

TORPEDO ALLEY



Vol. 5, No. 8

August 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
National web site: www.ussvi.org

Base Meeting:

August 13, 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	Ken Hutchison	843-553-0935
Veterans Affairs	Jim Morrison	843-832-9716
Chaplain	John Nichols	843-873-5897
Membership	Carl Chinn	843-875-3098
Holland Club	John Lookabill	843-797-2991
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

Minutes of the July 2009 meeting

Attendance for the July meeting was 87

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; Gary "six pack" Brown MTCM(SS/SW). 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: Terry Trump gave the treasurer's.

Storekeeper: Tee shirts are in.

Chaplain: On June 5th, we conducted a bell tolling memorial service for Bill Hyatt at Dorchester Memory Gardens. There were 8 members of USSSVI Charleston Base mustered to give Bill a Sailor's farewell. The Navy provided a chaplain, flag folding detail and rifle honor guard. This was the COB's first funeral and he did a great job pulling everything and everyone together. The service was done with great dignity. Cards were sent as follows to:

Bob Isaman. Bob had a heart cath procedure and was told he needed a 3x bypass. He had bypass surgery and received a 4x bypass. He left the hospital on July 5th and is doing well. After a few weeks of recovery he will begin his physical therapy.

Sue Peters. Sue was hospitalized in Trident with pneumonia on June 14th. She is home and doing well.

Connie Chinn. Connie's grandmother passed away mid-June.

Stacy Powers. Stacy is home and recuperating after the total knee replacement.

Larry Sims. Larry was taken to Trident hospital on June 16th with fluid buildup in his legs. He did receive some transfusions to stabilize his red cell count which has been reduced due to the chemotherapy.

Howard 'Andy' Anderson. Andy had a heart cath done at Trident hospital on June 16th and is doing well. Additionally on June 24th Andy went to the hospital with an uncontrollable nose bleed. He needed surgery to repair holes in an artery that supplies blood to his nose/sinus areas. He will be taking it easy for awhile.

Bob Finch. Bob will begin his chemo treatments on Monday, July 13th. He is having a lot of problems with his vocal chords due to a recurrence of cancer from 2001.

Dave Rein. Dave is scheduled for a heart cath on July 22nd.

Bill Kennedy. Bill went in this morning for a procedure and will be recovering at home for the next 4-5 days.

Family of William 'Bill' Smith, Sr. Bill departed on

Vice Commander Report: No report

Scholarship: We are selling tickets for an autographed Hunley print. We are having it framed. Tickets are \$1 or 6 for \$5. Drawing will be held at the Christmas party. Also four former shipmates of Jim Murrell donated \$100 to the scholarship fund in his memory. They are Doc Jenkins, Dick Stevenson, Ralph Reeves, and Jack Harden. BZ to them!

Public Affairs: Our Admiral Osborne scholarship presentation was in today's Post and Courier.

Webmaster: No report

Veteran's Affairs: No report

District Commander: No report

Holland Club: John Lookabill has Holland Club challenge coins for sale for \$7.50 + tax

Membership: Please pay your dues early.

Little David: Books are on sale. Sept 12 and 13th is a tractor pull. We will have representatives there. Come out and help.

FRA Rep: The FRA will have a guest speaker at the next two meetings. 1st will be the Berkley County VA rep in Aug. and in Sept. will be Capt. McClure from the new Naval Clinic at the Weapons Station.

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

After Battery Rep: All ordered hats are in. There was a special presentation of a special hat to Jim Eckles; Gary Semler "the BULL Nuc" already has his. It read over the dolphins "Log Room Lesb***. The After Battery also gave \$50 to hog roast.

Chief of the Boat: There were 8 Sub Vets at the Moncks Corner 4th of July dedication and parade. Sept. 12 is the See-Saw Days parade in Harleyville.

Base Commander: No report

Nuclear Historian: A great story about Marines and Sailors.

Old Business: Ed Stanke will have the coffee cups on the 25th.

New Business: None

Good Of The Order: Roy Morrow has a web site for a Silent Service Motorcycle Club. Plank owners will receive a free patch. Web site is

<http://www.honorflight.org/>

Roger Gibson and the WWII SubVets presented what the new memorial to the "Lost Boats" would look like. The dedication will be next year.

Nov. 7th will be another Honor Flight to take WWII vets

Eternal Patrol on July 3rd in North Augusta. He was a member of Subvets WWII and also USSVI Charleston Base. We found out about Bill's passing on July 6th about an hour before his funeral service. I will be making contact with Aiken Base to see if they will present the Eternal Patrol Certificate, the Silver Dolphin Shadow Box and the USSVICB Coin to the family on our behalf. The Charleston Base Eternal Patrol Web Page has been updated.

I attempted to call Harry Plank to check on him but the phone number I have is incorrect. If someone has his number please let me know.

Recently found out that:

Richard Alfano is preparing for a back test on 7/9/09.

Buddha will be going in to St Francis in the morning for surgery on a disc. The surgeon will go in through his neck.

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.

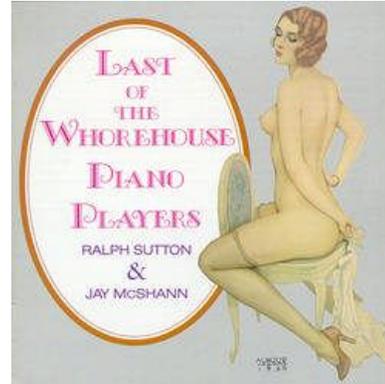
Sub Vets WWII: 20th of Aug at Ryan's is the next meeting. Come out and join us.

Lee Allison has a written history of the USS Barb from Panama Jack who was its COB Copies are available.

to Washington DC to the WWII memorial. The information for the flight, donations, applications are on its web site, <http://www.honorflight.org/>

The "After Battery" donated \$50 to the Honor Flight. Depth Charge drawing was held with \$260 to winner. The winner was Bill Roup. He donated \$50 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."



Addington	Allison	Andersen, D	Cleeve
Daughtery	Davis, D	Freligh	Graff
Hanson, A	Hardaway	Henderson	Hixson
Hutchinson	Ianuzzi	Ilgenfritz	Irving
Kirby	LaRose	Larsen, D	Lowman
Mills	Morrow	Mulkey	Nelms
Reuer	Roberts	Snyder, C	Spagone
Turner	Veres	Wise	Young

August Submarines Lost:

USS Grunion	SS 216	August 16, 1942
USS S 39	SS 144	August 16, 1942
USS Pompano	SS 181	August 29, 1943
USS Flier	SS 250	August 13, 1944
USS Harder	SS 257	August 24, 1944
USS Bullhead	SS 332	August 6, 1945
USS Cochino	SS 345	August 26, 1949

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



Navy Memorial To Collect "Stories of Service"

Calling all Sea Service veterans! Be a part of history! Tell us your story! "Stories of Service" (www.stories-of-service.org) preserves the personal, first person stories of veterans in the form of multimedia Digital Stories. They provide volunteers with information on how to conduct good interviews, create scripts and produce an edited, short-form video. The Navy Memorial is partnering with Stories of Service to interview Sea Service veterans this summer. Stories of Service has trained our interns to produce these videos, which will be posted on The Navy Log Community (www.navylogcommunity.org). To have your Story preserved for history, call Taylor Kiland at (202) 380-0718 or tkiland@navymemorial.org. Interviews will be conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12-2 p.m., in person at the Navy Memorial in Washington, D.C. We do not currently have the resources to conduct interviews in other locations. There is no charge for this service, but donations are appreciated.

Breaking Into The Underwater Boys' Club: Sailor One Of 12 Women To Be Submarine-Qualified

(STARS AND STRIPES 21 JUL 09)

Erik Slavin, Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan

A sailor once asked Lt. Cmdr. Marilisa Elrod where she got the twin dolphins sewn below the U.S. Navy lettering on her uniform. She could understand the sailor's confusion - he had probably never seen the insignia on a woman before.

"I said I borrowed them from my husband ... just to tease him," said Elrod, a doctor and undersea medical officer based in Hawaii.

Then she explained how she studied for more than a year and passed her qualification test aboard the USS Key West before earning the distinction of being a submarine-qualified sailor.

To a submariner, those dolphins mean that the sailor wearing them knows enough about every function of the boat to save it in an emergency.

Elrod is one of 12 submarine-qualified women in the Navy, officials said.

As a medical officer, she has had the opportunity to ride on several vessels. However, crews stationed aboard submarines remain all male in the U.S. Navy.

"I think in the beginning it would be difficult from a logistics standpoint, but I don't see any reason why women would not be well-suited to be on subs," Elrod said.

Australia, Canada, Spain and Norway all allow women to serve on submarines, though their deployments tend to be shorter than those aboard U.S. nuclear-powered subs.

Membership and Dues Information:

2010 dues are 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

Those Who Sail Beneath the Swells

by Bob 'Dex' Armstrong

In every generation, the navies of the world always seem to find the necessary number of that 'special breed of man' needed to man their undersea ships. Those truly magnificent fools with the requisite pride and spirit of adventure needed to voluntarily crawl into an iron cylinder full of similar mental defectives and take the contraptions to sea.

I can't speak for the rest of the Navy. The only 'rest of the Navy' I ever met, were perpetual shore duty shore patrols. Looking back I can't remember one positive interaction I had with any sonuvabitch sporting an SP armband. The last thing they were interested in, in the old days, was spreading goodwill.

My entire short-lived naval service career was spent with like-minded jaybirds who actually liked going to sea in what closely resembled a sinkable septic tank. I actually thought that to be a sailor, one had to go to sea. Sailing had to involve stuff like seagulls, saltwater and large metal objects that were painted gray, displaced tons of water and bounced around a lot in heavy weather.

How guys who interpreted photographs in a windowless building in Omaha, Nebraska called themselves sailors was way beyond the level of comprehension of a seventeen-year-old who cut his teeth on books about Pacific submarine action.

Lads who turned up at New London back in the 1950s weren't the kind of young men whose sense of naval adventure could be satisfied inventorying jocks and socks in some damn quonset hut in East Rat's Ass, Minnesota, or typing liberty cards at some shore station where they hot-patched weather balloons.

Submariners had no desire to belong to any organization that issued clothing designed to blend in with poison ivy plants required you to dig holes and own a personal shovel or any desire to eat unidentifiable food out of little green cans in the rain.

We liked hydraulic oil-laced coffee, crawling up on a pre-warmed flash pad and freely exchanging insults with men as equally ugly as ourselves. We enjoyed knowing that in any unscheduled altercation, our entire crew would show up to extract our drunken fanny and

Some U.S. sailors say having women serve aboard subs would hurt unit cohesion. Others say sailors would adapt. "You'll hear all sorts of arguments against it, some medical ... some similar to the arguments you hear against having homosexuals serving in small units," said Petty Officer 1st Class Jim Grisham, an electronics technician serving aboard the USS Seawolf. "Nothing credible, in my opinion, and little that the surface Navy and the other armed forces haven't learned to deal with."

Female U.S. Naval Academy students have come aboard the Seawolf and other submarines for years as part of their summer training.

While aboard submarines, Elrod has shared an officer's stateroom.

If women were allowed to serve permanently aboard subs, they would need designated spaces that aren't available on today's boats, said Submarine Group Seven spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Greg Kuntz.

"It's the space and the design itself that makes it very difficult at this time, but it's not that we aren't constantly reviewing [the idea]," Kuntz said. "The big question we continually ask ourselves is, 'How could we make this work?' "

Studies on retrofitting existing submarines to accommodate female berthing have shown that doing so would be prohibitively expensive, Kuntz said.

Submarines are already packed tightly with equipment; the few spaces that aren't, like the chief petty officer's lounge, aren't likely to be given away to enlisted sailors of any gender, Kuntz said.

Meanwhile, rack space is precious; the lack of bedding requires some enlisted sailors to "hot rack," meaning that three sailors share two racks while working different shifts.

Nonetheless, some sailors think it could be done if women are willing to put up with the same near-absence of privacy as men. For example, an extra curtain could cordon off a women's bunk area in the existing berths.

In Elrod's case, a sign hung on the door of the head, or bathroom, when she was using it. Certain times could be designated as women only, as they are for shower trailers in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Undiagnosed pregnancies before deployment could interrupt missions, detractors say. However, there are protocols for evacuating sailors with medical emergencies. Submarine medics would also need to keep women's health issues in mind; for example, abdominal pain can be harder to diagnose in women, Elrod said.

"There are definitely some things that would need to be worked out and some instructions would need to be written, medically speaking," she said.

Other than the logistics, the biggest change would have to occur among attitudes. A large group of men in their 20s and 30s, living in very close quarters, tend to produce a lot of off-color humor.

chastise those we had stirred up.

Back in the old days, (before any of you modern day techno undersea swashbucklers get a twist in your bloomers, I only know about the old days. I never rode anything that was intended to go below 412 feet or stay down for several months at a time.) So, as I started to say

Back in the old days, the old leather-faced, hardboiled Chiefs used to say, "Gahdam sailors belong on ships and ships belong at sea."0

There was some kind of selection process that they put you through at New London that eliminated the fainthearted, the not totally committed, guys lacking desire to engage in intimate cohabitation with members of the opposite gender, communists, bedwetters, whiners, and anyone who entertained the slightest desire to be stationed in Omaha, Nebraska.

The system, God bless it, sorted out the true believers and packed the rest off to the surface fleet, Omaha and God knows where else.

And they put us on boats. A lot of us went to old, late in life, boats with combat histories. They were old World War II boats with racks, that once bunked our heroes the men we wanted to be accepted by and to be exactly like. We qualified and in so doing we joined the continuous chain that is and will always be the U.S. Submarine Force.

I don't know what the dreams and aspirations consist of for the young men of today. Ours was a far simpler time. We grew up chasing fireflies, shooting marbles, spinning tops, teaching each other yo-yo tricks, shooting each other with BB guns, playing two hands below the waist tag football, neighborhood kick the can and pick-up-game after school hardball. Nobody cried, tattle-taled or went home to pee.

Back then, you didn't have to have made all 'A's in diathermic razz-a-ma-tazz physics or have a working understanding of the components in the formulation of the universe, to ride submarines.

You had to have an understanding of honor, loyalty, faithfully performed duty, obedience to command, respect for leadership, and total and absolute faith in your ship and shipmates.

Added to these qualities, a true boatsailor had to have a wide-screen sense of adventure and the same brand of curiosity that has lived in the hearts of those in every generation who ventured beyond known limits.

And you had love dancing with the devil. Somewhere, real major-league devil dancing got shot out the garbage gun.

But some things never change. It's still pitch black dark below 150 feet, a boat is always no father than 9 miles from land (straight down) and the skipper's word is law. And so far, every generation has worn the same insignia and nobody ever forgets the hull number of their qual

"There's a sort of fraternity culture on board that would have to evolve, but if destroyers and the space station can be sex-integrated, then so can submarines," Grisham said. Kuntz, who is submarine qualified, said that successful submariners of any gender tend to be shaped by the existing culture more than they change it themselves. Petty Officer 2nd Class Seth Powers, 29, said that even most sailors who think it's a bad idea wouldn't have much choice but to do their jobs. "It would probably work out," Powers said. "I don't see it being impossible. ... People would just get used to it."



Lt. Cmdr. Marilisa Elrod, shown here in Hawaii recently, has a rare distinction: as a doctor and undersea medical officer, she has become submarine qualified in a service that excludes women as crewmembers. Elrod says it would take effort and changes but believes women can successfully serve on submarines.

Confessions of an SSBN Sailor (A letter to my SSN colleagues) by CDR John Elnitsky, USN

Fellow Submarine Warfighters,

Admittedly, I came by it honestly: the concept that SSNs were somehow more prestigious, more glamorous, and even better than SSBNs. Perhaps it was the clichés most of us have heard, "Fast Attack Tough," "SSN: Saturdays, Sundays, and Nights," and "Ain't no slack in Fast Attack" - as opposed to "Boomer Weenies," "Part-time Sailors," and "On patrol going two knots to nowhere." Maybe it was our training pipelines that until recently have been wholly SSN-centric. Even the Prospective Commanding Officer (PCO) course only recently started having SSBN PCOs embark on a TRIDENT submarine for their underway torpedo firings. Out of fiscal necessity, all our programmatic rhetoric justifies the SSN inventory and leaves our junior officers with the misconception that only attack submarines are important.

We may have reached the point where a real dichotomy exists between SSBNs and SSNs. Are SSBNs just this other part of the Submarine Force that we SSN purists tolerate, like F-18 jockeys tolerate their helicopter pilot

boat or the name of their first COB.

There are many common denominators among the worldwide community of undersea sailors.

When the Kursk went down, I was struck and frankly dumbfounded by the genuine outpouring of sympathy for the families and loved ones of the lost boat sailors. To me, they had always been our enemy. Up to then, I had given no thought to the similarities found in our manner of service and the commonality of the danger of operating deep within a hostile environment surrounded by potential death on all sides.

Likewise, I never cease to be surprised by the way that submariners embrace their adversarial counterparts. There appears to be a universal acceptance with implied forgiveness of all German U-boat crewmen.

You never hear the term 'Nazi' U-boatmen. The term 'German' has become substituted for the term 'Nazi'.

America has a short national memory and everybody gets out of the penalty box in one generation.

I sat in a theater rooting for the former 'bad guys' in the film DAS BOOT. What we were seeing on the screen, was a boat full of sons of Hitler sneaking around and sinking our citizens. But the fact that we, having lived a similar life inside a recognizably similar pressure hull, elicited a sympathy and irrational forgiveness. In short, we related to both the characters and their circumstances.

I guess that in the final analysis, all submariners are brothers when you look into the depth of their souls.

That is good. In times of war, nobody who transits the surface of the world's oceans loves submarines.

Submarines and submariners are viewed as implements and practitioners of the black arts backstabbing, bushwhacking sonuvabitches. We slip up from hiding below the waves and blow ships to pieces in a totally unfair, unsportsmanlike fashion. Any way you cut it, that's the way we made our living.

We black sheep we predatory sharks we saltwater sneaky Petes stick together.

We are a very small group when you consider the total world population and the percentage that never had any desire to crawl into a steel tank and sink out of sight.

Submariners, when all is said and done, are special unique people who are the only ones who truly understand each other and ever will.

The old warhorses who fought submarine wars are leaving us. These submersible sea dogs passed down the lethal reputation we carried and the awesome respect our boats were given.

I for one have been both honored and extremely proud to have been a part of this fine body of extraordinary adventurers and patriots.

Nautilus goes under North Pole

counterparts? Have the myths generated a potential schism?

For me, these myths began on my first SSN. On that boat, our Commanding Officer, Navigator, and Engineer were all previous SSBN sailors, but you wouldn't know it. They never wore their Strategic Deterrent Patrol pins and rarely discussed their patrol operations out of Guam. Not the SSN thing to do, I guess? The Executive Officer, who had never been "corrupted" by an SSBN patrol, forbade discussions of "Boooo...ooooomers" at the wardroom table.

Later in my career, I encountered similar attitudes. A senior staff member once told me that "...not much goes on during those Trident refits. It's sort of Sleepy Hollow down there in Kings Bay." More recently, a Captain told me how much it bothered him to see sailors in Kings Bay wearing gold patrol pins (signifying 20 SSBN patrols). Too much time on "boomers" doing the same old thing. And I confess that I unwittingly perpetuated some of those same myths. But I had it wrong, and if you are propagating that same attitude, you may need to reconsider.

I was fortunate to get some great advice about SSBN operations amidst all the sniping. Despite having served entirely on SSNs, I asked for command of a TRIDENT and just recently completed my first patrol. Having learned a lot myself during this first operating cycle, I provide the following perspective to help dispel some of the myths regarding SSBNs.

Myth #1: The SSBN force is comprised of "part time sailors."

SSBN junior officers (JOs) will complete at least five patrols during their first sea tours. On average this amounts to only two weeks less than their SSN counterparts in total underway time. TRIDENT crews prepare for and execute a deployment about every 220 days. Admittedly, it's not a six-month Mediterranean run, but the challenges of preparation and deployment are the same, and the cycle repeats itself more frequently than our current SSN Inter-Deployment Training Cycle.

The "off-crew" period is undoubtedly the most inappropriately named portion of the cycle. It should really be called "off-boat" because in terms of the crew's activity, there is nothing "off" about it. A former SSBN Commanding Officer once told me that he worked his crew very hard underway just to be able to pass the many graded training sessions during off-crew. This may be a little backwards in priorities, but it's somewhat true nonetheless. Because about 30% of the crew turns over between each patrol, we must make full use of the hands-on training opportunities available at the TRIDENT Training Facility to be ready for our wartime mission. The first time I watched our Battle Stations Missile Navigation Team complete the transition to readiness for missile launch in the Strategic Navigation Lab, I realized

The following link will take you to a site that contains a 1958 video narrated by Edward R. Murrow which documents the first voyage of the Nautilus as it traveled from the Pacific to the Atlantic by way of the North Pole.

<http://www.navytv.org/media.cfm?c=435&m=832&s=115&>

Tolling The Boat – Remembrance

Although Armed Forces Day and Memorial Day have passed, I hope to take a moment to remember different things and hopefully, remember those who have come before us.

One of those is remembering 'Tolling the Boats' which commemorates those on 'Eternal Patrol'. This is to remember the history of the Submarine Force and not forget those submariners whose names are engraved on our World War II memorials. During this time 52 submarines are considered "overdue and presumed lost".

Since the birth of our Underwater Navy in 1900, many sacrifices, loss of life, and dedication to duty, have made our Volunteer Service what it is today. These accomplishments did not come easy or without the "Can Do" spirit possessed by those who wear the coveted Dolphin Insignia with pride and dignity.

Japan began the war with 6,000,000 tons of Japanese cargo ships. Of this total, the US Submarine Service is credited with the sinking of 214 Japanese naval Vessels, nearly a third of all Japanese warship losses, and a staggering 1,178 Japanese merchant ships, over half of its total merchants shipping fleet, for a total of 5,631,117 tons. This war against shipping was perhaps the most decisive single factor in the collapse of the Japanese economy and logistic support of the Japanese naval power. But this record only reflects only a small part of the submarine's contribution to America's victory.

However, this success did not come without a high price. During that war, 52 American submarines; 375 officers and 3,131 enlisted men, were lost from the 16,000 men who actually made war patrols. These figures represent a casualty rate of almost 22 percent, the highest loss for any branch of the military.

Submariners quietly paid the ultimate price in the defense of their country, quickly earning them the nickname "The Silent Service". The "Tolling the Boats" Memorial Day Service has been held every Memorial Day since 1977. The tolling of the ship's bell reminds us of the reverence we owe to our departed shipmates to those who guard the honor of our country while serving silently under the sea. The "Tolling the Boats" ceremony formally restates to our officers and enlisted personnel who presently serve aboard US submarines that their "deeds and sacrifices" follow in the footsteps

how challenging and effective these trainers can be. At first, I questioned why we ran such complex and layered casualties. With their multiple anomalies, these training sessions make most engineering drills look like they're moving in slow motion, but they provide the hands-on training that enables us to truly practice like we will fight. This same intensive casualty response drill is also found in the Ship Control Trainers, Tactics Team Training, Sonar trainers, Command and Control Exercises, Piloting Lab, Mariners Skills Labs, and Strategic Weapons Labs, to name just a few.

Myth # 2: SSBN refits are sleepy affairs requiring little effort on the part of the ship.

I had survived several pre-overseas movement up-keeps on SSNs, so I figured how bad could an SSBN refit be? A Selected Restricted Availability (SRA) on steroids is the best analogy to a TRIDENT refit. In addition to corrective maintenance, numerous incremental overhaul work items and a host of pre-patrol tests must be completed during each refit. The average refit easily matches an SRA in man-hours of effort, yet it is accomplished in about half the time.

The TRIDENT Refit Facility completes a refit and gets a ship ready to deploy every two weeks. It takes active involvement of both the Blue and Gold crews to complete the required maintenance and preservation, and if they don't hit the deck running and work together as a team, they quickly find themselves behind the power curve. In the case of the officers, imagine an SSN junior officer who has completed five SRAs and seen most of his ship taken apart and put back together, and you have the equivalent of an SSBN JO's expertise. This experience provides essential skills for these future department heads.

Myth #3: SSBN operations consist of driving around at two knots going nowhere.

The increase in Modified-Alert periods, with more flexible scheduling, has gone a long way to break down the myth of boring underway operations. During my first two weeks underway we acted as the opposition force for a destroyer squadron's undersea warfare exercise, which culminated in a night-time choke-point defense against eight darkened and deceptively lit warships. It proved pretty challenging even for this experienced SSN sailor. We followed that evolution with an open-ocean submarine tracking exercise coordinated with Maritime Patrol Aircraft. As a newly initiated strategic sailor, I didn't think I even needed to be able to spell BULLPEN, much less have to establish one. Fortunately, our JOs were more than up to the challenge. By the time we began our alert patrol, I could easily have forgotten I wasn't on an SSN any more, if not for the Chief of the Boat's reminders that "This is a TRIDENT submarine, not a little boat!" The operations were frequent, tactically challenging, and just plain fun. Alert patrol added a dimension to underway operations that I never experienced on an SSN. In addition to the

of their fellow shipmates who preceded them. This ceremony is a unique and time honored product of the rich heritage of the Submarine Service and is in keeping the finest traditions of the Navy.

This is a formal ceremony, designated to strengthen the bonds of past with the present and honors the memory of those submariners who lost their lives during World War II, as the name of each of the 52 submarines lost during that war, along with the fate of its crew, are read aloud as a bell is tolled for each. A bell is then tolled for the men lost on the submarines Thresher and Scorpion which is followed by a final bell tolled for all our valiant Submariners of the US Navy who lost their lives in the service of their country. In remembrance of our shipmates who have sailed on their "Final Patrol"- You shall not be forgotten. The oceans of the world are littered with the steel coffins that were home to those who served our Nation in war and peace. Their sacrifices should live in our memory forever: Whenever "The Bell is Tolloed" for our lost boats and shipmates, keep one thing uppermost in your minds. No one forced our lost submariners to go to sea on the respective boats to which they were assigned. They went willingly and were proud to serve in an all volunteer service. those who chose to be transferred to other naval activities were not denied that privilege and were relieved of their obligations to further serve on board submarines.

Honor and never forget our fellow submariners who exemplified the courage and desire to put their lives on the line in wartime, Cold War, and peacetime conditions, to preserve the freedom that we as Americans cherish so much.

God bless our submarine navy and God bless America.
Pride Runs Deep

Boat Sailors on Liberty



Crack found in hull of submarine Toledo

challenges found in fast attack operations, SSBN patrols include the requirement to maintain constant communications connectivity, missile system readiness, and navigational accuracy while remaining completely undetected. Couple this with externally-generated round-the-clock weapons readiness tests, "mini-war" exercises with strategic scenarios, and preparations for the next inspection, and you have a good picture of an SSBN on alert. I found I was concerned about issues I never considered on an SSN, such as communications buoy operations, TACAMO aircraft reception paths, ELF connectivity, and Aguada VLF down times. Contrary to the popular misconception that SSBN patrols are boring, my crew and I found the patrol period busy and challenging.

So are SSBN Sailors really very different from our SSN brethren? Maybe we're more just differently evolved than actually different. We maintain our ships as national assets, practice many of the same warfighting skills, and exercise many of the same tactics. The only real distinction is that we've had to learn the additional complexity of operating strategic weapon systems. I tell all my newly reporting Sailors that what makes SSBNs different from the ships they've served on before is that every time we go to sea, we're there to execute our primary, real-world mission. This is not a drill! In deterring the use of weapons of mass destruction, we shoulder a heavy responsibility in our dangerous and constantly changing world.

If we go by current force level plans for SSNs - the schedules for new construction and decommissioning - approximately 42% of submarine commands will be on TRIDENTS by the year 2001. You owe it to yourselves to try one and understand what we do. I'll see you out there. You'll know me. I'm the CO with the shiny new patrol pin.

USS Wyoming Crew Visits Namesake State

Kings Bay, Ga. (NNS) -- Crew members of USS Wyoming (SSBN 742)(Gold) conducted a namesake visit to the State of Wyoming July 16-24.

Cmdr. Diego Hernandez, who will become the commanding officer of Wyoming (Gold) in a change of command ceremony on August 7, joined six other crew members in a number of special events.

On Friday, the Sailors met with Cheyenne Mayor Rick Kaysen and Governor Dave Freudenthal, they also enjoyed a welcome luncheon arranged by the Chamber of Commerce at Frontier Park. The crew made a stop at The Wrangler, a western-style clothing store and Cheyenne landmark since 1892.

On Saturday, the Wyoming Sailors were joined by crew members of USS Cheyenne to participate in Frontier Day, the world's largest outdoor rodeo and western celebration. Both crews marched in the Grande Parade, attended the rodeo and enjoyed a bar-b-que dinner at the Veteran's of

By Andrew Scutro - Staff writer

Posted : Wednesday Jul 22, 2009 19:48:30 EDT

Sailors discovered a crack in the attack submarine Toledo prior to the boat getting underway in Connecticut, which will likely lead to inspections of other submarines, according to a Navy spokesman. Crew members last Friday discovered a 21-inch crack in the topside hull, as well as a corresponding one-inch crack in the pressure hull that would have leaked water if the ship was submerged, the spokesman said. "The submarine was pierside in New London," said Lt. Patrick Evans, spokesman for Submarine Group 2. "The Navy is conducting additional tests to determine the extent of the crack and the proper procedures to repair it."

The width and location of the crack were not yet available.

"After a cause is determined, other submarines will conduct similar inspections," he said.

Because of the one-inch crack in the pressure hull, "water would have entered Toledo if submerged," Evans said.

He said the cracks were found prior to getting underway for local operations.

Toledo is assigned to Submarine Development Squadron 12 and was built at Newport News Shipbuilding and commissioned in 1995.

In 2007, Toledo was one of several Navy ships needing close re-inspections after faulty welds were discovered on non-nuclear internal piping in new Virginia-class submarines.

It is not clear if the recently discovered cracks on Toledo are connected to the problems discovered in 2007.

Other Los Angeles-class subs that needed weld re-inspection were the Oklahoma City and Newport News. As of late May, an investigation by Naval Sea Systems Command into the faulty welds was not concluded.

New Cracks Trouble Sub Overhauled At Newport News Yard

A nuclear submarine that was recently overhauled in Newport News for \$175 million has been sidelined due to the discovery of two cracks in its hull.

Alan Baribeau, a spokesman for the Naval Sea Systems Command in Washington, said crew members of the Toledo, a Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine based in Connecticut, found the cracks Friday.

The Toledo was preparing to go to sea when the cracks were spotted, Baribeau said. Instead, it is staying put at the pier in Groton.

Baribeau said the longer crack, stretching about 21 inches, is on the top of the submarine, in its exterior hull, located behind the sail. Another crack - estimated at about an inch long - was found in the pressure hull, a

Foreign Wars Post 1881.

"This has been a trip like no other," said Hernandez. "The support we feel is amazing. I am absolutely overwhelmed by the support and patriotism of the people of Cheyenne." The crew also traveled to Casper. Where, they visited the USS Barbel memorial; Barbel is one of the 52 lost submarines from World War II. The submarine service suffered the largest loss rate among the armed forces during the war; in recognition each state was assigned a submarine for an official monument (California and New York were assigned two each). The crew also traveled to Buffalo to visit with the residents of the Veterans' Home of Wyoming.

"You always hear about southern hospitality, but what we experienced here has been tremendous. They truly appreciate what we do and that makes it all worth while," said Kelly.

USS Wyoming is homeported in Kings Bay, Ga. It is the fourth U.S. Navy vessel to bear the state's name and was commissioned at Groton, Conn., on July 13, 1996.

American Women Trained To Serve On Subs

Although women are not allowed to serve on U.S. Navy submarines, there are twelve submarine qualified female officers in the navy. That is, they have taken all the training required for someone to serve on a submarine. There is a lot more training on the boat before you become part of a crew. These women are technical specialists, and do serve for short periods on submarines, sharing a two person stateroom. Other navies (Australia, Canada, Denmark, Sweden, Spain and Norway) allow women to serve on subs, but not all of these countries have had many, if any, women actually volunteer for the service. The U.S. Navy has a unique situation, however, mainly the length of the cruises (up to three months at a time for missile subs and a month or so for attack boats). The nations that already allow women on subs, have non-nuclear boats that spend far less time at sea, each time they go out. The women on these sub crews have got used to the lack of privacy, and both genders have adapted, as has been the case with mixed crews on surface warships. But the wives of American submariners have been openly hostile to the idea of mixed male/female crews. What the wives worry about is, well, sex. They know that this takes place on surface ships with mixed crews, and it has caused a few marriages to break up. Service on subs is even more claustrophobic and stressful. And there are far fewer places, compared to surface ships, for a couple to have some clandestine sex. But this sexual activity, even though banned on all USN warships, does happen. There's also the problem of berthing, although other navies have simply put a curtain or two up to separate the male and female berthing. The officers and senior NCOs have shared rooms, and if women are allowed to serve on American subs, it will probably be women officers at first.

layer beneath the exterior. The opening in the pressure hull could have allowed water to seep into the submarine when it submerged.

"Due to the interior crack's small size the amount of water that could enter the hull would be seen as minor weepage," Baribeau said in an e-mailed response to questions.

The Toledo, commissioned in 1995, entered the Northrop Grumman shipyard in Newport News in December 2006 for a period of extended maintenance. It rejoined the fleet in February, almost a year after its scheduled return.

Jennifer Dellapenta, a spokeswoman for the shipyard, said she couldn't speculate on what caused the crack.

"The quality of our work is something we take very seriously and we are working closely with the Navy on this matter," she said in a statement.

Both the Navy and the shipyard said the Toledo's cracks were unrelated to faulty welding jobs discovered aboard Navy subs and ships that visited the shipyard in the past two years. The Toledo passed inspections for welds during the overhaul.

This isn't the first time the Navy has discovered cracks aboard submarines. In the 1990s, Baribeau said, the Florida, a ballistic missile sub, and the Boise, a fast-attack sub like the Toledo, had cracks appear in hull components known as castings. Both boats had castings replaced, and the cracks didn't reappear.

After the Navy determines the cause of the Toledo's cracks, other submarines will be inspected to check for similar problems, he said. Neither Navy nor shipyard officials could say how long it would take to diagnose and fix the Toledo's problems

Military Channel Explores the Fast-Paced Adventures of the Modern U.S. Navy in the Landmark Mini-Series, AT SEA

SILVER SPRING, Md. – The United States Navy has transformed into a sleek, high tech, and forward deployed military asset prepared to assist allies in crisis or strike against enemies at any moment.

In a time of global uncertainty and unrest, the U.S. Navy is in the midst of innovative technological advances that have enhanced the way they protect the seas in the face of an ever-changing enemy. Now, the three-part special AT SEA will allow viewers to experience first hand the revolutionary changes that are currently taking place in the mission, manpower and machinery of this unmatched maritime force. In cooperation with the U.S. Navy, Military Channel cameras were granted access to capture key moments unfolding on the waters around the world, as well as rarely documented operations, weapons and technologies across the breadth of Naval operations. Each hour-long episode focuses on some of the new

Not a lot of men are willing to go through all the training and tests to qualify for a job as an enlisted sailor on a nuclear sub, and probably fewer women are interested.

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!



New Submarine

The only new weapon system authorized by this year's fiscal 2010 Defense Authorization bill is a new class of strategic ballistic missile submarines, dubbed the SSBN-X.

According to a defense source familiar with internal deliberations on weapons systems, Obama administration budget officials were anxious about adding the nearly \$700 million for the new strategic submarine because it runs counter to the president's strategy of seeking the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, as outlined in a speech the president gave in Prague earlier this year. The SSBN-X money is the first sign in pending law that the administration's nuclear free world is not likely until after 2029, when the new missile submarine will be deployed.

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates called the new submarine "a little-noticed initiative" in his speech in Chicago on July 16 that focused mainly on the hotly debated issue of whether to produce more than 187 advanced F-22 jets. The SSBN-X is needed to "sustain and continually improve our specialized strategic deterrent to ensure that our allies' security is always protected against nuclear-armed adversaries," he said.

The real reason for the new submarine funds is more prosaic, according to the source who declined to be identified because of the sensitivity of the information.

responsibilities of the U.S. Navy, as well as new technologies and training necessary to achieve success on the high seas. The visually stunning mini-series AT SEA premieres Sunday, August 9 through Tuesday, August 11 at 10 PM ET on Military Channel.

"No naval force in history has been tasked with such a wide range of missions and the scope of what the U.S. Navy accomplishes is both incredible and inspiring," said Clark Bunting, president and general manager of Military Channel. "Military Channel is honored to present the sweeping documentary AT SEA, which provides a 360-degree look into the skill and bravery that men and women exhibit every day to uphold the freedom of the seas."

The U.S. Navy is a powerful and versatile asset to the seas, and is now responsible for a wider array of missions than ever before. Patrolling the world's oceans, their task is to maintain the freedom of the seas and AT SEA showcases the global role of the U.S. ships, aircraft, sailors and Marines. Many shows have taken viewers inside the technology, but for the first time, AT SEA also takes viewers on a journey through the leadership and management of the U.S. Navy on a global scale. Viewers will hear real-life stories told by the men and women who risk their lives every day to protect and ensure peace on the open seas, and receive a first-hand account of what, why, when and how the U.S. Navy operates from the people comprising the ranks. This comprehensive special features exclusive footage shot by Military Channel's embedded crews aboard U.S. Navy ships. Viewers will dive deep beneath the ocean's surface to explore the latest in attack submarines and fly shotgun in the world's most sophisticated combat aircraft as the U.S. Navy combats piracy, drug smuggling and international terrorism. Each episode explores different units of the U.S. Navy, including the aviation, surface and submarine forces to understand how the teamwork between these units makes for a powerful and unstoppable military force. From counter terrorism operations and anti-pirating task forces in the Gulf of Aden, the U.S. Navy is smarter, stealthier and more advanced than ever before.

AT SEA is produced by Single Malt Media LLC for Military Channel. Brian J. Kelly is executive producer for Single Malt Media LLC, and Jack Smith is executive producer for Military Channel. Clark Bunting is president and general manager of Discovery Emerging Networks.

Lockheed Martin Gets \$92.8M for Integrated Submarine Imaging System

Lockheed Martin Maritime Systems and Sensors in Manassas, VA won a \$92.8 million cost-plus-incentive-fee contract for the engineering services and support of the AN/BVY-1 Integrated Submarine Imaging System

Development of the new submarine class, the first of which will not be built until 2029, is being slightly speeded up because it will be needed not just for the U.S. Navy, but it will also be adapted for use by Britain as a replacement for its four aging Vanguard-class missile submarines.

The British government announced in 2006 that it would spend \$32.9 billion to modernize its nuclear arsenal with up to three new missile submarines that can launch Trident nuclear missiles.

The new class of the Navy's boomer, as missile submarines are called, is expected to cost between \$3.3 billion and \$6.3 billion per submarine, and they will replaced the 14 Ohio-class nuclear missile submarines.

MCPON Works To Revamp Warfare Programs

Seven months into the job, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (SS/SW) Rick West has rocked the service with his first major initiative – calling for enlisted warfare qualifications to become mandatory across the fleet. To make it happen, West has tasked the top sailors in the Atlantic and Pacific fleets to lead development of a plan that will make warfare quals a required part of every sailor's initial sea tour.

Their recommendation must be given to West by late August or early September. West will then submit the proposal to Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead – something West hopes to accomplish quickly. "This is one of the simpler decisions I've made as MCPON, and we're not turning back," West said. "If a sailor has a pin, I can guarantee you they are better prepared to fight. So I believe that every sailor who has access to these programs should be getting qualified. This has been a long time in coming."

West said he believes, when enacted, the program will create an even more professional enlisted work force better prepared to fight, regardless of whether they are in a ship, squadron or boots on the ground in a war zone. And in the next few years, it won't be unusual to see E-4s and E-3s walking around with warfare quals.

Since 1998, all E-5s and above on sea duty without a warfare qualification have had to complete a warfare qualification within 18 months of joining a command – or face advancement restrictions until they did. Many sailors don't make it to a second sea tour, so the program was not mandatory for all.

West is quick to point out that other communities require warfare qualification programs. Navy divers and explosive ordnance disposal technicians complete their warfare quals within two years of joining the fleet. Special warfare operators and special warfare boat operators are awarded qualification badges after training.

In the end, most affected by this move will be first-term sailors on their initial sea tour – the bulk of the enlisted force, said Fleet Master Chief (SW/AW) Tom Howard, at

(ISIS) and for the production of 10 AN/BVY-1(V)1 integrated control and display cabinets.

ISIS integrates visual and digital imagery into submarine periscopes. It provides all-weather, visual, and electronic search, digital image management, indication, warning, and platform architecture interface capabilities for the SSN 688 Los Angeles Class, SSN 21 Seawolf Class, the SSGN Ohio Class, and the SSN 774 Virginia Class submarines, with potential application to the SSBN Trident Class submarines and other submarines.

DID has more on the ISIS and the Lockheed Martin contract...

The ISIS system [PDF] replaces the optical light path of existing submarine periscopes with a system that integrates new periscope mounted high-resolution cameras and fiber optic digital imagery, while allowing images to continue to be viewed via the optical path. A conning officer would manipulate an outboard camera with a joystick while observing the digital video on a computer monitor.

An onboard suite of video processing equipment allows the display and analysis of video images on existing submarine control room tactical displays. The image can be shared with the combat team on various displays aboard the submarine.

The ISIS system provides submarine operators with image enhancement capabilities and analysis tools for both real time and recorded imagery; supplied active and passive range finding control; and recording, storage and recall capabilities for imagery and associated data. Infrared cameras provide enhancements to the images, which can be transmitted off the submarine to other naval and joint forces.

The ISIS architecture enables the addition of future capabilities as they become available, such as technologies developed from the SSN 774 (Virginia) class photonics program.

Lockheed Martin developed the ISIS in collaboration with Kollmorgen Electro Optical in Northampton, MA. Under this contract, Lockheed Martin will provide design, development, testing, reverse engineering, technology insertion/ refreshment, engineering services, field engineering services, and system support for the ISIS. The company will perform work in Manassas, VA (33%); Fairfax, VA (33%); Cape Canaveral, FL (9%); Waterford, CT (6%); Atlanta, GA (5%); Arlington, VA (4%); Northampton, MA (4%); Woodbridge, VA (3%); Johnstown, PA (2%); and Middletown, RI (1%); and expects to complete it by March 2011. This contract was competitively procured with 3 proposals received via the FedBizOpps website by the Naval Sea Systems Command in Washington, DC (N00024-09-C-6247).

Survivor's File

Fleet Forces Command. He and Fleet Master Chief (SW/AW) John Minyard, at Pacific Fleet, are charged with developing the plan.

Those few sailors who go to shore duty first won't be affected until they rotate to sea.

"We are looking to add this on to all the other qualifications that a sailor has to achieve when they first get on board," Howard said.

How much time a sailor has to get his pin remains undecided.

"We need to find the right time frame to complete the warfare qualification; that's one of the main things we need to address this summer," Howard said. "We are not going to push it as far as the submariners with just 10 months to qualify – they have the benefit of going to submarine school where they start the process – we'll be doing it all onboard."

Howard said he expects sailors will have to earn their pins 18 to 36 months after beginning their first sea tour.

Figuring out the consequences

West said he's also not afraid to put teeth into the program – laying out consequences for sailors who fail to comply.

"Yes, we need that, but I want to hear from the fleet and force [master chiefs] on what they think that should be – but we must discuss it carefully," West said. "We have to get that piece right to have an effective program.

"If a sailor is struggling with their quals, then we need to assign them a mentor and work as a team a little harder with that sailor. Some sailors go in front of the board three times before qualifying, and that's OK."

West said he realizes that not everyone will be happy with this decision. He said he's heard the argument that making it mandatory will relegate the programs to mere "checks in the box," causing commands to lower the bar in order to qualify their sailors in time.

"If anyone is worried about the command warfare program becoming watered down, they shouldn't – that is a cop-out," he said. "Those that wear the pins will 'hold the line' to ensure the programs are challenging and will enhance command readiness – but programs should not be impossible, either."

He's also heard concerns that making warfare quals mandatory takes away avenues for sailors to stand out in the crowd – netting them better evals and a better shot at advancement. He disagrees.

"A warfare device has nothing to do with 'breaking' a sailor out," he said. "Hot-running sailors always have and always will find a way to stand out."

For example, West said sailors can go for multiple warfare quals.

"That's how you stand out anyway," he said. "Going above and beyond what's required – without being told."

Both West and Howard said they believe the warfare qual programs don't need to be changed. It's up to commands to execute them properly.

Whether your marriage was in the early days of military service or long after retirement, one of the most difficult situations you'll face is dealing with the death of your retired military spouse. Nothing can make this mission easy, but being prepared can help ensure that you do what you need to when the time comes. Communication and regular updates are key. A file with all the retiree's important papers won't help if it's in an unlabeled file drawer or on a computer protected with a password that your spouse doesn't have. Similarly, funeral wishes can't be followed if the cemetery selected has since closed to new burials. Retirees can use the Casualty Assistance Checklist at

<http://www.armyg1.army.mil/rso/PostRetirement.asp> as a starting point for their survivor's file. Keep in mind that your survivor file needs to fit your Family's situation and meet your Family's needs. Above all, talk about your survivor's file with your Family. Death is a topic most of us tend to avoid – so you need to set a date and time to talk. You might pick a date you want to be sure to remember – like your wedding anniversary. Make this file up-to-date, easily accessible and designed for your Family. Following is information most survivor's files will need:

- Social Security Number & copy of your DD-214
- Numbers to call first:
 - The Army's Casualty Operations Center (1-800-626-3317) to report the death of a retired Soldier.
 - The Defense Finance and Accounting Service's Retired Pay Center (1-800-321-1080) for those receiving military retired pay.
 - The Department of Veterans Affairs (1-800-827-1000) for those receiving VA disability compensation.
 - Local Social Security office for death notification and apply for benefits on your account for survivors.
- Funeral - Who needs to be notified? Also, what kind of funeral do you and your spouse want, do you want to be buried in your uniform, do you want a military honor guard, where do you want to be buried?
- Retired Pay/Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)
 - a.) Include a copy of your latest Retiree Account Statement and highlight the section that shows if you did or did not enroll in SBP and, if you did enroll, what category of beneficiary you enrolled (for example, spouse or former spouse).
 - b.) If you worked for the federal government as a civil service employee, note in your file whether you're receiving separate or combined retirement

Still, West said commands should take the time to review and perhaps improve their existing programs.

"Who do you have running your programs?" West said. "It should be your best people – your strongest chief, your most ambitious, energetic and knowledgeable first class petty officer."

Howard said commands must realize the intent of the programs.

"It's not as if the goal of this is to take an operations specialist out of [the combat information center] and make him go down to the engine room and light off the plant to get the ship underway – that's not going to happen," he said. "But the reality is when a sailor understands how things operate onboard the ship and how everybody's role adds to the effectiveness of that command – that ship becomes a better fighting tool."

West's actions have put a smile on the face of retired MCPON Bob Walker, who pushed mandatory warfare quals for nonsubmarine sailors in the late 1970s.

"This was absolutely what I had in mind when we started down this path in 1978," Walker said on hearing of West's initiative to make the quals mandatory. "It's taken 30 years and it's about time."

Current qualification rules, open to all Sailors

- Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (SW): Mandatory for all active-duty E-5 within 18 months of joining a command; open to active E-4 and below, and reservists. Sailors must be assigned to Type 2 or Type 4 sea duty, or to staffs and commands that deploy aboard commissioned Navy or Military Sealift Command surface ships as members of a military detachment. Reservists must be assigned to units whose gaining command is a Navy or MSC ship or afloat staff. See OpNavInst 1414.1D.
- Qualified in Submarines (SS): Everyone in a submarine rating and assigned to a boat must qualify within 10 months of reporting aboard. Waivers are available for sailors in nonsub ratings who complete the qualification program, earning designator (SG). See MilPersMan article 1220-040.
- Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist (AW): Not mandatory. Sailors must be assigned to Type 2 or Type 4 sea duty, or to staffs and commands that deploy aboard Navy ships whose primary mission is aviation. Sailors who start the qualification must finish within 18 months. See OpNavInst 1414.2A.
- Seabee Combat Warfare Specialist (SCW): Open to any sailor, regardless of rating, assigned to the Seabees. Once enrolled, active-duty sailors have 24 months and reservists 36 months to complete the program. See OpNavInst 1410.1C.
- Enlisted Expeditionary Warfare Specialist (EXW): Mandatory for all active-duty E-5 and above personnel; open to active E-4 and below, and reservists. Sailors must serve under Expeditionary Combat Command on

from the military and civil service and show how this affected your SBP election.

- VA benefits – Are you receiving VA disability compensation? Make sure your survivor's file includes information on any VA payment or claim you've filed with the VA with your VA file number. Even if you don't usually use a computer, you'll want to visit the VA's Survivor page www.vba.va.gov/survivors/index.htm.
- Insurance – Do you have life insurance? Include a copy of your policy and current information on where to call.
- ID cards – Note that your spouse needs to get a new ID card and notify the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) (1-800-538-9552) of your death.
- Finances – Put a copy of your latest bank statement(s) in your file as well as details on any investments and their current value. Also make sure you leave records of any creditors.
- Your will - Where is it? If you were married before – Are any benefits going to your former spouse and children? For example, if your former spouse is your SBP beneficiary, is your current spouse aware of this?
- Do you have a lawyer? Include contact information. Do you have a financial advisor? Include contact information.

VA Parkinson's Disease Program Update 02

On 12 JUL, the House of Representatives unanimously passed legislation authored by Congressman Pete Sessions (TX-32) to recognize and report the results and planned expansion of Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy in Veterans Affairs medical facilities. Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) uses a chamber to administer oxygen in prescribed dosages for a variety of external and internal injuries. The oxygen acts as a catalyst in healing wounds that often fail to respond to other medical and surgical practices and that lack the blood circulation and blood-oxygen levels necessary to heal. The Federal Drug Administration has already approved the use of HBOT for thirteen medical conditions, including non-healing diabetic foot wounds, crush injuries, exceptional blood loss, and tissue transfer for complex wound reconstruction. Under military and VA medical care, HBOT has saved injured service members or veterans from expensive, painful, life-altering, and potentially life-threatening amputation of an arm, leg, hand or foot. Since 2006, Sessions has been actively engaged in researching a new cross-application of hyperbaric therapy to an increasingly- common and life-threatening

Type 2 or Type 4 sea duty. See OpNavInst 1414.7.

- Enlisted Fleet Marine Force Warfare Specialist (FMF): Mandatory for all active-duty E-5 and above personnel serving in units of the Fleet Marine Force on Navy classified Type 2 and Type 4 sea duty for at least 12 consecutive months. Open to active E-4 and below, and reservists. See OpNavInst 1414.4B.
- These qualifications are rating-specific:
- Naval Aircrew Warfare Specialist (NAWS): Sailors must be qualified aircrew members; possess an eligible Navy enlisted classification of 78XX, 82XX, 8401, or 94XX; and be assigned to flying duty in an eligible billet for their NEC. Candidates must complete a positional qualification for the respective aircraft in which they fly within 18 months of reporting to a permanent duty station. See MilPersMan Article 1220-020.
- Diving and Salvage Warfare Specialist (DSW): All Navy divers on their first three-year sea tours must qualify. Divers who become first class divers must re-qualify for DSW at their new qualification level. See OpNavInst 1414.3A.
- Explosive Ordnance Disposal Specialist (EWS): EOD technicians must qualify as a senior EOD tech within 24 months of leaving "A" school. They can compete for master EOD tech qualification after 36 months as a senior EOD tech. See OpNavInst 1414.8.
- Special Warfare Combatant-Craft Crewman (SWCC): The SWCC qualification program is mandatory for all special boat operators. A sailor qualifies for the designator and pin after 37 weeks of SWCC training. See OpNavInst 1414.5.
- Special Warfare Operator (SEAL): SEALs qualify for warfare designation and pin after completing the 70-week training pipeline. See MilPersMan article 1220-231.

non-healing wound: Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).

Currently, veterans suffering from TBI are receiving hyperbaric therapy from only private physicians, and evidence from numerous cases show substantial progress in brain function after treatment. Sessions has met with physicians, scientists, the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and service members regarding the potential of expanding hyperbaric therapy for TBI and PTSD in military and VA medical facilities. As an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2010 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act (H.R.3082), Sessions' legislation requires the VA to submit a report to Congress detailing the current and planned use of the Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy in VA medical facilities, including the number of veterans and types of conditions being treated with HBOT, their respective success rates, and the current inventory of hyperbaric chambers. "My report amendment is the first step toward expanding the use of hyperbaric therapy in military and VA medical facilities," said Sessions.

"An SRA on steroids is the best analogy to a TRIDENT refit"

Dog Days of Summer

