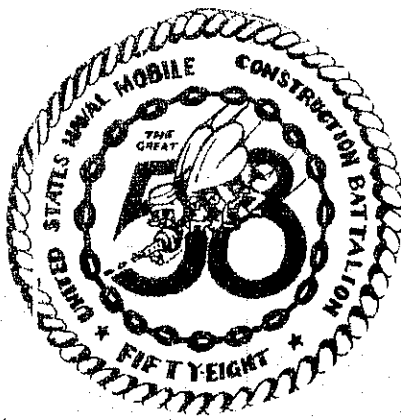


FIFTY-EIGHT



FAMILY-GRAM

19 October, 1966
Davisville, Rhode Island

Greetings:

The excitement of "getting underway", to use a good naval term, is mounting. We have now returned from our military training at Camp Lejeune. The advanced party has departed. Many men have returned from leave and liberty, and all are anxiously awaiting the challenging and hopefully rewarding experiences which lie ahead.

Our deployment for military training at Camp LeJeune is over, and the entire training effort was quite successful. Our final week was spent at the Rifle Range where the Battalion scores were outstanding. Each man in the Battalion fired the M-14 rifle on the Marine "C" course, which consists of firing at silhouette targets from distances of 200, 300, and 500 yards.

The Battalion demonstrated its ability by firing the highest percentage (74.6) of any Seabee Battalion this year. The leader among the rifle shooters was EON3 Harry Payne, who fired a 171 out of a possible 215. Our weapons include the .45 calibre pistol, and those who carry this weapon fired for record. Our Battalion had a 77 per cent qualification. One of our officers, Ensign Larry Lord, fired the highest score with a 355 out of a possible 400.

Our entire training at Camp LeJeune turned out to be extremely successful, and the results were most gratifying to me.

Now we are back in Davisville for our final preparations. Early this month our advance party departed on two C-141 jet transports. This group of about 110 was comprised of men from each company in the Battalion. Their job is to prepare for our smooth and efficient move into camp and plan, as much as possible, the project work the rest of the Battalion will do when they arrive.

During these last weeks many of our people have been taking as much of their well deserved leave and liberty as can be allowed. They all returned to Davisville the first of this week so that we can make the last minute preparations that are required.

We are now approaching the climax of our training and hard work of the last month. The Seabees of the Great FIFTY-EIGHT are highly talented and skilled, and as a result we are truly a capable Battalion. I know our endeavors will be successful as we embark on our deployment.

As mentioned before, the "Family-Grams" will continue after we get settled at our deployment site. I will keep you up to date with our activities, and by all means, write your Sea-bee often and keep him up to date with yours.

Sincerely,

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

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