

# TORPEDO ALLEY



Vol. 5, No. 6

June 2009

## Newsletter of Charleston Base, United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.



### USSVI Creed



*“To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds, and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution”*



Base web site: [www.ussvicb.org](http://www.ussvicb.org)  
National web site: [www.ussvi.org](http://www.ussvi.org)

#### Base Meeting:

June 11, 2009  
Social hour 1800, General Meeting 1900

#### Location:

Fleet Reserve Association Branch 269, Low Country Home  
99 Wisteria Rd.  
Goose Creek, South Carolina. Phone 843-569-2962

Special Officers		Phone Number
Chief of the Boat	Rick Wise	843-875-5559
Public Affairs		
Veterans Affairs	Jim Morrison	843-832-9716
Chaplain	John Nichols	843-873-5897
Membership	Carl Chinn	843-875-3098
Holland Club	Terry Trump	843-873-9563
Scholarship	Jim Yates	843-873-0246
Newsletter	Carl Chinn	843-875-3098
Storekeeper	Ken Fuhr	803-749-6077
Webmaster	John Nichols	843-863-8474

Base Officers		Phone Number
Commander	Paul Viering	843-797-2623
Vice Commander	Carl Chinn	843-875-3098
Secretary	Rick Collins	843-851-3490
Treasurer	Terry Trump	843-873-9563

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## Minutes of the May 2009 meeting

Attendance for the May meeting was 98

**Opening Ceremony:** Base Commander called the meeting to order. A Quorum was present and the meeting was commenced at 1900.

**Introductions:** New people were introduced; John Hill HMCS(SS) Luke Hayes MM2(SS) James Hudgins MSC(SS). Welcome aboard.

**Secretary:** Secretary Rick Collins asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from last month. A motion was made and seconded. Minutes approved.

**Treasurer:** George Lisle gave the treasurer's.

**Storekeeper:** He will swap out the pocket fob patches that have failed.

**Chaplain:** On April 20th, we conducted a bell tolling memorial service and scattering of ashes for Don Nuzum onboard USS YORKTON. USSSVI Charleston Base and SubVets WWII had a very good crew mustered to give Don a Sailor's farewell. The Navy provided a chaplain, soloist, and flag folding detail and mustered several of the young nuc power Sailors. Marvin Miller, Larry Knutson and Jerry Stout performed the scattering of ashes. The entire service was done extremely well and with great dignity.

Cards were sent as follows to:

**William Kopacka** who continues to recover from his March surgery. Bill now has shingles and is in quarantine as he recovers.

**Carol Hix** who is at home completing his recovery from hip replacement in March. Carol is doing OK. He is done with the therapist and is doing home therapy now.

**Jeannie Nuzum and family** of Don Nuzum who departed on Eternal Patrol on April 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Jillian Joyce Curry**, mother of Myles Dunn who departed on Eternal Patrol on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Myles served on the USS VON STEUBEN but was not a member of USSVICB.

**Virgie Chinn**, Carl's mother, wishing her a speedy recovery after some health issues.

**Sharon Allen**, Carl Chinn's sister, wishing her a speedy recovery after some health issues.

**Clyde Peters** after his procedure in Emory. The procedure went very well and Clyde should begin seeing the results soon.

**Bill Roberts** as he recovered from the flu.

**Ben Heber** congratulating him on being declared cancer free by his doctor. Now he needs to gain back his weight.

**Al Addington** who in Roper hospital. He was sick when he returned from the conference in St. Augustine. He has pneumonia and the flu and is currently undergoing tests and the doctors are formulating treatment. He is in

**Vice Commander Report:** No report

**Sub Vets WWII:** Next meeting in June at Ryan's. We want and need your help.

**Scholarship:** We received a thank you card from Rebecca Stout for receiving the Admiral Osborne scholarship. A nice write up was sent to national for publication in "The American Submariner".

**Public Affairs:** No report

**Webmaster:** Website is updated three times a week with any news that we have. We have the menu from "The After Battery", pictures of various functions, V.A news and information, WW@ newsletters, and a store keeper page. Any thing you need.

**Veteran's Affairs:** No report

**District Commander:** 18 Charleston base members went to the combined district meeting in St Augustine, FL. The National Commander was there. The District election is in June. Anyone can run. We are opening a new base in the upstate. The next meeting is in Greenville.

**Holland Club:** We had a presentation to our newest Holland Club inductee; Ralph Comp. Congratulations!

**Membership:** We have 316 members; remember it is never too soon to pay dues

**Little David:** There will be a "Confederate Christmas" celebration at Stono landing. We may have a touch up working party prior to. There are LIL David books for sale to the Sub Vets for \$6.

**Newsletter:** Please let me know if you are not receiving your newsletter.

**Alcohol & Gaming:** He gave a nice tribute to Steve "Budda" Nelms our outgoing base commander who received the heartiest hymn presented to anyone in a while. Also appreciation was given to Wanda Nelms for putting up with us.

George Lisle was saluted for his years of service as our base treasurer.

**Chief of the Boat:**

**Base Commander:** The hog roast is on 3 Oct. The executive voted to not have a picnic this year due to the lateness in the year and how hot it will be. We will try to plan it earlier next year.

**Nuclear Historian:** The tactfulness of a Submarine Chief cannot be understated.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** None

Stan Standrich: Elections were held and the following

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quarantine and cannot have visitors at this time. Al and Barbara are scheduled to go on a 50th anniversary trip next week. Al called me yesterday afternoon and asked that I pass this on to you tonight: *Thank you SUBVETS for the support you've shown to Barbara and me since I've been in the hospital. It has been tremendous. It will be 2 or 3 more days before the doctors make a decision on when I can leave but it appears that I'm out of the woods.*

Recently found out that:

Carl informed me that Bob Chinn was buried at sea on 11 March.

Buck Owens is having no complications from his radiation.

Several people are here who have been sick and are now back with us.

Several follow-ups were made on those who've had surgery or illnesses in the last couple of months along with the base sending additional cards.

If you know of shipmates or spouses from other bases who are having a difficult time, had surgery, etc. and would like for USSVI Charleston Base to send them a card please send their name and address to the Chaplain via email or phone call.

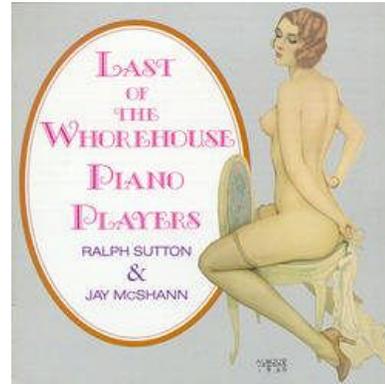
posts were filled:

Base Commander Paul Viering  
 Vice Commander Carl Chinn  
 Secretary Rick Collins  
 Treasurer Terry Trump

The new COB was announced, he is Rick Wise.

**Good Of The Order:** Depth Charge drawing was held with \$286 to winner. The winner was Jim Lewis. He donated \$100 to the scholarship fund.

The Base Commander adjourned meeting at 2000.



*"Don't tell mom I'm a submariner, she thinks I play piano in a whorehouse."*



Becker	Brown, A.	Burton	Grabowski
Hance	Heinle	Jones, W.	Kirtley
Kratz	Loveday	Lowe	McDonald, B.
Morris	Murphy	Rein	Schaffer
Smith, P.M.	Suddeth	Williams, J.	Yates, J.

### June Happenings

June 11 – General Meeting; social hour 1800, meeting starts 1900

June 14 – Flag Day

### Historic Research Sub Returns Home In Pieces

Groton - The last time the research submarine NR-1 returned to Groton, it came up the Thames River with the crew standing on the sail.

On Friday, pieces of NR-1 returned to Groton strapped to a flatbed truck. The crowd that gathered to greet the NR-1 Friday was smaller than in July, when the crew completed its final deployment, but enthusiastic.

"I'm ecstatic," Michael Riegel, executive director of the Submarine Force Library and Museum Association, said

### June Submarines Lost:

USS S 27	SS 132	June 19, 1942
USS R 12	SS 89	June 12, 1943
USS Herring	SS 233	June 1, 1944
USS Gudgeon	SS 211	June 7, 1944
USS Golet	SS 361	June 14, 1944
USS Bonefish	SS 223	June 18, 1945
USS O-9	SS 70	June 19, 1941

Run silent, run deep  
 For freedom we fought to keep  
 How we spent so many days  
 Beneath the shimmering waves  
 A terrible foe we fought  
 And gave our lives; and freedom bought  
 Now our souls forever lie  
 Restlessly beneath the waves  
 So silent now, so deep  
 For it is not enough for you to weep  
 For we shall not have died in vain  
 Lest you forget for what we gave  
 We gave our lives, freedom to save  
 For if you forget our deeds  
 Then we shall never sleep  
 Though we lie so silent, so deep

*Al Alessandra, 2005*

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while watching the unloading with others from the museum and the Historic Ship Nautilus. "But it's kind of sad in a way. This is a statement of finality. Here are the pieces of it, it doesn't exist as a ship anymore."

After a 40-year career, the Groton-based Naval Research Vessel (NR-1), the Navy's only nuclear-powered, deep-diving ocean engineering and research submarine, was taken out of service in November 2008 and sent to Portsmouth Naval Shipyard for fuel removal.

Later this year it will go to Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Washington, where the nuclear reactor will be removed and it will be dismantled. The pieces are usually recycled or buried at a nuclear reservation.

But a group of NR-1 supporters, led by members of the museum association, have been lobbying the Navy to get the submarine back in Groton once the reactor is removed to display it at the U.S. Navy Submarine Force Museum and preserve the unique submarine's history.

Some of NR-1's high-profile missions included retrieving pieces of the space shuttle Challenger when it blew up after launch in 1986 and recovering the engines from Egyptair Flight 990 after it crashed off the coast of New England in 1999.

On its final deployment, the crew helped a local foundation look for the wreck of John Paul Jones' Revolutionary War ship the Bonhomme Richard.

The main part of the sail, another piece of the sail, rudder and propellers arrived in the museum parking lot Friday morning.

Additional shipments of pieces and equipment will follow in the coming weeks, but the Navy has not yet told the museum whether it will get the entire ship, minus the reactor.

"This is a down payment," Riegel said Friday. "We still want the rest of the ship."

Public works employees from the Naval Submarine Base used a forklift to unload the smaller items Friday and a crane to lift the distinctive orange sail and lower it into a fenced-in area of the parking lot.

Museum curator Steve Finnigan said these artifacts will eventually be displayed outside, somewhere on the museum grounds. If the Navy gives the museum the entire ship, or a large section of it, an addition to the museum would be needed, he added. The museum is already home to the USS Nautilus (SSN 571), the world's first nuclear-powered submarine.

In an April letter to U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead said the Navy is preparing the reactor compartment for disposal in 2015 and it would cost more to preserve parts of the ship for display. But he did not rule out the possibility.

Courtney, D-2nd District, was optimistic Friday, saying that the effort by local stakeholders and his office has "really gotten through to the Navy" and he is hopeful that this will be the first in a series of shipments of artifacts.

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### **Membership and Dues Information:**

2010 dues will be payable by 1 October 2009. Contact your shipmates to get them to pay their dues.

Send dues (payable to USSVI) to:

Carl Chinn

217 Brailsford Rd

Summerville, SC 29485-5405

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### **"The Submariner"**

Only a submariner realizes to what great extent an entire ship depends on him as an individual. To a landsman this is not understandable, and sometimes it is even difficult for us to comprehend, but it is so!

A submarine at sea is a different world in herself, and in consideration of the protracted and distant operations of submarines, the Navy must place responsibility and trust in the hands of those who take such ships to sea.

In each submarine there are men who, in the hour of emergency or peril at sea, can turn to each other. These men are ultimately responsible to themselves and each to the other for all aspects of operation of their submarine. They are the crew. They are the ship.

This is perhaps the most difficult and demanding assignment in the Navy.

There is not an instant during his tour as a submariner that he can escape the grasp of responsibility. His privileges in view of his obligations are almost ludicrously small, nevertheless, it is the spur which has given the Navy its greatest mariners: the men of the Submarine Service.

It is a duty, which most richly deserves the proud and time-honored title of... "SUBMARINER"

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### **Flag Day**

Flag Day was first observed in 1877 on the 100th anniversary of the Continental Congress' adoption of the Stars and Stripes as the official flag of the United States. In that year, Congress asked that all public buildings fly the flag on June 14. The idea quickly caught on and many people wanted to participate in waving the flag.

One early supporter was B. J. Cigrand, a Wisconsin schoolteacher who wanted June 14 to be known as "Flag Birthday." In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed Flag Day as a national celebration.

However, the holiday was not officially recognized until 1949 when President Harry Truman signed the National Flag Day Bill. Although Flag Day is not celebrated as a Federal holiday, Americans everywhere continue to honor the history and heritage it represents. The longest-running Flag Day parade is held annually in Quincy,

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### **He Kept His Faith In The 'Man Upstairs'**

Ernest "Ernie" Plantz survived 1,297 days as a prisoner of war during World War II because he had a "strong belief in the man upstairs" and the will to live.

"I never, ever really thought I was really going to die," he said. "... I think my mother prayed me out of that camp. She was very religious. I wasn't a particularly religious boy. I had been raised Baptist, went to church, but like most teenagers I wasn't too religious. But I'm convinced that's what got me out, between my mother and the man upstairs."

Unable to find a job because of the Depression, Plantz had joined the Navy in 1940 at the age of 19. He served on a battleship and then volunteered for submarine duty. His first submarine assignment was the USS Perch (SS-176). The Perch was in the Java Sea on its second war patrol when it encountered an enemy convoy on March 1, 1942.

"We made a run on a ship ... and the (Japanese) destroyers drove us down in fairly shallow water, about 140 feet, and they started to depth-charge us, all in one day, and the next day, and then they left us. They thought they had sunk us because debris and oil and air had come to the surface. So we managed to surface ... and tried to make repairs that night.

"The next morning, before daybreak, we tried to make a trim dive and the ship was going down stern first. The water poured in through the hatches. We had an emergency surface, and when we did, we had three (Japanese) destroyers and two cruisers ... ahead of us. They started firing ... the skipper had alerted us that we'd probably have to abandon ship, so he gave the order to abandon ship. We opened the valves in the hatches to sink the submarine. It was like watching your home go down." Fifty-four sailors and five Perch officers were in the water.

"I was hoping (the Japanese) would (pick us up), and scared that they would. Because we had no real idea what they would do, how they would treat us, if they picked us up. We'd been told all kinds of rumors, that they'd cut your head off, they'd do this, they'd do that.

"Somebody asked what the (Japanese), if they picked us up, what they would feed us. And somebody else says, 'Rice and fish, you damn fool. What else do the Japanese eat?' And I said, 'Geez, if it's rice, let's hope it's rice with cream and sugar because I can't eat just plain rice.' Three days later, when they got around to giving us the first rice, that was the best rice I ever ate in my life."

The Perch crew was taken to a prison camp in Makassar, on an island in what is now Indonesia.

"They off-loaded us there and marched us through the city. Many of us were barefoot. The pavement was hot, hot enough you could fry an egg on the thing. It fried our feet; the skin peeled off and blistered. Anyway, they ended up putting us in what used to be a Dutch Army

Massachusetts, which began 1952 and will celebrate its 59th year in 2009. The largest Flag Day parade is held annually in Troy, New York, which bases its parade on the Quincy parade and typically draws 50,000 spectators. In 1996, President Bill Clinton issued the following proclamation:

By The President  
Of The  
United States Of America

#### A Proclamation

There is no better symbol of our country's values and traditions than the Flag of the United States of America. Chosen by the Continental Congress in 1777, it continues to exemplify the profound commitment to freedom, equality, and opportunity made by our founders more than two centuries ago. Our flag's proud stars and stripes have long inspired our people, and its beautiful red, white, and blue design is known around the world as a beacon of liberty and justice.

Today, America's Flag graces classrooms, statehouses, courtrooms, and churches, serving as a daily reminder of this Nation's past accomplishments and ongoing dedication to safeguarding individual rights. The brave members of our Armed Forces carry "Old Glory" with them as they fulfill their mission to defend the blessings of democracy and peace across the globe; our banner flies from public buildings as a sign of our national community; and its folds drape the tombs of our distinguished dead. The Flag is a badge of honor to all -- a sign of our citizens' common purpose.

This week and throughout the year let us do all we can to teach younger generations the significance of our Flag. Its 13 red and white stripes represent not only the original colonies, but also the courage and purity of our Nation, while its 50 stars stand for the separate but united States of our Union. Let us pledge allegiance to this Flag to declare our patriotism and raise its colors high to express our pride and respect for the American way of life.

To commemorate the adoption of our Flag, the Congress, by joint resolution approved August 3, 1949 (63 Stat. 492), designated June 14 of each year as "Flag Day" and requested the President to issue an annual proclamation calling for its observance and for the display of the Flag of the United States on all Federal Government buildings. The Congress also requested the President, by joint resolution approved June 9, 1966 (80 Stat. 194), to issue annually a proclamation designating the week in which June 14 falls as "National Flag Week" and calling upon all citizens of the United States to display the Flag during that week.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the

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camp.”

There, the Japanese captors were also holding the crew of the American destroyer USS Pope (DD-225), which had also been sunk by the Japanese in March 1942.

The camp, Plantz said, was brutal.

”They never told you what the rules were, what you could do and what you couldn't do. The way you found out is when you did something that they disagreed with and they'd either slap you around or beat the hell out of you with a club.

”A good example is when we first were there, some of the people at the prison who could play musical instruments scrounged together some Dutch instruments and then organized a band. And we were having some good concerts on Sundays and the (Japanese) said we weren't supposed to enjoy music. So they beat the devil out of the people who were playing music and the leader of the band. And one of our officers off the Pope goes charging down to the (Japanese man) who was doing the beating and says, 'These are my men. If you beat anyone, you beat me.' So they proceeded to beat the heck out of him.”

The prisoners were forced to work on the island six to seven days a week, off-loading ships, cleaning toilets, tearing down steel telephone poles so the steel could be used for land mines and hand grenades, and doing other manual labor to maintain the city and build infrastructure for the Japanese.

At first the prisoners were given a piece of bread the size of a hamburger bun once a day, Plantz said, but eventually the Japanese increased their rations to a small cup of rice three times a day, water with a few vegetables thrown in at lunch and dinner and an occasional piece of dried fish.

”It was the worst food they could possibly come up with. The rice was full of worms, the fish they gave us was full of maggots. ... The first few days, when we got that kind of rice, we picked out the worm carcasses. You'd end up with half a cup of rice and half a cup of worm carcasses. So we decided, well, the worm carcasses, they were protein too, so we just ate them. They didn't seem to make any difference. You couldn't taste them.”

Plantz's worst beating came in late 1943. Some of the sailors, he said, had interacted with one of the local merchants, so the Japanese beat the merchant and then brought him to the camp to identify the sailors.

”He picked out three guys, the (Japanese) wanted four. I was the fourth one. So they put us in the brig, threatened to chop our heads off. We were there for about a week. Then I guess the last day, the breakfast was a good breakfast, all you could eat, and meat, which you never got. And lunch was the same way. They had always told us that the day, or day before, they put you to death, they'd feed you all you ordered to eat. So by the time the evening meal came, which was the same thing, we were beginning to lose our appetite for fear of what was coming.

”About halfway through the meal, we heard a clatter

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United States of America, do hereby proclaim June 14, 1996, as Flag Day and the week beginning June 9, 1996, as National Flag Week. I direct the appropriate officials to display the Flag on all Federal Government buildings during that week, and I urge all Americans to observe Flag Day and National Flag Week by flying the Stars and Stripes from their homes and other suitable places. I also call upon the people of the United States to observe with pride and all due ceremony those days from Flag Day through Independence Day, also set aside by Congress (89 Stat. 211), as a time to honor our Nation, to celebrate our heritage in public gatherings and activities, and to publicly recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America. In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventh day of June, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twentieth.

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### **Sailor's Body Discovered On Submarine**

By Susan Respass, Tribune & Georgia, May 27, 2009

A chief petty officer was found dead aboard the USS Maryland at Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base Friday, a Navy spokeswoman said yesterday.

Lt. Rebecca Rebarich, public affairs officer for Submarine Group 10 at Kings Bay, said the cause of death is under investigation. She identified the sailor as Chief Machinist's Mate (SS) Michael G. Jackson, 50, who was assigned to the Maryland's blue crew. Jackson, a Kerrville, Texas native, entered the Navy in 1990. His previous assignments are Recruiting Command and Naval Training Command in Great Lakes, Ill., Naval Submarine School in Groton, Conn., and the USS Florida blue crew. He also worked at the Trident Refit Facility at Kings Bay.

His personal awards, Rebarich said, include two Navy Marine Corps Commendation Medal, four Navy Marine Corps Achievement Medal, a Meritorious Unit Commendation, Navy E Ribbon, three Good Conduct Medals, two National Defense Medals, a Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, a Navy Marine Corps Overseas Service Ribbon, a Global War on Terrorism Service Medal and Pistol Marksmanship Medal.

Bereavement counseling is available to his shipmates, Rebarich said, but she provided no other information about the death.

This is the second death of a U.S. Navy submariner this month. Machinist's Mate Third Class John Carlos Rodriguez, who was assigned to the attack submarine Hawaii in Groton, Conn., died May 8 from a gunshot wound that was later determined to be suicide, the Navy Times reported.

A Navy spokesman, quoted in the Navy Times story,

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outside the guardhouse and here come a bunch of (Japanese), young (Japanese) sailors charging in, each one swinging a club. They took us out and we realized it wasn't going to be a head chop, it was going to be a beating."

The rest of the camp was assembled to watch as the sailors were beaten, one by one, Plantz said.

"They had a table you gripped with your hands and then they'd make you lean against the table. I got 75 blows before I finally passed out."

In early 1945, Plantz came down with dysentery, then malaria.

"The malaria went to my brain. I went unconscious and I was unconscious for six days. When I came to, I was told that the Dutch doctor who was a prisoner had said, 'Well, he's going to die anyway,' 'cause guys were dying eight, 10, 12 a day, so ... he crushed quinine and mixed it with tap water and gave me an injection in the vein with a homemade needle and that broke the malaria."

The only thing Plantz remembered from when he was unconscious was a vision that Jesus Christ had visited him.

"I asked if I was going to die and he told me no, that I was just going to be very ill. And if I had been thinking, I would've asked him how long that was good for. But I didn't."

Before Japan surrendered on Aug. 14, 1945, six of Plantz's crewmates had died of malnutrition. Plantz weighed 80 pounds, down from 175 when he was captured.

"The (Japanese) called us together ... and they told us that the war was over and that we had won. They wanted to shake hands, the same guys that had beat the heck out of us for three and half years said, 'Now we're friends.' You've got to be kidding.

"Anyway, the Americans, the Allies, they didn't know there was a prison camp where we were at so we finally cobbled together a homemade radio transmitter ... and we made a contact with the Americans and they sent a plane." Plantz, who left the prison camp on Sept. 17, 1945, spent about 10 months recuperating at a Navy hospital near Chicago.

"I checked in with my friends, what they were doing and what their prospects were, and I decided I would stay in the Navy."

Plantz served for 30 years, retiring as a lieutenant in 1970.

"I think I was a little bit ashamed of where I had to serve (during the war), helping the (Japanese) instead of helping the Americans, so I never talked about it. I wanted to make my way after the war, on my own, without people feeling sorry for me. I think I had a good career and I got recognized for my efforts.

"I ended up as chief electrician, then chief of the boat and on the last boat I got selected for commission (to an officer), so I feel good about my record."

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said Rodriguez, 22, of Doylestown, Penn., was shot in the head on the pier at the submarine base. The Hawaii left Groton May 13 for its new homeport at Pearl Harbor.

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### **Lasers Could Find Friend or Foe Submarines Underwater**

Flashy lasers should not make any sound in space, despite what "Star Trek" and "Star Wars" would have people believe. But lasers aimed underwater can and do create small supersonic explosions.

It's not just a light show. Naval researchers hope to use lasers for sonar detection, or even submarine-to-aircraft communication.

"The lasers we're using in experiments now are pretty compact," said Ted Jones, a physicist at the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory. "They're smaller than desk-sized and could fly on an aircraft."

Radios or other devices that rely on the electromagnetic spectrum don't work underwater, because water does not transmit such waves well. That means submarines cannot communicate from beneath the waves – they have to surface if they want to communicate with home base, planes or other naval ships.

Lasers could fill that communication gap, because water can act as a focusing lens if a laser has the right "frequency chirp." The chirp depends on the arrangement of different color wavelengths within a laser beam, because each color travels at a slightly different speed underwater.

The water's focusing effect squeezes the laser beam so that it gets narrower and narrower, and eventually creates a superheated explosion that can be heard.

"It's a very hot little bubble of steam that expands supersonically, makes a little shockwave, dissipates a bit and then turns into an ordinary acoustic pulse," Jones told LiveScience.

The naval researchers have used modest lasers to create pulses of 210 decibels, which far exceeds the sound of a jet engine or the loudest rock concert imaginable.

Playing with lasers underwater is nothing new for the U.S. Navy, but previous experiments used larger lasers and could only thermally heat the water without the pulse effect.

Much understanding of the acoustic pulse effect came from laser eye surgery, where scientists wanted to reduce the effect. Now Jones and his colleagues want to do the exact opposite and enhance the acoustic shock for a louder sound.

Jones envisions aircraft using lasers to transmit messages to submarines gliding beneath the waves. Or the lasers could allow aircraft to quickly search large areas of ocean with sonar systems, which listen for sound signatures reflected off of underwater objects.

"You put down an array of passive sonar buoys and go

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## Sub Commander On Oprah Via SKYPE

(WLS (CHICAGO) 22 MAY 2009) ... Broadcast Clip

We go down to our next Skyper, Navy Commander John Sager. Commander Sager, where the Skype are you?

I'm Commander John Sager from Bonita, Florida. I'm the Commanding Officer of the fast attack submarine USS Louisville. We call her "The Slugger." We're off the coast of Hawaii at periscope depth Skyping off of our periscope.

O: Wow. Is this a first for you guys?

This is the first for any submarine. We're pretty proud that we're being able to do this for you today.

O: And so, uh, how big is it?

First of all, what part of the submarine are you standing in right now? I'm currently in the torpedo room. You can see behind me the torpedo tube number one. We have four torpedo tubes. Each one of the torpedo tubes is capable of launching cruise missiles or torpedoes.

O: How many people are in this submarine?

I'm lucky enough to have 146 lead personnel onboard today.

O: That is amazing. Any women onboard?

The Navy's policy right now is not to have women onboard submarines, although they continue to look at that policy and evaluate it. Right now, we don't have any women onboard based on habitability and the personal space that everybody has onboard. Privacy issues. I hear that things are pretty tight down there.

O: Can you describe the sleeping arrangements for us?

Here is the link for the video: [View Clip](#) run time 3:29

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## Far From 'OK'... Weld Inspector's Lies Could Affect 8 Submarines, New Carrier

More than 10,000 welded joints on at least eight submarines and a new aircraft carrier might need to be re-inspected after the discovery by Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding that one of its inspectors had falsified inspection reports.

According to an internal report obtained by Navy Times, the issue came to light May 14, when a welding inspector at the company's Newport News, Va., shipyard told a supervisor that a fellow inspector was initialing welds as "OK" without performing the inspections. Confronted by the supervisor, the offending inspector, admitted to falsifying three weld inspections, all that same day. Company officials rapidly began an internal investigation and notified the Navy's supervisor of shipbuilding of the situation, according to the report. On May 20, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service began its own investigation.

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back over with same aircraft that dropped those," Jones explained. The aircraft could then use its laser to sweep a wide area and see what the sonar buoys detect. But before any of that can happen, Jones and his fellow researchers are trying to improve the laser ranges underwater. Their current lasers can travel almost 66 feet (20 m) – not exactly Star Trek material, but still very sci-fi.

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## Diesel Sub Commander Recalls Historic Soviet Sub Chase

The former commanding officer of the Tench-class diesel submarine USS Grenadier (SS 525) recounted the experience of his crew 50 years ago; the events of May 28, 1959 impacted submarine warfare, especially during the Cold War era.

Capt. Ted Davis, a native of Gloversville, N.Y., who now makes his home in Virginia Beach, Va., was commanding officer of Grenadier that day and can still recall the events as if they happened only five years ago. After 18 hours of tracking a contact through the icy waters of the Northern Atlantic Ocean, the captain and crew of the Grenadier would force the surfacing of a Russian Zulu-class missile-firing submarine. It marked the first time visual and photographic proof of the presence of Soviet submarines in the Atlantic was able to be captured.

Grenadier left its homeport of Key West, Fla., in April 1959, along with USS Amberjack (SS 522), USS Atule (SS 403) and USS Grampus (SS 523), to conduct special antisubmarine exercises in the Northern Atlantic Ocean. Their mission was to patrol the "GIUK gap," a chokepoint from Greenland to Iceland to the United Kingdom.

However, their unofficial goal was much different. During Grenadier's overhaul in the Philadelphia Navy Yard, Davis learned of a proclamation from Adm. Jerauld Wright, then commander-in-chief of the Atlantic Fleet. The proclamation was more of a challenge in the form of an award to the first naval unit in the fleet that could prove the presence of a "non U.S. or known friendly" submarine. The first to do so would be presented an award that was certainly a sign of the times – "one case of Jack Daniels Old No. 7 black label Tennessee sour mash whiskey."

When word came down that Grenadier and three other submarines would conduct operations in the Northern Atlantic after her homeport shift from New London, Conn., to Key West, Davis informed his crew of the added incentive for the deployment.

"I put out at quarters, 'Hey guys, there's a case of Jack Daniels involved,'" said Davis, who was 36-years old at the time. "It was a challenge, but I knew the odds of us running into a Russian submarine were about one in a million."

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Northrop Grumman declined to reveal the employee's name, citing the ongoing personnel investigation. A company official did say May 28 that the employee initially had been suspended, then fired. According to the report, a quick company review of the inspector's work showed that 12 other joints inspected by the employee that evening were satisfactory. But the ramifications of the falsified inspections rapidly grew beyond a single night's work. "We have to go back and check everything this guy has ever touched," said one industrial source. The employee had been certified to perform inspections in June 2005 and, according to the report, a review of the shipyard's welding database showed that in the ensuing four years he inspected and signed off on more than 10,000 structural welding joints on at least nine ships. Company officials said May 27 that the investigation of the employee's work could mean that all the joints would need re-inspection or reevaluation.

### 3 ships in service

According to the report, the ships worked on by the inspector included the Virginia-class nuclear attack submarines North Carolina, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Missouri, California, Mississippi, Minnesota and John Warner, and the aircraft carrier George H.W. Bush. Bush, North Carolina and New Hampshire are in service; the other subs are in various states of construction at Newport News and at the General Dynamics shipyards in Groton, Conn., and Quonset, R.I. The two shipbuilders share equally in building the submarines. Each shipyard builds specific sections of the submarines and transports the sections to the other yard. The shipbuilders alternate in assembling the hulls. The inspector performed most of his work on the New Mexico (2,133 welds inspected), Missouri (3,169), California (2,002) and Mississippi (2,177). The employee inspected only 23 welds on New Hampshire and two on North Carolina. A little more than 10 percent of the submarine welds were hull integrity, or SUBSAFE, joints involving critical parts. The, inspector also performed 229 piping joint inspections on submarines. There are many thousands of welds on each 7,800-ton submarine – more than 300,000, according to an Electric Boat Best Manufacturing Practices Web site. But making sure that welding work is done correctly can be a matter of life and death. "People take this really, really seriously," said one industry source. "Why? Because people don't want another Thresher. Nobody takes a chance." The submarine Thresher sank in April 1963 when it was forced to dive below its crush depth and the hull imploded. All 129 men aboard the sub perished. "The quality of our work is something we take very

Grenadier was on station for several days when Davis received word from his messenger that a contact was nearby.

"The messenger came in and told me that sonar had a Soviet submarine," said Davis. "The first thought that came to my mind was that the crew was so good that if they said it was a Soviet submarine, it was a Soviet submarine."

Davis, however, wasn't about to take it for granted. He asked his crew how they were so sure the contact was Russian.

"They said they'd been listening to submarines for a long time, and they knew this guy didn't fit any other pattern we had," said Davis. "No American submarines, no British submarines – this was it."

Then the contact disappeared only moments after Davis had been convinced by his sonar operators the contact was Soviet.

The sonar crew estimated the course of the contact, believing the submarine was heading home to a port in the Soviet Union. Its range was about 20,000 yards and speed about five knots.

Davis, a 1947 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, instructed his crew to set up two plotting teams, one in control and one in the wardroom, to plan to intercept the contact.

At the time, Grenadier's battery was strong, having charged all night, but later in the day the air inside Grenadier became a little fouled. Technology that would provide submarines the ability to clean the air inside the submarine had yet to be invented, so submarines would have to surface to vent the sub and take in clean air.

Additionally, smoking cigarettes aboard the boat was common and not restricted to the engine room.

"A strong battery was more important than anything else," said Davis, allowing his crew to plot a course to intercept the Soviet sub at a speed of approximately eight knots.

"The waiting went on into the early afternoon, when all of a sudden, sonar hollers, 'Contact! Close aboard! Port bow!'" said Davis.

"To this day, I couldn't tell you if that guy knew where we were, but we could hear him."

The Soviet sub immediately "came roaring down at us," said Davis. It reminded him of a recent incident during which a Soviet submarine fired a torpedo deep under a U.S. submarine. The torpedo was intentionally fired deep, but the action achieved the intended effect – the U.S. boat was forced to take evasive action, while the Soviet sub was able to sneak off in the confusion and noise from the torpedo, effectively breaking the contact. Davis believed the actions by the Soviet sub commander this day might have the same intentions, including forcing the Grenadier to identify its presence by going to full speed to evade the oncoming Russian sub. He

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seriously," Northrop spokeswoman Margaret Mitchell-Jones said in a May 28 statement to Navy Times.

#### Previous problems

Newport News is still smarting from a welding filler issue that arose in fall 2007. Shipyard workers had used the wrong type of welding filler material on many pipe welds, and the company and the Navy were forced to reexamine a number of submarines, aircraft carriers and surface ships built or repaired at the shipyard. Northrop changed a number of workshop practices as a result.

Both the Navy and Northrop Grumman emphasize that there is no relation between the weld filler issue and the latest problem with the inspector.

Northrop Grumman has developed an inspection plan of the offending inspector's work that will focus on hull integrity and SUBSAFE joints as a priority, followed by non-SUBSAFE joints, according to the internal report.

The nature of the NCIS investigation is unclear.

"I can confirm that NCIS is investigating allegations made against a weld inspector, but I cannot get into case specifics," NCIS spokesman Ed Buice wrote in a May 28 email to Navy Times. "NCIS does not comment on the details of ongoing investigations."

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#### **Mobile Submarine USS Drum Provides Tight, But Realistic Quarters For Movie Crew**

MOBILE, Ala. – It was tight quarters inside the claustrophobic submarine USS Drum, as a film crew and cast members shot scenes for the movie "USS Seaviper" this spring and last year.

But director Ralph Villani, who is busy finishing the independent feature film in Florida, said using the authentic naval vessel will lend realism to his cinematic story that is set during World War II.

They shot by night inside the submarine, which remained open during daytime hours to tourists visiting Mobile's Battleship Memorial Park. The vessel, a Gato-class submarine commissioned by the US Navy in 1941, was first opened to the public in 1969.

"USS Seaviper" will tell the story of a top-secret mission to rescue a downed American airplane pilot as German and Japanese forces are discovered together on a Pacific island. In the story, the Germans have delivered a deadly cargo to the Japanese.

The "USS Seaviper" cast includes 25 actors, plus extras. The players include Timothy Large as Chief Keenan and Steve Roth as the submarine's commanding officer, Capt. Horatio Culpepper.

Many of them had to jam inside the Drum during filming, and Villani pointed out that the sub's conning tower measures just five feet wide by 12 feet long.

"It was extremely tight," he said. "We probably had seven or eight of us in there at one time, plus about 3,000 watts of light. It got pretty toasty in there. We were drinking

also felt the Soviet commander might try to clip Grenadier's screws, stern planes or rudder, leaving the boat helpless to continue the pursuit but not in a life-or-death situation.

Grenadier didn't back down, however, maintaining position and most importantly stealth.

Davis instructed two of his officers who were manning passive and active sonars to basically maneuver the ship using the sonars' info.

But there was one specific instruction – always turn into the contact to avoid presenting the stern to the other submarine. Davis didn't want to present his rudder or screw to the other ship because doing so would leave him vulnerable to a "bump" from the Soviet sub that could damage Grenadier's screw or rudder. Damage to either would force Grenadier to abandon the pursuit, letting the Soviet sub slip away.

"He came within 400 and 800 yards of us, which is awfully close" said Davis. "When I thought that it was about time to turn, I heard, 'Left full rudder! All ahead flank!' The officers in conn were on top of the problem. As he went down our port side, we just curved right in behind him.

"He thought he heard something behind him, but he wasn't sure, so he turned around and did it again," said Davis. "Then we did the same thing and fell right in behind him again. Then he took a course for home." The Soviet sub was deep at a speed of five knots; Grenadier trailed 2,000 yards astern.

Davis decided to surface. Not only was the air fouled, but it was getting hard to light a cigarette, demonstrating the increasing amount of carbon dioxide in the boat.

While surfaced, he sent a message to Commander Submarine Force Atlantic Fleet: "Have contact on Soviet submarine, can track indefinitely." Davis also requested support from a P-2V anti-submarine patrol aircraft from Patrol Squadron 5 (VP-5) at Naval Air Station Keflavik, Iceland.

According to a report Davis wrote later, he decided to then remain surfaced as long as possible, creating a greater advantage for himself over the Soviet submarine. Topside watches were organized, and Executive Officer Lt. Cmdr. Ed Welsh took over as plot coordinator.

"We were ready to hold contact for as long as it took to exhaust the adversary," wrote Davis in his report.

Shortly after the P-2V was vectored in, sonar reported the Soviet sub coming up, probably to take a look.

One of Davis' junior officers, Lt. Dave McClary, wanted to be a pilot when he first entered the Navy, but poor eyesight prevented further pilot training. He took this opportunity to vector the P-2V over the Soviet sub and was manning the con when the sub's periscope broke the surface. He then expertly directed the P-2V right over the Russian, performing the task to perfection.

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water and Gatorade like crazy."

The director said he is pleased with how the scenes shot in Mobile have turned out.

"We shot a few more scenes this last trip, and everything just clicked," he said. "When I was leaving the boat for the last time – and some of the other people said the same thing – I had a feeling like we didn't want to leave. The boat didn't want for us to leave."

Villani's father, Pasquale Villani, 88, was a second-class petty officer aboard the Drum during a portion of his naval career. The elder Villani was unable to visit the submarine during filming because of failing health, but his son said he hopes his father will make it to a Mobile screening of the finished film tentatively planned for early 2010.

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### **Cold War-Era Nuclear Missile Installed At Base**

Dedication ceremony is held Sunday for a Regulus missile, newly mounted at Missile Park, near the entrance to Naval Base, Point Mugu.

Calendar events in Ventura County: June 1, 2009

A nuclear missile that helped keep the United States safe from Soviet aggression during the early years of the Cold War took its place among 13 other missiles and two fighter jets Sunday at Missile Park at Naval Base Ventura County, Point Mugu.

From 1959 to 1964, the Regulus missile was America's first line of defense in the Pacific Ocean, as well as its first nuclear missile deployed on a submarine. It was replaced by the more advanced Polaris in 1964.

Researched, designed and built by American and German rocket scientists at Point Mugu, Regulus missiles were deployed on five submarines: the USS Tunny, USS Barbero, USS Growler, USS Grayback and USS Halibut. The Tunny and Barbero were World War II diesel-powered submarines converted to carry two Regulus missiles on deck. The Grayback and Growler were designed and built to carry four missiles, while the Halibut was the first nuclear-powered Regulus submarine and carried five missiles.

Unlike Polaris missiles, the Regulus was launched from deck after a submarine surfaced. The missiles' targets were the USSR's Pacific Coast-based submarine and naval installations. Their mission was to maintain peace through the threat of mutual assured destruction.

Retired Lt. Cdr. Bob Harmuth was engineering officer onboard the Growler for four of its eight patrols. Harmuth was instrumental in the design and mounting of the Regulus missile and a memorial stone at Missile Park on Sunday.

"Bill Gunn, the last skipper of the Growler, who passed away two years ago, once told me we were really kamikaze pilots," Harmuth said. "It took seven minutes to get off the first bird. Our chances of getting off four birds and getting out of there were pretty well nil.

"They weren't pretty," he said. "They were awkward,

Flares dropped from the P-2V landed in the water right beside Ivan's periscope. Davis still laughs when he thinks about it.

"I swear, that periscope came up, and the flare went 'boomp' right beside it," said Davis. "I said to myself, 'I'd like to see the look on his face, whoever was looking up through that periscope.'"

Several more flares were dropped over the next few hours. Davis knew without a doubt the Russian sub was aware of the plane and most likely was now fully aware they were being tracked by a submarine as well.

"I thought that was good because if he had any ideas about trying to sink us we've got a witness in the air," said Davis.

After several hours of tracking the Soviet sub from the surface, sonar lost contact. Davis immediately brought Grenadier to all stop.

"I passed the word that if you're smoking, dump your ashes in your hand...don't let your ashes hit the deck," said Davis. "That's how quiet I wanted the boat to be." Davis' sonar officer suggested they go active on sonar, but Davis felt the other sub was deep and hovering, and going active would only help him verify Grenadier's position in one last attempt to escape.

"We were both dead in the water, so we were just going to let him sit," said Davis.

At the same time, the P-2V was running out of fuel and was replaced by another P-2V out of Keflavik.

"The second guy was dropping sonar buoys all over the place," said Davis. "I needed that like a hole in the head."

By this time, it was almost midnight on May 28. And Davis knew the time was near.

"I thought, this guy was out of air; he's out of battery, he's running out of everything, and he's going to surface at the darkest part of night," said Davis.

Davis had his sound-powered phone talker pass the word through the ship that the CO expected the submarine to surface a little after midnight. The XO laughed, saying, "There you go again!"

"I thought, what the hell, we have to do something to keep (the crew) laughing," said Davis. "But sure enough, at 15 minutes past the hour, sonar hollers, 'He's surfacing! He's surfacing!' So we vectored the airplane over the top of their deck."

The P-2V shined a light on the Soviet submarine and took dozens of photographs. Some of the photos showed Russian crewmembers trying to cover the sail area with canvas to hide two missile tubes.

"It turned out that we found the first real evidence of a missile-firing Soviet submarine, something our intelligence community was trying hard to get the dope on," said Davis. "Here we had all the information they needed. We not only satisfied Jerauld Wright ... but this was a real break for the intelligence community as

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cumbersome and hard to control. But for five years we kept at (Soviet leader Nikita) Khrushchev's back door with at least four missiles with nuclear warheads that made the bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki look like firecrackers." Because the Regulus had a range of only 300 miles the submarines had to patrol either on or just below the ocean surface near Russia's east coast. The crews had to be constantly on the alert. The only time a Regulus submarine and crew came home to Pearl Harbor was for repairs and refitting.

"For the crews and their families it was a particularly difficult mission," said Capt. David Fleisch, Naval Base Ventura County chief staff officer, who represented the base during the dedication ceremony. "I was born in 1959, so for the first five years of my life you protected me and the country so I could be here today.

"It is my privilege to accept this memorial on behalf of the base. This is where it was developed and deployed. We're providing a memorial for five submarines that carried the Regulus missile. There is no more fitting place than Point Mugu's Missile Park."

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### **Admiral Osborne Scholarship Fund**

How about helping out the scholarship fund? We are offering a Charleston Base Challenge Coin for sale. ALL proceeds go into the scholarship fund.

Coins only cost \$7 each. Available for an additional \$1 is a protective plastic capsule.

To get your coin(s) see Jim Yates, Julian Villegas or Carl Chinn.

Make sure you have one for "when you get challenged"! Buy several for great gifts!



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Thanks goes out to John Muessig, MNM USN Ret. A couple of weeks ago on Social Night he put \$100 "on the bar" as a thanks to Charleston Base for loaning him a wheelchair for his wife.

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well."

The Russian sub stayed on the surface for more than 24 hours, and Grenadier's crew recorded as much information as possible. Once Grenadier had gathered enough information, they were ordered back to their station to continue their participation in the exercise. Once the exercise was over and Grenadier returned to Key West, an awards ceremony was held, during which Wright presented a case of Jack Daniels Old No. 7 black label Tennessee sour mash whiskey to the crew. The crew of Grenadier would have to accept that as their reward for a job well done because no unit award was presented to the boat for surfacing the Soviet Zulu, but Davis believes the crew was just as happy with the success and the Jack Daniels.

"That whiskey was gone at the next crew party," said Davis, who still has a Jack Daniels bottle from the original case. Empty, of course.

Along with the case of whiskey, Wright presented a proclamation to Davis and the crew. The proclamation stated that the presence of unidentified submarines had been reported in the sea lanes off the coast of the U.S., and those submarines were uncooperative in declaring their identity and intent. But "...through actions of USS Grenadier (SS-525) tangible evidence these surreptitious operations are being conducted has been produced."

Davis gives credit for the success of this mission to his crew, many of whom were extremely well qualified.

"They were truly a magnificent team," said Davis.

Although the significance of the incident can never be fully credited to Grenadier's success, many changes in both navies followed soon after. The Navy commissioned America's first fleet ballistic missile submarine USS George Washington (SSBN 598) in December 1959, and the Russians soon scrapped their Zulu class of ballistic missile submarines.

Davis is very proud of the accomplishment, and he fondly remembers "29 May '59" any time someone asks him about it.

"We were in the right place at the right time with a great crew," said Davis.

He also remembers how some senior officers tried to put the surfacing in a different light.

"The briefing for (the chief of naval operations) with all his staff was amusing in that the surface force admirals were trying to say that it wasn't a submarine that did it because Grenadier was on the surface when the Soviet surfaced," he said. "I just smiled and concluded my remarks emphasizing that it was submariners that did the job, not the submarine itself. In short, it was submariners who got the Jerauld Wright Award, which gave the sub force a great boost."

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