

CONSTRUIMUS BATUIMUS -- "WE BUILD, WE FIGHT"



8TH NCB — NMCB-8 — 8TH NCB



# NEWSLETTER



U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION EIGHT

Volume 10, Issue 3

— Your 2010 Reunion — Happy Holidays —

December 2010

## —SEABEES IN THE KOREAN WAR—

ON 15 SEPTEMBER 1950 U.S. TROOPS LANDED AT INCHON in what has come to be known as one of the most brilliant amphibious assaults in history. Seabees helped make it possible. Battling enormous thirty-foot tides and a swift current while under continuous enemy of the first beach assault. Seabees also went motives. Despite enemy mortar fire, they to the Army.



Seabees could be found throughout K-fields of the various Marine Air Groups. cemented by a group of nine Seabees who Marine intercept squadron and its source of supplies. They worked round-the-clock in five-below-zero temperatures to successfully fulfill their promise to rebuild any damaged bridge within six hours. —Cont. on next page

the war zone constructing, repairing, and servicing the Seabee relations with the Marine Corps were further kept a 21-mile stretch of road open between an isolated

## —FROM YOUR PRESIDENT—



Arnie speaks to NMCB-8 near the "Fi-yah".

WELL WE HAD ANOTHER GREAT REUNION. It just does not seem possible it was two years since our last one. I don't know how to thank all the people in the Association for the hard work they did in putting this reunion together. This was a wonderful reunion, and taken as a whole the hotel, the weather, the food and the old friends were priceless. Everything went great and we owe so much to Ron and Leslie Sabbatis, Billy and Sally Boggs, Gil Gilbertson and Ron Dougal, and all the other folks who pitched in by going out to buy snacks and cleaning up afterwards. You all went a long way to ensure the success of the reunion. I want to say thanks again to all of you for electing me as president and keeping the same group intact. My job is the easy one because we have a great supporting cast of the best people giving of their time to support the Association. Ken Bingham, our treasurer and newsletter editor; Ron Dougal and Carol who keep track of the troupes and continually work at finding lost Seabees from EIGHT. These are a few of the CAN-DO people to whom we owe our gratitude

for a job well done. A special thanks to our new official Chaplain Billy Boggs. Certain people have the ability to project sincere love to others; to reach out and provide assistance when someone needs help. When we meet such a person they touch our lives, and we are very fortunate to have Billy as he is that special person.

I also want to thank the WW II vets who were able to attend the reunion. It was a pleasure to meet and talk with you gentlemen and your wives and I am looking forward to seeing you again at the next reunion.

We plan to revise the web site so please monitor it. One of the major changes will incorporate access to the Association's complete roster. The online roster will include all members with address and phone numbers. In order to review and print this section you will need a password: The password is **CANDO** (case sensitive). Please help us with this project as we need to update and maintain correct addresses

We have started a new project involving pictures; our goal is to be able to put hundreds of pictures on line with ease of access and the ability to identify individuals in the pictures.

Again I want to thank our Association Officers. Without them this outfit would not be what it is today. We show respect for one another and have great pride in the traditions of the Seabees.

Your President, —Arnie Cicerone



### Inside

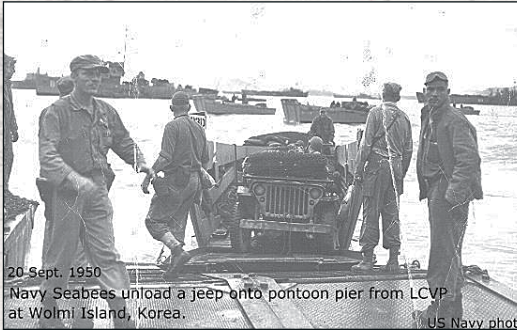
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- 16 - Mail address.

## SEABEES IN THE KOREAN WAR —Cont. from cover page.

ONE OF THE MOST INCREDIBLE SEABEE FEATS of the war took place on the small island of Yo in the Bay of Wonsan. Planes were hit by enemy fire daily leaving their pilots with the unhappy choice of either ditching at sea or attempting to land in enemy-held territory. The need for an emergency airstrip was critical and, under the code name Operation “Crippled Chick,” a detachment of Seabees came to the rescue. Put ashore on Yo Island, they were given 35 days to construct a runway. Working under constant artillery bombardment from neighboring enemy positions, they managed to complete the 2,400-foot airstrip in only 16 days. By a prearranged signal, “Steak is Ready,” the Seabees signaled that the job was done, and nine damaged aircraft landed on the new field that same day.



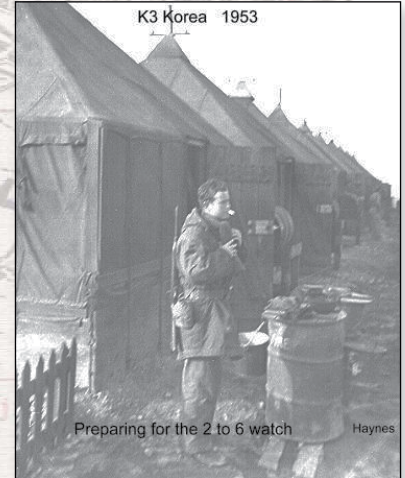
Japanese LST Q090 at Inchon a few days after landing on 9-15-50  
Thode



20 Sept. 1950  
Navy Seabees unload a jeep onto pontoon pier from LCVP at Wolmi Island, Korea.  
US Navy photo



K3 Korea 1952  
Beginning of airstrip extension fill.  
Willard House



K3 Korea 1953  
Preparing for the 2 to 6 watch  
Haynes

### Navy Seabee Units in Korea 1950 – 1953

Unit Designation Location Commanding Officer Strength Deployed to / fm

- ACB-1 Inchon Landing, Wosan, (1st Marine Division); Inchon (second) (while assigned to 7th Fleet) 500 (est.) ??? 1950 - Sept 1950
- ACB-1 CDR A. T. Roth, CEC, USN Oct 1950 - Nov 1951
- ACB-1 CDR J. F. Staniumas, CEC, USN Nov 1951 - Jan 1953
- ACB-1 CDR W. C. Bowers, CEC, USN Jan 1953 - Oct 1953
- ACB-1 LCDR G. L. Moeller, CEC, USN Oct 1953 - Feb 1954
- CBD-1804 K-3 LCDR Cameron W. Lee, CEC, USN 32+2 (est.) 12 Oct 1951 - 30 June 1952
- CBMU-1 K-3 LCDR Cameron W. Lee, CEC, USN 357 (est.) 1 July 1952 - 30 Sept 1953
- CBMU-101 K-3 CDR O. E. Forbess, CEC, USN 594 (est.) 1 Oct 1953 - ??? 1954
- Detail K-2 . . .
- Detail K-3 . . .
- Detail K-6 . . .
- Detail K-13 . . .
- Detail K-18 . . .
- Detail K-55 . . .
- 30th NCR Subic Bay, Phillipines  
also, LT Richard W. Trompeter, CEC, and LT James T. Taylor, CEC



Airfields with Seabees in Korea: K-2, Taegu, K-3, Pohang, K-6, P'yong Taek K-13, 1st MAW USMC site (Corsairs and AD's) K-18, (Seoul), Kimpo  
K-55, Osan

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*“We’re surrounded. That simplifies the problem.” —Attributed to Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller, USMC*

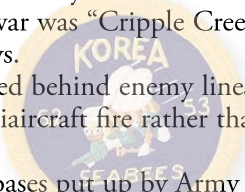
DURING THE KOREAN WAR, AMPHIBIOUS CONSTRUCTION BATTALION (PHIBCB) ONE in September, 1950, built the same kind of “Instant Piers” at Inchon (Wolmi-do) that they had managed so beautifully in Sicily, Salerno, the Normandy Beachhead, and a wide spectrum of Pacific landings from Guadalcanal to Okinawa. PHIBCB-1 had a pontoon pier working in that 30-foot tide so that General Douglas MacArthur could walk ashore with dry feet on the second day.

Another distinguished project of the Seabees in the Korean war was “Cripple Creek”, at the port of Wonsan on Yo Do Island, where they had 35 days to build an airstrip, and had it ready in 16 days.

The field was built under enemy fire. It was boldly constructed behind enemy lines to serve as an emergency field where pilots could save themselves when their planes were damaged by enemy antiaircraft fire rather than falling into enemy hands. By war’s end 60 fliers had used this escape route to safety.

Seabee Detachments maintained the many expeditionary airbases put up by Army Engineers, like K-14 at Seoul and K-2 at Taegu. A volunteer party of eight, PHIBCB-1 and Army Engineers, in a celebrated raid, penetrated enemy territory at Yong Dong Po and made off with three locomotives intact. With typical Seabee dash, they grabbed 15 cases of beer from the Kirin Brewery en route— then had to stop to repair a damaged truck on the way out under enemy machinegun and mortar fire.

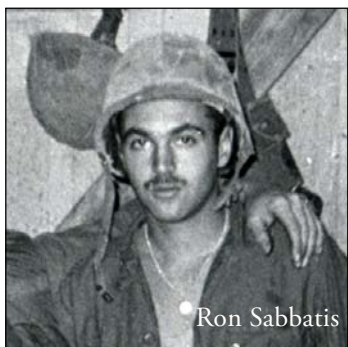
In the Korean emergency, the Navy deployed Naval Mobile Construction Battalions 1, 4, 6, 7 and 8 from the Atlantic Base at Davisville, R.I. and NMCB’s 2, 3, 5, 9, 10 and 11 on the Pacific side from the base at Port Hueneme, near Santa Barbara, California.



Reunion

—NMCB-8 2010 REUNION—  
A GREAT TIME WAS HAD BY ALL!

Reunion



MY PERSONAL THANKS GO OUT TO EVERYONE WHO MADE THE 2010 REUNION SUCH A SUCCESS. I know that it will be remembered for a long time to come. Particular thanks go to Billy and Sally Boggs, Ron Dougal, Gil Gilbertson, Troy Branch and to all those who leant a helping hand when needed. Thanks to the gals who made the shopping runs for munchies and drinks...great job.

Looking at the group photo, I would say we are all doing pretty well given the fact (that like it or not) we ARE senior citizens!! I think that Lodge of the Ozarks suited the needs of our group nicely. It was great having the RV Park so close by. Judging from the noise coming from the breakfast room, I think we all filled ourselves to the brim while we were talking to friends and new acquaintances.

We were a little worried about the weather for the bar-B-Q; thankfully it waited to rain ‘til the end of the evening. Billy, that campfire you constructed was art at its best. The stories that were told around the fire pit seemed to grow as the night went on! Sorry to anyone who did not get a plate for their dinner. We thought that everything was set and did not realize that the caterer shorted us on the

dinnerware until it was too late. Weren’t all the sauces delicious?

It was hard to say good-bye to everyone....Let’s all do our part in keeping in touch with each other through the years. Please let Ron Dougal know of any changes in your contact information so that you continue to receive the newsletter and e-mails that are sent.

At the membership meeting in Branson, while discussing future reunions, it was suggested that we have a mini reunion in the fall of 2011 with the possible opening of the new Seabee Museum. We will keep everyone posted in future newsletters.

We are beginning to plan for the 2012 Las Vegas reunion. I guess I don’t have to tell anyone about all of the fabulous things to do and see there. One thing for certain is there will be a ladies luncheon and a day of shopping . This will be a great day to get to know each other a little better

Now is the time to be giving your input on what you liked at the last reunion and what you hope to see added to the next.

Wishing everyone a healthy and happy new year! —Ron Sabbatis



Luv Ya Man!



42 years later? —My my, time does fly!



Maestro Prez. Arnie tickles the Keys



Ron Dougal

ON OCTOBER 22, 2010, MEN OF NMCB-8 STARTED TO ARRIVE for the reunion in Branson, Missouri. After setting up the registration desk, William Odell Boggs Jr. and I were sitting there and I asked him what the three strips of paper laying on the table were. He said they looked like bookmarks (picture below). Billy said that maybe we could sell them as a souvenir to make some money for the Association. I told him that I will try to do it.

Well, Jack (Quinn) Dennis told me that I would not be able to sell one. I like challenges so as the Seabees and wives came into the room, I helped Billy sign them in and I then gave this sales pitch, "You know the Association is always in need of money for different expenses, so how would you like to buy this bookmark as a souvenir? We will also autograph it but it costs ten dollars." Well to my surprise I sold one! I turned and said to Jack, "That's one!"

After selling nine bookmarks I thought that I needed to change my sales pitch. So as the Seabees came in it went from buying a bookmark to use while reading a book to buying a bookmark to raise money for a beer run. With that sales pitch I had some Seabees give me twenty dollars each. I could not believe it, then I had another Seabee hand me a hundred dollar bill! I said to him, "Do you think this Seabee has change for that?" He looked at me real funny and started to walk away. My pitch was so believable that one Seabee asked me if I was a car salesman. I help my wife and daughter sell things at our yard sales, but a car salesman I am not.

Well after making \$290, I figured I better close up shop. Even though after each sale I returned the money to each person, I proved that Seabees unite together for great causes, even for beer runs! I do have one last thought, will the Seabee who took and kept the bookmark please return it for the next reunion, I will need it!

To the best group of Seabees ever, the names listed below donated to the cause.

Take care,

Ron Dougal (*Not Dan*) NMCB-8 D- Co 66-68.

*P.S. At the next reunion, I will be selling deeds to the Brooklyn Bridge. Any takers?*

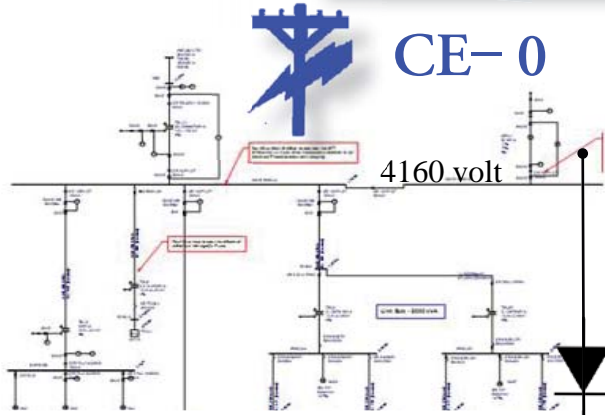
*Ron Wunderlich, Dan Rivera, Arnie Cicerone, John Markham, Chuck Riley, Bob Rosengrant, Dan Epplett, James W. Barnes, Mike Dillon, Loyd Dockery, Robert Fishwick, Jerry Frigg, Don Overbay, Dave Duecker, Bill Bricking, Tom Angier and Rick Reese. There were 2 names that I missed getting, but you know who you are!*

*(—Note Ron's weapon in pic. above. M14's were issued for the first two (1965-1967) deployments. M16's were issued later for the 1968-69 deployments.)*

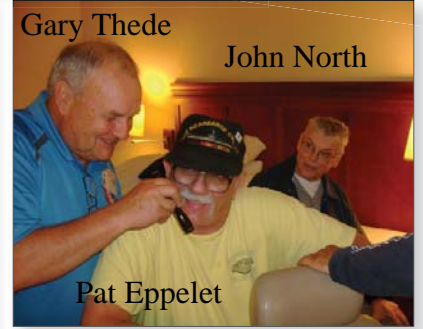
2010 Reunion



# CE's AT WORK ON JOHN NORTH'S WHEEL CHAIR



Dan Epelet



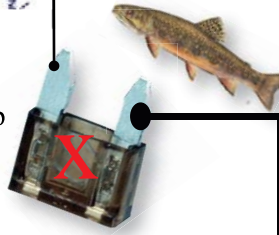
Gary Thede

John North

Pat Epelet



7.5 Amp Fuse (duh!)

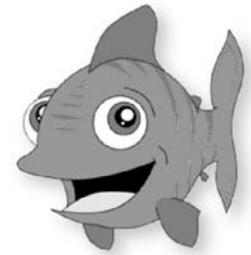


*John North's wheel chair circuitry was befowled indirectly by trout ("no shit story"!). The fleet (Pat Epelett) came in and found the problem thereby showing up several of us IPO CE types.*

**2010 Reunion**



*John North & Pat Epelett working on Wheel Chair Actuator.*



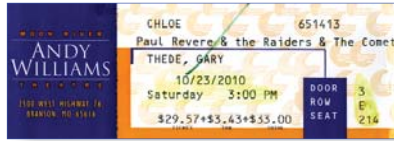
MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

**SHELTER RESERVED**

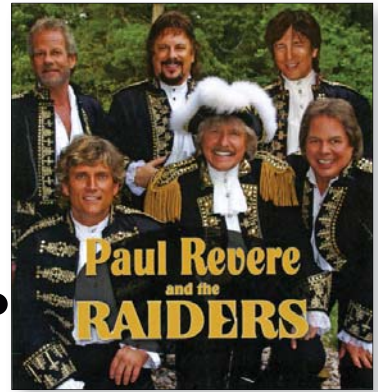
DATE	Oct. 22, 2010
TIME	All Day
USER	Military NMCB 8 REUNION

**DO NOT REMOVE THIS NOTICE**

THIS FACILITY IS RESERVED FOR THE TIME AND DATE INDICATED BY ORDER OF THE DIVISION OF STATE PARKS.



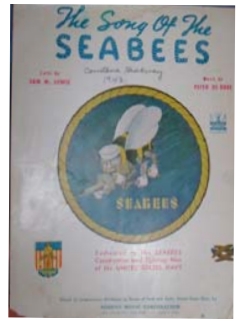
—Paul Revere and the Raiders still rock at the Andy Williams Theater in Branson. It was a good show.—kb



Don't it seem like, kicks just keep getting harder to find,  
 All your kicks ain't bringing you peace of mind,  
 Before you find out it's too late,  
 You'd better get straight,  
 But, not with kicks.



2010 Reunion



—DISTINGUISHED WW II SEABEE GUESTS—



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE



2010 Reunion



—The End—

—The Next Reunion will be in 2 years at Las Vegas—



{ I REGRET THAT MANY OF YOU ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THIS PHOTO COLLECTION.; BUT THIS IS WHAT I HAD. KB }



# —True Facts on Vietnam—

(CONTINUED FROM LAST NEWSLETTER)



—Submitted by Rick Clark—

5. 5,283 lost limbs.
6. 1,081 sustained multiple amputations.
7. Of those killed, 61% were younger than 21.
8. 11,465 of those killed were younger than 20 years old.
9. Of those killed, 17,539 were married.
10. Average age of men killed: 23.1 years.
11. Five men killed in Vietnam were only 16 years old.
12. The oldest man killed was 62 years old.
13. As of January 15, 2004, there are 1,875 Americans still unaccounted for from the Vietnam War .
14. 97% of Vietnam Veterans were honorably discharged.
15. 91% of Vietnam Veterans say they are glad they served.
16. 74% say they would serve again, even knowing the outcome.
17. Vietnam veterans have a lower unemployment rate than the same non-vet age groups.



18. Vietnam veterans' personal income exceeds that of our non-veteran age group by more than 18 percent.
19. 87% of Americans hold Vietnam Veterans in high esteem.
20. There is no difference in drug usage between Vietnam Veterans and non-Vietnam Veterans of the same age group (Source: Veterans Administration Study)
21. Vietnam Veterans are less likely to be in prison - only one-half of one percent of Vietnam Veterans have been jailed for crimes.
22. 85% of Vietnam Veterans made successful transitions to civilian life.
23. Interesting Census Stats and "Been There" Wanabees:
  - a. 1,713,823 of those who served in Vietnam were still alive as of August, 1995 (census figures).
  - b. During that same Census count, the number of Americans falsely claiming to have served in-country was: 9,492,958.

*"True Facts on Vietnam" was forwarded by Rick Clark. More of the facts will continue in the next Newsletters.*



*{“43 Years Later—Just Like Yesterday.”}*

*January 30-31, 1968*

—Memories of TET 1968—

*by*

LTJG Lou Beland, LTJG Pete Loberg & LTJG Rick Clark



*LTJG Lou Beland*

**T**HE NIGHT IT BROKE, I WOUND UP IN A BUNKER BY MYSELF and could hear the rockets walking across our camp. When one hit the Engineering Hut and the next one hit an enlisted men's hut about 100 feet past me, I didn't know I could get so much of my body into my helmet. It was the first time I had been under direct fire and it was SCARY!. Six months later, I slept through another rocket attack ... strange what you get used to.

The next morning, January 31, my hut mate LTJG Bob Moynster, who was a supply officer with an LCU detachment at Hue, disobeyed orders and left the camp to drive to Hue to see if his guys on the ramp were OK. He didn't make it. Surprisingly, however, his whole detachment at the LCU ramp survived.

Now for a humorous incident ... After being bottled up in camp for two weeks, we were totally out of plywood, which we needed to repair damaged buildings. After begging and pleading, we finally got one helicopter flight to DaNang for supplies. As MLO, I was sent along to get two pallets of plywood. Just before the chopper landed, I was accosted by a group of Chiefs (Led by Chief Robinson and Chief Forte), saying that the Enlisted Men's Club was out of beer and I had to substitute one of the pallets of plywood for beer .... Their argument being that SEABEES can build without plywood, but can't without beer. Boy, did I wrestle with that one ... but I came back with one pallet of plywood and one pallet of beer! I thought that LCDR Bud Mehers (my boss) would have my butt but no one ever said a word to me about it.

Another thing .... I got so tired of eating B-rats that C-rats actually tasted good ... I have never eaten Spam again in my life!

—LTJG Lou Beland, MCB 8 Material Liaison Officer

***“THERE IS NO PROBLEM THAT CANNOT BE SOLVED BY THE USE OF HIGH EXPLOSIVES.”***



—Memories of TET 1968—



LTJG Pete Loberg

SEABEE TEAM 0809 WAS ON DEPLOYMENT AND LOCATED IN THE CITY OF CAN THO, situated on the Mekong River in the heart of the Delta...rice basket of Asia. The team was confined for three days in its compound as the TET offensive raged on. Half of Can Tho had been overrun but fortunately, we were in the other half. I have fond memories of the Douglas AD-24 Skyraiders flying out of Saigon and firing their rockets as they flew at treetop level over our compound into the six story hotel four blocks to the west of our position. That would be as close as the VC/NVA advanced before gradually being expelled. The army in our area consisted of ARVN troops with US advisors. The Douglas Skyraider could carry its weight in bombs and was the last prop plane used in combat operations. —LJGT Pete Loberg, OIC Seabee Team 0809



LTJG Rick Clark

I ARRIVED AT GIA LE COMBAT BASE ON JANUARY 29, 1968 for my second tour in Vietnam. MCB 8 was in the midst of relieving MCB 3 so part of the camp was Three and part was Eight. I vowed to keep a daily journal of this tour in-country.

0335, Wednesday, January 31. Whomm!! Whomm! Rocket Attack! My hut mates and I dove into an inch of mud in our covered, sandbagged bunker. Whomm! Another explosion, this one very close and we immediately heard thump, thump, then falling sand inside our bunker. It's pitch black. Have no idea what that is!

Fifteen minutes later, we got the siren signaling Condition 1, "Man the lines!" More rockets! One landed in the Alpha Company trench, killing an MCB-3 Seabee who was scheduled to leave for home later that morning, and wounding five more, including two from MCB-8. Our mixed battalions stayed in the muddy perimeter trenches on 100% alert all night with the threat of Charlie bursting through our defenses. Once we secured and went on partial alert in the morning, we discovered that one of the night's explosions completely

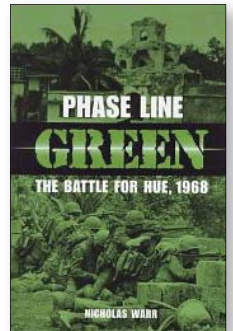
destroyed the engineering building and ALL of the drawings inside! It was only about fifty yards from my hut so I figured it must have been the one that created the mysterious sound in our bunker. Curious, I climbed into the bunker and discovered that a piece of jagged, razor-sharp shrapnel about two inches wide and eight inches long had blasted through one of the walls of our bunker, passed just above our heads and imbedded in the opposite wall. That had created the falling sand! They say that baseball is a game of inches. Uh, uh, guys.... THAT was a game of inches! I still have that relic.

For the next dozen cold (45 degrees), wet, miserable nights, we manned the muddy perimeter lines. Rocket and/or mortar attacks continued, both night and day. One landed by the enlisted chow hall, resulting in one KIA and 10 wounded. We were confined to our combat base for two weeks. We watched Navy and Marine jets bombarding Hue, about 6 miles north, and for two days and nights, we heard ammunition exploding in the Phu Bai ammo dump, hit by a VC rocket. I remember echo company placing more claymore mines along our perimeter, the ones that have relief letters stating, "THIS SIDE TOWARD ENEMY" (apparently, this is very important!) ...! We installed our (half tent) shelter halves over the trenches to try to stay dry. One of the Seabees from my company climbed out of the trench to the urinal, lost his way back in the dark and came into the trench on top of my shelter-half.... never been so scared in my life!

The 101st airborne "Screaming Eagles" were adjacent to MCB-8 in our combat base. Many of the helicopter pilots who had been on missions and several who had been shot down, came into our clubs as things quieted down a bit. One warrant officer pilot came into the O Club one night, carrying the steel shell of his former chopper seat. It had a severe indentation from a bullet shot from below that was about four inches deep. The dent was between where the thighs of the pilot would be, a few inches above the knees. He was going to send the seat back to the states, frame it and dedicate it to his wife! ..... Again, guys, a game of inches!!

A friend of mine is an author in North Carolina. He was a Marine LT. with the First Marine Division and was directly involved in the battle to get Hue back from the NVA. He wrote an excellent book, "Phase Line GREEN, the Battle for Hue 1968" by Nicholas Warr." It is still available at Amazon.com, for as little as 5 bucks, used. He and I have discussed his day by day account and compared it to my daily journal and what we were doing on the other side of the river at each one of those moments. One project was our MCB-8 Seabees jerry-rigging a ramp spanning the blown up railroad trestle bridge across the Perfume River to allow the Marines to move tanks and equipment into the walled city in support of Nick's Marines.

I don't know about you guys that were there, but 1968 was the most frightening and probably the most memorable single year of my life. —LTJG Rick Clark, MCB-8 Engineering Officer



—The NVA took over the City of Hue during TET. They blew up all of the bridges that crossed over the Perfume River and the canal that went around the other two sides of the city. I was up there one night when the guys were working on that trestle bridge ramp under flood lights and took some sniper fire pinging off the steel bridge. As described by Nick Warr in Phase Line Green, the battle for Hue was the most intensive house to house fighting of the entire war.

—LTJG Rick Clark, MCB-8 Engineering Officer

## —Memories of TET 1968—

*Images submitted by Rick Clark*



*Morning after first night of TET 1968; Engineering Hut destroyed by 122mm rocket during night time attack.*



*(TET 1968); Admin. Office Hut destroyed by 122mm rocket during night time attack.*

122mm rocket



*Railroad Bridge over Perfume River blown up by NVA during TET. (Battle of Hue was raging). MCB-8 made emergency temporary repairs by bridging a connection between the downed trestle sections.*



*Morning after first night of TET 1968; Engineering Hut destroyed by 122mm rocket during night time attack.*



*Enemy weapons (RPG-7's) and satchel charges collected on MCB-8's perimeter during TET.*



*(TET 1968) EM Hut, destroyed by 122mm rocket, fortunately hit during daytime*

Click to **LOOK INSIDE!**



## Southeast Asia: Building The Bases: The History Of Construction In Southeast Asia

[Paperback]

[Richard William Tregaskis](#) (Author),  
[Moana Tregaskis](#) (Afterword)

**\$23.00**



### Product Description

Using photos, maps, charts and extensive travel throughout Vietnam, Tregaskis covered every major port, airfield, bridge, building, hospital, & storage facility engineered & constructed in Vietnam by the United States Navy SEABEES and other military engineers and American civilian engineers (1962-1972). He weaves this story, of one of the largest war-time construction efforts in history, through the backdrop of the major battles of the war and its political intrigues.

### About the Author

Richard William Tregaskis (November 28, 1916 – August 15, 1973) was an American journalist and author of the well known book Guadalcanal Diary (1943). Tregaskis served as a war correspondent during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. His work always has both the authenticity of gun smoke and the grace of the skilled literary craftsman. He was deeply—almost reverently—devoted to his country and to its well-being. Were the descriptive term “Patriot” reserved for only that tiny few men whose instinctive motivation causes them to labor, to risk and to sacrifice selflessly and willingly in their country’s behalf, the elect number would surely include Richard Tregaskis. And that is why it is so fitting that this—his last wartime chronicle—should be dedicated not just to the memory of Richard Tregaskis, Patriot, but to the great causes for which he fought until the day he died.—VICTOR H. KRULAK Lieutenant General, USMC (Ret.)

### Product Details

- **Paperback:** 508 pages
- **Publisher:** CreateSpace (January 1, 1975)
- **Language:** English
- **ISBN-10:** 1456317792
- **ISBN-13:** 978-1456317799
- **Product Dimensions:** 10 x 7 x 1.1 inches
- **Shipping Weight:** 2.4 pounds ([View shipping rates and policies](#))

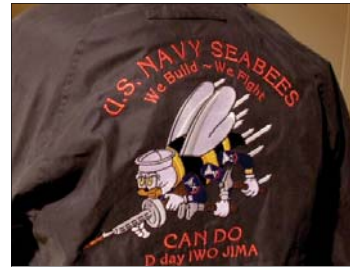
*All Profits Are Donated  
 To Non-Profit Org.*

### —OUR WEBSITE—

Are you aware that your Association has a web site? Posted on the web site are all of the newsletters that have ever been published (21 in number). Deployment completion reports, and pictures are also included. In addition, there is a list of all Association members and their states of residence. So navigate the site and see what you can find. The web address is: <http://www.nmcb8.com>. See you on line!

### — ABOUT DUES—

Please note the mailing address space 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.



Vietnam Era Seabees wants you!



<http://www.vietnam-era-seabees.org/>

## —OUR NEW SEABEE MUSEUM AT PORT HUENEME—

EACH YEAR THE BOARD, VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF WORK TIRELESSLY to preserve the history of the CEC and Seabees. To continue our work in the CEC/ Seabee community, we need your support. Please consider making an annual donation today.

On behalf of the CEC/ Seabee Historical Foundation, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

*Captain Bill Hilderbrand, CEC, USN (Ret.)  
 CEC/Seabee Historical Foundation President*

Go on-line and see it: <http://www.camarillositecameras.com/RQC/Seabee/>

Customized bricks are also available for \$125.00.

A name of your choice will be molded into the brick and displayed at the new museum (“Forever”).





## —Subject: Quang’s Speech at the Freedom Rally—

Submitted by Gary Thede NMCB-8



*I was asked to speak for 10 minutes on my experience of coming to America and what it means.*

*I wrote this in dedication to all Vietnam Veterans and I feel that it is important for me to share it with you prior to the Saturday event. Here it is and God Bless you my friend.*

**35 YEARS AGO**, if you were to tell me that I am going to stand up here speaking to a couple thousand patriots, in English, I’d laugh at you. Man, every morning I wake up thanking God for putting me and my family in the greatest country on earth. I just want you all to know that the American dream does exist and I am living the American dream.

I was asked to speak to you about my experience as a first generation Vietnamese American, but I rather speak to you as an American. If you hadn’t noticed, I am not white and I feel pretty comfortable with my people. I am a proud US citizen and here is my proof... It took me 8 years to get it, waiting in endless lines, but I got it and I am very proud of it. Guess what, I did it legally and it ain’t from the state of Hawaii. I still remember the images of the Tet offensive in 1968, I was six years old. Now you might want to question how a 6-year-old boy could remember anything. Trust me, those images can never be erased. I can’t even imagine what it was like for young American soldiers, 10,000 miles away from home, fighting on my behalf.

Thirty-five years ago, I left south Vietnam for political asylum. The war had ended. At the age of 13, I left with the understanding that I may or may not ever get to see my siblings or parents again. I was one of the first lucky 100,000 Vietnamese allowed to come to the US. Somehow, my family and I were reunited 5 months later, amazingly, in California. It was a miracle from God. If you haven’t heard lately that this is the greatest country on earth.

I am telling you that right now, It is the freedom and the opportunities presented it to me that put me here with all of you tonight. I also remember the barriers that I had to overcome every step of the way. My high school counselor told me that I cannot make it to college due to my poor communication skills. I proved him wrong. I finished college. You see... All you have to do is to give this little boy an opportunity and encourage him to take and run with it. Well, I took the opportunity and here I am. This person standing tonight in front of you could not exist under a socialist/communist environment. By the way, if you think socialism is the way to go, I am sure many people here will chip in to get you a one way ticket out of here. And if you didn’t know, the only difference between socialism and communism is an AK-47 aiming at your head. That was my experience.

In 1982, I stood with a thousand new immigrants, reciting the pledge of allegiance and listening to the National Anthem for the first time as an American. To this day, I can’t remember anything sweeter and more patriotic than that moment in my life. Fast forwarding, somehow I finished high school, finished college, and like any other goofball 21 year old kid, I was having a great time with my life, I had a nice job and a nice apartment in Southern California. In someway and somehow, I had forgotten how I got here

and why I am here. One day I was at a gas station, I saw a veteran pumping gas on the other side of the island. I don’t know what made me do it, but I walked over and asked if he had served in Vietnam. He smiled and said, “Yes”. I shook and held his hand. The grown man began to well up. I walked away as fast as I could and at that very moment, I was emotionally rocked. This was a profound moment in life. I knew something had to change in my life. It was time for me to learn how to be a good citizen. It was time for me to give back.

You see... America is not place on the map, it isn’t a physical location. It is an ideal, a concept. And if you are an American, you must understand the concept, you must buy into this concept and most importantly, you have to fight and defend this concept. This is about Freedom... and not free stuff. And that is why I am standing up here. Brothers and sisters, to be a real American, the very least you must do is to learn English and understand it well. In my humble opinion, you cannot be a faithful patriotic citizen if you can’t speak the language of the country you live in. Take this document of 46 pages... Last I looked on the internet, there wasn’t a Vietnamese translation of the US constitution. It took me a long time to get to the point of being able to converse and until this day, I still struggle to come up with the right words. It’s not easy, but if it’s too easy, it’s not worth doing. Before I know this 46-page document, I learned of the 500,000 Americans who fought for this little boy. I learned of the 58,000 names scribed on the black wall at the Vietnam memorial. You are my heroes. You are my founders. At this time, I would like to ask all the Vietnam veterans to please stand. .... I thank you for my life. I thank you for your sacrifices, and I thank you for giving me the freedom and liberty I have today. I now ask all veterans, firefighters, and police officers, to please stand. On behalf of all first generation immigrants, I thank you for your services and may God bless you all. —*Quang Nguyen*



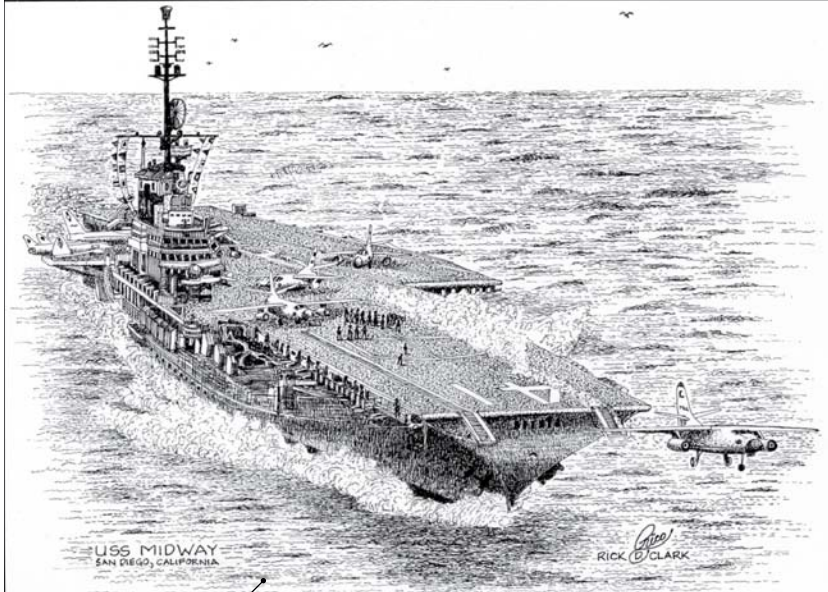
“Half of it’s good”



# —IN MEMORIAM—

—In Remembrance Of Those Who Served With Us—

- LOREN (CORK) GRIPP, PASSED AWAY 4-8-2010 . DONALD LAKE, B-Co 2-29-2003; (69 DANANG)
- MICHAEL D. COOK, 4-1993 .(B-Co DANANG 69) JAMES L ARTHUR , OHIO



JUNE THE FOURTH OF '42, A CLASH OF GIANTS CAME  
 A PACIFIC ISLAND SO REMOTE, MIDWAY IS HER NAME

AMERICAN FORCES DID PREVAIL, A TURN IN WORLD WAR TWO  
 A MOMENT WE SHOULD NOT FORGET, OUR CONFIDENCE NOW GREW

IN FALL OF NINETEEN FORTY THREE, A BRAND NEW KEEL WAS LAID  
 THE LARGEST WARSHIP IN THE WORLD WAS DESTINED TO BE MADE

A THOUSAND FEET IN LENGTH SHE WAS, SIXTY THOUSAND TONS  
 PROPELLERS, EIGHTEEN FEET ACROSS, STOCKED WITH PLANES AND GUNS

WORLD WAR TWO WAS OVER AS SHE SLIPPED INTO THE SEA  
 HER FUTURE WOULD BE ONE OF PRIDE, PROTECTING YOU AND ME

SHE SUPPORTED TROOPS IN VIETNAM, HER PLANES FLEW IN AND OUT  
 SHE SERVED WITH HONOR IN DESERT STORM, A HERO, WITHOUT DOUBT

MUSEUM MIDWAY WELCOMES GUESTS ON SAN DIEGO BAY  
 WE HOPE YOUR YEAR TAKES OFF WITH FLAIR AND HAPPY HOLIDAY.

*Rick & Nelsa Clark*  
 2010

## The Chaplains Corner

HELLO EVERYONE. FIRST OF ALL, I FEEL WE MUST CLEAR the air about me being the battalion chaplain. Somehow at the banquet while at Branson, someone said, “ you should be our chaplain”, and the next thing I know I was appointed! I am not any kind of clergy and the closest thing to it is that I teach the 7th and 8th grade Sunday School class at our local Methodist church. I’m just an old white haired Seabee that loves our Lord and tries to serve Him where I can. So I guess I have been called to be the chaplain, but I don’t know by who.

*Well here goes.*

What a wonderful time we had in Branson! So many friends, so many stories, so many lives touched in so many special ways. The sunset at the lake, the BBQ, the campfire, what a fun night. And then the banquet, I was especially struck by the out-pouring of generosity at the spontaneous auction for one of our own. Even after the auction was over, folks were coming up wanting to help. God works in our hearts sometimes when we don’t even know it. He never ceases to amaze me.

A few days ago I had the privilege to attend a Veterans Day celebration at a local elementary school. There was a skit, poems, and songs. The chorus, made up of 4th and 5th graders, sang all the service’s songs from memory. In fact, the whole program was done with out notes. It is so moving to see how our country is supporting our veterans. I can only think we are growing as a nation in how we think of our military. What a blessing!

As we look back over the road of our life, if we look carefully, we can see the stepping stones that God has placed there in our path to get us to where we are today. I would ask that you ask God, in your own way, to give you wisdom and courage to follow the path that leads to the purpose God has for your life and hope you look for ways to serve HIM.

May the Lord bless you and give you peace,  
 —Billy

*The above picture and Poem was created by Architect/Artist/Poet Rick Clark .  
 For more about Rick Clark see page 9*



**Heroic Seabees Home for Rest**  
 Outfit Towed Ready-made Harbor to Normandy Coast Solving the Invasion Supply Problem  
 BY CHARLES E. FOLSOM

THE NAVY SEABEES, WHO TOWED a ready-made harbor across the English Channel and anchored it off the Normandy Beach for General Eisenhower's invasion, came home yesterday. They arrived 1000 strong members of the 108th Naval Construction Battalion, en route to Camp Endicott, Davisville, R.I., where they will be given leaves to visit their families before reassignment to new tasks.

These veterans of the very start of the storming of Hitler's "Atlantic West Wall" are easy to identify by the shoulder patch of the amphibian engineers they wear, a bright yellow insignia, and the foreign campaign ribbon of the combat theatre.

They brought home the newest words in military lore, terms born with the ingenious device of floating a harbor into place on the French coast where none had been before, in order to permit the landing of immense supplies needed by the combat forces.

Coming ashore to report their arrival at the first Naval District headquarters, the battalion commander, Lt. Cmdr. Erwin T. Colliet, of Miami, Florida, and a group of his men many of whom hail from New England, gave an account of the new method first used at Normandy landing on an enemy shore.

The artificial harbor is called a "mulberry" and into its construction go novel craft, some 10,000 tons in weight, which bear such names as "phoenix", "bombardon", "spud", and "whale". The "phoenix" was described as a great box like concrete, displacing 6000 tons in 200 feet long 60 feet high and as wide, which were compartmented so as to float.

**Device Quiets Waves.**

The sections of "phoenixes" were towed into place where a Sea wall was desired, the sea cocks opened and sunk. Other "phoenixes" were sunk to form a breakwater. Out beyond the Sea wall additional protection from the sea was given by an ingenious sort of huge raft, the "bombardons", which were big steel assemblies with giant flappers which serve to reduce swells and wave action.

A channel through the Phoenix seawall led to the artificial harbor, the chief feature of which was the spud, a curious floating steel post. Two of these, when sunk in 4 fathoms of water, rose 8 to 100 feet above the ocean and served as moorings and elevators between which the pier floats were attached for ships to unload on.

A bridge of pontoons extended from the pier 3100 feet to shore. The motorized equipment of the Army, including the powerful 40 ton tanks, rolled ashore under their own engine power, from such piers—to make the Normandy invasion possible without waiting for the capture of Cherbourg or other French ports.

The Seabees arrived in England November 3, 1943 and until the D-Day were in the constant training for seven long months. Yet the particular artificial harbor they established operated but the first 12 critical days although others continued in use. The battalion suffered light casualties, one killed, one missing and 9 wounded, but they endured all of the dangers of being under attack from German artillery and air strafing and had a desperate battle with a storm. They overcame such difficulties as 15 foot tides in crossing the channel, saw their "whale" writhing about in the ocean like a fantastic sea serpent, rising high on the swells with corkscrew coils.

**Loses Leg**

One Seabee lost his leg from the explosion of a land mine as he was operating a bulldozer on the beach to prepare a bridgehead. Electrician's mate second class Alfred J. Rezerides, of 66 Barnes Ave. E. Boston, counted himself one of the luckiest, for, although he was wounded four times by shrapnel, he was hospitalized but seven weeks before his wounds heal. One piece of shrapnel cut through his helmet, causing a head wound that took 11 stitches to close. Another went through his canteen, and he was hit on the leg and in both hands. He was taken to a liberty ship outfitted as an emergency hospital, where he remained a week and a half before returning to his own outfit, but the battalion doctor then sent him to the convalescent nursing home in England.

The Seabees worked with the British Royal engineers, and the planning of the complicated floats with the specialized techniques for their operation, was one of the most secret of the pre-invasion steps. Towing the harbors across the channel was a feat in itself, some of the units being in the forefront of the passage to the "Omaha" beaches on the Normandy shore.



*Wreckage on Omaha Beach after the storm*



*An Army DUKW crosses one of the British-built "whale" bridges at Omaha Beach.*

*The above newspaper clipping was submitted by Raymond H. White BM2/c 1943-44 108th NCB's (via Gary Thede NMCB-8)*

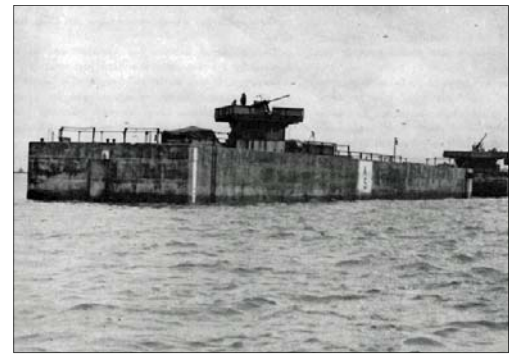
*The Normandy images (this page and next) are from the book; Building The Navy's Bases in WW II; Vol. II. —kb*



Omaha Beach before the Mulberry was installed



Rhino Ferry "married" to an LST at Omaha



Phoenixes at Omaha. Notice the anti-aircraft guns and "Blimps"



First Seabee Camp at Omaha Beach



Gooseberry 2 at Omaha



Rhino Ferries in action at Omaha

—LETTER FROM RICH BERRY BU2 MCB-8 PLANK OWNER—

**A**FTER ATTENDING THE REUNION in Branson Mo., words cannot describe how proud I am to be part of NMCB-8, and be with those generous shipmates. The selection of Branson was a good central location, in the time of the year, late October, when the Ozark trees were in full color, of reds, yellows, greens, browns—like a patchwork quilt

It was at the banquet of the last night that made me so proud. After a nostalgic chow line dinner (no banging trays). I went up on stage to tell my story. I held up an official copy of the CB song that dated back to the date of Adm. Ben Morrell and John Wayne movies about 60 years ago. I told him I would like to auction it off tonight.

The song sheet was sent to me several years ago by J. E. Smith Builder First-Class, MCB-8 plank owner. JE worked in Pittsburgh's steel mills laying firebrick in the steel furnaces before joining the Navy. He was a Mason and laid concrete block and all those MEMQ's.

He's in his 80s now and lives in a back bedroom in his daughter's house. His knees gave out, after years of heavy lifting, and now he's mostly bedridden.

*So the Book Bidding Started:*

So who will give \$10, \$15, \$20?

Quickly the bids passed \$50 then passed \$100. Then one of the guys came up to the mike and began a fast-talking auctioneers singsong. And so it went: \$175 -- 225 -- 250 -- 300 -- 350 -- 355 going once, going twice. Sold for \$355.00! I was surprised at the amount and told the director it was getting out of hand. But the director said we're not finished yet. Soon a bucket was passed around to each table and when the passing was complete, it was set in front of me. It totaled \$1071.

It was truly MCB-8's finest hour

—Rick Berry BUC

MCB-8 plank owner.

*Note: Remember the "Auctioneers" song in 1950".*

*Twenty-five dollar bid, now who will give me thirty dollar*

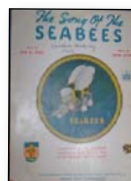
*Will you make it thirty dollar, give me thirty dollar*

*Oh who will give me a thirty dollar bi-id*

*Got a thirty dollar bid, now who will make it thirty-five*

*Will you give me thirty five, make it thirty-five*

*Oh who will give me a thirty-five dollar bi-id*



**\*NOTE FROM YOUR EDITOR**  
Thanks to all of you that have submitted articles for our Newsletter. They have all been very good and helps to archive the history and memories of our experiences with the Seabees—especially NMCB-8.

If you have an article that you have in mind please send it in—send it in whatever format that is available to you. However, a typed copy e-mailed will save hours of typing and make the job of the Editor significantly easier. The best to all of you this holiday season.

—Happy New Year!  
Ken Bingham



SEABEE MEMORIAL, WASHINGTON, D.C

NMCB-8 Seabees' Association  
 1773 Tamarin Ave. Ventura Ca. 93003  
 ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Sculptor - Felix de Weldon



To:



Note: The above numbers denote your membership dues status (Month-Year). (Due date)  
  
 Example 1-10 = Due Jan. 2010

NMCB-8 Seabees' Association

1773 Tamarin Ave. Ventura Ca. 93003

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- TREASURER ..... KEN BINGHAM
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- PROOF READERS ..... RICK CLARK/HARRY DAVIS
- RECRUITING ..... RON DOUGAL (9 YEARS)

Past Presidents ..... Gordon Gilmore, Ken Kerr, Rick Reese

Previous Editor ..... Capt. Harry Davis (9 years)



**-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 year, 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:

Ken Bingham, 1773 Tamarin Ave., Ventura Ca. 93003. If you have e-mail and want to make your update electronically, please do so. Send updates by e-mail to; [jorden2323@msn.com](mailto:jorden2323@msn.com).

Thanks for your support!