



# NMCB-8 NEWSLETTER



VOLUME 5, ISSUE 3

FALL 2005



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# DOLLYWOOD HERE WE COME!

## PLANNING FOR "2006" REUNION

Troy & Dawn Branch, Frank Pecjak, Billy & Sally Boggs, Ray & Loyie Jane McPeck, & Ron Dougal got together on August 15th, 2005, to plan and make the arrangements for the best NMCB-8 reunion ever in late September 2006. That's right, 2006, a year away. It's not too early to plan a reunion of this type. A lot of time, effort, and coordination is necessary. The planning team came up with a reunion packet that we think will be a big hit. We have reserved 122 rooms at the Ramada Inn in Pigeon Forge, TN. If we fill these rooms we will more than double the size of our largest reunion back in 2001 in Port Hueneme, CA.

In addition to visiting Dollywood, a theme park and the largest tourist attraction in the area, there is much more to do in Pigeon Forge. So we picked out a few things for everyone to do together. The rest of the time you will be on your own. Along the strip there are Trolley's that run every 20 minutes for 25 cents a trip. The trolley will take you anywhere you want to go around town.

We will all go to the Dixie Stampede & Dinner Show on Thursday, the 28th of September followed by a visit to the Comedy Barn on the 29th. This is a family show, and they will have you laughing the whole time you are there. Discount tickets for all of the other shows in town will also be available. The Banquet will be held on Saturday night, the 30th of September, in the Convention Hall, located right beside the Ramada Inn.

Inside this newsletter are the forms you need to fill out in order to register for the reunion. Make your room reservation early, and remember to say that you are with the NMCB-8 Reunion to insure that you get the discount rates! We hope to see you all in DOLLYWOOD in 2006!

We are sure you will have the best time ever!

**MCB-8 REUNION COMMITTEE**

## From Your President

After a great trip to Gulfport during our reunion there last October, it is just unbelievable to read and view the devastation that has taken place there since Hurricane Katrina. It is fortunate that the Gulfport area has the Seabee base. There's no other military or civilian group that could have responded so quickly to provide the help to rebuild the community in the ways that the Seabees can, and did, in and around the Gulfport/Biloxi area. I received an e-mail from Ed Kloster that included a letter from Admiral Michael G. Mullen, Chief of Naval Operations, dated September 12, 2005. As we could expect, his direct quote was: *"The Seabees are repairing infrastructure and clearing debris at such a pace they have actually inspired local citizens to feel more optimistic about the future."* The last paragraph said it all: *"At NAS New Orleans I came across a bunch of Seabees working feverishly on the wooden platform for what was going to be a temporary dining facility. It was a contract job, but the contractor was having problems rounding up the necessary manpower and resources. The Seabees didn't ask permission, didn't wait for orders, they simply rolled up their sleeves and went to work."* *"Hey, they needed help," one said, "and we know how to do this stuff."* We do, indeed, know how to do this stuff, and we are doing it extremely well. Standing amongst them, I was never more proud to call myself an American Sailor."

This is definitely a proud moment for all of us who understand the "Can Do" spirit of the Seabees. We, as members of NMCB-8, have had the opportunity to serve with the greatest group of Seabees ever put together.

Our records indicate we have approximately 19 NMCB-8 Association personnel living in the Gulfport area. **Ron Dougal** has been trying to locate and report on their situations in order for us to provide any assistance, if needed, within our capabilities. If we find any of our shipmates or their families in dire need of assistance, I will send out a special mailer providing you with information as to their needs and how you can help.

On a lighter note, I want to personally thank **Troy & Dawn Branch, Ray & Loye Jane McPeck, Billy & Sally Boggs, Frank Pecjak, and Ron Dougal** for all the hard work being done on the 2006 Reunion to be held in Pigeon Forge, TN. Those of you who attend this reunion will be in for a great experience. Please send in your registration forms ASAP.

I also want to thank **Harry Davis** for being editor of our news letter and **Ken Bingham** for being our treasurer. Both of these guys continue to put in a lot of work behind the scenes and deserve a lot of credit from our organization. Keep sending articles and stories to Harry. He wants to hear from you so he can print your sea stories and life after the Seabee experiences all of us have had. Last but not least, please get to the website **www.nmcb8.com**. Information is updated and added every couple of weeks.

*Arnie*

## Arnie Cicerone



## NMCB-8 Association Hurricane Relief assistance for the Gulf Area



On October 5th, Jim Daniels presented a check in the amount of \$1,500 to Nadine Gamble, Director of NMCRS Port Hueneme. The money was donated in the memory of CAPT Pharo "Pap" Phelps Commanding Officer of NMCB-8 from 1965 to 1967. Pap passed away last December after a long, courageous fight with cancer. A letter from your Association accompanying the check is printed below.

On behalf of the NMCB-8 Association, I would like to present you with a check for \$1500.00 in the memory of our Commanding Officer, Capt. Pharo "Pap" Phelps to be used for the Hurricane Katrina relief fund in the Gulfport, MS area. Our commander would have been proud to know that we are helping our fellow military personnel in such a catastrophic disaster. Pap was a person of high standards and compassion. I am sure he would be proud of how our military is assisting in cleaning up the disaster area, and he would be especially proud of the Seabees in Gulfport and other areas in the region where they are providing disaster recovery help.

The American people are the most generous and compassionate people in the world. When disasters strike, we are there. Fortunately, we have not had such widespread devastation of this magnitude before, but this country will recover from it and any other disasters that may strike. It is an honor to be an American and to have served in our military.

On behalf of the NMCB-8 Association, I would like to thank you for your great effort in helping our needy military families. If our Association can be of any other assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

God bless you and all those involved with this mission.

Sincerely yours,

**Arnold Cicerone**  
NMCB-8 Association President

October 5, 2005

**MCB 8 REUNION 2006  
REGISTRATION FORM  
September 27 – October 1, 2006**

(Please print all information)

**Member name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(List name as you wish it to be on ID badge)

**Guest name (s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

**E-mail address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency contact:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Phone #

**Planned arrival:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Planned departure:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Day/date Day/date

**Date(s) served in MCB8** \_\_\_\_\_ **Craft** \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE READ AND SIGN THE FOLLOWING:**

I understand that the 2006 reunion is a non-alcoholic sponsored event. Any alcoholic drinks that I purchase during the four-day event from the hotels, caterers or other sources will be at my own discretion. I agree to hold harmless the NMCB-8 2006 Reunion; its directors, officers, reunion planners, and membership for any and all acts, or consequences from my conduct or the conduct of my guests. I also authorize the release of all photos of the event for future publication by the association. I further understand that all meals other than the Dixie Stampede and the NMCB-8 Banquet are at my expense.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Deadline for registration is August 1, 2006.**

**Mail completed forms and payment to:**

**Troy F. Branch  
454 Indian Gap Road  
Sevierville, TN 37876  
Phone 865-428-2390**

**Make checks payable to:  
"NMCB-8 2006 Reunion"**

**NMCB-8 REUNION 2006  
REGISTRATION FORM (cont)  
September 27 – October 1, 2006**

<b>Registration Fee</b>	<b>\$15.00 per member</b>		<b>\$15.00</b>
<b>EVENTS</b>	<b>COST PER PERSON</b>	<b># OF PERSONS</b>	
<b>Dixie Stampede Dinner &amp; Show</b>	<b>Adults 26.00 (inc tax) Child 11 &amp; under 19.00 (inc tax) Child 3 &amp; under free</b>		
<b>Comedy Barn</b>	<b>Adult 15.00 Child 11 &amp; under \$6.00 Child in lap free</b>		
<b>NMCB-8 Banquet</b>	<b>\$25.00</b>		
<b>Merchandise</b>			
<b>T-shirt w/pocket</b>			
<b>Sm</b>	<b>15.00</b>		
<b>Med</b>	<b>15.00</b>		
<b>Large</b>	<b>15.00</b>		
<b>X-lg</b>	<b>15.00</b>		
<b>2 xl</b>	<b>15.00</b>		
<b>3 xl</b>	<b>15.00</b>		
<b>Hat</b>	<b>10.00</b>		
<b>TOTAL</b>			

**Note, if you have special dietary needs: \_\_\_\_\_**

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**Troy F. Branch**

**454 Indian Gap Road**

**Sevierville, TN 37876**

**Phone 865-428-2390**

**Make check payable to:**

**"NMCB-8 2006 Reunion"**

## NMCB-8 2006 REUNION ITINERARY

### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2006

Reunion check-in Ramada Inn

12 noon – 10pm

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2006

Reunion check-in Ramada Inn

8am – 12 noon

Dixie Stampede Dinner & Show  
"The Smokies Most Fun Place to Eat"  
Four Course Feast

4:15pm – 8pm

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2006

Comedy Barn  
"Side Splitting Family Fun"

7:30pm – 10:15pm

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2006

NMCB-8 Banquet  
Smoky Mountain Convention Center at the Ramada Inn

7:00pm

The Gatlinburg, Pigeon Forge, Sevierville, Tennessee areas are loaded with many choices for free time activities. The ladies will enjoy spending time at any of the three outlet malls. There are specialty shops galore. Putt-putt golf, bumper boats, and bungee rides are available. Cave tours, hiking trails, and beautiful scenic drives await the nature lover. There are several restaurants within walking distance of the hotel.

#### Accommodations:

Ramada Inn, 4010 Parkway, Pigeon Forge, Tennessee 37863. Call for reservation 1-800-523-3919. Check out their webpage at [www.smokymountainresorts.com](http://www.smokymountainresorts.com)

Sun – Thurs \$44.70 (tax included)  
Fri – Sat \$74.87 (tax included)

**When making room reservations, be sure to say you are with the "NMCB-8 Reunion" to get the special rate.**

We have 122 rooms reserved at the Ramada. Try and make your reservations early. If the Ramada Inn fills up you may be housed in one of the sister hotels nearby for the same rate. Come early if you like. These special rates are available all week long.

There are great campground choices in the area. For those planning to come by land yacht, we will receive a special rate at the **Twin Mountain Outdoor Resort**. It is just a few minutes from the reunion hotel and offers full hookups from \$31 to \$35 a night tax incl. To make a reservation call **1-800-848-9097**. Make sure you mention you are with the NMCB-8 Association reunion.

There are also many major timeshare accommodations throughout the region.

#### Local transportation is on your own.

Fun Time Trolley – Schedule: daily 8:30am – midnight. 25¢ each time you board. There are over 100 stops throughout Pigeon Forge. You can also go to Gatlinburg, Splash Country, or Dollywood. Handicap Van available with reservation.

#### Airport destinations:

Knoxville	approximate driving time	45 – 60 minutes
Nashville	" "	3 hours
Chattanooga	" "	3 hours

Traveling I-40 east, take Exit 407 to Dollywood, Pigeon Forge, and Sevierville.



# Seabee Memorial, Washington, D.C.



## IN MEMORIAM

*In remembrance of those who served with us.*

We have received word of the passing of several shipmates: **James Luney**, May 2003; **Keith Galusha**, August 2003; **Tom Navin**, July 2005; **Anton Kump**, Sept. 2005; **Jon Perkerson's** sister Joyce informed us that Jon passed away May 31, 2005; **Tom Gade's** wife Susan let us know that Tom passed away suddenly on September 1, 2005.

## VOICES FROM THE PAST

I am so glad I was contacted by **Ron Dougal** who introduced me to the NMCB-8 Association. I served in NMCB-8 Alpha Company 1966-1969. I have several remembrances. One that seems like yesterday started in EO "A" School, Port Hueneme.

I had a mentor in MCB-8 named **CPO Frash**. He was one of my instructors in "A" School. I then worked for him on the Chu Lai deployment in the rock quarry. He was also my Chief on detachment in Tam Mi (Malfunction Junction) on the Phu Bai deployment.

Ever have a really bad day in MCB-8? I have had several. While on detachment, one project was laying dredged sand as highway base through the rice paddies. One afternoon Chief Frash assigned me to operate the TS-24 scraper. The very first run I loaded up a full load of sand and headed for the dump site. As I arrived at the site, I began slowing down to open the apron and empty the sand. The scraper started bouncing. When it jumped so high that I lost control, the scraper transported me and the full load of sand right into the adjacent rice paddy. It sunk so deep there was no way to drive it back out. Needless to say the Chief was a little upset. He handed me a shovel and ordered me to start digging out the scraper and its load of sand until he could get a Marine Corps tank retriever to pull it out. Still sorry chief. When it was pulled out, the job was reassigned to other operators including "**Squeaky**" **Larry Hansel**. I should have learned when in "A" school bulldozer training that if we ever ran out of fuel, the Chief would make us fill it up with a coke bottle.

*John Heppel EON-2*

Thanks Ron (Dougal), Don't think I can make the reunion, have to start cancer treatment, but please ask the guys if they remember me and they can contact me at this e-mail address.

**Jim Mecca, Harleysville, PA, [jvm1027@comcast.net](mailto:jvm1027@comcast.net)**

**EDITORS NOTE:** At our May, 2005 reunion in Port Hueneme, your shipmates who were present voted to donate \$1,500 to a worthy cause in the memory of Pap Phelps, EIGHT's Commanding Officer who died last December after a long battle with cancer. Originally, we thought a donation to the Seabee Museum Fund or the Seabee Memorial Scholarship Fund would be appropriate. However, when Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast in September, there was a quick change in direction. A decision was made to send our contribution to the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) to support those families in

need at Gulfport as a result of the Katrina disaster.

Seabees are a tough breed of people. Even while they and their families suffered the aftermath of the storm, Seabees from several battalions, some of whom had just returned from Iraq, pitched in to provide immediate emergency help throughout the Gulfport/Biloxi and New Orleans area. The Chief of Naval Operations, in a speech given shortly after the disaster, mentioned the Seabees, twice as he described what military personnel were doing, in a most positive way, to help out in the relief effort throughout the region.

**NMCB-8 SEABEES' ASSOCIATION**

241 Windrose Drive  
Port Ludlow, WA 98365

President ..... Arnie Cicerone  
Treasurer ..... Ken Bingham  
Past Presidents ..... Gordon Gilmore  
Ken Kerr  
Rick Reese  
Recruiting ..... Ron Dougal  
Newsletter Editor ..... Harry Davis

Web Page: <http://www.nmcb8.com>

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



SEABEES "CAN DO"



**NMCB-8 ASSOCIATION ROSTER UPDATE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone & E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*The mailing list and roster for the NMCB-8 Association needs to be continually updated. Only through a current roster can we ensure your receipt of the newsletter and information of current and future reunions. If you have had a change of address within the past two years, you can update this information by filling out the above form. Please include your e-mail address, if you have one.*

Detach the form at the dotted line and return to: **Harry Davis, 241 Windrose Drive, Port Ludlow, WA 98365.** If you have e-mail and want to make your update electronically, please do so. Send updates by e-mail to **nmcb\_8@msn.com.** **Thanks for your support !**

