

THE GULFPORT CENTER COURIER

HOME OF ATLANTIC FLEET SEABEES



Special Edition

Naval Construction Battalion Center, Gulfport, Mississippi

October 31, 1969

NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION WON BY GULFPORT SEABEE CENTER

FOR CAMILLE ASSIGNMENT

Hurricane Camille, which slammed into a 50-mile Gulf Coast beach front with 200 mph winds and torrential rain at midnight August 17, tested Seabee disaster and recovery skills to their fullest.

*Naval Awards Ceremony
Recognizing Seabees and Marines
For Their Performance
During And After Hurricane Camille
Friday, Oct. 31, 1969
Milner Stadium
Gulfport, Miss.*

ORDER OF EVENTS

*Call to Attention - 2 p.m.
Honors
Invocation
Band Sound Off
Remarks By Distinguished Guests
Presentation Of Awards
Benediction*

Camille hit as Mobile Construction Battalion - 74 was deploying for Vietnam and as MCB-128 was returning. Flights to Southeast Asia were delayed four days for some of 74's men so they could assist in disaster relief. Planes carrying MCB-128 Seabees were diverted to Miami and to McGuire AFB, N. J., from where the Seabees literally battled their way to Gulfport by bus, commercial aircraft and military planes. They found their families safe in shelters at the Seabee Center, but many had lost homes and possessions.

Camille's winds were accompanied by 20-foot plus tides that hit Pass Christian, which was nearly obliterated, and was blamed for the deaths of three people connected with the Seabees. The wife of Lt. Terrence E. Geshke, medical officer of MCB-74, and Yeoman First Class Frederick E. Gerlach Jr., of the Naval Construction

Training Unit administrative office, died apparently from injuries received when the wave washed away the apartment building in which the two families lived. The third fatality was Commissaryman Second Class Merlin J. Boyer, a cook at the Center galley, who drowned when the apartment house in which he lived in nearby Long Beach was destroyed.

Thirteen Seabees at the Center received injuries, but there were no fatalities among the more than 5000 military and civilian personnel sheltered aboard the station during the hurricane.

In her five hour pass across the Gulf Coast, Camille destroyed or damaged some 30,000 homes and hundreds of business, civic and religious structures; severed communications; knocked out water, power and sewage services. At the Center, where 29 buildings were destroyed, more than 90 percent

of the structures received major damage.

The Center is home port for five Mobile Construction Battalions. Also stationed at the Center are the 20th Naval Construction Regiment which exercises operational control of the MCBs during homeport deployment, Construction Training Unit, a disaster recovery training unit, and the Center staff. When Camille had passed she left only one barracks in livable condition to house the 2500 Seabees who were on board Monday morning, August 18.

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending

United States Naval Construction Battalion Center

Gulfport, Mississippi

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For exceptionally meritorious service from 16 August to 1 October 1969, just prior to, during, and after the devastating forces of Hurricane Camille struck the Gulf Coast, west of Gulfport, Mississippi on the night of 17 August 1969. Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport quickly took action to provide effective communications links with local Civil Defense Headquarters, and to effect a massive effort to move civilian and military personnel into shelters at the Center. When the hurricane reached its peak of intensity, leaving a trail of devastation along the Coast, the Center provided the primary and, at times, the only communications link between Civil Defense Headquarters and other units. Many instances of heroism took place as the Seabees rescued victims of the storm. Over twelve hundred persons were evacuated to safety, despite hurricane-force winds, driving rain, darkness, downed power lines, and scattered debris. During the days following the hurricane, the Center continued its widespread actions to assist the local communities. Center personnel secured gas mains and power lines which posed potential hazards and succeeded in making streets and roads passable. Medical teams gave aid to the injured. Due to the rapidly-deteriorating sanitary conditions and the consequent possibility of epidemic, the Command was tasked with the mass evacuation of Pass Christian, the most seriously devastated area along the Gulf Coast. These victims were provided food, medical attention, and transportation to Jackson for shelter. The tireless assistance and humanitarianism shown the civilian populace by the personnel of Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

All personnel, including assigned units, attached to and serving with United States Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport, Mississippi during the above-designated period, or any part of, are hereby authorized to wear the Navy Unit Commendation ribbon.

JOHN H. CHAFEE

Camille's midnight swipe at the Coast gave everyone many hours to respond to radio alerts which broadcast the storm's progress. Hurricanes are nothing new to the region, but, as one survivor said later, nothing like Camille ever came this way. Total storm damage in Mississippi, according to officials, will reach close to \$750,000,000. Center Commanding Officer, Capt. James M. Hill Jr., made his first sortie on the station about 3 a.m., returning to report in a grim tone that, so far as he could determine in the darkness,

damage was widespread.

Monday's dawn was bright and clear and very quiet. Before long the morning quiet was shattered by the staccato roaring of diesel-powered heavy construction rigs on the way to clear streets of fallen trees and building debris.

Power and telephone lines were down. Civil Defense officials reported on the Navy radio network that buildings had collapsed in Gulfport. Many streets were blocked. Water geysered from broken

CAMILLE
CONT'D PAGE 8

For Hurricane Recovery Work

MILITARY AWARDS

LEGION OF MERIT MEDAL

CAPTAIN JAMES M. HILL JR., COMMANDING OFFICER, GULFPORT SEABEE CENTER

NAVY and MARINE CORPS MEDAL

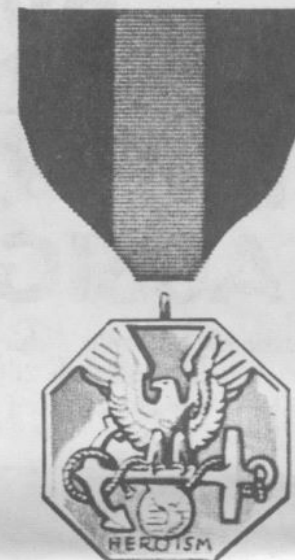
LIEUTENANT COMMANDER GENE DAVIS, MCB-121
 LIEUTENANT THOMAS W. DUTSCH, 20TH NCR
 LIEUTENANT(JUNIOR GRADE) JAMES L. MCWILLIAMS, MCB-74
 MASTER CHIEF CONSTRUCTIONMAN NORMAN T. JONES, MCB-121
 CHIEF CONSTRUCTION MECHANIC LOUIS A. BRUNEY, 20TH NCR
 CHIEF BUILDER JAMES U. BURLOCK, 20TH NCR
 CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ELECTRICIAN HENRY S. MCPHERSON, CBC
 EQUIPMENT OPERATOR FIRST CLASS CHARLES R. WEBB, 20TH NCR
 STEELWORKER FIRST CLASS WILLIAM E. SPIRES, 20TH NCR
 BUILDER SECOND CLASS JAMES R. GETZ, 20TH NCR
 EQUIPMENT OPERATOR SECOND CLASS EUGENE E. CATLIN, 20TH NCR
 EQUIPMENT OPERATOR SECOND CLASS STEPHEN E. PACK, 20TH NCR
 CONSTRUCTION ELECTRICIAN THIRD CLASS JOHN VIRGILIO, 20TH NCR
 CONSTRUCTIONMAN EDWARD R. SLAWINSKI, 20TH NCR

MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL (Medal Not Struck)

Awarded to any member of the Armed Forces of the United States who has distinguished himself by outstanding non-combat meritorious achievement or service to the United States.

MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL

COMMANDER JACK B. MOGER, COMMANDING OFFICER, MCB-121
 COMMANDER JOHN J. SHANLEY JR., EXECUTIVE OFFICER, GULFPORT SEABEE CENTER
 COMMANDER JOSEPH J. GAWARKIEWICZ III, COMMANDING OFFICER, MCB-128
 COMMANDER WILLIAM C. CONNOR, CHIEF STAFF OFFICER, 20TH NCR
 LIEUTENANT JOSEPH B. LEAP, COMMANDING OFFICER, NAVAL CONSTRUCTION TRAINING UNIT



NAVY AND MARINE CORPS MEDAL
For acts of heroism not involving actual conflict with an enemy.

NAVY COMMENDATION MEDAL

COMMANDER JAMES H. CLARY, SUPPLY OFFICER, GULFPORT SEABEE CENTER
 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER FREDERICK G. KELLEY, MCB-74
 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER RICHARD C. TRUESDELL, CBC
 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER L. B. PURINTON III, MCB-121
 MAJOR BOBBY F. COLE, USMC, 20TH NCR
 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER DONALD B. CAMPBELL, MCB-128
 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER THEODORE S. MYERS, CBC
 LIEUTENANT WILLIAM F. MALONEY, CBC
 LIEUTENANT(JUNIOR GRADE) PAUL E. SANDERS, 20TH NCR
 LIEUTENANT(JUNIOR GRADE) MICHAEL S. WISE, CBC
 ENSIGN DAVID L. BUHRMANN, MCB-128
 ENSIGN CHARLES H. POLLARD, 20TH NCR
 SENIOR CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ELECTRICIAN THEODORE F. NIELSEN, MCB-121
 SENIOR CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ELECTRICIAN J. M. SWINDLE, CTU
 SENIOR CHIEF BUILDER L. D. RUMPH, CTU
 SENIOR CHIEF COMMISSARYMAN GARNER G. MORGAN, MCB-121
 CHIEF CONSTRUCTION MECHANIC WILLIAM W. PURKIS, CBC
 EQUIPMENT OPERATOR FIRST CLASS JOHN E. JENSEN, CBC
 CONSTRUCTION ELECTRICIAN FIRST CLASS NORMAN H. COTHAM, 20TH NCR
 EQUIPMENT OPERATOR SECOND CLASS ROBERT A. CHESS, 20TH NCR



NAVY COMMENDATION MEDAL
Awarded by Navy and Marine Corps for meritorious or heroic achievement or service.

NAVY ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

MAJOR STANLEY E. JONES, USMC, INSPECTOR-INSTRUCTOR,
 CO "A", 4TH AMPHIBIAN TRACTOR BATTALION
 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER JIMMY E. CHRISTEN, MCB-121
 LIEUTENANT BENJAMIN F. HAYNES, CBC
 LIEUTENANT LOUIS D. MACNAUGHTON, MCB-121
 LIEUTENANT RONALD T. BRUNI, CBC
 LIEUTENANT BILLY H. MCCAULEY, CBC

LIEUTENANT LEONARD E. ALFREDSON, MCB-128
 CAPTAIN GILES W. BOND, USMCR
 LIEUTENANT(JUNIOR GRADE) CHARLES S. RUSSELL, CBC
 LIEUTENANT(JUNIOR GRADE) H. B. WYCHE JR., CTU
 LIEUTENANT(JUNIOR GRADE) DAVID L. SIMPSON, MCB-121
 LIEUTENANT(JUNIOR GRADE) PAUL D. STEPHENSON, CBC
 ENSIGN L. W. MAY II, MCB-121

CIVILIAN AWARDS

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY DISTINGUISHED CIVILIAN SERVICE AWARD

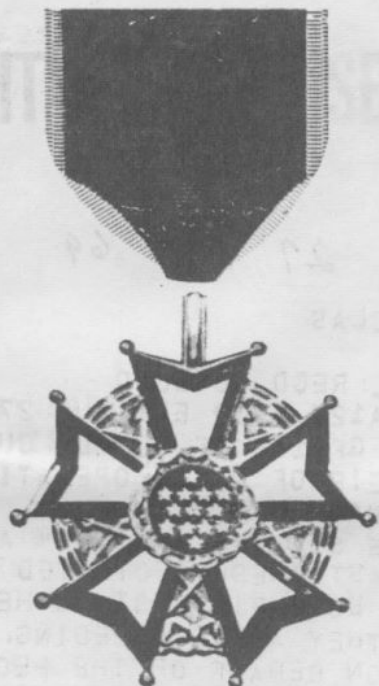
—John W. Davis, Gulfport Seabee Center Planning Officer

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY SUPERIOR CIVILIAN SERVICE AWARD

—Luther F. Ladd, Public Works Department

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY MERITORIOUS CIVILIAN SERVICE AWARD

—James O. Bowling, Construction Equipment Department
 —William Thompson, Medical Department
 —Rodney P. Eike, Planning Department
 —Robert Brownlee, Supply Department
 —Harold J. Levron, Industrial Relations Division
 —Mrs. Betty M. Price, Industrial Relations Division
 —Morlan M. Ray Jr., Public Works Department



LEGION OF MERIT

For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services.

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY AWARD OF MERIT FOR GROUP ACHIEVEMENT—SHOPS DIVISION, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

—Joseph H. Dubuisson
 —Allen K. Baltzer
 —Thomas F. Hartsock
 —Billy J. Barnett
 —Robert R. Wilson
 —Riley M. Bradley
 —Leonard R. Bosarge
 —Louis R. Levens
 —James S. Craig Jr.
 —Leroy J. Necaise
 —William C. Martin
 —Emile J. Guel

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY AWARD OF MERIT FOR GROUP ACHIEVEMENT—SHOPS DIVISION, CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT DEPARTMENT

—Preston T. McManus
 —Charles J. D'Angelo
 —John W. Daniels Jr.
 —Clifton J. Ladner
 —Albert L. Lewis
 —Charles W. Stepp
 —Ollen J. Byrd

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY AWARD OF MERIT FOR GROUP ACHIEVEMENT—STORAGE BRANCH, SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

—Edward Smith
 —Eli Z. Brown
 —R. J. McConnic
 —Warren L. Burks
 —Alph D. Long

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY AWARD OF MERIT FOR GROUP ACHIEVEMENT—ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

—Agnes C. Landberg
 —Ruth L. Schambach
 —Zelda A. Fenton
 —Evelyn E. Fillingim

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY AWARD OF MERIT FOR GROUP ACHIEVEMENT RETAIL ISSUE BRANCH, SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

—Joseph A. Denicola
 —Anne M. Towell
 —Joe Culpepper
 —Gene M. Clark Sr.
 —Gladys S. Davidson
 —Carl L. Tate
 —Edith S. Lacy
 —Wesley L. Watts

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY SPECIAL ACT OR SERVICE AWARD

—James B. Adcock, Supply Department
 —Lester Bennett, Supply Department
 —Lavon J. Donald, Supply Department
 —Owen L. Havard, Supply Department
 —Victor E. Herrington, Construction Equipment Department
 —Arthur W. Platts Jr., Supply Department
 —Russell S. Randolph, Construction Equipment Department
 —Otis W. Webb, Construction Equipment Department



CIVILIAN PIN FOR MERITORIOUS SERVICE.

NAVY ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

ENSIGN GENE R. CASTIN, MCB-121
 CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER GERALD M. LAMB, CBC
 CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER ROY E. ROBERTS, CBC
 CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER ROBERT E. HERNING, 20TH NCR
 WARRANT OFFICER RICHARD A. BRYANT, CBC
 MASTER CHIEF COMMISSARYMAN ALBIN J. COFFTA, CBC
 CHIEF PERSONNELMAN JOHN T. SPEARS, 20TH NCR
 CHIEF BUILDER WALTER M. JACKSON, 20TH NCR
 CHIEF BUILDER LEON G. DUHAMEL, MCB-121
 CHIEF UTILITIESMAN DAVID R. MATTOX, MCB-128
 CHIEF EQUIPMENT OPERATOR KENNETH K. KLINE, MCB-121
 CHIEF CONSTRUCTION MECHANIC BENJAMIN F. GRIFFITH, MCB-128
 CHIEF EQUIPMENT OPERATOR JOSEPH R. ECK, MCB-128
 CHIEF BOILERMAN PAUL B. WILLS, CBC
 CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ELECTRICIAN WALTER S. WILDER, CBC
 GUNNERY SERGEANT JACK C. GREGORY, USMC, CO "A", 4TH AMPHIBIAN TRACTOR BATTALION
 GUNNERY SERGEANT JIMMY D. PHILLIPS, USMC, CO "A", 4TH AMPHIBIAN TRACTOR BATTALION
 EQUIPMENT OPERATOR FIRST CLASS TED C. FRESHOUR, MCB-128
 CONSTRUCTION MECHANIC FIRST CLASS GERALD W. BROOKSHIRE, 20TH NCR
 HOSPITAL CORPSMAN FIRST CLASS GREGORY A. FLORENCE, CBC
 HOSPITAL CORPSMAN FIRST CLASS ROGER L. MOOR, CBC
 HOSPITAL CORPSMAN FIRST CLASS M. R. GANNON, CTU
 BUILDER FIRST CLASS R. L. SMITH, CTU
 STAFF SERGEANT MICHAEL B. SCHRANTZ, USMCR, CO "A", 4TH AMPHIBIAN TRACTOR BATTALION
 CONSTRUCTION ELECTRICIAN SECOND CLASS BILLY G. MILLICAN, MCB-121
 EQUIPMENT OPERATOR SECOND CLASS MARK E. WENTWORTH, 20TH NCR
 PERSONNELMAN THIRD CLASS ALEXANDER J. BIVINS JR., 20TH NCR
 CONSTRUCTION MECHANIC THIRD CLASS T. E. PADGETT, CTU



NAVY ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

The award is given for professional and/or leadership achievement in a combat or non-combat situation based on sustained performance or specific achievement of a superlative nature.



8 September 1969

OFFICE OF
THE REGIONAL DIRECTORDEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
REGIONAL OFFICERegion IV
Room 404, 50 Seventh Street, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30323

September 12, 1969

Dear Captain Hill:

I would like to extend to you and your officers and men my personal commendation and congratulations for the outstanding manner in which they reacted to the catastrophe of Hurricane CAMILLE.

As the first military personnel on the scene, the Seabees in effect were the local Government. The manner in which they assisted the deployment of Army Engineer troops to the area and assisted in all facets of the recovery operation was truly outstanding. No estimate can be made of the number of lives and the millions of dollars of personal property that were saved due to your expeditious reaction.

Everywhere I went throughout the disaster area I heard the highest praise from federal and state officials for the Navy Seabees. This praise in my opinion is richly deserved.

Again, congratulations on your outstanding performance.

Sincerely,

F. J. Clarke
F. J. CLARKE
Lieutenant General, USA
Chief of Engineers

Captain James M. Hill, Jr., CEC-USN
Commanding Officer
Naval Construction Battalion Center
Gulfport, Mississippi 39501

Captain James H. Hill, Commander
Twentieth Naval Construction
Regiment
Gulfport, Mississippi 39501

Dear Captain Hill:

You and your very capable organization are to be commended for the unstinting assistance rendered to emergency health service teams from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and the Mississippi State Board of Health. Without your help, our job of protecting the public health and welfare would have been most difficult.

Mr. Walter Hughes has briefed me about the numerous occasions in which you and Commander Shanley provided such valuable support including meals, sleeping quarters for health personnel on the base, lift pumps, trucks, manpower, a photographer, and many other courtesies.

In our efforts to live up to our charge of being "the department of the people," it is refreshing and gratifying to receive such willing cooperation from others outside the Department who make our job easier and more pleasant. As Secretary Finch's representative in the southeastern states, I want to express our deep appreciation to you and your staff.

Sincerely,

William J. Page Jr.
William J. Page, Jr.
Regional Director

'THANK YOU

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CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
WASHDC

THE SEABEES "CAN DO" AND ON THE HURRICANE COAST THESE DEDICATED OFFICERS AND MEN TO DO THEIR BEST TO HELP PUT THE AREA THEY ARE SUCCEEDING.

ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF GULFPORT THE GULFPORT AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AVAILABLE TO THE COMMUNITY AND THE AFFLUENT OFFICERS AND MEN IN LARGE MEASURES FOR THE RAPID PROGRESS MADE IN THE GULFPORT IS PROUD TO COUNT THE SEABEES MOST DEDICATED CITIZENS, WE OWE THEM EVERLASTING GRATITUDE RESPECTFULLY,
ROBERT MASSINGILL RESIDENT GULFPORT

FREDERICK COULTS
GENERALCOMMISSIONER GLENN RYAN
TERRITORIAL COMMANDER

The Salvation Army

FOUNDED IN 1865 BY WILLIAM BOOTH

MEN'S SOCIAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT
LT-COLONEL WARREN C. JOHNSON
SECRETARYSOUTHERN TERRITORIAL HEADQUARTERS
875 SEMINOLE AVE., N. E.
POST OFFICE BOX 5236
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30307

PHONE 876-3381

CABLE ADDRESS
SALVATION, ATLANTA, GA.

September 10, 1969

Commanding Officer
Navy Base
Gulfport, Mississippi

My dear Sir:

Might I say thank you for the great amount of work that your men accomplished during the Hurricane Camille in that area.

You were so nice to help the Salvation Army, and we do hope that as our cause might pass again that we can help each other do what needs to be done.

We thank you for your help. May the Lord bless you and all of the men connected with you.

Sincerely yours,

Paul Branum
Paul Branum, Major
General Secretary

PB/dw

Captain J. Hill, Jr.
Seabee Center
Gulfport, Mississippi

Dear Sir:

I want to express my thanks and deep appreciation for what you have done for the City of Gulfport. Since the hurricane, the Seabees have made life more endurable. They have helped us to help ourselves. Even though we are surrounded by destruction and death, they have helped us to accept the fact that we must start all over again. Though we have lost everything, we thank God to be alive and here for tomorrow. I firmly believe that without the help of the Seabees, we would still be in misery.

Very truly yours,
Billie Evans

"Christ is still the answer — Communicate Christ

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September

Dear Captain Hill:

As you well know, Hurricane Camille hit dozens of communities and great numbers of Americans. A natural disaster over which we have little control. I believe, however, is the way in which we can overcome such a crisis.

Reports made to me show that the command and direction during the hurricane responded to the extraordinary courage and resourcefulness. In particular, and make special note of the 20th Naval Construction Regiment, 121, and 128, the Naval Construction Battalion. By reacting with great speed when such qualities were absolutely necessary and units working with it helped to prevent further loss of life and property and to bring stricken communities back on their feet.

The record of what has been done by the nation greatly admires and deeply appreciates your associates and all those who should be very proud of the high standards achieved. I hope you will pass along my thanks and commendation -- from me and the people who helped make that achievement possible.

Sincerely,

Richard M. Nixon

Captain James M. Hill, Jr., CEC
Commanding Officer
U. S. Naval Construction Battalion
Gulfport, Mississippi 39502

'THANK YOU...' SEABEES, MARINES

OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
REGIONAL OFFICE

Region IV
404, 50 Seventh Street, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30323

Commander
uction

39501

able organization are to be commended for
nce rendered to emergency health service
ent of Health, Education and Welfare and
Board of Health. Without your help, our
public health and welfare would have been

briefed me about the numerous occasions
nder Shanley provided such valuable support
ing quarters for health personnel on the
cks, manpower, a photographer, and many other

up to our charge of being "the department
refreshing and gratifying to receive such
rom others outside the Department who make
re pleasant. As Secretary Finch's represen-
stern states, I want to express our deep
nd your staff.

Sincerely,

William J. Page, Jr.
William J. Page, Jr.
Regional Director

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WASHDC

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COAST THESE DEDICATED OFFICERS AND MEN DID DO AND ARE CONTINUING
TO DO THEIR BEST TO HELP PUT THE AREA BACK ON ITS FEET.

THEY ARE SUCCEEDING.

ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF GULFPORT, HOME OF THE SEABEES,
THE GULFPORT AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE THANKS YOU FOR MAKING
AVAILABLE TO THE COMMUNITY AND THE AREA THE SERVICES OF THESE
SPLENDID OFFICERS AND MEN IN LARGE MEASURE THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE RAPID PROGRESS MADE IN THE CLEAN-UP OPERATION.

GULFPORT IS PROUD TO COUNT THE SEABEES AMONG ITS FINEST AND
MOST DEDICATED CITIZENS, WE OWE THEM--AND YOU--A DEBT OF
EVERLASTING GRATITUDE RESPECTFULLY,
ROBERT MASSINGILL RESIDENT GULFPORT AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.



GULFPORT, MISS 39501
September 19, 1969

Commander James M. Hill
U. S. Navy Seabee Center
Gulfport, Mississippi

Dear Jim:

Just want to take a moment to tell you again how
much the citizens of the area owe you and express the
gratitude and thanks on the manner in which your men moved
and helped to get us back out of the wilderness here follow
the hurricane.

The Coast people have always held the Seabees with
high regard and esteem; however, I'm certain that their ad-
miration and estimation of them is even greater than ever before, and
let me personally, as well as on behalf of the people of the
say "Thanks!" to you and your men.

Sincerely yours,

Leo W. Seal, Jr.
Leo W. Seal, Jr.
President

LMSJr:jmc

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 23, 1969

Dear Captain Hill:

As you well know, Hurricane Camille brought great damage
to dozens of communities and great suffering to thousands
of Americans. A natural disaster such as this is something
over which we have little control. One thing men can deter-
mine, however, is the way in which they will respond to
such a crisis.

Reports made to me show that the units and men under your
command and direction during the period following the hur-
ricane responded to the extraordinary challenges with both
courage and resourcefulness. I commend the Center in
particular, and make special note of the performance of the
20th Naval Construction Regiment, Seabee Battalions 74,
121, and 128, the Naval Construction Training Unit, and the
critical support rendered by Company A, 4th AMTRAC
Battalion. By reacting with great speed and skill at a time
when such qualities were absolutely essential, your Center
and units working with it helped enormously to prevent fur-
ther loss of life and property and to put stricken men and
stricken communities back on their feet.

The record of what has been done is one which the entire
nation greatly admires and deeply appreciates. You and
your associates and all those who have helped in this effort
should be very proud of the high standard which has been
achieved. I hope you will pass along this word of thanks
and commendation -- from me and all Americans -- to all
who helped make that achievement possible.

Sincerely,

Richard Nixon

Captain James M. Hill, Jr., CEC, USN
Commanding Officer
U. S. Naval Construction Battalion Center
Gulfport, Mississippi 39502

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT
MEMPHIS REGIONAL OFFICE
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38101

SEP 24 1969

Captain James M. Hill
Commanding Officer
U. S. Naval Construction
Battalion Center
Gulfport, Mississippi 39501

Dear Captain Hill:

May we extend to you our personal thanks and appreciation
for the very significant assistance rendered to the Post Office
Department in restoring postal service in the Gulf Coast
area following the damage caused by Hurricane Camille.

The Postmaster at Gulfport, Mississippi, has advised us of
the loan of a dump truck. Our Regional Officials have also
advised us of the help given by Commander Jack Moger, USN,
Commanding Officer MCB-121, in clearing a site for the
location of trailers to be used as temporary quarters for
the Pass Christian, Mississippi, post office.

Judging from other information received and news accounts,
your command provided an invaluable service in rescue and
restoration operations during this disaster period.

Sincerely yours,

J. H. Olehy
J. H. Olehy
Regional Director

317 45th Street
Gulfport, Miss
October 3, 1969

Captain J. Hill, Jr.
Seabee Center
Gulfport, Mississippi

Dear Sir:

I want to express my thanks
and deep appreciation for what you
have done for the City of Gulfport.
Since the hurricane, the Seabees
have made life more endurable.
They have helped us to help ourselves.
Even though we are surrounded by
destruction and death, they have
helped us to accept the fact that
we must start all over again.
Though we have lost everything, we
thank God to be alive and here for
tomorrow. I firmly believe that
without the help of the Seabees, we
could still be in misery.

Very truly yours,
Billie Evans

THANK YOU... SEABEES, MARINES

(38)NSA311
RT MISS 27

IN THE HURRICANE DEVASTATED MISSISSIPPI
CERS AND MEN DID DO AND ARE CONTINUING
UT THE AREA BACK ON ITS FEET.

OF GULFPORT, HOME OF THE SEABEES,
OF COMMERCE THANKS YOU FOR MAKING
AND THE AREA THE SERVICES OF THESE
IN LARGE MEASURE THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE
ADE IN THE CLEAN-UP OPERATION.
UT THE SEABEES AMONG ITS FINEST AND
WE OWE THEM--AND YOU--A DEBT OF
PECTFULLY,
NT GULFPORT AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 23, 1969

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s were absolutely essential, your Center
with it helped enormously to prevent fur-
d property and to put stricken men and
ies back on their feet.

t has been done is one which the entire
ires and deeply appreciates. You and
d all those who have helped in this effort
ud of the high standard which has been
you will pass along this word of thanks
-- from me and all Americans -- to all
hat achievement possible.

Sincerely,

Richard Nixon

Hill, Jr., CEC, USN
er
uction Battalion Center
ippi 39502



LEO W. SEAL, JR.
PRESIDENT

GULFPORT, MISS. 39501
September 19, 1969

Commander James M. Hill
U. S. Navy Seabee Center
Gulfport, Mississippi

Dear Jim:

Just want to take a moment to tell you again how
much the citizens of the area owe you and express the
gratitude and thanks on the manner in which your men moved in
and helped to get us back out of the wilderness here following
the hurricane.

The Coast people have always held the Seabees with
high regard and esteem; however, I'm certain that their admiration
and estimation of them is even greater than ever before, and
let me personally, as well as on behalf of the people of the Bank,
say "Thanks!" to you and your men.

Sincerely yours,

Leo W. Seal, Jr.
Leo W. Seal, Jr.
President

LWSJr:jmc

CITY OF PASS CHRISTIAN

ON THE MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST
PASS CHRISTIAN, MISSISSIPPI 39371

J. J. WITTMANN
Mayor

September 24th, 1969

Commodore James B. Hill, Commander,
Twentieth Naval Construction Regiment,
Gulfport, Mississippi 39501

Dear Captain Hill:

It is impossible for me as an individual and
as Mayor of the City of Pass Christian to express my feelings
and those of the citizens of the Pass, for the tremendous job
done by the Seabees during the recent disaster.

This entire community will forever be indebted
to you and your men for the some 8000 man hours given to help-
ing us recover from the Hurricane.

We pray that God will protect and guide you
and all of your men in your new assignments, and bring you
all back to us safely.

If ever I can possibly serve you in any way,
it will be a honor to do so.

Again, may God bless you and thank you so much
for the dedication and assistance you provided.

Very truly yours,
J. J. Wittmann
J. J. Wittmann

JJW:c

RIEMANN

Funeral Homes

P. O. BOX 123 • GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI
PASS CHRISTIAN • LONG BEACH • BAY ST. LOUIS
EDGEWATER

September 4, 1969

Capt. James M. Hill, Jr.
NCBC
Gulfport, Mississippi

Dear Captain Hill:

Frances and I and the staff at Riemanns
appreciate your response to our need
immediately following Hurricane Camille.

Certainly we will never be able to repay
you for the personal services you rendered
to us during this disaster. Your interest
and love for the coast will always be
remembered.

The 30 KW generator furnished by the Seabee
facility was a godsend to us and to the
people we served in this time of disaster.
In addition to relieving families requiring
mortuary services, this equipment allowed
us to operate two-way radio equipment so
vital to our ambulance dispatch and served
as a method of communications for Gulfport
Memorial Hospital as well as the temporary
satellite hospital set up in the Pass
Christian area.

Again we express our appreciation for your
expression of concern for our beautiful Gulf
Coast area which we will rebuild.

Sincerely,

Bob Riemann
Bob Riemann

BR:gj

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT
MEMPHIS REGIONAL OFFICE
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38101

IN REPLY REFER TO

SEP 11 1969

Captain James M. Hill
Commanding Officer
U. S. Naval Construction
Battalion Center
Gulfport, Mississippi 39501

Dear Captain Hill:

May we extend to you our personal thanks and appreciation
for the very significant assistance rendered to the Post Office
Department in restoring postal service in the Gulf Coast
area following the damage caused by Hurricane Camille.

The Postmaster at Gulfport, Mississippi, has advised us of
the loan of a dump truck. Our Regional Officials have also
advised us of the help given by Commander Jack Moger, USN,
Commanding Officer MCB-121, in clearing a site for the
location of trailers to be used as temporary quarters for
the Pass Christian, Mississippi, post office.

Judging from other information received and news accounts,
your command provided an invaluable service in rescue and
restoration operations during this disaster period.

Sincerely yours,

J. H. Olehy
J. H. Olehy
Regional Director

MISSISSIPPI POWER COMPANY

GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI

McRAE TURNER JR.
VICE PRESIDENT

September 3, 1969

Captain James M. Hill, Jr.
U.S. Naval Construction Battalion Center
Gulfport, Mississippi

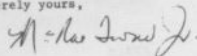
Dear Captain Hill:

We are all most grateful to you and the entire Seabee organization for the tremendous support that you have given this community before, during, and after the hurricane. I am sure that the commendations that you all have received will fill volumes, and I would like to add my personal ones to those.

On the night of the hurricane, I had the opportunity to observe one of your men in action under very trying circumstances. When Civil Defense recommended the evacuation of all people living south of the I & N Railroad, I moved my family to the Central Elementary School in Gulfport. In charge of that shelter for Civil Defense was a Seabee named Bill McKenzie. As the evening progressed, the physical conditions at the school became increasingly difficult as windows, ceilings, chimneys, et cetera, began to give way. It was necessary to move the people in the school from place to place and give them instructions for their protection to meet the changing conditions. The entire operation was handled by Mr. McKenzie in a very calm, courteous, efficient, and exemplary manner. All of us there were fully aware that his handling of the situation saved many of the group from serious injury and helped maintain an atmosphere of order in the midst of chaos.

I thought that you would like to personally know of the superb job that he did, and I would appreciate it if you would pass on to him our gratitude.

Sincerely yours,



Gulfport Municipal Separate School District
Gulfport, Mississippi 39501

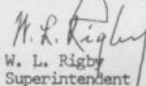
10th
October
1969James M. Hill, Jr.
Capt., CEC, USN
Commanding Officer
Naval Construction Battalion Center
Gulfport, Mississippi 39501

Dear Captain Hill:

We complete our first month of twenty teaching days of the 1969-70 school session today. At one time during the latter part of August it was very doubtful we would be able to get in a full nine months school term this year. We were able to open school on September 15 only because of the help given us by the Seabees and the Corps of Engineers. One of our biggest problems was the clearing of the campus at West Ward Elementary School since it was piled high with debris from the Port of Gulfport. The Seabees came to our aid and did a wonderful job of clearing this campus and making it possible for us to open school by the September 15 deadline.

To you, your staff and all the Seabees who took part in this project, we are most grateful and extend to you our sincere appreciation.

Sincerely yours,



W. L. Rigby
Superintendent

/jh

'THANK YOU...'

Major Cecil R. Baker
400 N. Island View
Long Beach, MS 39560
3 September 1969Commanding Officer
Naval Construction Battalion Center
Gulfport, MS 39501

SUBJECT: Letter of Commendation - Robert A. Rotonda, UT-2

I would like to take this opportunity to commend a recent member of your Command, Robert A. Rotonda, UT-2, MCB-128, Bravo Company.

During the recent Hurricane Camille activity, UT-2 and Mrs Rotonda displayed outstanding initiative, dedication and service to their local community. They were one of the few families in their neighborhood that did not receive extensive damage to their property. In addition, they were fortunate enough to have a gas kitchen stove that was immediately made available as a community cooking facility. Although UT-2 Rotonda had just returned shortly after the hurricane hit, from a second tour in Vietnam, they both made immeasurable contributions to their community by offering personal assistance to less fortunate families.

In addition to providing their community with access to a cooking facility 24 hours each day, they opened their home to three other Seabees who had just returned from Vietnam. They provided hot meals to the Seabees and several other personnel, including myself and my neighbor, both from the Long Beach area. Also, this couple was one of the first to have water returned to their home and they immediately provided bathing facilities for several personnel. As soon as the water was restored, they made their washing machine available as a community washer and even washed several loads of clothes for other personnel. To top this off, their car was not damaged during the hurricane and they made this vehicle readily available for transportation of families, ice runs, water runs, and ration runs as required.

Although UT-2 Rotonda was recently discharged from the Seabees and now resides at 3914 16th Street in Gulfport, his contributions during a time of disaster reflected outstanding credit upon the United States Navy, the Gulf Coast Community and himself. His discharge from the service has resulted in the Gulfport Community obtaining two additional residents who will no doubt be an asset to the rebuilding of the Gulf Coast.

Since I had first hand knowledge of their service to the Community, I thought you might possibly be interested in receiving the information; due to the fact that he was a member of your Command during that time.

CECIL R. BAKER, Major, USAF

PRAISE TO
SEABEES

Admiral Ephraim P. Holmes, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, whose headquarters is at Norfolk, Va., sent a message of congratulations to the Gulfport-based Seabees praising them for the part they played in hurricane recovery operations on the Gulf Coast.

The four-star naval officer visited the Gulfport Seabee Center earlier this year shortly after he assumed his command, and has continued to show a personal and professional interest in Seabee activities during homeport deployment and training.

In his message to the officers and men of the Gulfport battalions, Admiral Holmes said "The Seabees recent actions in ravaged victims of hurricane Camille, is an extension of a long standing U. S. Navy tradition to show compassion for those in need. The hundreds of civic and humanitarian projects undertaken by the Seabees were of vital importance to the stricken citizenry of the Gulf Coast area and were instrumental in starting the community on a return to normalcy."

He said that each Seabee has earned the admiration of the Atlantic Fleet and the appreciation of a large group of his fellow citizens.

The message ended with a "Well Done."

NAVAL MESSAGE

27 AUG 69

UNCLAS

FOL RECD VIA WUTELCO
BFA016 922P EDT AUG 27 69 (13)NSA348
NS GFA277 GD NL PDF GULFPORT MISS 27
CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

WASHDC

ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF GULFPORT AND ALL OF ITS CITIZENS I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR MOST SINCERE APPRECIATION FOR THE ASSISTANCE AND UNTIRING EFFORTS OF THE SEABEES DURING THE DISASTER RESULTING FROM HURRICANE CAMILLE, WITHOUT THE SEABEES WE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO RESPOND NEARLY SO QUICKLY TO THE MANY CITIZENS PROBLEMS IN THE CLEARING OF STREETS AND THE MOVING OF TRAFFIC. WE ARE HAPPY THAT THEY ARE PART OF OUR COMMUNITY AND HOPE THAT THEY WILL ALWAYS BE HERE

PHILIP W SHAW MAYOR CITY OF GULFPORT MISS

NAVY DEPARTMENT

ACTION

00
09
AP-04

NAVAL MESSAGE

R 27 AUG 69

UNCLAS

FOLLOWING RECD FROM WUTELCO
BFA076 239P EDT AUG 27 69 (23)NSA198
NS GFA094 CF PDF GULFPORT MISS 27 1252P CDT
CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

WASHDC

WITHOUT MASSIVE AND EXPERT AID OF NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION BASED AT NEARBY GULFPORT CITY OF LONGBEACH COULD NOT HAVE SURVIVED HAVOC OF CAMILLE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE AND APPRECIATE SUCH WILLING AND UNTIRING EFFORT AND EXPRESS FURTHER WITH NCGN'S CONTINUE IN AID OF OUR RECOVERY

WILLIAM SKELLIE MAYOR LONG BEACH MISS

NAVY DEPARTMENT

B 91 00
09
A-04

Can Do!

"Once again the officers and men of the Atlantic Fleet Seabees have demonstrated their legendary 'Can Do' spirit in providing invaluable assistance in the recovery operations following hurricane Camille."

Captain Custer F. Krickenberger, Jr., Commander, Construction Battalions, U. S. Atlantic Fleet, said in a congratulatory message to Captain James M. Hill Jr., Commanding Officer of the Gulfport Seabee Center.

"Your immediate and unselfish response to the sufferings of your fellow men have earned you the respect and admiration of citizens everywhere and indeed the sincere appreciation of the people of Mississippi."

Capt. Krickenberger, who recently replaced Capt. Donald G. Iselin at the Davisville, R. I., command headquarters visited the Gulfport Seabee Center on a two-day inspection tour shortly after Camille.

His message to Capt. Hill concludes: "Your actions have been in the highest tradition of the Seabees and the U. S. Navy. The many commendatory messages you have received have been well earned. Well Done."

SEABEES, MARINES

GASTON H. HEWES
JUDGE OF COUNTY COURT
Harrison County
Gulfport, Mississippi 39501

September 2, 1969

Capt: James M. Hill, Jr., CEC USN
Naval Construction Battalion Center
Gulfport, Mississippi 39501

Dear Sir:

One day during last week one of your men, namely, Ted Presour, together with four men serving under him assisted in every way possible in attempting to salvage any articles that could be found at my former residence of 4808 West Beach, Gulfport, Mississippi. The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the fine work performed by Mr. Presour together with the four young men serving under him. They were courteous and efficient and did everything they possibly could to assist us even though we did not have the proper implements to perform the work.

I would be certainly remiss if I did not advise you of the fine work that these men under your command performed in trying to assist those of us who were victims of the storm, Camille.

I do not know, nor was I able to ascertain, the names of the four men under Mr. Presour, but in the event that this matter should come to your attention and the names of the parties are ascertained I would greatly appreciate your advising them of the appreciation the entire Hewes family feels towards them.

Thanking you, I am

Very truly yours,

Gaston H. Hewes
GASTON H. HEWES

GHH:ih

ST. THERESE'S CHURCH
3521 - 19TH ST.
GULFPORT, MISS. 39501

October 8, 1969

Capt. James Hill, CEC USN
Seabee Base
Gulfport, Miss.

In my own name, and the name of our people at St. Therese, I wish to thank you and your Seabees for the aid they gave recently in helping clear our property & for now an important step in helping us in our efforts to return to normalcy.

Later a Name of Thanks will be

Offered for all who assisted us after the Hurricane

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours
Rev. Martin Kennedy
Pastor

25-1701 Eva St
Hattiesburg
Mississippi
Sale of Peace Christian 29401
September 18, 1969

To The Commanding Officer
U. S. Navy Construction Battalion
Dear Sir:

May I take this opportunity to express to you and through you to your men, who so courageously and selflessly, came to the help and rescue of me and helpless people like me, on that never-to-be-forgotten night of August 17-18, 1969. I was taken from certain death, together with my sister after I had abandoned all hope. These fine boys and men pulled her and I to safety aboard one of your amphibious craft. It was too dark for us to recognize them again, but today and forever we know we owe our lives to them. After depositing us to a place of safety, they were off again on their errand of mercy to rescue others and so on far into the night. May I say "Thank you Sir" for an errand of mercy and a job well done. May God bless you all. Very faithfully,
Alexander H. Graig

Naval Construction Battalion Center
33rd Avenue
Gulfport, Mississippi

Att: Captain R. Hill

Dear Sir:

After a catastrophe, such as the one we have just experienced, the job of "cleaning-up - Putting to rights" - re-arranging our lives - our futures, takes over. For some of us it was a short-lived experience - for others it will be a long, drawn-out painful experience, taking one step at a time like a child learning to rely on his own ability to pick up his feet and walk!

Now that things have quieted down to a nice, steady pace of rehabilitation one has the opportunity to take a serious, long look back and contemplate the situation.

Despite the ruin - the devastation we see all around us - out of it emerges one outstanding picture in our mind's eye - the thoughtful, energetic men of "A-co" 128th MCB.

I, for one, shall never forget them - their courtesy, their humor, their untiring efforts but, more than that - their sincere desire to WANT to help us and the community.

It was my pleasure to have the opportunity to talk with Chief Sworford to request the aid of "A-Co." in clearing Mother's property here on Pine Street. Mother is 82 yrs young, a widow, living on a pension - hardly in a position to lift huge trees - up-root tree stumps and clear two and a half acres or to be able to pay the ridiculous prices some were asking for this service.

The very next day after my call for help, A-Co 128th MCB arrived and for two days those boys worked as I have never seen young men work before. That they accomplished was absolutely unbelievable! I still find it difficult to believe - despite the fact that I witnessed it. Never was there a complaint - nothing seemed too great a task to accomplish. I am not too certain of the gentlemen's name but - I believe it was Mr. Lostogor. However, under his competent direction the job was completed with absolute ease - truly, he is to be complimented!

The "A-Co" - 128th MCB has gone and I shall never even know the boy's names but - I assure you - they may have carried off the damaged trees and roots but they also took with them our deepest respect and sincere thanks.

Words just cannot express the gratitude my family and I feel for the service they rendered. We still have a long way to go but, like that child, taking it's first step - A-Co 128th MCB gave us the encouragement, by means of their unselfish concern and physical help, to look ahead - to pick up our feet and START WALKING! We'll make it fine!

Too often, being the humans we are - imperfect - we fail to acknowledge our gratitude - May that not be so in our case! WE ARE TRULY GRATEFUL! Thank you most sincerely,

Very truly yours,

Marjorie E. Blund
Marjorie E. Blund

MISSISSIPPI STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT JACKSON

39205

WHEREAS, on Sunday, August 17, 1969, Hurricane Camille caused tremendous devastation on the Mississippi Gulf Coast; and

WHEREAS, the hurricane rendered roads and bridges impassable, thousands of residents without homes and other necessities of life; and

WHEREAS, it became imperative for the Mississippi Highway Department to move a task force of approximately 350 men to the Gulf Coast to reopen roads for traffic; and

WHEREAS, the Highway Department contacted the Naval Seabee Base at Gulfport and solicited assistance in providing housing, food and necessary essentials for the Highway Department employees;

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the Mississippi State Highway Commission, on behalf of all the employees of the Highway Department commend and express appreciation for the excellent cooperation extended by the Seabees, and pay special gratitude to Commander Shanley and his Staff.

Herschel G. Jumper
Herschel G. Jumper
Chairman

Sam W. Waggoner
Sam W. Waggoner

W. H. Pyron
W. H. Pyron

WELL DONE! SEABEES

The Commander of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Rear Admiral Walter M. Enger, sent the following message to the Gulfport Seabee Center, Sept. 4, from his Washington, D. C. office:

"The unparalleled devastation incurred in the wake of hurricane Camille was felt in varying degrees by all military and civilian personnel of action addressee commands ranging from temporary displacement to loss of home and loved ones. In spite of these most trying conditions exemplary manner in which all hands turned to in recovery operations on the base complex and in the civilian community goes far beyond any reasonable expectations. A heartfelt well done."

Other action addressee's on the message were: 20th NCR; MCB-74; MCB-121; MCB-128; CTU; MCRTC; NRTC; Info, CMC; COMEIGHT; CNABTRA; COMBCBLANT and the MCR-TC to pass to the 4th AMTRAC BN.

CAMILLE CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

mains - water that was soon to be a precious commodity.

Following a Seabee road clearing crew Capt. Hill set out for Harrison County Civil Defense headquarters. Destruction was beyond immediate belief. He arrived at 7 a.m., and offered assistance. The most immediate need was to restore vital community services. The Center earlier had hooked up generators to meet power needs at critical locations and had installed generators at a few off-station places.

As damage assessments were made in the civilian areas, requests for power units flooded into the Center. Seabees and civilian employees installed 46 generators at hospitals in Gulfport and Biloxi, at Civil Defense headquarters, radio stations, sewage lift stations and water wells in Long Beach and Pass Christian, a meat packing plant, funeral homes and the county jail. Residents were invited to use the Center's water supply if they could get to the station. As Seabees cleared a lane of traffic, mobile water tanks left the station to take water to the community.

Gulfport, largest of the three areas most severely damaged, was best prepared to help itself. About 100 Seabees from MCB-74, whose deployment to Vietnam was delayed, were sent there to begin clearing and opening streets for essential vehicles. Pass Christian, about nine miles west of the

station, was hardest hit. MCB-121 went there. This community had taken the full force of the storm before and after the eye passed.

The few men from MCB-128 who had arrived just before the storm went to Long Beach.

As Seabee rigs moved through the area they faced a task which appeared unending. Destruction sometimes appeared to be spotty. Just when they seemed to reach the end of it, they would come to an intersection to see another wall of trees, building debris and tangled wires.

Seabee disaster recovery teams in Pass Christian reported almost total destruction in the lower areas. Mississippi Governor John Bell Williams directed Capt. Hill to "take over in Pass Christian. Evacuate everyone who wants to leave and make a massive search and recovery sweep as far inland as necessary."

More than 1700 Seabees began a house-by-house search and recovery swing which began at the beach and moved inland. Buses and helicopters from Naval Air Stations at Pensacola and New Orleans picked up 780 refugees the first day and took them to the Center where their first hot meals in three days, a medical examinations, and blissful rest awaited them. The task of registering each refugee was big in itself. Two groups of 300 each were located the second day and evacuated through the Seabee Center to relief centers in Jackson, Miss.

The major Seabee efforts were

confined to the area from West Gulfport to the Bay St. Louis bridge. Smaller groups of Seabees worked in Ocean Springs and in Biloxi.

The first task was to open a lane through debris covered streets so that areas could be entered. Live power lines had to be disconnected, broken water and gas mains cut off and a search made for people. Navy corpsmen and doctors followed Seabee recovery crews. Civilian employees followed with generators to power sewage lift stations.

Homeless Seabee families and those of Center employees lived in warehouses, gymnasiums, and other structures. State highway department and private power company workers were billeted and fed at the Center. An Army Engineering battalion was provided a two-acre bivouac site. A building was provided to house Red Cross disaster headquarters.

As commercial power was restored in the devastated areas and water wells returned to service, Navy medical teams deployed to check on water purity and to work with public health officials to prevent an outbreak of disease.

Repair of hurricane damage is well on the way on the Center and all along the Gulf Coast. Replacement of demolished homes and businesses will take longer. Optimism is the order of the day as hope for a brighter community shines as brightly as a Fourth of July sun on the golden Gulf Coast.

THE NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION

This award, established by the Secretary of the Navy on December 18, 1944, with the approval of the President, is conferred on any ship, aircraft, detachment, or other unit in the naval service of the United States which, subsequent to December 6, 1941, shall have distinguished itself by outstanding heroism in action against the enemy. It is also awarded to any unit which distinguished itself by extremely meritorious service not involving combat but in support of military operations, and of such nature as to render the unit outstanding compared to similar units rendering similar service. The service rendered must be comparable to that which would merit the award of a Silver Star Medal or Legion of Merit to an individual.

The NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION RIBBON has a broad winter-green stripe in the center, flanked on either side by a narrow red stripe, a yellow stripe, and, at the edge, a blue stripe. All personnel attached to a unit and actually present and serving therein during the service or occasion for which that unit is commended are authorized to wear the ribbon permanently; a bronze star is worn on the ribbon for each additional such commendation.



BRAWNY BODIES



Navy Seabee Disaster Recovery Teams had the grim task of searching for victims.

LET'S FLY 'OLD GLORY'

THE SEABEE CENTER COURIER is published bi-weekly on Friday by the Public Affairs Office at the Naval Construction Battalion Center, Gulfport, Mississippi. It is printed commercially with appropriated funds in compliance with NAVEXOS P-35 (Rev. July 1958). Any material, including that credited to the American Forces Press Service (AFPS) and Navy News, may be reprinted without special permission.

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CAPT. JAMES M. HILL, JR., CEC, USN
Commanding Officer
CMDR. JOHN J. SHANLEY, JR., CEC, USN
Executive Officer
HAROLD K. BRAUN
Public Affairs Officer
MARCO J. BILLANTE, PHC, USN
Leading Photographer
CAROLYN N. LANGHOLZ, JO1, USN
Editor



BIG MACHINES GET THE JOB DONE.

*Let's Rebuild For A
Greater Gulf Coast!*