

**NAVY SEABEE VETERANS of AMERICA**  
**Commander's Corner –December 2016**

Greetings all, I am John J. Hillyer III, and I was recently elected National Commander, NSVA, I have been a Life member of Navy Seabee Veterans of America and Island X-11 Tampa since 1982. Other SVA Positions, Commander Island X-11, Tampa; Commander, Dept. of Florida; and NSVA Southeast District Commander.

I have been a Cub Scout, Boy Scout and Explorer Scout and Junior Air Cadet. Played football, ran track and marched in the band at King High School, Tampa, Fl. Graduated June of '62. I enlisted in the Naval Reserve Seabees, RMCB-14 , Jan. 1962 while in high school, after graduation went to Great Lakes for recruit training, was Squad Leader. After that 2 weeks at Davisville, RI., for construction man training. Jan 1963, went on active duty, assigned to MCB-4, March '63, sent to Argentia, Newfoundland on an LSD. Upon returning to CONUS, made CMA3, I was assigned on a SEABEE Technical Assistance Team or "STAT Team" for training. Jan/Feb '64, the battalion went to Camp Lejeune, NC. for 6 wks., 2 wks. on the rifle range, 2wks at ITR, 2 wks. Courthouse Bay for Combat Demolitions Training. Next LST 1178, to Gitmo for 7 months, light equipment shop supervisor, returned to D-ville on an AKA, with the equipment party. Deployed to Rota, Spain, spring of '65, on an MSTs troop ship, worked in the mechanic shop, night shift, returned stateside on another Army troop ship. Another trip to Camp Lejeune, this time as the convoy mechanic, worked on our vehicles for 4 wks, late Oct. '65, I with 7 others were transferred to MCB-6, 1 Nov 65 on an LST to Gitmo, all kinds of military training. Jan. 1966, C -130 to Quonset Point, RI, snow on the ground, released from Active Duty.

Back to Florida, back in the reserves, progressed through the ranks, made Chief in 1974, Senior Chief, 1982, Masterchief 1988, numerous assignments, Platoon Commander, Weapons Platoon Commander, Equipment Officer, Heavy Shop supervisor, Equipment Maintenance Supervisor, Alpha and Charlie Company Chief, on deployment Alpha Company Commander twice, Charlie Company commander once. Was assigned as Command Senior/Master Chief for SELRES at Reserve Center, Tampa, 1987-1992.

Officially Retired as EQCM Sep. 1993. PS, My Navy roots, Grandfather; on the USS Tacoma C-18, Cruiser 1907-1911, Father; joined Seabees 1942, assigned 64th NCB as CM2(Carpenters Mate Second Class, retired as BUC, Brother; Submarines, diesel Boats 1960's. GO Navy- Beat Army

John Hillyer