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# SEABEE

UNITED STATES NAVY | SUMMER 2011

## UCT 'Bees

**Elite Builder-Warriors on Land and Sea**

ALSO INSIDE:

**Humanitarian Assistance, Disaster Relief  
Following Tsunami in Japan**

**Why We're Here:  
Perspective from the Afghanistan Front**

**Shields, Stethem, Combs and Moreell Awards**

# SEABEE

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DIRECTOR

**James G. Pinsky**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
CHIEF MASS COMMUNICATION  
SPECIALIST(SCW/EXW/SW/AW/SG)

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(SW/AW)  
25NCR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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**Daryl C. Smith**  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER  
FIRST NAVAL CONSTRUCTION DIVISION  
WWW.SEABEE.NAVY.MIL

### LAYOUT & DESIGN

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# FEATURES



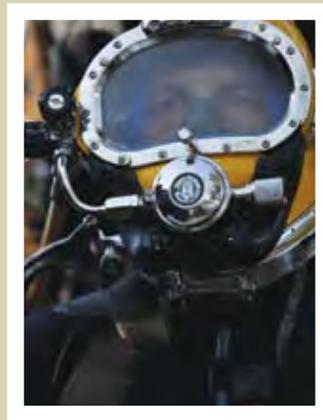
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BU2(SCW/DV) Joseph Hawthorne, UCT 1 prepares to enter the water, Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek - Fort Story, Va.

Photo by MC2(SCW) Gregory N. Juday

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Look for the Challenge Coin award in this issue!

CAN DO!





BU3(SCW/DV)  
Stephen Graddon,  
UCT 1, enters the  
water using the rear  
roll method, Joint  
Expeditionary  
Base Little Creek -  
Fort Story, Va.  
*Photo by MC2(SCW)  
Gregory N. Juday*

**F**reedom. Few words in any language have caused as many wars, cost as many lives, or inspired more hopes and dreams than simple, elegant freedom. As Americans we protect it, project it and empower it.

The summer issue of *Seabee* is a diverse edition, even for us. But the underlying theme with the turn of every page is freedom. The end result, doing whatever you wish, starts with being able to get there – literally.

Seabees in Afghanistan understand that and are helping Afghans gain and maintain the freedom of movement by building roads and other infrastructure to support the war fighter who chases away all those who wish to restrict freedom. In the Horn of Africa, Seabees are inviting freedoms by giving people their own fresh water supply. After all, there's no real freedom without sustenance, and the very first need has always been simply surviving.

Sometimes Mother Nature takes away your freedom, and Seabees are there to help get it back. In Japan, Seabees are responding as they always have, helping people rebuild their lives. To this point, Seabees from a variety of units worldwide are all contributing to Operation Tomodachi.

On our cover this issue is the Underwater Construction Team (UCT) community.

Seabee divers are builders and fighters, like all Seabees. However, they have one more dimension of opportunity – the sea. Their mission is as diverse as any Seabee, and the demand for Seabee divers is always high. If you think you have what it takes to



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

join the Seabees as a UCT, channel your inner “CAN DO” and apply.

UCT 2 contributed directly during Operation Tomodachi, with their unique skill sets to help clear ports and provide geological survey work via sonar-mapping tools.

Fighting for freedom has never been easy. Sometimes even the bravest need a little help, and the Seabees have always been willing and able to lend a hand.

*Seabee* Magazine would like to officially welcome our newest Force Master Chief, FORCM Ray Dickey, who relieved FORCM Michael Holdcraft on April 22 at the Seabee Memorial, Arlington, Va. Welcome aboard, Shipmate!

The ceremony also bid farewell to FORCM Holdcraft who retired after more than 30 years of service to our Navy. Fair winds and following seas, FORCM Holdcraft.

And finally, a hearty CAN DO to CNO Shore Sailor of the Year, CE1 (SCW) Leonardo D. Calderon, 31st Seabee Readiness Group, and his wife, Jamiah.

That's the beauty of freedom – it brings out the very best in all of us.

CAN DO, Seabees!

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

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WE BUILD WE FIGHT.  
**SEABEE**  
UNITED STATES NAVY

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Current subscription prices are \$25 per year or \$7 per issue FPO/APO/domestic and \$36 per year or \$9.80 per issue to foreign destinations.

Paid-subscriber address changes or corrections may be sent via instructions above.

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EDITORIAL

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

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1322 Patterson Avenue, S.E., Bldg. 33, Suite 1000  
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F  
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S

For the Seabees of the Naval Construction Force's Underwater Construction Teams (UCTs), the work is not always below the surface. These elite Sailors begin with standard construction rates and become expert 'Bees on both land and sea through rigorous training and exacting qualifications. Most recently, UCTs were called on to assist with salvage recovery missions following the 9.0-magnitude earthquake and subsequent tsunami in Japan, March 11.

We Build, We Fight  
**We  
Dive**



## We Build, We Fight **We Dive**

(Previous page) SW3(SCW/DV) Jacob Scarlett exits the water carrying a freshly cut steel pile from BU2(SCW/DV) Joseph Hawthorne (background), both assigned to UCT 1, Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek - Fort Story, Va.

(Left) SW3 Scarlett, UCT 1, gets an assist securing his helmet before the next dive, Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek - Fort Story, Va.

By MC2(SCW) Gregory N. Juday,  
Expeditionary Combat Camera

*Photos by MC2(SCW) Gregory N. Juday*

Staring straight ahead with a look of concentration, he leans back and splashes into the 54-degree water of the Chesapeake Bay, fins disappearing into the murky water below.

A hand rises from the water as a mask and regulator follow. “Diver on surface, diver okay,” says Builder 2nd Class (SCW/DV) Joe Hawthorne, Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1.

BU2 Hawthorne dives underwater inspecting damage to a pier, coming up periodically to give reports to the dive supervisor.

After 46 minutes in the water he is pulled into the boat, the cold wind hitting his wet skin. The dive supervisor looks at him as he gives the hand signal for okay.

Being in 54-degree water with SCUBA jugs, a wet suit and fins fixing damage to a pier is one of many aspects that differentiates UCTs from the rest of the Naval Construction Force (NCF). UCT divers are a tight-knit group – a family that works together to accomplish the mission – no matter how hard the task.

Seabees assigned to UCTs begin their careers in battalions, learning their rate and earning their Seabee Combat Warfare (SCW) qualification.

“It is a hard process to become a member of the team,” said Steelworker 3rd Class (SCW/DV) Jacob Scarlett, UCT 1. “You have to research and find out the requirements, put a package together, get screened and perform a physical fitness test. It’s easy to get discouraged.”

(Continued on page 8)





SW2(SCW/SW/AW/DV) Franklyn Tamarez, UCT 1, holds his M4 carbine at the ready, Fort Pickett, Va. Seabees assigned to UCTs begin their careers in battalions, learning their rate and earning their Seabee Combat Warfare (SCW) qualification.  
*Photo by MC2(SCW) Gregory N. Juday*

(Continued from page 6)

Once the screening process is complete, Seabees are assigned to a UCT to prepare them for dive school or they go directly to school.

"I didn't make it through dive school the first time," said Steelworker 2nd Class (SCW/SW/AW/DV) Frank Tamarez, UCT 1. "When I got accepted again, I prepared with UCT 1 for six months. I am grateful for that preparation, and it definitely made some of the rigors of dive school easier."

Students must be prepared mentally and physically for the transition to Seabee diver. Dive school is a constant challenge, forcing each person to find out how comfortable he or she is in the water, and how hard he or she is willing to study the material taught each day.

"You have to be prepared to study," said SW3 Scarlett. "If you go out partying and try to skate by, you will fail."

Being comfortable in the water is a new experience for some. According to SW2 Tamarez, he had never been in the water before dive school, with the exception of playing at the beach.

"I will never forget my first dive," said Tamarez. "Splashing in the first time, coming up and reporting to the dive supervisor, 'diver okay' is an experience I will never forget."

Diving is not the only task separating the UCTs from the rest of the NCF. UCTs are also known for precision demolition and small unit camaraderie.

"I love diving and blowing stuff up," said BU2 Hawthorne. "But it is the unity and brotherhood of the team that keeps me here."

UCT 1 consists of 70 personnel comprising three detachments of 12-15 Seabees working together to accomplish the mission.

Being Seabees, divers are expected not only to know their job as a steelworker, construction mechanic, builder, construction electrician, engineering aide, utilitiesman or equipment operator. They also need to know their job as an underwater construction diver.

"At UCT we not only need to know our rate, but we all have to know our job in the water as well," said Construction Mechanic 2nd Class (SCW/DV) Brandon Burrow, UCT 1. "In the water, as second-class divers, we are workers. We do everything from inspecting to repairing to maintaining structures."

While in the teams, divers constantly work on their diving qualifications, making each individual a true asset to the team.

"We are constantly learning and training to be better at our jobs," said Hawthorne. "Challenging ourselves and each other to become a first-class diver, inside tender or dive supervisor qualified."

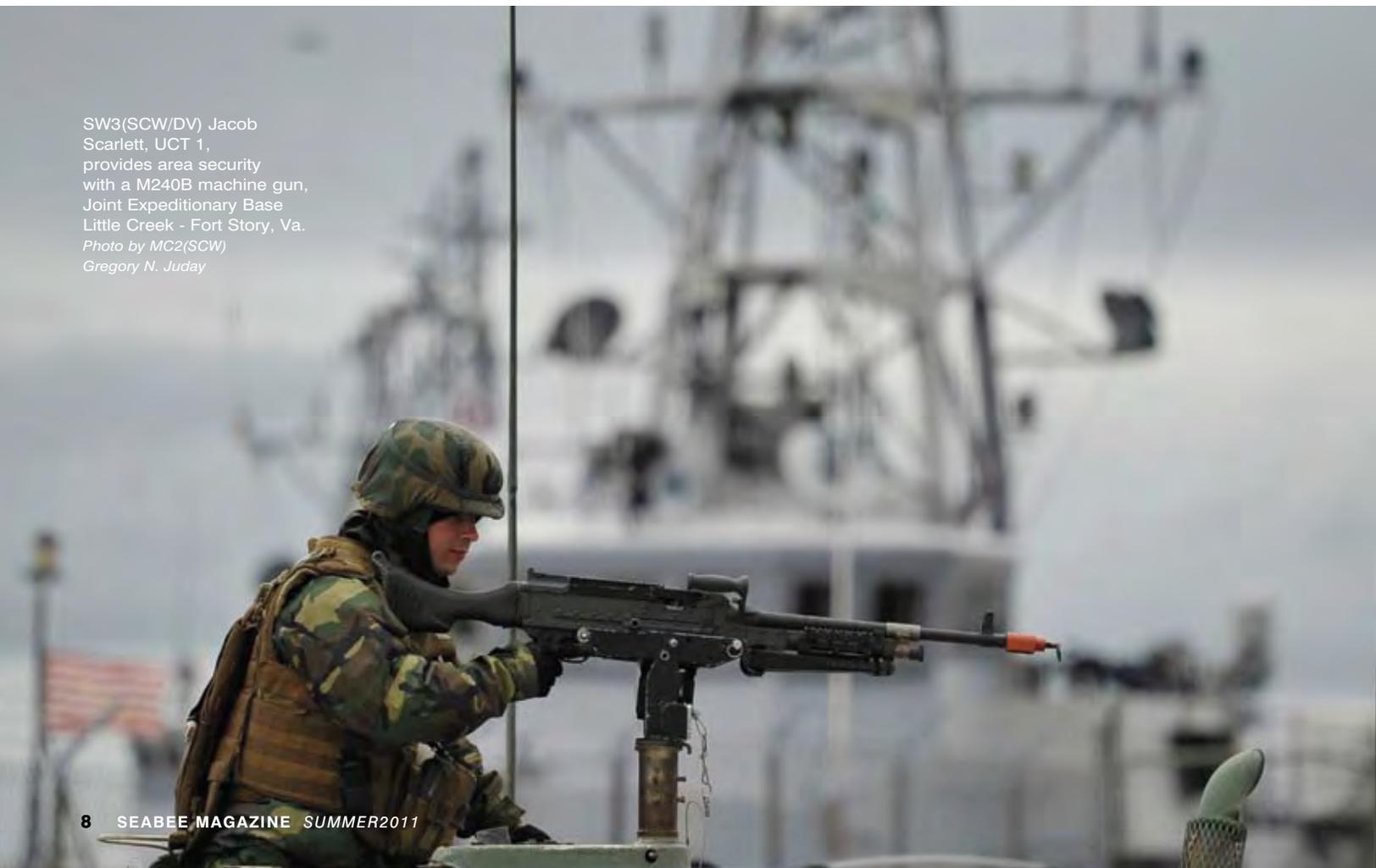
Those in battalions thinking of taking on the challenge of UCT need to be prepared to work hard, according to Hawthorne.

"The people we have here are the hardest workers in the NCF. They want to be at UCT and want to be in the Navy," he said. "We know that we're top-notch and we won't stop until the job is done."

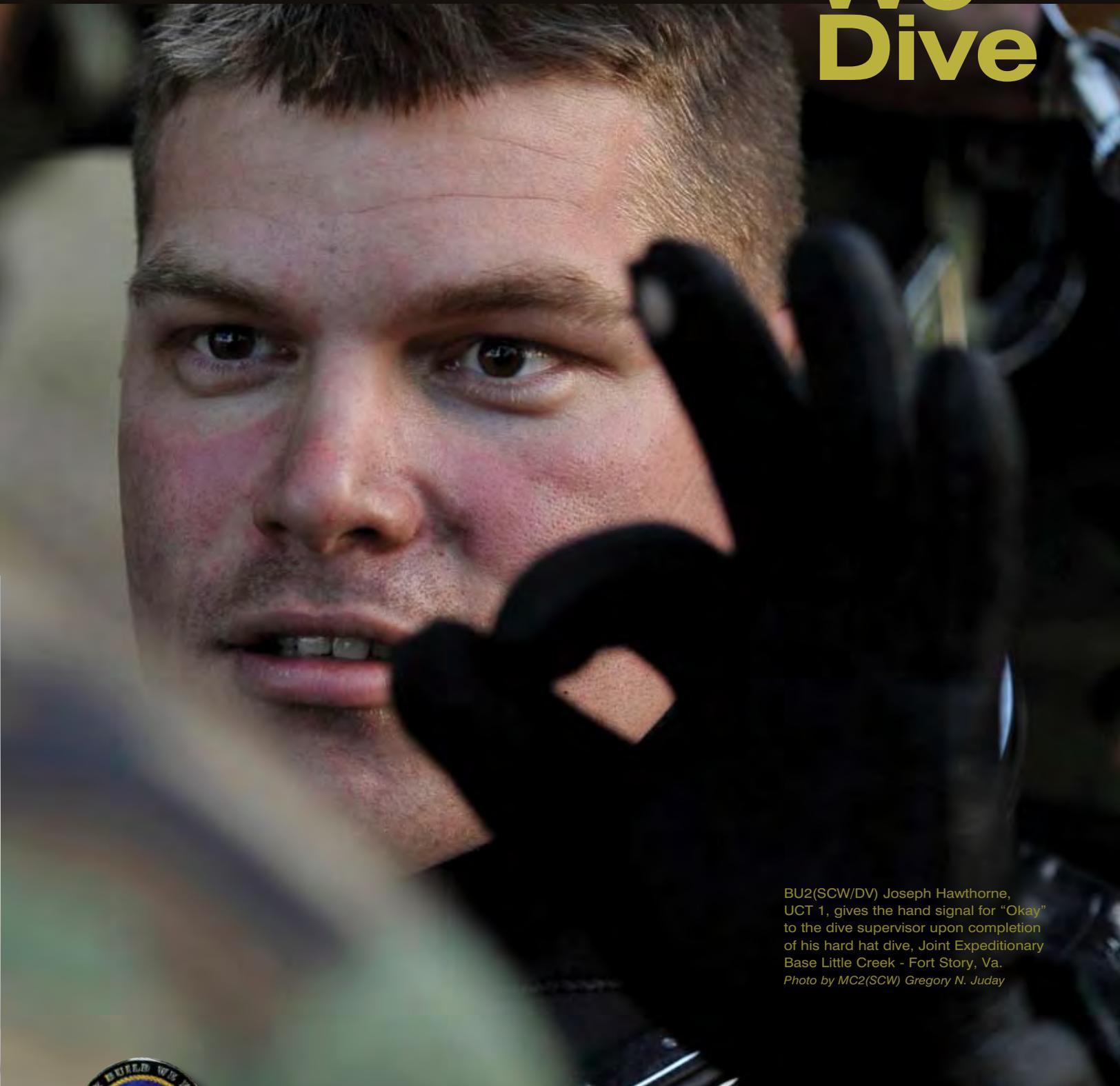
Only part of the new challenges ahead include doing maintenance checks on equipment, setting up dive stations, tearing down the work site and doing maintenance after the dive.

"If you want to come to UCT, you'd better be comfortable in the water because that is your workspace," said Builder 3rd Class (SCW/DV) Stephen Graddon, UCT 1. "Be prepared to get cold and wet, and work harder than you have ever worked before!" **SB**

SW3(SCW/DV) Jacob Scarlett, UCT 1, provides area security with a M240B machine gun, Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek - Fort Story, Va. Photo by MC2(SCW) Gregory N. Juday



We Build, We Fight  
**We  
Dive**



BU2(SCW/DV) Joseph Hawthorne, UCT 1, gives the hand signal for "Okay" to the dive supervisor upon completion of his hard hat dive, Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek - Fort Story, Va.  
*Photo by MC2(SCW) Gregory N. Juday*



For outstanding contribution to the summer 2011 issue, *Seabee Magazine* congratulates MC2(SCW) Gregory N. Juday, Expeditionary Combat Camera, for our cover feature. Through powerful imagery and compelling prose, MC2 Juday captured both the technical expertise and purposeful unity of the UCT divers. Hooyah Deep Sea and CAN DO!

More on becoming a UCT diver, p. 27.

# USNS *Safeguard*, Seabees Support Tsunami Recovery Mission in Hachinohe

By MC2 Devon Dow, Navy Public Affairs Support Element West, Det Japan

The rescue and salvage ship USNS *Safeguard* (T-ARS 50), along with personnel and assets from Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 2 and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 5, assisted the Japanese Coast Guard with salvage recovery missions following the 9.0-magnitude earthquake and subsequent tsunami in Japan.

*Safeguard*, stationed in Sasebo, Japan, is the Navy's only forward-deployed rescue and salvage ship. It is specifically designed to perform combat salvage, lifting, towing, manned diving operations, and emergency repairs to stranded or disabled vessels.

The salvage ship's crew consists of Sailors assigned to the Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit (MDSU) 1. Their expertise plays a vital role in clearing waterways around debris and sunken wreckage.

"We came per a request from the Japanese government to provide support. Whatever we can do to help, we are willing to do," said Lt. Cmdr. Derek Peterson, 7th Fleet salvage officer and coordinator of the *Safeguard*. "The teamwork with the Japanese has been incredible."

Operating from a dock at U.S. Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC) Yokosuka Fuel Terminal Hachinohe, EODMU 5 and UCT 2 worked to clear wreckage from a local commercial channel to enable Japanese ships to transport supplies and fuel to the north.

UCT 2 provided underwater surveillance imagery with side scan sonar equipment. When scanning was complete, they shared their findings with the Japanese Coast Guard. Once the wreckage location was determined, markers were placed and EOD divers entered the water for a more thorough inspection. From this point, both Navy and Japanese Coast Guard formed a collective plan to remove the wreckage.

Senior Chief Intelligence Specialist James Isham, EODMU 5's leading chief intelligence petty officer, said the Japanese have been doing a great job with their salvage efforts and that working with them has been a great experience.

"It's been a real honor," ISCS Isham said. "It is great to be helpful and assist our allies. With this port clear, they will be able to get needed supplies – especially heating fuel – to the people." **SB**



BU2(SCW) Charles Hannah, Public Works Department Misawa Facilities Sustainment Branch, nails two-by-four planks to help reinforce the U.S. Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC) Yokosuka Defense Fuel Support Point Hachinohe fence line, following a tsunami that damaged the facility.

Photo by MCC Daniel Sanford



# TSUNAMI RELIEF IN JAPAN



By Cpl. Brandon L. Saunders and Lance Cpl. Mark W. Stroud, Marine Corps Bases Japan

(Above right)  
BU2(DV) Joshua Knolla  
(left) and CM1(DV/SCW)  
Timothy Plummer (center),  
both assigned to UCT 2,  
review charts for a local  
port with Lt. Cmdr. Derek  
Peterson, 7th Fleet  
salvage officer.  
UCT 2 conducted  
salvage operations in  
support of Operation  
Tomodachi.  
*Photo by MC2 Devon Dow*

## Humanitarian Assistance Survey Teams Assess Recovery Need

Humanitarian Assistance Survey Teams (HASTs), comprised of Seabees, Sailors and Marines from units across III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), participated in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations following the 9.0-magnitude earthquake and subsequent tsunami in northeastern Japan, March 11.

Members of the HASTs' Navy component included Seabees with Navy Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133.

"It's what we are here for as Seabees," said Chief Builder Joshua Kolenda, NMCB 133. "This is our job."

HASTs included Marine and Sailor subject matter experts in civil affairs, engineering, logistics, communications, motor transport and field medicine. Structural damage assessments were made by Marine civil and structural engineers, along with construction input from the Seabees.

"We work to understand the resources within III MEF and match requirements to capabilities," said Master Sgt. Alexis Gil, HAST staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge, Combat Logistics Regiment 35, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III MEF.

HASTs have also benefited from working closely with Japanese subject matter experts.

"[The Japanese people] have earthquakes often so their engineers are used to that challenge," said BUC Kolenda. "We are not here to give them advice on their engineering; they are very capable of that themselves. We are here to see what they want us to do to help them. We all work hand in hand."



(Left) CE1 Rodney Barr (foreground), NMCB 133, and members of the Japanese Ground Self Defense Force (JGSDF) clean up the Ishinomaki Technical High School, Ishinomaki, Japan, following the March 11 tsunami.  
*Photo by Lt. j.g. Benjamin Dunn*

By Lt. j.g. Benjamin Dunn, NMCB 133

## NMCB 133 Cleans Up Japanese High School

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133 provided support for Joint Support Forces Japan (JSF-J) in Sendai, Japan, after the March 11 earthquake and tsunami.

NMCB 133 'Bees, operating out of Camp Sendai in the Miyagi Prefecture, embarked as part of a 50-man combined forces working party tasked to support clean-up efforts at the Ishinomaki Technical High School.

For two days during the disaster, 800 students, school staff and local residents were isolated on the high school's second floor without running water; the first floor was flooded with mud and debris in the rush of the tsunami.

Service members from the Marines, Army, Air Force and Navy, in conjunction with the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF), joined school officials and students with clean up of the classrooms, common spaces and student hall. Heavily soiled walls and workstations were scrubbed. Floors were cleared of mud and mopped, and damaged furniture and debris were removed as the school was restored to working order.

"It was great to get involved with the clean-up and assist in the recovery effort," said Builder 1st Class Matthew Culberson, NMCB 133. "You could tell the students and school staff were excited and very appreciative to receive our support."

Mr. Nishiyo, the school's vice principal, requested assistance with clean-up efforts to restore the school in time for next year's entrance exams. Ishinomaki Technical High School was the first of more than 40 schools identified by the JGSDF to use U.S. forces in clean-up operations.

# TSUNAMI RELIEF IN JAPAN



(Above right) BU3 Jeremy Evans, NMCB 133, assembles kennels for a pet shelter aboard Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY). The kennels support Navy families' pets who were left behind during Operation Pacific Passage, DoD's mission to provide support for the voluntary relocation of dependents from designated areas in Japan.

*Photo by CE1 Jamal Redding*

## 'Bees Help Those Left Behind After Tsunami

By Lt. Duc Huy T. Nguyen and Lt. Nathan V. Chenarak, NMCB 133

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133's Sasebo and Yokosuka dets constructed animal shelters in support of Operation Tomodachi following the 9.0-magnitude earthquake near Sendai, Japan, March 11. The shelters housed pets left behind by dependents unable to take them during the evacuation from Honshu Island.

The earthquake created a tsunami that damaged the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear complex, located in the town of Kuma, Fukushima, Japan. The damage caused the nuclear reactors to release radioactive contamination to immediate areas, posing a threat to surrounding cities including Yokosuka.

Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) initiated its Noncombatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) plan to include the execution of voluntary departure for all U.S. dependents. Det Yokosuka Seabees were tasked as standby bus captains in the event of mandatory evacuation for all mission-critical personnel.

As the number of dependents leaving the country for safe havens in the United States continued to rise, so did the number of abandoned pets. Strict airline regulations regarding the number of pets passengers are allowed to carry on board forced many distressed travelers to leave them behind.

NMCB 133 Det Yokosuka converted a section of a warehouse into a Pet Overflow Relocation Center to help solve the pet housing issue. Seabees configured eight cabinets for use as kennels, relocated eight kennels to the new centralized location and renovated a warehouse.

"I'm glad the installation cares about people's pets. I have a dog that is like a family member back home," said Builder 3rd Class Daniel McCluskey, NMCB 133.

Det Sasebo also has a warm heart for animals. They took care of a dog named Zoey who has become their mascot. **SB**

# NFELC MUSE Team Helps Power USSTRATCOM

By Ryan Hansen, 55th Wing Public Affairs, and Mason Lowery, NFELC Public Affairs

The Naval Facilities Expeditionary Logistics Center (NFELC) sent a four-person Mobile Utilities Support Equipment (MUSE) team to aid U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) when a broken water main flooded its headquarters building boiler room.

The MUSE team saved USSTRATCOM approximately \$1.5 million (\$784,000 in rental costs and \$763,000 in fuel costs), according to Douglas Wendt, 55th Civil Engineer Squadron (CES) exterior electric and power production supervisor.

The broken water main flooded the boiler room, causing electrical, cooling, heating and potable water issues for the 50-year-old

facility. While the command remained fully mission capable throughout the event, the 55th CES reached out to NFELC to provide support to the facility.

NFELC sent a MUSE team from Port Hueneme, Calif., to assist. The team installed two mobile 2,500 KVA electrical substations and also provided training to the 55th CES.

“The civil engineers here were already pretty familiar with the equipment, so we just had to provide the basic ins and outs,” said Engineering Aide 1st Class Adam Binon, lead electrician with the MUSE team. “In addition, we always have 24-hour support available. If there’s ever an issue, someone is

here to answer their question.”

“The equipment is very similar to stationary transformers and switchgear,” Wendt said. “CE high-voltage electricians are well-qualified to maintain the MUSE substations, [and] it should take about four man-hours per week to inspect and maintain them.”

Typically a MUSE team assists naval customers with public works issues, such as providing support to a building or utility.

“It’s definitely a new experience,” EA1 Binon said. “We’ve never done anything quite to this scale. It’s definitely a notch in the belt.”

The 55th CES anticipates the equipment will remain in place through mid-2011. **SB**



EA1 Adam Binon (left), lead electrician with NFELC’s MUSE team, and Todd Osgood, 55th Civil Engineer Squadron (CES), inspect an electrical substation outside U.S. Strategic Command, Port Hueneme, Calif.

U.S. Air Force photo by Josh Plueger

## Join MUSE... Power the world!

As an elite force that represents only one percent of the Seabee community, Mobile Utilities Support Equipment (MUSE) technicians provide power plants, substations and technical expertise to support utility shortfalls at Department of Defense locations worldwide.

If you are interested in becoming a MUSE Seabee, contact the MUSE recruiting staff at (805) 982 5323 / DSN 551-5323 to schedule an interview.

### PROGRAM BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- College-level education in mathematics, physics, electrical/mechanical engineering and power plant technologies
- College and ACE credits
- Close-knit community
- Diverse travel opportunities
- Closed-loop detailing
- Selective reenlistment bonuses
- Civilian certifications and licenses



For more information on the MUSE program, visit NAVFAC at <http://bit.ly/kPST3E>.



# Why We're Here

## SEABEES IN AFGHANISTAN

"When you come home, I hope you can tell me why we're in Afghanistan."

That question from a good friend has been in my head since I left Gulfport, Miss., in January 2011. How could I explain all the good things happening in a place she and most Americans will never see?

**I would start by telling her how the Seabees exemplify the coalition's effort in Afghanistan.**

Afghanistan, one of the poorest countries in the world, requires all of the Seabees' talents and then some – repairing roads, digging wells, building security outposts, pulling vehicles from the mud.

Brig. Gen. Kenneth R. Dahl, Deputy Commanding General for Support, Regional Command South, said there is very high demand for Seabee construction expertise.

“If you are going to do clearing operations, you want to follow it up with some kind of development or stability project, and you need the people who can do that,” Brig. Gen. Dahl said. “You need people who can look at the project from an engineering perspective, and then in a contingency environment do the construction and make it happen.”

Dahl said the Army has that capability, but not nearly enough of it to meet the requirements in Afghanistan.

“The Seabees bring that additional capability,” he said. “We wouldn't be able to meet the requirements without them.”

**I would tell her that projects in Afghanistan have wide-reaching effects throughout the country.**

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 3, works primarily out of Camp Leatherneck, Southwest Afghanistan, but has been sent to as many as 30 different locations throughout the country. Route Trident was one of their projects.

“It was a section of road that had not been completed and the contractors didn't operate in that area,” says Cmdr. Patrick Garin, commanding officer, NMCB 3. “We were able to get into the community, improve the roadway and provide better soil stabilization so both coalition forces and the local population could move around much better.”

**I would tell her that this improvement of access has a direct impact on the freedom of movement for the local Afghans.**

“We are a quintessential example of counterinsurgency [COIN],” Cmdr. Garin said.

Kandahar Province's Deputy Minister of Communication Ahmed Javid Faisal said safe roads such as Route Trident and Highway 1 have played a significant role in helping Afghan farmers reach markets from remote areas. Those efforts are paying huge dividends.

“Most of the Afghans are best friends of the Seabees and thankful for their assistance,” Faisal said. “Seabees have decreased the number of terrorist attacks on the Afghan National Security Forces [ANSF] and all Afghans.”

**I would tell her about how the Seabees are improving the Afghan people's ability to support themselves.**

Most Seabee projects are ultimately about self-sufficiency for the Afghans.

“We have improved the infrastructure,” Garin explains. “We're not just here to eradicate the bad guys. We're also here to get the economy jumpstarted so the country can be self-sustaining. We're good guys out here.”

**I would explain the necessity of farming in a country as agriculturally rich as Afghanistan.**

“If you're a farmer and you can't get your produce to the market, then you're not a farmer – you're a gardener,” Dahl explains.

He said many villagers cannot read or write, but they associate the Seabee logo with projects rather than fighting.

“They know that when the 'Bee is around there are tangible changes to the community,” Dahl said.

**I would tell her about how the Seabees have provided security to the Afghan people.**

NMCB 26, based in Kandahar, built two security outposts on each side of Tangi Valley, bringing stability to the people in the local community.

“The first thing the Afghans say [they need] is security,” Dahl said.

“Whether it is their security or security for the Afghan security forces or local police, they need some kind of tactical infrastructure and the ability to move freely.”

Checkpoints, two-man towers or a few HESCO barriers can make a huge difference in the security of a village.

“Just a few structures not only communicate to the people that there is security, but it actually puts our forces and the Afghan forces at a position of advantage,” Dahl said. “Frankly, when the Taliban and insurgents see that, they tend to go elsewhere.”

**I would explain how Seabees impact other coalition forces.**

NMCB 26 worked on a project at a Romanian forward operating base, where the entry control point was in bad shape. The Romanians asked the Seabees if they could do something to better protect themselves, all the while knowing this work would be in addition to current Seabee projects. CAN DO.

**I would tell her how the Seabees are flexible.**

During Afghanistan's brutal rainy season, which bogged down most of Southern Afghanistan in thick mud, Seabees opened roads and unclogged culverts. Then, they visited ANA bases to make sure there was proper drainage.

*Why are we here?* On second thought, I might just have the answer to that question.

The Seabees help. It's what they do.



An Afghan farmer sells produce at the fourth International AgFair, Kabul, Afghanistan. The country is home to one of the fastest-growing agricultural markets in Central Asia. Seabees have facilitated village-to-market routes through freedom of movement initiatives.

*Photo by French Army Staff Sgt. Romain Beaulinette*

# Purple Heart



## CM3 John J. Petty II Receives Purple Heart

By Carl Burnett Jr., CentralOhio.com

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.

The Purple Heart Medal was recently awarded to Construction Electrician 3rd Class John J. Petty II, NMCB 4. CE3 Petty was wounded bringing electricity into tents and buildings under construction in Camp Fallujah, Iraq, when an RPG (rocket-propelled grenade) struck the area, Oct. 17, 2004.

CM3 Petty fulfilled his active duty requirement in June 2005, and has waited more than six years for his medal due to miscommunication about the criteria for the Purple Heart. However, a CAT scan performed by the Veterans Administration revealed a piece of shrapnel from the attack still stuck in his head. Armed with this information, U.S. Rep. Steve Austria, R-Beavercreek, a congressman from Petty's home state of Ohio, convinced the military to review the case once again. Petty received his long-awaited medal from Rep. Austria in March.

Information compiled from the *Mansfield News Journal*, Mansfield, Ohio

# Bridging the Gap

## IN AFGHANISTAN

Armored vehicles from NMCB 3's Convoy Security Element head out to a project in support of the freedom of movement initiative, Helmand province, Afghanistan. NMCB 3 Det Trident spent time outside Camp Leatherneck refurbishing bridges along main supply routes for the country.

Steelworker 1st Class (SCW) Teddy Brown, NMCB 3, is a bridge manager and has tasked units with 30 different bridge repair projects so far.

"Right now, we're working on Gen. David Petraeus' freedom of movement initiative on the main supply routes for the country," said SW1 Brown. "I'm in the process of mapping every bridge in the country, no matter what size it is."

The battalion's work provides stable supply routes for military convoys and enables local Afghan farmers to transport their wares from village to market. **SB**

Information contributed by MC3(SCW) Christopher Carson, NMCB 3

Photo by UT3 Matthew Brown

# Lt. j.g. Francis L. Toner IV Memorial Bridge Dedicated

By Bob Krekorian, Naval Station Newport Public Affairs

Naval Station (NAVSTA) Newport's new replacement bridge connecting Coasters Harbor Island and Coddington Point was dedicated as the Lt. j.g. Francis L. Toner IV, CEC, USN Memorial Bridge in a ceremony, March 27.

The \$15.5 million bridge was built by the American Bridge Company and officially opened to traffic on June 18, 2010. The 963-foot concrete bridge replaced an outdated span that is now used as a pedestrian walkway.

The 1 p.m. ceremony, conducted at the west end of the bridge under a tent two years to the day Lt. j.g. Toner died, was attended by 150 guests that included Toner family members, friends, local dignitaries; and Senators Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse, and Representative David N. Cicilline.

"This is a moment to commemorate great sacrifice," Reed said. Lt. Toner's sacrifice was shared by his family, his shipmates and the Navy, he added.

"Each generation of Americans has been called upon to protect and sustain our lively experiment in democracy. Few answer that call with the last full measure of their life like Frank Toner," he said.

The memorial plaque was unveiled by Toner family members including his father, Frank Toner III; stepmother, Barbara Phieffer; and wife, Brooke Toner.

The plaque citation reads: "For heroic achievement in connection with combat operations against the enemy while serving as Garrison Engineer for Afghanistan Regional Security Integration Command North, in connection with operations against enemy forces in support of Operation Enduring Freedom from 20 Oct 2008 to 27 March 2009, Lieutenant Junior Grade Toner's superior leadership and unmatched technical expertise were vital in the struggle against violent extremism."

The plaque further reads: "On 27 March 2009, Lieutenant Junior Grade Toner displayed uncommon valor and conspicuous bravery when attacked by small arms fire from an Afghanistan National Army soldier while conducting physical training. Throughout his service in Afghanistan, Lieutenant Junior Grade Toner's actions displayed dedication to the security of the U.S. and a sincere desire to bring peace and stability to the citizens of Afghanistan."

Toner, 26, was a resident of Narragansett, R.I., at the time of his death, and for a brief period of time had been assigned to the NAVSTA Newport Public Works Department. He graduated from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in 2006.

He was killed March 27, 2009 by an Afghan National Army (ANA) soldier at Camp Shaheen in Afghanistan. He was six months into a year-long Individual Augmentation assignment with the Afghan Regional

Security Integration Command North, Mazar-E-Sharif, Afghanistan.

Rear Adm. Christopher J. Mossey, CEC, Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command and Chief of Civil Engineers, called Toner a true American hero.

"Whether it was a brief encounter, a professional association or a lifelong relationship, Frank had a special touch," Rear Adm. Mossey said. "If you met Frank Toner, even for a brief moment, you couldn't forget him. He was positive, full of energy and enthusiasm, and youthful hope."

Mossey said Toner was a natural leader and had a leader's touch.

Toner reported in country to Afghanistan in October 2008 and served as the garrison engineer mentor for the 209th Corps of the ANA.

"Here was a 26-year-old who was assigned to mentor an army. He was made for this assignment," Mossey said.

An inscription on a plaque hanging at the entrance to the Camp Spann Firehouse, Afghanistan, honoring Toner who was present for the March 23, 2009, groundbreaking reads in part:

"He forged close relationships with Afghan officers, contractors, and language assistants, embodying the professional skills and personal commitment necessary for counterinsurgency. He was instrumental in the engineering and construction of over one hundred million dollars of facilities across the nine provinces of northern Afghanistan. He died the way he lived, protecting others."

"He embraced the Afghan people and they embraced him back," Mossey said.

"Today we dedicate a bridge that closes a gap and connects people. Connecting people was Frank's special gift whether on the sports field or in a war zone halfway around the world," he said.

"This bridge seems good and steady," Frank Toner III told the guests. The elder Toner worked on the bridge when the concrete was being poured.

"Frankie had a zest for life, and an upbeat and humble spirit. He was very proud and honored to serve his country," he said.

He recalled that when his son called home from Afghanistan, he would always ask for school supplies for Afghan children.

Toner was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Combat Distinguishing Device for his heroic achievements in Afghanistan, October 2008 - March 2009; and the Purple Heart Medal for wounds received in action in Afghanistan, March 27, 2009.

The Merchant Marine Academy provided a color guard for the ceremony.

On May 30, 2009, Toner was honored as a fallen hero by the State of Rhode Island. His name was entered on a Garden of Heroes granite memorial in a ceremony at the State House in Providence, R.I. **SB**



Brooke Toner, widow of Lt. j.g. Francis L. Toner IV, CEC, displays the commemorative plaque on the bridge bearing her late husband's name. Lt. j.g. Toner, on Individual Augmentee assignment, was killed March 27, 2009, by an Afghan National Army soldier, Camp Shaheen, Afghanistan.

U.S. Navy photo by Bob Krekorian

# Seabees in Ethiopia

## Ambassadors in Hard Hats

By MC2 Michael Lindsey, NMCB 74

"PEARL" SS" NMCB-74

FEBRUARY 17, 2011

SNL: 23M

PUMP DEPTH=200' 61M

SCREEN DEPTH=135'-230' 41M-72M

HOLE DEPTH=202' 62M



(Left) BUCN Shawn Wilkins (left) and EACA Shawn Boyd, both assigned to NMCB 74 Det Horn of Africa (HOA), sort a load of steel rebar for the construction of a schoolhouse in Gende Gerade, Ethiopia.

(Below) In the village of Jedane, Ethiopia, local children play in the excess water of a well drilled by Seabees assigned to NMCB 74 Det HOA. The 302-foot-deep well provides clean water to more than 3,400 locals and their livestock.

Photos by MC2 Michael Lindsey

## CJTF-HOA's mission in Ethiopia is a part of the U.S. Maritime Strategy for building partner nation capacity.

Two dozen Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74 Det Horn of Africa (HOA) are working on several water wells and a new school for the people of Ethiopia. But it's not just these physical structures they'll leave behind. These Seabees hope to be remembered as welcome neighbors and goodwill ambassadors.

Currently deployed to Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), the Seabees are drilling and repairing water wells, as well as building a school from the ground up.

"So far we have provided clean water to remote villages that were getting water from the same sources as their animals," said Lt. j.g. Jose Mora, officer-in-charge for the Seabee det in Ethiopia. "We are also building a new school to help a community educate their youth. I have never done anything more rewarding than what we are doing here."

CJTF-HOA's mission in Ethiopia is a part of the U.S. Maritime Strategy for building partner nation capacity. The goal is to increase trust and confidence among the people in their own government, enabling them to create and maintain a stable, secure environment where education and prosperity take hold and violent extremist ideology is rejected.

Mohamed Ahmed Hashi is an Ethiopian native who has worked as a linguist and driver for CJTF-HOA since its establishment eight years ago. He has seen many different facets of CJTF-HOA and its success over the years, and can bear witness to the mission's importance.

"For the most part, I have seen happiness on the people's faces and gratitude from the Ethiopian government," said Hashi. "But I have also seen a few instances when I do campaigns such as MEDCAP and VETCAP, and I would see people wearing an Osama Bin Laden shirt or something like that. Locals are trying to spread that idea, but you might say they have their own civil affairs missions going on, too."

Hashi said he is amazed by the dedication of the Seabees, especially of the water well team which works around the clock in the dirt during their drilling operations. He was present when the team finished its first well in the remote village of Jedane.

"The Seabees did magic when they hit the pump for the first time! You should have seen the people's faces," he said. "When

you give people water in their village – people who actually walk kilometers and kilometers just hoping to find water, usually dirty water – imagine how that changes their life. It's the greatest gift you can give to anybody."

Not far from Jedane is the other half of the det, a crew of Seabees building a school in the small town of Gende Gerade. The building will be a 108-foot by 30-foot single-story brick and concrete structure divided into four classrooms. It was designed by a local Ethiopian engineering firm to match existing buildings in the area.

"Since our arrival we've been treated like family by everyone we've come in contact with," said Chief Builder Christopher Jefferies, mission commander for the school project. "The students at the school are wonderful and provide us with constant entertainment. At times, it's hard to figure out whether the students are more interested in us or the construction of their new schoolhouse."

Hashi said the Seabees in their hard hats represent an America that wants to help people. And, they are excellent ambassadors to Ethiopia.

"Those kids will grow up and say, 'I learned in a school that was built by Americans,'" he said. "And then maybe one day they'll see American military walking by and remember the Seabee who was building his school when he was a kid. Imagine the connection." **SB**



(Opposite) Clean, fresh water pours over the steel splash plate of a water well drilled by NMCB 74 Seabees, Jedane, Ethiopia. NMCB 74 Det Horn of Africa (HOA) is deployed to support Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) in building partner nation capacity and promoting regional stability through construction engineering support in accordance with the U.S. Navy's Maritime Strategy.

Photo by MC2 Michael Lindsey

## CM3 Marvin Shields Award

**UT1(SCW) Kevin K. Swanson, NMCB 5**



UT1(SCW) Kevin K. Swanson

While deployed to Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, from April to November 2010, Utilitesman 1st Class (SCW) Kevin K. Swanson displayed superb leadership, management and technical ability, working outside his rate as project supervisor in Charlie Company. UT1 Swanson expertly led 13 Seabees constructing four critical 32-foot by 120-foot SWA huts and executing 1,600 man days of construction in support of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) combat operations. His efforts provided

more than 10,000 square feet of time-critical command and control facilities required to accommodate the presidential surge and rapid expansion of Forward Operating Base Leatherneck, going from 6,000 to 21,000 Marines and coalition forces. He served as leading petty officer for a Seabee det to construct two separate 3.1-km roads on the west side of the Helmand River. To enable combat vehicles to transit the southern route, the slope required cutting and grading 40 feet into an extremely steep bluff that dropped nearly 300 feet over a quarter mile. Swanson led the convoy security element, providing security and over-watch for the crew. The initial convoy into the area was hit with an improvised explosive device (IED) and the return convoy also found and struck several IEDs. Swanson's leadership and coordination with the 31st Georgian Battalion and the battle space regions to ensure fire support, communication and security was essential to the successful completion of the construction mission and safe return of his team.

*This award is presented for outstanding technical and leadership ability, and is given in honor of Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Marvin Shields, a 26-year-old Seabee serving in Vietnam with NMCB 11 in 1965. Shields' unit, along with Army Special Forces and South Vietnam Defense personnel, came under attack by 2,000 Viet Cong and, although greatly outnumbered, withstood intense close-range combat for almost three hours. Shields and an Army lieutenant volunteered to man a rocket launcher, destroying an enemy machine gun position. Despite repeatedly being hit, Shields fought on until he was mortally wounded; he died the following day while being evacuated by helicopter. For these heroic actions that cost him his life, he was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor – becoming the first (and so far only) Seabee to receive the nation's highest award, and also the first Navy man to be so decorated for action in Vietnam.*



EOCS(SCW) Shane R. Potts (left) and Rear Adm. C.J. Mossey, Commander and Chief of Civil Engineers, NAVFAC

## SW2(DV) Robert D. Stethem Award

**EOCS(SCW) Shane R. Potts, NMCB 40**

Senior Chief Equipment Operator (SCW) Shane Potts' exceptional bravery and leadership were crucial to the establishment of tactical infrastructure during Operation Hamkari, and were key contributors to the Naval Construction Force's (NCF's) support to Regional Command South, Kandahar, Afghanistan. Demonstrating extraordinary tactical prowess and exceptional knowledge of NCF operations, EOCS Potts led his Seabee teams into enemy territory to expeditiously construct seven tactical operation centers, two combat outposts, and 25 km of route improvements that significantly enhanced the capabilities and maneuverability of coalition forces. Potts' dedication, thorough training of his team, exceptional leadership in the face of adversity and flawless execution in tactical situations kept his personnel safe while enduring enemy small arms fire, including hand grenade and rocket-propelled grenade attacks.

*Named for Steelworker 2<sup>nd</sup> Class (DV) Robert Dean Stethem, this award recognizes outstanding individual moral courage in support of the traditions of the Seabees while in the course of actual operations. SW2 Stethem was a victim of the hijacking of TWA Flight 847 in June 1985, after being singled out from passengers as a U.S. Navy Sailor and killed by members of the Lebanese terrorist organization Hezbollah when their demands to release 766 Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners held by Israel were not met. He was returning home with fellow members of UCT 1 after completing a routine assignment in Greece. Stethem was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star. In August 2010, he was frocked to the rank of honorary master chief petty officer.*



EOCS(SCW) Joseph Hampton (left) and Rear Adm. C.J. Mossey, Commander and Chief of Civil Engineers, NAVFAC

## Rear Adm. Lewis B. Combs Award

### EOCS(SCW) Joseph Hampton, NMCB 5

Senior Chief Equipment Operator (SCW) Joseph Hampton, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5, performed expertly as the Alfa Company operations chief, serving eight months in support of vital 1st Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) combat operations throughout Afghanistan.

Senior Chief Hampton pressed the Naval Construction Force's (NCF's) most degraded table of allowance (TOA) into the most dangerous and demanding environments. He was instrumental in executing five Helmand River crossings and 520 convoy missions outside the wire, conducting numerous project reconnaissance missions, and completing 80 horizontal projects essential to the 72,000 man-days of construction completed by the battalion. In addition, he effectively and efficiently relocated equipment, found alternative equipment, and rented or borrowed equipment to ensure missions and projects were finished on time. Hampton's technical guidance was essential to the planning and construction of two separate 3.1-km roads along the Helmand River, enabling coalition forces to drastically reduce convoy casualties.

His combination of superior leadership, unwavering commitment to his duties, and engineering knowledge has greatly contributed to success in the region.

*This award is named in honor of Rear Adm. Lewis B. Combs, and is presented to an individual who has made the most outstanding contribution in perpetuating the legacy of the Seabees and the Civil Engineer Corps (CEC). Combs served as chief deputy to Adm. Ben Moreell, CEC, founder of the Seabees, and helped create the "fighter builders" and the CEC. He was active with the Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association from its inception in 1970, first as Chairman of the Board of Directors and later as Chairman Emeritus, until his death at age 101.*

## Moreell Medal

### Lt. Cmdr. Daniel W. Cook, CEC, 22nd NCR

Lt. Cmdr. Daniel Cook demonstrated superior performance as operations officer, 22nd Naval Construction Regiment (NCR). He led Navy, Army and Air Force engineer forces during vital military combat operations in Afghanistan.

Lt. Cmdr. Cook orchestrated the completion of the following: more than 375 projects on 30-plus forward operating bases, resulting in greater than six miles of expanded perimeters, more than 25 command and control facilities, two large expeditionary airfields, 28 deep aquifer water wells, several tactical bridging installations, 250 acres of life support areas and numerous helicopter landing zones, along with many other force protection and facility improvements.

He extended engineer mission capabilities and optimized resources to enhance the safety, security and warfighting capability of the International Security Assistance Force Joint Command. Cook also expedited stabilization of regional commands in south, southwest and west areas of operation, enabling rapid deployment of the Afghan National security forces and paving the way for secure and successful national elections.

*The Moreell Medal is presented annually by the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) to an officer of the Navy Civil Engineer Corps (CEC), active or reserve, or to a civilian employee of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) in recognition of outstanding contributions to military engineering. The award is named in honor of Adm. Ben Moreell, CEC, who served as the chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks (later known as NAVFAC) and chief of the CEC from 1937 - 1945. Known as the "Father of the Seabees," Adm. Moreell established the Naval Construction Force in 1942.*



Lt. Cmdr. Daniel W. Cook, CEC

**B**uilder Constructionman Jacob McKanna is putting his college degree in construction management to work, but not in the way he expected.

A Terre Haute native and 2009 graduate of Indiana State University (ISU), BUCN McKanna is now serving in Afghanistan with the Seabees, the U.S. Navy construction division. He is part of the Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 26, which comprises Seabees from Michigan, Indiana and Ohio.

In Afghanistan, the Seabees are constructing combat outposts and infrastructure, including roads. McKanna has assisted in building bunkers, a mess hall, an air traffic control tower and about 600 yards of chain-link fence.

A 2003 graduate of Terre Haute North Vigo High School, McKanna lettered in wrestling all four years. The 26-year-old joined the Navy Reserves while at ISU.

In summer of 2010, he was activated and has been in Afghanistan since November.

In an e-mail interview, McKanna said that serving in Afghanistan "is pretty powerful to say the least. Seeing the locals here and observing the way they live makes you appreciate the United States on a whole new level. I haven't had much contact with them because of the large language and cultural barriers that exist, though."

The bases the Seabees are building are for the benefit of the Afghan National Security Forces.

"I most recently got back from a mission where a small detachment of Seabees built a combat outpost [COP] in the middle of the mountains. It was an experience, but I didn't much like not showering and not having any communication with home for a month," McKanna said.

There, he assisted in the construction of bunkers and the mess hall, and was the crew leader for those projects. At a larger, established base, he's assisted in building an air traffic control tower.

He believes the Afghans appreciate the work of the Seabees there. While helping build the COP, "I was approached numerous times by an Afghan National Army [ANA] soldier and his interpreter to tell me what a good job we were doing and how thankful they were. These types of projects are for the ANA and they will help keep their villages safe for many years to come."

McKanna believes in the mission.

"I know we're making a difference because I can see it all around

me. This is a country that has been in war for its entire existence and it shows in the society. Every day we're here helps bring this society closer to the level in which we live upon. And from what I've seen, they're stuck in the early 1900s."

He hopes to be back in the United States by early summer, although he could be deployed until October.

His long-term goals are to get home and concentrate on his career. After graduating from college, he was able to work only about six months before he had to report to duty. He had been working in Jacksonville, Fla., for an Indiana-based company.

"I look forward to picking up where I left off," he said. "My career in the Navy is still somewhat undecided on my end, but I will always have the option to re-enlist when my contract expires in May 2013."

What does he miss most? "Everything, I must say. Though, the thing I miss the most is paved roads. I can't wait to hop on the interstate and cruise."

He joined the Navy Reserve for many reasons. "The major one was the fact that it had always been an interest of mine and when the option arose for me to enlist, I took it. It also helped me better myself as a person, not to mention it looks great on my resume."

His mother, Katy McKanna, communicates with him every two or three days using instant messaging through Skype, Ms. McKanna said.

While her son may downplay the danger, she said it's very risky. "I pray every day he's going to be okay. I'm very proud of him," she said.

McKanna's high school wrestling coach at North, Mark Frisz, remembers Jacob as "...one of the best wrestlers we've had in our program. He was the first to achieve 100 wins [during] his career."

He described McKanna as a "really dedicated, quiet and hard-working kid...He was easy to coach. You could depend on him to do the things you asked him to do."

As far as McKanna serving with the Seabees in Afghanistan, Frisz said, "You worry about anybody over there...Whatever the circumstances are, he will be a man who will do the job, whatever the job requires of him. He will see it through and he will do his best to complete it."

## Terre Haute Native Puts Construction Degree to Work in the U.S. Navy

By Sue Loughlin, *The Tribune Star*

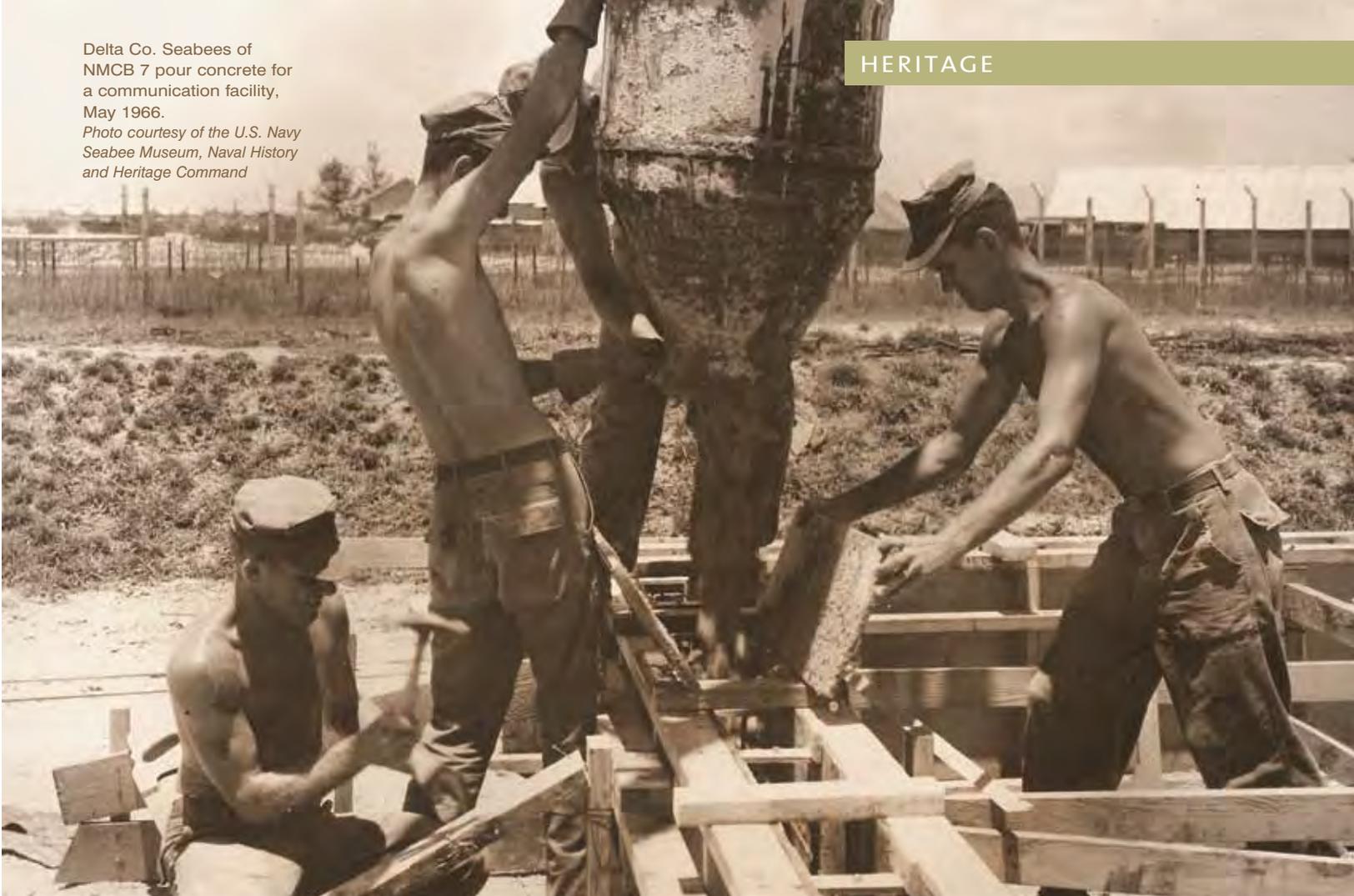


BUCN Jacob McKanna, NMCB 26, Afghanistan

Delta Co. Seabees of NMCB 7 pour concrete for a communication facility, May 1966.

Photo courtesy of the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum, Naval History and Heritage Command

HERITAGE



# Seabees in Southeast Asia

By Naval History and Heritage Command

In 1964, the U.S. military buildup in South Vietnam interrupted the normal peacetime deployment pattern of the Naval Construction Force. By fall 1968 worldwide Seabee strength had grown to more than 26,000 men, serving in 21 Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCBs), two Construction Battalion Maintenance Units (CBMUs) and two Amphibious Construction Battalions (ACBs).

As nearly 800,000 Vietnamese emigrated from north to south, an exodus known as the “Passage to Freedom,” the United States organized Navy Task Force 90, comprising more than 50 ships.

As members of Task Force 90, ACB 1 built and operated a recreation facility for U.S. personnel. Another detachment constructed a refugee tent camp and accompanying water and power supply facilities at the mouth of the Saigon River. For this achievement, ACB 1 Seabees were awarded the Vietnamese Presidential Unit Citation.

In summer 1956, a Seabee construction battalion team arrived in the newly established Republic of Vietnam to survey some 1,800 miles of existing and proposed roads. Two solid months of seven-day-a-week labor in extremely rough territory helped build many roads crucial to the conduct of the war.

During 1963, Seabee teams constructed small support points throughout the interior to counter Viet Cong political influence in villages in South Vietnam. The teams also built U.S. Army Special Forces camps, performed civic action tasks and conducted military engineering projects.

Seabee activity in South Vietnam grew. ‘Bees served throughout 22 provinces scattered from the Mekong Delta along the Cambodian border and the Central highlands, to the North Vietnamese border.

While they were primarily builders and instructors, Seabee Team members were sometimes directly involved in battle. Perhaps the most famous battle occurred June 1965 at Dong Xoai. When Viet Cong troops overran a Special Forces Camp containing 400 South Vietnamese and allied Asian troops, 11 men of a U.S. Army Special Forces team and nine men of Seabee Team 1104 were wounded or killed. One of the dead was Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Marvin G. Shields. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry in carrying a critically wounded man to safety and in destroying a Viet Cong machine gun emplacement at the cost of his life. Not only was Marvin Shields the first (and so far only) Seabee to receive the nation’s highest award, but he was also the first Navy man to be so decorated for action in Vietnam.

By the end of 1965, Seabees had pioneered three major advance bases in the northern provinces of the Republic of Vietnam. From these bases, combatant forces received critical support necessary for increasing attacks into the interior. In the words of then-Secretary of the Navy Paul H. Nitze, the Seabees “contributed mightily to constructing the vast infrastructure necessary for a major war in a primitive, remote area.”



For more information on Seabee history in Southeast Asia, visit the Seabee Nation on Facebook - [www.facebook.com/SeabeeMagazine](http://www.facebook.com/SeabeeMagazine).

## Seabees and Their Families

in *Sasebo, Japan* *A perspective*

By Stacy Molzhon

The 9.0-magnitude earthquake that fiercely rocked northern Japan happened more than 900 miles north from where my family is stationed in Sasebo, on the island of Kyushu, Japan.

Sasebo did not receive any physical damage from the earthquake or tsunami, but the hearts and minds of everyone here have been touched. Sasebo is home to a small Public Works unit of Seabees and their families, as well as a deployed Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) detachment.

Social media has been a huge lifeline between family and friends during this crisis. "Safe and sound" seems to be the most common status on Facebook here in Japan.

I have spoken with some Seabees and their spouses, and would like to share some of what they said.

Seabee spouse Letty Vegamacias: "I love this country! The minute I got here I knew this would be the place I would love to call home. Even with all of the devastation, the Japanese people stand firm on their values, and are very calm and patient in spite of their great loss."

Steelworker 1st Class (SCW) Erik Lowe: "My fellow Seabees and I are very anxious to help out during disaster relief; our bags are packed and we are ready to assist the Japanese people in any way we can. This is what the Seabees are all about – CAN DO! This disaster really hit home for my wife and me as her family currently lives in the Tokyo area. Her family is doing okay and is in good health. Their homes did not suffer any major structural damage unlike so many of the Japanese people who lost everything. God bless them and their families."

I should point out how wonderful our military organizations have been, including sending updates quickly to families across Japan. Voluntary evacuations have been taking place up north and military dependents are heading back to the states. In Sasebo, we are staying

put as the threat of radiation exposure has not made it to us. Family members at CFAS (Commander Fleet Activities Sasebo) immediately stepped up to collect donations for earthquake and tsunami victims. Blankets, diapers, flashlights, clothing and other necessities have been collected. Our ships that were homeported here quickly repositioned or took off immediately to assist.

NMCB Seabees are making temporary animal kennels in preparation for people evacuating the north coming to Sasebo with pets. Sasebo Public Works Seabees Utilitiesman 2nd Class (SCW) Michael J. Conway Jr., and Construction Electrician 2nd Class (SCW) Jeremiah B. Meaole assisted the base thrift store collecting and transporting relief items for Operation Tomodachi.

There is an unmistakable bond between military families. This is not only the time to support each other, it's also a chance to share important lessons we may have learned. These

include keeping our families focused, maintaining a sense of normalcy (especially for our children), and providing comfort to our own during times of challenge and crisis.

Living here for the past two years, my husband and I have come to call Japan "home." I am touched every time we go out, as the Japanese will approach Americans, bow and thank us for our assistance. It took only minutes for this earthquake and tsunami to destroy northeast Japan; however, the Japanese people will rebuild and recover because of their strength.

As the Seabees stand ready to assist with their CAN DO attitude, I once again find my heart going out to all of our great 'Bees! I pull strength from within and from the military families around me to once again support a mission our Seabees were born to do. "With compassion for others..."

*Stacy Molzhon is the wife of retired BUCS(SCW) David Molzhon.*

There is an  
unmistakable  
bond between  
military families.

Pictured are remnants of the March 11 tsunami which impacted Japan's eastern coastline. An 9.0-magnitude earthquake triggered the tsunami causing severe damage and untold loss of life.

*Photo by MCC Daniel Sanford*

This story came to *Seabee Magazine* via Facebook!



# RISE TO THE CHALLENGE

Underwater Construction Teams



BE PART OF AN ELITE  
"CAN DO" UNIT. BE A  
SEABEE DIVER

[www.facebook.com/seabee.diver](http://www.facebook.com/seabee.diver)

## DIVER RECRUITING

Seabee divers are trained to be Underwater Construction Technicians (UCTs). The U.S. Navy is looking for Seabees with at least one tour where they have been able to develop construction skills. Both male and female Seabees, as well as hospital corpsmen who want the Diving Medical Technician NEC 8493, may apply. During periods of low manning, the program may also accept well-qualified candidates directly from "A" school.

## TRAINING

Seabees start their training with UCT Basic School in Panama City, Fla. This physically demanding course covers basic diving principles and applications, followed by underwater construction and demolition-handling techniques.

This course is followed up with Advanced UCT School which awards the NEC 5931. After years of successful performance, a skilled Seabee chief may apply for the coveted position of Master Diver. Successful completion of the course merits award of the NEC 5932. After a few years of solid performance in the UCTs, advanced diver training is available.

The UCTs have an intense training program. Topics include military weapons and tactics, diver refresher, physical fitness and specialized training to meet the requirements of a particular project.

## DUTY LOCATIONS

Sea duty assignments are with the UCTs in Little Creek, Va., and Port Hueneme, Calif. These commands send dets throughout the world, including the Arctic Icecap, Puerto Rico, Latvia, Iceland, Bermuda, Iraq and numerous other locations throughout the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

## HOW TO APPLY

Prerequisites:

- 30 years old or less upon admission to UCT Basic School
- E-6 or below in a Seabee or corpsman rating
- Minimum of 3.0 performance evaluation average for prior two years and positive recommendation from commanding officer
- No NJP within 12 months of application
- Eligible for a secret security clearance
- Minimum ASVAB scores:
  - o Mechanical Comprehension: 50
  - o AR + (\*) = 104
- (\*) For ASVAB 5, 6, 7 use WK score/(\*) for ASVAB 8, 9, 10 use VE score
- Minimum of 36 months' obligated service as of class graduation date from dive school

There is also a medical exam and physical fitness test, as well as other qualifications. For more information, visit [www.facebook.com/seabee.diver](http://www.facebook.com/seabee.diver).

References: Naval Military Personnel Manual 1410380, Enlisted Transfer Manual 9.16

**HOOYAH DEEP SEA!**

**WE BUILD · WE FIGHT  
WE DIVE!**

# CE1(SCW) Leonardo Calderon, 31st SRG, Named 2010 CNO Shore Sailor of the Year



Construction Electrician 1st Class(SCW) Leonardo D. Calderon (far right), 31st Seabee Readiness Group (SRG), and his wife, Jamiah, pose with MCPON(SS/SW) Rick D. West at the Pentagon after Calderon was named the 2010 CNO Shore Sailor of the Year. CE1 Calderon was meritoriously advanced to Chief Petty Officer during a ceremony at the Navy Memorial, Washington, D.C., May 19. Photo by MC1(SW) Abraham W.G. Essenmacher



FORCM(SCW) James D. Fairbanks

On the Passing of FORCM (SCW) James D. Fairbanks, USN  
The 13th Command Master Chief, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, and 13th Force Master Chief Petty Officer of the Seabees

From Rear Adm. Christopher J. Mossey, Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command and Chief of Civil Engineers:

"Our Seabee family and the men and women of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command are greatly saddened by the unexpected death of Force Master Chief Jim Fairbanks. Our heartfelt prayers and sympathies go out to his family, friends and shipmates. FORCM Fairbanks was the epitome of a dedicated and caring leader throughout his long career of service to our nation. He will be greatly missed. May the wonderful memories of this gentle and honorable man bring comfort to us all, and particularly his family."

From Rear Adm. Greg Shear, CEC, USN (Ret):

"FORCM Fairbanks was a quiet tower of strength for me and for all Seabees. We will miss him terribly."

From FORCM (SCW) Douglas Dickey, USN, Command Master Chief, Naval Facilities Engineering Command:

"The passing of FORCM Fairbanks is a significant loss for the entire Seabee community. He was a trusted leader, mentor and friend to many and his impact to all of us will be felt for years to come."

From FORCM (SCW) Michael Holdcraft USN, (Ret):

"The passing of FORCM Fairbanks is a sad tragedy. We mourn the loss of a very fine Master Chief and he will be sorely missed."

## 2011 SEABEE REUNIONS

### SEPTEMBER

#### SEPT. 11-14

Seabee Team 0303  
Las Vegas, NV  
George Fowler  
972-874-7308  
GEFNBKF@aol.com

#### SEPT. 16-18

NMCB 1 / NMCB 9  
Gulfport, MS  
Peter Dowd  
781-837-0393  
mcb1reunion@verizon.net

#### SEPT. 16-18

62nd NCB  
Davenport, IA  
Joe Johansen  
303-949-3944

#### SEPT. 16-19

NMCB 133  
Myrtle Beach, SC  
Wm Dennis Ruocco  
910-842-1341  
gulfport67@gmail.com

#### SEPT. 21-25

NMCB 11  
Nashville, TN  
Larry Hagler  
512-267-8873  
mcb11.reunion@earthlink.net

#### SEPT. 23-25

NMCBs 12, 13, 27  
Westport, MA  
Bill Napert Jr.  
508-672-2737  
BNapert@aol.com

#### SEPT. 29 - OCT. 2

NMCB 3  
Reno, NV  
David Schofield  
508-255-1583  
davesco@verizon.net

### OCTOBER

#### OCT. 1

NMCB 16  
Fountain Valley, CA  
BUC Al Hegney  
909-627-3461  
hegneyhouse@hotmail.com

#### OCT. 10-13

103rd NCB  
Port Hueneme, CA  
Wayne D. Heple  
805-343-2399  
nwheple@yahoo.com

#### OCT. 11-14

All Seabee Reunion  
Gulfport, MS  
UTCS Robert P. Smith  
228-424-1185  
smithrp@cableone.net

#### OCT. 16-18

43rd NCB  
Radford, VA  
Tony Percoco  
845-647-6092  
tvtoursinc@yahoo.com

### NOVEMBER

#### NOV. 3-6

NMCB 14  
Orange Park, FL  
Fred Bossard  
570-992-2030  
bossarf@mac.com

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

# Seabee “CAN DO” Spirit Embodies Navy’s Global Force for Good

By FORCM(SCW) Ray Dickey

**F**ellow Seabees, it is with great humility, honor and purpose that I take the reins of Force Master Chief of the Seabees from FORCM (SCW) Michael Holdcraft, who retired on April 15, 2011, after 32 years of tremendous service to our nation.

Thank you, FORCM Holdcraft. I assure you the Seabees are in good hands.

More than ever, the need for the Seabee “CAN DO” spirit is strong in supporting America’s mission, both at home and abroad. From the front lines of Afghanistan where Seabees continue to enable coalition forces and the Afghan people to strive for freedom, to the Horn of Africa where Seabees build new and lasting friendships with our African friends by building schools, water wells and other much-needed infrastructure, to South and Central America where we continue a long-standing partnership of humanitarian and military assistance. Worldwide, the Seabees continue to embody the Navy’s focus on being a Global Force for Good.

Our work is needed. Our success is expected. But, many challenges await us.

We are in a time of drawdowns and have to do our part of being fiscally responsible. No one is protected, we have to understand that. I need you to work hard and earn your paycheck. With that said you are ultimately responsible for your career.

Leaders: The number one thing on your Sailors’ minds is Perform to Serve (PTS). The chain of command should be their advocate, but it starts with the Sailor ensuring he or she can do everything possible to be the #1 candidate in the rack in stack of Fleet Ride/PTS. That starts with the enlisted service record; is it up to date with your current information? Check it early and often.

“You always have been and always will be the ultimate person responsible for your success in the Navy.”

– FORCM(SCW) Ray Dickey

Seabees: Be aggressive and seek out your chain of command for career progression. You should be receiving career development boards to help outline your career, whether it’s five years or 20 years! Not everyone is a 20+ year Seabee, and I understand that. But I expect you to serve your time honorably, earn your paycheck and educate yourself. That way, if you do leave the Navy you will be a better veteran who has skills, abilities and knowledge that are marketable in a volatile economy. If you want to be a career Seabee then you have the responsibility to be better than everyone else to ensure your career path. The competition is tougher now and nothing is guaranteed. The good news is that it all comes down to you. You always have been and always will be the ultimate person responsible for your success in the Navy. Take control now!

All of our success and all of our endeavors begin and end with our people. And you, the men and women of the Seabees, from the newest Seabee recruit, our stellar support personnel, our Chiefs Mess and the CEC officers who lead us, are and always will be my utmost concern. My primary job is to serve as your senior enlisted liaison – and it is a responsibility I am passionate about carrying out.

As such, I would like to share with you three goals I have as your new FORCM.

First and foremost, I want to continue to ensure the future of our Seabees is parallel with the Navy’s mission requirements and goals. We are a tremendous asset to our Navy, and leadership will continue to make sure our mission focus aligns with the Navy’s. It’s all about teamwork, and the Seabees are consummate team players.

Which leads directly to my second goal – establishing, nurturing and extending relationships with other Navy forces. Doing so is contingent on communication and how we can help each other meet expectations. While what we accomplish as Seabees is great, what we can accomplish with our fellow naval forces is even greater. I will be the biggest advocate for our accomplishments.

And finally, but certainly no less important, is my commitment to work with all of our providers to ensure that Seabees and their families have the very latest information and support needed to provide peace of mind both at home and on deployments. This way, everyone can focus on the mission while maintaining an effective work/life balance.

Seabees, our force is more than 18,000 strong. We are a global presence making a significant impact everywhere our hard hats dot the skyline. Our success has America’s attention, and I urge you to continue to live up to your predecessor’s reputation of always having that CAN DO spirit. I’m excited about the future of today’s Seabee force and look forward to helping all of you be the very best Sailors in the Navy.



FORCM(SCW) Ray Dickey

## Galley Tent on the *Horizon*

Seabees assigned to ACB 1, Camp Pendleton, Calif., pull fabric into place on a structure to be used as a galley tent for *Pacific Horizon 2011*. During this exercise, participants establish command and control of Marine and Navy units, construct an 850-person camp, execute Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) operations from sea to shore, and retrograde and redeploy allocated forces.

*Photo by MC2 Bryan Niegel*

