

Issue No. 8
Page 1
31 Dec. 1943

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, HIGH NAVAL OFFICIALS AND NATION'S
PRESS CONGRATULATE SEABEES ON SECOND ANNIVERSARY.

President Roosevelt, Secretary Knox, high naval officials and the nation's press joined to commemorate the second anniversary of the formation of the first Naval Construction regiment, December 28, by lauding the outstanding achievements and ingenuity of the Seabees.

Following are the full texts of several congratulatory messages:

President Roosevelt: "I have followed with personal interest and admiration your record of achievements at home and on all our fighting fronts, since the time of your inception two years ago.

"Your war effort is outstanding because you accomplish three great purposes which enable our fighting forces to carry on the offensive. You build, you fight, and you repair. You are prepared to repeat the operation whenever necessary -- you go forward together.

"I congratulate you and wish you good luck and God speed."

Secretary of the Navy, Frank Knox: "Although it is but a brief two years since the first Naval Construction Battalion was hastily organized and sent overseas to build vital advance bases, your branch of the service has won for itself a permanent place in the glorious traditions of our Navy. From the beginning, you have undertaken your construction jobs with such enthusiasm and disregard for obstacles that you have earned the reputation of the "Can Do" boys with our other men in uniform.

"Every major amphibious operation of the Navy has found Seabees among the first to land. Almost every airfield, supply depot or other installation the Navy has built since Pearl Harbor has been a Seabee record for speed and ingenuity. And in bitter battles like Guadalcanal or Tarawa, you have shed your blood to earn a share of victory.

"Your second anniversary finds you keeping pace with the stepped-up offensive in all theaters of war. The shore installations you construct, daily consolidate the gains made by our combat forces. You have shown magnificently what you can do.

"The Navy is proud of you. The Navy looks with eagerness to your future accomplishments, certain that your brilliant past is only the forerunner of a glorious future."

(Over)

Admiral Ernest J. King, U.S.N., Commander in Chief of the United States Fleet and Chief of Naval Operations: "As Commander in Chief of the United States Fleet, I send greetings to the men of the Navy's Construction Battalions on this second anniversary.

"Your ingenuity and fortitude have become a legend in the Naval Service. With both tools and tommy-guns you have rendered vital aid on every assignment you have been given. Today, you may look with pride at the bases and airfields which you have helped to build throughout the world. Your achievements have aided in providing the Navy with strategic striking points for every major battle in the war to date. Despite the hazards of thick jungle, arctic storms or enemy assault you have carried on, constantly supporting our attacking force.

"In sending these greetings, therefore, I also send congratulations for a job "well done". At whatever distant outpost you may be currently established, you are hard at work building new stepping stones to victory."

Lieutenant General Thomas Holcomb, U.S.M.C., Commandant of the United States Marine Corps: "During the past two years the Seabees and the Marine Corps have developed a flourishing partnership devoted to the construction of a road straight into the heart of Japan.

"Our Marines returning from the fronts have had nothing but praise for the work of our Navy's rugged fighter-builders. Wherever Marines have gone they have seen their Seabee comrades performing miracles of construction and repair, often under heavy fire.

"On Guadalcanal, and on the hard, battle-pocked atoll of Tarawa the Seabees rebuilt in a few short hours air strips of critical importance to Allied fighting planes, and with scores of similar accomplishments they already have established a tradition that would do full credit to an organization having many more years of service.

"It is a pleasure to extend the Marine Corps' congratulations to the Seabees on this anniversary. We are confident our joint construction project will move on apace."

Rear Admiral Ben Moreell, U.S.N., Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks: "TO SEABEES EVERYWHERE:

"On this second anniversary of the authorization of the first Regiment of Seabees I send you greetings.

"From a small beginning we have grown to a mighty force which has made its efforts felt in all active theatres of war. With deepest humility but with complete confidence in our ability to discharge our assigned tasks, we look forward to increased opportunities and greater responsibilities.

"We take pride in the privilege which has been conferred upon us of serving and supporting our striking forces and of participating with them in active combat when the need arises and the opportunity affords.

"Ours is a story of devotion and determination to achieve. Let us always remember that, when the Commander in Chief directs, there is only one answer, "Can Do"."

TAKE IT FROM A MAN WHO KNOWS, MATES

Here's part of a letter Charles J. Heim, CM2c, on "Island X" with the 1st Battalion, has sent to a friend in the States:

"Dear Elmo: Heard you had joined the CB's. Don't get discouraged regardless of what happens. It isn't until you get overseas that you begin to realize you are in a wonderful organization. Here you can compare your organization against any other outfit in the field. And, Elmo, the CB's are regarded as the best organization in the field by everyone out here.... At the end of your assignment overseas, you will look back over your outfit's work and be proud of it, and be proud of being a Seabee when the comments and praise comes in from all sides. Mark my word and see if it isn't true."

SEABEES DEVISE STEAM STERILIZER

To eliminate the confusion caused by long lines of Seabees filing past the outdoor scullery to wash mess gear and handicapped by a shortage of help, Seabees of the 44th Battalion designed a sheet metal steam cabinet, capable of sterilizing trays, cups and silver for 1000 men.

The cabinet, approximately 30" x 6' x 6' is just large enough to accommodate a bread rack mounted on wheels, which runs on two light U-shaped tracks extending the length of the cabinet, and six inches beyond the door to permit easy handling of the rack. Live steam is fed into the cabinet through one-half inch pipe, perforated every three inches, which extends along the top, bottom and the end opposite the door. All mess gear is washed and rinsed in tubs before being placed in the rack.

FORMER SEABEE RETURNS TO SEABEE CAMP TO WED.

In what one observer described as a "good example of Army and Navy collaboration", Lieut. (jg) Ralph Carson, USNR, a former Seabee, married 2nd Lieut. Maida Berger, a U. S. Army nurse, in an impressive ceremony before a group of silent dungaree-clad Seabees at a Seabee camp in Africa.

Twelve Seabees, wearing their "dress-blues", acted as Guard of Honor, and stood with fixed bayonets as the khaki-clad bride and her blue-attired groom made their way across the sand into the Seabee-built chapel.

The newly-wedded couple, leaving on a 7 day honeymoon, expressed hope that they would be stationed near one another for a while anyway.

Issue No. 8
Page 4
31 Dec. 1943

JOHNSON? HERE WE ARE, SIR.

"A Johnson for every need," might well be the slogan of the 96th. The battalion reports eleven men with the popular surname.

YUH OUGHTA SEE THE ONE, ETC.

Seabees of the 9th Special Battalion have come up with one of the best "Fish" stories of the season. According to Gang #31, busily engaged in loading dunnage aboard a barge, the hook returned from one of its trips overside with a 30 inch, 12 pound marlin. A rumor, probably started by some envious Seabee, claims the fish leaped into the barge.

Issue No. 8
Page 4
31 Dec. 1943

SEABEES JOIN "ISLAND X" AMERICAN LEGION POST

Enough veterans of World War I were in the 59th Battalion to re-inforce an American Legion Post on Island "X", Seabee Chief Herbert E. Rawson decided. Launching a one-man recruiting campaign, he soon had fourteen new Seabee members for the Post.

Meetings were held and wives of local Legionnaires sponsored several seashore parties and dances. In recognition of his efforts, Rawson recently was elected as the Post's Second Vice Commander.

OIL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

A scarcity of coal suitable for forge work and an abundance of fuel oil made an oil burning forge very desirable to the machinists of the 44th Construction Battalion.

Working exclusively with scrap material, with the exception of fire-brick, the Seabees devised a forge that will develop sufficient heat to melt cast iron. It can be used as a foundry furnace for small castings as well.

WHEN GOOD FELLOWS GET TOGETHER

"The Dragline", the 22nd's smart-stepping new paper, puts in a good word for the Army Engineers. Says the Editor, "Throughout all of our enlistment served to date we have at various times worked side by side with the Engineers. It has been a pleasure. We have learned from them; they have learned from us. In any job in which we combined efforts, we found their cooperation to be of the best."

SEES TARAWA NEWSREEL: RECOGNIZES SEABEE HUSBAND

"I couldn't have received a finer Christmas present," said Mrs. Mary Boswell of Columbia Heights, Maryland, after she recognized her husband in a newsreel shot of Tarawa, photographed just after the battle for the Gilberts had been won.

Mrs. Boswell had no idea of where her husband, Chief Petty Officer Theodore Boswell, was serving until she went to the movies during Christmas week, and saw the newsreel showing the Seabee safe on the Gilbert atoll.

The film footage in which her husband appeared was presented to Mrs. Boswell by the manager of the theatre.

216

Issue No. 8
Page 5
31 Dec. 1943

BOUGAINVILLE BUILDERS LEAVE FRONT LINES IN REAR

Landing under fire at Empress Augusta Bay, Bougainville, Seabees first joined with Marines in defending the beaches against counter-attack, then got busy on construction of military roads feeding front lines. The fighting builders ran one of their roads 700 yards in advance of the Marines' front lines before the Leathernecks yelled for them to hold up a while.

RABAUl UNDER ATTACK FROM SEABEE FIELD AT BOUGAINVILLE

The new airstrip at Empress Augusta Bay, Bougainville, carved out of the jungle by the Seabees, has put Japanese forces at Rabaul in a desperate position, the United Press reports from Allied Headquarters in the Southwest Pacific.

The Seabees' five-week construction job has cut 70 miles off the flying routes of attacking fighters and bombers, observers report, and the airstrip adds an additional threat to the left flank of Rabaul's defenses, previously open to attack only from Allied bombers operating from bases farther south.

SEABEE OFFICER KILLED IN ACTION WHILE SPEARHEADING ITALIAN INVASION

"He died in action on his Causeways, at the head of his men, an outstanding example of an Engineer and an Officer," said Lt. Comdr. W. A. Burke, Jr., his Officer-in-Charge, of Lieutenant Carl Milford Olson, CEC-V(S), USNR, after Olson had been killed when enemy bombers attacked his platoon during the landing operations on September 10th, the first day of the Salerno Gulf Invasion of Italy.

Lt. Olson, who had also participated in the invasion of Sicily, was Officer-in-Charge of a Seabee Pontoon Causeway Platoon, in the thick of the fighting during both Mediterranean campaigns.

He is credited with having helped to develop and build many of the special attachments and fittings that have made the Seabees' side-carry pontoon causeways so successful in hostile landing operations.

A resolution framed by his brother officers read, in part, "Lieutenant Carl Milford Olson ... was an Officer and a Gentleman. He died a hero's death in defense of his Country and its principles..."

Lieutenant Olson leaves a widow and a fourteen year old son. His home was in St. Paul, Minnesota.

SEABEES ADD "LUXURY TOUCH" TO SOUTH PACIFIC CAMP

Without the loss of a single man-hour to their battalion, Seabees on a South Pacific "Island X" worked evenings and rest days to build one of the most modern camps in the area.

Framework and flooring for their tents came from surplus boards, trimmed off as the mills sawed timber for piling and docks. To provide electric lights, the Seabees built a system of generators from discarded marine motors. The diesel engines that drive the generators are cooled by another ingenious device, a water-filled pontoon barge, with a home-made air-circulating system built on top.

Under the supervision of Chief J. E. Jackson, the Seabees also built a complete ice plant and water cooling system from scrap metals. An old jeep engine was overhauled and used to drive the compressor. Pipes and coils came from insulating pipes for radios picked up at scrap dumps near the island's air field. The moulds, which hold twenty-five pound blocks, were made up in the battalion's own shop from tin cans discarded by the galley.

The plant turns out more than 2,000 lbs. of ice daily. About 500 lbs. are used by the battalion; the surplus goes to nearby hospitals and the mess halls and camp sites of other units.

A large wooden tank containing a refrigerating unit keeps drinking water ice cold. Servicemen from all over the island stand patiently in line at the Seabee Mecca to fill their canteens. Over a thousand gallons of ice water are drained daily through two small faucets.

ESPIRITO SANTO BASEBALL FIELD DEDICATED TO SEABEE

Russo Field, new baseball diamond on Espirito Santo has been built by members of a Seabee Special Battalion in memory of their shipmate, Stanley I. Russo of Oakland, California, who lost his life in the line of duty.

Three acres of thick forest were leveled to clear space for Seabee Russo's "monument".

SEABEE NEWSPAPER CHAIN LINKS MANY ISLAND X'S

Seabees' publishing activities now account for well over fifty papers, not including NCTC and ABD weeklies.

These newspapers are being published by battalions, detachments and maintenance units from the Aleutians, where the ink freezes, to the muggy islands of the South Pacific, where it doesn't dry.

Professional newspaper men are few and far between in the Seabees and modern printing machinery on "Island X" is usually most conspicuous by its absence, but the Seabee papers continue to grow and improve.

Among the unusual names selected are: "Mud and Thunder", (40th Battalion); "The Deep Breath", (69th Battalion); "The Trail-Blazer", (96th Battalion); "The Stevezette", (10th Special Battalion); "The Island X-Press", (88th Battalion); "The Coral Sea Bee", (84th Battalion); "Bolts and Bullets", (101st Battalion); "Fender Bender", (Detachment 1007).

CROSS-ROADS

Take the word of a Seabee battalion which stopped there recently en route to "Island X" -- Noumea, New Caledonia, is the cross-roads of the Pacific.

Seabee Joseph C. Chvosta, Slc, ran into his brother, an Army Tank Corps staff sergeant. Ulysses S. McCain, GMLc, got the "kick" of his life when he met his 18-year old son, a seaman in the regular Navy. George E. Keiter, Slc, had a reunion with his brother, Ensign Lester R. Keitler. And Norman W. Williams, Y2c, had a beer with his old home-town buddy, Seabee George Rosenberg, Y2c attached to the Public Works Office at Noumea.

TON A MINUTE

Swinging into action on "Island X", the 11th Special has scored an unloading average of 42 tons of cargo in 40 minutes, maintained for ship after ship.

Carpenter Otto E. Uhl, stevedoring officer, looking ahead to still better time, says, "It's only the beginning, folks, only the beginning."

TANKS!

While refusing to lay claim to any spectacular daily record for the erection of a single tank, Seabee erection crews of the 52nd Battalion believe they have made a sustained construction average "which is worthy of consideration" in the assembling of twenty 10,000-barrel bolted steel tanks.

Crew days required were 162, an average of about 8 days per tank, including all delays for "Aleutian weather", lack of proper tools, one day off each week for each man in the crew and despite the fact that about two-thirds of the tank material had to be toted a distance of approximately one-half mile.

(7)

NOTHING'S TOO GOOD FOR VELLA LA VELLA SEABEES

Seabees on Vella La Vella, noting that Guadalcanal has gotten into the news with mess halls of mahogany, advise that they use the precious stuff for the heads!

DIVERS PRODUCE

Approximately \$100,000 worth of ammunition has been salvaged by divers of the 84th Battalion. The equipment was recovered from a barge submerged in 40 feet of water.

Issue No. 8
Page 8
31 Dec. 1943

SEE THE WORLD WITH THE SEABEES

Add Naples to the growing list of Seabee ports of call. As the Allies took over, a platoon of the Navy's Fighter-Builders entered the ancient Italian city to help rebuild the harbor and to work with Army Engineers in salvaging operations.

MARINE FLYER RESCUED BY SEABEES

Hauling pilots out of the drink is getting to be routine for Seabees on "Island X". Another flyer, this time a Marine, owes his life to the quick and courageous action of the Fighting Builders. The latest rescue was the work of John Sugerman, CMLc, and Davis B. Sager, MM2c, of the 58th Battalion.

REST CURE?

One afternoon, in the good old days, Chief Petty Officer Russell Gross of the 22nd Battalion wrecked two cars on the world's fastest half mile track at Beville, Kansas. Thrown clear of his machine while traveling at 90 miles per hour, Gross lay in the middle of the track, his own racer careening over him and ending upside down against the guard rail. Still playing to win, he regained his feet, obtained a reserve car, re-entered the race, and ran smack into a second wreck! This time he wound up in the hospital.

"After recuperating," says Gross, "I joined the Seabees...."

SPELLING BEE REPLACES "PRISONER'S SONG"

Brig "clients" in CBMU 516 are few, but one of the latest miscreants returned from his servitude with aspirations of becoming a striker for brig recreation manager.

He based his claim on success of the spelling bee he instituted among the inmates in lieu of other entertainment. It proved so popular it was continued for the duration of his sentence. Identity of the winner must remain a secret, but the word on which he won makes the tale worth recounting.

His last opponent misspelled "incarceration".

Issue No. 8
Page 9
31 Dec. 1943

SEABEES HONOR MEMORY OF COMMANDANT

Seabees of the 29th Battalion who constructed a recreational project almost entirely of salvaged materials, paid tribute to the memory of the late Commodore James A. Logan, USN, commandant of a Naval Operating Base, by naming its recreation hall in his honor.

"IT'S A JAEGLER PRODUCT"

"It's a Jaegler Product" has become a by-word around the 40th Battalion camp, according to their publication "Mud and Thunder".

Whenever something is needed and nothing to make it with, the ingenuity of Anton Jaegler, CSF, is called upon.

Among his creations, practically all of which were made from wrecked equipment from the salvage dump are:

A 23" drill press, made from an automobile transmission, 8" channel iron and two bomb-bay screws from a B-17.

A five foot metal brake constructed from 8" channel and a grader blade.

A three foot pipe roll made from 8" channel and 2" shafting, with gears from a discarded marine engine water pump.

A bolt threader constructed from an automobile transmission and a pipe vice.

A thirty-ton hydraulic press built with 8" channel and a thirty ton hydraulic jack.

And a lawn mower, complete with 2 H.P. motor and a complete set of tires.

Issue No. 8
Page 10
31 Dec. 1943

SEABEES AWARDED NAVY AND MARINE CORPS MEDALS

Two Seabees, William C. Hartgrove, CM3c and Robert H. Folstadt, MMLc of the 46th Battalion have been awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal by Rear Admiral John F. Shafroth, USN, Deputy Commander of the South Pacific Area and South Pacific Force, for their heroism following a dive-bombing raid by Japanese aircraft at an advanced base.

Even while enemy planes were still in sight, the two Seabees plunged into the sea and swam from the beach to a burning landing craft to rescue a badly wounded man clinging to a rope from its side.

Upon returning to the beach, Hartgrove and Folstadt commandeered a lighter which was rigged with a fire pump and returned to the blazing barge. While Folstadt manned the pumps, Hartgrove made his way forward through the flames to jettison live ammunition from the turrets and also assist in the transfer of two badly injured men from the landing craft to a small boat.

The temporary citation which accompanied the Medals paid tribute to the Seabees "courageous initiative" which was maintained with utter disregard for their personal safety and was in keeping with the "highest traditions of the United States Naval Service".

TWO SEABEES COMMENDED FOR "MERITORIOUS DEVOTION TO DUTY"

Two Seabees who left the comparative safety of their foxholes during an enemy air raid at a Solomon Island base in February, 1943, to assist in the organization and direction of a fire-fighting party, have earned the commendation of Admiral William F. Halsey, USN, Commander South Pacific Area and South Pacific Force, for their "meritorious devotion to duty".

When a direct bomb-hit on a galley caused it to burst into flames, illuminating the entire camp area, CCM Howard W. Swan and CCM James D. Eaton, disregarding the enemy planes which continued to press home their attack, dashed across the open field to organize the detail that extinguished the flames.

Admiral Halsey's commendation noted that the Seabees "courageous conduct" averted the probabilities of a second attack with greater damage to life and property.

SEABEE MACHINISTS RECLAIM "VEHICULAR CADAVERS".

Given a reasonable nucleus with which to begin the work, the self-styled "Seabee Reclamation Agency and Auto Graverobbers" of CBMU 516 believe they could put even Berlin's battered transportation system back in operation.

Latest achievement of the machinists is the rebuilding of three pickup trucks, two dump trucks and a station wagon worn out by months of construction work and discarded as useless on "Survey Hill".

The "vehicular cadavers", in various stages of decay ranging to a mere four wheels, a frame and hull of a motor, are back in top working condition and answering an acute hauling and transportation problem. Officers estimate the value of the rebuilt equipment at more than \$10,000.

The rebuilding was in charge of Palmer Starr, MM1c, who used new parts when they were obtainable; salvaged parts from other wrecks when needed.

SEABEE RESCUES DROWNING MAN

For his outstanding heroism in saving the life of a man who had fallen into the harbor at Arzew, Algeria, Seabee Elmer C. Wolf, Slt, has been awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal by President Roosevelt.

The citation, which accompanied the Medal, read, in part;

"Observing that the helpless man faced imminent peril of drowning or of being crushed between the buoy and the barge, Wolf with cool courage and complete disregard for his own personal safety, unhesitatingly dived into the water and swam to his rescue. Despite his own exposure to danger in the rough stretch of sea between the buoy and the barge, he calmly passed a line about the body of the man and succeeded in getting him safely back to shore without injury. His gallant initiative in saving the life of another at great risk to himself was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

"THE FREEZE IS ON," SAY SEABEES IN THE TROPICS

When the men of the 3rd Special discovered that ice cream would be forthcoming if they could produce a freezer, they got busy.

One man chiseled off the head of a big oil drum. Another found a smaller drum, fitting it into the large one with just enough clearance for brine.

Discarded brass tubing was transformed into a cooling coil and brazed to an old steel shaft. Other parts were made of stuff that, at home, the most disreputable junk man would sneer at. Even after the machine had been assembled, and a metalsmith had polished and tin plated the whole thing, it still looked like one of Rube Goldberg's weirder creations.

But, as usual, the Seabees knew what they were doing. Ten gallons of experimental ice cream mix were poured into the device and the juice turned on. That night the Fighting Builders had all the ice cream they could eat.

Honey -

"Sure awful while it lasted"

FOUR SEABEES KILLED: FIVE MISSING, 78 INJURED IN AMMUNITION EXPLOSION

Four Seabees were killed, five were listed as missing and four officers and 74 enlisted men were injured when an ammunition dump exploded near a dock where the members of the Second Special Battalion were loading cargo.

Most of the casualties involved were operators of the dock equipment and those aboard ships in the immediate vicinity.

Issue No. 8
Page 12
31 Dec. 1943

SEABEE DETACHMENT ADDS TO SEABEE REPUTATION

Newly arrived at a Southwest Pacific base, Seabees of the 1007th Detachment already have added to the Seabee reputation for mechanical ability and cooperation in that area.

Although the bulk of their work has been the maintenance and repair of trucks and heavy construction equipment, the 1007th also has been responsible for the speedy return to action of vitally needed PT boats and amphibious craft.

Even before their own shops had been erected the Seabee mechanics were busy assisting the men of the PT base in overhauling and rebuilding marine motors. Eighteen crankshafts, normally returned to the United States for repairs, were reground in the partially completed Seabee machine shop -- six for PT boats urgently needed in operations.

Bilge pumps for seventeen idle amphibious trucks, used to transport troops from ship to shore, were rebuilt with parts manufactured in the Seabee shop.

Largely through the efforts of welders and electricians of the 1007th, the Ship Repair Unit faced with a rush order to repair an LST badly damaged in action, was able to place the vessel back in service ahead of schedule.

SEABEES TRUE PIONEERS SAYS BOLGER

Ray Bolger, famous satirical dancer, recently returned from a 27,000 air-mile USO-Camp Show tour of the Pacific war theatre, relating his experiences at a press conference, loudly praised the work of various branches of the armed service - "one group in particular--the Seabees".

"To me they (the Seabees) represent the pioneer spirit of this country," Bolger said. "They go in with the invasion troops and dig in, building machine shops, welding shops, etc., underground. They built an airstrip in thirteen days at one time, under bombing, working twenty-four hours a day. When a raid occurred they put out the spotlight and went under cover. All clear and they were back out again. They can unload ships about five times as fast as a human being is supposed to do, it seems to me."

Bolger, who was accompanied by Little Jack Little on the tour, was attired in a baggy camouflage suit, dappled in green and brown and wore a Japanese aviator's helmet and, at the request of the photographers, placed a Seabee-made hunting knife between his teeth.

ADD 30th HEROES

Two more names have been added to the growing list of 30th Battalion Seabees who have disregarded their own personal safety to save the lives of others, according to the camp publication, "Caribbean".

When Charles O'Brien, SC2c, was stricken with severe abdominal pains while on a mission with a detachment, William B. Cook, SF1c, unhesitatingly plunged into the tangled jungle undergrowth to fight his way through miles of almost impenetrable jungle and mountain to bring aid. A crash boat was dispatched to the scene and O'Brien was brought to camp for the removal of an acutely inflamed appendix.

Earlier in the month, Louis Rodriguez, Cox, in charge of a steel landing barge, saved two of his comrades from drowning in the same day.

The barge, moored offshore and badly battered by heavy seas, needed the attention of its crew. Rodriguez and a mate started to swim out to the vessel. Halfway out, his mate's strength failed against the strong surf and tide, although he was an expert swimmer. Rodriguez sensed this and got him safely back to shore.

Later that day, Rodriguez and part of his crew boarded the craft to make repairs. Two men from a liberty boat which had pulled alongside decided to swim to shore--with the same result for one of them. Again Rodriguez plunged into the sea to effect the rescue and bring the would-be swimmer safely in.

SANTA CLAUS IS GOING TO TOWN

Santa Claus adopted the "Can Do" spirit of the Seabees this year in Yuletide greetings carried on the front page of the Christmas issue of the 96th Battalion's "Trailblazer".

According to L. H. Gee, the artist who dreamed up the idea, Santa has abandoned his sleigh and reindeer for a sturdier and more modern contraption. Because of the vast territory he has to cover to visit all the service men, Santa has equipped a bulldozer with wings and a propellor.

"What Santa can't climb over or push over, he can fly over,"

"What Santa can't climb over or push over, he can fly over,"

says Gee.

SEABEE RIFLE CHAMP CHALKS UP PERFECT SCORE.

Ken Shover of the 22nd Battalion, a former member of the Akron, Ohio, national Championship rifle squad, stopped traffic on the battalion's firing range when he scored a neat possible 50. Shover put all ten shots dead center on the bull's eye.

"NAVY HONORED TO HAVE YOU," SAYS TUNNEY OF SEABEES

"Without the Seabees, the progress of the Pacific campaign would be at a standstill," vouched Commander Gene Tunney, former heavyweight boxing champion, speaking before a mixed group of Australians, regular Navy men, and Fighting Builders, on a South Pacific "Island-X".

Tunney said that he had travelled all over the Pacific area and found the Seabees on the job everywhere. "The Navy should be honored to have you as part of its branch of the service," he concluded.

BIG THINGS -- SMALL SHOP

A portable machine shop, measuring only six feet in width, twelve feet in length, and six feet in height, is being used by the 120th Battalion to turn out everything from small bushings to boom shafts for Caterpillar cranes.

Operated by Samuel P. Todd, MM1c, a machinist in civilian life for 28 years, and Donald Gillespie, MM2c, a "green hand" with only 15 years of civilian experience, the shop has also produced machine gun mounts, thousands of anchor bolts for Quonset hut erection, and even spigots for beer dispensers for the Seabees.

SEABEE SANTAS CHEER NORTH AFRICAN TOTS

French youngsters in Oran, North Africa, are happier today because enlisted men of a Seabee battalion stationed at the port remembered the spirit of Christmas. Far from their own homes, and many thinking of children of their own, the Seabees used their evenings and spare moments to set up a Toy Work Shop. They turned out hundreds of Mickey Mouse dolls, Donald Ducks, Porky Pigs, and other favorites for free distribution by the Navy to needy children in the area.

SHORT SPORT SHOTS

Chicago Bears won National Football League championship by hammering out 41-21 victory over Washington Redskins..Sid Luckman had one of his most brilliant days..set new play-off mark by tossing passes that accounted for five of Bears touchdowns..Old Bronko Nagurski hit line for Bears' other score..Andy Farkas bucked over for Redskins' first touchdown..Sammy Baugh, injured in early part of game, returned in second half to toss two touchdown-producing aerals..Redskins won right to play Bears for title by whaling New York Giants 28-0 in play-off game necessitated when Giants tied 'Skins in Eastern Division league standings by scoring 31-7 victory over Redskins week previously..Winning Bears received \$1,135.81 each and Redskins collected \$745.60 apiece..Sammy Angott, NBA lightweight champ won decision over Bobby Ruffin, who recently outpointed N.Y. and Penn. champ, Beau Jack..Count Fleet, Mrs. John D. Hertz' three-year old, voted "Horse of Year" in sportwriters and broadcasters poll..Sgt. Joe Louis, scheduled to go overseas to box for service men in all parts of world..Basketball season now in full swing..Sammy Byrd, former Yankee outfielder, placed second in Miami Golf Open..Montreal continues to lead Pro Hockey League..Joe Gordon, Yankee second baseman, notified club he will not play in 1944..intends to join armed services..Boxing writers voted to give Eddie Neil Memorial Award to 4,019 pro boxers, living and dead, in armed services..of service boxers, 18 have been killed in action, 7 more died in line of duty, 9 are missing and 40 have been wounded..Phil-Pitt Steagles took N.L. rushing title gaining 173 yards a game on average..Frankie Frisch, Stan Musial, Dan Litwhiler, Hank Borowy and Dixie Walker on tour in Aleutians showing World Series film..President Ford Frick of National League asserts baseball will continue as long as teams can field 9 men..Rutgers abandons inter-collegiate sports for duration..Boston Redsox led American League in fielding..Bobby Doerr, Sox second baseman set new league record for consecutive chances handled by a second baseman without an error, accepting 349..Other new American League fielding marks set by Milt Byrnes, rookie St. Louis outfielder with .997 average..Rudy York, Detroit, who handled 149 assists as first baseman..Lou Boudreau, Cleveland manager, with most double plays handled by shortstop, 122..Luke Appling, White Sox, won American League batting title with .328 average..lowest mark since 1908..Detroit led league in team batting..Rudy York slammed out 34 home runs and batted in 118 runs to lead sluggers..Washington's George Case stole 61 bases for his fifth theft crown..Bobo Newsom, recently traded to Philly, Berkeley Bell, tennis pro, Tommy Bridges, Detroit's veteran pitcher, and Joe Dobson, Red Sox hurler, inducted in Army..Connie Mack, Jr., Clyde McCullough, Cub catcher, Hal White, Tiger pitcher, Slat's Marion, Cardinal shortstop all called..Mort Cooper, Cardinal star hurler, rejected for military service..Ben Chase, Navy right guard, elected Navy 1944 football captain..Patty Berg, golfer, rated leading woman in sports by expert vote for AP.