

## RADM Frank Allston Receives Lifetime Achievement Award from Navy Supply Corps

**N**aperville, IL – Retired Reserve Rear Admiral Frank J. Allston, SC, USN, and NRA Life Member, was presented the Navy Supply Corps Lifetime Achievement Award in a ceremony on 19 October at the Navy Supply Corps School (NSCS) in Athens, GA. Author of *Ready for Sea, the definitive history of the Navy Supply Corps*, RADM Allston has contributed significantly to the Corps' mission through more than 34 years of active and reserve duty and 51 years of service in the civilian sector.

Lifetime Achievement Award recipients must have made contributions to the Supply Corps, not only during their service years, but also following their retirement. These contributions must have had a lasting impact on a wide cross-section of the Corps over a sustained period of time.

One of RADM Allston's many contributions to the Supply Corps since his retirement was the researching and writing of *Ready for Sea*. In 1994, he established the Oral History Section of the Navy Supply Corps Museum to preserve the more than 100 *Ready for Sea* interview tapes he used in his research. He continues to interview Chiefs of Supply Corps and other admirals who retired after 1995 to add to the oral histories. He also continues to contribute articles to the *Navy Supply Corps Newsletter*, highlighting the role of logistics and the Supply Corps in critical American history events as well as stories of memorable Supply Corps officers.

When making the presentation, RADM Daniel H. Stone,



**RADM Frank Allston meets with other Navy officials in the Navy Supply Corps Museum in Athens, GA. Standing, (L to R) CAPT Brian Sheppard, Commanding Officer of NSCS; RADM Donald St. Angelo, RADM Frank Allston, RADM Daniel Stone, and RADM Thomas Lilly.**

Commander, Naval Supply Systems Command and Chief of Supply Corps, said, "This award has been established to recognize Supply Corps officers who have given unusual service to the Supply Corps over an extended period of time. It is intended to recognize service that is of a scope and duration to be considered a lifetime achievement. RADM Allston has contributed well beyond what we would expect of one individual not only in his years of active and reserve duty, but also in his volunteer efforts since retiring."

"Throughout my Navy and Navy Reserve career, I have been fortunate to serve in excellent duty assignments. I have attempted to make the most of each opportunity," Allston said. "I continue to proudly serve my country

in retirement, and I am honored to be selected to receive the Supply Corps Lifetime Achievement Award," he added.

RADM Allston, a resident of Naperville, IL, enlisted in the Navy Reserve while attending the University of North Carolina. He graduated from UNC in May 1952 with an A.B. degree in journalism and political science, was commissioned through the Reserve Officer Candidate (ROC) program in August 1952, and graduated from NSCS Bayonne in February 1953. He later earned a M.B.A. through the Executive Program at the Graduate School of Business, the University of Chicago.

Attending the ceremony were RADM Allston's wife, Barbara; his son, Jim, of Palm Harbor, FL; and a number of close friends made during his lifetime serving with the Corps. ♫



## NRA Long Island Chapter Presents Navy Sword

**C**APT John Nash, President of the Long Island Chapter, Naval Reserve Association, presents a Navy sword to Midshipman Matthew Lenzer, United States Merchant Marine Academy. The award is in honor of CAPT Vince DeVito, USNR (Ret), Class of 1951, and is presented every year by the NRA Long Island Chapter to a Midshipman in the graduating class who has demonstrated overall academic achievement; those qualities of leadership, maturity of judgment, and responsibility; and is entering active naval service. Midshipman Lenzer hails from Wellington, OH. ♫

## Reserve Civil Engineer Corps Officers Provide Critical Support to Seabees' Katrina Relief Projects

By CDR Meg Reed

First Naval Construction Division (Forward) Public Affairs Office



(L to R) LCDR Jim Croom, LCDR Bob Eisenberg, LCDR Monte Mechler, and LCDR Gary Phillips in the Seabees' Katrina Relief Combat Operations Center, Construction Battalion Center, Gulfport, MS.

Gulfport, MS. – Reserve Naval Construction Force personnel kept a close watch on approaching Hurricane Katrina knowing their active duty Seabee counterparts in Gulfport, MS, could be affected themselves – either through potential personal loss and/or by inevitable tasking to support recovery efforts. Once Katrina hit the Gulf Coast and the full effect of Katrina was known, Reservists immediately volunteered to help their fellow Seabees, especially once they learned that many Seabees had lost their own homes. Four Reserve Civil Engineer Corps (CEC) Officers were on the ground within a few days, despite hurdles with obtaining orders and travel arrangements due to New Orleans-based systems that had been disabled by the storm.

The day after Katrina passed through the Gulf Region, the 22<sup>nd</sup> Naval Construction Regiment (22 NCR) stood up a command operations center (COC) to coordinate Joint Task Force (JTF) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) – directed Seabee tasking in the surrounding communities. Six Seabee battalions, four specialized Seabee units, and a regiment currently make up the Katrina recovery staffing. As Seabee battalions and units fan out into the communities, the behind-the-scenes planning and coordination that the Reserve officers are conducting is crucial to the success of Navy engineering and construction. The Katrina-affected community areas were divided into an Eastern Zone, a Central Zone, and a Western Zone, and spanned

the counties located between Bayou Labatre, MS, and New Orleans, LA.

Three of the CEC officers have been assigned to the 22 NCR [now the First Naval Construction Division (Forward)] as Area Action Officers. Action officers coordinate the project work for Seabees from battalions and other units in each of the three areas. After establishing personnel accountability and restoring base operations, Seabees moved out into the community to provide expeditionary repairs to homes and buildings, conduct rescue missions, clear major and secondary roadways of debris, and work with local authorities to restore utilities and other services. In other words, the Seabees performed emergency response activities that allowed citizens to get back on their feet until more permanent solutions can be organized through local government and businesses.

LCDR Gary Phillips of Kennesaw, GA, transferring to the 20<sup>th</sup> Seabee Readiness Group (Augment) next month, is responsible for the Eastern Zone. A dedicated Reservist, this is his third period of reserve training this year. Directly after his support to the Katrina effort, he will perform one final active duty period before the start of the new fiscal year. As a C130J aircraft engineer, he is grateful to his employer for understanding his need for service to his fellow Seabees. “Knowing that some Seabees have lost everything and are working to help the rest of the community made me want to be involved, too, in the hopes



that volunteering might alleviate some of the stress they would be going through.”

LCDR Monte Mechler resides in Midlothian, TX, and is a member of the 20<sup>th</sup> Seabee Readiness Group in Gulfport. He is the Central Area Action Officer for Katrina recovery and describes the community relations aspect of his job. “We’re tasked to provide intermediary resources and services to the communities in need. Both the Area Action Officers and Seabees do this by establishing interpersonal relationships with the people. Based on their needs, we task our battalions to perform the work while we ensure that progress continues.” Thus, the Seabees are considered “on-call support,” whose goal is to make sure the community is getting what it needs. According to LCDR Mechler, the counties have expressed gratitude and are extremely respectful to Seabees.

LCDR Bob Eisenberg is from the 7<sup>th</sup> Naval Construction Regiment and hails from Canandaigua, NY. He is the Western Area Action officer, whose area stretches all the way to New Orleans. He is retired from his civilian career, so is able to offer substantial time to his reserve career. He let his leadership know that he was available to volunteer to help his fellow Seabees and remarks on the professionalism of the people he serves with: “It’s important to coordinate efficiently so that the tasking does not overlap. The interface with the battalions has worked very well since everyone is working towards the same end – helping area citizens in need.”

LCDR Jim Croom hails from Wake Forest, NC, and is assigned to the First Naval Construction Division. He had already been performing an annual training there when Katrina occurred and

volunteered his service to the 22NCR. LCDR Croom serves as the Senior Watch Officer and is responsible for the overall flow of information in the COC – continuous coordination with all key personnel, preparing high visibility reports, tracking metrics of units and projects, developing important communication talking points, and ensuring Navy themes are met. He also monitors other reservist participation and facilitates their smooth integration into the active duty units. LCDR Croom served with the Seabees in Iraq and says he is amazed when comparing the diversity and quantity of unit participation there and in the Katrina effort. “Over 2,500 Seabees came together in one week to support Katrina recovery as compared to over 3,000 who flowed into Iraq over a period of months in the early days of Operation Iraqi Freedom.”

All of these officers agree that they are motivated and awed to be working with Civil Engineer Corps officers and Seabees who have lost their homes and whose families are displaced, yet who continue to promote Seabee goodwill throughout the community. At the same time, the 1NCD (Forward) staff is grateful to have them onboard. In the words of CAPT Eric Odderstol, Commodore, 22 NCR, “The expectation I have when looking at my staff is that I should not be able to tell a difference in quality of service and dedication between the active duty and reserve personnel. And that’s what I see.” Chief Staff Officer CDR Fred Broome adds: “Our regimental staff is currently undersized for contingency operations such as this one. We could not have been as successful as we have been in accomplishing our missions without the talented and dedicated reserve augmentees who joined our team.” ⚓