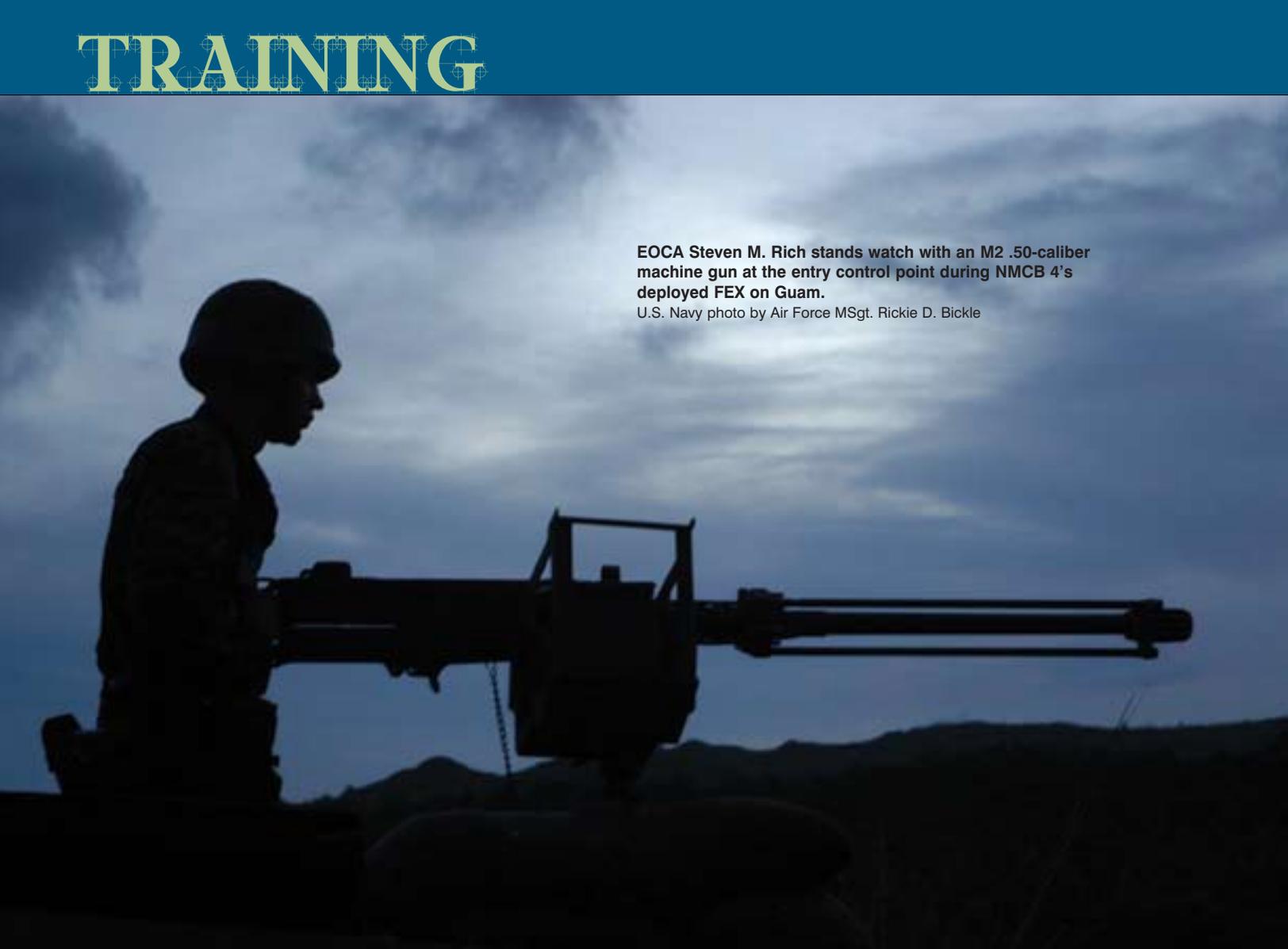


(Top) EO1 (SCW) David Martin (left) supervises EO1 (SCW) Van Johnson as he excavates a crater in a simulated runway on Kadena Air Base, Japan, in late September as part of the Rapid Runway Repair joint-training exercise with the U.S. Air Force.

(Center) NMCB 7 personnel receive guidance from Air Force MSgt. Matthew Kimball (second from right) as he explains equipment associated with utilities training the Seabees experienced during the joint-training exercise.

(Bottom) EO2 (AW) Gerald Flint (left) and EO2N Jonathan Montoro use front-end loaders to scoop the remaining pile of soil to fill a crater in a simulated runway on Kadena Air Base.

Photos by MC2 Michael B. Lavender



EOCA Steven M. Rich stands watch with an M2 .50-caliber machine gun at the entry control point during NMCB 4's deployed FEX on Guam.

U.S. Navy photo by Air Force MSgt. Rickie D. Bickle

NMCB 4 Displays Tactical Readiness on FEX

NMCB 4

By MCC (SCW/SW/AW) Steve Bansbach, NMCB 4 Public Affairs

In late August, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4 vacated Camp Covington, Guam, to participate in a deployment field exercise (FEX) to refresh and train personnel in various battalion tactics, while at the same time improving overall small unit leadership.

First, NMCB 4 leadership identified Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to create tactical scenarios and prepare personnel for the field. Seabees from each company participated in three different 'training lanes,' consisting of patrols, defensive security and entry control point/camp security.

Once NMCB 4 arrived at the FEX site, personnel hit the ground running – setting up camp, establishing defensive positions and preparing the training lanes for kick off. Seabees established a Command Operations Center, as well as a Command Post and Battalion Aid Station.

At the start of each day, companies met with the SMEs for a brief on the day's events.

"The first thing the SMEs pointed out was safety," said Senior Chief Steelworker José Plascencia, Det Guam operations chief. "Secondly, they told the companies to keep their minds on the tasking at hand."

With the help of personnel from Mobile Security Squadron 7 and Naval Special Warfare Group 1, who portrayed rebels, terrorists, protesters and innocent victims in a variety of scenarios, NMCB 4 was forced to act quickly under pressure. This split-second decision making will help the battalion prepare for situations it may encounter in a real contingency.

"This was a huge learning experience for me," Constructionman Jason Derosier said. "Being able to [actually use] strategies... find out about range cards and ADDRAC [Alert, Direction, Distance, Range Assign, Command/Control], you learn a lot more by seeing and doing."

After three days of defending the perimeter and 'liberating' a country, NMCB 4 declared the FEX a success. All Seabees displayed new confidence in their abilities to deploy techniques, tactics and procedures provided by each training lane, while ensuring new troops had become familiar with basic combat skills.

"This was my first FEX and it was good to find out what we do on the battlefield," Constructionman John Dibiasi said. "People count on us when we are out there."

4th Marine Regiment Trains NMCB 7 Seabees

NMCB 7

By MC2 Michael B. Lavender, NMCB 7 Public Affairs

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 teamed up with Marines from the 4th Marine Regiment for Convoy Security Element (CSE) training in Okinawa, Japan, on Camp Schwab from Sept. 24-26, followed by Entry and Vehicle Control Point training on Camp Shields from Sept. 27-28.

The training, attended by 60 NMCB 7 personnel, was part of NMCB 7's block training week and was the first time Marines from the 4th Marine Regiment's Regimental Schools platoon trained any unit from another service outside the Marine Corps.



Lance Cpl. Ganesh Tulshi (kneeling) demonstrates how to subdue a suspected insurgent, played by Cpl. Christopher Briscoe, to a group of NMCB 7 Seabees on Camp Shields, Okinawa, Japan.

Photo by MC2 Michael B. Lavender

"I especially couldn't wait to train Seabees," said Marine Sgt. Joseph Walling, the 4th Marine Regiment's Regimental Schools platoon non-commissioned officer in charge. "I encountered them in Iraq in 2003. They were great to work with, so when the opportunity came up, we made sure it would go off without a hitch."

CSE training includes convoy security, vehicle recovery, MEDEVAC procedures, and how to anticipate and react to ambushes and improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

"Travel in Iraq has to be done in convoys," continued Walling. "Therefore, anyone who goes there must know the guidelines of convoy travel. Our ultimate goal is to provide the Seabees with basics so they can get there armed with the information that will bring them home safely."

"I feel more confident now that we've had this training," said Construction Mechanic 2nd Class (SCW) Joshua Duty, a CSE course student. "It's more informative than any other training we've received about convoys in the past. I think other battalions should take advantage of the training when they deploy here because it's critical information to have."

The final two days of the joint training involved entry and vehicle control point training, where the Seabees of NMCB 7 learned how to inspect vehicles and personnel for firearms, IEDs and other suspicious items that may pose a threat to an installation.

(More photos on following page)



(Top) CM1 (SW) Kenneth E. Terlaan watches enemy movement during NMCB 4's deployed FEX on Guam.

(Center) BUCA Jonathan Dibiasi (foreground) lights up the night sky with an M2 .50-caliber machine gun to disable an enemy vehicle at the entry control point, while SWCA Steven A. Amador provides cover with his M16 during a training scenario.

(Bottom) MRFN Edward O. Pastoral mans the M2 .50-caliber machine gun at the entry control point during the deployed FEX.

U.S. Navy photos by Air Force MSGt. Rickie D. Bickle



(Continued from previous page)

NMCB 7 Trains with Marines

(Above left) A Marine observes members of NMCB 7 as they set up a perimeter around a simulated battlefield casualty during the security convoy element training exercise on Camp Schwab, Okinawa, Japan, in September. Marines played an integral part of the battalion's training, moderating and coordinating the exercise while others instructed the Seabees in various maneuvers.

(Top) Seabees from NMCB 7 receive instruction on towing a disabled Humvee during training on Camp Schwab. This joint training was the first part of the battalion's block training week, which included many security elements that will play a major factor during the next deployment.

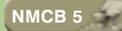
(Left) BUCN Kristina Douvikas mans a turret position on a Humvee as other members of NMCB 7 practice security techniques during the exercise.

Photos by MC2 Michael B. Lavender



NMCB 5 Seabees Drill During Operation *Bearing Duel*

(Above) Seabees of NMCB 5 participate in a CBR drill during Operation *Bearing Duel* 6-07 at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. More than 450 NMCB 5 Seabees participated in the annual field exercise, conducted by Naval Construction Force battalions to ensure maximum effectiveness and operational readiness prior to deployment to a contingency situation.



(Top left) CECR Daniel J. Nelson, NMCB 5, guides the Ditch Witch as it digs a mile-long path for placement of communications wire in August.

(Left) BMC Joselito P. Sacramento, NMCB 5, communicates with higher headquarters during a security alert drill.

(Bottom left) LT Angelico Q. Lumanlan, NMCB 5, updates the S3 board in the ACOC during a CBR drill.

(Below) An NMCB 5 Seabee mans a HMMWV-mounted M2 .50-caliber during a security alert drill.

Photos by MC3 Patrick W. Mullen III



By ENS John Kvandal, NMCB 3 Public Affairs

Construction Mechanic 2nd Class Adam Witt said farewell to his fellow Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 3 for the last time during his reenlistment ceremony at Naval Base Ventura County, Port Hueneme, Calif., on Oct. 2. Saying goodbye to his friends in the battalion was something Witt was already accustomed to as he had done so before when he left to play with the All-Military Baseball Team twice in a row.

"I've been playing baseball since I was four years old," said Witt, a native of Bedford, Va. "That is one of the reasons I joined the Navy, to see if I could play baseball for the military team."

After Witt graduated from boot camp, he attended construction mechanic (CM) 'A' school in Port Hueneme, Calif., and then reported to NMCB 3 in May 2003. Upon his arrival to the battalion in 2004, he deployed to the Philippines where he served as a floor mechanic. From the Philippines, Witt deployed to Djibouti, Africa, where he was a shop supervisor.

When Witt returned to the United States in 2005, his dream of playing baseball for the military

finally came true when he tried out for the all-military team and made it.

"My first tour was to the West Coast where we played in Anaheim and San Diego, Calif.," said Witt. "We even traveled to Tecate, Mexico."

During his first season, Witt received an injury to his shoulder and was unable to travel with the team to the east coast. He returned to the battalion in Port Hueneme and had surgery. Witt then deployed to Okinawa, Japan, where he continued rehabilitation.

In March 2007, Witt tried out for the team once more and was selected for the second time.

"I was excited to make the team again," said Witt. "This time our tour began in New York City where we participated in fundraising games against the New York Police Department and Fire Department teams."

Witt's tour continued along the coast making stops in New England, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina and Florida, as well as Ohio and Kentucky. The team played in the summer collegiate leagues, and against both independent and professional leagues.

ALL STAR SEABEE BIDS FAREWELL TO NMCB 3

"We visited VA hospitals and met with wounded and disabled veterans from the Vietnam War and from the war in Iraq," said Witt. "We also visited elementary schools, children's hospitals and burn centers."

Thanks to the Navy, Witt's dreams are coming true. He has traveled to many countries around the world with the Seabees and to many places in the U.S. playing his favorite sport. And although he will not be returning to NMCB 3 after his third season with the All-Military Baseball Team, he says he will continue to demonstrate the 'Can Do' attitude he has gained by serving with the 'Better than Best' Seabees of NMCB 3.

Witt recently reenlisted for four years and will report to Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU) 202 detachment out of Jacksonville, Fla.

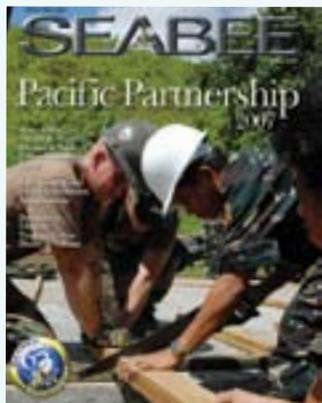


CMDCM (SCW) Ray Dickey (left), NCTC Port Hueneme, Calif., presents the oath to CM2 (SCW) Adam Witt, NMCB 3, at Naval Base Ventura County on Oct. 2.

Photo by MC1 Carmichael Yopez

Seabee Team Wraps Up Pacific Partnership

By MC2 Jennifer R. Hudson, USS Peleliu Public Affairs



Seabee Magazine, Fall 2007

Fifty-three members from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 and Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 1 worked together this summer as one team embarked from USS Peleliu (LHA 5). Both battalions assisted ship's company in completing construction and engineering projects in support of Pacific Partnership, a four-month humanitarian assistance mission to Southeast Asia and Oceania, from June through September 2007.

"This deployment went extremely well overall," said LT Francis Tay, officer in charge for ACB 1. "We met the overall goal during this mission by completing all the construction projects, as well as working hand-in-hand with host nations, partner nations and NGOs [non-governmental organizations], all the while strengthening ties with the United States."

The team visited Hawaii, Guam and Singapore in order to on-load personnel, cargo and give the crew some liberty time. They also went to the Philippines, Vietnam, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Marshall Islands for the mission where they demonstrated their expertise by completing 42 construction and engineering projects.

"This mission has gone exceptionally well, especially the teamwork that everyone displayed by being able to integrate as one team," said Construction Mechanic 2nd Class (SCW) Ronnie Giordani, NMCB 7. "Without the help of all the COMREL [community relations] participants, it would have made our job a lot harder in completing some of the jobs. We couldn't have done it without them."

According to LT Greg Jennings, officer in charge for NMCB 7, both Seabee units worked together for the first time with shipboard Sailors and NGOs demonstrating the ability to adapt to change.

"This deployment was a huge success; the work was really good. The people were terrific, and they always wanted to give you something or help in some way or fashion," said Equipment Operator 1st Class (SCW) George Petrofski, ACB 1. "This experience is something that I'm going to take with me and remember for the rest of my life. I would highly recommend doing this type of deployment again. In fact, I would recommend this to anyone."

(Bottom left) CMCA Matthew Blair (left), ACB 1, and HN Cody Reedy, 3rd Medical Battalion, mix cement for a fence post during an engineering civil-assistance program (ENCAP) at Delap Elementary School, Majuro, Marshall Islands, in late August.

Photo by MC2 (SW/AW) Kerryl Cacho

(Bottom right) While visiting the Marshall Islands in August, Commander, Pacific Fleet, ADM Robert F. Willard (left) thanks Seabees from NMCB 7 and ACB 1, along with forces from India, for their work in support of Pacific Partnership.

Photo by MCSN Matthew Jackson





Seabees Cook on and off the field

NMCB 5

By MC1 (SW) Palmer Pinckney II, NMCB 5 Public Affairs

Culinary Specialists Keep 'Can Do' Force Strong

U.S. Navy Culinary Specialist (CS) personnel assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5 and other deployed units around the world are more than just food preparation experts. Whether at sea with Sailors, undersea with Submariners or fighting side by side with Soldiers, a Navy CS should never be thought of as merely a cook.

"Our jobs go well beyond just cooking," said Culinary Specialist 1st Class (SCW) Derrick R. Wilson. "No matter what command I am with, I have to complete the same training and am held to the same standards and expectations as the other Seabees and Sailors."

Wilson recently returned from deployment with NMCB 5's Air Detachment to Kenya, Africa. While deployed, he worked with Seabees constructing a water well in an effort to provide solutions for the country's long-term drought problems. If necessary, he was also expected to build and fight side by side with the Seabees to defend the camp.

CS personnel have many responsibilities, including the following: to operate and manage the Navy galleys and living quarters established to subsist and accommodate naval personnel; estimate quantities and types of food supplies; assist the supply officer in ordering and stowing subsistence items and in the procurement of equipment; and assist medical personnel in the inspection of facilities, personnel and food preparation equipment.

In preparation for their deployment to Okinawa, Japan, and other sites throughout Asia, NMCB 5 Seabees conducted a field exercise (FEX) at U.S. Army Combat Support Training Center, Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. Upon arrival, the crew of six CS professionals erected galley and berthing tents, installed steel AM-2 matting to establish sanitation areas, and set up perimeter defense lines with concertina tactical wire. All of this was accomplished while dressed in full tactical fighting loads. Only after completion of these tasks was food prepared. Even though the pace of FEX is extreme, the culinary crew prepared a hot meal for the Seabees the first morning after arrival in the field.

Leading up to this FEX, several assigned CS personnel completed M16 and crew-serve weapons courses, basic and advance squad leaders training, field communications course, combat lifesavers training, and the Chemical, Biological and Radiological survival course.

The Seabees live a proud tradition that dates back to their WWII inception, and over the past decades they have relied on the support of assigned non-Seabee ratings – such as the Culinary Specialist – to keep the 'Can Do' force building and fighting around the globe.



(Top) CS1 Derrick R. Wilson, NMCB 5, takes cover during a reconnaissance patrol during a field exercise (FEX). NMCB 5 squad leaders participated in this FEX to help improve leadership and technical knowledge in various contingency operations.

Photo by MC3 Patrick W. Mullen III

(Above) CS3 Heather A. Rainey, NMCB 5, prepares a spaghetti dinner during Operation *Bearing Duel*. Rainey has deployed to Japan, Guam and Spain with NMCB 5. Culinary specialists, along with other non-Seabee ratings, support Naval Construction Force battalions.

Photo by MC1 (SW) Palmer Pinckney II

Battalion Updates

An Improved Navy Lighterage System (INLS) Causeway Ferry enters the well deck of the USS *Tarawa* (LHA 1) while operating off the coast of Camp Pendleton, Calif. ACB 1 Seabees conducted wet well operations during a recent NBG 1 FEX.

Photo by YN3 Jessica Bidwell



ACB 1

Seabees on *USS Tarawa*

By BM1 (SW) Tyrone L. Williams, ACB 1

ACB 1 Seabees Conduct Wet Well Operations with USS *Tarawa*

In late summer, Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 1 Seabees enjoyed the unique experience of conducting wet well operations with USS *Tarawa* (LHA 1). As part of a Naval Beach Group (NBG 1) field exercise, the operations were conducted off the coast of Red Beach South, U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

This marked the first time that most from *Tarawa* had seen the highly capable INLS craft, much less operated with them. However, this was not the first time an INLS craft had entered the well deck of an amphibious ship. In November 2006, INLS craft and crews conducted wet well operations with the USS *Rushmore* (LSD 47) in the San Diego local OP area.

Seabees from ACB 1 demonstrated their craft-handling skills, showcasing the expanded capabilities INLS brings to the fleet. An INLS 2+1 Causeway Ferry (CF), consisting of a powered module connected to a non-powered intermediate module and a beach module (2 non-powered sections + 1 powered section), is roughly 240 feet long, 24 feet wide, and can carry a cargo load of approximately 280 tons. An INLS 2+1 CF draws about 4 feet, transits at more than 10 knots, and can land at either a beach landing area or pier side. The enhanced cargo lift capability, increased speeds, and ability to operate in higher sea states makes INLS a much improved global ship-to-shore transportation and logistics over-the-shore capability as compared to its legacy Navy Lighterage (NL) predecessor.



NMCB 3's CMDCM (SCW) Jeffrey Weigel (center) introduces MCPON (SW/FMF) Joe R. Campa Jr., to PS1 (SCW) Erika Johnson during his tour of Naval Base Ventura County, Calif., in September. Campa later met with more than 600 Seabees at the base theater to discuss current Navy events.

Photo by MC1 Carmichael Yeppez

MCPON Visit

By MC3 Eva-Marie Ramsaran, Naval Base Ventura County Public Affairs

MCPON Visits Naval Base Ventura County



The Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) made his first visit to Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC) Point Mugu and Port Hueneme, Calif., on Sept. 17.

MCPON (SW/FMF) Joe R. Campa Jr. came to NBVC to interact with Seabees and to check on the overall organization of both bases.

Campa started his day off by talking to NBVC Point Mugu's chief petty officer selectees about their upcoming role as leaders. He stressed the importance of the Chief's Mess and how junior Seabees will rely on them for guidance.

"I was very pleased with the new chief selects and the tone of the engagement with the Chief's Mess – all their commands will benefit from them," said Campa.

All hands were called to attend NBVC Point Mugu's base theater to interact with the MCPON and relay suggestions or comments to him. Campa answered questions on individual augmentee (IA) assignments, housing and off-duty education.

"My seat with the Navy leadership is my connection with Sailors around the Navy. My credibility rests with my ability to speak on your behalf," said Campa.

The MCPON then moved on to NBVC Port Hueneme, where he visited the Naval Mobilization Processing Site (NMPS) and met Port Hueneme's chief petty officer selectees. He toured the Naval Construction Training Center (NCTC) and Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCBs) 3 and 5. All hands were again called at NBVC Port Hueneme's base theater to discuss current Navy events.

"I believe the MCPON was very perceptive of the Navy's current path and it seemed like he was dedicated to meeting the needs of the Sailors," said Yeoman 3rd Class Myles Fry, NMCB 5.

"My purpose of visiting NBVC was to thank the Sailors for all the work they do and to get feedback on how the Navy is doing as a whole," said Campa. "For my first visit to NBVC, I liked what I saw. I was impressed."

NMCB 3 Armors Up with Latest Gear

Nearly 600 Seabees from NMCB 3 received 'Gear for Life,' more than 200 pounds of gear and accessories at Naval Base Ventura County Port Hueneme, Calif., in September.

"If it saves my life, I am happy to wear it," said Engineering Aide 1st Class (SCW) Shawn Davis.

The centerpiece is the newly designed modular tactical vest, featuring a state-of-the-art load bearing system plus the added side plates to help protect against a wider variety of small arms threats. It is also designed to provide more protection from shrapnel.

"More than 15 parts make up the vest," said Builder 1st Class (SCW) Thomas Smith. "It is not really complicated to put together, but it does require the assistance of a battle buddy to put on."

"NMCB 3 is squared away and ready to roll," said CDR Tony Edmonds, NMCB 3's commanding officer. "I commend the leadership in our companies and the dedication of our troops."

(Top right) CM1 (SCW) Matthew Eckhart (right) and Seabees from NMCB 3 wear the new modular tactical vests as they wait to be inspected at Naval Base Ventura County Port Hueneme, Calif.

(Below) LT Brian Foster, company commander for Alfa Company, NMCB 3, stands ready to present his company for inspection.

Photos by MC1 Carmichael Yopez



Seabees Suit Up

NMCB 3

By LCDR Wendell Pasaraba, NMCB 3





Seabees in China Lake Calif.

By Linda Wadley, NFELC Public Affairs

Seabee Water Well Rig Makes the Grade; California Test Strikes 1,530-foot Depth

The new Atlas Copco T2W water well system was declared ‘fit for duty’ when it surpassed the design benchmark of 1,500 feet during testing in China Lake, Calif., on July 16. The test, conducted by Naval Facilities Expeditionary Logistics Center (NFELC) and Naval Construction Training Center Detachment, China Lake, was the last in a series of ‘first article tests’ for the new water well system before it reaches the hands of the Seabees.

“The depth or capacity is actually measured by the amount of pull back – how well the rig can pull the drill out of the ground,” said Master Chief Equipmentman (SCW) Charles Zimmerman, NFELC construction equipment program manager. “The T2W has a 30,000-pound pull back capacity.”

The system is one of six T2W water well drilling systems planned for delivery this fiscal year. A support truck, or ‘tender,’ with built-in 2,500-gallon water tank, fuel dispensing system, welder, water pump and 20,000-pound crane, adds significantly to the capabilities of each water well system. The support vehicle has ‘matched mobility’ being mounted on the same chassis as the drilling rig.

The T2W is highly mobile and can travel at highway speeds, as compared to the previous well rig which must be transported to the drill site by tractor-trailer. The T2W water well system is commercially available and was modified slightly for the Seabees. The cost for the T2W system is approximately \$1.2 million, said Zimmerman.

The water well system was a high-priority project for the First Naval Construction Division (1NCD) which directs the operations of the Naval Construction Force. The T2W water well rig and support truck replaces the ISO/Air Transportable Water-Well Drill (ITWD), a system which was engineered in the 1980s and is now out of production.

“We have a reliable, highly mobile system to deliver fresh water where it’s needed, whether to support a humanitarian mission or on the battlefield,” said Zimmerman. “This water well drilling capability is absolutely critical to our current and future global mission requirements.”

The new water well systems are used for training in China Lake and Port Hueneme, Calif., and Gulfport, Miss., and will be used to drill wells in the Horn of Africa and Iraq. Most recently, Seabee teams have drilled water wells in Pohnpei, Peru, Guatemala, Venezuela, Haiti and Horn of Africa. Six additional T2W water well systems are planned to be added to the Seabee inventory over the next two years.

Sunset silhouettes the Naval Construction Force’s new T2W water well system as it undergoes final testing in China Lake, Calif., on July 16. During the test, conducted by Naval Facilities Expeditionary Logistics Center (NFELC) and Naval Construction Training Center Detachment, China Lake, the T2W surpassed the design benchmark drilling depth of 1,500 feet.

U.S. Navy photo by John Laszik, NFELC



Seabees with NMCB 4's Charlie Company use a power screed during an overhead concrete pour on the mechanical shop project at Orote Point Quarry on Naval Base Guam.

U.S. Navy photo by Air Force MSgt. Rickie D. Bickle

NMCB 4 Completes Complex Job on Naval Base Guam

On Sept. 12, Charlie Company personnel from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4 stood more than 20 feet in the air prepared for one of the most complex jobs of this deployment: expertly placing more than 37 tons of concrete atop the Heavy Lift Mechanical Shop at the Orote Point Quarry on Naval Base Guam.

Once the construction is complete, the mechanical shop will be able to service heavy equipment used at the quarry. Currently, equipment that goes down has to be hauled back to camp, or worked on outside in the elements. Additionally, this building will protect equipment by offering typhoon cover. By completing this task, the construction completion percentage raised from 68 to 75 percent in just 29 days.

"Placing concrete on the ground is easier, but when you elevate that project into the air it is a whole different animal," Steelworker 1st Class DeeJay Ballon, project supervisor, said. "You have to make sure you have fall protection in place and the form material (wood framing) doesn't buckle."

Throughout the whole evolution the rain delayed the 18 personnel from being able to get on the concrete and complete the leveling operations. The concern is that the rain acts as an insulator hardening the top portion of the concrete, but then delaying the curing process of the interior. All hands worked together screeding the concrete and then laying out wood planks so personnel could use hand tools to smooth the surface, a tedious and time-consuming task. As each section was completed, a tarp was quickly draped over it to keep it safe from the elements.

"Some of these guys didn't know anything about the tools we use," said Ballon. "Now they will be able to handle any project in the future just with the experience they gained from this one project. The work they did was phenomenal."

Seabees in Guam

By MCC (SCW/SW/AW) Steve Bansbach, NMCB 4 Public Affairs

Seabees Help Guam Animals in Need

In June, the non-profit organization Guam Animals In Need (GAIN) contacted Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4 seeking help to renovate 20 dog kennels for the only animal shelter on the island.

The 30-year-old shelter, owned by the government of Guam, is run entirely by volunteers and houses mostly cats, dogs and rabbits. It had purchased all the materials needed to repair the kennels, but hiring a contractor was out of the question.

"We could not have achieved the renovations without the Seabees. They have probably prolonged [the life of] the kennels for an additional 40 years," Susan Tomiak, GAIN board member, said. "They live by their motto 'Can Do' and the crew exemplified that."

The project took the Seabees about three weeks to accomplish and was completed on Sept. 12. They had to tear down the old chain link fence and reinstall the links, uprights and gates, while ensuring there were no interruptions to kennel operations.

"They had to endure a lot of barking," Tomiak joked.

"We wanted to help out the community," Senior Chief Steelworker (SCW) Jose Plascencia, NMCB 4 Guam operations chief, said. "It enabled us to continue the legacy and tradition of the Seabees – 'For compassion for others we build, we fight for peace with freedom.'"



Seabees in the Bahamas



CM2 (SCW/DV) Jeffrey Snider (left) and SW2 (SCW/DV) Liam O'brien, UCT 2, work on the cable installation and landing project at the Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Center (AUTEK) in Andros Island, Bahamas, in late September.



Photo by CMCS (SCW/DV) William Perry

Seabees Complete Critical Underwater Cable Project

Seabees from Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 2 completed a critical cable installation and landing project at the Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Center (AUTEK) in Andros Island, Bahamas, in late September. Construction Mechanic Senior Chief (SCW/DV) William Perry, UCT 2, served as the overall project leader. The Air Detachment, led by Steelworker Senior Chief (SCW/MDV) Leonard Koelbel, provided critical underwater and waterfront construction for the deployment of the cable from a commercial cable ship.

AUTEK's mission is to support the full spectrum of undersea warfare by providing accurate three-dimensional tracking, performance measurement and data collection resources to satisfy research, development, test and evaluation requirements, as well as for assessment of Fleet training, tactical and material readiness. This UCT-led project restores AUTEK's underwater tracking ranges to its planned design and will better allow concurrent operations of its ranges.

In order for the shoreline cable landing site to be ready for cable deployment, Seabees from UCT 2 had to excavate the few hundred foot beachfront area. Instead of using typical excavation methods, such as backhoes and shovels, they used a high-pressure hose from the local fire department's engine to jet away the sand and create a trench. This was the safest way to ensure that existing cables in the area would be unharmed during the excavation.

By UCT 2 Public Affairs

"For some reason everyone on the island was very skeptical of using the hose to move that sand," said Engineering Aid 1st Class (SCW/DV) Blair Mercado, "They said they've seen that method fail a few times before and it will never work. But I guess they never saw it done the right way, because it saved us about three or four days of work, plus it was safer than using the backhoe."

Once the trench was ready and the cable ship was on station as close to shore as possible, the UCT Seabees started the actual cable installation process. They off-loaded the cable from the ship by using a high-powered utility pango winch which slowly takes the cable from ship to shore. The winch brought enough cable to the shore to make all of the termination, while the Seabees ensured it was correctly placed into the trench.

After approximately 72 hours of round-the-clock work, the cable was off the ship on the shore and pretty much in its correct location. The Seabees now had to swim the entire length of the cable out and every so often secure it to the seafloor using underwater clamps and tools. This ensured that the cable will stay in the right place, hopefully, for years to come – including during hurricanes.

"One of the things you always worry about during a project like this is the weather," Perry said. "But we really lucked out with calm seas and no electrical storms during the cable landing, and everything pretty much went as planned."

Seabees, Maritime Civil Affairs Group Forge Partnerships, Friendships in Africa

By MC2 (SW/AW) Rosa Larson, CNE-C6F Public Affairs

Seabees from Sigonella, Sicily, completed their first project working with a representative of the newly formed Maritime Civil Affairs Group rehabilitating a local high school in Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo, Oct. 2.

The rehabilitation of the school, which supports 1,500 students, is directly tied to Naval Forces Europe's efforts to develop maritime security and safety in the region. "Seabees and Congolese military worked side by side," said RADM Michael Groothousen, commander, Navy Region Europe/Maritime Air Naples. "These relationships are the first step in promoting maritime security, safety and stability."

According to Groothousen, the success of this project lies not only in the act of renovating the school itself, but in the relationship-building that occurred during the process.

"When we first showed up, the teachers would be sitting down at the end of the building watching us," said Chief Builder (SCW) Brian Weddle. "By the end, they volunteered to clean up the grounds and help move desks back into the classrooms."



Seabees in Africa



RADM Michael R. Groothousen (left), Commander, Navy Region Europe/Maritime Air Naples, and Robert Weisberg, U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of the Congo (center), meet with Republic of the Congo Prime Minister Isidore Mvoubia to discuss work the Seabees recently completed for two schools in the region. Seabee teams regularly work to rebuild structures, such as schools and boat ramps, in Africa as part of the Africa Partnership Station initiative.

Photo by MC1 William John Kipp Jr.

NMCB 40

UCT 1

Sao Tome Opens New Boat Ramp with Help from NMCB 40, UCT 1 Seabees

By MC2 Michael Campbell,
Fleet Public Affairs Center
Detachment Europe

Sao Tome locals are proud owners of a newly refurbished boat ramp, compliments of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 40 and Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1.

"This is a great day for Sao Tome," said Oscar Sousa, minister of defense for Sao Tome and Principe. "Our friends in the U.S. have helped us greatly with this boat ramp and we look forward to working with them in the future."

Together with local day laborers, NMCB 40 and UCT 1 disassembled the old boat ramp and rebuilt the entire structure. Before the new boat ramp, the local coast guard was unable to operate at full capacity. Sao Tome government officials asked the U.S. Navy for help.

"By rebuilding the boat ramp we are helping the people of Sao Tome improve their infrastructure," said Builder 2nd Class (SCW) Errol Browning. "This kind of job is what being a Seabee is all about."

Seabee Selected for Navy League 2007 Sea Service Award

By LCDR Joshua Pearlman, NMCB 21 Public Affairs



A Seabee has been selected by the Navy League of the United States to receive the 2007 Admiral Ben Moreell Award for Logistics Competence. The enlisted awardee is Senior Chief Equipment Operator Jason Jones, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 21, based at Naval Air Engineering

Station Lakehurst, N.J.

The Navy League presents the annual award to one officer and one enlisted member of the Navy or Marine Corps for an outstanding personal contribution that advanced the logistics readiness and competence of the naval service.

As a member of NMCB 21, Jones mobilized and deployed with a detachment of 145 Seabees from the battalion to Kuwait from March to November 2006. While at Camp Virginia in Kuwait, Jones was the project superintendent on multiple earthwork, grading and road construction projects. He stood out as a key leader in the detachment.

LT Shawn Galbraith, Jones' officer in charge, described him as a consummate professional. "He was the go-to man for everything," Galbraith said.

When a high-priority requirement emerged for mission-critical repairs to an airfield in Jalalabad, Afghanistan, Jones' leadership, technical expertise, and 'Can Do' reputation resulted in his selection as the officer in charge of a detachment tasked with performing the repairs.

His 16-person detachment brought together hand-selected Seabees from NMCB 5 and NMCB 21. None of the necessary equipment was on-site when Jones arrived with his detachment in Afghanistan. Drawing from his civilian background in construction, he was able to specify and obtain the equipment needed to mill, reheat and repave the airfield's asphalt surfaces. The detachment then began repairs within 36 hours of arrival on the ground.

Jones led the detachment to complete the airfield repairs within a period of 10 days, well ahead of schedule. He then spent an additional two weeks performing work in support of the airfield's operations, including enhancements to the runway surface and general camp maintenance improvements.

Although his service in Afghanistan exemplified Jones' attributes, it was in keeping with his performance throughout the overall deployment.

"Whatever you threw at him, he [got] it done," said Galbraith.

NEWSBREAK

NMCB 11 GETS MOTIVATED FOR MARINE MARTIAL ARTS

By MC2 Erick S. Holmes, NMCB 11 Public Affairs



GM2 Jonathan Quinty (right) practices maneuvers on fellow trainee BU3 Caleb Gregoire, NMCB 11, during Marine Corps Martial Arts Training at NCBC, Gulfport, Miss.

Photo by MC2 Erick S. Holmes

Twenty Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11 participated in Marine Corps Martial Arts Green Belt Training at Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport, Miss., in late July.

Each morning, NMCB 11 Seabees began with physical training, including calisthenics, track and 'body hardening.' Then, they were taught various self-defense tactics to protect themselves in close quarters.

"The best part about getting the Seabees out here and training them is that they volunteered for this," explained Marine Corps SSgt. Bryan J. Letbetter, class instructor. "The Seabees are as fierce as Marines and in this class, they are more motivated than Marines," Letbetter said. "It's mandatory for Marines to learn martial arts, but these Seabees wanted to be here, so there's more motivation."

With many lessons learned from the training, each Seabee took something unique from the class.

"It makes me more confident," said Builder 3rd Class Hope C. Van Der Puy. "This is very helpful – from the city to the desert, I can use this skill, work and relax with more [assurance] in my own abilities and security."



BU3 Angela Self (left) receives a blow from her opponent, EOCN Karen McKenney, NMCB 11, during green belt-level Marine Corps Martial Arts Training at NCBC, Gulfport, Miss.

Photos by MC2 Erick S. Holmes

NMCB 7 GEARS UP IN SEABEE OLYMPICS

By MC2 Michael B. Lavender,
NMCB 7 Public Affairs

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 participated in a Seabee Olympics event in August.

“We needed to get out of the classrooms and do some training as a group,” said Utilitiesman 1st Class (SCW) Brian Dess, NMCB 7 training department coordinator and event organizer.

Seabee Olympics events included a Grenade Toss, Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement (MTRV) Pull, M16A3 Service Rifle Relay and a Litter Relay, with these results: 1st place – Charlie Company’s Team 3; 2nd place – Alpha



Seabees assigned to NMCB 7 pull an MTRV during the Seabee Olympics in August. The event was originally scheduled to be a Humvee pull, but was changed to provide Seabees with a greater challenge.

Photo by MC2 Michael B. Lavender

Company’s Team 2; and 3rd place (four-way tie) - Alpha Company’s Team 4, Bravo Company’s Team 2, Charlie Company’s Team 1 and

Headquarter’s Company Team 6.

“We were all winners out there,” said Builder 1st Class Eric Scott, an event coordinator. “I’ve never

seen so much camaraderie in the battalion before. It was definitely an added bonus to a magnificent day.”

PEARL HARBOR SEABEES FEATURED IN EXTREME MAKEOVER: HOME EDITION

By Denise Emsley, Public Affairs, NAVFAC, Hawaii

In June 2007, to kick off its fifth season, ABC’s *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* program came to Hawaii, selecting the Akana family of Honolulu for its project. Ty Pennington, program host, and the design team from *Extreme Makeover* worked with Brookfield Homes Hawaii, and more than 3,000 volunteers, including 28 Pearl Harbor Seabees, to help build the Akanas a new home. In addition, they also constructed a new learning center for Momi Akana’s non-profit organization, Keiki O Ka Aina Family, near the home. Both structures were completed in seven days.

After Day 1 of the project, Builder 2nd Class (SCW) Timothy Edgar, NAVFAC Hawaii Self Help, got a call from a co-worker telling him that *Extreme Makeover* needed more volunteers with building skills in order to complete the

work on time. He visited the site and then began pulling together some of his fellow Seabees from both NAVFAC Hawaii Self Help and Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU) 303. The Seabees worked from Day 2 to Day 7 doing whatever was needed – interior work (plumbing, carpentry, electrical, fiber optics, dry wall, painting and finishing work), as well as exterior work (siding and landscaping).

“Three other very dedicated Seabees – Utilitiesman 3rd Class Christopher Fisher, Utilitiesman 1st Class (SCW) Mauricio Puerto, and Equipment Operator 2nd Class (SCW) Andresart Reyes – and I spent three days and nights at the project site,” said Edgar.

“It was a great experience, and I would love to have the opportunity to do something like this again,” he continued. “As Seabees, we execute a wide variety of projects at Pearl Harbor which helps sharpen our skills. This knowledge was very helpful, enabling us to jump in and help out with whatever was needed to make this *Extreme Makeover* project a success.”

The Akanas’ new home in Honolulu, Hawaii, courtesy of *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* and the Seabees of Pearl Harbor.

U.S. Navy photo by Denise Emsley, NAVFAC, Hawaii





Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association Establishes Scholarships for Sons and Daughters of Fallen Seabees

The Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association (SMSA) has established guaranteed, specific educational scholarships for sons and daughters of U.S. Navy Seabees killed in combat actions. The educational scholarships would assist the surviving children of fallen Seabees in paying the costs of obtaining college degrees.

For further details about the scholarship, contact Meg Reed, SMSA public affairs officer, (703) 608-6761, MMLREED13@yahoo.com, or write to the 'Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association,' P.O. Box 6574, Silver Spring, Md., 20916, and address correspondence to 'Fallen Seabee Scholarship.'

For additional information, visit the SMSA website at www.seabee.org and select 'Fallen Seabee.'

SEABEE REUNIONS

FEBRUARY

1st ALL SEABEE Reunion – East Coast
FEB. 22-24, 2008
 Hampton, VA
 Bruce MacDougall
 804-921-4753
 7305 Cannonade Ct.
 Midlothian, VA 23112-6182
seabeemacd40@comcast.net

MARCH

NMCB 22
MARCH 7-9, 2008
 Corpus Christi, TX
 Carlton A. Biermann
 830-895-2189
 127 Crestwood Dr.
 Kerrville, TX 78028-4830
carlton@ktc.com

For a complete list of reunions and contact information for individual units attending the All Seabee Reunion in Hampton, Va., visit www.allseabees.com or the Seabee Historical Foundation at www.seabeehf.org.

APRIL

40th NCB – NMCB 40
APRIL 3-6, 2008
 Virginia Beach, VA
 Ed Holston
 856-358-2009
 P.O. Box 112
 Franklinville, NJ 08322
NMCBFighting40@aol.com

NMCB 58 Association
APRIL 6-13, 2008
 Branson, MO
 UCCM Ronald A. Rathert
 618-826-2813
 3 W. Haywood Ct.
 Chester, IL 62233
rathert@verizon.net

Naval Beach Group 1 (ACB 1)
APRIL 23-26, 2008
 Nashville, TN
 Gene Glasco
 757-428-8226
 211 72nd St.
 Virginia Beach, VA 23451
sglasco@aol.com

By CAPT Jeff Borowy, Commodore,
25th Naval Construction Regiment

The Seabee Story Behind the Glory

1230 hours, June 6, 1944: Under the direction of The 25th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR), the first Seabee pontoon boat, Rhino Ferry #10, lands at Omaha Beach with a load of tanks and artillery pieces essential to Operation *Overlord*, the Allied invasion of Normandy.

Later, Rhino Ferry #13 loses its Officer in Charge followed soon thereafter by its Chief Petty Officer. An E-3, Seaman George Taiol, finds himself in command of a Navy vessel at war. Seabee Taiol takes charge and successfully completes the mission.

The Rhino ferry consisted of a series of heavy steel boxes, each five by seven by five feet, connected together and powered by two large outboard motors. With little or no freeboard, Seabees successfully guided the Rhino ferries in five- to six-foot seas, transporting gear from ship to shore. The pontoons, or 'magic boxes,' were the brainchild of CAPT John Laycock who prototyped his invention with cigar boxes and kite sticks.

By late October 1944, with its Rhinos and pontoon causeways, Seabees had transported and off-loaded more than 94,000 trucks, tanks and artillery pieces, 422,000 tons of vital war cargo and 35 percent of the troops onto the beaches of France.

Operation *Overlord*, a plan nearly two years in the making and generally regarded as an impossible mission by Nazi Germany, led to the ultimate surrender of the Third Reich.

Taiol and Laycock were examples of the Seabee story behind the glory.

Flash forward to 2007. On the afternoon of Sept. 14, the Navy's newest Seabee unit, The 25th Naval Construction Regiment, is recommissioned in Gulfport, Miss. During the ceremony, there were speeches, the band played, people cheered and colors were unfurled. Like the 'Overlord' Regiment of World War II, there was plenty of story behind the glory leading to this historic day for the Seabees.

Going back more than a year earlier, deep within an austere wing of the Navy Annex in Washington, D.C., a work group convenes to analyze the Seabee worldwide demand signal and current force structure, and to make a recommendation for the future. CAPTs Mike Conaway, Jim Hollrith, Jim Worcester, Jeff Voltz; CDR John Adametz; and LCDR Tim Min work tirelessly to educate the group of manpower specialists on Seabee doctrine and tactics, develop cost estimates and assist in developing alternatives. Their efforts directly lead to the Chief of Naval Operations' decision to 'grow' another regiment and battalion, The 25th Naval Construction Regiment and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11.

Conaway, Hollrith, Worcester, Voltz, Adametz and Min: The story behind the glory.

One by one, Sailors begin arriving as part of the pre-commissioning unit of The 25th Naval Construction Regiment. As the first Seabee in the Communication Department, Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Sarah Washington works to identify the information systems needs of the Navy's newest Seabee regiment and attend 'green gear' classes to learn expeditionary communication. Managing a career while also raising three children, IT2 Washington's positive attitude brings a smile to the faces of those who join her in 'The 25th'.

Across the street, the Leading Petty Officer of the Overlord Regiment Personnel Division, Personnel Specialist 3rd Class Erik Estrada leads seven Sailors, all of whom are recent graduates of PS 'A' School. Having already earned himself a bachelor's degree during his off-time, PS3 Estrada earnestly teaches his young Sailors the details of their rating and sets the standard for honor, courage and commitment. Two of his troops are selected as the Sailor of the Quarter in the first six months.

Washington and Estrada: The story behind the glory.

Through the dedicated efforts of our Civil Engineer Corps staffers, the Naval Construction Force now has an additional regiment and battalion to support the Global War on Terror. Through the superb efforts of the Sailors first to arrive at The 25th Naval Construction Regiment, the Overlord Regiment stands ready to contribute to the defense of our nation. This is the story behind the pomp and circumstance of a commissioning ceremony. This is the story behind the glory.



25th NCR Staff

U.S. Navy photo

Construimus ☆ Batuimus



BEE □ CAM

Got Soap?

CM3 Greg A. Bottom displays a version of camouflage style after manning the defensive fighting positions during NMCB 4's deployed FEX in Guam.

U.S. Navy photo by Air Force MSgt. Rickie D. Bickle



NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND

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