

WE BUILD • WE FIGHT

# SEABEE

UNITED STATES NAVY | WINTER 2011

LT. J.G. FRANCIS L. TONER IV, CEC  
STRENGTH OF CHARACTER,  
MORAL COURAGE LEAD  
TO **SILVER STAR**



**ALSO INSIDE:**

SEAPOWER Interview with Rear Adm. Mark Handley

'Bees Combine Forces in Horn of Africa

Original Home of the Seabees: Davisville, R.I.

# SEABEE

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Lt. j.g. Francis L. Toner IV, CEC, recipient of a posthumous Silver Star, on Forward Operating Base Shaheen near Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan  
*Photo illustration*

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For her inspirational account of life-changing events after "the knock on the door," we are proud to present Brooke Toner with the Winter 2011 Seabee Challenge Coin. See story on p. 8.



SW2 Barron Montowski (far right), NMCB 23, embarked aboard High Speed Vessel (HSV 2) *Swift*, attends a recognition ceremony with students at Rafaela Santaella Elementary School, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. NMCB 23 completed minor structural, electrical and plumbing repairs to the school during a three-week Southern Partnership Station project. Southern Partnership Station is an annual deployment of U.S. ships to the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility in the Caribbean, Central and South America.  
*Photo by Lt. Matthew Comer*



All Seabees understand the cost of freedom. Many have given their lives for it.

Despite our short history, Seabees have names known throughout military circles for upholding our deep commitment to the Navy's core values. Seabees such as Marvin Shields and Robert Stethem need no introduction. Their stories of heroism, bravery and honor are repeated throughout all Sailor history.

We remember Seabee heroes because it gives their deeds immortality, and never forgetting is one way we honor the men and women who go above and beyond the call of duty. Some day greatness may call upon one of us to join their ranks.

On March 27, 2009, Lt. j.g. Francis L. Toner IV answered that call and paid for it with his life. *Seabee* is honored to tell you his heroic story. We hope that you honor his sacrifice by telling it for years to come.

The injury or tragic loss of a loved one in our line of work has a profound impact on everyone whose life was touched by that Seabee. In this issue, we have also included some very special words from Brooke Toner, widow of Silver Star recipient Frank Toner. She describes what happens when life sends us down some very unforeseen paths.

What we do as Seabees matters, and it is dangerous work. Just performing our duties is hazardous – let alone factoring in the impact of those who wish us harm. Even today, freedom has its opponents.

Sacrifice, to some degree, is part of the everyday life of being a Seabee. But the good we do worldwide far outweighs the tragedies we endure to provide people their first taste of freedom. We hope our fallen know this, and we need to remember now more than ever the words of our motto – “With compassion for others, we build, we fight, for peace with freedom.”

In Africa, this motto echoes throughout the continent striving



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

for freedom. Seabees are diligently helping the people of Africa literally build a bright future. From medical clinics to schools to water wells, Seabees are playing an integral role in the nation's modernization and independence.

The future of the Seabees evolves with our country's needs. Rear Adm. Mark Handley, Commander, INCD, recently spoke with *SEAPOW* Magazine about the way ahead, and we have his words for you.

Today's fiscally constrained environment has forced the Department of the Navy to make many difficult decisions with regard to the future Navy force, to include the force structure of the Naval Construction Force (NCF). As you have probably heard, NMCB 7

and NMCB 40 will be decommissioned next year as part of those budget-cutting efforts. However, the Seabees are an enduring force in our Navy and will continue to perform our mission and build upon our “Can Do” legacy. The NCF will remain ready and eager to help solve our supported commanders' toughest challenges on a moment's notice.

Like the Seabees themselves, *Seabee* Magazine is evolving. The digital age is all around us and we are fully embracing it to tell the Seabee story in new and exciting ways. Next year, *Seabee* will speak with a faster, more dynamic voice. From frontline to homefront, profile to professional development, our award-winning magazine will be completely digital – featuring breaking news, the latest photography and video, and of course the in-depth content you have come to expect. We are very excited to share this multi-faceted, next-generation perspective of the ‘Bees in action with you.

CAN DO!

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

WE BUILD WE FIGHT.

**SEABEE**  
UNITED STATES NAVY

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#### EDITORIAL

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# STRENGTH OF CHARACTER, MORAL COURAGE LEAD TO SILVER STAR

By NAVFAC HQ Public Relations & Communications

Lt. j.g. Francis L. Toner IV, CEC, during his IA assignment as garrison engineer mentor for the 209th Corps of the Afghan National Army in Northern Afghanistan.

Halfway through a year-long Individual Augmentee (IA) assignment with the Afghan Regional Security Integration Command (ARSIC) North, Lt. j.g. Francis L. "Frank" Toner IV, CEC, didn't hesitate when a terrorist attacked his shipmates on Forward Operating Base Shaheen near Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan. Unarmed, he charged the lone gunman.

It was enough to save some innocent lives that day—March 27, 2009—but not all. Lt. Florence B. Choe, Medical Service Corps, and Lt. j.g. Toner himself were killed.

Honor...Courage...Commitment...and Sacrifice. True heroes, like Toner, don't hesitate. They act. It's in their nature.

One of the last things Brooke Toner said to her husband before he left for Afghanistan was to not be the hero. After March 27, Brooke and everyone else learned that he never had a choice. It was always in his nature.

(Continued on next page)





# ADM. MULLEN PRESENTS SILVER STAR TO FALLEN SAILOR'S WIDOW



*The nation's former top military officer presented a posthumous Silver Star to the widow of a heroic Navy officer who was killed in Afghanistan, during a ceremony at the U.S. Navy Memorial, Washington, D.C., Sept. 23, 2011.*

By Karen Parrish, American Forces Press Service

Adm. Michael Mullen (ret), then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the hundreds of people in attendance that Lt. j.g. Francis L. Toner IV faced death “tragically and heroically.”

Lt. j.g. Toner, 26, was deployed to Afghanistan with an embedded training team as garrison engineer mentor for the Afghan National Army's 209th Corps at Forward Operating Base Shaheen, near Mazar-e-Sharif in northern Afghanistan. He and three other officers were exercising, running around the camp's perimeter on March 27, 2009, when an enemy fighter who had infiltrated the Afghan army attacked with a firearm.

As Toner's Silver Star citation recounts, “In seconds, officers were shot and lying wounded on the ground. The gunman proceeded to shoot one of the wounded officers... Toner, unarmed, verbally challenged the insurgent and continued to advance until he was fatally wounded.”

“I've been to enough [award presentations] and I've seen enough citations to know that he was basically walking straight into the enemy's fire,” Adm. Mullen said of Toner's actions. “We shouldn't – and we won't – ever, ever forget that service, that sacrifice,” he added. “Because that is what makes us strong, as a military and as a nation.”

*The President of the United States of America, has awarded  
the SILVER STAR to*

*Francis L. Toner IV  
Lieutenant Junior Grade, United States Navy*

**For Gallantry:** *in action against the enemy as Garrison Engineer, Camp Mike Spann Embedded Training Team in Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom on 27 March 2009. While Lieutenant Junior Grade Toner and three other Officers were conducting physical training around the perimeter of Camp Shaheen, they were attacked by an enemy who had infiltrated the Afghan National Army. In seconds, Officers were shot and lying wounded on the ground. The gunman proceeded to shoot one of the wounded officers. Lieutenant Junior Grade Toner, unarmed, verbally challenged the insurgent and continued to advance until he was fatally wounded. Lieutenant Junior Grade Toner's actions distracted the attacker from shooting the second wounded, and allowed the fourth runner to seek reinforcements. Lieutenant Junior Grade Toner's distinctive accomplishments are in keeping with the finest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, the United States Navy and the United States Army.*



(Opposite) Adm. Mike Mullen (ret), then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, addresses the audience during the presentation ceremony of the Silver Star to Brooke Toner, wife of Lt. j.g. Francis L. Toner IV, at the U.S. Navy Memorial, Washington, D.C.

(Left) Brooke Toner receives the Silver Star from Adm. Mullen during the presentation ceremony at the U.S. Navy Memorial, Washington, D.C.

DoD photos by MC1 Chad J. McNeely

Brooke Toner, who accepted her husband's Silver Star, spoke during the ceremony and thanked everyone who attended.

"From the moment I got that knock on the door – which was the worst day of my life – I've been supported by my casualty assistance officer, by Admiral Mullen, by Rear Adm. Mossey and by all of our friends who have wrapped their arms around our family to support us all," she said.

Toner was previously posthumously awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star with Valor. The Silver Star is the third highest combat military decoration. **SB**

# After the Knock on the Door Life *not love* Changes Course

By Brooke Toner

I never knew my own strength until I became a military spouse. The unexpected turns of where we would be stationed, deployments and time away from one another led me to a place I never wanted to be. But I am so proud to call myself the wife of Lt. j.g. Francis L. Toner IV.

I will never forget that phone call. Frankie and I were at an opening social for the Society of American Military Engineers with a few of his colleagues in Minneapolis. The call came from his executive officer in Hawaii to his commander's cell phone. I knew it was serious if they needed to get a hold of him that badly. Frankie was trying to mouth words to me, and I could not understand what he was saying. He signed the letters with his hand...IA. I knew instantly what that meant – Individual Augmentee to Afghanistan. It felt like someone punched me in the gut. Frankie had an hour to decide.

Not even two months later, our life had drastically changed. We put our things in storage. The lease on our condo in Kailua, Hawaii, was up, and I would stay with my family in Idaho. Frankie was headed to training in Fort Riley, Kan., to prepare for a war zone.

I will never forget that ride over the beautiful H-3 to drop him off at the Honolulu International Airport. I told him that I never doubted him being able to get out of any dangerous situation, but if someone else was in trouble he would be the first one in. I said, “So baby, don’t be the hero.” I knew full well, those words were of no use.

I saw Frankie twice before he headed to Afghanistan. We spent Labor Day weekend together with my family in Idaho, and the last time I saw Frankie was the week we spent with his family in Narragansett, R.I.

Our last night together was October 16, 2008. Saying goodbye this time was so different. We both shed tears, knowing it would be half a year until I saw him again for his R&R. I watched Frankie be the last to board the plane. When he turned to look back at me and give me his final wave, I wondered if he felt the same sick feeling I did.

We both stayed super positive over the next few months. We talked almost every single day, even if it was just for a few minutes. Most days we were lucky enough to talk twice. We would always make each other laugh, sometimes we would cry. We prayed together, and we could never say I love you enough. When the phones were down, we would e-mail. I loved putting together care packages for him, and sending him things I knew he would love.

Frankie and I were always “that couple.” People just knew that

we were made for each another. We loved one another unconditionally. We would always wonder how we got so lucky. But Frankie would always say, “We aren’t lucky, we are blessed.”

Around the end of March 2009, I was getting so excited. I knew the estimated date Frankie was supposed to be coming home for his 15-day R&R. I had planned an amazing vacation for us and had even bought him new clothes to wear on the trip.

We talked on March 26, which for him was the morning of the dreaded 27th. We talked about all the details of our vacation. I left out a few of the surprises I had planned for him. We talked about everything. Getting off the phone that night was difficult. We

said I love you over and over again. We said our goodnight prayer, and I remember asking more than usual for Frankie to be watched over and kept safe. He told me he would call at the usual time the next day.

I woke up on March 27 with my phone by my side, as always. I got ready to go to the gym, and waited for Frankie’s call. It never came.

I checked my e-mail. He had sent some information we needed for the rental car. He said he couldn’t wait to see me and that it felt like Christmas was coming. I knew he was supposed to convoy out the next day to start his travels home.

Later that day, still feeling a little strange about not hearing from Frankie, my dad knocked on my bedroom door. I had just gotten out of the shower, and he said I should come downstairs. Two Navy men were waiting to talk to me. Not good, I thought.

What do they want? They just don’t come to visit. I threw on a pair of sweats and a t-shirt, and went downstairs.

Their dress blues seemed to smack me in the face, but I still could not quite comprehend the nature of their visit. I smiled, stuck out my hand and introduced myself, and apologized for the way I looked just getting out of the shower and all. The look in their eyes said way more than they could ever say. They realized I had no idea why they were there. That look gave them away. They asked if there was anywhere we could sit. I asked if Frankie was okay. Please, tell me he is okay. I backed away from them into the kitchen, toward the table. We did not sit. They confirmed I was the wife of Lieutenant Junior Grade Francis Lawrence Toner IV. Then they proceeded to say, “The Secretary of Defense regrets to inform you, that your husband, LTJG Francis Lawrence Toner IV, was killed today...”

That was all I heard, and all I could say, was no...no, no, no,



Brooke Toner receives Lt. j.g. Francis L. Toner IV's folded flag from Rear Adm. Greg Shear, CEC (ret) during her husband's funeral with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va., April 16, 2009.

no....not him, no, please God, no, as I crumbled to the floor. I then somehow managed to pull myself together, thanking them for coming to tell me, which has to be the hardest job in the world.

The next three weeks were a whirlwind of papers, funeral planning, flying to the East Coast and through it all feeling stuck in a horrible nightmare. More details came in every day of how Frankie died saving others, and I just stayed focused trying to make his funeral the most perfect it could be. He did have a beautiful funeral and one that I think he was proud of.

And then, the whirlwind was over. My husband was respectfully buried at Arlington National Cemetery on April 16, 2009. I was given his folded flag and I was no longer considered a military spouse, but a military widow. I could not understand how this happened to us, the fairytale couple, and why I was forced to live every military spouse's worst nightmare. I felt alone, isolated, scared and wanted nothing but to be with my husband.

I knew that I would stay here for both of us though. I knew I would live for both him and me, and that I would not quit. I have his story and legacy to share, and know that I will share it until the day I see him again.

I was so proud to call Frankie my husband before he died, and that has not changed. He was a hero before the incident on March 27, by how he chose to live his life. He was just such an amazing man whom other men looked up to. He was so smart and funny, and he truly cared about all those around him. There are not enough words to describe the amazing traits and character of Frankie.

Some days the strength I have dealing with this is directly from Frankie, and stems from the love we share and were so blessed to have known. We truly lived a lifetime of love in our six short years together. I feel honored he chose me as his wife.

I am happy to know that Frankie is with me always, and that I have had the opportunity to meet other amazing military widows to walk this path with through an organization called The American Widow Project. I am thankful for the continued friendships of the military spouses I met along our path in the military as well. Every day, all of them continue to face the long deployments, the fear of their husbands in a war zone and raising children on their own. I look to their strength and how they have given me continued support, when I know it is difficult for them seeing what could possibly happen.

I have realized through meeting other military spouses and widows the resiliency and strength of some amazing women, who support their husbands and, in turn, their country. Frankie's choice to go active duty was one he did not take lightly after seeing the attacks on the Twin Towers with his own eyes, and fearing that his parents were on the flight from Boston. He knew he had to serve his country, and he knew I would be right there by his side to support him in any decision. I am so proud of my husband, and know that he is proud of me as well. **SB**

For more information on The American Widow Project, please visit [www.americanwidowproject.org/](http://www.americanwidowproject.org/).



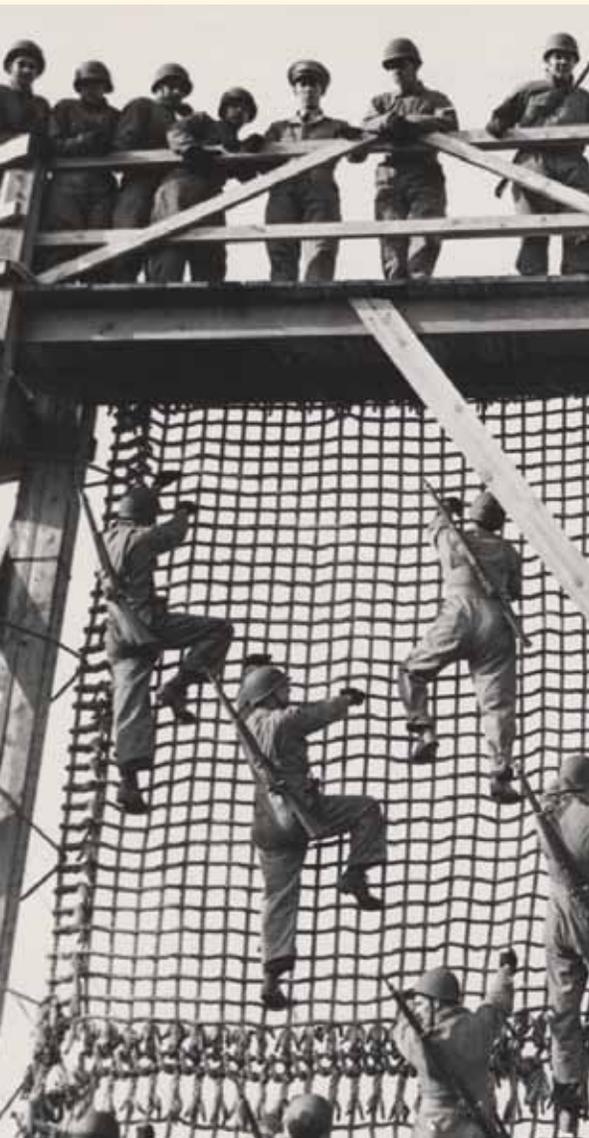
Frankie and Brooke Toner

# Original Home of the Seabees: Davisville, Rhode Island

Photos courtesy of the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum, Port Hueneme, Calif., Naval History and Heritage Command



Seabees marching past reviewing stand during the dedication ceremony of Camp Endicott, Davisville, R.I., 1943.



A group of Seabees climb down cargo nets during a stiff commando course, Camp Endicott, Davisville, R.I., 1943.

## A 6,000-mile journey—Davisville to Bora Bora

After the December 7, 1941, Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the United States' entry into World War II, the use of civilian labor in war zones became impractical. Under international law, civilians were not permitted to resist enemy military attack since it could mean summary execution as guerrillas. Consequently, the need for a militarized Naval Construction Force to build advance bases in the war zones was self-evident.

On December 28, 1941, Rear Adm. Ben Moreell, Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks (BUDOCKS), requested specific authority to activate, organize and man a unique organization that would support the Navy and Marines in remote locations and defend itself if attacked – the Naval Construction Battalions. Early the next year, Adm. Moreell was given authority to recruit men from the construction trades for assignment in support of the war effort. Recruits were assigned to a Naval Construction Regiment, comprised of three battalions. The original battalions were formed at an Advance Base Depot – in Davisville, R.I., or Port Hueneme, Calif. At these locations, the battalions underwent staging and outfitting. Seabees received six weeks of advanced military and technical training, underwent considerable unit training, and were then shipped to an overseas assignment.

Due to the urgent need for naval construction, the first unit to deploy left within two weeks of arriving at the Advance Base Depot Davisville. The unit was designated the First Construction Battalion, and the 296 men arrived at Bora Bora on February 17, 1942.

## The Fighting 'Bees

On March 5, 1942, all Construction Battalion personnel were officially named Seabees by the Navy Department. Adm. Moreell personally furnished them with their motto...*Construimus Batuimus*—"We Build, We Fight." A logo, the Fighting Bee, was created by Frank J. Iafrate, a civilian file clerk from North Providence, R.I., with a talent for caricature. Iafrate enlisted in the Navy later that year, and served as a chief carpenter-mate in a Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU).

On D-Day across Normandy's beaches, approximately 10,000 Seabees attached to the 25th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) manhandled pontoon causeways. It was over these causeways that the infantry charged ashore. The pontoons were designed at Davisville.

On August 11, the Naval Construction Training Center (NCTC), known as Camp Endicott, was commissioned at Davisville. The camp trained more 100,000 Seabees during WWII. Camp Thomas, a personnel receiving station on the base, was established in October. It eventually contained 500 Quonset huts for personnel.

## A "Hut" to Call Home

Fighting the war involved more than training and artillery. Housing the "fighter-builders" and protecting material was critical, especially in far-flung locations. Structures



(Left) Seabees from the NCTC Huts and Carpentry Training School assemble a Quonset hut, Camp Endicott, Davisville, 1942.



Seabees learning their trade, NCTC Drafting School, Camp Endicott, Davisville, 1943.

needed to be inexpensive, lightweight and portable so they could be shipped anywhere and put up quickly using only hand tools.

The British had developed a light prefab structure called a Nissen hut during World War I. In early 1941, the U.S. military looked at the Nissen, but felt the design could be improved.

One of the construction companies building Davisville's Quonset Point Naval Base, George A. Fuller and Company, was tasked with designing and producing a hut to U.S. specifications – in only two months.

Improvements on the British design included bending the corrugated sheets of steel into a usable form, and attaching them with nuts and bolts. The two ends were covered with plywood, and had doors and windows. An interior Masonite (pressed wood) lining, insulation and a one-inch tongue-in-groove plywood floor on a raised metal framework were also incorporated into the new design. The production facility was located in West Davisville, not far from the base.

Concerned about patent issues with Great Britain if they used the name Nissen hut, the new structure was called a Quonset hut, borrowing the word “Quonset” (meaning “boundary”) from the Native American Narragansett people who once lived on the land.

The Navy made its first shipment of Quonset huts overseas in June 1941. Several redesigns followed, evolving into lighter weight, more efficient structures with varying layout plans for diverse weather conditions. Many Quonset huts are still in use today throughout the United States, primarily as commercial buildings.

### Seabee Heroes

The first decorated Seabee hero of WWII was Seaman 2nd Class Lawrence C. “Bucky” Meyer, USNR. He was among the Seabees of the 6th NCB out of Davisville who worked at Henderson Field on Guadalcanal. During his off-time, S2c Meyer salvaged and repaired an abandoned machine gun. On Oct. 3, 1942, he used the gun to shoot down a Japanese Zero fighter making a strafing run.

For this exploit, he was awarded the Silver Star. It was, however, a posthumous award, since 13 days after shooting down the plane he was killed in action when the gasoline barge on which he was working was struck by Japanese naval gunfire. Although Seabees were only supposed to fight to defend what they built, such acts of heroism were numerous. In all, Seabees earned 33 Silver Stars and five Navy Crosses during WWII. But they also paid a price: 272 enlisted men and 18 officers were killed as a result of enemy action – many beginning their journey in Davisville, R.I., the original home of the Seabees.

### SOURCES

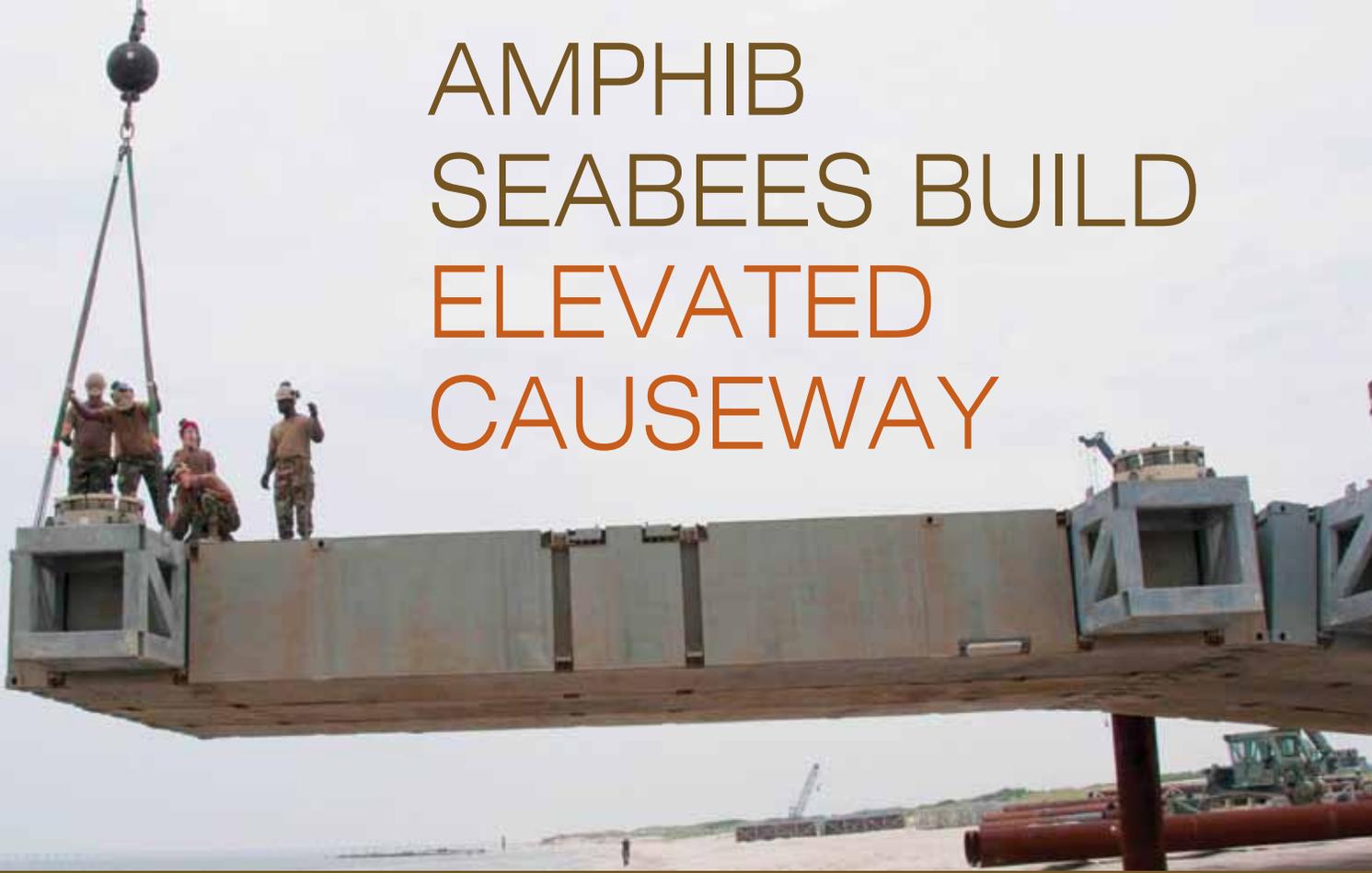
U.S. Navy Seabee Museum, Port Hueneme, Calif., Naval History and Heritage Command.  
History of the Seabees, Command Historian, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, 1996.



(Above) Rhode Island native Frank Iafrate, creator of the “fighting bee” logo, at the Seabee Museum, Port Hueneme, Calif., 1978. (Below) Quonset huts at Camp Endicott, Davisville, 1944.



# AMPHIB SEABEES BUILD ELEVATED CAUSEWAY



By MC3(SW/AW) Jonathan Pankau, ACB 2 Public Affairs

Active duty and reserve Seabees from Amphibious Construction Battalions (ACBs) 1 from Coronado, Ca., and 2 from Virginia Beach, Va., completed the construction phase of the Elevated Causeway System - Modular (ELCAS-M) at Anzio Beach, Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek/Fort Story (JEBLC/FS), Va., in August.

The ELCAS-M is the only expeditionary pier system in the world and only the Seabees have the capability to construct it. It is deployable anywhere throughout the globe and is constructed to support ship-to-shore cargo movement where a usable seaport may be damaged or unavailable. ACB 2 stores the system at JEBLC/FS and the two battalions construct it annually to maintain proficiency and train newer Seabees in building the system.

“Once ELCAS is constructed everything else flows pretty smoothly, from boatswains mates pulling [their causeway ferries] alongside the pier to the trucks driving onto the turntable and spinning around to face the way they came,” said Equipment Operator 3rd Class Martin Conner, ACB 2.

The ELCAS-M allows the Navy to move the offloading of supplies beyond the surf zone and beaches that are not otherwise suitable for landing craft. The system is constructed out of 40-foot-long pontoon sections that form the ramp and causeway, 38-foot-long steel piles driven into the beach and seafloor to support the system’s weight, and external spudwells that secure the piles to the pontoons. When broken down into its components, ELCAS-M may

appear to be a simple system but ACB 2 ELCAS-M Officer-in-Charge Lt. Artemio Trevino said the planning, precise measurements and technical expertise required to successfully construct the system are far from simple.

“At the core, ELCAS-M is constructed from a few simple parts,” Lt. Trevino said. “Anyone who observes the build from start to finish, however, realizes that it takes precise measurements and many different capabilities staffed by trained personnel from all parts of the amphibious construction force.”

“The ELCAS-M is just another example of what the world’s greatest combat construction force is capable of doing.”

Adm. J.C. Harvey Jr.,  
Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces

Chief Equipment Operator (SCW/AW) Jered Robbins, ACB 1, said the ramp onto the causeway is built first and is the most important part of the build. He added that the grade, or slope, of the ramp is only one of the many factors that play into the foundation of the entire pier.

“The ramp is the foundation for the causeway. Just like a house foundation, it has to be very precise or you’ll ruin everything you build on top of it,” EOC Robbins said.

Once the ramp is constructed and the first pieces of the causeway are attached, the external spudwells are attached to the sides

and piles are driven through them. Each supporting pile has to be driven into the ground a certain length, requiring a massive pile hammer lifted by a 200-ton Crawler crane. Before any pile hammering begins Engineering Aide 1st Class (SCW/AW) Patrick Russell, ACB 2, has to calculate the depth the piles need to be driven into the sand. Once the pile hammer is fueled, placed atop the pile and turned on, it begins to pound the pile into the sand.



(Photos at left) ACB 1 and 2 Seabees participating in the Elevated Causeway System-Modular (ELCAS-M) build guide an external spudwell, a fitting for the pontoons that acts like a large nut for the pile supports, into place, Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek/Fort Story, Virginia Beach, Va.

Photos by  
MC3(SW/AW) Jonathan Pankau

“This measurement is called the blow count and the purpose is to accurately determine the amount of strikes from the pile hammer are required to achieve the pile depth necessary to support the weight of the causeway,” EA1 Russell said. “The pile for this exercise was driven into the sand a minimum of 15 feet and did not stop until the pile hammer could strike the pile 37 times without it moving more than a foot, which tells us the pile can handle the weight. If the hammer struck the pile even 36 times and it moved a little over a foot, the count would start again until the blow count was reached.”

If the pile is driven far enough into the sand and more length is required, Russell said he would give a length recommendation for the additional pile based on the blow count and the Seabee steelworkers would splice additional lengths of pile onto the original.

The ELCAS-M Assistant Officer-in-Charge Chief Equipment Operator (SCW) William Haynes, ACB 2, said the exercise requires patience, training and experienced Seabees. Civilian contractors, such as Denise Brown, a technical engineer with Defense Support Systems, educate Seabees on the necessary skills.

“I teach Seabees all about amphibious unit-specific operations, and the most important lesson is to always check the tech manuals,” Brown said. “I’ve been a part of three ELCAS-M builds in the military and seven as a civilian contractor... I know from experience that one missing bolt or one wrong weld can quickly become a show-stopper.”

EOC Haynes added that ACB 2 Seabees can build the ELCAS-M in seven days, up to 3,000 feet out into the water with a crew of 108 personnel. Haynes added that the main objectives of the exercise are safety and training. This ensures that the junior

Seabees understand how ELCAS-M operates and are able to take the lead at the next build.

“We took 13 days to build a 720-foot causeway during last year’s exercise and 17 days for 840 feet this year,” Haynes said. “This is a training exercise and it is important to proceed slowly and carefully.”

Neither battalion has the manpower to construct the system independently so they call on reserve component Seabees for support. This year more than 40 reservists from ACBs 1 and 2 participated in the build for unit training and to assist their active-duty shipmates. Equipment Operator 2nd Class Jami Danforth, ACB 2, a surgical technologist from Laconia, N.H., was one of the many reservists participating in the ELCAS-M.

“This was my first ELCAS build so I did a lot of observing and learning,” EO2 Danforth said. “Once I got the hang of it, though, I was good to go and had so much fun working with my hands and getting dirty.”

The ELCAS-M is not limited to combat operations. The system provides a unique capability to transport combat and humanitarian aid supplies from the sea and across the shore assisting in relief missions around the world and supporting the Navy’s Maritime Strategy.

“During times of peace, our Seabees have deployed to disaster zones to repair critical infrastructure and deliver supplies to the victims of natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes and floods,” said Adm. J.C. Harvey Jr., Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces, during a visit to the build site. “The ELCAS-M is just another example of what the world’s greatest combat construction force is capable of doing.”



# NMCB 4 'BEEES SPAN RIVERBED TO IMPROVE AFGHANS' QUALITY OF LIFE

SWCN Brittany Desroches, NMCB 4,  
welds a metal plate at the Musa Qal'eh  
low water crossing project in Afghanistan.

By Lt. j.g. Jim Corbett and MC1 Russ Stewart, NMCB 4 Public Affairs

# Purple Heart



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

## Gulfport Seabee Killed in Afghanistan



BUC(SCW) Raymond J. Border

Chief Builder (SCW) Raymond J. Border was killed by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) in Afghanistan, Oct. 19, while assessing a road in Paktika Province. BUC Border was a member of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74, and was assigned as an Individual Augmentee (IA) to the Provincial Reconstruction Team in the province. He was from West Lafayette, Ohio, and joined the Navy in September 1999.

## NMCB 4 Seabee Receives Purple Heart

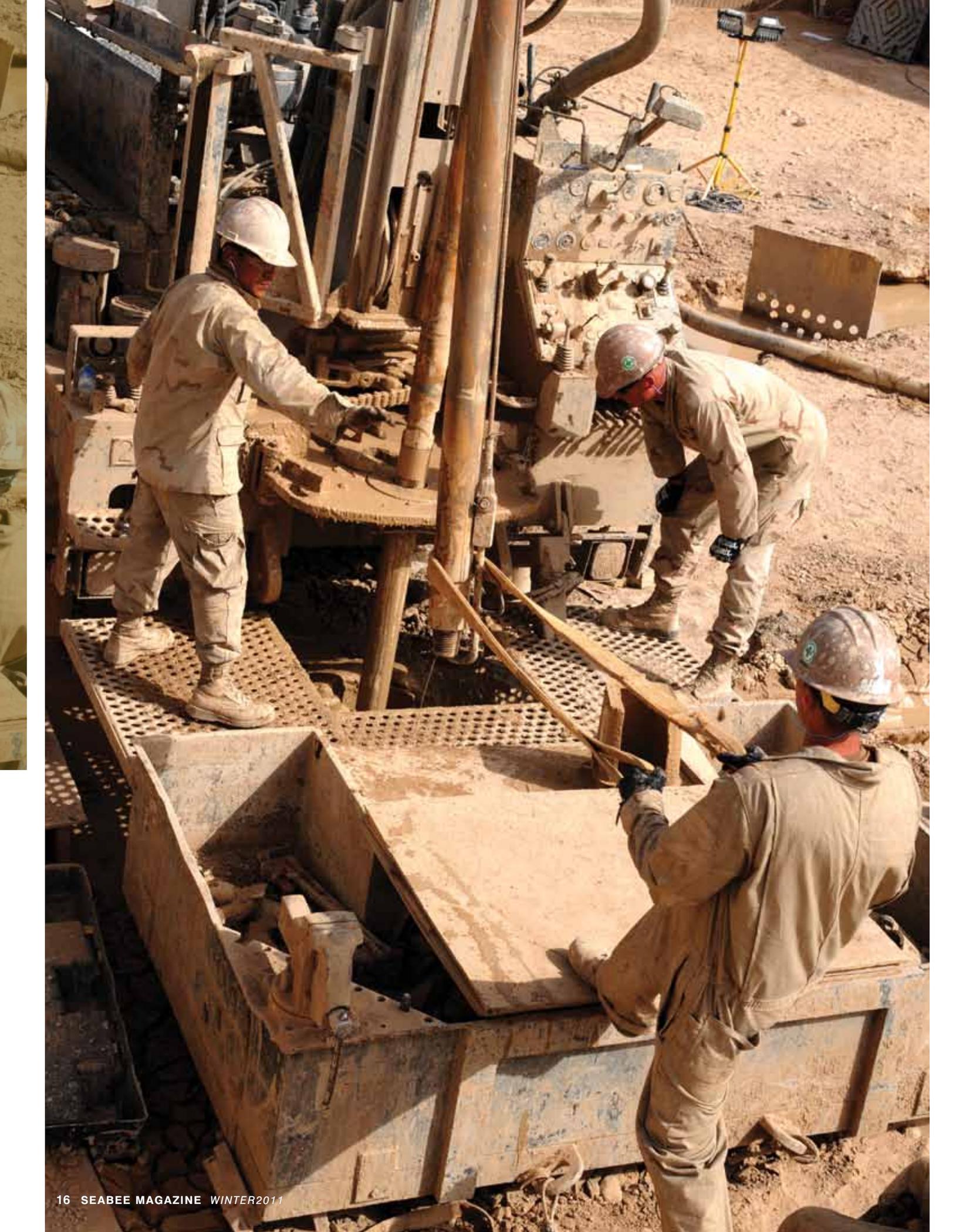
Utilitiesman 3rd Class Crystal McDougal sustained injuries while stationed as gunner of NMCB 4's Convoy Security Element (CSE) when her MRAP (mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle) was hit by an IED in Afghanistan, Nov. 22. UT3 McDougal received the Purple Heart while surrounded by the battalion's CSE at Camp Krutke, Nov. 28.

Sources: Daryl C. Smith, Public Affairs Officer 1NCD; and MC1 Russell Stewart, NMCB 4

SB



Seabees assigned to NMCB 4, Alfa and Delta companies, place prefabricated concrete pieces in the riverbed at the Musa Qal'eh low water crossing project, as they provide contingency engineering and construction across Afghanistan.  
Photos by MC1 Russ Stewart



# ‘WE BUILD ✦ WE FIGHT’

## Seabees Build Bases in War Zones and Partnerships Worldwide

In the October 2011 issue of *SEAPOW*, Rear Adm. Mark Handley, Commander, First Naval Construction Division (1NCD), discussed Seabee operations in Afghanistan and other regions with Managing Editor Richard R. Burgess. Excerpts from the interview follow.

### **What are the particular challenges of operating in Afghanistan?**

**HANDLEY:** It’s a dangerous environment. It puts our troops in armored equipment and protective gear and it’s a pretty harsh environment. If you were there around this time in Kandahar, you’d see temperatures at 120 degrees. You add on top of that Kevlar [body armor] that you wear outside the wire and you work outside, it gets pretty hard for those Seabees doing hard construction work. It’s also tough on our equipment.

The real hard one is logistics. If you decide you need something, it takes you several months to get it there. They’ve got some great distribution networks, but the Northern Distribution Network will take you several months to get material there from the time you decide you need it. The urgent stuff can get flown in, but sometimes the material we work with is kind of large and bulky, so it takes some planning ahead of time in order to have the right materials. We’ve been there long enough now that we’ve got that pipeline pretty well filled and flowing.

### **Doesn’t the Marine Corps have its own equivalent to Seabees?**

**HANDLEY:** The Marines have combat engineers that do some of the more kinetic engineering — mine clearing, obstacle breaching, those types of things. They have limited construction capability. When the Marines get into building an infrastructure like a base or the airfield, they rely on Seabees. As we were preparing for maneuvers for [Operation Iraqi Freedom] OIF-1 and we were in Kuwait, the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing needed to bed down all of their aircraft, so, in about a 90-day period, the Seabees built a 21-acre concrete apron for all the wing’s fighter aircraft. That was a massive project, 24/7 operations.

### **Have the Afghanistan and Iraq wars overly stressed the Seabee force?**

**HANDLEY:** First of all, a day doesn’t go by that I’m not amazed by the strength and resiliency of our force, but there is no doubt that we’re seeing the signs of the stress of being at war for 10 years. When we surged in Afghanistan, we doubled our force and we had to lengthen our deployments from six to eight months. Their homeport time was shortened by about two months to 10 months. That enabled us to do great things. In our Reserve component, we mobilized Reserve battalions on a faster cycle, essentially a 3-to-1 turn instead of the normal 5-to-1 for Reserve forces. We’re now resetting our Reserve component.

### **Can you give some examples of Seabees in action in humanitarian relief?**

**HANDLEY:** It’s really about building partnerships. We have a water well team in Cambodia. It makes a difference for every village that they touch. It really helps build the camaraderie and enhances the image of the United States.

We also have a detachment of Seabees going into Vietnam. This is our first military presence back into Vietnam in many, many years and we’re really looking to build a foundation of trust and partnership with them. We’re aligned very much with our fleet commanders. For example, Seabees aboard the [amphibious transport dock ship] USS *Cleveland* participated in Pacific

(Opposite page) CE3 Eric Polito (far right) guides a new section of drill to the derrick handler, CMCN Tomas Gonzalez (left), both assigned to NMCB 4, on the drilling rig at a water well site at Patrol Base Alcatraz in southwestern Afghanistan, Aug. 14.

Photo by MC1 Russell Stewart



Seabees assigned to NMCB 40 defend their camp in a simulated firefight at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., Oct. 8, during a field training exercise and evaluation before their upcoming U.S. Pacific Command deployment.

Photo by MCC Michael B. Watkins

Partnership, where a ship will visit several ports and provide some medical assistance, do some positive engagement with the local government there — and the Seabees will renovate schools and clinics and do some small community service projects.

We're doing the same thing with Africa Partnership Stations. In one of the best examples, we sent Seabees out about a month ahead of time to actually build a new school from the ground up, and we timed that for when the ship does its engagement as part of that partnership station. It really leaves a lasting impression of what partnership with the United States provides to those countries and how they can improve security within the region with cooperation.

**Bulldozers were symbolic of the Seabees in World War II. What new technologies are you embracing?**

**HANDLEY:** We're using bulldozers and the same types of earth-moving equipment that we've had in the past to build roads and do the heavy up-and-down lifting. The biggest difference is that in the equipment we have in Afghanistan and Iraq now, we've incorporated armor. An operator "outside the

wire," working in that combat environment, has some protection between him and any insurgent who might decide to fire rounds in his direction.

We're looking at alternative energy. We've built a number of combat outposts out and around the city of Kandahar and a number of them included security checkpoints with lighting. Providing fuel to a combat outpost takes a lot of effort. You have to convoy fuel out there. So we came up with a strategy to incorporate solar lighting into those combat outposts. It eliminated the need for refueling for generators to support that. That's probably been one that has helped save a number of lives, and also provided an economical and clean way to provide that mission.

The satellite communications that we use today give us full-spectrum capability. It has given us great technical reachback capability. We will send Seabees out to look at a bridge and take digital photographs of it, make drawings of it and take measurements. We will send that in a package back to engineers here in Norfolk at Naval Facilities Engineering Command Atlantic. They have experts who will work on it and then send us back answers and solutions within 24 hours.

We get a reachback to a huge suite of technical expertise that we didn't have access to before. That's been a huge force multiplier for us.

**What challenges do you see the Seabees facing in today's environment?**

**HANDLEY:** The No. 1 challenge for us is continued operations in Afghanistan. We're seeing lots of increased demands for Seabees in Afghanistan and for humanitarian missions and theater security cooperation.

The other one is potential force reductions that are causing us to spread what limited assets we have over a greater demand than we've seen in the past. With the fiscal constraints that [the Department of Defense] is facing, it's very likely the Navy will have a smaller force in the future, and that would include the Seabees. During these challenging economic times, one of our key focuses is going to be on maintaining our core capabilities and force wholeness, so that Seabees are going to be ready to build and fight when they're called upon, whenever the nation or the Navy needs us. **SB**

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Ecuadorian boys watch as Seabees assigned to NMCB 28 and Marines assigned to the 8th Engineer Support Battalion build a wall at their school in La Tavesia, Ecuador, during a Continuing Promise 2011 community service project in May. Continuing Promise is a five-month humanitarian assistance mission to the Caribbean, Central and South America.  
*U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Alesia D. Goosic*



# 'Bees Combine Forces in Horn of Africa

## NMCB 5 'Bees Harvest Rainwater in Tanzania

By Army Spec. Brad Miller,  
326th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**N**aval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5 Seabees assigned to Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) traveled to Zanzibar, Tanzania, to work with the Tanzania People's Defense Forces (TPDF) combat engineers and construct two 10,000-liter storage capacity rainwater harvesting systems at local schools. The rainwater catchment containment systems will not only provide water for normal use, but will support the Tanzanians during drought and natural disaster.

While Mbuzini Primary and Secondary School has a well for drinking water, Pale Primary and Secondary School had no water source – the restroom facilities were not even fully functional. Seabees, along with the TPDF crew, attached gutters under the sloped roof of the schoolhouses to channel the water into the first 5,000-liter containment drum seated on a cement base.

"There is no water here...they must go far to fetch water," said Capt. Muhamed Muhamed, liaison officer for the TPDF Military Civil Affairs Team. "The partnership between the Tanzanian People's Defense Forces and the U.S. Army on this project has really impressed me."

"It's a joint effort. We learn from the TPDF engineers and they learn from us," said Equipment Operator 1st Class Mario Perez, project mission commander. "Everyone understands and respects hard work and working together."

Perez said that the biggest obstacle they had to overcome was the fact that the area does not have large home improvement stores or construction centers.

"It's really hard to get some of the construction materials here. We wanted to use more than one vendor and distribute the wealth," EO1 Perez said.

Capt. C.L. Mushanshu looks on as his crew is working side-by-side with the Seabee team, doing a good deed for the local community.

"We have learned through cooperating with the Americans how to construct this system to harvest rainwater," Capt. Mushanshu said. "For any projects, if you need us, we are ready to get together with the Americans anytime." **SB**



(Above) The NMCB 5 Seabee team gathers with their Tanzania People's Defense Forces (TPDF) construction crew counterparts—and local helpers—to construct the rainwater catchment system at Pale school in Zanzibar, Tanzania, Sept. 19.

(Opposite page) SW3 Ericka Tutino, NMCB 5, carries a piece of fascia board which will support the gutters for the rainwater catchment system at Pale school in Zanzibar.

Photos by Army Spc. Brad Miller, 326th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



## After Schoolhouse Renovations: Recess

A student from Kontali, Djibouti, loses a sandal while kicking a ball during a fútbol game against NMCB 5 Seabees, Oct. 1. The fútbol game and subsequent festival enabled the Kontali people to share their cultural heritage with the Seabees, who worked closely with them on a long-term project to modernize the local schoolhouse.

For nearly a year, Seabees attached to Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) worked with village elders to plan schoolhouse renovations and coordinate construction efforts. When completed, the fully renovated school will provide a structurally sound, solar-powered learning environment for local students.

*U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Jarad A. Denton*

# 'Bees Combine Forces in Horn of Africa



## Seabees, Army Civil Affairs Bring the Basics to Dire Dawa

By MC2 Timothy Wilson, NMCB 74

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74, Detachment Ethiopia, came to Dire Dawa to continue construction projects helping the city build infrastructure and meet basic needs – such as supply water to the local population.

Projects included drilling several water well sites around the city. At more than five of these sites, the Seabees, attached to the Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), drilled hundreds of feet into the ground and installed mechanical pumps to bring up potable water, providing clean water for outlying villages.

Equipment Operator 1st Class Dennis Hill, lead driller, said the wells can produce 20 gallons of fresh water per minute, averaging depths of more than 400 feet.

"The Seabees are working hard. We

work in 12-hours shifts, non-stop," said EO1 Hill. "We will look back and be proud of what we accomplished here."

Lt. Jose Mora, officer-in-charge, NMCB 74, Detachment Ethiopia, said these projects are essential and progress quickly.

"The idea is to build these projects and, in turn, give ownership to the locals," said Lt. Mora. "Then, the local people will maintain them which helps support our mission."

Mora said that by helping build infrastructure, the actions of a few help create friendships with the larger population. This can work to dissuade conflict in the future.

"The people we directly interact with are very appreciative and excited," said Mora. "At the well sites in particular, the villagers especially enjoy that we are here."

Another Seabee project is the Gende

Gerada Primary School House, scheduled for completion in the fall. Once finished, more than 500 students will have seating with new walls around them.

"The current structures are not sound, and we are trying to provide buildings for students to learn in a safe environment," said Mora.

NMCB 74 works closely with the 402nd U.S. Army Civil Affairs Battalion team in Dire Dawa, also attached to CJTF-HOA.

"We have a good relationship with [Army Civil Affairs]," said Mora. "We are always looking for projects where we can work together."

U.S. Army Capt. Jennifer Glossinger, Dire Dawa civil affairs team chief, said the Seabees provide a critical link so they can address issues in region by working together.

Once a month, Capt. Glossinger meets



Lt. Jose Mora, officer-in-charge, NMCB 74, Detachment Ethiopia, pumps water for residents at a fresh water well in Dire Dawa.  
Photo by MC2 Timothy Wilson

with regional non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to discuss important local issues. Topics range from HIV education and immunization to work opportunities, and food and water distribution.

She said a large part of the civil affairs mission is to understand how the local people view the U.S. projects. Ownership of these projects is given to the local people once work is completed. At that point, it's necessary to ensure the projects are sustainable over time with the proper resources.

Mora recounted a memorable and lasting impression when the first well was finished. A village elder came over to thank him.

"He said this was the greatest thing that has ever happened in the village," Mora said, "and the people were eternally grateful." **SB**

## New Bridge Will Connect Ethiopian Villages...and Save Lives

By Capt. Jennifer Pearson, USAF,  
Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) Public Affairs

The people of Negele celebrated the hard work between the governments of Ethiopia and the United States during a groundbreaking ceremony for a much-needed bridge, Aug. 22. The completed bridge will connect two local villages and improve commerce, ultimately saving lives.

The bridge will span a 22-foot-wide river bed that during the rainy season can be as deep as seven meters, and presents significant challenges for anyone trying to cross.

"I farm on one side of the river and live on the other," said Mohammed Abadi, a local villager. "During the rainy season, if the river is full I cannot make it to farm... our kids have to either stay at the school or stay at home because it is too dangerous to cross."

Abadi has lost livestock while trying to cross the river and has seen fellow community members drown in attempts to cross.

The river crossing is used by 17,000 people and the bridge will benefit villages

on both sides of the river, giving them safe access to school, markets and medical services. Additionally, the livestock will be able to cross safely, maintaining the livelihood of many villagers.

"May this bridge tie together the two communities, so may it tie together Ethiopia and the United States," said Lt. j.g. Brandon Gosch, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5, Negele detachment officer-in-charge, during the ceremony.

The event included traditional dance, and bread-cutting and coffee ceremonies, where many village elders and leaders thanked the Ethiopian government



NMCB 5 Seabees, along with women and children from Negele and Borena, Ethiopia, gather around a stone marker after its unveiling during a bridge dedication ceremony, Aug. 22. The bridge will provide villagers access to the market, school and medical facilities during the rainy season.  
U.S. Air Force photo by Capt. Jennifer Pearson

for inviting America to help make this bridge happen. They continued by welcoming the Civil Affairs and Seabee teams to their community, and expressed that the Negele community is now their home.

"This is a day of beginning," said Mata Muelea, a local community elder. "We all feel bad because we have lost livestock because there was no bridge. Kids couldn't go to school and our women couldn't make it to the hospitals to give birth.

"We are glad our government invited you and we will make this bridge happen together," Muelea said.

Denke Tefra, vice chief of Gujii zone, committed his people in the community to work with the United States on this project. "This bridge is for everyone," Tefra said. "This is the commitment of everyone who knows Negele.

"Ethiopia and America have a long [history] and this bridge is part of that," he continued. "This shows us your commitment, and this bridge links two governments to keep the relationship."

Maj. Antonio Gonzalez, civil affairs team chief, noted that Ethiopia and the United States have been working on many projects together, including mosquito bed net distribution and the Veterinary Civic Action Program (VETCAP).

"Today is a day to remember. Give thanks to your government, to your community leaders, to the bridge committee leaders and to the elders," Maj. Gonzalez said during the dedication. "Thanks to them, this is happening today." **SB**

# CBMU 303 'Bees Repair Critical Landing Pad for Pacific Fleet Amphibious Operations

By EOCN Elizabeth Castillo, Public Affairs Officer-Alfa Company, CBMU 303

After the El Nino weather pattern dumped record amounts of rainfall across the southwest, Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU) 303 Seabees repaired a damaged Landing Craft Air Cushioned (LCAC) landing pad on San Clemente Island, Calif. Assault Craft Unit (ACU) 5, based out of Camp Pendleton, can now complete critical training while delivering personnel and logistics on board multi-million dollar amphibious craft.

San Clemente Island houses the only non-restricted LCAC landing area along the west coast. It supports numerous U.S. Marine Corps and Joint Task Force beach landings required to qualify and certify all Pacific Fleet amphibious operations.

In true "Can Do" spirit, the Seabees completed the project in

less than one-third the estimated time. In only seven days, CBMU 303 members hauled approximately 1,357 cubic yards of Type 2 recycled material five miles from the 215-foot by 150-foot aggregate pad, as well as relocated large boulders and leveled the entire one-acre site, using a D7 Bulldozer and two road graders.

Bravo Zulu to CBMU 303 'Bees: Equipment Operator 1st Class (SCW) Joel O. Alvarez, Equipment Operator 2nd Class (SCW) Casey C. Roberto, Equipment Operator 2nd Class (SCW) Edith E. Juarez, Construction Mechanic 2nd Class (SCW) Westin K. Bolton, Construction Mechanic 2nd Class Christopher M. Wadsworth, Equipment Operator 3rd Class (SCW) Ryan S. Cofer, Equipment Operator 3rd Class Edward Q. Peters and Equipment Operator Constructionman Nathan G. Dreher. **SB**



EO2(SCW) Casey C. Roberto, CBMU 303, directs the placement of material as the battalion repairs a damaged Landing Craft Air Cushioned (LCAC) landing pad on San Clemente Island, Calif. San Clemente houses the only non-restricted LCAC landing area along the west coast.  
Photo by EO1(SCW) Joel O. Alvarez



# Seabees: Career Management is up to YOU

By NC1(SCW) Robert A. Wetzel,  
NAVFAC Headquarters

BU2 Moses Silva, NMCB 5, takes the E-6 advancement exam at Naval Station Rota, Spain.

Photo by MC2 Ace Rheume

**T**he enlisted Seabee assignments division – PERS 401 – of Navy Personnel Command (NPC) at Naval Support Activity Mid-south is responsible for the distribution of Sailors. Our team of detailers actively communicates with Seabees during their career providing advice and mentorship while negotiating for their next duty assignment. Additionally, the PERS 401 team is structured in traditional company organization with Alfa, Bravo and Charlie company detailer teams.

As you already know, today's Navy is changing. We are downsizing at a rate which has not been seen in a long time. Unfortunately, the trend of extremely high retention and the need to reduce the number of Seabees has made it an extremely challenging environment for those in our force. In order to remain competitive, it is more important than ever to stay current with regard to new policy changes and keep your records up to date. The NPC webpage is one of the most useful career management tools and your best resource for the most current information. Use your career counselors to your advantage. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to call your detailer. We are here to support YOU!

There are many tools designed to help you shape your own career. One of the most useful is Career Management System Interactive Detailing (CMS-ID). CMS-ID serves as an electronic liaison between the Navy and you. It provides a prioritized listing of jobs available based on the needs of the Navy. CMS-ID is the easiest way for you to communicate your wishes to your detailer.

#### CAREER MANAGEMENT RESOURCES:

<http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/Pages/default.aspx>

<https://www.nko.navy.mil>

<https://www.cmsid.navy.mil/jass/Index.action>

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## Follow these easy steps and you should be on track for a smooth Permanent Change of Station (PCS) transition:

- 18 months prior to your PRD...Log on to CMS-ID and review/edit your personal and professional information.
- 15 months prior...Contact your career counselor and submit your PTS application, if required (NAVADMIN 352-10).
- 12 months...Log on to CMS-ID, review your duty preferences and consider any special requests such as OSA assignments, RDC, Recruiter, Spouse Co-location, etc.
- 10 months...Prepare to enter your detailing window by logging on to CMS-ID and review the Active/FTS schedule and potential jobs available.
- 9 months (you are now in your detailing window)...Consult with your career counselor or detailer and apply for your next job. While in your negotiation window you may apply for up to five different jobs per month. This provides a total of 15 opportunities to directly communicate a desired career path to your detailer.
- 6 months (you have now entered the "NEEDS OF THE NAVY" window)...If at this time you are not locked into a set of orders, your detailer may assign you for duty based solely on the needs of the Navy. If for some reason you do not have orders at this juncture, it is absolutely imperative you contact your detailer.
- 0 months...Execute orders to your new Navy job.



## College Credits Updated for Seabee Ratings

By Ed Barker, Naval Education and Training Command (NETC)

The American Council on Education (ACE) released updated college credits for Seabee ratings on Oct. 19, following a review of career paths at the Center for Seabee and Facilities Engineering (CSFE), Port Hueneme, Calif.

“This was the first ACE review in 10 years, and reflects significant changes to the recommended credits in many Seabee ratings,” said Capt. Richard Cook, CSFE commanding officer. “Depending on rank and rating, Seabees can qualify for up to 24 lower division credits and up to 12 upper division credits.”

Since World War II, ACE has worked to recognize the educational value of military training and experience by continuously evaluating military schools, correspondence courses and occupations to determine the amount and level of academic credit each should be awarded. Through ACE, Sailors can receive academic credit for work experi-

ence and on-the-job training as well as formal Navy training. The ACE military evaluations program is funded by the Department of Defense (DoD) and coordinated through the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES).

“Considering the current environment both in and outside the Navy, getting a college degree can be one of the best moves a Sailor can make to be competitive,” said Roland Perez, institutional accreditation manager, Naval Education and Training Command (NETC). “Getting a degree can be expensive and time consuming, but using their Sailor/Marine American Council on Education Registry Transcript (SMART) and ACE credits can give Sailors a big head start toward a degree.”

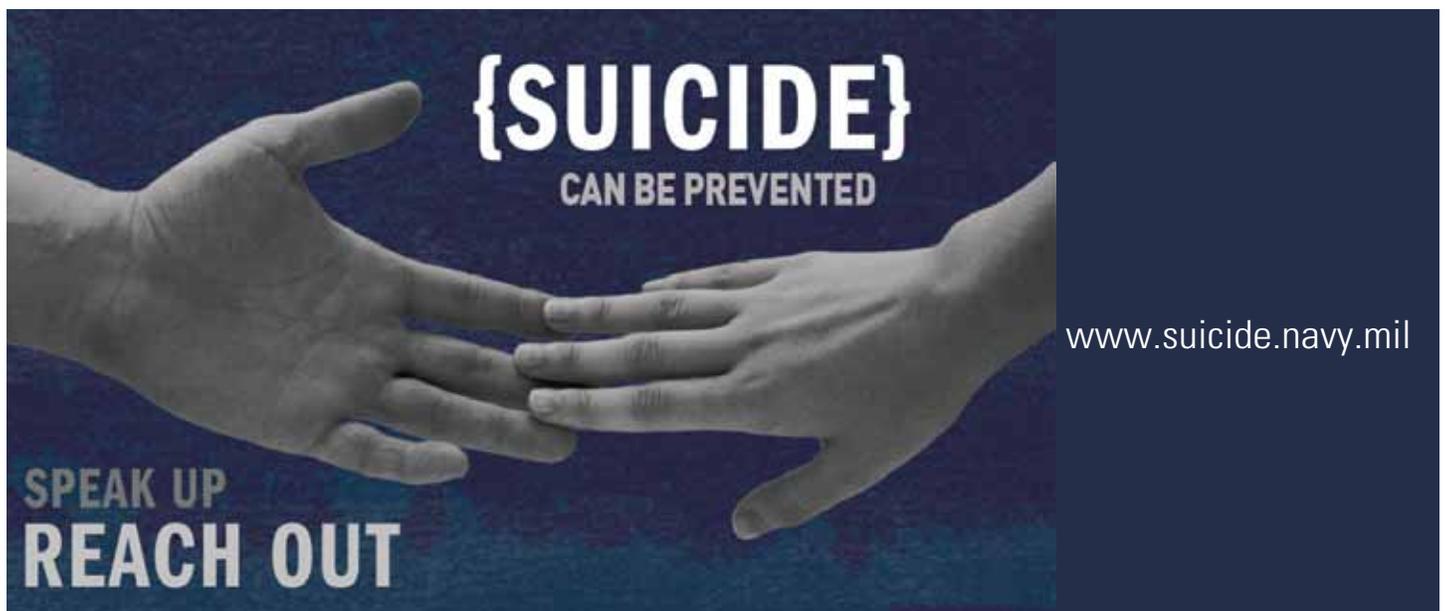
One CSFE Sailor who has used his ACE credits to great effect is Senior Chief Builder (SCW) John Scroggs, senior learning program manager, CSFE.

“The ACE credits I was able to use for my bachelor’s degree with Coastline College saved me significant time in the classroom,” said BUCS Scroggs. “My Navy schools and experience, combined with my Master Training Specialist certification, added up to 75 credit hours – over half of what I needed to graduate.”

To take advantage of ACE – recommended credits for specific ratings – visit your nearest Navy College Office or Educational Service Officer, and review your SMART transcript and develop an education plan.

For more information about using ACE credits toward a college degree, visit <https://www.navycollege.navy.mil/>.

For more news from the Naval Education and Training Command (NETC), visit [www.navy.mil/local/cnet/](http://www.navy.mil/local/cnet/).





NMCB 3 Seabees (from left in uniform) Cmdr. Scott Raymond, commanding officer, CMDM(SCW/EXW) Percy Trent and Lt. Andrew Hayes, stand proudly with SVA Island X-7 Cmdr. Seth Johnson (ret) during a dinner held in Seabee veterans' honor, Ventura, Calif.

Photo by MCC(SCW/SW/AW) Jesse Sherwin

## NMCB 3 Bridges Generation Gap with Seabee Veterans

By MCC(SCW/SW/AW) Jesse Sherwin, NMCB 3

Members of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 3 spoke with Seabee veterans about current operations during a Seabee Veterans of America (SVA) dinner in Ventura, Calif. As they exchanged stories of their previous Navy experiences, 'Bees of many generations marveled at how things have changed since their time in service.

Following the dinner, Cmdr. Scott Raymond, commanding officer, NMCB 3, discussed recent changes within the Seabee community, such as the Seabees' alignment with Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC). He also discussed some proposed changes, including the decommissioning of two battalions and the

resulting community-wide adjustments. Command Master Chief (SCW/EXW) Percy Trent spoke with the veterans about NMCB 3's recent deployment to Afghanistan.

"This was a great opportunity for us to connect with those Seabees who literally paved the roads to success in nearly every American military campaign since World War II," said Lt. Andrew Hayes, NMCB 3's assistant operations officer. "We owe these men and their families a debt of gratitude for the contributions they have made to protect our nation and for laying the groundwork to form the Seabee organization that we know today."

*Reprinted with permission from the Ventura County Star, Ventura, Calif.*

### 2012 SEABEE REUNIONS

#### FEBRUARY

##### FEB. 24-26 East Coast ALL SEABEE Reunion

Hampton, VA – Hosted by Vietnam Era Seabees, Inc.  
Bruce MacDougall | 804-921-4753 seabeamacd40@verizon.net

##### Mini-Reunions

###### NMCBs 1 & 9

Peter Dowd  
781-837-0393  
mcb1reunion@verizon.net

###### NMCB 3

Dave Schefield  
508-255-1583  
davesch@verizon.net

###### NMCB 5

Felix Costa  
843-655-0426  
fcosta@sc.rr.com

###### NMCB 10

Bill Annett  
619-449-6745  
seabeebill@cox.net

###### NMCB 23

Dave Preston  
804-512-7746  
vnesvp@gmail.com

###### NMCB 62

Price Richardson  
540-389-0555  
price\_richardson@howellsmotor.com

###### NMCB 74

Gordon D. Spence  
757-464-5096  
seabee@aol.com

###### NMCB 121/121st NCB (all eras)

Billy Millican  
252-943-2627  
bcmillican@aol.com

###### NMCB 133 (133rd NCB WWII invited)

Dennis Ruocco  
910-842-1341  
gulfport67@gmail.com

###### NSA DaNang & dets

Jerry Hubbs  
gghubbs@msn.com

###### PWD Edzell, Scotland

Norm Hahn  
715-834-4780  
nhahnjr@sbc-global.net

##### Other Reunions

###### CBMUs 301 & 302

Dave Schill  
609-410-5969  
dwschill@comcast.net

###### NMCB 71/71st NCB (all eras)

Jerry Montecupo  
412-373-3096  
jmontecupo@verizon.net

#### MARCH

##### MARCH 6-8

NMCB 22 (all deployments)  
Gulfport, MS  
Carlton Biermann  
830-895-2189  
carlton@kct.com

##### MARCH 23-27

NMCB 6  
Metairie, LA  
John Bevier  
231-633-9450 (c)  
231-839-2011 (h)  
jbevier@mich-web.net

#### APRIL

##### APRIL 17-19

NMCB 128  
Mobile, AL  
George McDanel  
618-259-4694  
macdanelgk@aol.com

##### APRIL 18-22

NMCB 58 Assoc.  
Ventura, CA  
Ronald Rathert  
618-826-2813  
rarathert@frontier.com

##### APRIL 19-21

46th NCB  
Gulfport, MS  
Alice and Jerry Chevalier  
281-728-3324  
aliceandjerry@embarqmail.com

##### APRIL 26-29

NMCB 40/40th NCB (all eras)  
Atlantic City, NJ  
Ed Holston  
856-358-0916  
nmcdfight-ing40@aol.com

#### MAY

##### MAY 10-12

NSVA Dept. of FL State Convention & Reunion  
Hosted by NSVA  
Island X-5, FL  
Fort Lauderdale, FL  
Cmdr. Sam Silver-Smith  
954-474-7260

For a complete list of reunions, visit [www.allseabees.com](http://www.allseabees.com) or the Seabee Historical Foundation at [www.seabeehf.org](http://www.seabeehf.org).

Naval Construction Force...  
on the threshold of our

70<sup>th</sup>  
YEAR



By Rear Adm. Mark Handley, Commander, 1st Naval Construction Division

**As 2011 draws to a close and we look ahead to our 70th year, the Seabees' vital work continues around the world in support of the global maritime strategy. Today we have nearly 2,400 Seabees deployed to more than 30 major detail sites in support of five combatant commanders. Seabees remain in high demand as we continue to write new chapters in our "Can Do" legacy.**

In Afghanistan, we have reduced our footprint from four battalions to two. Currently, the 30th Naval Construction Regiment is leading Task Force Forager in Afghanistan, which includes Army engineer battalions and Air Force squadrons in addition to our Seabee battalions. They oversee all engineering operations in the south, southwest and west. Projects have included construction of water wells, helicopter landing zones, roads, combat outposts and forward operating bases.

In support of the transition of security responsibility to Afghan forces, Seabees are constructing a Joint Operations Center at COP South Station for both U.S. and Afghan forces. We have recently completed a project to protect fuel pipelines that run between Camp Leatherneck and Camp Bastion, and drilled water wells at Patrol Base Alcatraz in southwestern Afghanistan. In direct support of the local Afghan population, Seabees are constructing a low water crossing in Musa Qal'ah district, Helmand Province, to decrease flooding and help Afghan locals transport their crops to the city.

Our force has been engaged in the full spectrum of conflict for 10 years. From the very first mission into Afghanistan in 2001 in support of the Marines on Camp Rhino to Operation Iraqi Freedom I and the continuing mission in southern/southwestern Afghanistan, Seabees have given their all to the mission at hand – and they have seen overwhelming success and endured the most challenging deployments in our history.

As we see the drawdown of forces in Iraq this year and in Afghanistan in the coming years, we will see more operations aimed at regional stability to prevent future conflicts. These kinds of efforts, which Seabees do extremely well, have been a great asset to the fleet commanders. They are the foundational programs to build trust and working relationships with partner nations that will ultimately lead to cooperative security and stability in the region.

In addition to our battalions deployed to Afghanistan, two battalions are providing engineering and construction support while promoting regional stability through engineer civic action projects in Africa, Europe, South America and the Pacific.

A great example is in Dire Dawa, Ethiopia, where Seabees are completing a four-room addition at the Gende Gerade School, which serves 2,400 students. A second group of Seabees is working to install a water well at the Gota Village School. This will allow the

local residents and school children to obtain clean water within the town rather than walk five kilometers to get water from a contaminated stream. In the Pacific, Seabees completed two schools in the Philippines in support of USAID, and renovated two high schools and a library in Pohnpei. Seabees also drilled a water well for an elementary school and renovated a medical clinic in Cambodia. In Timor Leste, Seabees finished a new school, jointly built by U.S., Australian and Timorese military engineers, and in Vietnam, our first presence there in nearly 40 years, Seabees constructed a library for an orphanage. All of these efforts have had tangible, positive effects on people's lives.

As we all know, today's fiscally constrained environment has forced the Department of the Navy to make many difficult decisions with regard to the future Navy force, to include the force structure of the NCF. The disestablishment of certain Navy units is a natural progression. Throughout our history, the Navy has constantly been reorganized and restructured to effectively respond to global demands. During World War II, the ranks of the Seabees swelled to over 250,000. But after the war, most of those units were decommissioned, and our numbers dropped to nearly 5,000, a 98% reduction. This was repeated again following campaigns in Korea and Vietnam. Most recently, with the continuing war on terrorism, we added a new regiment and battalion to meet the demand for engineer forces bringing our force to nearly 17,000 Seabees. We must understand that with the drawdown of forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the current fiscal environment, the NCF force structure must also change to reflect the times.

The Seabees remain an enduring force in our Navy, and we will continue to perform our mission and build upon our "Can Do" legacy. As we undergo these changes, we will do so in a way that we remain effective and maintain our core capabilities. We will maintain a foundation to build upon when we need additional capacity in the future. We also will ensure our service members and their families receive the support they need.

The Seabees have faced many challenges before, and our flexibility in adapting to challenges has always served us well. As we forge ahead into our 70th year, we do so with pride in our history, and we look forward to chapters yet to be written.

# The Great Guys (and Gals) are Never Forgotten...

By Rear Adm. C.J. Mossey,  
Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, and Chief of Civil Engineers

We often use the term “great guy” to describe a shipmate we admire – someone we enjoy being around. The Great Guys and Gals among us are recognized for their “Can Do” spirit and their ability to pitch in and solve any problem. We admire their ability to lead. They motivate us by their actions. They are confident, but not arrogant. They lead the pack, but never leave it.

If you met Lt. j.g. Frankie Toner, even for a brief few minutes, you would not forget him. He was a Great Guy. Many in the Civil Engineer Corps/Seabee family knew him well. His CECOS classmates, his colleagues in Hawaii, and his shipmates in Afghanistan all had the opportunity to see this bright young officer at his best. Full of energy, enthusiasm and youthful hope, Frank would brighten your day. He could bring a smile to even the most hardened cynic. He looked for good and found it... everywhere.

All of us who met Frankie were, in one way or another, moved by this young man. Be it a personal encounter with him, a life-long relationship or a professional association—which Frank would make personal by his genuine care for others—you knew that you were in the presence of someone special. I had the good fortune to meet Frankie Toner when I was stationed at Pearl Harbor. Frank had just arrived in Hawaii for his first Navy tour. One day we were enjoying some of the great island weather—a cookout and some fun for all of our local Civil Engineers, Seabees, and their families. I watched Frank engaging with the young enlisted troops like he’d been doing that his whole life. He was in his element. Frank was in great shape, an exceptional athlete...but that day watching him on that field I was seeing much more than an athletic young man having a good time. He was busy making sure that everyone he could touch was having fun as well. He had a leader’s touch. What was it? Character? Conviction? Faith? Likely all three. To his last day those attributes shined through.

“If you met Lt.j.g. Frankie Toner,  
even for a brief few minutes, you  
would not forget him.”

When he arrived in Afghanistan for his year-long individual augmentee tour, he was determined to make a difference. His job was to help build and mentor the 209th Corps of the Afghan National Army. He used his personal touch to build relationships that would create the environment for success. He built buildings and he forged friendships. What unsuspecting Afghan sergeant wouldn’t want to do exactly as this energetic young lieutenant advised him? Frank made a difference. He embraced the Afghan people and they embraced him. He shared his experiences with his family and friends back home, and asked them to join him in showing compassion for the Afghans’ plight, particularly the children. They all did. Mission accomplished.

It has been almost three years since Frankie gave his life in the service of his country, while heroically protecting his shipmates. On that fateful day in March of 2009 we lost a Great Guy. The sting of his death is as real today as it was shocking then. As [then-] Chairman Mullen said when he presented Frankie’s Silver Star Medal to his widow, Brooke, “We will not forget.”

And we won’t.



Rear Adm. C.J. Mossey

*Construimus ☆ Batuimus*



### **Heroic Seabee Honored On Veterans Day**

Navy personnel and civilians – young and old – attended a ceremony to honor Seabee Medal of Honor Recipient CM3 Marvin G. Shields at the Gardiner Community Cemetery, Gardiner, Wash., Nov. 11. CM3 Shields was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor in 1966 by President Lyndon B. Johnson for gallantry during combat in Vietnam. Shields is the only Seabee to date to receive the Medal of Honor. His widow, Joan Shields Bennett, and members of her family attended the Veterans Day ceremony, hosted by the Navy Seabee Veterans of America.

*Photo by MCSN Ryan Riley*