

TORPEDO ALLEY



Vol. 6, No. 12

December 2010

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 page: www.ussvicb.org

National web page: www.ussvi.org

Base Meeting:

No meeting in December

Location:

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

Base Officers	Phone Number
Commander	Paul Viering 843-797-2623
Vice Commander	Carl Chinn 843-875-3098
Secretary	Ed Stank 843- 569-6012
Treasurer	Terry Trump 843-873-9563

Special Officers	Phone Number
Chief of the Boat	Rick Wise 843-875-5559
Public Affairs	Ed Stank 843- 569-6012
Veterans Affairs	Jim Morrison 843-832-9716
Chaplain	John Nichols 843-452-3189
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 803-413-3657
Webmaster	John Nichols 843-452-3189
Historian	George Scharf 843 873-3318

Merry Christmas

Minutes of the November 2010 meeting

Attendance for the November 10, 2010 meeting was 99

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

Introductions: New people introduced. Welcome aboard.

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

Treasurer: Terry gave the treasurer's report.

Storekeeper: POMFLANT Patch is now available for \$6.00. First known patch of its type. **Post meeting note:** Don Mook will be the Base SK starting in January 2011, I will be his assistant.

Chaplain: November Report:

Nick Nichols presented the chaplain report and requested that the membership update their Page 2, get your pictures taken at the conclusion of the meeting and take a look at the website as updates are very frequent.

Cards were sent as follows:

T Nancy Alkire, wife of Rick Alkire, will go into Trident Hospital tomorrow morning for a knee replacement. Jon Sutton is still in the hospital from his surgery on October 28th. There is no word on when he will get to go home. Requesting no visitors at this time but Jon can have phone calls, the number is 958-1208 (Roper Towers) rm 7004.

Walter Job actually had a quadruple bypass. He is home and recovering fine but says there's too much medicine involved. He's up to walking ½ mile at a time.

Linn Rogers had surgery in early October. The surgery went well and he is recovering well. Linn is here tonight. Larry Rosselot's knee and hip replacement went well and he is recovering well. He's walking without assistance. He is teaching tonight and leaves tomorrow for a conference in Virginia.

Jim Loveday is doing well after breaking his wrist. He's here tonight.

Public Affairs: Writing up a story for submission to the American Submariner on the Taste of Summerville "Patriotism in the Park" event.

Scholarship: The USS Cobia model donated by Ken Hutchison will be raffled off at the annual Christmas Party. Tickets are \$5/ea and 6 for \$20.00. Challenge coins used to support the scholarship fund are also available.

Veteran's Affairs: No report

Sub Vets WWII: Next meeting will be informal and to celebrate the upcoming Christmas. The event will take place at Ryan's in Summerville on December 9th. WWII Submarine Calendars and Lost Boat Cards are available for \$8.00/ea or both for \$15.00.

Lee Allison reported on the WWII Reunion held in Kings Bay and had a great experience while touring the USS Maryland. He did report that the reason the security watches were armed was a little known fact it was not to protect them from intruders but was to protect them from the Torpedomen, I mean Machinist Mate (MM) Weapons or whatever the Navy has done to screw-up this fine rate.

Newsletter: No report

Membership: 341 Members which makes us the second largest base, tied with San Diego. 46 members are delinquent on their dues.

Webmaster: The web site has new information on it you need to take a look at it and it is constantly updated with "Flash Traffic".

Vice Commander Report: Last Day to buy Christmas Party tickets is tomorrow, Nov 12 at ceremony in Summerville. Need 3-5 people to help set-up for Christmas party on December 4 @ 0900.

Fleet Reserve: No report

District Commander: A volunteer to serve as the National Storekeeper is needed.

Base Historian: No report

After Battery: No report

Chief of the Boat: Summerville Veterans Day Memorial with the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc Charleston Base as the primary sponsor. Muster at 1000 with ceremony starting at 1030. Lee Allison and Willie Jones will perform the laying of the wreath. A working party is needed to help setup the Gatherings on Saturday December 4th. Contact Carl Chinn or Paul Viering.

The following is a list of upcoming parades we are participating in:

Thursday December 2 @ 1900 – Harleyville Parade

Saturday December 11 @ 1100 – Ridgeville Parade

Sunday December 12 @ 1400 – Summerville Christmas Parade, Bring your children and grandchildren to ride the float.

Base Commander: 1 January 2011 the Submarine Force will go "Smoke Free" on board all units. The USS Michigan is the test boat and has been "Smoke Free" since July 2010.

Starting next year in Charleston a group is putting together an Oral History of the submarine force. Each member giving his story will be given 12 DVDs free of

Little David: Upcoming events”

Berkeley County Tractor Show is November 21 and 22 in Monks Corner. The United States Submarine Veterans, Inc Charleston Base will present the Little David which was restored by in 2004. Need volunteers to present Little David on Saturday and Sunday. The slotted times are 8:30 – 12:30 and 12:30 – 16:00 each day.

Holland Club: The following members are eligible for indoctrination into the Holland Club. If you believe you are eligible, contact the membership chairman, Carl Chinn or the Holland Club representative, John Lookabill. The ceremony will take place in April 2011 at the monthly meeting.

Last	First	Qual Date
Alkire	Richard	08/61
Birdwhistell	Glen	02/59
Bonow	David	06/58
Britton	Thomas	12/60
Campbell	Newell	09/60
Douglass	Peter	07/60
Emerson	Miguel	09/61
Feller	Harry	02/59
Gallagher	Robert	02/60
Higgins	James	09/54
Houston	John	04/61
Hutchinson	Clell	01/61
Keller	James	12/60
Koehler	Richard	06/61
Langley	Robert	10/60
Larsen	Donald	06/61
Lindberg	Thomas	01/61
Londergan	Donald	08/57
Lord	Avery	01/61
McCollem	Robert	01/57
Mills	John	02/60
Pruitt	William	01/59
Saari	David	06/60
Schaffer	Jerome	05/58
Semler	Gary	08/61
Silvers	Monty	09/59
Stump	Richard	03/61
Weaver	William	06/56
Wieda	Thomas	10/59
Wilson	Barry	01/61
Wilson	Murrell	01/56

charge for his personal use.

Inputs for the Distinguished Submariner Award are needed.

The Amberjack memorial will be held the 3rd week in March 2011

Nuclear Historian: Rick Carlson gave an interesting story on the why the next generation.

Old Business: None

New Business: Ken Hutchinson requested that new holiday colors be procured for use at the After Battery during official functions including the Pig Roast, Oyster Roast and Annual Picnic. The motion passed with the cost not to exceed \$250.00

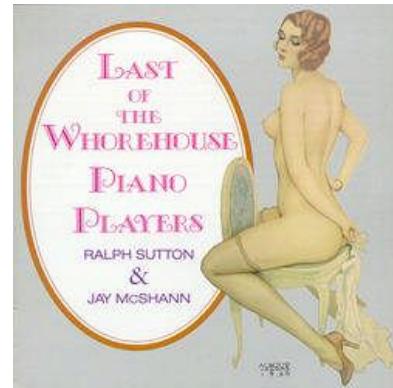
Good Of The Order:

The FRA is hosting an in-house picnic on November 11th and an Army-Navy football game on December 11th.

Donations for the Victory House will be accepted at the Christmas Party.

The next “Honor Flight” will take place in April 2011. This will probably be the last flight from Charleston. The depth charge drawing winner (\$312) was John Lokabill who donated \$150 to the scholarship fund. Thanks John!

The Base Commander adjourned meeting at 1955.



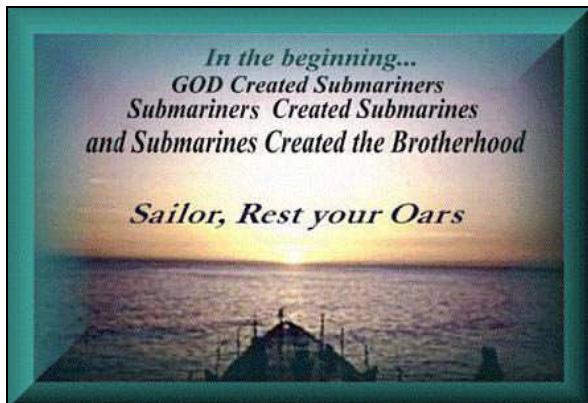
"Don't tell mom I'm a submariner, she thinks I play piano in a whorehouse."



Bailey, R	Baker	Boatwright	Chinn
Clift	Cline	Collins	Curtis, S.
Davis, P	Dygert	Emerson	Evans
Hayes	Helton	Hopkins	Horton, D
Humbertson	Hunt	King	Ougourlian
Rackley	Reid	Samples	Scharf
Schnebel	Semler	Standrich	Trump
Vandiver	Werley	Williams, B	Woodley
Zeigler			

December Submarines Lost:

USS Sealion	SS 195	December 10, 1941
USS F-1	SS 20	December 17, 1917
USS S-4	SS 109	December 17, 1927



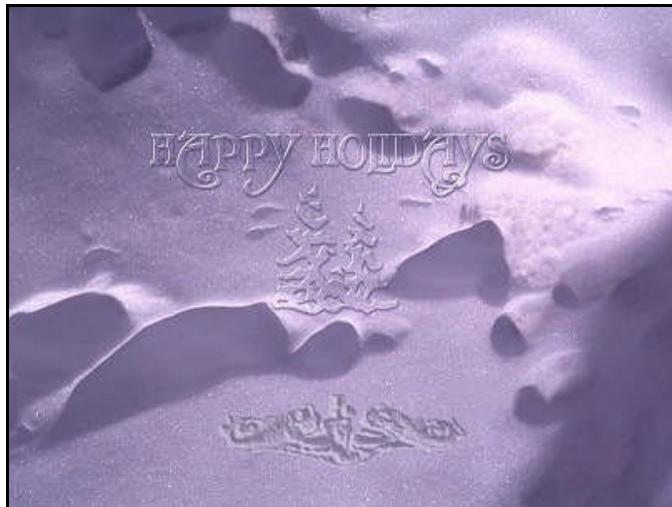
December Happenings!

December 2 – Harleyville Christmas Parade, line up 1800, starts 1900

December 4 – Annual Christmas Party, Gatherings in Dorchester. Cocktails 1700, Dinner 1830

December 10 – Ridgeville Christmas Parade, line up at 1000, starts 1100

December 11 – Summerville Christmas Parade, line up at 1230, starts 1400



Storekeeper Turnover

Beginning January 2011, Don Mook will relieve Ken Fuhr as Base Storekeeper.

Navy Commemorates 50th Anniversary Of First SSBN Deterrent Patrol

By Lt. Ed Early, ComSubGru 9 Public Affairs



Eternal Patrol



MMCS(SS) Richard 'Rick' Waller departed on Eternal Patrol on Saturday, November 13, 2010. Richard "Rick" Waller, 49, of Summerville, died Saturday, November 13, 2010, in a tragic auto accident, with his faithful dog, Sadie, by his side. Rick was born February 2, 1961, in Birmingham, AL, the youngest son of Robert Waller and Margaret Reynolds Waller. Rick served 20 years in the United States Navy as a proud A-Granger, aboard a variety of submarines, retiring in 1999. He qualified in submarines on the USS Nathan Hale (SSBN-623) in 1981 and was a MMCS(SS) when he left the Navy.

BANGOR, Wash. (NNS) -- When the ballistic missile submarine USS George Washington (SSBN 598) departed Charleston, S.C., 50 years ago, it marked the beginning of a new era in strategic deterrence.

On Nov. 15, 1960, the "Georgefish" – a converted attack submarine – began the U.S. Navy's first SSBN deterrent patrol. With her stealth capability and the 16 Polaris missiles she carried, the George Washington provided the United States with a forward presence unprecedented in naval history.

As the Navy celebrates the golden anniversary of the George Washington's historic deployment, the ballistic missile submarine remains a key component of our nation's strategic deterrent. Today, the Navy employs 14 Ohio-class Trident SSBNs in its deterrent force – eight at Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor, Wash., and six at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Ga.

"USS George Washington revolutionized the way we conduct both submarine warfare and strategic deterrence," said Rear Adm. Bob Hennegan, Commander, Submarine Group 9. "The legacy of that first patrol is the strong, capable deterrent force you see in today's Navy."

Commissioned on Dec. 30, 1959, the George Washington was originally laid down in 1957 as the Skipjack-class attack submarine Scorpion (SSN 589). However, the decision was made to add a 130-foot section behind the sail that would carry 16 Polaris A1 missiles, resulting in the world's first ballistic missile submarine.

Following her commissioning, George Washington would successfully carry out the first submerged Polaris launch on July 20, 1960 at the Atlantic Missile Test Range, launching two missiles. Later that year, she left her homeport of Groton, Conn., for Charleston to load her full complement of Polaris missiles.

Cmdr. James Osborn Jr. and his Blue Crew took George Washington out of Charleston on Nov. 15 to begin her historic first patrol, which concluded Jan. 21, 1961 at New London, Conn., after 66 days submerged. George Washington's Gold Crew followed with its first patrol from February-April 1961.

George Washington was the first of the "41 For Freedom" – the Navy's first 41 ballistic missile submarines.

Together, they paved the way for future Polaris, Poseidon and Trident submarines that continue to maintain the nation's strategic deterrent today.

Get Wet With Submarine Tech Photos

By Daniel Terdiman , CNET News.com, July 21st, 2010

In 2007, at the Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding yard in Newport News, Virginia where the first of the next-generation aircraft carrier class, the Gerald R. Ford, is currently under construction the US Navy rolled out the North Carolina, the fourth of the Virginia-class fast-attack nuclear submarines.

Today, the North Carolina (SSN 777) is stationed at the

Rick earned his degree from Limestone University while in the service, and was currently employed by Trident Technical College as Program Leader in Manufacturing, Industrial and Construction Trades. He was a member of the Overton Civic Club and the Submarines Veterans Association. Rick leaves behind his wife, Angie, of 30 years, and their two children, Robert, 28, who is a sous chef with Norwegian Cruise Lines in Honolulu, HI; and Annie, 24, OSSN (SW/AW) US Navy, stationed in Norfolk, VA. He will be deeply missed by his wife; children; father; brothers - Randy and his wife, Becky of Charlotte, NC; and Ron of Hanes City, FL. He was especially close with his brother in law, Jim Bertolini of Stoystown, PA. He leaves behind many nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins, in-laws and friends. We know his darling Mama was waiting for him at the gates of Heaven. Rick was an avid supporter of the military and taking care of the troops.



Robert "Pop" Coley, Sr. SUMMERTVILLE - Entered into eternal rest on Monday, November 15, 2010, Mr. Robert "Pop" Coley, Sr. Residence: 122 Newspring Court, Summerville, SC 29485, formerly a resident of Montgomery, AL. He is the beloved husband of the late Mrs. Julie Mae Coley, his beloved wife for 59 years. Mr. Robert "Pop" Coley, Sr. is a United States Navy Retired WWII Pearl Harbor survivor. He is the beloved father of Robert Coley, Jr. (Sandra), Summerville, SC, Doris Chukes (Frank), Newark, Texas, Jerome Coley of California, Evon Coley of California. He is the beloved brother of Lugenia Robertson of Gulfport, Mississippi. He is the beloved brother-in-law of Dan Robertson of Gulfport, Mississippi and sister-in-law, Agnes Marie Primus of Montgomery, AL. He is the beloved grandfather of eight grandchildren and eight great-grands and a host of family members and friends. The funeral notice is forthcoming. Arrangements by HARLESTON-BOAGS FUNERAL HOME, INC., 121 Calhoun Street, Charleston, SC (Downtown). Established in 1896. Phone: 723-3066. Visit our guestbook at www.postandcourier.com/deaths

New London submarine Base, commanded by Wes Schlauder. The Virginia is the first class of submarines to have true 21st century on-board communications, including a fibre-optic intranet, a server room and large digital screens placed throughout the ship that show what is being viewed through the periscope.

<http://www.zdnet.com.au/get-wet-with-submarine-tech-photos-339304674.htm>



Chinese Navy Jin Class Nuclear Submarine Fired Missile Off So Cal

November 11, 2010: Wayne Madsen

China flexed its military muscle Monday evening in the skies west of Los Angeles when a Chinese Navy Jin class ballistic missile nuclear submarine, deployed secretly from its underground home base on the south coast of Hainan Island, launched an intercontinental ballistic missile from international waters off the southern California coast.

WMR's intelligence sources within Asia, including in Japan, say the belief by the military commands throughout Asia and their intelligence services is that the Chinese decided to demonstrate to the United States its capabilities on the eve of the G-20 Summit in Seoul and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Tokyo, where President Obama is scheduled to attend during his ten-day trip to Asia. The reported Chinese missile test off Los Angeles came as a double blow to Obama.

The day after the missile [off So Cal], China's leading credit rating agency — Dagong Global Credit Rating — downgraded the sovereign debt rating of the United States to A-plus from AA. The missile demonstration coupled with the downgrading of the United States financial grade represents a military and financial show of force by Beijing to Washington.

The Pentagon spin machine, backed by the media reporters who regularly cover the Defense Department, as well as officials of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), and the U.S. Northern Command, is now spinning various conspiracy theories, including describing the missile plume videotaped by KCBS news helicopter cameraman Gil Leyvas at around 5:00pm Pacific Standard Time, during the height of evening rush hour, as the condensation trail from a jet aircraft. Other Pentagon-inspired cover stories are that the missile was actually an amateur rocket or an optical illusion.

There are no records of a plane in the area having taken off from Los Angeles International Airport or from other airports in the region. The Navy and Air Force have said that they were not conducting any missile tests from submarines, ships, or Vandenberg Air Force Base. The Navy has also ruled out an accidental firing from one of its own submarines.

Missile experts, including those from Jane's in London ,

Christmas Party



For those of you who have tickets...

Charleston Base annual Christmas Party will be December 4. Cocktails at 1700, dinner served at 1830. Party will again be at Gatherings in Dorchester, SC. You must have a ticket to attend.

No ticket sales at the door.



Membership and Dues Information:

Your 2011 dues were payable by 1 October 2010. You can pay me at the meeting or send your dues to me. Not sure how much you owe? Just ask me. List posted at the meeting.

The following are on the dink list as of 30 November and will be dropped from National and/or Charleston Base on 1 January:

Abbott	Allegretto	Andersen, D	Cahall
Clift	Douglass	Erickson	Farr, C
Fletcher	Gunnis	Harbison	Hunt
Hunter	Ianuzzi	Kratz	Lavergne
Luttrell	Mason	Minaudo	Morrin
Niebeling	O'Callaghan	Olsen	Ougourlian
Pruitt	Reid	Roehm	Smith
Spagone	Versprill	Watson	Zeigler

Send dues (payable to USSVI) to:

Carl Chinn
217 Brailsford Rd
Summerville, SC 29485-5405

Second Task Force Seeks To Cut Retired Pay

By Rick Maze - Staff writer

Wednesday, November 17, 2010 17:01:47 EST

The military retirement system is under attack from another group trying to cut federal spending, and this time they say they would make the changes apply even to current service members who have less than 15 years of service. In a report released Nov. 17, the Debt Reduction Task Force of the Bipartisan Policy Group recommends cutting military retirement costs in half by

say the plume was definitely from a missile, possibly launched from a submarine. WMR has learned that the missile was likely a JL-2 ICBM, which has a range of 7,000 miles, and was fired in a northwesterly direction over the Pacific and away from U.S. territory from a Jin class submarine. The Jin class can carry up to twelve such missiles.

Navy sources have revealed that the missile may have impacted on Chinese territory and that the National Security Agency (NSA) likely possesses intercepts of Chinese telemetry signals during the missile firing and subsequent testing operations.

Asian intelligence sources believe the submarine transited from its base on Hainan through South Pacific waters, where U.S. anti-submarine warfare detection capabilities are not as effective as they are in the northern and mid-Pacific, and then transited north to waters off of Los Angeles. The Pentagon, which has spent billions on ballistic missile defense systems, a pet project of former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, is clearly embarrassed over the Chinese show of strength.

The White House also wants to downplay the missile story before President Obama meets with his Chinese counterpart in Seoul and Tokyo . According to Japanese intelligence sources, Beijing has been angry over United States and allied naval exercises in the South China and Yellow Seas , in what China considers its sphere of influence, and the missile firing within the view of people in Southern California was a demonstration that China 's Navy can also play in waters off the American coast. For the U.S. Navy, the Chinese show of force is a huge embarrassment, especially for the Navy's Pacific Command in Pearl Harbor, where Japan 's December 7, 1941 attack on the fleet at Pearl Harbor remains a sore subject.

Sub Skipper Relieved in Navy Probe

November 20, 2010

The Day, New London, Conn.

GROTON -- The commanding officer of the USS Memphis has been relieved of duty and 10 crew members removed from the ship while the Navy investigates allegations that the submarine's training examinations had been tampered with.

The commander of Submarine Development Squadron 12 relieved Cmdr. Charles Maher as the commanding officer of the Memphis (SSN 691), a Groton-based Los Angeles-class submarine, on Thursday because of a loss of confidence in his ability to command, the Navy said in a statement Friday.

The Navy also said Friday that 10 Memphis crew members are suspected of tampering with the answer keys used in the engineering department training exams.

Maher was not accused of any involvement in the tampering, the Navy said in the statement, but "his

making three changes:

- Instead of drawing a retirement check immediately after completing active duty, checks would not start until age 57.
- Instead of calculating retirement benefits on the highest three years of basic pay, the highest five years of consecutive service could be used as the multiplier to set amounts.
- A new formula would be adopted for calculating cost-of-living adjustments in military and federal civilian retired pay and Social Security — a formula expected to result in smaller increases by disregarding price increases in some goods and services if people could use a less expensive alternative product or service.

The Debt Reduction Task Force was headed by former Senate Budget Committee chairman Pete Domenici, a Republican from New Mexico, and Alice Rivlin, who was the White House budget director during the Clinton administration. The report also talks of either freezing defense spending or rolling back the size of the defense budget to pre-2001 levels.

Retirement changes are similar, but slightly less drastic, than recommendations made by co-chairmen of another bipartisan group, the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform. That panel also recommended a high-five calculation for military retirement with a revised COLA calculation, but would have made retirees wait until age 60 to draw their first checks.

The Domenici-Rivlin task force calculated \$131 billion in savings by 2040 from the revised retirement plan, but it noted that by postponing the effect on anyone with 15 or more years in the military, the plan wouldn't start achieving real savings until 2017.

The recommendations from the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform co-chairmen, former Sen. Alan Simpson, R-Wyo., and former Clinton White House chief of staff Erskine Bowles, do not include a specific savings estimate from changing military retired pay, instead lumping cost estimates in with changes in federal civilian retired pay.

Additionally, the Simpson-Bowles recommendations do not specifically say whether anyone now in the military would be grandfathered or whether the reduced and delayed retired pay could apply to everyone still in the service. Any change in retirement calculations would require congressional approval, since the formula and timing for payments are set in law.

The two reports are expected to get attention from Congress next year when current lawmakers are faced with drawing up a 2012 federal budget plan after the 2010 elections featured a lot of talk about cutting federal spending.

Sea Water Antenna System

leadership and performance fostered an environment which failed to uphold the high standards of integrity of the Submarine Force and the Navy."

The Navy was not confident that Maher would be able to "improve the command's environment and execute the ship's mission," the statement said.

The 10 crew members were removed from the ship as part of the investigation, said Lt. Cmdr. Mark C. Jones, spokesman for the commander of the Submarine Force. Maher has been reassigned to administrative duties at Submarine Group Two in Groton. Capt. Carl Lahti, recently the deputy commander of Development Squadron 12, now commands the Memphis.

"The ship was safe at all times and remains safe," according to the Navy.

Maher has served on three fast-attack submarines. His first sea tour was as a division officer on the USS Bergall (SSN 667) from 1993 to 1996. He served as chief engineer on the Memphis from 2002 to 2004 and as executive officer on the USS Tucson (SSN 770) from 2005 to 2007.

He was the deputy commander for readiness at Submarine Squadron 19 last year.

U.S. Navy Creating Robotic Warship To Tirelessly Hunt Submarines

When a submarine shows up on the scene, it's a game-changer in terms of naval warfare. Unless a ship has the capabilities to detect a sub — let alone take it out — it's pretty much at the submersible's mercy. With that in mind, the Navy and DARPA are creating a robotic warship that could chase a submarine down to the ends of the Earth. Known as ACTUVs (which stands for — and take a breath before you say this — Anti-submarine warfare Continuous Trail Unmanned Vessel), the autonomous craft would be equipped with sonar sensors and communication equipment so that it could track a sub and constantly relay its position to friendly vessels and sub-hunters. It would also use its sensors and onboard AI to plot its course so that it steers around other ships, not into them.

This would fill a role that's normally a dangerous one for a fleet, which would employ a faster, smaller vessel such as a frigate to pinpoint a sub using sonar or accompanying aircraft, all the while doing its best to stay out of range of the sub's torpedoes. Once dialed in by a ACTUV, a specialized anti-sub warship such as the USS Port Royale, pictured above, could go in for the kill if needed.

If the submarine did happen to destroy the pursuing ACTUV, it would actually only create more problems for it. Not only would there be no loss of life, the burning wreck would be just as handy in marking the last position of the submersible, meaning it would have to expend more of its limited resources in getting out of the area instead of carrying on with its mission.

[Click here: Sea Water Antenna System](#)

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!



Runway Able

Written by Dr. Jack Wheeler

Tinian Island, Pacific Ocean. It's a small island, less than 40 square miles, a flat green dot in the vastness of Pacific blue. Fly over it and you notice a slash across its north end of uninhabited bush, a long thin line that looks like an overgrown dirt runway. If you didn't know what it was, you wouldn't give it a second glance out your airplane window.



The Heroes of Walter Reed

By Scott Eblin Monday, November 8, 2010 11:27 AM
Last week, on a rainy afternoon in Washington, I had the privilege of doing something that I wish every American had the opportunity to experience. Through her company, Hooks Book Events, my friend Perry Hooks arranged to give 200 copies of a new book about women combat veterans called When Janey Comes Marching Home to wounded warriors and their families going through rehabilitation at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Along with the book's author Laura Browder and its photographer Sascha Pfalaeging, Perry and I and a few other folks who were helping out had the opportunity to meet and talk with some of the soldiers and the people who are supporting them.

They're heroes and to explain why they are I want to share a few of their stories with you.

The first soldier I met was a good looking young guy named Jeremiah. He's a National Guardsman from South Carolina and was two months into his first tour in Afghanistan when an IED blew up the vehicle he was riding in. Jeremiah's in a wheelchair and will be for several more months while the damage to his feet is repaired. He joined the Guard to earn money for college and isn't sure yet when he'll enroll but intends to. He had ambitions of going Airborne with the Army but figures his injuries have ruled that out. He also suspects that he won't be carrying 80 pounds of equipment on patrol in the Afghan mountains again. He was deployed to a forward operating base near Kandahar and told me that while he was there you were pretty much guaranteed of being shot at with AK-47's or rocket propelled grenades whenever you left the base. Compared to most of the soldiers I saw in wheelchairs at Walter Reed yesterday, Jason is fortunate because he still has ten fingers and ten toes while most of his comrades in chairs have lost one or both legs to IED's.

Next was Stephanie, a bright and bubbly solider from Delaware assigned to a Civil Affairs unit. She came to Walter Reed in April after the vehicle she was riding in went out of control and ran head-on into a cement wall at 45 miles an hour. Stephanie was thrown into the windshield and suffered severe lacerations to her head, some traumatic brain injury and other injuries that left her in a wheelchair until a few weeks ago. When I met her, she walked into the room on crutches and stood and talked with me for 20 minutes about her career with the Army and her plans for the future. (Honestly, I was worried that I was keeping her standing for too long but she really wanted to talk.) Afghanistan was her third tour to the Middle East following ones in Iraq and Kuwait. She enjoys the work of Civil Affairs and the opportunities to work with soldiers from other NATO countries. She's particularly fond of the French since they're the ones that provided the EMT's that saved her life after the vehicle



On the ground, you see the runway isn't dirt but tarmac and crushed limestone, abandoned with weeds sticking out of it. Yet this is arguably the most historical airstrip on earth. This is where World War II was won. This is Runway Able:



On July 24, 1944, 30,000 US Marines landed on the beaches of Tinian. Eight days later, over 8,000 of the 8,800 Japanese soldiers on the island were dead (vs. 328 Marines), and four months later the Seabees had built the busiest airfield of WWII - dubbed North Field - enabling B-29 Superfortresses to launch air attacks on the Philippines, Okinawa, and mainland Japan.

Late in the afternoon of August 5, 1945, a B-29 was maneuvered over a bomb loading pit, then after lengthy preparations, taxied to the east end of North Field's main runway, Runway Able, and at 2:45am in the early morning darkness of August 6, took off.

The B-29 was piloted by Col. Paul Tibbets of the US Army Air Force, who had named the plane after his mother, *Enola Gay*. The crew named the bomb they were carrying *Little Boy*. 6½ hours later at 8:15am Japan time, the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima.

Three days later, in the pre-dawn hours of August 9, a B-29 named *Bockscar* (a pun on "boxcar" after its flight commander Capt. Fred Bock), piloted by Major Charles

crash. She wants to stay with the Army after Walter Reed but is hoping for assignments in Europe instead of the Middle East.

Accompanying Stephanie yesterday was her youthful looking mom, Paulette. She's at Walter Reed serving in the role of her daughter's NMA - non medical assistant. We were meeting at the Mologne House Hotel on the Walter Reed Campus. It has about three hundred two-bed guest rooms of about 280 square feet each. Many of the soldiers who are at Walter Reed for long term care and rehabilitation stay there. Each of them has an NMA which could be a mom, a dad, a spouse, a brother or sister. While Paulette used to work in a marketing job for a business in Delaware, her full time job now is to make sure Stephanie gets to the three or four therapy appointments that she has every day between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm. Paulette and Stephanie have been at Walter Reed since the accident last April and expect to leave when the rehabilitation program is completed next April or May.

Their stay at the Mologne House will likely be a little shorter than the average. I spent some time talking with Peter Anderson, the manager of the hotel. He told me that the average stay for his guests is somewhere between 16 and 18 months. Peter has been the manager at Mologne since it opened 14 years ago. When he told me how long he had been working there, I noted that he had been in a position to see a lot of history come through the doors. He agreed and listed the different military engagements - large and small - that have led to wounded warriors coming to Walter Reed. I asked Peter what his job was like supposing that it must be both rewarding and emotionally difficult. He agreed but said it was mainly rewarding because of the opportunity to connect with his guests and see the progress they make between the time they arrive and when they leave. It was clear from watching him walk the lobby and work the dining room that Peter knows every solider and story at Mologne. One of the soldiers I saw him embrace with a man hug was a nice fellow named Rafael. My friend Perry had met Rafael on a previous visit to Mologne when he was in a wheelchair. Yesterday, he was on his feet. He was a little unsteady and swaying a bit from side to side but he was on his feet and proud of it. He told us that he had just completed his 29th surgery since coming to Walter Reed and knows a friend who's had 50 surgeries in his time there. Rafael was a golfer before being wounded in Iraq and has recently taken up the game again with the support of volunteers and a special wheelchair that allows the wounded warriors to swing the club. Lately, he's been playing without the chair and told us with a laugh that the last time he fell down was when he was out on the course and lost his balance while trying to crush a drive. He wanted to make sure we knew that he's hitting the ball about 150 yards these days.

People like Jeremiah, Stephanie and Rafael are heroes not

Sweeney took off from Runway Able. Finding its primary target of Kokura obscured by clouds, Sweeney proceeded to the secondary target of Nagasaki, over which, at 11:01am, bombardier Kermitt Beahan released the atomic bomb dubbed *Fat Man*.

Here is "Atomic Bomb Pit #1" where *Little Boy* was loaded onto *Enola Gay*:



There are pictures displayed in the pit, now glass-enclosed. This one shows *Little Boy* being hoisted into *Enola Gay*'s bomb bay.



And here on the other side of ramp is "Atomic Bomb Pit #2" where *Fat Man* was loaded onto *Bockscar*.



just because they chose to serve their country but because, after being wounded doing so, they are approaching their life after with quiet courage, grit and grace. People like Paulette and all the moms and dads, spouses and siblings who are serving as NMA's are heroes too. With their sacrificial love and care for their soldiers, they, too, are serving their country. For bringing compassion and connection to his work, Peter is a hero as well. His passion for his job and his guests makes an incredibly difficult time in their lives more bearable.

With all of the chatter and noise in our public discourse today, it's too easy to view the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as just more headlines in our busy lives. With less than 2% of Americans serving in our armed forces, it's too easy for the 98% of us who don't to forget what they're doing for us. I'm grateful for the opportunity I had yesterday to be reminded of that and understand it in a different way. I'm grateful for their service and that of their families. I'm sure you are too. There are lots of ways you can show that gratitude. To get you started, here's a link to the web site for the Wounded Warrior Project. If you have other suggestions for how we can support our troops and their families, please share them in the comments.

A Tribute To Chief Petty Officers

** Editor's Note**

Rodney: This may be a repeat from sometime in the last 6 years.

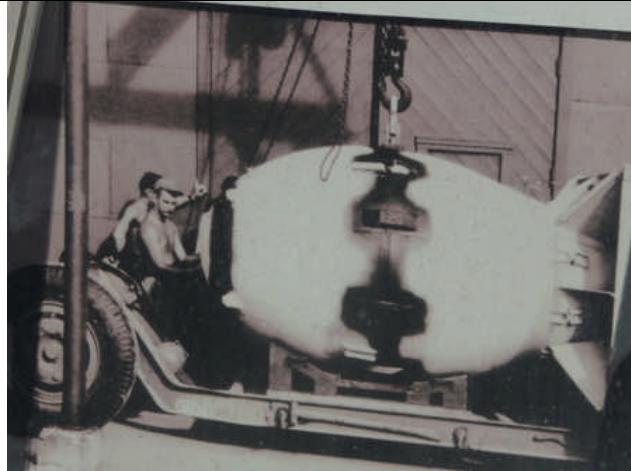
CPO Standards

Never forget this, a Chief can become an Officer, but an Officer can never become a Chief. We have our standards! Recollections of a WHITEHAT.

"One thing we weren't aware of at the time, but became evident as life wore on, was that we learned true leadership from the finest examples any lad was ever given, Chief Petty Officers. They were crusty old bastards who had done it all and had been forged into men who had been time tested over more years than a lot of us had time on the planet. The ones I remember wore hydraulic-oil-stained hats with scratched and dinged-up insignia, faded shirts, some with a Bull Durham tag dangling out of their right-hand pocket or a pipe and tobacco reloads in a worn leather pouch in their hip pockets, and a Zippo that had been everywhere. Some of them came with tattoos on their forearms that would force them to keep their cuffs buttoned at a Methodist picnic.

Most of them were as tough as a boarding house steak. A quality required to survive the life they lived. They were, and always will be, a breed apart from all other residents of Mother Earth. They took eighteen year old idiots and hammered the stupid bastards into sailors.

You knew instinctively it had to be hell on earth to have been born a Chief's kid. God should have given all sons born to Chiefs a return option.

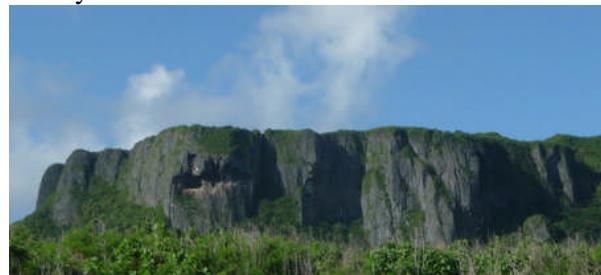


The commemorative plaque records that 16 hours after the nuking of Nagasaki, "On August 10, 1945 at 0300, the Japanese Emperor without his cabinet's consent decided to end the Pacific War."

Take a good look at these pictures, folks. This is where World War II ended with total victory of America over Japan. I was there all alone. There were no other visitors and no one lives anywhere near for miles. Visiting the Bomb Pits, walking along deserted Runway Able in solitude, was a moment of extraordinarily powerful solemnity.

It was a moment of deep reflection. Most people, when they think of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, reflect on the numbers of lives killed in the nuclear blasts - at least 70,000 and 50,000 respectively. Being here caused me to reflect on the number of lives *saved* - how many more Japanese and Americans would have died in a continuation of the war had the nukes not been dropped. Yet that was not all. It's not just that the nukes obviated the US invasion of Japan, Operation Downfall, that would have caused upwards of a million American and Japanese deaths or more. It's that *nuking Hiroshima and Nagasaki were of extraordinary humanitarian benefit to the nation and people of Japan*.

Let's go to this cliff on the nearby island of Saipan to learn why:



Saipan is less than a mile north of Tinian. The month before the Marines took Tinian, on June 15, 1944, 71,000 Marines landed on Saipan. They faced 31,000 Japanese soldiers determined not to surrender.

Japan had colonized Saipan after World War I and turned the island into a giant sugar cane plantation. By the time of the Marine invasion, in addition to the

A Chief didn't have to command respect. He got it because there was nothing else you could give them. They were God's designated hitters on earth.

We had Chiefs with fully loaded Submarine Combat Patrol Pins, and combat air crew wings in my day...hardcore bastards who remembered lost mates, and still cursed the cause of their loss...and they were expert at choosing descriptive adjectives and nouns, none of which their mothers would have endorsed.

At the rare times you saw a Chief topside in dress canvas, you saw rows of hard-earned, worn, and faded ribbons over his pocket. "Hey Chief, what's that one and that one?" "Oh hell, kid, I can't remember. There was a war on. They gave them to us to keep track of the campaigns." "We didn't get a lot of news out where we were. To be honest, we just took their word for it. Hell son, you couldn't pronounce most of the names of the places we went. They're all depth charge survival geedunk." "Listen kid, ribbons don't make you a Sailor." We knew who the heroes were, and in the final analysis that's all that matters.

Many nights, we sat in the after mess deck wrapping ourselves around cups of coffee and listening to their stories. They were light-hearted stories about warm beer shared with their running mates in corrugated metal sheds at resupply depots where the only furniture was a few packing crates and a couple of Coleman lamps. Standing in line at a Honolulu cathouse or spending three hours soaking in a tub in Freemantle, smoking cigars, and getting loaded. It was our history. And we dreamed of being just like them because they were our heroes. When they accepted you as their shipmate, it was the highest honor you would ever receive in your life. At least it was clearly that for me. They were not men given to the prerogatives of their position.

You would find them with their sleeves rolled up, shoulder-to-shoulder with you in a stores loading party. "Hey Chief, no need for you to be out here tossin' crates in the rain, we can get all this crap aboard."

"Son, the term 'All hands' means all hands."

"Yeah Chief, but you're no damn kid anymore, you old coot."

"Horsefly, when I'm eighty-five parked in the stove up old bastards' home, I'll still be able to kick your worthless butt from here to fifty feet past the screw guards along with six of your closest friends." And he probably wasn't bullshitting.

They trained us. Not only us, but hundreds more just like us. If it wasn't for Chief Petty Officers, there wouldn't be any U.S. Navy. There wasn't any fairy godmother who lived in a hollow tree in the enchanted forest who could wave her magic wand and create a Chief Petty Officer. They were born as hot-sacking seamen, and matured like good whiskey in steel hulls over many years. Nothing a nineteen year-old jay-bird could cook up was original to these old saltwater owls. They had seen E-3 jerks come

31,000 entrenched soldiers, some 25,000 Japanese settlers were living on Saipan, plus thousands more Okinawans, Koreans, and native islanders brutalized as slaves to cut the sugar cane.

There were also one or two thousand Korean "comfort women" (*kanjiin* Japanese), abducted young women from Japan's colony of Korea to service the Japanese soldiers as sex slaves. (See The Comfort Women: Japan's Brutal Regime of Enforced Prostitution in the Second World War, by George Hicks.)

Within a week of their landing, the Marines set up a civilian prisoner encampment that quickly attracted a couple thousand Japanese and others wanting US food and protection. When word of this reached Emperor Hirohito - who contrary to the myth was in full charge of the war - he became alarmed that radio interviews of the well-treated prisoners broadcast to Japan would subvert his people's will to fight.

As meticulously documented by historian Herbert Bix in Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan, the Emperor issued an order for all Japanese civilians on Saipan to commit suicide. The order included the promise that, although the civilians were of low caste, their suicide would grant them a status in heaven equal to those honored soldiers who died in combat for their Emperor. And that is why the precipice in the picture above is known as Suicide Cliff, off which over 20,000 Japanese civilians jumped to their deaths to comply with their fascist emperor's desire - mothers flinging their babies off the cliff first or in their arms as they jumped.

Anyone reluctant or refused, such as the Okinawan or Korean slaves, were shoved off at gunpoint by the Jap soldiers. Then the soldiers themselves proceeded to hurl themselves into the ocean to drown off a sea cliff afterwards called Banzai Cliff. Of the 31,000 Japanese soldiers on Saipan, the Marines killed 25,000, 5,000 jumped off Banzai Cliff, and only the remaining thousand were taken prisoner.

The extent of this demented fanaticism is very hard for any civilized mind to fathom - especially when it is devoted not to anything noble but barbarian evil instead. The vast brutalities inflicted by the Japanese on their conquered and colonized peoples of China, Korea, the Philippines, and throughout their "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" was a hideously depraved horror.

And they were willing to fight to the death to defend it. So they had to be nuked. The only way to put an end to the Japanese barbarian horror was unimaginably colossal destruction against which they had no defense whatever. Nuking Japan was not a matter of justice, revenge, or it getting what it deserved. It was the only way to end the Japanese dementia.

And it worked - for the Japanese. They stopped being barbarians and started being civilized. They achieved more prosperity - and peace - than they ever knew, or

and go for so many years, they could read you like a book. "Son, I know what you are thinking. Just one word of advice. DON'T. It won't be worth it."

"Aye, Chief."

Chiefs aren't the kind of guys you thank. Monkeys at the zoo don't spend a lot of time thanking the guy who makes them do tricks for peanuts.

Appreciation of what they did, and who they were, comes with long distance retrospect. No young lad takes time to recognize the worth of his leadership. That comes later when you have experienced poor leadership or let's say, when you have the maturity to recognize what leaders should be, you find that Chiefs are the standard by which you measure all others.

They had no Academy rings to get scratched up. They butchered the King's English. They had become educated at the other end of an anchor chain from Copenhagen to Singapore . They had given their entire lives to the U.S. Navy. In the progression of the nobility of employment, Chief Petty Officer heads the list. So, when we ultimately get our final duty station assignments and we get to wherever the big Chief of Naval Operations in the sky assigns us, if we are lucky, Marines will be guarding the streets. I don't know about that Marine propaganda bullshit, but there will be an old Chief in an oil-stained hat and a cigar stub clenched in his teeth standing at the brow to assign us our bunks and tell us where to stow our gear... and we will all be young again, and the damn coffee will float a rock.

Life fixes it so that by the time a stupid kid grows old enough and smart enough to recognize who he should have thanked along the way, he no longer can. If I could, I would thank my old Chiefs. If you only knew what you succeeded in pounding in this thick skull, you would be amazed. So, thanks you old casehardened, unsalvageable sons-of-bitches. Save me a rack in the berthing compartment."

Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass. It's about learning to dance in the rain.



could have achieved had they continued fighting and not been nuked. The shock of getting nuked is responsible. We achieved this because we were determined to achieve victory. Victory without apologies. Despite perennial liberal demands we do so, America and its government has never apologized for nuking Japan. Hopefully, America never will.

Note: Tinian and Saipan, along with a third island, Rota, form a very interesting political jurisdiction, *The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands* or CNMI, which both is and is not a part of the U.S. It is directly north of Guam (the islands north of Saipan are currently uninhabited):



