

UNITED STATES NAVY

SEABEE



SUMMER 2006

In-Depth
Exploration of
Underwater
Construction Teams

'Bees in the Sea

INSIDE: **Navy Expeditionary Combat Command Update**

NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND

Michael K. Loose

REAR ADMIRAL, CEC, USN
COMMANDER, CHIEF OF CIVIL ENGINEERS

John E. Roark Jr.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

James D. Fairbanks

FORCM (SCW), FORCE MASTER CHIEF
PETTY OFFICER OF THE SEABEES

Virginia Bueno

PUBLIC AFFAIRS & COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Whit DeLoach

PUBLIC AFFAIRS & COMMUNICATIONS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

FIRST NAVAL CONSTRUCTION DIVISION

Robert L. Phillips

REAR ADMIRAL, CEC, USN
COMMANDER

Albert Garcia III

REAR ADMIRAL, CEC, USNR
DEPUTY COMMANDER

Jerry B. Major

CMDCM (SCW)
COMMAND MASTER CHIEF

Calvin O. Foster

CMDCM (SCW)
COMMAND MASTER CHIEF (RESERVE)

Daryl C. Smith

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

STAFF

Raina T. Williams

Public Affairs Specialist
EDITOR

Regina Adams

Senior Chief Petty Officer
EDITORIAL ADVISOR

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

QNXIS, INC.

Strategic Marketing and Communications
www.qnxis.com

Liz Dunn

Editorial Copy and Content Management

Luisa Palting

Graphic Design, Layout and Production

Kurt Nguyen

Project Management

(Cover) Utilitiesman 1st Class Joe Karr, Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1, Air Detachment Alpha, carries a hydraulic-powered drill to a work site in the waters off Naval Base Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. (Photo illustration)

(This spread) Utilitiesman 1st Class Martin J. Stacy, Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1, uses a Broco underwater cutting torch to slice through a steel-reinforced bar during the reconstruction of a pile in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

U.S. Navy Photos

FEATURES

'BEES IN THE SEA

Dive deep with Underwater Construction Teams 1 and 2 where the workplace covers most of the Earth's surface

- 4 Seabee divers' Big Ka'Huna makes waves
- 5 Since World War II, Seabee divers have accomplished mission-critical operations worldwide
- 6 Diver training and equipment arm the Seabee diver
- 7 Rigorous standards make for challenging underwater assignments
- 8 Seabees hone their diving skills with Philippine Marines
- 9 Underwater Construction Technicians' commitment to the mission runs deep

NECC ILLUSTRATED

- 10 As the Navy expands its capability and adaptability, the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command launches a united front on land, sea and in the air
- 11 Rear Adm. Don Bullard sends an NECC message to the Seabees

GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

- 13 Seabees from the 9th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 40 team with the U.S. Army to aid Iraqis with force protection
- 14 The Seabees' own resident expert on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) — Capt. Robert Koffman, MC, USN, Force Medical Officer, 1st Naval Construction Division — provides insight, guidance and information on available resources to combat this invisible enemy
- 16 NMCB 25 flight-line crews work 'round the clock to repair a deteriorating runway in Iraq
- 16 Mobile concrete batching plants return needed capability to Seabees
- 17 Purple Hearts: Seabees salute and remember fellow Builder Warriors killed and wounded in action in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom



SUMMER06

BUILDER/PHOTOGRAPHER

- 19 Two Seabee photojournalists receive honors in their specialized field

HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS

- 23 While the USNS Mercy assists Philippine citizens with medical and dental care, Seabees from NMCB 40 revitalize the Zamboanga Medical Center
- 25 Embarked on the USS Emory S. Land, NMCB 7 Seabees complete a 30-day mission in Sao Tome in Africa's Gulf of Guinea
- 26 In the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, Seabees from NMCB 7 teach local people how to drill water wells in the face of drought
- 27 Seabees in Djibouti, Africa, leave their construction mark at Camp Lemonier and at a nearby school
- 28 More than 6,000 residents benefit from a medical clinic pavilion built during Thailand's Cobra Gold 2006

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

- 29 *United Through Reading* keeps Seabee parents and children connected during long deployments through the pages of a book

SEABEES THROUGH HISTORY

- 30 Even today, NAS Cubi Point remains the single largest earthmoving project ever undertaken by the U.S. Navy and the Seabees

TRAINING

- 32 NMCB 23 takes on its Military Year Exercise
- 32 NMCB 5's Operation Meathook tests "real world" readiness, while Operation Bearing Duel combines five Naval Construction Force units and two regiments in a larger-scale contingency operation scenario
- 32 NMCB 26 and the 20th Seabee Readiness Group participate in a joint exercise
- 34 Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 1 evaluates the Improved Navy Lighterage System (INLS) during a cargo exercise
- 35 NMCB 4 Seabees and Republic of Korea sailors test response to military contingency during Reception, Staging, Onward-movement and Integration (RSOI) 2006

Dear Reader:

With the Summer '06 issue of *Seabee* Magazine, we continue to share our stories, accomplishments and pride in the Seabees striving to provide information, education and motivation which connects us no matter how near or far our mission takes us.

In the following pages, you'll see the Seabee "Can Do" spirit showcased through the Underwater Construction Teams on the East and West coasts, as well as in the humanitarian outreach making a difference in so many countries around the globe. We also provide an update on how the Navy is building a more adaptable force through the recently created U.S. Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC). In addition, as a follow-up to our article on combat stress in the Spring 2006 issue, "At War With an Invisible Enemy," Capt. Robert Koffman, MD, MC, Force Medical Officer, 1st Naval Construction Division, discusses Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), shares how to recognize its signs and relates the real-life story of a Marine who has become known as the "face" of this condition.

On a professional note, on behalf of the entire *Seabee* Magazine team, I'd like to congratulate the staff of *Seabee Courier* at NCBC Gulfport on its recent Honorable Mention in the Chief of Naval Information (CHINFO) Merit Awards Program. In the world of publishing, this recognition is much sought after in military circles. To our fellow journalists on the *Courier*, we salute you!

As always, we rely on your input and feedback to keep *Seabee* Magazine representative of all facets of our Builder Warriors. Contact us with your story ideas, or send us your story ideas and photos*:

E-mail: seabeemagazine@navy.mil
Voice: (202) 685-9108 or DSN 325-9108
Fax: (202) 685-1484 or DSN 325-1484.

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

Sincerely,
Raina T. Williams
Editor, *Seabee* Magazine

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

DEPARTMENTS

AWARDS and COMMENDATIONS

- 35 Seabees earn Bronze Stars
- 35 NMCB 22 receives Department of Texas Reserve Officer's Association (ROA) Sea Services Unit of the Year Award, Lt.j.g. Ray Mendez is selected as the ROA Sea Services Outstanding Junior Officer

NEWSBREAK

- 36 *Seabee Courier* is recognized in the Chief of Naval Information's (CHINFO's) Merit Awards Program
- 36 NCAA Coaches bring hoops to Kuwait

FINAL WORD

CMC Jerry Major, 1st Naval Construction Division, shares his thoughts on a successful quality-of-life program for military families, *United Through Reading*

Summer 2006

MILITARY RECIPIENTS

Units or organizations with Seabees assigned are authorized no-cost distributions of *SEABEE* Magazine (ISSN 1546-8429). Send requests by mail or fax on official letterhead signed by the commanding officer or officer in charge, citing number of unit personnel, to the editor at the magazine's postal address or fax number shown below.

CIVILIAN SUBSCRIPTIONS

Paid subscriptions to the official magazine of the U.S. Navy Seabees, *SEABEE* Magazine, are available from the Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954, or call (202) 512-1800 and ask for the publications order desk. The best method for obtaining a paid subscription is to point your Web browser to <http://bookstore.gpo.gov> and enter the Search term *SEABEE*. This returns a means to enter your subscription via a secure credit card transaction. Current subscription prices are \$25 per year or \$7 per issue FPO/APO/domestic and \$36 per year or \$9.80 per issue foreign.

POSTMASTER

Send address corrections to the Editor at the magazine address shown below.

AUTHORIZATION

The Secretary of the Navy has determined this publication is necessary in the transaction of business required by law of the Department of the Navy.

EDITORIAL

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

NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND

Attn: Editor, *SEABEE* Magazine (Code PA)
1322 Patterson Avenue, S.E., Suite 1000
Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5065

Contents do not necessarily reflect the official views of the Department of Defense, the Navy, NAVFAC, the Civil Engineer Corps (CEC) or the U.S. Navy Seabees. Inclusions of or references to any product or service in editorial content do not constitute endorsement by the U.S. Navy, NAVFAC, the CEC or the Seabees. All trademarks, service marks or other symbols, names, images or logos are and remain the sole property of their respective owners. Military address corrections, story and photo submissions, and requests for writer's guidelines may be sent to the magazine's postal or e-mail address. Paid-subscriber address corrections must be sent to the GPO address above.


CONTACTS

E-mail: seabeemagazine@navy.mil
Voice: (202) 685-9108 or DSN 325-9108
Fax: (202) 685-1484 or DSN 325-1484

To learn more about the Seabees and Seabee opportunities, discover us on the Internet at www.seabee.navy.mil. For information on Navy careers, see www.navy.com. To learn more about the technical Civil Engineer Corps and the global activity of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, we invite you to visit the NAVFAC Web site at www.navfac.navy.mil.

STAY NAVY. STAY SEABEE.





While working on a waterfront construction project, an Underwater Construction Technician uses a Broco cutting rod, capable of producing a temperature in excess of 10,000 degrees Fahrenheit. This extreme temperature will quickly cut or melt through cast iron, stainless steel, brass, other ferrous and non-ferrous metals, and concrete. This cutting rod is one of many pieces of highly specialized equipment Seabees use solely in environments below the surface.

U.S. Navy Photo

'Bees in the Sea

While most of the Seabee "Can Do" spirit is evident above ground, other accomplishments are only obvious below sea level — and sometimes on the ocean floor itself...

Compiled from U.S. Navy Sources

'Bees in the Sea

The Underwater Construction Teams — UCT 1 based in Little Creek, Va., and UCT 2 based in Port Hueneme, Calif. — are component commands of the Naval Construction Force, reporting directly to Commander of the 22nd and 30th Naval Construction Regiments (NCRs), respectively.

Seabees' Underwater Construction Teams round out the complement of Mobile Construction Battalions (MCBs), Amphibious Construction Battalions (ACBs) and Construction Battalion Maintenance Units (CBMUs), and are comprised of a variety of exceptionally skilled and motivated personnel. As qualified Navy Divers, UCTs apply their skills to a variety of construction projects in the ocean environment. The teams also have specialists in logistics, administration and diving medicine.

The UCT provides construction, inspection and repair of ocean facilities, such as wharves, piers, underwater pipelines, moorings and boat ramps, to name a few. Underwater Construction Technicians are capable of diving down to 190 feet using scuba- or surface-supplied air to perform their work underwater.



From Above the Waterline: The Seabee Divers' Big Ka'Huna

As I read through this edition dedicated to the Underwater Construction Technicians (UCTs or Seabee Divers), I am reminded of a quote from the character Master Diver Billy Sunday in the movie *Men of Honor*: "The Navy Diver is not a fighting man, he is a salvage expert. If it is lost underwater, he finds it. If it's sunk, he brings it up. If it's in the way, he moves it. If he's lucky, he will die young, 200 feet beneath the waves, for that is the closest he'll ever get to being a hero."

The same goes for Seabee Divers, as well. If it is not there, they will build it. If it must stay in place below the sea's surface, they will anchor and stabilize it. And if it needs some terrestrial construction to support it, UCTs can do that, also. If they need to defend it, they'll set up a secured perimeter. There is nothing too large for UCTs to tackle, for they have the entire Naval Construction Force to draw from.

The Seabee Divers continue to do what we do best: underwater construction. These highly motivated, highly trained, highly enthusiastic Seabees draw from the best of the best, and still only 60% make it through the training pipeline. A Seabee Diver must not only advance through his or her rating, but also continue to achieve higher diving qualifications. It takes mental toughness, acute knowledge and physical conditioning that is second to none.

These Seabees are highly trained sailors who work with cutting-edge technology and push themselves and their teammates to achieve what others have called impossible. Operating in small units, they form a close knit group that even when assigned to different commands, can quickly come together to form a team, and within hours operate as if they have been together for years.

Because of this team environment, every UCT gets cross-trained to be more than his or her rating. The specialization of the UCT allows him or her to be given the responsibility that is normally provided to someone much more senior. In fact, the UCTs have a 90+% retention rate at all pay grades, and their promotion meets or exceeds the rest of the Naval Construction Force. As evidenced by the high retention and promotion rates, UCTs enjoy what they do, day in and day out. They epitomize the Seabee motto, "With compassion for others, We build — We fight, for peace with freedom."

So if you want to have the best of both worlds — Navy Seabee and Navy Diver — and be part of an elite team, see a UCT to find out how to apply.

Every day as a UCT is a great day.

Dive safe,

Dave Balk

Capt., CEC, USN

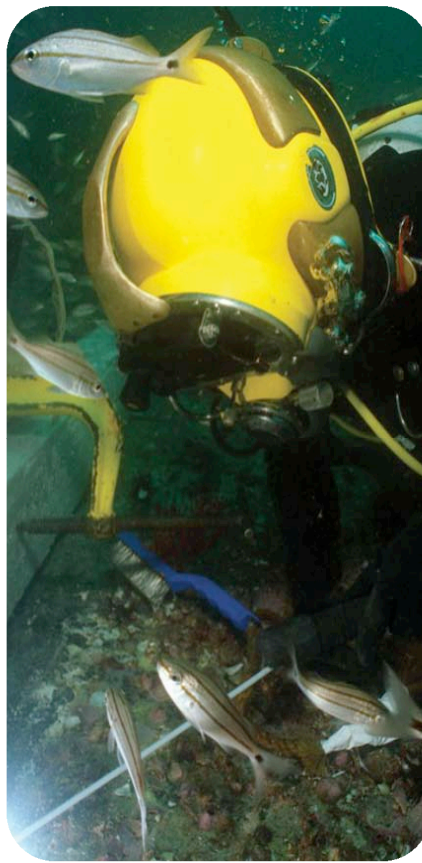
Director, Ocean Facilities Program

MISSION

The U.S. Navy Seabees' Underwater Construction Teams provide a capability for construction, inspection, repair and maintenance of ocean facilities in support of Naval and Marine Corps operations, to include repair of battle damage. UCTs maintain capability to support a Fleet Marine Force (FMF) amphibious assault, subsequent combat service support ashore, and self-defense for their camp and facilities under construction. In time of emergency or disaster, UCTs conduct disaster control and recovery operations.

To accomplish this assigned mission, UCTs will:

- o Accomplish operational and training projects to maintain ocean construction capabilities and readiness
- o Respond to emergency inspection and repair of essential fleet waterfront systems within 48 hours
- o Maintain the capability to deploy or redeploy with an organic allowance within 6 days
- o Assist in the test and evaluation of new ocean construction equipment and ocean facility structures and components
- o Provide emergency medical care for diving operation to include operation of recompression chambers
- o During the initial period of contingency mobilization, provide underwater construction support of Naval Beach Groups, Harbor Defense Groups and other fleet units as directed
- o Construct, inspect and repair ocean facilities in support of Naval and Marine Corps operations in the combat zone or at forward area support bases
- o Conduct military operations in support of FMF amphibious assault and subsequent combat service support ashore
- o Provide limited defense against attacks directed toward personnel, camps and facilities under construction.



HISTORY

Seabee Divers have been around for as long as the Navy has had its Builder Warriors. The original Seabee diving teams were formed during World War II in support of beach clearing operations. Combining the unique skills of blasting and diving, they formed small units that prepared the beaches for amphibious assaults. Later, these units were called Underwater Demolition Teams (UDTs). Today's UCTs utilize explosives and other techniques to remove hazards to navigation, demolish obstacles and perform inshore work necessary to provide channels and mooring facilities for shipping.

During the 1960s, Seabee Divers became major contributors to the early success of the "Man-in-the-Sea" programs, including SEALAB II and TEK-TITE II undersea laboratories. In 1969, there was need for a dedicated unit on each coast to support fleet underwater construction. In 1974, two detachments of Seabee Divers were commissioned as Underwater Construction Teams with a Civil Engineer Corps Officer as the Officer in Charge. In 1985, the Underwater Construction Teams were elevated to Command status.

OPERATIONS

Underwater Construction Teams have the unique capability of providing a wide range of underwater repair and construction expertise. Truly amphibious in nature, capabilities include shallow and deep-water structures, mooring systems, underwater instrumentation, light salvage and precision blasting. Each UCT supports contingency and national security operations, and is capable of accomplishing both inshore and deep ocean tasks, operating as an independent unit or as an augment to other organizations.

UCT 1 and 2 maintain three deployable Air Detachments, traveling to a dozen or more project sites during the deployment cycle. UCT 1 has responsibility for all ocean and waterfront facilities under the purview of Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command (COMUSFLTFORCOM); UCT 2 has the responsibility for the same under the purview of Commander in Chief, Pacific (PACFLT).

During homeport, both UCTs conduct military training, advanced diver and in-rate training, commercial schools, equipment maintenance and project planning for the next deployment cycle. Commands send detachments throughout the world and have included locations such as the Arctic Icecap, Puerto Rico, Latvia, Iceland, Bermuda, Iraq and numerous other locales throughout the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

(Above left) Chief Steelworker (Ret.) Tim Norris, UCT 1, Air Detachment Bravo, welds a passive cathodic anode on a tracking tower in the Gulf of Mexico.
U.S. Navy Photo

(Opposite top) UCT 2 launches an amphibious land vehicle into the water for repairs at Naval Station Whidbey Island, Wash.
U.S. Navy Photo

DIVERS IN TRAINING

Seabees start their training with Underwater Construction Technician Basic School, located in Panama City, Fla. This physically demanding course focuses on diving principles and applications, and is followed with underwater construction and demolition handling techniques.

After solid performance as a UCT, advanced diver training is available. Then, following several years of successful performance, a skilled Seabee Chief may apply for the coveted position of Master Diver.

This Seabee training program emphasizes a wide variety of topics, including military weapons and small unit tactics, diver refresher, physical fitness, and specialized skills to meet the requirements of a particular project.

Professional development is also enhanced through various training commands.

DIVING CAPABILITIES

UCT 1 and 2 maintain the capability to dive SCUBA and/or Surface Supplied diving in nearly all environmental conditions: zero visibility, contamination, day or night operations, under-ice diving, rivers, harbors or open ocean. In support of underwater construction operations, UCTs maintain the following equipment:

SCUBA

- o Normal limit is 130 feet of sea water (fsw); in certain instances, up to 190 fsw
- o Twin 80 cubic foot SCUBA cylinders
- o AGA full face mask
- o OTS through water communication

SURFACE SUPPLIED DIVING

- o MK-21 Diving Helmet:
Maximum depth 190 fsw on air
- o MK-20 Full Face Mask:
Maximum depth 60 fsw
- o MK-3 MOD 1 Light Weight Dive System (LWDS):
Supports 3 divers to 190 fsw
- o FADS-III Fly Away Dive System:
Supports 3 divers to 190 fsw
- o Air Supply Rack Assembly (ASRA):
Holds 9 3.15 cubic feet flasks of air at 5,000 psi

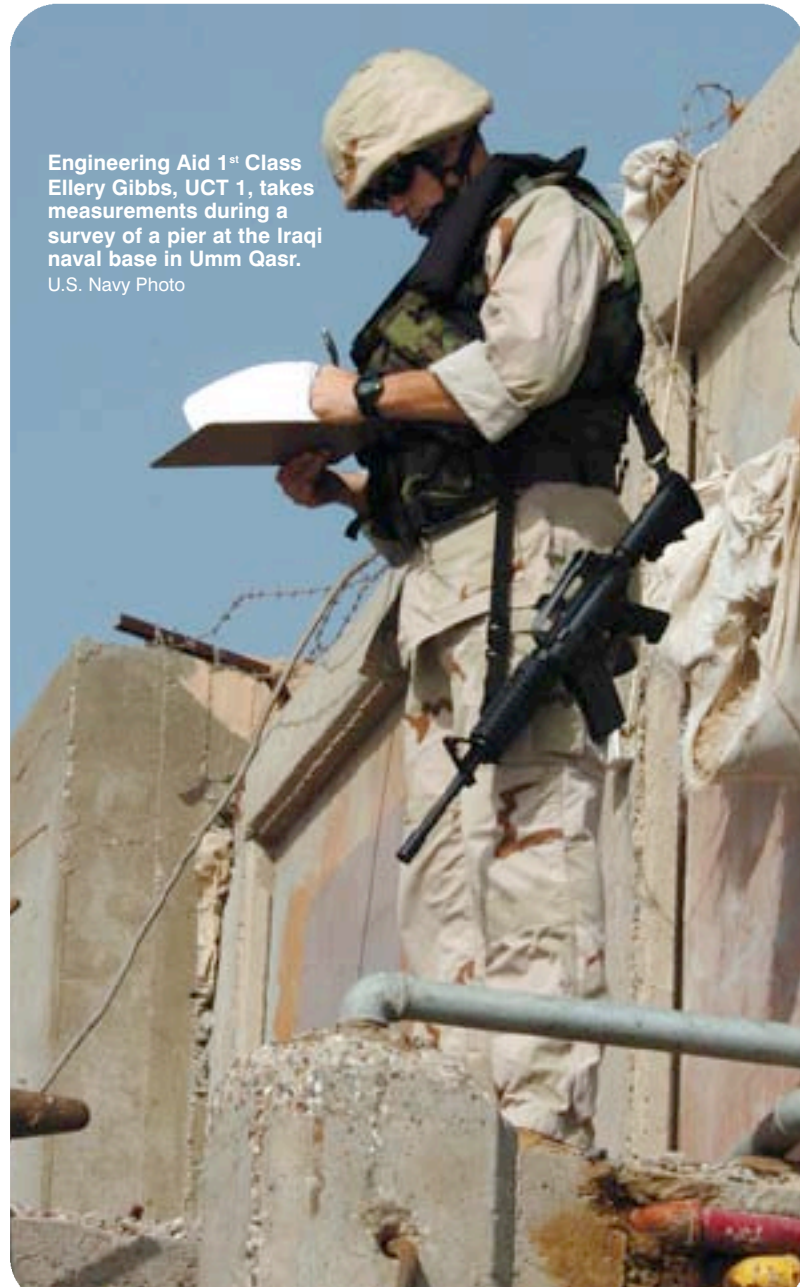
RECOMPRESSION CHAMBERS

- o MK-6 Transportable Recompression Chamber System (TRCS): Supports 4 occupants to 225 fsw
- o Standard Navy Double-Lock (SNDL): Supports 5 occupants to 225 fsw



During recovery efforts for Hurricane Katrina last year, 15 divers from UCT 1 participated in recovery efforts at the small fishing marina at Pass Christian, Miss., which historically provides \$15 million in oyster and \$5 million in shrimp revenue to the local communities each year. UCT 1 cleared debris from the marina and recovered machinery for the ice-making facility, resulting in reduced water traffic downtime and continuous supplies of fresh seafood — a much-needed boon to the economy.

Engineering Aid 1st Class Ellery Gibbs, UCT 1, takes measurements during a survey of a pier at the Iraqi naval base in Umm Qasr.
U.S. Navy Photo





Equipment Operator 2nd Class Chris Amescua (right), UCT 2, receives assistance from his dive supervisor in sealing his helmet before conducting training dive operations at Camp Patriot, Kuwait.

U.S. Navy Photo

What it Takes to be a Seabee Diver: Rigorous Standards Qualify Only the Very Best

*By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class
Kim Williams, Naval Base Ventura County, Public Affairs*

The large body of salt water that covers most of the earth's surface serves as the primary workspace for one of the military's most difficult, yet exciting careers — the Seabee Diver.

This specialty combines the various talents of the Navy Seabee community with the highly demanding skills of a diver. Seabee Diver hopefuls should be in both excellent physical and mental condition. Not only do candidates spend several hours each day doing rigorous physical training, but they will also find themselves in mentally challenging situations.

Most of what a Seabee in a battalion learns on land, a Seabee Diver performs underwater: construction, engineering, repair work, recovery and salvage, as well as specialties including physics and diving medicine.

According to the Seabee Divers Association, there are approximately 100 Seabee Divers among only two Underwater Construction Teams (UCTs) in the U.S. Navy. Few UCT hopefuls even complete dive school.

Chief A.K. Burns, a Master Diver, explained why UCT remains a highly undermanned rate.

"Most recruitment for UCT comes out of Seabee battalions," Burns said, "but very few from the battalions are willing to go through the rigorous PT and academic standards."

Construction Mechanic 1st Class (SCW/DV)

Elisia Correa, is the leading petty officer of Port Hueneme's UCT 2 Air Detachment Bravo. Correa is the first African-American woman and only the second female to qualify as a Seabee Diver.

"I have always been around water so it was only natural for me to want to go into this field," said Correa. "This is the best job in the Navy, but if you think you are qualified and would like to apply, make sure you want to do it for the right reasons."

In order to qualify for a UCT specialty, a Sailor must have a minimum of two years in his or her current assignment, and pass an initial physical training assessment and interview.

Candidates must also meet the minimum Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) medical and service record requirements.

Interested Seabees should be aware that UCT is not all clear, blue water diving. The team also conducts dives in murky, seaweed-infested water — during the night, in the ice and in the pouring rain.

"We screen pretty hard. We don't want people to go to dive school who are not going to make it through," said Chief Petty Officer (SCW/DSW) Alexander Semmler, UCT 2 Air Detachment Charlie Assistant Officer in Charge and qualified saturation diver. "There is lots of education involved and we need to make sure candidates are academically ready to handle dive school, as well as physically capable to make the grade."

"If you're looking for an adventurous job within a close-knit team with a unique mission, then this specialty may be for you," said Semmler.

SPECIALIZED UNDERWATER EQUIPMENT

- Wide assortment of oil hydraulic tools for underwater or topside use, including rock drills, impact wrenches, band saws, grinders, pile cutters, pressure intensifier, cutoff saw and chain saw.
- Hydrographic surveys, including geotechnical data. Primarily utilize the differential Global Positioning Hydrographic Survey System and HYPACK software. This software allows survey teams to quickly prepare survey plans, perform field data collection, edit the data and present it in a mobile station which can be deployed in a small boat.
- Water craft, such as Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats (RHIBs), and 15' and 19' inflatable Zodiacs. In addition, the teams also utilize large amphibious crafts called Lighter Amphibious Resupply Craft (LARC-V's), which are 35' wheeled vehicles capable of operating on both land and water.
- Remote-operated vehicles (ROVs) capable of deploying an electrically powered ROV to 500' vertically or horizontally.
- Precision terrestrial and underwater blasting using military or commercial explosives. Members are specifically trained to perform surgical demolition.



In a combat zone, UCT 1 patrols the waters for snipers, in addition to facing the usual dangers presented by diving.
U.S. Navy Photo

Seabee Divers Work, Train with Philippine Marines at Balikpapan '06

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class (SW/FMF) Chad V. Pritt, 30th Naval Construction Regiment, Public Affairs
Seabees from Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 2, Air Detachment Charlie, hit the beaches of the Republic of the Philippines (RP), the same day massive mudslides buried portions of the Southern Leyte Peninsula, for three weeks at Exercise Balikpapan 2006.

This year, the divers worked closely with RP Force Recon Marines as they proceeded through their diver training.

"We'll be working with the Marine Recon qualified divers," said Chief Warrant Officer 2nd Class Edward Richard, operations officer for UCT 2. "We won't put anybody in the water who isn't qualified. For every Philippine Recon diver, there will be one American diver and an American Diving Supervisor."

While training with the RP Marines is important, there's a more important reason for the exercise.

"The most important aspect for us is the relationships we are building with the Philippine military," said UCT 2 Executive Officer Lt. Russell Pile. "We'll be training with them and honing our own small-unit leadership skills by leading our troops along with the Filipinos through this exercise."

The exercise and training is not for the RP Marines alone, as UCT 2 was able to gauge its efficiency as a deployable unit.

"This exercise tests some of the most important aspects of our mission," said Pile. "It is a huge logistical undertaking; it works our embarkation capabilities, through the coordination of several different methods of shipping our gear, as well as coordination with the Philippine military. We're training together to work together."

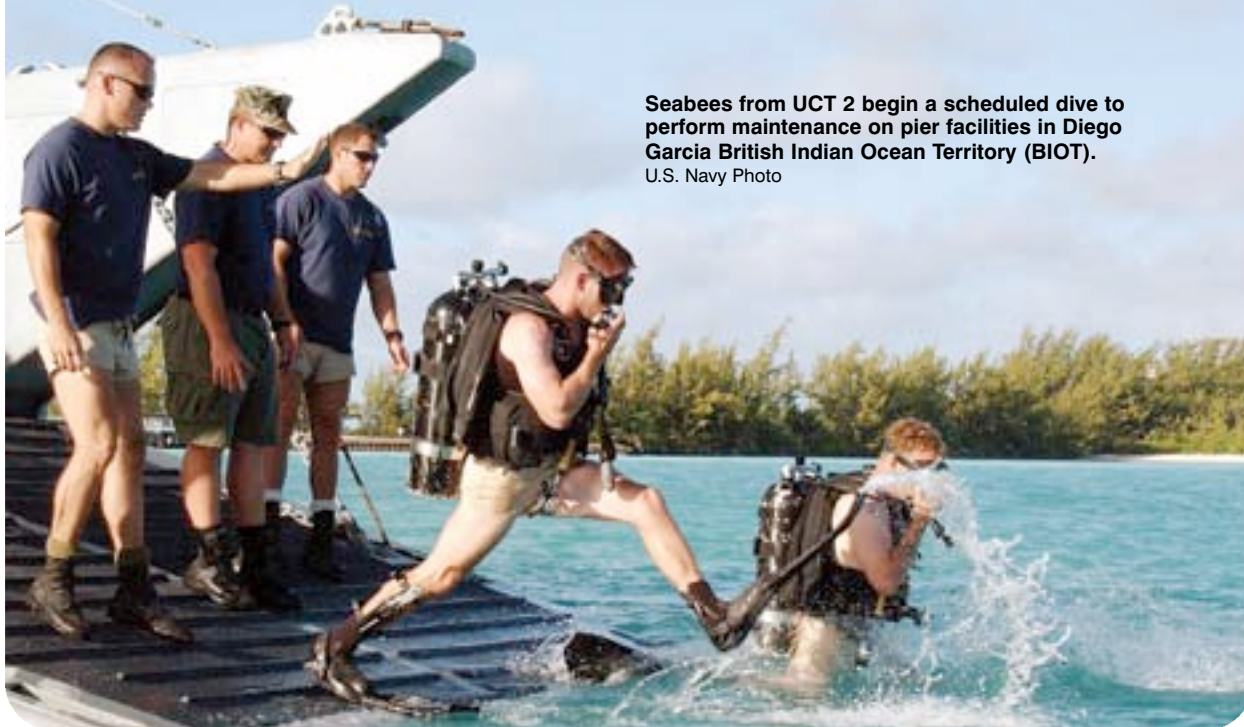
Though UCT 2 is taking part in Balikpapan, working side by side with an allied nation, they are not far removed from the real world dangers of terrorism. The Southern part of RP, where Ternate is located, is home to the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), an Islamic terrorist organization. The ASG is responsible for bombings, assassinations and kidnappings throughout Southeast Asia.

"It's keeping everybody on their toes," said Chief Petty Officer (SCW/DSW) Alexander Semmler, the Assistant Officer in Charge of Air Det Charlie. "It can go from a training exercise into real world combat."

***Do you have what it takes
to be a Seabee Diver?
Take the plunge and call today...***

*East Coast: 850-235-5259
Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center*

*West Coast: 805-982-5207
Naval Facilities Engineering Service Center*



Seabees from UCT 2 begin a scheduled dive to perform maintenance on pier facilities in Diego Garcia British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT).
U.S. Navy Photo

What is an Underwater Construction Technician?

By Lt. Cmdr. Jason Glover, CEC, USN

Editor's Note: The following piece originally served as an introduction to the UCT Tactical Standard Operating Procedures. It has since been informally adopted as the UCT creed.

An Underwater Construction Technician is a Sailor, a Seabee and a Diver.

As a Sailor, an Underwater Construction Technician must feel comfortable at sea. He must know basic Seamanship and be able to operate in, on and around vessels. A Sailor knows Navy policies, Navy core values, Navy customs and Navy traditions.

As a Seabee, an Underwater Construction Technician must feel comfortable in the field. He must be knowledgeable of defensive tactics and be able to operate proficiently in an expeditionary environment. This includes the ability to shoot, move and communicate in the battlespace.

As a Navy Diver, an Underwater Construction Technician must feel comfortable in any ocean environment, from deep clear open water to muddy shallow congested harbors. He must be knowledgeable of safe diving practices, Divers Life Support Equipment, and advanced underwater construction and demolition techniques. Some Seabees drive a truck to the jobsite, others dive a Mark 21. Diving requires knowledge, abilities and toughness beyond what is expected from most Sailors and from most Seabees. This is what sets the Underwater Construction Technician apart from his peers.

The primary mission of an Underwater

Construction Technician is to provide underwater construction, inspection and demolition services to Combatant Commanders in support of military operations. Our nation requires Underwater Construction Technicians to be highly skilled and highly trained technical experts. They are our nation's first choice when these services are required. History shows that Seabees cannot execute construction tasking, be it on land or underwater, if they are lost, wounded, killed or captured en route to the jobsite. This is even truer for Seabee Divers. Their limited numbers, critical skills and specialized equipment require that each person and each piece of gear arrive at the jobsite in one piece.

All Seabee Divers know this: In order to be what they are today, whether it be a UCT Basic Diver, UCT Advanced Diver or a UCT Master Diver, they proved themselves through the crucibles of U.S. Navy Boot Camp, Seabee Training and Dive School. They are one of a very few that can call themselves a Seabee Diver. The UCTs are unique, not only within the U.S. Navy and the Department of Defense, but across our nation and our nation's allies. And though their accomplishments might not be as recognized, as understood or as well funded as other expeditionary units, their mission and capabilities are absolutely critical in the execution of our nation's strategic objectives. They are one of our nation's greatest assets — the Underwater Construction Technician.

Hooyah Deep Sea!



NECC



Explosive Ordnance
Disposal Groups 1 & 2



Naval Coastal Warfare
Groups 1 & 2



Naval Expeditionary
Logistics Support Group

NECC Brings Together Impressive Range of Capabilities

*By Mass Communication Specialist
1st Class Barrie Barber,
Navy Expeditionary Combat
Command Public Affairs*

Imagine a port, located in any third-world country around the globe, one that might be used as a safe haven for terrorists or others who might use the port as a thoroughfare to transport illegal people, arms or other material.

Lacking an existing cadre of anti-terrorism and force protection (AT/FP) specialists, this imagined nation may formally request maritime security assistance from the U.S. Department of Defense. In this scenario the Navy would probably take the lead in building an adapt-

able force, using the recently created U.S. Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) to do so.

The U.S. Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, which stood up in January, has assumed type commander responsibility for 40,000 expeditionary Sailors all grouped under the NECC flag.

"This is the Navy expanding its capability and adaptability," said Rear Adm. Donald K. Bullard, commander, NECC. "In the past, they were disparate parts. Now, we're bringing them all into one."

NECC integrates the maritime battlespace in the near shore and inland waterway environments with wide-ranging AT/FP, logistical and construction capabilities that will deny the enemy sanctuary, freedom of movement and use of

waterborne lines of communication. NECC forces possess a high-end defensive capability that can find, fix and engage the enemy within the battlespace, while ensuring unrestricted flow of supplies and personnel. These objectives can be met unilaterally within the joint force, in conjunction with coalition members or through partnership and training with host nations.

In short, what NECC brings to the table is a wide variety of brown-water and coastal assets tailor-made for maritime security operations, force protection and anti-terrorism efforts.

illustrated



Riverine
Group 1



First Naval
Construction Division



Expeditionary Combat
Readiness Center

In the third world scenario previously described, an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) team covertly climbs on the sandy shore of a beach searching to defuse buried or underwater explosives, thus clearing the way so Seabees can build a base camp for use by Joint and Coalition forces. A Seabee team of constructionmen, equipment operators and electricians build the beach camp where previously nothing but a sandy beachfront existed.

Naval Coastal Warfare (NCW) teams provide anti-terrorism force protection. An NCW inshore boat unit (IBU) patrols the perimeter of the harbor, ready to intercept terrorists who may target a Military Sealift Command (MSC) ship carrying humanitarian aid. A mobile

diving and salvage unit clears underwater debris, allowing other ships into the port. A mobile security detachment moves ashore to protect an airfield and help provide landward force protection.

Navy cargo handlers from the Navy Logistics Support Group unload the MSC ship, providing food, fuel and much-needed medical supplies to what may be a typhoon-ravaged region.

In addition, a riverine squadron patrol boat cruises deltas and inland waterways conducting maritime security operations which include visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) missions in order to detect, deny and disrupt any illegal activities.

Finally, NECC teams work closely with the host nations, train-

ing them on maritime security operations (MSO) and AT/FP measures.

"It's really a diverse set of capabilities that exists under this umbrella," said Capt. Fran Castaldo, NECC's operations officer. "You gain efficiencies and economies of scale in running an enterprise. These forces are very different from one another in some respects, but in others have a lot of commonality."

One of the future resources of the growing NECC includes a maritime civil affairs group which will focus on interaction with coalition partners around the globe to improve and increase their maritime security operations capability and capacity.



Letter to the Seabees

In the short few months since I assumed command of the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC), I have been most impressed with the Seabees' professionalism and expertise. Whether assisting in natural disaster relief efforts at home and overseas or supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom by building base camps and combat outposts for coalition and Iraqi security forces, making bridge and road repairs, renovating buildings in Iraq or constructing new facilities, you have contributed significantly to the Navy's mission throughout the world. Your performance has been nothing short of extraordinary.

As the Commander of NECC, I will work closely with Rear Adm. Phillips and Rear Adm. Garcia as another fleet flag advocate for the Seabee Community. I intend to help our Navy make the best use of your skills at every level. I will need your help and support in moving the community forward to maintain readiness for today's Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), while looking forward to preparing Navy Seabees for the challenges of the future. All levels of our military have a great need for the experience and skills Seabees bring to the fight.

As we move forward with NECC, I am working on the overall makeup of the entire Expeditionary Force and how we better meld it together. My three goals for NECC, what I call the three "R's" to accomplish this mission, are to:

REALIGN current Navy expeditionary forces into a structure that increases capacity for GWOT missions, improves war-fighting effectiveness, and captures efficiencies in common synergies.

REDISTRIBUTE current forces throughout the Navy to better contribute to the GWOT and to temporarily relieve stress on Marine Corps and Army missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

RECOGNIZE where our Navy must expand current expeditionary capabilities and develop new competencies for the long war.

With this all-encompassing approach, the Navy will ensure that expeditionary forces have sufficient capability and capacity to meet requirements for the Global War on Terrorism, major combat operations and Homeland Defense, while maintaining solid core capabilities that can respond rapidly to evolving irregular-warfare missions.

Nearly 40,000 highly skilled Sailors are part of NECC including Seabees, divers, EOD technicians, the newly established Riverine force, Naval Coastal Warfare security specialists and Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group cargo handlers. Every day, expeditionary combat Sailors — particularly Seabees — are integrated in the joint maritime environment, filling critical needs to win the long war. NECC is developing our future capabilities so that there is truly a seamless transition from our powerful blue water forces into the green and brown water battlespace. This includes the capability to contribute at home, as you did during post-Hurricane Katrina, Rita and Wilma support, to opening up ports and building critical structures for much-needed relief efforts.

Seabees, as part of the expeditionary combat team, are flexible, scalable and rapidly deployable. You are self-reliant, self-sustaining and capable in the most diverse environments in the world. I am tremendously proud of the hard work, determination and performance of all Sailors who call themselves Seabees, and who epitomize that "Can Do" attitude. I thank you for serving your country and also thank you for the honor to serve with you.

With respect,
Rear Adm. Don Bullard

GLOBAL WAR on TERROR

Seabees, Soldiers Create Security Points for Iraqi Forces

*By Mass Communication Specialist
1st Class Benjamin T. Franklin
NMCB 25 Public Affairs*

The 9th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) completed major projects in late spring that will directly aid Iraqi Security Forces in their efforts to reinforce security and maintain stability in Al Anbar Province. In a cooperative effort between the Seabees and the U.S. Army, the 9th NCR created several security posts to be manned entirely by the Iraqi army.

"We are building all the steel and wooden structures for their fighting positions, and are preparing the berthing spaces with electrical and air conditioning," said Builder 1st Class Andrew Bugs, special projects supervisor. "The U.S. Army will drop them off, and then we'll build the sites. Once finished, the Iraqi army will take them over."

NMCB 40 Seabees are constructing these projects at a detachment site. Steelworker 3rd Class Pablo Sanchez helped reinforce steel conex boxes to support the weight of a heavy steel fighting position and layers of sandbags. This unit will house a defensive machine gun nest for the Iraqi forces.

"Collectively, our crew burned

about 500 welding rods on this project," Sanchez said. "We build a lot of things for people, but this is the first time that I've been able to set a camp up for the Iraqi forces. I hope this helps protect the Iraqi troops so they can accomplish their work."

A challenge completing the projects was a swamp located at the end of a waterway that separated the Seabees from the project sites. Movement around the far end of the waterway was even less desirable because it meant placing the convoy at greater risk from other hazards.

To solve the dilemma, the Army's 46th Engineer Construction Battalion (ECB) was called in to create a road along the waterway and directly across the edge of the swamp. The 46th ECB is a subordinate unit to the 9th NCR, with a valuable pool of highly skilled engineers the Seabees rely on to handle difficult projects.

Soldiers operating bulldozers, bucket loaders, dump trucks and road graders spent days moving large volumes of earth to create a new convoy route. The crew used more than 2,000 cubic yards of rubble to fill in the edge of the canal from its six-foot depth.

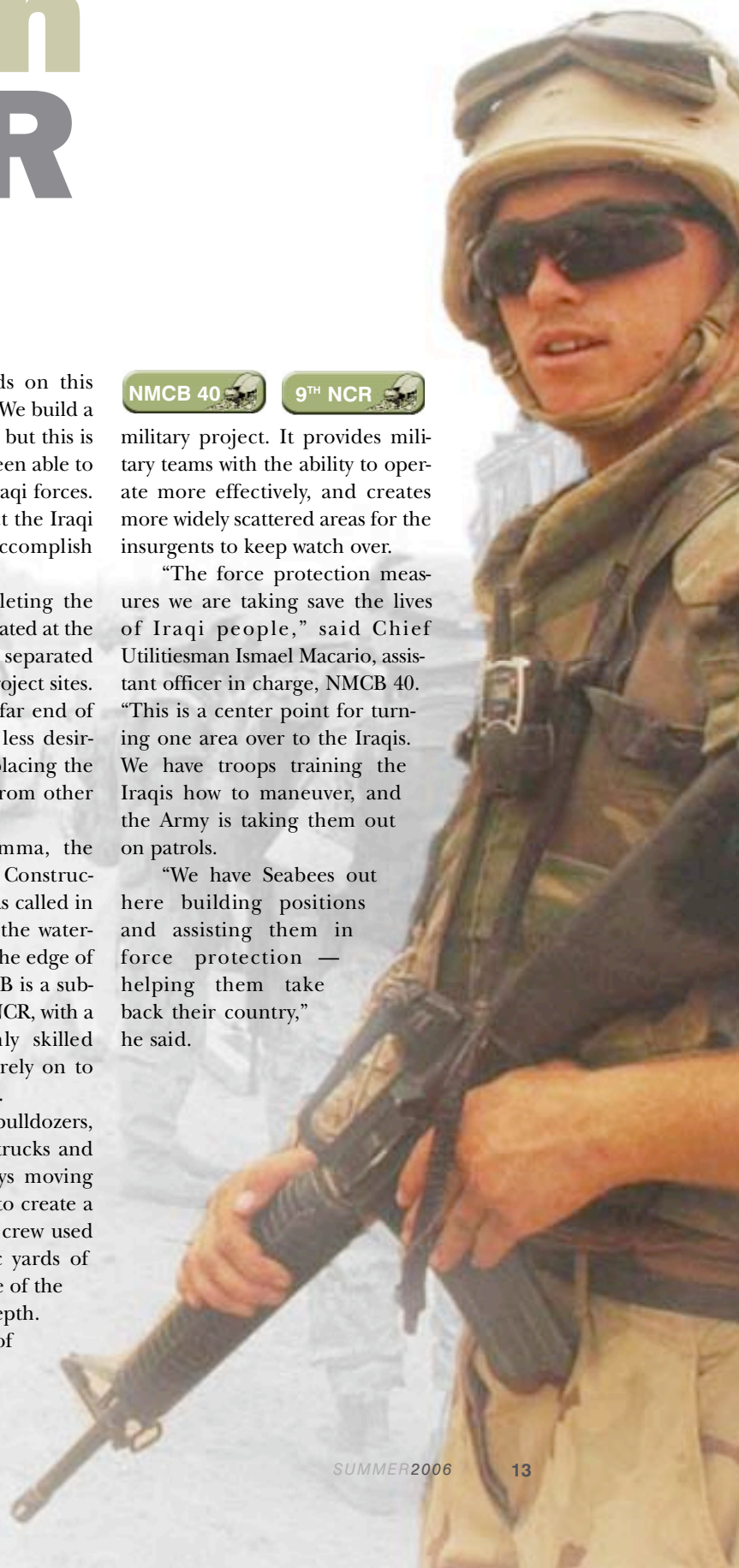
The importance of this road goes well beyond any single



military project. It provides military teams with the ability to operate more effectively, and creates more widely scattered areas for the insurgents to keep watch over.

"The force protection measures we are taking save the lives of Iraqi people," said Chief Utilitiesman Ismael Macario, assistant officer in charge, NMCB 40. "This is a center point for turning one area over to the Iraqis. We have troops training the Iraqis how to maneuver, and the Army is taking them out on patrols."

"We have Seabees out here building positions and assisting them in force protection — helping them take back their country," he said.



Though it was only as recent as 1980 that this condition was identified and described by psychiatrists — chiefly in the observation of returning Vietnam veterans — synonyms for PTSD reflect the very psychological nature of warfare: Shell Shock, War Neurosis, Battle Fatigue, even Soldier's Heart...

By Capt. Robert Koffman, MC, USN
Force Medical Officer
1st Naval Construction Division

COMBATING COMBAT STRESS



Being catapulted to fame worthy of celebrity was a fate Lance Cpl. Blake Miller, USMC, neither wanted nor sought. But that is exactly what happened back in 2004 following the Battle for Fallujah when the now iconic picture of Miller appeared on the front page of more than a hundred newspapers coast to coast. Dubbed the “Marlboro Man,”* Miller’s vacant eyes gazed forsakenly into the distance, his bloodied, dirty face limply holding a cigarette in one corner of his mouth. The photograph, painful to look at and even harder to study, came to be called the face of the Iraqi conflict. Photographed by an embedded *Los Angeles Times* reporter, Luis Sinco, it is ironic that Miller’s image — initially unidentified save for his unit, 1st Battalion, 8th Marines — would become the caricature of the war. For what belied this “thousand mile stare,” and for what Miller would struggle with for the next two years until being diagnosed, would be a classic case of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD.

“Being in Iraq is something no one wants to talk about.”

— Lance Cpl. Blake Miller, USMC

PTSD: A HISTORY OF COMBAT PSYCHIATRY

Though it was only as recent as 1980 that this condition was identified and described by psychiatrists, chiefly in the observation of returning Vietnam veterans, synonyms for PTSD reflect the very psychological nature of warfare: Shell Shock, War Neurosis, Battle Fatigue, even Soldier’s Heart. Coined during the Civil War, Nostalgia as it was referred, was thought to be due to a young man’s pining for his loved ones back home. In Miller’s case, the Thousand Mile Stare, another expression for this same affliction, was most fitting.

Considered an anxiety disorder, PTSD can arise whenever an individual is confronted with a terrifying incident wherein the person experiences, witnesses or is confronted with an event that involves actual or threatened death, or serious injury to self or others. Importantly, war is not the only provocative stressor. Physical or sexual assault, horrific accidents and, significant for our Gulfport Seabees, terrifying natural disasters may also produce this condition. Fortunately, the vast majority of individuals exposed to overwhelming trauma do not develop PTSD; rather, they overcome this stress reaction.

* http://www.digitaljournalist.org/issue0412/sinco_jpg06.html

It is important to point out that many of the symptoms of PTSD — recurring dreams or nightmares, insomnia, irritability and jumpiness — are commonly experienced by normal, healthy individuals exposed to abnormal or terrifying experiences with complete resolution and no progression to the disorder. In fact, as this author has seen time after time, combat exposure frequently strengthens an individual’s coping mechanisms, enhances resilience to hardship, and instills appreciation for what had previously been thought of as a routine, now filling the individual’s life with richness, reward and opportunity. Most of all, Seabee veterans acknowledge a sense of accomplishment and pride like they’ve never experienced before.

However, that was not the case for Miller and for

some other Seabees who fought along side him in the Battle for Fallujah...or in the town of Ar Ramadi...or along the Main Supply Routes (MSRs) of the Al Anbar province. Given the random and capricious nature of indirect fire, as well as the ever present threat of roadside bombs or IEDs, for some Seabees just keeping up maintenance on the vehi-

cles in the alpha yard or delivering building materials out west was traumatic enough to produce PTSD symptoms.

PTSD EXAMINED

The hallmarks of this condition fall under three general symptom clusters: 1) Re-experiencing the traumatic event in the form of recurring recollections, dreams and so-called “flashbacks” where the service member, for a brief moment, finds himself/herself back in that terrifying situation; 2) Avoidance of reminders or stimuli which have symbolic meaning; and 3) Increased arousal which may take the form of jumpiness or easy startle. The latter contributes to the irritability and quickness to anger seen in PTSD sufferers. Sometimes, in an attempt to avoid distress caused by the trauma, sufferers become emotionally numb. Sadly, this numbing significantly impacts the person’s ability to experience pleasure or happiness, and can also blunt intimacy and closeness in his/her relationships.

Anxiety disorders are a broad group of conditions to which PTSD, Panic Disorder or other phobias

Continued on page 22

In the Combat Zone... NMCB 25 Runway Repair

By Lt.j.g. Merl Trimpe and
Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class
Benjamin T. Franklin, NMCB 25 Public Affairs

In a way, the open desert is the perfect location for an airport because a runway can stretch unhindered for miles. Conversely, the environment of the desert can play havoc with these runways and the people who operate them.

The flight-line crews of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 25 know this all too well. They have been tasked with repairing a runway in Iraq that has slowly deteriorated from extreme heat. Temperatures reaching above 120 degrees Fahrenheit have caused the pavement to expand and buckle under the strain.

To repair the runway, Seabees from NMCB 25 work around the clock to cut away the damaged areas and install new concrete. Builder 1st Class Frederick Schrepfer, with more than 30 years of concrete experience, is crew leader at the job site.

"We're cutting out the old runway sections and creating new ones with expansion joints on both sides," Schrepfer said. "This way, the concrete can safely expand at each new joint which will keep it from cracking."

The work is hard and dirty. Schrepfer says that 20 to 25 mph winds routinely blow across the work site. Along with the wind comes the sand. Fine particles encroach upon anything not sealed airtight, but the Seabees

seem oblivious to it. Cement work is dirty and they create enough dust of their own when they cut away the old concrete.

Huge saws, the same style used on roadways, slice across large sections of the runway. The blades cut incisions 15 inches deep, creating a removable portion almost four feet wide and 200 feet long. Too large to be removed in one piece, these sections must be cut into smaller blocks so they can be lifted away safely.

Equipment Operator 3rd Class Travis Murphy routinely uses a large excavator to accomplish this delicate task, saving the crew hours of work.

In a recently cleared trench, holes are placed into the walls of the remaining concrete using a hydraulic drilling machine. A single operator can drill five holes simultaneously. Soon, dozens of holes line the walls on each side of the void. Seabees follow behind, using sledgehammers to pound large steel dowels into each hole.

The unmistakable ping of steel rods being hammered into concrete rises above the incessant noise of the cutters. The sound of Marine Corps jets accelerating down a nearby runway routinely drowns out all else — a not so subtle reminder of why they are here.

"This is the major runway," said Schrepfer. "I know it's a top priority for the Marines, so it's a top priority for us."

Concrete Batch Plant is Newest Star in Seabee Inventory

By Linda Wadley, Public Affairs Officer,
Naval Facilities Expeditionary Logistics Center,
Port Hueneme

In mid-May, production testing began for two mobile concrete batching plants as the last step to accepting the equipment into the Naval Construction Force (NCF) inventory. A priority project for the 1st Naval Construction Division, the batch plant will bring in-house heavy concrete production capability to the NCF.

Naval Facilities Expeditionary Logistics Center (NFELC) teamed with the 31st Seabee Readiness Group, Naval

Construction Training Center and area Seabees to test the equipment and spread the first produced concrete at the Port Hueneme Advance Base Functional Components training yard. Equipment Operator Master Chief Chuck Zimmerman, NFELC project lead, said, "This is the next generation state-of-the-art mobile batching system, a capability we needed to get back to the Seabees and into the Naval Construction Force."

The last heavy concrete producing batch plant was procured in the early 1970s for Diego Garcia.



Seabees from NMCB 25 worked 24/7 repairing an Iraqi runway which had slowly deteriorated from constant extreme temperatures above 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Photos above depict various phases of runway repair and reconstruction. U.S. Navy Photos

PAVING THE WAY

ON TERROR

(Below, top) Production testing for two mobile concrete batching plants in Port Hueneme, Calif., began in mid-May, bringing in-house heavy concrete production capability to the Naval Construction Force (NCF). The operation includes (from left) transit mixer, batching plant, and sand/aggregate feed hoppers.

(Middle) Master Chief Equipmentman Chuck Zimmerman, Naval Facilities Expeditionary Logistics Center (NFELC) project lead, uses an automated batch control system to perform a batching test.

(Bottom) With the in-house capability provided by a mobile concrete batching plant, two operators can set up the next generation, state-of-the-art system and be able to produce concrete within half a day.

U.S. Navy Photos by James P. Cencer



Purple Hearts



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

PURPLE HEART RECIPIENTS*

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

HM2 Jaime S. Jaenke, NMCB 25
(June 5, 2006)
EO1 Gary T. Rovinski, NMCB 25
(June 5, 2006)
BU1 Jerry A. Tharp, NMCB 25
(July 12, 2006)

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

BU1 Dean Berlin, NMCB 25
UT1 Keith Hendrickson, NMCB 25

See story on following page.

* At time of publication



Seabees from NMCB 25 Mourn the Loss of Three of Their Fallen in Iraq

During a few short weeks in June and July 2006, three members of NMCB 25 were killed as a result of enemy action — Equipment Operator 1st Class Gary T. Rovinski, Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Jamie S. Jaenke, and Builder 1st Class Jerry A. Tharp. NMCB 25 is a reserve unit based out of Fort McCoy, Wis.

In Iraq since March, NMCB 25 Seabees have supported reconstruction efforts as they repaired bridges and runways, drilled water wells, built a medical facility and sustained convoy operations. Although deeply saddened by their losses, Seabees continue their work despite daily challenges.

Capturing the sentiment of this highly emotional time, Cmdr. David Marasco, NMCB 25 Commanding Officer, read the following letter from Rear Adm. Robert Phillips, 1st Naval Construction Division, during Tharp's memorial service...

"With the heaviest of heart, I want you and your Seabees to know that all of us throughout the Naval Construction Force feel the loss that you, your troops and your family have experienced once again with the loss of BU1 Tharp. While the battalion has had little time to grieve the loss of EO1 Rovinski and HM2 Jaenke, all of these tragic deaths only strengthen our commitment to win the war on terror, reinforcing the fact that regardless of where we serve, we are one Seabee family."

— Rear Adm. Robert Phillips, 1st Naval Construction Division

Equipment Operator 1st Class Gary T. Rovinski and Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Jamie S. Jaenke

Two members of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 25 — Equipment Operator 1st Class Gary T. Rovinski and Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Jamie S. Jaenke — were killed June 5 when their vehicle hit an improvised explosive device (IED) while on a convoy in the Al Anbar Province.

Hundreds of mourners gathered to honor the lives of their fallen comrades in a memorial service in the main chapel at Al Asad in mid-June. The service included many personal remembrances and stories of Rovinski and Jaenke, as well as a slide presentation which captured both Seabees at work and at play.

A native of Roseville, Ill., Rovinski, a soldier in the Army during Operation Desert Storm, had been

with the battalion throughout his time in the Navy. Friends remembered him as a hard worker who was content working far from the lime-light while getting the mission accomplished.

Jaenke, a native of Iowa Falls, Iowa, worked as an emergency medical technician before joining the Navy. She was remembered as "a beautiful person with a contagious smile and a mischievous spirit." Co-workers commented how she always seemed to delight in the simple things in life.

Purple Hearts have been presented to their families.

*Submitted by Cpl. Daniel J. Redding, USMC,
1st Marine Logistics Group*

Builder 1st Class (SCW) Jerry A. Tharp

Hundreds of soldiers, Marines and Sailors gathered at a memorial service in Al Asad, Iraq, to mourn the loss and reflect upon the life of Builder 1st Class Jerry A. Tharp, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 25, who died July 12 when an improvised

explosive device (IED) detonated at a Seabee project site.

Tharp lived in Aledo, Ill., where he worked full time as an operator on a concrete pump truck. He belonged to the Operating Engineers Union Local 150 and earned the nickname "Pumping Jerry" among his co-workers. After serving as an Army artilleryman, he enlisted in the Navy Reserve in 1994. Tharp loved being a member of a construction battalion and would tell people "he wouldn't want to be anything else but a 'Bee.'"

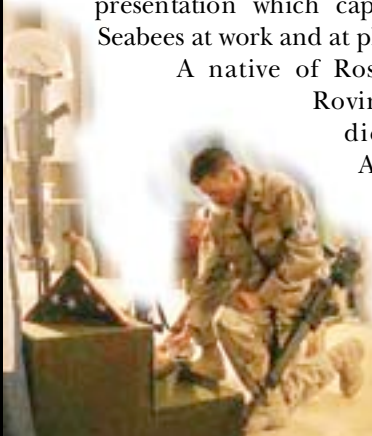
According to his fellow Seabees, Tharp was the kind of person who made you feel that anything was possible. Work seemed like another form of recreation to him and he put everything he had into it. His positive attitude was contagious and he was a born leader among junior petty officers in the battalion.

A Purple Heart has been presented to his family.

*Submitted by Mass Communication Specialist
1st Class Benjamin T. Franklin, NMCB 25*



(Above, left to right) Equipment Operator 1st Class Gary T. Rovinski, Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Jamie S. Jaenke and Builder 1st Class Jerry A. Tharp
U.S. Navy Photos



Through the Lens of a Seabee

Acting as the eyes and ears of the Builder Warriors is an integral role of all Seabee communicators — journalists, photographers and other military mass communication professionals who deliver visual information to the masses. Missions and assignments vary according to the state of the world, but the job remains the same for the Seabee photojournalist: Capture the unique emotion of the story in an instant.

Two Seabee journalists recently received honors in the specialized field of military photojournalism, in two separate competitions.

Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class **ERIC S. POWELL**, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74, received Second Place for Combat Documentation in the Department of Defense Visual Information Program (VIAP). Powell's winning photo (on the following page) depicted fellow NMCB 74 Seabees in a jungle warfare training exercise in Okinawa, Japan. The VIAP is designed to recognize, reward and promote excellence among military photographers, videographers, journalists and graphic artists.

Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class **BENJAMIN T. FRANKLIN**, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 25, received Second Place in the Photo-Story Category (on the following page) for the Navy Reserve Photographer of the Year Competition, sponsored by *Navy Reservist Magazine*. The annual competition recognizes Navy photographers for their achievements and continued support to the visual communications initiatives, documenting the global contributions of the Reserve Component.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Eric S. Powell

BUILDER / photographer

Through the Lens of a Seabee



WINNING PHOTO: POWELL

(This photo) Seabees assigned to NMCB 74 participate in jungle warfare training in Okinawa, Japan. The training included patrol techniques, jungle survival, and a 3.2-mile obstacle course through harsh terrain.

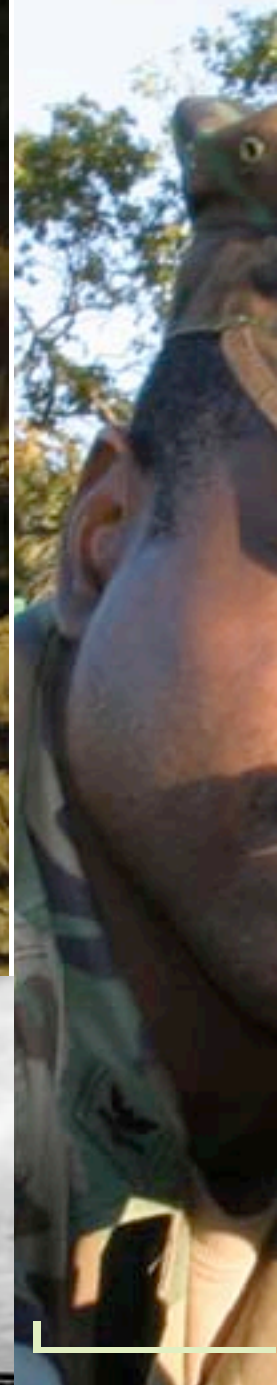
Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Eric S. Powell



Powell



Powell





(This photo and bottom left, center and right) NMCB 25 Seabees take advantage of a clear day on the firing range at Fort McCoy, Wis. Photos by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Benjamin T. Franklin

WINNING PHOTO SERIES: FRANKLIN



COMBATING COMBAT STRESS

Continued from page 15

belong (fear of spiders or public speaking are two common phobias). These disorders affect upwards of 20% of our population, with about 8% of Americans believed to carry a diagnosis of PTSD sometime in their life.

Though combat is most often associated with PTSD, the Global War on Terror continues to expose people — uniformed and civilian — to psychological trauma. By one researcher's estimate, one third of the 100,000 citizens of New York witnessing the terrorist attack on September 11th has PTSD or will develop PTSD. A curious feature of traumatic disorders is that individuals may exhibit minimal or no symptoms for a long period of time. Attending a Fourth of July fireworks show or watching war movies (*Black Hawk Down* is particularly noteworthy) might trigger classic symptoms of PTSD years later. Anniversaries may also provoke so-called "anniversary reactions."

Ironically, it was not until last year when Miller was participating in the Hurricane Katrina response for the Gulf Coast that his condition came to light.

While embarked aboard the USS Iwo Jima, he came unglued when a sailor whistled as if to simulate an incoming Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG). Without thinking, Miller slammed the sailor to the bulkhead and then onto the deck.

PTSD is what clinicians call a dissociative disorder, meaning one of the hallmarks of the disorder is responding reflexively, without recollection — as in Miller's case above. Though he is finally in treatment now, he acknowledges that he went years without admitting that he had a problem. Perhaps Miller's greatest legacy is the public health message he leaves for others.

Quoted in a CBS article, Miller stated, "I just didn't understand how it [my time in Iraq] could affect me so dramatically and not affect some of these [other] guys...The more and more I talk to [other guys], the more I found out there were a lot of Marines that are going through the same or similar emotions. It's tough to deal with. Being in Iraq is something no one wants to talk about."

TREATMENT HELPS, BUT TIME IS CRITICAL

With prompt recognition and a willingness to seek help, Acute Stress Disorder, the psychological condition from which PTSD arises, is imminently treatable. If left untreated, Acute Stress Disorder may become chronic (long term). Consequently, the longer the service member goes without treatment, the more difficulty doctors have in treating the individual.

If early recognition is the key to intervention and early intervention is the essential element of managing the condition, then Naval Construction leads the charge in identifying

service members who may need follow-on care for PTSD.

Indeed, Seabees from several battalions participated in the now landmark study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, "Combat Duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, Mental Health Problems, and Barriers to Care", published July 1, 2004, by Army psychiatrist Colonel Charles Hoge and colleagues. This study demonstrated that as many as one in six returning Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom vets will experience depression, anxiety or PTSD.

Perhaps even more importantly, this research revealed the real menace: Stigma. Even though 80% of service members afflicted with psychological problems admitted they were having difficulties, only 44% found help to be acceptable with even fewer actually seeking formal help. Most troubling was the finding that those who were most symptomatic or out of control with their lives were least like-

ly to get help. It is not so much the fear of the initiating trauma that continues to impact the person as much as it is the fear the impact of self-referral might have on

the service member's career which limits the desire to seek care. Even just the fear of admitting there is a problem and having the courage to talk to someone about it — even a fellow Seabee — can paralyze the person into inaction.

*As many as one in six returning
Operation Enduring Freedom/
Operation Iraqi Freedom vets will
experience depression, anxiety or PTSD*

— Study on Combat Duty in Iraq and Afghanistan
New England Journal of Medicine, 2004

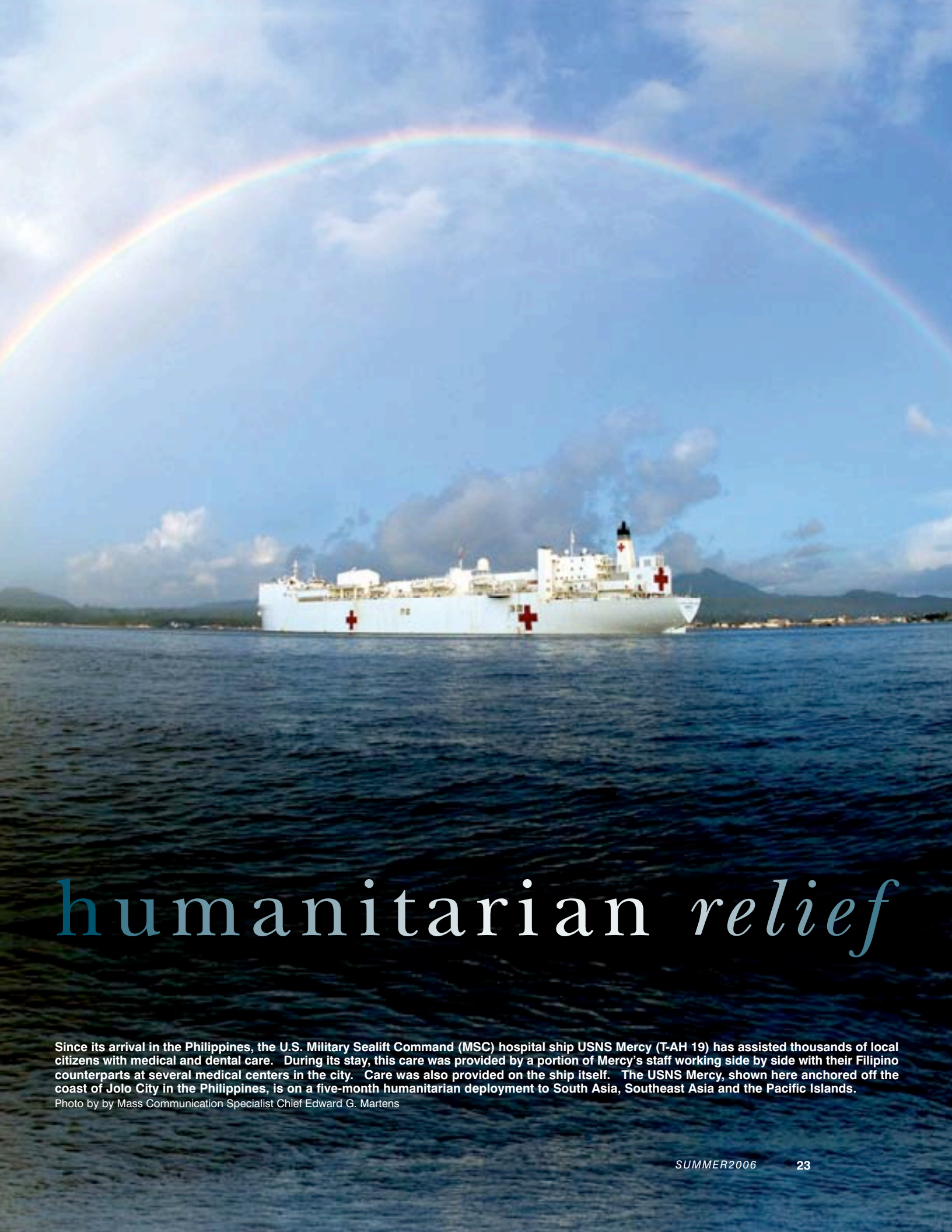
RESOURCES ARE READILY AVAILABLE

Comprehensive support systems are available to service members and their families. These include a wide range of community and family support, legal, educational and chaplain services, as well as health and wellness/fitness programs. These services facilitate prevention, education and counseling for the broad array of everyday stressors to improve and maintain the overall level of health and quality of life of Seabees and their families.

A complete list of services is available at Military One Source (1-800-342-9647 or www.militaryonesource.com). Military One Source is an excellent resource providing 24-hour, 7-day-a-week confidential non-medical counseling accessed through the telephone, Internet and e-mail across the country. Counseling services are provided in support of a broad spectrum of life's challenges for all active duty, reserve component members and their families. Face-to-face counseling is provided at no cost for up to 6 sessions per person, per problem before, during and after deployment.

In this day of sophisticated and high-tech medicine, stress-related injuries are conditions for which good old-fashioned talk is the best medicine. Though Seabees are well known for speaking their mind, this is one area where Seabees could open up even more.





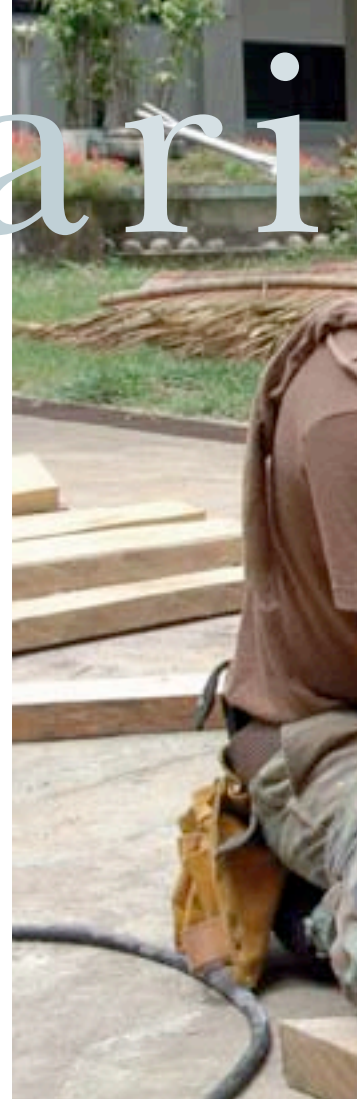
humanitarian *relief*

Since its arrival in the Philippines, the U.S. Military Sealift Command (MSC) hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) has assisted thousands of local citizens with medical and dental care. During its stay, this care was provided by a portion of Mercy's staff working side by side with their Filipino counterparts at several medical centers in the city. Care was also provided on the ship itself. The USNS Mercy, shown here anchored off the coast of Jolo City in the Philippines, is on a five-month humanitarian deployment to South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands.

Photo by by Mass Communication Specialist Chief Edward G. Martens

humanitari

Seabees continue to make a world of difference to the people of many nations as they provide a wide array of humanitarian relief and aid. In this issue, experience how the people of these diverse locales — the Zamboanga Peninsula of the Philippines — Sao Tome, Ethiopia and Djibouti in Africa — and the Kingdom of Thailand in Southeast Asia — benefit and learn from the Builder Warriors of the U.S. Navy... “With compassion for others...we build, we fight...for peace with freedom.”



USNS Mercy Ports in Philippines to Aid Locals

By U.S. Navy Fleet Public Affairs

The U.S. Military Sealift Command (MSC) hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) is currently on a five-month humanitarian deployment to South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands. During its scheduled stops, the medical crew aboard Mercy is providing general and ophthalmology surgery, basic medical evaluation and treatment, preventive medicine, and dental and optometry screenings, eyewear distribution, public health training and veterinary services, as requested by the host nations.

Like all U.S. Naval forces, Mercy is able to rapidly respond to a range of situations on short notice. She is uniquely capable of supporting medical and humanitarian assistance needs, and is configured with special medical equipment and a robust multi-specialized

medical team that can provide a range of services ashore, as well as aboard the ship. The medical staff is augmented with an assistance crew, many of whom are part of non-governmental organizations with significant medical capabilities.



In addition to providing medical and dental care, Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 40 have made many critically needed structural and cosmetic improvements to Zamboanga Medical Center in the Philippines. Seabees placed fresh cement to smooth a walkway surrounding a medical building at the center, while locals — including children — helped paint the pediatric ward. This community relations crew is part of a 15-man civic action team from NMCB 40 assigned to Mercy to provide basic construction, utility work and training during its deployment.



(Above) A local boy helps Builder 2nd Class Shane Murray, NMCB 40, paint the pediatric ward at Zamboanga Medical Center.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Timothy F. Sosa



(Above) Builder 2nd Class Shane Murray, NMCB 40, receives some help from neighborhood children as he builds a picnic table for the Sulu Provincial Hospital.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Joseph Caballero

Seabees Rebuild School, Build Partnerships in Sao Tome

*By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class (SW)
Rebekah Blowers, USS Emory S. Land Public Affairs*

Seabees embarked on USS Emory S. Land (AS 39) during a deployment to the Gulf of Guinea, completing a 30-day repair mission at a high school in Sao Tome, and at the same time strengthening emerging partnerships in the region.

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 Seabees, homeported in Gulfport, Miss., arrived in Sao Tome at the beginning of the mission during USS Land's first port call. They stayed on shore to refurbish a Sao Tomese high school gymnasium, while Land continued south into the Gulf.

Chief Warrant Officer Bruce Coskie said the Seabees worked seamlessly with the Sao Tomese army and local contractors to complete the project.

"When we arrived, you couldn't even tell that this school had a gymnasium. It was basically just an old storage room, and now we've redone it all," Coskie said. "There is a basketball

court, a handball court and a volleyball court all inside. I think we've done a world of good out here."

The job also included installing more than 200 window panes, refurbishing the floor, repainting walls, building a stage, and installing seven bathrooms and six showers, along with a boys and girls locker room.

Working together was educational for the Seabees, as well.

"They showed us some different tricks using stucco that we don't normally use in the United States, and we showed them different aspects of how we do construction," Coskie said. "It was a good learning experience for both countries."

The Sailors also had a little fun on the field teaching the finer points of football to their hosts. The Sao Tomese were only too happy to reciprocate.

"They invited us to a basketball game and then played against us," Coskie said. "I'll tell you right now, they've got some good basketball players in Sao Tome!"



humanitari



Seabees Help Bring Water to Drought-stricken Ethiopia


By Mass Communication Specialist Chief (DV) Robert Palomares, Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa Public Affairs, and Hospital Corpsman 1st Class David Minchin, NMCB 7

Seabees from the water well drilling unit of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 are making a difference in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia — drilling wells that will produce clean drinking water for residents, as well as for livestock and crops. They have been in the remote region since earlier this year drilling into known aquifers, or underground lakes.

The people of this region were victims of a 10-year drought that killed thousands of inhabitants and livestock. They had been mostly dependent on rainfall for their water supply, but it was never a guarantee.

“Before the wells, local residents walked five to 15 miles a day with five-gallon jugs just to get water from muddy watering holes where animals also bathe and drink,” said Ens. Max Jones, the unit’s officer in charge.

The 20-member well drilling team established a base camp, Camp Cherry, in a remote area of Ethiopia. The camp is named

after fellow water well team member  Equipment Operator 2nd Class Robert Cherry, who passed away just before the unit deployed to the Horn of Africa.

Many attempts to drill wells had failed since the local people did not have the proper equipment to do the job. However, after Seabees shared their expertise with local water departments in Ethiopia, they are now better able to drill and maintain the wells.

“That way, they can continue what we’re starting here,” said Utilitiesman (SCW) Bill Yobs.

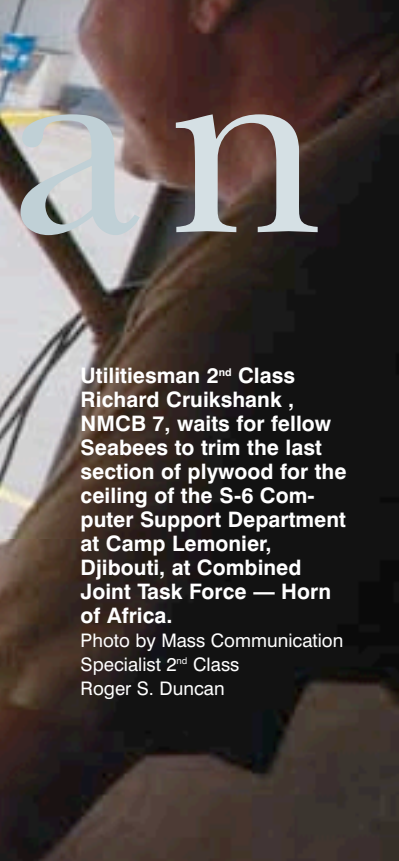
In the Ogaden region, water is present, but until recently out of reach. There are significant water reserves below ground, but to reach 200 to 500 feet and bring water to the surface requires a feat of modern engineering. Drilling deep-water wells is an expensive and often dangerous task, requiring commitment, expertise and patience.

NMCB 7 has these skills.

“I couldn’t ask for a better crew,” Yobs said. “Everyone on the team is motivated to do the job and do it right.”

NMCB 7 will conduct drilling operations through August, providing as much water as possible to the people in the region.





Utilitiesman 2nd Class Richard Cruikshank, NMCB 7, waits for fellow Seabees to trim the last section of plywood for the ceiling of the S-6 Computer Support Department at Camp Lemonier, Djibouti, at Combined Joint Task Force — Horn of Africa.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Roger S. Duncan

an relief

“I was out at Dikhil (in Djibouti)...where 17 Seabees are building a school. In many respects, in their own way, those 17 Seabees doing their mission out there achieve as much for us as a battalion of infantry on the ground looking for bad guys. Dollar for dollar and person for person, our return on our investment out here is better than it is anywhere in the CENTCOM (area of responsibility).”

— Gen. John P. Abizaid
Commander, U.S. Central Command, U.S. Army

(Left inset) Seabees from NMCB 7 drill water wells in the remote area of Jijiga, Ethiopia. Some residents travel miles to collect clean water for drinking, bathing and cooking.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist (DV) Robert Palomares

(Right) Inhabitants of this Horn of Africa nation have endured several years of drought, reducing the quantity and quality of water in the area.

Photo by Hospital Corpsman 1st Class David Minchin



humanitarian relief

Cobra Gold Produces Pavilion for Thailand Clinic

By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Adam R. Cole,
Task Force 76 Public Affairs

Earlier this year, Seabees and Royal Thai Navy (RTN) sailors built a pavilion at a local clinic in Rayong, Kingdom of Thailand, as part of a civic assistance project known as Cobra Gold 2006.

The project took place at the Ban Yai-da Medical Clinic, which serves more than 6,000 residents in the local municipality of Ta-pong. The pavilion now serves as a much-needed venue for community exercise programs and senior health activities, immunizations, and community medical and dental screening, as well as a place for patients and clinic personnel to relax.

Lt. Cmdr. Dana Partridge, a naval flight officer attached to Commander, Amphibious Group (CPG) 1 reserve detachment in St. Louis, Mo., led the project. When not serving in active-duty status, he is a plant manager for glass manufacturer Guardian Industries Rayong. Guardian has donated many of the supplies for the current project.

"As an international businessman working in Thailand, and as a drilling reserve officer, the Ban Yai-da community service

project allowed me to both give something back to the local community, and to contribute toward the larger interests of the United States," said Partridge.

Such a full spectrum of people working toward the same goal strengthens the bonds between the United States and Thailand.

"This is a very good project, and we are very happy with the quality of construction," said Thansak, a RTN sailor who holds the Thai rank of first class petty officer builder.

Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4, serving under Commander, Task Force (CTF) 76 for the exercise, are happy they can contribute.

"It's a lot of fun and it makes you feel good that you can make a difference," said Construction Electrician 2nd Class Marlon Romero.

"Our medical clinic serves many thousands of local people in the Ta-Pong sub-district," said Thachawan Yamklin, head of the Ban-Yai Da Health Center and Medical Clinic. "These people are very happy that the project has been donated and built by the Cobra Gold Team."



Construction Electrician 2nd Class Stephen M. Johnson (left), NMCB 4, loads concrete mix alongside Royal Thai Navy sailors to create the foundation for a pavilion at a local medical facility as part of Cobra Gold 2006.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Adam R. Cole

Seabees Stay Connected to Family Through Reading

Compiled from U.S. Navy Sources
At Camp Arifjan in Kuwait, the Fighting Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 find moments of peace as they unpack boxes of children's books donated by generous people all over America for the Navy's *United Through Reading Program*. Donors from both civilian and military communities, churches, businesses and schools support the program.

United Through Reading, a quality-of-life program designed and sponsored by the Family Literacy Foundation, helps keep parents and children connected while separated during long deployments, through the medium of reading aloud on videotape or DVD.

Now in its fourth month at Camp Arifjan and spreading rapidly to other bases around the region, *United Through Reading* fosters connections between deployed parents and their children back home



(Above) Equipment Operator 2nd Class Bryan Morgan, NMCB 7, Djibouti, Africa, records himself reading stories to his children back home.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist Chief Jeffrey J. Pierce

through shared reading. Seabees select a book from the more than 1,800 donated so far and read the story to their child on camera. The video or DVD is mailed to the child, along with the book if the child does not already have the chosen story at home.

Although the Seabees have participated in this program for years at other locations, books were not yet available at Camp Arifjan and Djibouti. Chaplain (Lt.) Martie Johnson, NMCB 7, and his wife organized a book drive at his national church, the General Church of the New Jerusalem in Bryn Athyn, Pa., as a way to provide a local connection between families at home and those serving overseas. Soon other churches joined the program, as well as individual donors around the country. Before long, books were arriving in Kuwait and Africa.

Chaplain Johnson and his fellow NMCB 7 Seabees have found

the steady stream of packages from the U.S. touching and encouraging.

"It's about doing what we can to keep families together with as many ways to communicate as possible in their time of separation," said Johnson.

When not deployed, NMCB 7 is based in Gulfport, Miss., a city directly impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

"Our Seabees and their families have learned a lot about staying connected after last year's hurricanes, and I want to really support that with this great program as we do our duty in the desert," Johnson said. "It has been fun to receive the books because each time we do, it is a little bit like Christmas."

Editor's Note: Please see Final Word in this issue for additional information on United Through Reading from Command Master Chief Jerry Major, 1st Naval Construction Division.



(Left) Construction Mechanic Thomas Weber, left, and Culinary Specialist 3rd Class Heather Giletz, NMCB 7, help unpack hundreds of donated books for the *United Through Reading Program* in Djibouti, Africa.

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

Building Cubi

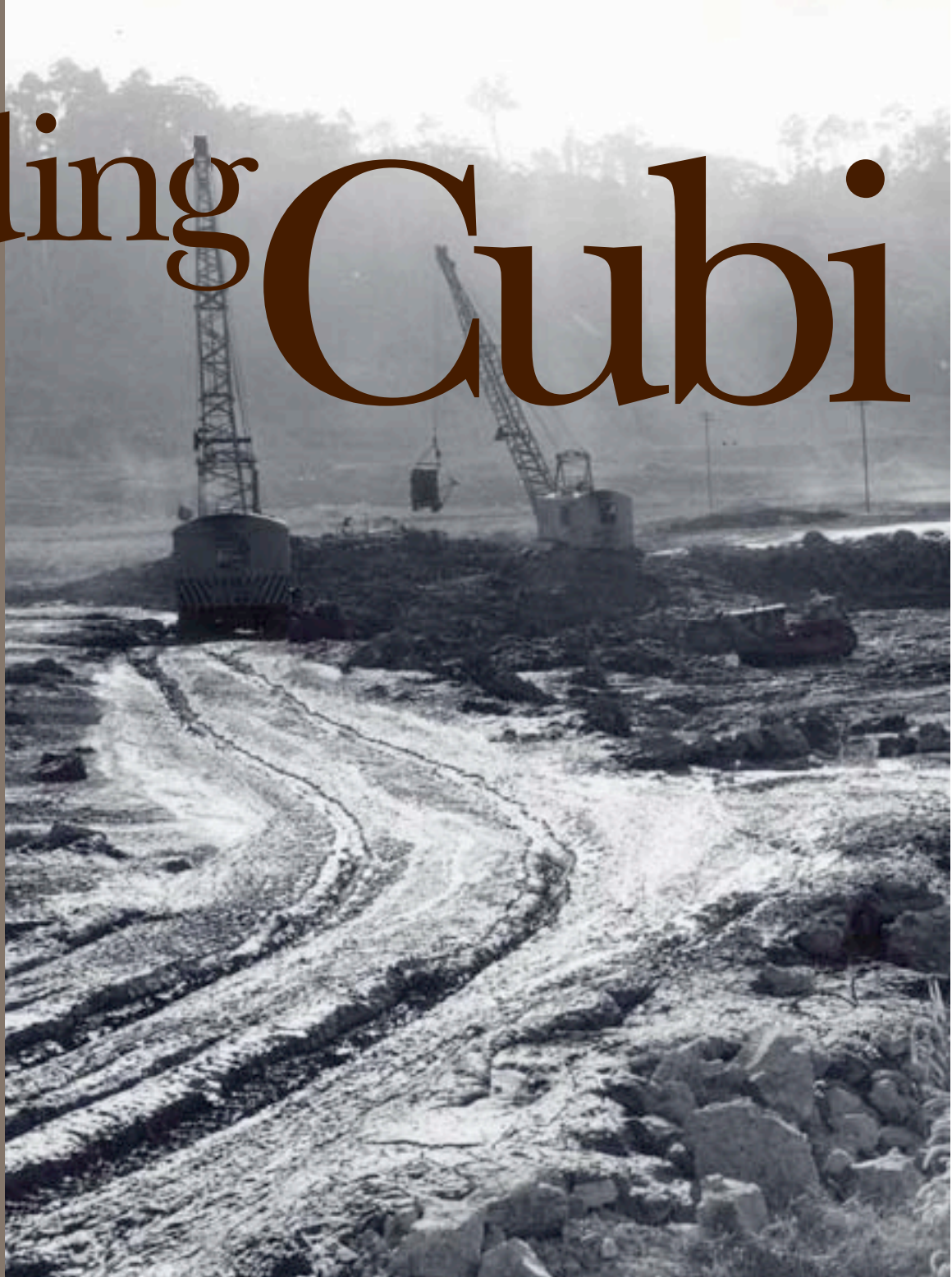
By far the largest and most impressive project tackled by the Seabees in the 1950s was the construction of Cubi Point Naval Air Station, Subic Bay, in the Philippines. Civilian contractors, after taking one look at the forbidding Zombales Mountains and the maze of jungle at Cubi Point, claimed it could not be done. Nevertheless, the Seabees proceeded to do it.

Begun in 1951 at the height of the Korean War, it took five years and an estimated 20 million man-hours to build this major Navy base. At Cubi Point, Seabees cut a mountain in half to make way for a nearly two-mile long runway...blasted coral to fill a section of Subic Bay...moved trees as much as 150-feet tall and eight-feet around...and even relocated a native fishing village.

The result was an air station and an adjacent pier that was capable of docking the Navy's largest carriers. Undoubtedly as important as the finished project, however, was the indispensable leadership and construction experience gained by the postwar generation of Seabees. The construction of Cubi Point Naval Air Station was a mammoth learning experience, as well as a superb job well done.

Even today, NAS Cubi Point remains the single largest earthmoving project ever undertaken by the U.S. Navy.

Introduction compiled from several resources including historical accounts by Dr. Vincent A. Transano, command historian of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (1997), and Construction Engineer 1st Class (Ret.) Charles Hogan, Mobile Construction Battalion 9, 1952-1955.



Monsoon Season (Above) Subic Bay, Summer 1953

As many times before, the Seabees' real enemy was often the weather. Large construction equipment was often bogged down in the mud created by frequent monsoon rains. The Philippines' extremely high annual rainfall – averaging 110 inches – made ongoing construction of any type difficult.

Building the Runway (Opposite, top) Cubi Point, March 1955

Seabees set hundreds of piles into Subic Bay to hold the material blasted from the mountainside. Equipment operators later used a steam shovel to load a “belly” dump truck, and backfill the area until a runway and parking apron could be placed on the fill foundation. In 1952, Adm. Arthur W. Radford, Commander in

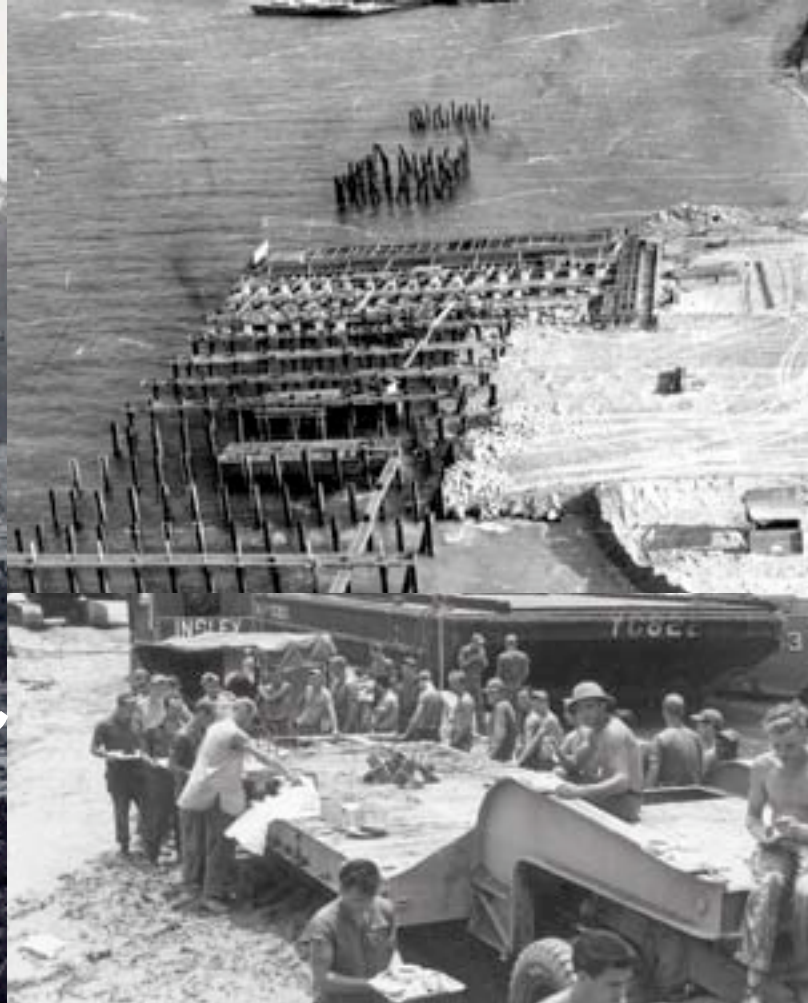
Chief of the Pacific Fleet and later Chief of Naval Operations, who conceived the Cubi Point project, had the honor of piloting the first plane to land on the 2,500-foot temporary runway only nine months after actual construction began.

Serving Lunch (Opposite, center) Cubi Point, August 1952

Seabees from NMCB 2 get their lunch off the back of a

Photos courtesy of
the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum,
Port Hueneme, Calif.

Point



flat bed while building the piers at Cubi Point during the early days of construction. In January 1955, more than 6,300 meals were served each day to Seabees in the 30th Naval Construction Regiment and Mobile Construction Battalions 2, 3, 5 and 9.

Stringing the Lines (Right, bottom)

Subic Bay, 1953–1954

Once the roads were in, Seabees got to work stringing the electrical and telephone lines. Trees blasted out over months often became the poles used for the lines. During much of the work in the untamed green mountains in the area, Seabees had to constantly fight off monkeys, wild pigs and pythons.

TRAINING

MEX

By Lt.j.g. Robin McCall, Public Affairs Officer, NMCB 23

Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCBs) train in a four-phase cycle: Technical, Military, Field Exercise and Construction. Reserve Construction Battalions perform one phase per year.

NMCB 23 is currently in its Military (M) Year. Specifically, this phase covers training in 21 skills, including field communications, individual- and crew-served weapons, war damage repair, and operations in chemical, biological and radioactive environments. The photos across these two pages capture a glimpse of approximately 250 NMCB 23 Seabees participating in the most recent MEX which resulted in 534 new or recertified skills.



NMCB 5 Executes Operation Meathook and Conducts Combat Training

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

OPERATION MEATHOOK

After an early morning warning order, Operation Meathook was underway this year at Port Hueneme, Calif., to test Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5's readiness and ability to conduct an embarkation in a "real world" scenario.

"Every battalion company — Air Detachment (AIRDET), Alfa, Bravo, Charlie and Headquarters — played a part in this mount-out exercise," said Lt. Michael K.

O'Beirne, NMCB 5 Alfa Company Commander. "This was not just an Alfa Company evolution, but an entire NMCB 5 evolution."

Operation Meathook tested the battalion's capability to expeditiously airlift AIRDET's people, equipment, supplies and vehicles, or Table of Allowance (TOA), within 48 hours. In order to accomplish this mission, the Embark and AIRDET team prioritized the AIRDET's (250 ton) TOA to fit in each aircraft. Next, heavy-duty pallets were built and loaded with the TOA. However, before the pallets and vehicles could be securely placed into aircraft each had to be weighed, marked and balanced according to specific loading requirements. Eighteen C-130 air-

craft were required to embark all AIRDET assets.

"Operation Meathook was a total success in my eyes. All parties involved learned a lot, I know that I did," O'Beirne remarked. "Now that it is over, we can focus on finetuning some of our shortfalls, but all in all it was a success."

OPERATION BEARING DUEL

"Victor Three, Victor One," Utilitiesman 1st Class Courtney J. Wynia called the convoy commander. "Any other convoys or vehicles on our route?" The convoy commander replied, "Negative Victor One!" Wynia shouted to the gunner, "What kind of uniforms are they wearing?"

Steelworker Phillip Tremeti, manning a 50-caliber machine gun mounted on top the HUMVEE, replied, "Desert Cammies! All of them!" With a controlled voice Wynia said, "That's the enemy! Open fire! Fire!"

This event is just one of the many training scenarios that took place during Operation Bearing Duel 4-06, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5's annual field exercise (FEX) held in April and May at Fort Hunter-Liggett, Calif.

This year for the first time, four Naval Construction Force units — NMCB 5, NMCB 28, CBMU 303 and UCT 2 — as well as the 1st Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) and 30th NCR,



(Top row, left) An NMCB 23 Seabee prepares to fire an M9 pistol.
Photo by Steelworker 1st Class Edward Ross

(Top row, center) NMCB 23 Seabees move equipment over a water obstacle on the Leadership Reaction Course.
Photo by Lt.j.g. Robin McCall

(Top row, right, left to right) Utilitiesman 2nd Class Bruce Nisbet, Construction Mechanic 1st Class Kenneth Schnur and Builder 2nd Class Westley Spriggs practice medevac procedures under the guidance of the 20th Seabee Readiness Group.
Photo by Steelworker 1st Class Edward Ross

(Bottom row, left) Seabees of NMCB 23 practice operation of the M240B machine gun.
Photo by Utilitiesman 2nd Class Bruce Nisbet

(Bottom row, center) Builder 2nd Class Leigh Foster (left) instructs NMCB 23 Commanding Officer Cmdr. Susanne Openshaw on the operation of the M2 machine gun.
Photo by Utilitiesman 2nd Class Bruce Nisbet

(Bottom row, right, left to right) Chief Construction Electrician Tom Flint, Chief Steelworker Joseph Whitton, and Chief Builder Charles Becker apply a bandage to a classmate's hand during the first aid portion of Chiefs and Officers Battle Skills Training.
Photo by Lt.j.g. Robin McCall

simultaneously participated in and completed this annual milestone training event.

Each homeport period, NMCB 5 conducts a three-week training evolution designed to elevate battalion personnel to a higher level of knowledge and combat readiness in preparation for real-world contingency operations. As part of this training, NMCB 5 was tasked with providing general and mobility engineering support for the 30th NCR within the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force area of operation in order to facilitate Marine operations to defeat *Centralian* forces and reestablish the country of *Coastlands* border. *Coastland* and *Centralian* are ficti-

tious names provided to simulate friendly and enemy forces in a contingency environment.

The exercise began with a 48-hour mount-out of personnel and equipment from Naval Base Ventura County, Port Hueneme, Calif., to U.S. Army Base Fort Hunter-Liggett. Food, weapons, communications gear, power generators, fuel, vehicles, construction equipment, etc., were transported to the field.

Upon arrival, Seabees established a security perimeter and erected more than 40 personnel tents among a myriad of other tasks. Company-level training in combat skill areas, such as rules of engagement, security patrols, to chemical-biological gear use,

medical skills and military operations, comprised much of the first week.

A field exercise of this magnitude requires a great deal of logistical coordination. Two vital elements are supplies and communication. Yeoman 1st Class Robert D. Thomas III explained, "Communications is a lot like real estate; the first three rules are, 1) Location 2) Location 3) Location. The most formidable challenge we [the communication team] faced during FEX was finding the right locations for the many communication antennas spread over 35 square miles."

During FEX, the Supply Department managed to flaw-

lessly distribute and account for over 12,500 pieces of personnel equipment valued at more than \$5.2 million. Depending on the situation, the command or even an individual may be held financially responsible for lost gear and supplies.

Convoy operations were an important aspect of FEX. The Convoy Security Team (CST) escorted all vehicles transporting personnel and equipment in the area of operations. According to Chief Petty Officer Anthony B. Teart, "We faced an extremely difficult schedule. Just as it is in a real-world situation we [CST] would have to adjust our operations to an ever-changing contingency environment."

(continued on following page)



(Above) USMC Gy Sgt. Steve Stapel (right), a 20th Seabee Readiness Group instructor, directs his students on their next evolution. The joint exercise with NMCB 26 took place on a firing range at Camp Shelby, Miss.

(Right) Builder Utilitiesman 2nd Class Brad Miller leads the charge into a mock fight with insurgents during the forward operation base exercise.

Photos by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Casandra Newell



KOREA (Above, top to bottom) Seabees and Republic of Korea (ROK) sailors lay down M19 matting during a Rapid Runway Repair (RRR) exercise during Reception, Staging, Onward-movement and Integration (RSOI) 2006.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class (SW/FMF) Chad V. Pritt

*(Operation Bearing Duel
continued from previous page)*

On day six, NMCB 5 moved to the Forward Operating Base (FOB) for the main portion of the exercise. Each day, Seabee warriors were pursued by enemy forces. This was meant to test their ability to maintain a security posture and complete the assigned construction projects. Construction objectives during the exercise included a water well project, a 50-foot timber tower, installation of a Bailey bridge and an entrance control point security bunker.

The medical staff itself conducted field training for more than 40 Combat Lifesavers.

“Seabees trained as Combat Lifesavers increase the survivability in a contingency environment to 60 percent,” explained Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Abel Alaniz.

Cmdr. Jorge P. Rios, Commanding Officer of NMCB 5, said at the conclusion of the exercise, “NMCB 5 Seabees should all be proud of the hard work they’ve accomplished during this exercise. I heard positive reports each day about the performance here.

“Small unit leadership was a key ingredient to our success,” Rios said. “We put safety first, proved our readiness and accomplished the mission.”

Seabees Participate in RSOI '06

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

Active-duty and reserve Seabees from across the United States tested their ability to respond to military contingencies during Reception, Staging, Onward-movement and Integration (RSOI) 2006, paired with Exercise Foal Eagle, in Pohang, Republic of Korea (ROK), in late March.

While most of the exercise pertained to Navy afloat units and Army and Marine Corps ground forces, Seabees were tested on their ability to successfully execute

immediate taskings resulting from simulated battle damage. These included rapid runway repair (RRR), pier assessments and route reconnaissance. A detachment from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4 worked closely with ROK sailors on an RRR demonstration in front of the Pohang base commander and U.S. Navy officers.

During the week-long exercise, members from the 30th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) acted as subordinate units, including two NMCBs, an Underwater Construction Team (UCT), and a Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU) — a force of more than 1,500 Seabees. They

(Continued on following page)

(RSOI continued from previous page)

managed all of this on one computer, using a different e-mail address for each command

"The biggest challenge in this exercise was keeping prompts, action requests and replies separately identified for each of the four fictional subordinate commands, and two 'higher' commands," said Chief Navy Counselor (AW) Chris Cunningham, a command operations center watch officer for the 30th NCR in Iraq. "If we were to confuse the 3rd NCR personnel receiving the training, we're no longer teaching them anything useful for their regimental objectives."

Because the notional Seabees couldn't actually conduct the work they were being tasked with, the training focused mainly on movement control and fragmented order writing. Movement control is the act of moving people and equipment around the battlespace using carefully scheduled convoys and air transportation.

"Accountability is the most important thing we do," said Master Chief Utilitiesman (SCW) Cristen B. Owoc, the 30th NCR's operations chief. "Movement control is very important because it allows you to know where your people are. Wherever you go in the world, you do movement control. If movement control isn't locked in, nothing else is either."

Commander, 3rd NCR, Capt. John Miller II was thankful for the chance to work with the 30th NCR personnel, and saw it as a chance to glean firsthand knowledge of the situation in Iraq from the subject matter experts.

"This is the first time any NCR has had this level of involvement in RSOI, and we're just thrilled to be here," Miller said.

ACB 1 Evaluates INLS Operations

By Mass Communication Specialist Seaman John Ciccarelli, Fleet Public Affairs Center, Pacific Seabees from Amphibious

Construction Battalion (ACB) 1 participated in an operational evaluation of the Improved Navy Lighterage System (INLS) earlier this spring in Coronado, Calif. INLS is a floating dock designed to reach locations where traditional port facilities may be damaged, inadequate or nonexistent.

"The mission of the new INLS is to support naval and allied forces with a safer, more versatile way to deliver vehicles and critical supplies from ship to shore during war or peacetime operations," said Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class William Garcia, ACB 1. "This operation gives Sailors from ACB 1 in different areas of specialty the opportunity to work together toward one goal."

During the exercise, ACB 1 worked to safely move cargo from shore to sea while evaluating INLS' compatibility with a variety of equipment and Sailors' skills. These skills included loading and unloading supplies, repairing machinery, assembling at sea, and performing roll-off discharges from the front platforms.

"This training enhances our speed, while making our job more streamlined," said Construction Mechanic 1st Class (SCW/SW/AW) Harvest Right. "It also opens a lot more possibilities for Sailors to understand the variety of equipment used in these operations."

"We've been concentrating on ways to make our mission safer for Sailors by giving them the opportunity to learn new skills with this type of equipment," said Capt. Keith Hamilton, commanding officer of ACB 1. "Experience is the key for future missions with this type of lighterage."



Seabees Earn Bronze Stars

Six Seabees received the Bronze Star Award for actions in support of direct combat operations missions in *Operation Iraqi Freedom* and *Operation Enduring Freedom*.

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7

Cmdr. Bret Muilenburg

Lt. Cmdr. Peter Maculan

Senior Chief Builder (SCW) Scott Morris

Chief Warrant Officer Charles Heatherly, Jr.

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1

Cmdr. Lou Cariello

Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 2

Construction Mechanic 1st Class Jerry A. Young

Texas Honors for NMCB 22

By Lt. Cmdr. Michelle Breaux, NMCB 22

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 22, NAS Joint Reserve Base in Fort Worth, Texas, received two prestigious honors from the Department of Texas Reserve Officer's Association (ROA) Sea Services.

The entire battalion received the Department of Texas ROA Sea Services Unit of the Year Award for 2005, based on significant accomplishments supporting the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force in Al Anbar Province, Iraq. Cmdr. Robert C. Burton, Oklahoma City, Okla., is NMCB 22's Commanding Officer.

Lt.j.g. Ray Mendez, El Paso, Texas, was selected as the ROA Sea Services Outstanding Junior Officer for 2005. Lt.j.g. Mendez served as the embarkation officer and Sierra Company Commander during the battalion's Iraq deployment. He was responsible for standing up two convoy security teams, leading to mission success during deployment.

NMCB 22 is comprised of Seabees from nine detachments throughout Texas and one in Oklahoma.



SEABEE COURIER RECEIVES CHINFO AWARD

By Bonnie Lindley-McGerr,
Deputy PAO/Editor,
Seabee Courier, NCBC Gulfport
Seabees, civilian employees,
family members and retirees

of Naval
Construction
Battalion
Center

(NCBC) Gulfport again have a winning newsletter for all the latest news and information. *Seabee Courier* was recently recognized by the Chief of Naval Information (CHINFO) with an Honorable Mention in

the Merit Awards Program.

The *Courier* is a 24-page, bi-weekly publication (print and electronic) with a circulation of approximately 3,500. Articles and photos are received from a variety of local sources, as well as through battalion journalists/photographers (NMCB 1, 7, 74 and 133). All production is

performed in-house, and is published by civilian enterprise contract with a local newspaper.

In 2001, *Seabee Courier* received its first CHINFO Merit Award — 1st Place in the Civilian Enterprise Newspaper (tabloid format) category. The publication first hit newsstands on July 29, 1966.

OPERATION HARDWOOD BRINGS NCAA HOOPS TO KUWAIT

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

Seven members of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 had a taste of "The Big Dance" during the Operation Hardwood II basketball tournament in late May.

Although not the true Final Four, that same collegiate excitement was in the air as Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines traveled to Camp Arifjan from around Kuwait to compete for top honors in Operation Hardwood, now in its second year. The competition is a five-day, round-robin tournament among 12 teams, each comprised of 13 players (men and women), selected after a series of tryouts.

This year, 12 NCAA basketball coaches and sports personalities traveled to Camp Arifjan to coach the military teams, including Jim Crews, U.S. Military Academy; Reggie Minton, former U.S. Air Force Academy basketball coach; Billy Lange, U.S. Naval Academy; and Jay Bilas,



Hospital Corpsman 1st Class (center) Carletus Patrick, assigned to NMCB 7, goes up for a jump shot during the semi-finals of Operation Hardwood II.

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

ESPN analyst and former Duke player.

NMCB 7 players included Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Carletus Patrick, Equipment Operator 3rd Class Lafredrick Hopkins and Builder Constructionman Sean Brinson representing the Camp Arifjan Renegades; Builder 3rd Class Kelmore Batt and Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Joseph Larson playing for the Camp Virginia Scorpions; Equipment Operator Constructionman Tylor

Blasko on the Camp Virginia Vipers team; and Construction Electrician 3rd Class Chad Carter playing for the Camp Arifjan Rock.

Before the tip-off in the championship game, all 12 coaches marched out to mid-court in desert BDUs and saluted the troops. Needless to say, the crowd roared with approval.

In the hard-fought championship game — the lead changed hands several times — it came down to which team could hit the free

throws. In the end, the Renegades outlasted the Heat, 55 to 51.

"It was a great experience and such a huge morale booster," Patrick said. "It was great not only because our team won, but because our whole command supported us. Not only did they give us time off to participate, but they came to the games and cheered us on."

By Jerry Major, Command Master Chief, 1st Naval Construction Division

THIS issue of *Seabee* Magazine features a story on *United Through Reading*, a quality-of-life program for military families that helps keep parents and children connected while separated during long deployments, through the medium of reading aloud on video. Since its inception during the Persian Gulf War, more than 100,000 Navy and Marine Corps personnel and their families have participated in this program.



U.S. Navy Photo

Through this initiative, service members who are separated from their families due to deployment read stories on video and then send the tape or DVD home to their child. The Family Literacy Foundation trains deploying personnel and homefront volunteers to manage *United Through Reading* while the unit is deployed. Deployed volunteers promote the program, schedule recording sessions and provide coaching tips to participants. Homefront volunteers initially assist with creating an onsite library of children's books and then promote the program during deployment.

Our Seabee chaplains have done a great job managing and encouraging participation in this program. Seabees now have access to *United Through Reading* facilities at many locations: Okinawa; Guam; Camp Arifjan, Kuwait; Al Asad and Fallujah in Iraq; and Djibouti. We will soon have additional recording suites set up in Camp Moreell, Kuwait, and Balad, Iraq. Equipment is also available to our personnel and their families in homeport at Gulfport and Port Hueneme. The 1st Naval Construction Division has recently arranged to purchase new digital video equipment that produces DVDs rather than videotapes, since many households have converted to the newer format.

Reading aloud with children has been shown to be the single best predictor of a child's future academic success. It also strengthens the bond between adult and child, and provides a bridge for communication and sharing. A General Accounting Office (GAO) survey has shown that after pay issues, the most frequently mentioned reason for leaving the military is the frequency of deployments and subsequent effect on time spent with family.

United Through Reading is one way to help improve quality of life during deployment. The benefits for this simple, yet powerful program include children and parents feeling much closer, children having less fear about Mom's or Dad's absence, and higher morale for all involved. I encourage all deployed Seabees with young children to take advantage of this highly rewarding program.

Construimus Batuimus.



LOOKING AHEAD

**IN THE NEXT ISSUE
OF SEABEE:**

**Gulfport...
One Year Later**

**Ship to Shore:
Amphibious
Construction
Battalions**

**USNS Mercy's
Humanitarian
Mission Continues**

**(LEFT)
Seabees assigned to
Amphibious Construction
Battalion (ACB) 2 clean
up debris from Hurricane
Katrina in Biloxi, Miss.,
in September 2005.
U.S. Navy Photo**



NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND
SEABEE MAGAZINE (Code PA)
1322 Patterson Avenue, SE
Suite 1000
Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5065