



# NMCB-8 NEWSLETTER



VOLUME 7, ISSUE 2

REUNION 2008, PIGEON FORGE, TN - REGISTRATION FORMS INSIDE

OCTOBER 2007

## IT'S PIGEON FORGE REVISITED IN 2008

The next NMCB-8 reunion will once again be held in Pigeon Forge, TN. One might ask: Why are we going back there again so soon? The main reason is because no one came up with a better location and was willing to put the time and effort to coordinate and set up the reunion in another area of the country.

At the last reunion we held a meeting of those present who expressed an interest in coming up with a new site for 2008. A lot of discussion ensued with no firm decision being made.

In the June 2007 newsletter we went further and ran an article asking everyone to help with choosing locations for future reunions with the results to be listed in our fall newsletter. Over 400 newsletters went out and only 9 people responded.

These association gatherings are an opportunity for us to reconnect, catch-up and reaffirm old bonds and just have a good time. Our first solely NMCB-8 reunion in Pigeon Forge last year will be hard to beat. Our goal for the future is to hold the reunions in locations chosen by the members through the “majority rules process”. However, setting the site for a reunion is only the first step. It is imperative that different people volunteer to become members of the Reunion Committee, especially members who happen to live in or near a preferred reunion site. This became all too apparent in 2006 when Troy Branch took the bull by the horns and almost single-handedly coordinated the entire Pigeon Forge Reunion. He did have others helping him, especially during the reunion. But it was Troy’s familiarity with the area (he’s a native) and his ability to personally pick out what he felt were the best things to do that went a long way in making the 2006 reunion the success it was.

Please take a moment to review the following suggested sites and feel free to make some of your own. Your reunion committee is more than happy to put the effort required into whatever it takes to bring you the best reunion experience possible. We just don’t want to be totally responsible for picking the locations.



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(See REUNION, page 2)

**From Your President**

As I get older, time seems to move at an accelerated rate, so if you are like me, get ready and make your arrangements for the 2008 reunion because before you blink an eye it will be just weeks away. The reunion gang has put together the itinerary and it looks outstanding. I've talked to Troy Branch and Ray McPeck. They are busily preparing the onsite activities and everything is on schedule for another successful reunion.

**Arnie Cicerone**

Ron Sabbatis has been working on our first battalion steak dinner cookout with Chef Billy Boggs providing the cooking. The cookout will be held at the Patriot Park in Pigeon Forge located about one mile from the hotel. I'm looking forward to this one as we plan to have a great meal.

On another note, please contact Ron Dougal if you have knowledge of any "missing" EIGHT Seabees and can give information of their whereabouts to Ron so he can "hunt" them down and bring them into the fold. Lets all work together locating lost members and getting them on the roster and to the reunion next year.

Harry Davis, our newsletter editor, asked me to remind everyone that this newsletter is our most important communication tool. We would like to publish any and all of your comments, articles or just plain "lies" of your exploits when you were in EIGHT.

Put a priority on hotel reservations, airline tickets and sending in the registration forms.

**Arnie**

**LET US KNOW WHEN YOU MOVE**

In the past year, our membership has changed quite remarkably. Unfortunately, it has gone down not up, as one might expect. While we have added a few new members, we have lost more than we have gained.

The reason for the reduction in our ranks is twofold. Regrettably, several of our older members, and some not so old, have passed away. On the other hand, we have lost a number of members because they have moved without giving me a forwarding address.

Every newsletter has "Address Service Requested" printed on it. If someone moves and leaves a forwarding address with the Post Office, the newsletter will be sent on and I will be notified of the new address.

*Continued in next column*

**REUNION**

*From page 1*

Looking beyond 2008, several locations have been suggested for REUNION 2010. They are listed in no particular order:

Washington DC

Las Vegas

Caribbean cruise

Hawaii

Branson, MO

San Diego

Norfolk, VA

Port Hueneme (New Seabee museum scheduled to open 2010)

We would like everyone to email (or snail mail) your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choice by the end of November. We will list the top three sites in the winter newsletter.

Thanks to everyone.,

Please send your responses to **Ron Sabattis**

Address: 606 Capitola Ave., Capitola, CA, 95010

Email: [sabagus@charter.net](mailto:sabagus@charter.net)

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*Continued from previous column*

However, this service only lasts for one year and is not foolproof.

Each time we mail out the newsletters, quarterly or thereabouts, I get several back that cannot be forwarded for various reasons. The biggest ones are "moved, left no address" or "time expired unable to forward".

In addition, "Address Service Requested" is not free. Each time I get a notification it costs between \$.50 and \$.90 depending on the reason for the return.

The bottom line is, if we don't have your correct address and are unable to find one for you through our state reps or by using the internet, and we do try, your name will, regrettably, be deleted from the roster and from future newsletter mailing lists.

So if you want to continue to receive the newsletter and stay on the active roster, please take time to fill out the form on the back of the newsletter with any change of address, telephone number or e-mail if you have it. You can also email me the information at [nmcb\\_8@msn.com](mailto:nmcb_8@msn.com).

**Harry Davis, Newsletter Editor**

**NMCB-8 REUNION 2008  
REGISTRATION FORM  
September 24 – September 28, 2008**

(Please print all information)

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Date(s) served in NMCB-8** \_\_\_\_\_ **Craft** \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE READ AND SIGN THE FOLLOWING:**

I understand that the 2008 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 2008 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 15, 2008.**

**Mail completed forms and payment to:**

**Make checks payable to:**  
"NMCB-8 2008 Reunion"

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

## NMCB 8 REUNION 2008 REGISTRATION FORM (cont) September 24 – September 28, 2008

(Please print all information)

<b>Registration Fee</b>	\$ 20.00 per member	\$ 20.00	
<b>Events</b>	<b>Cost Per Person</b>	<b># of Persons</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Steak Cookout</b>	\$ 10.00		
<b>Comedy Barn</b>	Adult	\$ 20.00	
	Child 11 & under	\$ 6.00	
	Child in Lap	Free	
<b>NMCB – 8 Banquet</b>	\$ 33.00		
<b>Merchandise</b>			
<b>T-Shirt w/Pocket</b>	Small	\$ 15.00	
	Medium	\$ 15.00	
	Large	\$ 15.00	
	X-Large	\$ 15.00	
	XX-Large	\$ 15.00	
	XXX-Large	\$ 15.00	
<b>Hat</b>	\$10.00		
			Total

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

**Mail completed forms and payment to:**

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

**Deadline for registration is August 15, 2008.**

## NMCB 8 REUNION 2008 ITINERARY

### Wednesday, September 24, 2008

Reunion check-in (Advanced Party)	Ramada Inn Hospitality Room	12:00 PM – 10:00 PM
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### Thursday, September 25, 2008

Reunion check-in (Main Body)	Ramada Inn Hospitality Room	8:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Comedy Barn "Side Splitting Family Fun"		7:30 PM – 10:15 PM

### Friday, September 26, 2008

Steak Cookout at Patriot Park, Pigeon Forge	3:00 PM – 6:00 PM
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### Saturday, September 27, 2008

NMCB – 8 Banquet	7:00 PM – Midnight
Photos	Smoky Mountain Convention Center at the Ramada Inn

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)

Sunday – Thursday    \$ 46.94 (tax included)

Friday – Saturday    \$ 77.11 (tax included)

**When making room for 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 \$ 32.00 to \$ 36.00 a night tax included. 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 8:30 AM – 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
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Ashville, NC	approximate driving time	1.5 - 2 Hours
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Nashville	approximate driving time	3 Hours
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Chattanooga	approximate driving time	3 Hours
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Traveling I-40, take Exit 407 to Dollywood, Pigeon Forge, and Sevierville.

## Skipper's corner

*Bob Westburg relieved Jack O'Leary as CO of NMCB-8 at 1100 hours on the 16th of July, 1968 at our camp in Phu Bai, RVN. He remained CO until NMCB-8 was decommissioned in December of 1969.*



I am looking forward to our next reunion at Pigeon Forge. The last reunion was really an enjoyable time. Not only to meet again our MCB-8 friends, but the things we were able to see there and the two shows. At the same time we met with friends from Memphis and we took a hike in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The weather was perfect and the scenery was spectacular. We didn't get to Dollywood, so we look forward to doing it this time. If you missed the last reunion in Pigeon Forge, I strongly recommend you come to the next one. I want to thank those who are taking the effort to set up this next reunion.

When I watch what the country is going through with the Iraq war, it brings back memories of our experience in Vietnam—the anti-war protesters, the negative news and the political bickering for personnel gain. My guess it will end just like the Vietnam War, probably with more negative impact on our country.

I am sure this has been said several times in this newsletter, but I would like to say it again. We can all be proud of the positive effect NMCB-8 had on the country of Vietnam. This includes the improvements of its infrastructure—roads, bridges, the community projects such as schools and churches and the medical and dental care to villagers. The men of NMCB-8 were an extraordinary team who worked long hours, had exceptional ability and always met the Can Do spirit. It is hard to believe it has been almost 40 years since our 1967 and 1968 time when we were in Vietnam, but the memories are still strong.

**Bob**

## A WORD ABOUT DUES

Please note the mailing label attached to the back of your newsletter. Next to your name, you will see a date (month & year) denoting when your membership should have been renewed. The word "LIFE" next to your name denotes a life member and no renewal of membership is necessary. If your membership has expired but you would like to renew it in order to continue receiving the newsletter and keep up on the latest reunion information, and other news, please submit payment by check to **NMCB-8 ASSOCIATION**. Send checks to **Ken Bingham, 1773 Tamarin Ave, Ventura, CA 93003**. Please do not send checks to me.

Dues are \$10/year or \$100 for a life membership. To bring your membership up to date, submitting a check for \$10 will be sufficient.

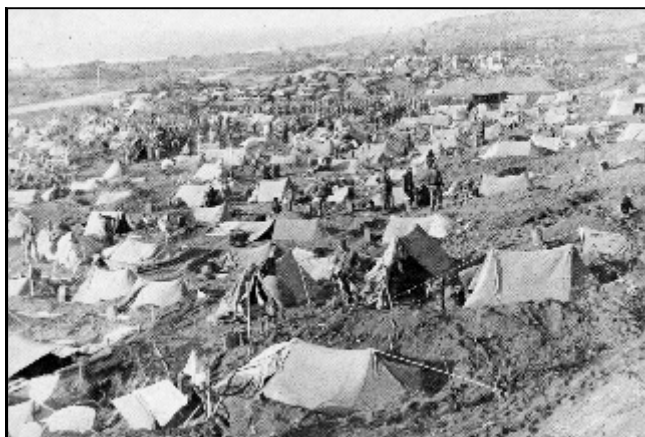
## REMEMBER WHEN....



A wetting down party at the offices club in Chu Lai 2/67. Gordon Gilmore and Harry Davis were promoted to Lieutenant Commander during the deployment. Shown 1 to front row: Gordon; Skipper Pappy Phelps; Harry; back row: Frank Symanowski; Jon Perkerson; and Jim Owens.



FIRST SERGEANT W. A. TODD receives the purple Heart from BGen Styles Commanding General, Task Force XRAY, at the first Medical Battalion hospital. The award was presented to Todd December 13, 1966, for wounds received from an electrically detonated booby-trap



The 8th Naval Construction Battalion on Iwo Jima D+12 in their camp site. From the time they set up they were under constant sniper attack from the Japanese above the camp on the hill-sides.

# Seabee Memorial, Washington, D.C.



## IN MEMORIAM

*In remembrance of those who served with us.*

*Ron Dougal advised us that Robert Risley passed away on 4/20/07. John North advised that Mike Cork and Ron Gagnoli have also passed away. Geri Dicks notified us that her father, a WWII veteran, George Dicks passed away on 6/21/07. Fern Gwin, a life member, passed away in 10/06. Her husband Rodney passed away in 1990.*

## VOICES FROM THE PAST

I was in Cargo Handling Battalion One until 1953 after joining in 1950. Before I got out I was in GITMO with MCB-8. I'm Commander of Island 14 of Kankalee, IL Navy Seabee Veterans. **Richard Hildebrand**

I joined EIGHT in 1963 as a PNSN, deployed to the ice, Rota and Nam. When the guys went to Hue, I was the pencil pusher doing the reports in Hue. I worked for Gene Steffens during this time. He was a good boss and person to work for. After Nam I turned into a fleet sailor. My last duty station was WINTEROVER 1981-82..(Loved it). If you knew CMC Jim Evans, he came off the ice and I went down. He was stationed at NAS Brunswick, ME and I was also. I am originally from Maine. I have been a U.S. Army bus driver for over 20 years. These days, we spend most of our time in Arlington Cemetery doing Army funerals. I go by the Seabee Memorial almost every day going back and forth to Fort Meyer. **Tim Fowler**

Ken, I enjoyed talking to you today. I am enclosing a money order to cover the cost of the DVD and my membership. It is a pleasure to be a member of the NMCB-8 Association. **Raymond G. Karstens**

Hi Harry, I just sent in my dues for the NMCB-8 newsletter. I was a plank owner of MCB-8 from 1951 to 1953. I was a heavy equipment operator CD-2. I received a complimentary newsletter from Ron Dugal and decided to join. **Ed Burke**

**SEABEES "CAN DO"**

**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 !**

