

FIFTY-EIGHT



FAMILY-GRAM

16 May, 1966
Davisville, Rhode Island

Greetings;

In the five weeks since the last family-gram, nearly one hundred-fifty men have reported to FIFTY-EIGHT. Most of our new arrivals are seasoned petty officers. We welcome their arrival because of the additional experience and leadership ability they bring to help us round out our capabilities as an effective Battalion.

Training continues to be our prime mission during this period of home-port deployment. Our new men are undergoing formal courses of instruction in their construction specialties. Many petty officers are taking advanced courses relating to new equipment of specialized operations such as saw mill, railroad laying and rock crushing. In addition to the technical training we are continuing to send our men, in groups of fifty, through the two week basic military training course here at Davisville.

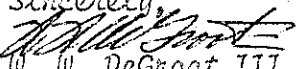
Everyone will attend this two week course before the Battalion goes to Camp LeJeune, North Carolina for four weeks of Battalion military training in September.

One of the most rewarding training projects we have undertaken here at Davisville, is the conversion of a World War II wood frame warehouse into a modern training facility. It will be comprised of twelve well-lighted and sound-proofed classrooms, an auditorium, interview center, offices and uniform issue rooms. This extensive undertaking provides fine on-the-job training for our new men. With the addition of our experienced SeaBee petty officers, they learn to work together as a crew. As many as eighty of our men can be found working there at any one time. By the spectacular progress made to date, our seabees are certainly aspiring to their Battalion motto--"The Great FIFTY-EIGHT".

We recently completed issuing seabee green working uniforms and combat boots to all of our men, which we are now proudly wearing. The greens are similar to those worn by marines and have a fine military appearance, while still being comfortable for work. Because we have adopted greens as the working uniform, a Battalion personnel inspection was held on the morning of April 16 to check how the seabees of MCB-58 are wearing them. It was gratifying to see the pride our men took in their military appearance.

One of the most important events of the past weeks for our younger men was the opening of "Club SeaBee" on April 22. It provides a wide variety of recreational facilities for after hours enjoyment. These include a game lounge, dance area, club area, shuffle board and TV area. I'm sure the men will take full advantage of its facilities.

Spring finally seems to have come to Rhode Island. The trees are beginning to leaf and spring shrubbery is in bloom. Despite our busy training program, which is in full swing right now, our thoughts cannot help but turn to the many summer recreational opportunities available to us here on the shores of Narragansett Bay. All forms of water sports, including sailing, fishing, motor boating, water skiing and swimming are at our doorstep. The Navy's special services have the facilities to provide any boats and equipment we may desire, making it easily available to all of us.

Sincerely,

W. W. DeGroot III
CDR, CEC, USN
Commanding Officer