

UNITED STATES NAVY

SEABEE

SPRING 2008

A Partnership of Trust in Iraq

ALSO INSIDE:

The Soft War on Terror

**HSV 2 Swift Visits
U.S. Naval Academy**

**Seabees of State:
World's-eye View**

WE BUILD ★ WE FIGHT

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ON THE COVER

ABU3 Adam Turbeville, NMCB 1, checks the level on a truss while working on the construction of a fellowship hall at Camp Ramadi, Iraq, in December. The hall will be used to host conferences, celebrations and worship services. NMCB 1's deployment covered several locations in the Middle East, Afghanistan and Micronesia, as the Seabees provided responsive construction support to U.S. military operations.

Photo by MC2 Chad Runge

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FINAL WORD

NMCB 3 'Bees reflect on the 66th Birthday of the Naval Construction Force

WE BUILD ★ WE FIGHT

In this issue, our cover feature focuses on one of the key topics discussed in the State of the Union address this past January. President George W. Bush said, “[In Iraq] our objective in the coming year is to sustain and build on the gains we made in 2007, while transitioning to the next phase of our strategy. American troops are shifting from leading operations, to partnering with Iraqi forces, and, eventually, to a protective overwatch mission.” On a daily basis, our Seabees are forming professional partnerships and personal relationships with members of the Iraqi army, resulting in bonds of trust, mutual respect and success.

Indeed, it is the individual Seabee, making the daily choice to stay Navy and continue to work for the United States that keeps this nation safe and broadens our alliances around the globe. It is in recognition of this commitment that all Seabees make every few years – as well as of the 66th birthday of the Naval Construction Force – that we devote our Final Word in this issue. Spend a few moments and read what being a Seabee means to a few individual ‘Bees. It is truly a reflection of what America is all about: COURAGE - HONOR - COMMITMENT.

In this issue as well, see for yourself the COURAGE Seabees display working in the Middle East as we help rebuild and restore the region for eventual Iraqi provincial control. And, we introduce you to the *Soft War on Terror* through a range of humanitarian exercises in Battalion Updates around the world.

Our historical pages feature the 4th Special Naval Construction Battalion (the original NMCB 4) which first exemplified HONOR in 1943 as it began a ‘tour-of-duty’ leading to the Guadalcanal Campaign.

Also, look at the faces of our Seabees in the Training section as they show all of us what COMMITMENT looks like in action during simulated missions, field exercises and squad competitions.

Finally, being a Seabee doesn’t necessarily end with a final tour of duty or retirement. In Mail Call, one Seabee from the 70s writes about the impact being a Seabee has had on his life. His words provide an historical echo to the Seabees’ comments on the last page of this issue.

As we continue to tell the Seabee story, send us your news and profile subjects, as well as photos*, comments and candid feedback. Contact us via...

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Thank you for your continued interest in the magazine and Happy Birthday, Seabees!

Sincerely,
George L. Markfelder
Team Leader, Seabee Magazine

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



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EDITORIAL

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Building a Framework of Trust



In a country held captive by war, civil uprisings and political unrest, words like 'trust' carry no weight. The Seabees quickly learned that the personal relationships developed with their Iraqi counterparts were an essential component in helping them gain the trust that would make the difference.

(Continued on next page)

AN IRAQI PARTNERSHIP

MAIL CALL

To whom it may concern,

I just found the website for the Navy Seabees – it brings back a lot of memories. I was stationed in Gulfport, Miss., for training in the fall of 1972, and transferred to the 31st NCR in December 1972. I joined NMCB 5 in 1973, and stayed with the unit until I left the military in 1975. I enjoyed my three years in the Seabees and have always valued the training I received. I joined when I was 17 years old and left just before my 21st birthday. I went into the Seabees as a constructionman recruit and left as a builder 3rd class. I have saved hundreds of pictures I took while traveling in the Navy and still have my tour books.

After the military, I worked construction trades full time for a few years while attending college on the G.I. Bill. I obtained a degree in law enforcement and am retiring after 30 years as

a deputy sheriff this fall. I have used the skills I learned in the Seabees, i.e., military training, disaster recovery training, first aid, carpentry, concrete work, leadership skills and many others, throughout my career. Since leaving the Seabees I also have had a part-time business in home repair and remodeling.

I'm glad that many young men and women are still finding a career in the Seabees. I want to thank you and your troops for carrying on the tradition of the Navy Seabees and for helping to keep our country and other countries who value freedom safe from those who would like to destroy us.

Sincerely,
Timothy Roy McGough
Deputy Sheriff
Hennepin County, Minnesota

Building a Framework of Trust

NMCB 1 Forms Professional Bonds With Iraqi Counterparts

By MC2 Ja'lon A. Rhinehart, NMCB 1 Public Affairs

As part of continued training efforts, Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1 were augmented on Oct. 17 to the 7th Iraqi Division Military Training Team (MiTT), a combined military organization comprised of U.S. and Iraqi military personnel. The battalion had been tasked to provide expert construction-related technical training to the 'jundee,' or enlisted Iraqi army soldiers.

Nearly a month later, a professional bond had formed between the Seabees and their Iraqi army counterparts. NMCB 1 taught them basic Seabee skills, including working with electricity, generators, welding and basic construction, such as building Southwest Asia (SWA) huts.

In a country held captive by war, civil uprisings and political unrest, words like 'trust' carry no weight. The Seabees quickly learned that the personal relationships developed with their Iraqi counterparts were an essential component in helping them gain the trust that would make the difference.

"Many of these soldiers served under a military culture that discouraged personal motivation and initiative, up and down the chain of command," said Utilitiesman 3rd Class Michael Gazinski. "We are here to change that culture. However, providing the training and encouragement that they can accomplish the mission is just not enough. It is imperative that we develop a strong relationship so that they learn to trust us. Then, and only then, will they accept and put into practice what they have learned from us."

Unlike with the Seabees, Iraqi military specialties are not broken down into specific job classifications, but are generally combined. The skill sets, however, remain the same. Many of the Iraqi jundee acquired the basic knowledge of their trades as children, from their fathers, but they were limited in formal education due to lack of available resources. Working with the American troops has provided the opportunity to become more proficient in their specific trades and allowed them to build the confidence that comes with working on new ideas and equipment.

"I feel like a new man; I want them [the Seabees] to stay so I can learn more," said Hashim Ali Abas, a lead mechanic with the Iraqi army. "I have been a mechanic since I was 7 years old and began working with my father, but this experience has allowed me to work with new equipment and learn skills that I didn't have until now. The American Seabees work with me. I have an idea, they may have one better; but we talk and learn from each other."

The relationship that has developed between the Seabees and their Iraqi counterparts is not a secret around the base. After hours, the Seabees often try to talk and learn Arabic as they introduce the Iraqis to different American foods. The Iraqi officers who are not directly involved with the technical training, but more with the logistics of the program, are very encouraged by what they hear

Continued on page 6



(Above) SW2 Timothy Sims (left), NMCB 1, provides instruction to a 'jundee' (far right), an Iraqi army enlisted soldier, as he practices cutting with an oxy-acetylene torch at Camp Blue Diamond in Iraq, November 2007.

(Previous page) A Seabee from NMCB 1 (left) works together with an Iraqi soldier to move trusses into place as they complete the roofing structure of an SWA hut. NMCB 1's recent deployment included several locations in the Middle East and Afghanistan, as the Seabees provided responsive military construction support to U.S. military operations.

Photo by MC2 Chad Runge



“...at this time, they are able to learn so much from the Seabees – it is still not just one side or the other; it’s together.”

Lt. Col. Hassau Farhar, Iraqi army



(Left) Iraqi enlisted soldiers, called ‘jundee,’ practice techniques taught by SW2 Timothy Sims (far left), NMCB 1, during a prefabrication training evolution on board Camp Blue Diamond, Iraq.

Photos by MC2 Ja’lon A. Rhinehart

Building a Framework of Trust



(At left) The late Sheik Abdul-Satter Abu Risha (left) and LCDR Robert Gersh, resident officer in charge of construction, Public Works Department, Brunswick, Maine, NAVFAC, prior to mid-September 2007.

U.S. Navy photo

War Hits Home for ROICC

By MCSN (AW) Nathan Anderson, NAS Brunswick Patroller Staff Writer

LCDR Robert Gersh, Brunswick's resident officer in charge of construction (ROICC), Public Works Department Maine, Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC), Mid-Atlantic, was "shocked and saddened" to hear that his friend and former co-worker in Iraq, Sheik Abdul-Satter Abu Risha, was killed by a roadside bomb on Sept. 13.

The sheik was in his late 30s when the bomb exploded and killed him near his home in Ramadi in Iraq's Anbar Province. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, for which Gersh was the contracting officer, had awarded a number of contracts on Jan. 23, 2006 to an Iraqi construction company owned by Sattar Abu Risha. The sheik had been in hiding after his brother, Sheik Mohammed, had been assassinated in 2005. Still, he worked for the betterment of the Iraqi people by helping to found a Sunni group called the Anbar Salvation Council to fight the Iraqi insurgency.

"Here was an individual who, despite tragedy in his own family, was brave in his willingness to step forward," Gersh said. "It's one thing to enter a contract with the coalition; it's another to take it a step further and actively fight the insurgency to identify and root out al-Qaeda in Iraq.

"Nevertheless," he added, "it is heartening that brave Iraqis are still willing to stand up against the insurgents and continue to work to improve conditions [in Iraq]."

Continued from page 4

from their subordinates.

"The relationships between the Seabees and the jundee are very close," said Lt. Col. Hassau Farhar, Iraqi army. "Becoming friends, showing pictures, sharing; it's a great way to perpetuate teamwork in the field. Although at this time they are able to learn so much from the Seabees – it is still not just one side or the other; it's together."

For the Seabees of NMCB 1, this is an experience they will never forget. They have been given the chance to learn about a new culture and effect change in a world of uncertainty. For the troops, the responsibility is not one that weighs heavily on their shoulders, but one they accept fully, head up and chest out.

"Developing a personal relationship with and gaining the trust of the Iraqi soldiers is critical to our success," said Equipment Operator 3rd Class Brandon Martin. "Simply put, if they succeed, we succeed."

(Below) An Iraqi army enlisted soldier works with CM3 Michael Dembinski (right), NMCB 1, to remove a Humvee wheel at Camp Blue Diamond, Iraq.

Photo by MC2 Ja'lon A. Rhinehart



GWOT UPDATE

Al Taqaddum Runway Fully Operational After Two Years

By LT Eric Vega, 30th NCR Public Affairs

In early January, the 30th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) (Forward), along with members from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward), 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) and Marine Wing Support Squadron 272, commemorated the official completion of repairs to the Al Taqaddum airfield in Iraq.

The airfield repairs began Jan. 2, 2006, and spanned the deployment of four NCRs and five NMCBs.

NMCB 1 completed construction repairs one month ahead of schedule on Dec. 13, 2007, overcoming difficulties in sourcing concrete of sufficient quality locally and ensuring daily coordination with air operations to minimize disruptions to the flightline.

At project completion, Seabees expended more than 12,300 man-days of engineering and construction efforts resulting in a \$4.3 million cost savings to Multi-National Forces-West (MNF-W). The Seabees placed 8,200+ cubic meters of concrete, equivalent to more than nine miles of single-lane roadway.

The completed repairs not only restored the airfield to fully operational condition, but increased the airfield capabilities to accommodate MNF-W needs at this vital logistical hub.

NMCB 1

(Below, from left to right) Brig. Gen. J.A. Kessler, commanding general, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Fwd), Brig. Gen. Timothy C. Hanifen, commanding general, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (Fwd), and CAPT Hans Probst, commander, 30th NCR (Fwd), address Seabees from NMCB 1 and Marines from Marine Wing Support Squadron 272 at the official opening of a newly renovated runway at the Al Taqaddum airfield in Iraq on Jan. 8.

Photo by EO1 Robert Kendall





NMCB 1 Supports Critical Construction Efforts in Al Anbar Province

(Left) BU1 Billy Thomas (left) and SK1 Joseph Sanchez, NMCB 1, pick up targets prior to weapons-familiarization training at Camp Taqaddum, Iraq.

Photo by MC2 Chad Runge

(Right) Commander, 22nd NCR, CAPT Robert A. McLean (left) speaks with SKCS Melvin Lawrence, NMCB 1, during a recent visit by the 22nd and 30th NCR commanders around the Ramadi area.

Photo by MC2 Ja'lon A. Rhinehart

(Below, left) BU1 Billy Thomas, NMCB 1, lays out ammunition prior to weapons-familiarization training at Camp Taqaddum.

Photo by MC2 Chad Runge

(Below) SW3 Brandie Rhoads, NMCB 1, grinds angle iron for a tire rack at Ar Ramadi, Iraq in October. NMCB 1 is part of nearly 1,100 Sailors and Marines supporting critical construction efforts in the Al Anbar province of Iraq as part of the 30th NCR.

Photo by MC2 Ja'lon A. Rhinehart





Monster Garage Open for Business

NMCB 15 

SW2 Samuel Rampton, NMCB 15, uses metal inert gas to weld frames late into the night at Camp Fallujah, Iraq. The frames are used for grates to block culverts, denying access to insurgents, a favored site for improvised explosive devices' emplacement. These 'monster garage' steelworkers average a 12-hour workday, but have been known to put in up to 20-hour days to meet operational requirements.

Photo by EO1 Anthony Soares



ACB 2 Constructs Bases, Assists Army in Overcoming Logistical Challenges

By YN3 Danielle Sharp, ACB 2



(Left to right) BU2 Steven Laucher, EO1 Mike Turton and BU2 Doug Shaner, ACB 2, build a deck for one of 14 MGPTS Large tents at Checkpoint 4 in the Wasit Province in Iraq.

U.S. Navy photo

Seabees from Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 2, currently deployed to Al Kut, Iraq in support of Operation *Iraqi Freedom*, are leading the Joint U.S. Engineer Force after being selected by the U.S. Army to do so in the logistically complicated and geographically isolated environment of the Wasit Province. Directly benefitting U.S. and coalition forces, their contributions are a key part of broader efforts in supporting the transition to a peaceful Iraq.

ACB 2 first reported to Forward Operating Base (FOB) Delta as part of the U.S. troop surge in spring 2007

as the first engineers on station. Their efforts soon earned the attention of the U.S. Army's 20th Engineering Brigade, the Tactical Commander for the detachment. ACB 2 assumed overall construction responsibility for six checkpoints and patrol bases, completing the projects ahead of schedule despite numerous logistical and coordination challenges.

Each four-acre base contains berthing for 200 troops, complete with force protection measures, air conditioning and a dining facility, along with a tactical operations center for command and control.

"The Seabees are an integral part of the Task Force Marne team," said Maj.

Gen. Rick Lynch commander, 3rd Infantry Division, commenting on the primary mission of his troops to block Iranian influence into Iraq. He explained the work Seabees are doing to build checkpoints and patrol bases along the major routes from Iran into Iraq is critical to the accomplishment of their mission. "The Seabees are making a difference every day," he said.

Demonstrating a true connection between coalition forces, ACB 2 engineers continue working on FOB Delta, and remain the 'engineers of choice' in Al Kut. With the Army's help, they will continue carrying out critical logistics support during Operation *Iraqi Freedom*.



ACB 2 completed Checkpoint Logistic Support Area ahead of schedule, contributing to troop surge success during Operation *Iraqi Freedom*.

U.S. Navy photo



Battalion Updates

SEABEES AROUND THE WORLD

The Soft War on Terror

“Humanitarian exercises are a major contributor to [fighting] the Global War on Terror without ever pulling a trigger.”

Chad Mitchell, Director, Theater Security Cooperation Program, 22nd NCR

Seabees in Peru

(Above) EO1 Manuel Gradillas, CBMU 202, shovels rocks to mix into concrete with the help of a local boy at Miguel Grau School, in Salaverry, Peru. CBMU 202 is embarked aboard the Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20), on a four-month humanitarian deployment to Latin America and the Caribbean providing medical treatment to a dozen countries.

Photo by MC2 Steven King



Regimental Theater Security Cooperation Program Combats Terrorism Around the World

By MCC (SCW) Jeffrey J. Pierce, 22nd NCR Public Affairs

Seabees make a difference around the globe, helping impoverished countries in need of hospitals, schools and even roads that these nations cannot afford. A team in charge of executing these missions contributes to fighting the war on terror by creating positive sentiments. The ‘Soft War on Terror’ – as the mission has come to be called – is rooted in the Theater Security Cooperation Program (TSCP) at the 22nd Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) and 25th NCR located aboard the Construction Battalion Center Gulfport, Miss. TSCP focuses its efforts on military exercises where Seabees’ skills can make a positive impact on local populations.

“What we do in TSCP is a preventive to war. If we can win the hearts and minds of friendly foreign nations, the hope is that this will prevent infiltration of future terrorist activity in that nation,” said Chad Mitchell, 22nd NCR’s TSCP director who manages exercises around the globe.

For military exercises in USSOUTHCOM and USNORTHCOM areas of operation, Mitchell coordinates with key personnel from Army and Air Force Joint Task Forces (JTFs)

for the initial planning, which can take up to 12 or 14 months.

“The Army or Air Force is the task force lead for these exercises and assists with MEDEVAC operations, as well as with the shipment of tools, equipment and personnel from Gulfport,” said Senior Chief German Sifuentes, an exercise planner for the 25th NCR.

According to Dave Young, 22nd NCR’s exercise planner for USEUCOM and USAFRICOM areas of operation, Seabees have built schoolhouses and medical clinics during past exercises. They have drilled water wells, improved roads and renovated existing facilities. This is in addition to informal projects initiated when Seabees find a need, such as repairing broken doors, adding fresh coats of paint and, if time permits, building basketball courts.

“Personnel from NMCB 40 have been tasked to be the Seabee element for this multinational exercise,” said Young. “In addition to routine community relations projects in several African nations, Seabees have been tasked with the construction of a

(Continued on following page)

- CBMU 202
- NMCB 40
- 22ND NCR
- 25TH NCR



Seabees in Ghana

The Soft War on Terror

(Continued from previous page)

medical clinic in Ghana. Once built, it will be staffed by local and Ghanaian navy physicians.”

Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU) 202 recently concluded a four-month community relations exercise in conjunction with the USNS Comfort where it deployed to 12 Latin American and Caribbean nations. CBMU 202 completed construction projects at 27 sites and improved the lives of thousands.

In addition to gaining the satisfaction of helping those less fortunate, Seabee units benefit greatly from their experience.

“We give [junior officers and senior enlisted] the tools to successfully plan for all aspects of contingency operations,” said Mitchell. “In turn, this experience will allow them to plan future operations and operate independently.”

For Seabees, putting their talent to good use may prove to be an effective weapon in combating future terrorists. “Humanitarian exercises are a major contributor to [fighting] the Global War on Terror without ever pulling a trigger,” Mitchell added.



As part of the Africa Partnership Station (APS), NMCB 40 Seabees hoist equipment from the amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43) to be used in building a medical clinic in Ghana in November, in support of more than 20 humanitarian assistance projects. The APS also hosted information exchanges and training with partner nations, during its seven-month deployment.

Photo by MC2 R.J. Stratchko

NMCB 40

Seabees Support Africa Partnership Station

By LT Elizabeth Durika, NMCB 40, LT Brandon Casperson and ENS Michael Hightower, NAVFAC EURSWA

Seabees from the Naval Facilities Engineering Command Europe and Southwest Asia (NAVFAC EURSWA) Public Works Department joined Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 40's team in supporting the Africa Partnership Station (APS). Representing an international team of military experts, APS includes African, European and American Sailors and Seabees, working together on the same staff toward a common goal of enhancing regional and maritime safety and security in West and Central Africa. APS staff is embarked on USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43) and will be visiting ports throughout western and central Africa, including Senegal, Ghana, Cameroon, Gabon and Sao Tome.

Seabees are supporting the APS mission on two fronts. Twenty Seabees from NMCB 40 are deployed to Tema, Ghana, to construct a new 3,300-square-foot medical clinic. The crew departed from Spain with more than \$3 million worth of equipment and supplies offloaded in Ghana.

Equally as important are the community relations (COMREL) projects. Seabees from NMCB 40 and NAVFAC EURSWA Rota embarked on USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43), joining the APS to plan and complete COMREL projects in every port the ship visits.

Although ships often complete COMREL projects, their scope is usually limited to painting and minor repairs; however, by employing Seabees, scopes can be expanded to include concrete, electrical and maintenance work. As Seabees travel through each port, they are also on the lookout for projects for their next visit. By identifying needs early, materials can be ordered and staged in advance, allowing for more time on site during the port visit and thus, completing larger-scale projects.

UCT 1, NMCB 133 Construct Sao Tome Boat Ramp



By BUC (SCW/DV) Brad C. Ott, UCT 1

Sao Tome

Seabees in

Responding to the need for increased maritime safety and security in the Gulf of Guinea,

Commander Naval Forces Europe requested Underwater Construction Team (UCT)1 and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133 to construct a 330-foot by 26-foot cast-in-place boat ramp on the West African nation of Sao Tome and Principe.

UCT 1 installed 25 grade beams and deck planking, and managed all elevations above and below the water line throughout the construction process. NMCB 133 provided all camp support, messing and CESE to maintain construction operations.

This construction project was in direct support of the U.S. Navy's Maritime Domain Awareness program, the centerpiece of the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Strategy, aimed at enhancing the security of the maritime areas.



EA1 (SCW/DV) Christopher Munch (foreground) directs the placement of a grade beam while BU2 (SCW/DV) Joshua Sisson (rear left) and SW1 (SCW/DV) Anthony Wright wait at a safe distance to check its resting position underwater.

Photo by BUC (SCW/DV) Brad C. Ott

NMCB 1 Donates Bicycles to Underprivileged Children



By MC2 Demetrius Kennon, NMCB 1 Public Affairs

Guam

Seabees in

Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1, donated six new bicycles to underprivileged children at Chief Brodie Memorial Elementary

School (CBMES) in Tamuning, Guam, on Dec. 18.

"While we were at CBMES for the 47th Annual Commemoration Ceremony in October, the faculty mentioned that the last battalion here on station during the holidays had donated two bicycles," said Senior Chief Builder E. Dan Walker, the detachment's senior enlisted leader. "I brought up the idea to the messes when we returned to camp."

"[The petty officers second class] were so interested we ended up getting two bikes," said Builder 2nd Class Deanna Whelply, 2nd Class Petty Officers' Association president.

The 1st Class Petty Officers' Association also raised enough money for two bicycles. The chiefs and officers worked together and bought two as well.

"Seeing the kids smile is what I was looking forward to," said Construction Electrician 1st Class Jason Knorr, vice president of the 1st Class Petty Officers' Association and a father of two. "It reminds me of my kids, so it helps me with being away. And it makes me feel good knowing that we made the kids happy."

Because of service members like Chief Builder Clifford Brodie, who started the construction of CBMES in 1960, the military continues to build upon the legacy of "giving back to the community."

"We're a part of the community, right?" said Walker. "No matter where we go, no matter what we do, we're a part of the community, and we can never forget that."



BU2 Deanna Whelply (far left) and BU3 Taylor Crow (far right), NMCB 1, pose with a student and her new bicycle at Chief Brodie Memorial Elementary School in Tamuning, Guam.

Photo by MC2 Demetrius Kennon



Talon Vision Continues Humanitarian and Training Mission

Source articles by MC2 Michael B. Lavender, NMCB 7 Public Affairs, and Lance Cpl. Tyler J. Hlavac, MCB Camp Butler

Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 departed Okinawa, Japan on Oct. 6, for a joint-service humanitarian mission to the Philippines. The mission, *Talon Vision 2007*, is an annual bilateral exercise conducted between U.S. Forces and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) designed to improve cooperative military efforts between the two countries.

“*Talon Vision* is a community relations project and training opportunity with the Marines of the 171st and 172nd Marine Wing Support Squadron to provide citizens of the Laguna Province with better living conditions,” said Steelworker 1st Class (SCW) Jeremy Nettleton, NMCB 7 detachment operations officer.

The 29-Seabee detachment worked on three projects: placing six latrine-style restroom facilities over pre-existing structures, fitting 16 hut-style houses with wooden floors, and improving a road that the jungle had nearly reclaimed.

The Marines and Seabees put down five kilometers of a road which would ultimately be a projected length of 13 kilometers.

“We’re looking forward to helping these people on a level that will hold up to the expectations that the CARAT [Cooperation Afloat Readiness Training] and Pacific Partnership missions have laid down for us,” said Senior Chief Equipment Operator (SCW) James Sweet, detachment assistant officer in charge. “We want to win the hearts and minds of the people we help on this contingency mission.”

Seabees in the Philippines

Philippine army Cpl. Jose Dapat, AFP’s 51st Engineer Battalion, operates a grader as SN Justin Holsinger, NMCB 7, looks on during a civil engineering project to build a farm-to-market road for farmers in San Juan, Philippines.

Photo by NMCB 7 Public Affairs



Seabees on the Gulf Coast



CWO Commissioning

Elsbeth Hodges pins the Chief Warrant Officer device insignia, along with the Civil Engineer Corps collar device, on her husband, CWO2 Vincent Hodges, during a ceremony at the Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport, Miss., on Oct. 1.

Photo by MC2 Gregory N. Juday



Seabees Support Habitat for Humanity

By CE3 Micheal R. Parks and MC2 Erick S. Holmes,
NMCB 11 Public Affairs

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11 have partnered with Habitat for Humanity since July 2007, building houses in the Mississippi Gulf Coast area.

“This is what we do – help people,” said Construction Electrician 2nd Class (SCW) Alan J. Cole. “The devastation [following Hurricane Katrina] was catastrophic, and anything we can do, we need to do.”

This type of community relations (COMREL) project provides multiple benefits. It provides Gulfport community families with new homes who could not otherwise afford them. (Families receiving homes pay for them, but at no profit to Habitat for Humanity.) The type of project also provides on-the-job experience for the ‘Bees.

Finding the opportunity was the first step. “We’re a new battalion,” explained LTJG David D. Kim, NMCB 11 chaplain. “Most battalions inherit COMREL, but we had to start from scratch. When [NMCB 11] stood up, we had no relationship with local schools or charities.”

“[NMCB 11’s] work has been absolutely tremendous. They are conscientious about their tasks and work,” said Kent Adcock, director of community relations, Mississippi Gulf Coast Habitat for Humanity. “The supervisors feel blessed to have the Seabees working with them and can’t thank them enough.”

“NMCB 11 is getting off on the right foot,” Kim said, “making our own footprint in both the civilian and Seabee communities.”

NMCB 11



Seabees Lend Help to Mississippi Veteran

MC2 Erick S. Holmes, NMCB 11
Public Affairs

The citizens of the Gulf Coast still feel the effects of Hurricane Katrina on a daily basis. John Storms, Bay St. Louis, Miss., was driving his RV back to Mississippi, towing a trailer packed with all of the belongings he had quickly gathered before the storm hit, when he lost control of his vehicle. The vehicle and trailer fell over an 800-foot ledge leaving Storms – a Vietnam Air Force veteran – wheelchair-bound.

“I had help from my church and teenage volunteers

to build a ramp so I could get in and out of my home easier,” Storms said. The drawback was that the ramp led directly to his front yard where the uneven terrain made getting back and forth to his driveway a daily challenge.

Then on Saturday, Oct. 20, two dozen volunteers from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11 added to Storms’ ramp. Spending a weekend morning, the ‘Bees of 11 placed, leveled and edged 17 yards of concrete, creating a sidewalk that starts at the ramp, passes through the yard and connects to a new driveway.

Storms recognized the military teamwork of the Seabees. “A well-oiled machine is all I could think of when I saw them start,” he said.

“All I feel is shock and awe, as corny as it sounds,” said Storms. “This is a blessing, and I’m thankful the Seabees spent their day off to help me. When I think about how they helped, it makes me swell up, and I try not to get emotional.”

(Above) BU2 John Bachik, NMCB 11, levels a concrete driveway at the home of John Storms, Bay St. Louis, Miss. The new driveway and sidewalk makes entering and exiting the house easier for the wheelchair-bound veteran.

Photo by MC2 Erick S. Holmes.



(Left) BUCN Daniel Hubbert, NMCB 11, helps frame one of many houses constructed by Seabees last summer, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity, for families in need throughout the Gulf Coast area.

Photo by MC2 Erick S. Holmes



ACB 1 Mobilizes Task Force *Bulldozer*

By LT Andrew Cline, ACB 1

Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 1 deployed Task Force *Bulldozer* on Oct. 26, in support of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection’s (CAL Fire’s) firefighting efforts in San Diego County, Calif.

Task Force *Bulldozer* provided support to CAL Fire by supplementing existing, but over-taxed, firefighting equipment and resources. These additional resources increased CAL Fire’s capability and allowed much-needed preventive maintenance to be performed on in-service equipment.

There were several wildfires burning in San Diego County, which has one of the highest military populations in the nation. Many of the fires were minimally contained after several days of around-the-clock firefighting efforts. Among the most under-served conflagrations was the Harris Fire, which broke out around the city of Potrero, southeast of San Diego. *Bulldozer* was assigned to support fighting that fire.

Task Force *Bulldozer*, comprised of four bulldozers, two water trucks and various support vehicles and equipment, was manned with two 20-Seabee crews that conducted 24-hour operations for approximately three to four days.

Training on basic firefighting, personal protective equipment and other mission-related topics was provided by CAL Fire and the California Department of Forestry at U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. In addition to the fire crews, ACB 1’s Commanding Officer CAPT Jim Wink and Operations Officer LCDR Scott Cloyd attended the training.

“[The training] provided our troops with a basic level of wildfire knowledge and personal safety techniques,” said Cloyd. “The training was extremely valuable in ensuring their success and safety.”

The support provided by Task Force *Bulldozer* was not front-line firefighting, but rather focused on the construction of fire breaks and on supplying water to CAL Fire trucks coming from the front lines. ACB 1’s heavy equipment and Seabee crew made it ideally suited for this mission.

In staffing this task force, ACB 1 had an overwhelming number of volunteers wanting to help out with this mission. The “Can Do” spirit of the Seabees is clearly alive and well at ACB 1.

“This is why I joined the Navy,” said Equipment Operator Constructionman Apprentice Jody Vandermolen. “To help people who need it.”

Seabees in California

(Below) A Seabee attached to ACB 1 monitors his crews’ bulldozers as they work to clear away dry shrubs. ACB 1 Seabees worked side-by-side with civilian firefighters in Hauser Canyon to construct firebreaks and safeguard the town of Campo, Calif.

Photo by MC2 Joy Marie Kirch



NMCB 74

NMCB 74 is First to Train on Atlas Drill

By MC2 Gregory N. Juday,
NMCB 74 Public Affairs

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74's water well detail traveled to Camp Shelby, Miss., in October to train on a new drill for their upcoming 2008 deployment.

It is the first time any battalion on the East Coast has used the Atlas COPCO T2W drill, and it has not been without its share of challenges.

"There have been a few problems incorporating old support equipment with the new rig," said Equipment Operator 2nd Class Steven Barczak, "but through Seabee ingenuity we figure it out and get the mission done."

Prior to Camp Shelby, NMCB 74 sent several Seabees to water well drilling technician school at the Naval Construction Training Center, Port Hueneme, Calif.'s detail China Lake.

"It was a great learning experience," said Equipment Operator 2nd Class Arturo Cruz, "though there was a lot of information, along with many long days. The knowledge gained is truly helping out here in real-time scenarios."

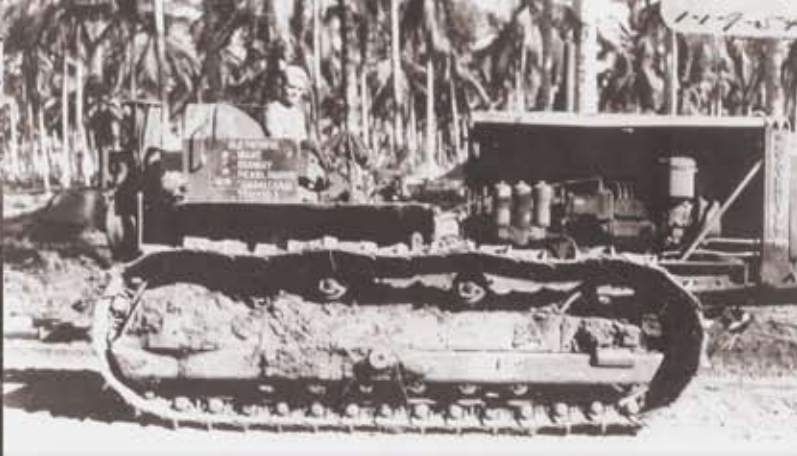
Overall, the experience for the water well team is a well-perceived learning opportunity that will help the 'Bees not only during their 2008 deployment, but with their careers inside the Naval Construction Force.



Seabees attached to NMCB 74's water well detail drill a 200-foot hole with an Atlas COPCO T2W at Camp Shelby, Miss., in mid-October.

Photo By MC2 Gregory N. Juday

Seabees in Mississippi




First Timers

The 4th Special Naval Construction Battalion

Sixty-five years ago as the Seabees were still building their reputation within the Navy, the 4th Special Naval Construction Battalion – the original Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4 – was contributing its chapter to what was fast becoming the Seabee legend.



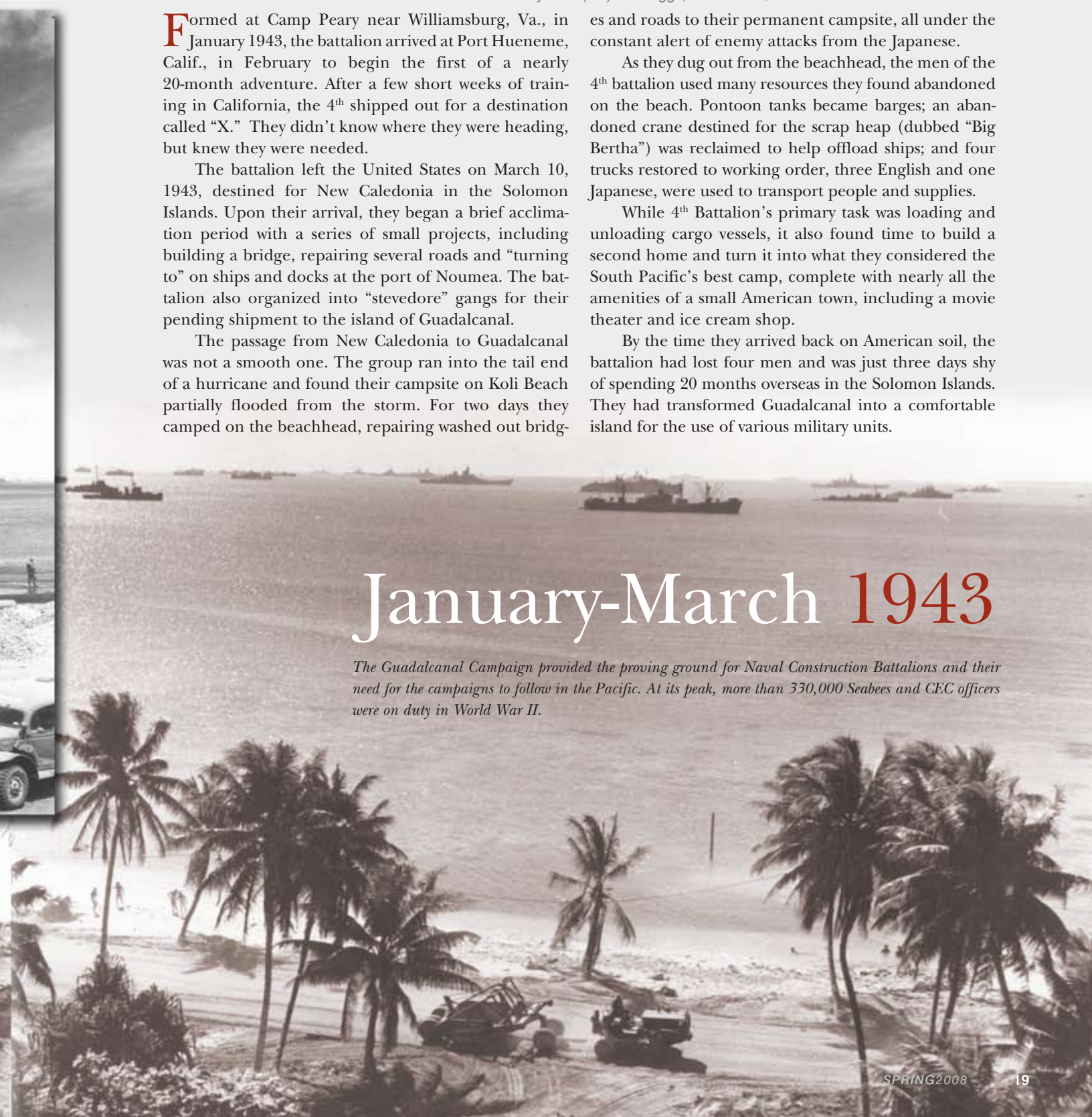


(Opposite, clockwise from top left) New recruits arrive at Naval Construction Battalion Training Center, Camp Peary, Williamsburg, Va., the beginning of the battalion's journey; A bulldozer without a blade, known as 'Old Faithful' to the Seabees, pictured on the island of Tulagi, 1943. Note the other islands visited painted on the side, just beneath the driver – among them, Guadalcanal; Liberty ships alongside a pier built by Seabees on the island of New Caledonia in the Solomon Islands, February 1943; Seabees on Guadalcanal testing their new railroad, constructed in three days; Seabees unload logs at a sawmill on Guadalcanal, January 1943.

(This page) Pacific Fleet warships anchor off the beach in the Solomon Islands as a Seabee crew builds an advanced base.

Sources: 4th Special Battalion Cruisebook and additional resources from the Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, D.C..

By MC1 (SW) Kurt Riggs, NAVFAC HQ Public Affairs and Communications



Formed at Camp Peary near Williamsburg, Va., in January 1943, the battalion arrived at Port Hueneme, Calif., in February to begin the first of a nearly 20-month adventure. After a few short weeks of training in California, the 4th shipped out for a destination called "X." They didn't know where they were heading, but knew they were needed.

The battalion left the United States on March 10, 1943, destined for New Caledonia in the Solomon Islands. Upon their arrival, they began a brief acclimation period with a series of small projects, including building a bridge, repairing several roads and "turning to" on ships and docks at the port of Noumea. The battalion also organized into "stevedore" gangs for their pending shipment to the island of Guadalcanal.

The passage from New Caledonia to Guadalcanal was not a smooth one. The group ran into the tail end of a hurricane and found their campsite on Koli Beach partially flooded from the storm. For two days they camped on the beachhead, repairing washed out bridg-

es and roads to their permanent campsite, all under the constant alert of enemy attacks from the Japanese.

As they dug out from the beachhead, the men of the 4th battalion used many resources they found abandoned on the beach. Pontoon tanks became barges; an abandoned crane destined for the scrap heap (dubbed "Big Bertha") was reclaimed to help offload ships; and four trucks restored to working order, three English and one Japanese, were used to transport people and supplies.

While 4th Battalion's primary task was loading and unloading cargo vessels, it also found time to build a second home and turn it into what they considered the South Pacific's best camp, complete with nearly all the amenities of a small American town, including a movie theater and ice cream shop.

By the time they arrived back on American soil, the battalion had lost four men and was just three days shy of spending 20 months overseas in the Solomon Islands. They had transformed Guadalcanal into a comfortable island for the use of various military units.

January-March 1943

The Guadalcanal Campaign provided the proving ground for Naval Construction Battalions and their need for the campaigns to follow in the Pacific. At its peak, more than 330,000 Seabees and CEC officers were on duty in World War II.



CNO Visits CBC Gulfport

CNO ADM Gary Roughead answers questions during an All Hands call with Seabees of Construction Battalion Center (CBC), Gulfport, Miss., on Jan. 11. The CNO's Gulfport visit was part of an eight-day trip to several installations on the Gulf Coast.

Photo by MCSN Jeffrey R. Miltzer

Change of Camp Ceremony in Guam



(Above) LT Mark Powell, NMCB 1 assistant officer in charge and operations officer, leads his detachment in a change of camp ceremony at Camp Covington aboard Naval Base Guam, Dec. 21. After 90 days of a six-month deployment, NMCB 1 Seabees and an additional detachment from San Nicolas Island, Calif., joined counterparts in Southwest Asia and Afghanistan to continue providing responsive military construction support.

(Top right) LCDR Michael Mihaly, NMCB 1 officer in charge, gives a speech while the detachment's senior enlisted leader, BUCS E. Dan Walker, looks on during the change of camp ceremony in Guam.

Photos by MC2 Demetrius Kennon



NMCB 1 Career Counselor Reaches \$1 Million Milestone

By MC2 Chad Runge, NMCB 1 Public Affairs

On Oct. 4, Chief Navy Counselor James Brady helped the Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1 post their one-millionth dollar in selective reenlistment bonuses since his arrival to the command in January 2006.

To some, \$1 million is an extraordinary amount of money. But for Brady the dollar amount is only the mark of his latest milestone.

For a command with only 650 personnel, the \$1 million mark is well ahead of the power curve. Though he is NMCB 1's only rated career counselor, Brady is quick to mention that this is not something he has accomplished on his own.

"Nothing in career development is possible without active involvement from every facet of the chain of command," said Brady. "Over the last year, NMCB 1 has had a fully functional career development team (CDT) of up to 32 counselors. Not to mention a supporting and fully engaged wardroom, chiefs' mess, and First Class Petty Officers' Association."

With the assistance of his highly motivated team, Brady has boosted the battalion's retention rates in the last two years. This year's retention was a spectacular 26 percent increase overall from last fiscal year (FY).

"I can't say enough great things about our company and detachment counselors," he added. "They are the ones coordinating the company-level career development boards, holding career information training and ensuring every Seabee and Sailor is counseled at the correct time. This is extremely difficult when your team is located in 16 different sites all over the world, but they make it happen.

"Our goal for FY08 will be the same as it was for FY07, which

is to maintain or exceed the Navy's goal and to continue career information training," said Brady. "An aggressive, proactive program produces results."

Betting against Brady accomplishing his goals has never been a good idea. Once he sets his mind to do something, he does not let up until he achieves it.

"We ended the fiscal year exceeding the Navy's goal by 10 percent or more in each retention zone. Regardless of where our numbers end up, we have a strong program and we will continue to provide as much guidance as possible," he added. "We want to ensure every Seabee and Sailor receives the proper information and direction at the right time so they are able

to make a well-informed decision whether to stay Navy, transition to the Navy Reserve or separate."

Brady will be the first to say that his job is not to get every Seabee or Sailor to stay Navy.

Rather, it is to provide his troops with all of the tools they require to accomplish their personal goals.

As Brady completes the last few months of his tour of duty with NMCB 1, there is no doubt he will continue to add to his million-dollar total. More importantly, however, he will help guide more Sailors and Seabees onto their desired course. For him, that is most rewarding.

"There's no price you can put on the smile you receive when you help someone achieve his or her goal, whether it's getting a bonus for reenlistment or a job in the private sector. I have complete job satisfaction," said Brady. "Additionally, I look forward to coming to work everyday because I know I will help someone, I will teach someone something they didn't know, and I will learn something I didn't know – this is what drives me to do what I do."



Little Creek Seabees Make

“Swift” Visit

to the Naval Academy

HSV 2 SWIFT, the Navy’s high-speed, cutting-edge vessel, looks more like a movie prop from *Batman* than it does a warship. The 320-foot-long, wave-piercing catamaran transited from Naval Amphibious Base (NAB) Little Creek, Va., up to the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., in mid-November with personnel and equipment from the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) and Naval Special Warfare.

(Top) CM1 (SCW) Melvin E. Giron (far left), UCT 1, introduces MK-5 dummy ‘Jake’ to the public.

(Above) BU1 (SCW/DV) Peter J. McElroy, UCT 1, demonstrates the use of a turret-mounted .50-cal machine gun to a ‘future Seabee.’

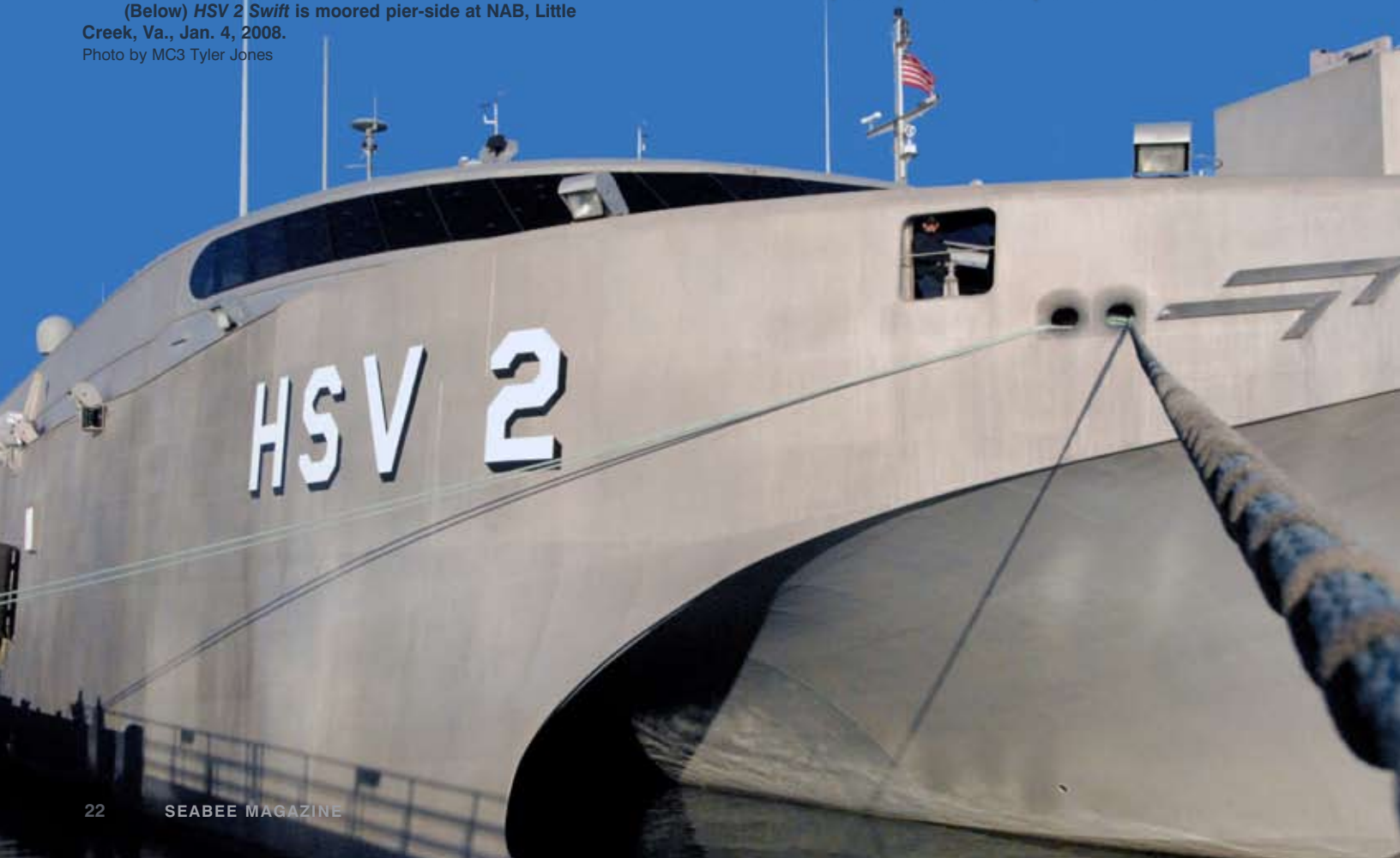
Photos by YNC (SW) Sharell Johnson

(Opposite) LT Li Sung (far left), UCT 1, speaks to midshipmen about his career as a Seabee diver during a professional development mission aboard *HSV 2 Swift*.

Photo by MC3 Ryan O’Connor

(Below) *HSV 2 Swift* is moored pier-side at NAB, Little Creek, Va., Jan. 4, 2008.

Photo by MC3 Tyler Jones



The purpose of the trip from NAB Little Creek to Annapolis was to showcase the missions and career opportunities within the Navy expeditionary communities to the Academy midshipmen and public. Seabees from Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1 and Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU) 202, NAB Little Creek, were invited to represent the Naval Construction Force (NCF), and joined members from Mobile Security Detachment 33, Riverine Group 1, Naval Special Warfare Motivational Team, Seal Delivery Vehicle Team 2, and *HSV 2 Swift* crew. Together, the commands represented and showcased NECC, Navy Special Warfare and the Fleet.

During the six-day visit, Seabees and CEC officers from UCT 1 and CBMU 202 stayed aboard *HSV 2 Swift* at Annapolis to present NCF capabilities, including CESE, weapons and specialized dive equipment to more than 7,500 midshipmen and civilian visitors. The 'Little Creek Seabee Team' set up informative presentations complete with a grader, High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled

Vehicle (HMMWV) with a turret-mounted .50-cal machine gun, MK-21 and -20 dive helmets, SCUBA system, various underwater hydraulic tools, and UCT 1's MK-5 dummy (otherwise known as 'Jake').

For most midshipmen, as well as the public, this was the first exposure to the Seabees.

"Midshipmen are afforded opportunities for summer cruises aboard ships and submarines, but have little opportunity to interact with Seabees," said Construction Electrician 1st Class (SCW/DV) Mike K. Jones, UCT 1. "This is a rare and valuable opportunity to educate future naval leadership and the public on what Seabees bring to the table."

This was also an educational experience for the Little Creek Seabees. "It was a great opportunity and a first in my 19-year Navy career, to work and live aboard a Navy ship and see how the Fleet operates," said Equipment Operator 1st Class (SCW) Arthur Sanchez, CBMU 202.

As an added perk, *HSV 2 Swift* crew



members arranged for all participants to attend the Northern Illinois vs. Navy football game, the Academy's final home stand. "It was the first time any of us had attended a Navy football game, and it was an honor to partake in the tradition," said Construction Mechanic 1st Class (SCW) Melvin E. Giron, UCT 1.

Overall, the trip was a resounding success for the participants, the Seabees and the NECC. Consequently, UCT 1 and CBMU 202 performed a follow-on trip with the *HSV 2 Swift* to Baltimore, Md., which was open to the public in conjunction with the 2007 Army-Navy football game on Dec. 1, showcasing the Seabees to more than 11,000 people.

(Editor's Note: Navy was victorious over both Army and Northern Illinois.)

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Navy and Air Force Work Together Through Personnel Exchange Program



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

As you look through the ranks within Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4, you see a lot of chevrons and anchors, but there is one person who stands out with his six blue chevrons and a star in the middle.

What is an Air Force master sergeant doing in a Seabee battalion?

Air Force M.Sgt. Rickie Bickle is serving a three-year tour with NMCB 4 under the Memorandum of Agreement between the U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Navy exchange of engineer officer and enlisted personnel program. The goal of this program is to gain a more comprehensive understanding and effectively exploit joint capabilities in contingency engineering, wartime planning and field operations.

Bickle arrived at NMCB 4 in August 2005 and reported to Bravo Company, which specializes in vertical construction projects for the Seabees.

"I have noticed a lot of similarities between the Seabees and Air Force Civil Engineering units, as well as a lot of differences," Bickle said. "The way the unit is organized has been the biggest difference. I'm used to being assigned to one shop or area and staying there until I move to a new unit. With the Seabees you get a new job every six months."

Since being assigned to NMCB 4, Bickle has worked as the camp maintenance chief and assistant operations chief during the battalion's Okinawa deployment, and had a collateral duty working with Public Affairs during the Guam deployment.

Even though Bickle's Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) is a structural specialist – a combination of masonry, carpentry, welding and sheet metal work – he says one of his favorite jobs has been working

with Public Affairs.

"I have always been interested in photography," Bickle said. "Working with Public Affairs has given me a chance to take a hobby I love and actually do it as part of my job."

Battalions which participate in the exchange program are NMCB 133 and NMCB 74, Gulfport, Miss.; and NMCB 4 and NMCB 40, Port Hueneme, Calif. Officers in the program are required to fulfill two-year tours, while enlisted personnel complete three-year tours; eligible paygrades are O-3s and E-7s.

According to Bickle, he did not know the exchange program existed until he was up for orders last time. He also said that being with the Seabees has been a very challenging and knowledge-enhancing experience.

Bickle leaves NMCB 4 in August and plans to retire the following year. After spending 22 years with an Air Force unit, Bickle said it was difficult to make the switch, but he'll miss the people with whom he has had the opportunity to work.

"The hardest part has been adjusting to the way the Seabees operate," Bickle said. "The Seabees tend to concentrate more on tactical training which has given me a chance to expand my knowledge in that area. With today's environment, tactical training is a valuable tool for any military member."

Editor's Note: Seabee thanks M.Sgt. Bickle for the articles and photographs we have published in the magazine during his assignment with NMCB 4.



SEABEES OF STATE

By MC1 (SW) Kurt Riggs, NAVFAC HQ Public Affairs and Communications

Naval Support Unit Diplomatic Security and Naval Construction Force is an active unit that supports diplomatic installations around the world, stationing Seabees at consulates and embassies owned and operated by the United States Department of State. In this capacity, Seabees filling these billets concentrate on the physical security of the buildings while serving as construction specialists when needed.

At the height of the Cold War in December 1964, one officer and 49 enlisted Seabees known as 'Det. November' deployed to the American Embassy in Moscow, Russia. What they found was a real-life spy movie – an extensive system of microphones throughout the facility, recording information from U.S. embassies in the Soviet Union.

Deploying for one year, Det. November was so successful that the Secretary of the Navy formally established the Naval Support Unit (NSU) Diplomatic Security and Naval Construction Force in 1966. Forty years later, approximately 100 Seabees provide varying services to U.S. Department of State (DoS) facilities around the world.

The NSU's mission is to support the DoS, Security Technology Office in providing a safe and secure environment for diplomacy through appropriate technical security countermeasures, and in reducing risk and ensuring a safe working environment for U.S. government employees and visitors.

"We once were known as locksmiths, because we took care of all the safes used to secure classified information," said LCDR Patrick Connor, officer in charge, NSU. "And while we still provide that service, we handle just about all aspects of physical security.

"Basically, we handle everything from security barricades at the entrance to the facility, to installing peep holes so our people can see who is at their front door."

Using only eight Seabees and one CEC officer on shore duty in Washington D.C., Connor supervises and supports more than 100 Seabees on sea duty at 42 regional locations and in a temporary duty (TDY) pool for tasking.

"We like to bring them in and put them in the TDY pool so they can get to know their job and understand how travel works," Connor explained. "Then we'll post them overseas for upwards of two years supporting our different regional locations."

While traveling and the opportunity to live abroad are definite perks, only those who meet requirements are eligible: U.S. citizen; second class-and-above builders, utilitiesmen, construction electricians and steelworkers; no convictions or non-judicial punishment violations within the last five years; and fit for overseas duty with their CO's endorsement. Those interested must also be eligible for a Top Secret clearance. After these requirements have been met, there is a 10-week training course, and selectees spend up to a year in the TDY pool before being posted overseas. The experience is priceless.

"We have Seabees who come here for this duty and never want to leave. It's good duty," explained Connor.

While the Cold War may be over, the DoS continues its diplomatic duties around the world – with the Seabees supporting its physical security requirements.

SEABEES TO RECEIVE

NEW CONVOY SIMU

By Daryl C. Smith, Public Affairs Officer, 1NCD

The Naval Construction Force (NCF) will soon have a new, 21st century convoy training simulator to augment current training for Seabees.

Lockheed Martin Corporation was recently awarded a contract that includes a state-of-the-art \$5 million Combat Convoy Simulator (CCS) expected to be delivered to Construction Battalion Center (CBC) Gulfport, Miss., this September. The trainer is part of a \$52.5 million contract providing convoy simulators to the U.S. Marine Corps.

The system consists of six vehicle simulators – four High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (Humvees) and two Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacements (MTVRs) – that will be programmed with a variety of training scenarios and scenery projected onto a 360-degree screen. “These are the actual vehicle cabs, not mock-ups,” said Rich Morrison, training systems manager for the Training Department, 1NCD, Norfolk, Va. Wireless weapons systems and communications gear are also included.

Each vehicle may train a crew of five personnel, allowing 30 students to be trained at a time. In addition, each vehicle is positioned in its own simulation space surrounded by a projection screen which displays the other vehicles within the convoy as it progresses through the simulation. Drivers will navigate their vehicles through hostile, life-like scenarios while passengers take appropriate actions.

The facility uses the Firearms Training System (FATS), providing realistic weapons firing simulation that registers ‘hits’ on the screen. Since the weapons are wireless, the students have the freedom to move outside and around the vehicles. Although the vehicle cabs are stationary, the sense of movement is maintained by the video projection and sound feedback. As the vehicles move over hills and around corners, the scenery also moves, providing the real sense of riding in the vehicle.

Upon completion of the scenario events, an after action review will be conducted using portions of the recorded mission. This recording will be played back providing instant feedback, allowing students to better understand if their actions were performed correctly. The system allows for each scenario to be set up differently with on-the-fly changes.

“The potential of this technology is unparalleled,” said Jim Craig, vice president of Ground, Maritime and Civil Solutions, Lockheed Martin Simulation. “We are able to adjust scenarios presented on the convoy trainers, allowing our customers to prepare for an ever-growing range of simulations.”

Due to limited opportunities for Seabees to train with real vehicles in the field, the CCS is intended to augment live Convoy Security Element training, but will not replace it. “The simulators allow our Seabees to hone and further develop their convoy operations skills learned during live training events, helping to prevent skill degradation,” Morrison said.

The first system will initially be housed in a temporary building set up by Lockheed Martin at CBC Gulfport. It will eventually be moved into a permanent training technology building that will house additional training equipment and systems.

Plans are underway to purchase another convoy simulator for the Seabee base at Port Hueneme, Calif., when funding becomes available. With these systems, as well as other advances in NCF training already in place, Seabees will receive the most advanced state-of-the-art training to prepare the construction warrior for future missions.



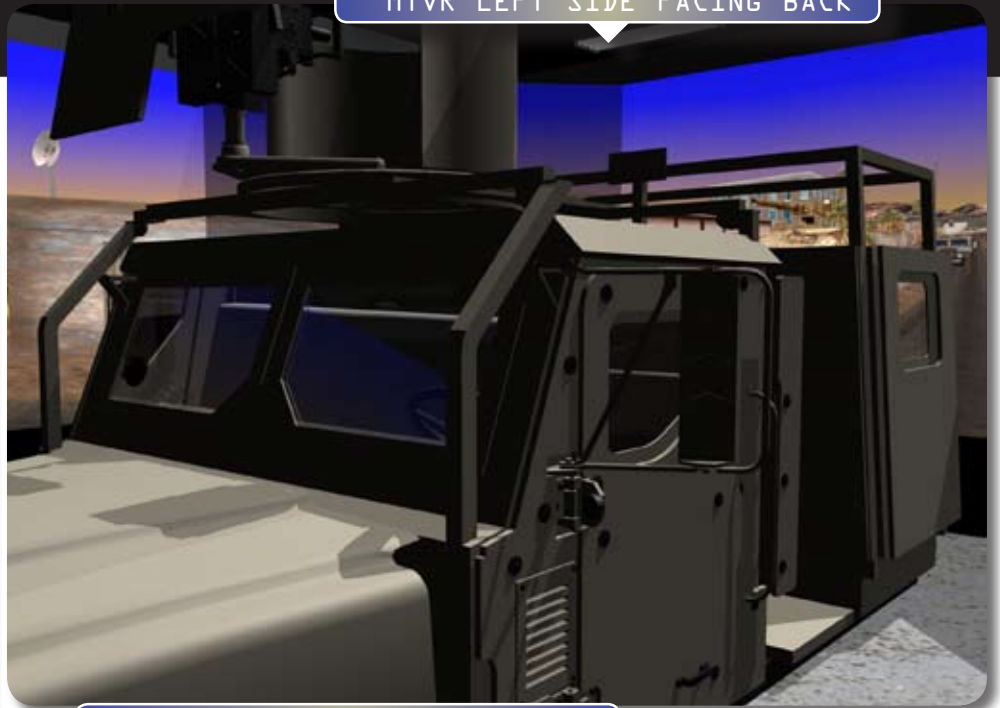
MTVR



ULATOR

IN GULFPORT

MTVR LEFT SIDE FACING BACK



MTVR POD GUNNER'S VIEW



MTVR LEFT SIDE FACING FRONT



MTVR POD DRIVER'S VIEW



Computer-generated illustrations courtesy of Lockheed Martin Corporation

'Fearless' Seabee Accepted to Naval Academy

By MC3 John Hulle, NMCB 74

Like many other passengers at Chicago O'Hare International Airport, Construction Mechanic 2nd Class (SCW) Jedediah Lomax, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74, is eager to board his flight and for good reasons – he's worked three years for this day.

Soon the 21-year-old will be a midshipman at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. After four years, with any luck, his plans of becoming an intelligence officer will come to fruition. "Intel seems like an interesting thing to do," said Lomax. "It sounds like it would be challenging."

Lomax said his family is proud of all he has accomplished. His supervisor, Chief Construction Mechanic (SCW) Michael Prados, isn't surprised in the least. During NMCB 74's deployment to Okinawa, Japan, Lomax's calm demeanor and professionalism were key to successful maintenance.

"He has his nuts and bolts in the right basket," Prados laughs, perhaps the most appropriate compliment one mechanic can give to another.

Lomax had considered applying to the Naval Academy after high school, but did not feel prepared at the time. So he decided to enlist instead and went off to boot camp in September 2004. After Construction Mechanic 'A' school in Port Hueneme, Calif., Lomax joined NMCB 74 in Gulfport, Miss., during which time he advanced through the ranks to 2nd class petty officer and earned his Seabee Combat Warfare qualification.

"He was serious about the officer program from day one," said Senior Chief Construction Mechanic (SCW) Vincent Hodges. "He's a real hard charger."

"It took a lot of paperwork and numerous tests, but it's definitely worth it," Lomax modestly explains, referring to the tests and recommendations necessary for his officer package. A nomination from the Secretary of the Navy doesn't come easily, but talk to any of his supervisors and you'll see it was well earned.

During NMCB 74's 2006 deployment to Iraq, Lomax was a member of Convoy Security Team *Foot Spade*. As one of only three mechanics assigned to the convoy, he was responsible for maintaining all equipment in a tactical environment.

"We never missed a vehicle maintenance deadline nor had a mission compromised due to mechanical failure," said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class (SCW/FMF) Robert Flowers, vehicle commander on Team *Foot Spade*.

"He had what I like to call 'ice water in the veins,'" continued Flowers, who was impressed by Lomax's ability to work under pressure.

In Lomax's short time in the Navy, he has demonstrated professional excellence and the Seabees' 'Can Do' spirit. "As an enlisted Seabee, you perform a significant amount of manual labor," Lomax explains. "So, as an officer, you know what you're asking people working for you to do." With his experience as an enlisted leader, Lomax is confident he will become a competent officer in the U.S. Navy.

Editor's Note: CM2 (SCW) Lomax is currently enrolled at the Naval Academy in the class of 2012.



Bancroft Hall at the U.S. Naval Academy
U.S. Navy photo

"He has his nuts and bolts in the right basket," CMC (SCW) Michael Prados laughs, perhaps the most appropriate compliment one mechanic can give to another.

CM2 (SCW) Jedediah Lomax
U.S. Navy photo



UCT 1 Participates in NECC EXERCISE

By UCT 1 Public Affairs

Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1's Air Det Alpha participated as a stand-alone Naval Construction Force (NCF) unit in the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command's (NECC's) Command and Control, Operational, Maritime, Expeditionary Training Exercise (COMET-EX) at Fort Pickett, Va., in September 2007.

COMET-EX provided UCT 1 Seabees the opportunity to develop interoperability with 12 other participating NECC units, including Naval Coastal Warfare Group (NCWG) 2, Naval Coastal Warfare Squadron 4, Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Group 2, EOD Mobile Unit 6, Mobile Security Squadron 6, Mobile Security Detachment 33, Riverine Group 1, Riverine Squadron 2, Maritime Civil Affairs Group, Maritime Civil Affairs Squadron 2, NECC Detachment Combat Camera Atlantic and Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group. The overall exercise successfully demonstrated the viability of NECC's adaptive force packaging concept.

"Adaptive force packages consist of the right mix of expeditionary Sailors who are adaptable, responsive and ready to accomplish the most difficult missions," said CAPT David McDuffie, commodore, NCWG 2 and COMET-EX commander.

COMET-EX is similar to Operation *Bearing Duel* FEXs that enhance working relationships between Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCBs) and UCTs, and validate the combat and tactical training skills of both units. For UCT 1, many parallels were drawn between the two exercises.

During the 10-day exercise, Air Det Alpha directly supported EOD Mobile Unit 6, which filled the role of a Naval Construction Regiment (NCR), where NCWG 2 filled the role of 1NCD. UCT 1 Air Det Alpha expertly provided unique waterfront engineering skills to the COMET-EX



UT1 (SCW/DV) Paul Sarniak prepares a watercraft for diving operations during NECC's COMET-EX at Fort Pickett, Va.

Photo by MC1 Roger S. Duncan

operational commander by conducting land and underwater demolition missions, battle damage assessments on various waterfront structures such as bridges and piers, and underwater survey and recovery. In addition, UCT 1 Seabees conducted convoy operations, crew serve weapons live fire training and helo MEDEVAC.

COMET-EX marks a pivotal

time when the NECC battlespace comes to life bringing all the pieces of the NECC enterprise under one command and control element.

This exercise provided an excellent opportunity for UCT 1 to bring unique NCF capabilities to the fight by successfully operating within the NECC command structure in a true field environment.



Hands-on Training in Okinawa

(Left) UTCN Patrick M. Knight (top) and UT3 Jeffery T. Schuett, NMCB 5, build a plumbing training model demonstrating quality construction while on deployment in Okinawa, Japan.

(Right) CE3 Jennifer Janzen, NMCB 5, works on an electrical training model during the battalion's detachment to Okinawa. NMCB 5's deployment included several locations in the Pacific area of operations to provide construction support to area commanders.

U.S. Navy photo

NMCB 5



NMCB 3

2½-mile March

UT1 (SCW) Jesse Scherer, NMCB 3, calls cadence to keep his company in step during a 2½-mile march at Port Hueneme, Calif., in November. NMCB 3 Seabees marched in full battle gear, weighing more than 40 pounds.

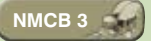
Photo by MC1 Carmichael Yopez



CE2 Scott Jones, NMCB 3, waits while his squad prepares for inspection after donning chemical protective gear during a three-day Super Squad competition at Naval Base Ventura County, Port Hueneme, Calif., on Nov 14.

Photo by MC1 Carmichael Yopez

NMCB 3 Seabees Earn 'Super Squad' Title



By MC1 Carmichael Yopez, NMCB 3 Public Affairs

Winning this year's 'Super Squad' title was no easy task for the Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 3. However, through skill, grit and determination they prevailed during the three-day competition where more than 300 Seabees tested their ability in field combat training, and command and control skills at Port Hueneme, Calif., in November.

Twenty-five squads took part in the event during Commanding Officer's (CO's) Week, where Seabees tested their skills in embarkation, communications, land navigation, chemical protective gear suit-up, decontamination, grenade tossing, weapons training and first aid.

According to Builder 1st Class (SCW) Jeffrey Davenport, CO's Week coordinator, this year's competition was a tough one, as Squad 4 from the battalion's Air Detachment (Air Det) beat Squad 3 from Alpha Company by one point.

"The squad competition is a test of skill, teamwork and ability to lead," Davenport said. "All the squads displayed these skills, but only the toughest one earned the title of Super Squad."

"CO's Week was quite challenging," said Construction Mechanic 2nd Class (SCW) Scott Lewis, squad leader for Air Det 4. He credits their win to the fact that most of his squad has been together since they returned from deployment, making it easier for them to work as a team.

According to Davenport, even though only one team can earn the title of Super Squad, the overall winner was the battalion.

"CO's Week is a perfect way to train our junior troops," said Davenport. "It also gives them a better understanding of our role in the Naval Construction Force."

NMCB 3's Commanding Officer CDR Tony Edmonds said he was very impressed with the overall results of his battalion.

"Oorah! NMCB 3, this competition is a powerful combination of training and teambuilding," Edmonds said. "After seeing it myself for the first time, I'm extremely proud of the positive attitude and motivation displayed by the competing squads. I commend Air Det Squad 4 for winning the competition and the Seabees of NMCB 3 for making this a fun event."



NMCBs 3, 17 'Bear Down' in Pre-deployment FEX

NMCB 3

NMCB 17

Contributors – CDR Thomas Bauhan and MC2 Kenneth Robinson, NMCB 17, and MC1 Carmichael Yopez

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCBs) 3 and 17 participated in Operation *Bearing Duel*, a field exercise (FEX) in rugged, cold-weather terrain at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., in November, that would not only test their military and contingency construction skills, but also their physical stamina and endurance.

Several 'firsts' were associated with this FEX: the first time Seabees trained in the FEX arena with the modular tactical vest, the new body armor weighing 40-plus pounds now being used in Iraq; the first time Seabees have operated and trained at a FEX with the new Joint EOD Rapid Recovery Vehicle (or JERRV), which has only recently been used by Seabee convoy security teams in Iraq. The battalion's convoy security element received four of these heavily armored 42,000-pound six-wheel vehicles for training purposes.

In addition, this FEX marks the first time that both battalions set up and operated a truly integrated, joint logistic support area. Through proactive joint planning during the exercise, NMCBs 3 and 17 derived mutual benefit in perimeter defense, react forces and facilities.

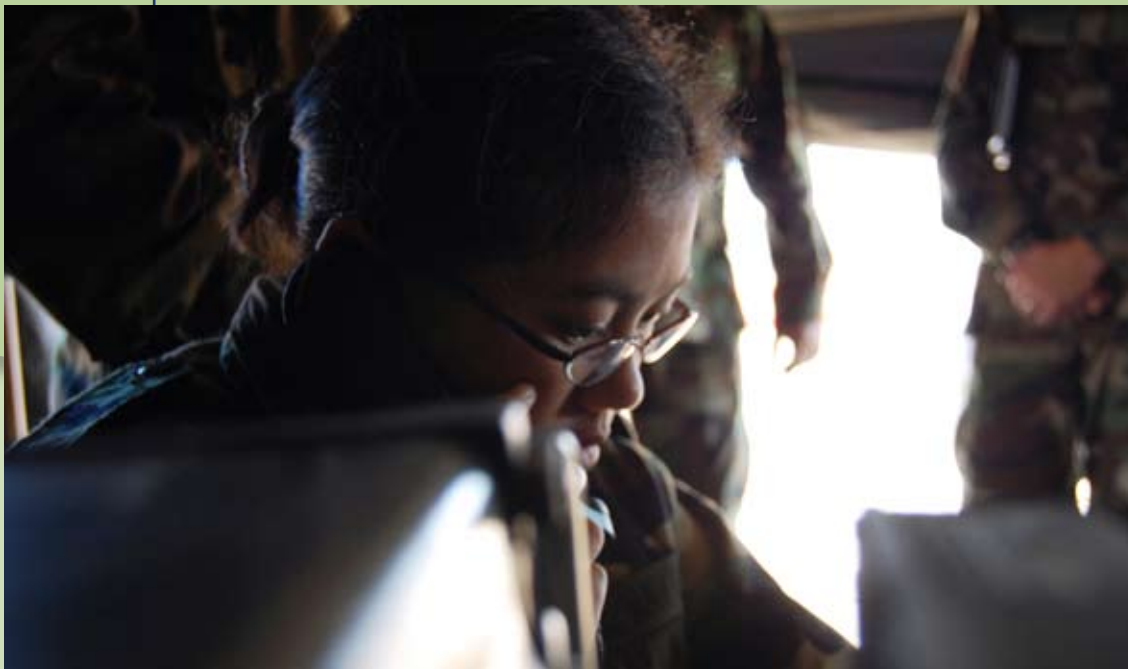
(Top left) LTJG Jennifer Grob, NMCB 3 patrol leader, signals her squad to regroup after engaging a group of aggressors during Operation *Bearing Duel*. The week-long exercise at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., in early November offered training in combat operations, communications, and command and control.

Photo by MC1 Carmichael Yopez

(Top right) CECN Brian Hess, NMCB 17, assigned to the camp reactionary force (REACT), takes up a defensive position during an intruder drill. REACT was tasked with internal camp security during Operation *Bearing Duel*.

(Above) HM1 (SCW) Lisa Haro, NMCB 17, stands at the ready by her ambulance located at the Battle Aid Station at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., during the November FEX.


Photos by MC2 Kenneth W. Robinson



(Left) UTCR Rena Hach relays a message over the AN/VRC-90 Multiband Radio during NMCB 11's COMMEEX.

(Below) ET3 Johnathon Cooper, NMCB 11, demonstrates the assembly of an OE-254/GRC antennae during the battalion's COMMEEX. The objective of the exercise was to familiarize Seabees with field communications gear.

Photos by MC2 Erick S. Holmes

NMCB 11 

NMCB 11 Conducts COMMEEX

By MC2 Erick S. Holmes, NMCB 11 Public Affairs

Late last year, Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11 conducted a three-day Communications Exercise (COMMEEX) in Gulfport, Miss., to learn the key to successful deployments, field exercises and other contingency operations.

The communications platoon included a mix of ratings, both Seabee and Fleet, many of whom had never before handled field communications gear, explained LTJG Nick Leinweber, NMCB 11 communications officer. Training included tent assembly, radio and antennae set up, proper communications protocol, and practical application of communication traffic.

While the gear seemed complex at first, the fledgling platoon tackled the opportunity head on. "We went through a large amount of technical information and jargon, but I'd say there were a lot of quick learners," said Leinweber.

"I [was able to be] hands-on with multiple things," said Construction Electrician Constructionman Apprentice Erica Perry. "I had maintenance of the generator, so that was in-rate training, and I had COMMS [communications] which is difficult out-of-rate training. And I was surprised – there's more to COMMS than I expected."

NMCB 11 has additional exercises and classes scheduled for the future, including more advanced elements of communications operations. The battalion is transitioning into the military training phase of the homeport training cycle, preparing for its first deployment since the Vietnam War.



NMCB 133

FEX

LT Gilberto Penserga (far left), NCC Jeffery Ingram (middle) and BUCS Brian Miller, NMCB 133, establish a field of fire during a Chief and Officer Field Exercise (FEX) held at Camp Shelby, Miss., in mid-December. FEX is a routine exercise designed to sharpen the battalion's combat and contingency construction capabilities.

Photo by MC1 (SW) Terry Spain



NMCB 74 Wins 10th Battle 'E'

By MCC (SCW) Jeffrey J. Pierce, 22nd NCR Public Affairs

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74 was selected as the Fiscal Year 2007 Atlantic Naval Construction Force Battle Efficiency ('E') Battalion.

This was NMCB 74's 10th Atlantic Fleet Battle 'E' selection dating back to 1968.

RADM Richard E. Cellon, commander, First Naval Construction Division (1NCD), presented the Battle 'E' pennant to NMCB 74's Commanding Officer CDR Craig S. Prather during morning quarters aboard Construction Battalion Center (CBC), Gulfport, Miss., on Dec. 19.

While speaking to battalion personnel, Cellon reminded them that their Seabee leadership was working hard for them and that 2007 was a great year. He also reminded NMCB 74 'Bees to take

responsibility for themselves and their shipmates.

"I'm really proud of each and every one of you," Cellon said.

"This is all about Seabees helping Seabees."

According to Prather, NMCB 74 earned this award by demonstrating a high level of operational efficiency, personal behavior and mission readiness. He attributed the battalion's success to hard work and strong family support.

According to LCDR Michael Leonard, NMCB 74's operations officer, winning the Battle 'E' demonstrates the battalion is doing something right, but the mission continues.

"We still have a job to do," Leonard said. "We need to congratulate ourselves, but our job is deployment and mission readiness."



RADM Richard E. Cellon (right), commander, 1NCD, presents NMCB 74's Commanding Officer CDR Craig S. Prather the Battle 'E' pennant during a ceremony held aboard CBC, Gulfport, Miss., in December.

Photo by MCC (SCW) Jeffrey J. Pierce

SEABEE SLOGAN NOW A BOAT'S NAME

Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5, deployed to the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia, won a Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) boat-naming contest by suggesting the vessel be called "Can Do!" – the Seabees' well-known slogan. The boat, a 22-foot Boston Whaler, is a new addition to the island for use by Seabees and Sailors.



(Above) NMCB 5 'Bees pose in front of *Can Do!* in January. According to the island's MWR officials, the name won the contest since it recognizes the spirit of the Seabees who have had a major impact on Diego Garcia for the past 37 years.

(Left) CEC John R. Guiliano, NMCB 5, holds the plaque for the newest Navy MWR vessel named in recognition of Seabee spirit.

Photo by BU2 (SCW) Christina L. McCaslin



CBMU 303 'BEES SPRUCE UP VETERANS CEMETERY

By EA2 (SCW) David Miller,
CBMU 303 Public Affairs

The 'Bees of CBMU 303 stationed on board NAS Fallon, Nev., completed an improvement project for the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Fernley, 30 miles west of the base, in October 2007. Seabees removed three existing flagpoles and placed nine new ones; the tallest flagpole is now 70 feet tall with smaller stepped-down flagpoles on each side. This project improved the cemetery's aesthetics by providing a more pleasing display for the national, state and various military services' flags. Visitors can now clearly view the service colors honoring those who are now in their final resting place.



(Above left) After the *Wreaths Across America* ceremony at the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Fernley, Nev., the new flagpoles installed by CBMU 303 proudly display the National Ensign and the service flags on a brisk winter day in December.

(Above right) BUCN Christiana Ackley hones her concrete placement skills as she gains valuable on-the-job technical experience during CBMU 303's project at the veterans cemetery.

Photos by EA2 (SCW) David Miller

How Well Do You Know Your Rating?

The Center for Seabees and Facilities Engineering (CSFE) has implemented a new program, 'Test Your Rating Knowledge,' designed to enable 'Bees to evaluate how well they know their rating. Through quizzes and rating games on Navy Knowledge Online (NKO), as well as through discussion forums with peers, Seabees now have a multitude of new resources at their fingertips.

Currently, each of the seven Seabee rates has designated quizzes and games built using the rate training manuals and the advancement exam bibliographies. By taking these quizzes and playing these games, Seabees may evaluate their knowledge, assess strengths and work on areas needing improvement.

Discussion forums for your rate are also available and may come in handy for Seabees with questions on a piece of equipment, product, tool, etc. Simply log into the NKO discussion forum, and you will be connected to Seabees around the world who can offer real-time feedback and 24/7 problem-solving advice.

Here's how to tap into these tools:

- 1) Go to <https://www.nko.navy.mil>.
- 2) Click on Organizations and Communications/Learning Centers/Seabees and Facilities Engineering.
- 3) Once you are on the CSFE page, click on the rate link located on the lefthand side; this will take you to your rate page.

For questions and comments, contact your NKO administrators below:

CMC Mark Wagner, USN (Ret.)
 mark.w.wagner@navy.mil
 Ph: COMM 805-982-2919
 DSN 551-2919

CUCM Chris Bissonnette, USN (Ret.)
 christopher.bissonne@navy.mil
 Ph: COMM 805-982-1862
 DSN 551-1862

YOUR SINGLE POINT ACCESS

N@VY Knowledge Online

SEABEE REUNIONS



MAY / JUNE 2008

NMCB 128 Outreach Reunion

MAY 1-4, 2008 Galveston, TX
 Rick and Nancy Day, 409-948-9683
 2012 1st St., N., Texas City, TX 77590
 sonday777@sbcglobal.net

Retired Seabee Reunion

MAY 24, 2008 Biloxi, MS
 Ron Harvey, 228-547-8512
 14997 S. Shadow Creek Dr., Biloxi, MS 39532
 byusef@hotmail.com

NMCBs 12, 13, 19, 21st NCR (Vietnam)

MAY 29-JUNE 2, 2008 Nashville, TN
 Bob Williams, 802-228-8672
 P.O. Box 48, Ludlow, VT 05149
 mcb12nam@tds.net

NMCB 3 Blue Team 1977-82

JUNE 16-19, 2008 Prestonsburg, KY
 Vernon Meek, 561-596-6324
 2442 S.W. Cooper Ln., Port Saint Lucie, FL 34984
 rrwoodworks@bellsouth.net

Port Hueneme All Seabee Reunion

JUNE 27-30, 2008 Port Hueneme, CA
 Ed Kloster, 626-280-9495
 3815 Rio Hondo Ave., Rosemead, CA 91770
 allseabees@charter.net

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

Happy Birthday, Seabees!

March 5, 2008 marks the 66th year that our Builder Warriors have provided Naval Construction Force support, protecting the United States and our allied nations, and serving our Warfighters, the Fleet and their families with pride. Several Seabees from NMCB 3 reflect on this legacy in their own words...

SWCA Chantelle Schweiger



I have only been a Seabee for a year. I am a steelworker and have learned many things about my trade. I have gained combat skills and soon my battalion will be deploying to Iraq. This will be my first time away from home for a long time. It will be difficult for me at times, but I can't wait because every day will be an adventure. When I return home, my family will definitely be proud of this Seabee.

I have to say, I was very hesitant to join the Seabees since I was not at all sure what I was in for. Since that day, I truly believe that I have come to fit into the life of a Seabee quite well. I feel that I have come full circle and cannot wait to continue on this incredible journey.

For the better part of my teenage years, I had determination to join our armed forces. After graduating from high school, I worked with a recruiter in my hometown to determine if the Navy was the right fit for me. I was told with my history and abilities, the Seabees would be a great fit. I joined the U.S. Navy on March 12, 2008. My life has forever changed due to that decision.

CE3 (SCW) Seth Tolson



Being a Seabee is about more than just working long hours. It's about pride and personal accomplishment. Through all the construction projects and concrete pours, the friendships I've created are the most memorable. I've met people I never would have met if I hadn't joined the Seabees. Through good and bad times with sweat and blood pouring from our brow, the camaraderie has been great. No matter what the job is we pull through and work as a team to get the job done. This is what being a Seabee means to me.

The friends I've made will remain friends for a long time. I just completed my first deployment with them to Japan and Korea, and soon we will be deploying to Iraq. We've been trained to work through pouring rain, snow, and hot and humid weather – without hesitation we were able to get the job done. I don't wish to be called a hero when we come back from Iraq; I just want to be called a Seabee who's done his best to get the job done.

BU2 (SW) Sean Kriloff

I became a Seabee because I am following in the footsteps of my grandfather. He was one of the first Seabees to lead the way back in 1942. He told me many stories about the places he traveled, and the roads and buildings he built overseas.



I have been in the Navy five and a half years and, like my grandfather, I have also traveled overseas and am continuing his legacy. I recently returned to the States from my first deployment with the Seabees. I traveled to the Philippines where I led a crew of Seabees in rebuilding schools devastated by a tsunami and a volcano. The smiles and tears from the children had an overwhelming impression on my life, and I will never forget the expression of gratitude on their faces. It makes being a Seabee worthwhile knowing that what we do can impact people around the world.

Being a Seabee has been more than I expected. And from what I have accomplished, I can say I am proud. Perhaps one of the most rewarding feelings I have now is being able to share my stories with my grandfather.

BU1 (SCW) Daniel Lynch

What it means to be a Seabee? The word selflessness has only one meaning, placing the mission and loyalty to my unit above everything else. Being a Seabee means spending months away from family and friends, and includes dangerous tasking while enduring arduous conditions with little time to spare. I do something that most people can't or won't care to do, but I love it.



I work with some of the finest men and women in the world. They are true professionals, and the efforts we make are immeasurable and have a positive impact on the world. Only those who have experienced this can say they understand the meaning of teamwork as we the Seabees do.

Forgotten by most in the fleet until we are needed, we are never stagnant. We are always ready to deploy at a moment's notice around the world. To count myself amongst these ranks only gives me a feeling of pride that is seldom experienced. Ten years have gone by and I know that what I am doing is right. I can only say that I have one of the best jobs in the world.

Construimus ☆ *Batuimus*



BEE ● CAM

A Seabee assigned to NMCB 1, Task Force Sierra, waters a freshly laid pad of concrete to aid the curing process while stationed in Iraq in early January. During its six-month deployment, NMCB 1 provided responsive military construction support to U.S. military operations in the Middle East and Afghanistan.
Photo by MC2 Demetrius Kennon



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