

TORPEDO ALLEY



Vol. 7, No. 6

June 2011

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 Government”



Base Meeting:

June 9, 2011 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

<u>Special Officers</u>		<u>Phone Number</u>
Chief of the Boat	Rick Wise	843-875-5559
Public Affairs	Gary Williams	843-873-9161
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	Julian Villegas	843-871-6135
Newsletter	Carl Chinn	843-875-3098
Storekeeper	Don Mook	843-245-2005
Webmaster	Nick Nichols	843-452-3189
Historian	George Scharf	843 873-3318

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

Minutes of the May 2011 meeting

Attendance for the May 12, 2011 meeting was 107

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

Introductions: New people introduced. Dennis McFarland, Brian Daugherty, Roy de la Garza, Ernie Tayao, Joe Hays, Adam Vieux. 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 Trump gave a combined Base financial report for March and April 2011.

Vice Commander: Carl Chinn talked about the USSVI Southeast Regional convention in Ocala Florida that was held 28 April thru 1 May 2011. We had 12 Charleston Base members that attended. The Sea Dragon Base put on an excellent memorial service. Those not there missed a very good convention and a lot of fun.

Storekeeper: New guys here tonight get your vests ordered, patches etc. or go to base website I can get things ordered, you don't have to wait until the next meeting to order.

Chaplain: Nick Nichols presented the May report.

- Marty Sessler had a total knee replacement on April 14th. he is recovering at home with outpatient rehab.
- Don Heinle's wife, Barbara, had major surgery on April 28th. The surgery went extremely well and she is home recovering. Her cancer was downgraded from Stage IV to Stage II. She will be having chemo in the near future.
- Dave Hansen's wife, Lorry, had a hospital stay in mid-April.
- Harry Nettle's mother is now under hospice care and not expected to live much longer.
- Terry Sickie is recovering from minor surgery.
- Lee Allison has had a lot of problems with arthritis in his hips.
- Rick Collin's wife, Colleen, had emergency surgery for a blood clot in her arm on May 2nd. She may never get full use of her hand back. They have lots of Doctors visits scheduled both on and off base with different Doctors. All prayers are appreciated.
- George Henson, member of Groton Base, has stage IV cancer.
- Clyde Peters was released from Trident Hospital on Monday. He is at White Oak Manor for rehab, room 404, phone 797-8282. Calls/visitors welcome. He is doing much better.
- EMCS(SS) Ret. Roger Qualls from Goose Creek departed on Eternal Patrol on February 21, 2011. He was not a member of Charleston Base. Rodger was a WWII vet, serving on a heavy cruiser where he survived her sinking in 1942. Rodger served as COB on USS CORPORAL (SS-346) in 1961-62.
- Ed Stank's wife, Pauline, has been placed on the waiting list for a lung transplant as of 5.6.11. General wait time is about 19 days so they are expecting something to happen around the week of May 23rd. In an email today Ed said: Last night we were called to Duke Hospital for a possible transplant. Unfortunately, the lungs recovered were not suitable. But this is a good sign since we were just listed last Friday. Thanks for all your prayers and thoughts.
- Harry Kirk's wife, Jacqueline, had surgery today. Have not heard of her condition as yet.
- One of our own, CDR John Helton, US Coast Guard, previously an ETC(SS), will retire tomorrow morning at 1000 in the old FBMSTC Auditorium.

Please have your pictures taken for the web site and also go there to complete your Page 2 for the Chaplain.

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.

After Battery Rep: Thom Beach has After Battery patches, koozies and hats for sale at the table by the front.

Public Affairs: No report

Scholarship: Julian Villegas has received 6 applications and will award CB scholarships in June

Veteran's Affairs: No report

Little David: Rick Wise reports that the Little David is ready for the tourist season. Thank you to those who helped. Some rotten wood will have to be replaced next April. On June 25th the Berkeley County Museum will dedicate a Confederate Memorial and would like a Little David presentation. Due to lack of sponsors the museum will no longer run the tractor and engine shows.

Holland Club: If there are any inductees who have not received their awards see John Lookabill after the meeting.

SUBVETS WWII: WWII dues are renewable now, associate members see Mike Emerson. Next WWII Swamp Fox chapter meeting will be 16 June.

Historian: No report

Recreation Committee: The base picnic will be Saturday 21 May at Buddha's, eating starts at 1300. Need volunteers to flip hamburgers and roll hotdogs.

District Commander: No report

Base Commander: Denizens of the Deep base will hold the GA/SC all base get together on Saturday 18 June at noon.

Nov 2-6, 2011 WWII Memorial Service events at Kings Bay. Applications on the web.

Nuclear Historian: Rick Carlson told a good story about the Chinaman's brother who contracted Mongolian V.D.

Fleet Reserve: 21 May at 8 am car wash/bake sale at the Lowcountry Home proceeds go to Honor Flight. In August will burn mortgage for Lowcountry Home. Thurs 19 May @ 6:30 Fort Dorchester High School, FRA will award scholarship for Essay Contest. Any subvet can join the Fleet Reserve.

Chief of the Boat: Memorial Day Service at Park's Cemetery in Summerville starts at 10:30. Muster time 10:00, uniform is vest uniform. Working party for setup for picnic will start @ 12 noon on Wed 18 May. E-mail will be put out on this.

Old Business: None

New Business: Base elections were held for Base Commander and Base Treasurer. Paul Viering will remain the Base Commander and Terry Trump the Base Treasurer.

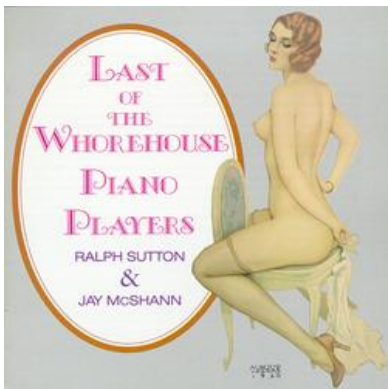
Good Of The Order: MUSC Children's Hospital, Child Life Department sent a letter of appreciation thanking the base for the caps4kids program visit.

Gary Semler talked about his experience with the Honor Flight and read a thank you card from a WWII honor flight veteran. Both expressed what a rewarding experience the flight and homecoming reception held Saturday night was for them. We have 9 or 10 members of the Base who have gone as honor guards. Next Lowcountry Honor flight will be around May next year per Mike Emerson. For more info regarding Honor Flight, <http://www.honorflight.org/>.

Some discussion on procedure for future base elections

Depth charge drawing winner was Ken Hutchinson who donated \$100 to the building fund.

Meeting Adjourned: The Base Commander adjourned the meeting.



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

June Submarines Lost:

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

*There is a port of no return, where ships
May ride at anchor for a little space
And then, some starless night, the cable slips,
Leaving an eddy at the mooring place . . .
Gulls, veer no longer. Sailor, rest your oar.
No tangled wreckage will be washed ashore.*

June Happenings

June 9– Monthly meeting

June 14 – Flag Day

The History Of Flag Day

The Fourth of July was traditionally celebrated as America's birthday, but the idea of an annual day specifically celebrating the Flag is believed to have first originated in 1885. BJ Cigrand, a schoolteacher, arranged for the pupils in the Fredonia, Wisconsin Public School, District 6, to observe June 14 (the 108th anniversary of the official adoption of The Stars and Stripes) as 'Flag Birthday'. In numerous magazines and newspaper articles and public addresses over the following years, Cigrand continued to enthusiastically advocate the observance of June 14 as 'Flag Birthday', or 'Flag Day'.

On June 14, 1889, George Balch, a kindergarten teacher in New York City, planned appropriate ceremonies for the children of his school, and his idea of observing Flag Day was later adopted by the State Board of Education of New York. On June 14, 1891, the Betsy Ross House in Philadelphia held a Flag Day celebration, and on June 14 of the following year, the New York Society of the Sons of the Revolution, celebrated Flag Day.

Following the suggestion of Colonel J Granville Leach (at the time historian of the Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the Revolution), the Pennsylvania Society of Colonial Dames of America on April 25, 1893 adopted a resolution requesting the mayor of Philadelphia and all others in authority and all private citizens to display the Flag on June 14th. Leach went on to recommend that thereafter the day be known as 'Flag Day', and on that day, school children be assembled for appropriate exercises, with each child being given a small Flag.



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

Two weeks later on May 8th, the Board of Managers of the Pennsylvania Society of Sons of the Revolution unanimously endorsed the action of the Pennsylvania Society of Colonial Dames. As a result of the resolution, Dr. Edward Brooks, then Superintendent of Public Schools of Philadelphia, directed that Flag Day exercises be held on June 14, 1893 in Independence Square. School children were assembled, each carrying a small flag, and patriotic songs were sung and addresses delivered.

In 1894, the governor of New York directed that on June 14 the flag be displayed on all public buildings. With B.J. Cigrand and Leroy Van Horn as the moving spirits, the Illinois organization, known as the American Flag Day Association, was organized for the purpose of promoting the holding of Flag Day exercises. On June 14th, 1894, under the auspices of this association, the first general public school children's celebration of Flag Day in Chicago was held in Douglas, Garfield, Humboldt, Lincoln, and Washington Parks, with more than 300,000 children participating.

Adults, too, participated in patriotic programs. Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior, delivered a 1914 Flag Day address in which he repeated words he said the flag had spoken to him that morning: "I am what you make me; nothing more. I swing before your eyes as a bright gleam of color, a symbol of yourself."

Inspired by these three decades of state and local celebrations, Flag Day - the anniversary of the Flag Resolution of 1777 - was officially established by the Proclamation of President Woodrow Wilson on May 30th, 1916. While Flag Day was celebrated in various communities for years after Wilson's proclamation, it was not until August 3rd, 1949, that President Truman signed an Act of Congress designating June 14th of each year as National Flag Day.

First Female Students Report to Submarine School

By Commander, Submarine Forces Public Affairs, May 6, 2011

NORFOLK, Va. - Eight female officers selected for assignment to submarines will report May 9, 2011 to the Submarine Officer Basic Course (SOBC) in Groton, Conn. for initial submarine training. These female officers will join 74 male counterparts to make up SOBC Class 10040. The officers are among 18 women from the U.S. Naval Academy, Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) and Officer Candidate School (OCS) commissioning programs who were selected last year to enter the submarine service. Female SOBC graduates will be assigned to eight different crews of guided-missile and ballistic-missile submarines once they have completed their training program including six months of Nuclear Power School, six months of Naval Nuclear Prototype Training and 10 weeks of SOBC.

USS Lagarto Servicemen Honored

Ceremony held 60 years later WLUK-TV, May 9, 2011
MANITOWOC - The city of Manitowoc is paying tribute to service members who served on submarines built in Manitowoc.

A remembrance ceremony was held Saturday for those who served and lost their lives on the USS Lagarto.

The Lagarto was built by the Manitowoc Shipbuilding Company. The submarine was launched in 1944.

The submarine was last heard from in May of 1945. USS Lagarto was one of 28 submarines built by the Manitowoc Shipbuilding Company during World War II. Lagarto was on her second war patrol when she sank just weeks before the end of the war with 86 seamen aboard.

For 60 years, the sub was lost in the Pacific Ocean, her final resting place unknown. It was discovered in the Gulf of Thailand six years ago.

The names of 86 men who were on board the sub were read as part of the ceremony.

The ceremony was part of the Wisconsin Maritime Museum's 28 boat reunion.

The Lagarto was one of 28 submarines built in Manitowoc during World War II.

Video: <http://www.fox11online.com/dpp/news/uss-lagarto-servicemen-honored>

May 10, 1960: USS Triton Completes First Submerged Circumnavigation

By Tony Long, Wired, May 10, 2011

The USS Triton, a nuclear-powered radar picket submarine, arrives in Groton, Connecticut, after completing the first completely submerged circumnavigation of Earth. It spends 60 days, 21 hours under water.

The Triton put to sea Feb. 15, and the crew was told to prepare to stay out longer than normal. Still submerged, the boat reached St. Peter and St. Paul Rocks in the mid-Atlantic east of Brazil on Feb. 24, where the men on board were informed of the Navy's plans.

In the following weeks, Triton rounded Cape Horn, crossed the Pacific and Indian oceans, then slipped past the Cape of Good Hope and into the Atlantic, reaching St. Peter and Paul Rocks on April 10.

The boat did surface once, briefly, to transfer a sick sailor to the heavy cruiser USS Macon, but this was not considered a break in the submerged circumnavigation. In practical terms, the Triton's accomplishment demonstrated the submerged endurance capabilities of modern submarines, while enhancing U.S. military prestige. The boat also returned with new oceanographic data. The boat's commander, Capt. Edward Beach, received the Legion of Merit from President Dwight D. Eisenhower, and the Triton was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation.

Vivid Tale of Submarine

From St. Joseph Gazette, Missouri: date unknown, boat unknown

Editor's note: This article was found in my wife's mother's scrapbook where she kept many articles about local soldiers and sailors during WWII.

As an apprentice in The Gazette composing room, Fred W. Clouse thought he had experienced some heat in the summertime, and when things happened in a hurry he thought he knew something about tight spots, but his first real lessons came after he went into the navy and was assigned to a submarine. Mr. Clouse went into the navy two and a half years ago, after a year with the Gazette. He's home on leave now and visiting his wife and baby daughter, who are staying in Mound City. Mr. Clouse had charge of a torpedo section on his submarine. He is a son of Mrs. Lala Clouse, New Hampton, MO., and has brother in the navy, George Clouse. His navy rating is torpedoman first class. Following is Mr. Clouse's story of one fearful week: On South Pacific Cruise

"It was a bright moonlight night, such as can only be found in the south Pacific, the moon making it as bright as day. My sub had so far had a normal patrol run, sinking and damaging a few ships. We were cruising on the surface, charging batteries and enjoying the fresh air. I had just relieved the torpedo tube watch and had settled down to read a good book when all of a sudden the ship gave a big lunge, hesitated, and then lunged again.

"I heard a noise which sounded like all hell had broken loose in the after end of my compartment. I jumped up and started to run aft, but, believe it or not, three other fellows were out of their bunks and through the hatch before me. (I always considered myself fast.) When I reached the officers' quarters my senses prompted me and I turned and went back to see what the damage was. The chief torpedoman and myself found that it was nothing to hinder the operation of the ship, so we stood by to do whatever was necessary to get off the shoal on which we were grounded.

"It was 12:20 when we hit. All engines were running at full speed trying to back us off the uncharted shoal, which was only about 10 miles from a big Jap airbase. We worked at top speed until we had thrown some of our loose gear over and had blown a considerable amount of fuel overboard. At about 4 a.m. she shot loose from what everyone was thinking would surely be a death trap or at least a trip to a Jap prison camp.

"All the men were pretty nervous and excited for a few hours following but were soon settled down to routine duties again.

Waited For Bigger Prey

"Two days and nights passed and everyone was in high spirits because we were headed toward our home base.

On the third morning we submerged for the regular day's run. Everything was fine until about 9 a.m. when we spotted a destroyer on the horizon. We didn't attack because the captain figured there would be a larger ship along shortly.

"About 10 a.m. along came a big merchant ship, upon which we fired with the greatest of pleasure. Then, to our sorrow, the destroyer came rushing back at us and let go with six large depth charges, which gave us a severe jolting, broke most of our lights, and started quite a few leaks through the ship. They also started an air leak, which sent a continuous string of telltale bubbles to the surface, guiding the enemy right to our whereabouts. They blasted away at us with over two score of depth charges, each one driving us farther and farther until we were at twice the depth our ship was tested to.

"At the end of about 18 hours the air began to get bad so we spread soda lime through the compartments to absorb carbon dioxide and at the same time bleed oxygen into the boat. This was a big relief, but the pressure was becoming great and caused the temperature to shoot up to around 120 degrees. During this time the water was slowly seeping in until two compartments were flooded above the decks and we were running a bucket brigade to keep the water out of another compartment so it wouldn't flood our main motors.

Situation Was Desperate

"all of this flooding had caused us to take on such a terrible angle that it was difficult to move from aft to forward without pulling yourself along by your hands. The air was so bad that you could only walk about 20 feet at a time without stopping to rest and get your breath. Everywhere you looked you could see men lying on wet decks or anywhere possible. All were dripping with perspiration and gasping for a good breath of air. "I'm sure that one breath of good air would have sold for an enormous price down there at that time.

"As we went about our necessary jobs I noticed that each man would try to help the other one feel a little better by saying something and trying to smile, but everyone knew what each was really thinking because we all had practically the same thought — our loved ones at home; would we ever see them again?

"About daybreak of the second day the destroyer had exhausted his load of depth charges but, to our great sorrow, another came to relieve him. Then came more charges.

Mouse Under Nip Paws

By the end of 28 to 30 hours the men were giving up hope of ever seeing the surface again. Our batteries tested zero and the little yellow Nips still had us under their paw, just as a cat plays with a mouse before the kill.

"One man had lost his eyesight caused by nervous strain. Another had wrapped his head in a blanket and would

have suffocated had some of the fellows forced him out of it. Many others were lying with pictures of their mothers, wives and sweethearts in their hands. I believe every man in the crew prayed many times during this attack and I know that our captain prayed for us. "At the end of 32 hours we could not hear the enemy anymore, but we waited until 48 hours was up before surfacing. Getting to the surface was a hard task because we had so much water in the boat we were heavy. When we did hit the surface and fresh air, every man said a thanksgiving prayer, I'm sure. "We were a badly beaten crew, but by no means were we whipped, because all but a few of the same crew went back on our next patrol and I wish to say here that those Japs have paid and paid dearly for the harassing they gave us."

Missing German WWI U-Boat Discovered

Hydro International, May 11, 2011

A Hydroid REMUS 100 AUV aided in the discovery of the World War I German submarine U-106, which had been missing since October 1917. The Royal Netherlands Navy (RNLN), which used the REMUS vehicle, located the missing submarine off the coast of Terschelling in the Netherlands. In October 2009 the RNLN hydrographic survey vessel HNLMS Snellius located an unidentified object while charting shipping lanes. This was followed two months later by an inspection by a MCMV, the HNLMS Maassluis. A wire-guided Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) designed to locate mines, detected the shape of the vessel. The discovery prompted a series of research missions, which employed Hydroid's REMUS 100 as well as divers from the Royal Netherlands Navy's Diving and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group (EOD).

The REMUS vehicle and the EOD divers descended 40 metres in order to explore the area, where a brass plate bearing the serial number of the submarine was eventually discovered. After further exploration as well as confirmations from the German Ministry of Defense and the families of crew members, the submarine was positively identified as the German U-106, which perished during the First World War.

"These findings always happen by chance," said expedition leader Captain-lieutenant Jouke Spoelstra. "Twelve years ago, a hydrographic survey ship passed the same spot of our discovery, but the German vessel must have still been under a layer of sand. We were lucky to be at the right place at the right time."

The German SM U-106 was one of the 329 submarines serving in the Imperial German Navy in World War I. It was commissioned on 28th July 1917 under the command of Captain-Lieutenant Hans Hufnagel. The SM U-106 is noted for sinking the HMS Contest during the First Battle of the Atlantic on 18th September 1917,

and also for damaging the City of Lincoln a 5,867 ton steamer. The U-106 was lost off of the coast of Terschelling after striking a mine on 7th October 1917. "The ship left behind is an official war grave," added Spoelstra. "A memorial ceremony may take place at sea but will only occur at the initiative of the relatives."

From a recent Holland Club induction at Bremerton Base:

The other fellows at the meeting to be inducted didn't say much, but I knew I had to say something to honor my hero, Norman (Sparky) Roch Trudeau, my dad's sister's husband, a submarine sailor from WWII. So I did. And will again right now.

In 1941 (before pearl Harbor) a 19-year old young man from Fall River, Massachusetts enlisted in the US Navy in Boston. He volunteered for submarine duty and after riding a battle wagon to the Philippines, he was assigned to submarine tender in Manila Bay awaiting his first boat to come in from a training mission when the Japanese simultaneously attacked Hawaii and the Philippines and other places on December 7, 1941 hoping to deal the USA such a devastating blow that they could never recover. Norman's boat came in right after the attack and he was transferred aboard USS Pickerel SS-177 a Porpoise class submarine built in the mid-30's for his first submarine duty.

The boat immediately loaded groceries, fuel and torpedoes and departed on it's first war patrol off Cam Rahn Bay. Norman was not designated for any rating so he started in the seaman gang standing watches as a lookout, but after a short time decided he wanted to be an electrician's mate and the Chief of the Boat (COB) assigned him to E-division. There are a number of divisions in the engineering department other than E. There is also M, which take care of the main propulsion equipment and A, which fixes almost anything, in fact a popular saying on a fleet boat is that if it 'leaks, stinks, or makes noise, it belongs to A-gang.'

Norman, now nick-named 'Sparky' by his shipmates, qualified in submarines and made five war patrols in Pickerel. After the fifth patrol the boat was sent back to Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo, California for a much-needed overhaul and Sparky, now a third class electrician's mate was transferred to new construction duty at the Manitowoc, Wisconsin shipbuilding facility to be a part of the cadre of seasoned veterans who would be the core of the first crew of the USS Puffer SS-268. While Sparky was in new construction, the Pickerel finished her overhaul and went back to the Pacific to attack Japanese shipping and was lost with all hands on her 7th war patrol.

In June 1943 Sparky married Viola Christensen, the same month as the boat finished her construction. The captain gave Sparky leave to drive to New Orleans to

meet the boat for his honeymoon. The boat was loaded into a special floating dry dock and pulled by tug boat down the Chicago and Illinois rivers to the Mississippi river and then down to New Orleans.

On the way down the river the two new periscopes from the Kollmorgen factory were installed. Upon reaching New Orleans the boat received practice torpedoes and spent several days in the Gulf of Mexico practicing all the things needed to survive. Then after loading 'war shots' they were sent to Australia through the Panama Canal and across the vast Pacific Ocean.

On her first patrol out of Fremantle, the Puffer was attacked by five Japanese warships and continuously depth-charge for nearly 31 hours straight and only managed to escape when the attackers thought her sunk when diesel fuel and debris shot from a torpedo tube floated to the surface. After an extended refit period the Puffer went back on patrol. After patrol two patrol was over Sparky was reassigned to the USS Blue Back SS-326 where he made three more patrols, which made 10 patrols in all before the war ended in 1945.

Sparky stayed in the Navy and I met him for the first time in 1959 before I enlisted in the Navy. He told me during the depth charging the air got so bad he could hardly light a Lucky Strike because his Zippo lighter wouldn't work unless he got high up in the frame bays--and that was the extent of his war stories--old boat sailors don't talk much about their exploits, they say they are just doing their duty--that's why they are sometimes referred to as the 'silent service.' Sparky retired after 20 years in Chicago, Illinois on board the Silversides, a reserve boat stationed there.

Later he and Vi settled in Lake City, Florida where he died in 2007 with Vi at his side, just shy of 65 years being married.

When I finished my talk I raised my hand and said 'this one's for you Sparky' and everyone at the meeting toasted his memory. It only took a few moments to tell a man's story, but I felt it was needed as we are losing the WWII heroes from the submarine service at an alarming rate now. Their courage should never be forgotten by any of us.

Gary Christianson

Veteran Helped Honor Lost Sailors

He was a hero to family and helped build WWII submarine memorials.

By Tim Stanley, Tulsa World, May 18, 2011

The idea that Navy submarine crews - more than 3,500 members of whom died in World War II - were not getting their due for their part in the war gave George Cross a sinking feeling.

Most people "don't know if we lost even one submarine - and we lost 52," the Tulsan once told The Tulsa Tribune.

That concern compelled Cross, who worked in concrete construction, and fellow members of the Oklahoma Chapter of Submarine Veterans of World War II to do their part to change things.

In 1989, after raising the money, members of the group began personally erecting a series of granite monuments at the USS Batfish War Memorial in Muskogee.

By the time they finished, there was a marker for each of the 52 submarines the U.S. lost in WWII, complete with the names of all 3,505 sailors who went down with them. George Bethel Cross, who served on the USS Lamprey in the Pacific from 1944 to 1945 and for the rest of his life kept close ties with his crewmates, died Saturday. He was 90.

A funeral service is scheduled for 1 p.m. Wednesday at Red Fork Baptist Church under the direction of Mark Griffith-Westwood Funeral Home.

As a survivor, his name was not inscribed on the memorials, but Cross did not go unrecognized.

In a sense, he had his own living memorial in his family: His granddaughter Crystal Riley, a Navy veteran, and several of his children and grandchildren followed his example by serving in the military.

"I grew up in his home, and he was like another parent to me," said Riley, who served from 1999 to 2001. "My grandfather was a big influence in my deciding to go into the Navy. He was my hero."

Cross spent his tour in the Navy aboard the Lamprey before he was discharged after the war in October 1945. The submarine, with its 70-member crew, patrolled the western Pacific Ocean, engaging and sinking a handful of enemy vessels and earning four battle stars.

Cross' job was to help load torpedoes.

Originally, his duties included "blowing the ballast," which causes the sub to dive.

"But one time," said Lois VanderWoude, Cross' daughter, "he did it too early, while the top hatch was still open, and water started pouring in. He said they decided that wasn't the best job for him."

Born in Cumberland, near the Oklahoma-Texas border, Cross had been a Tulsa resident since 1952.

In later years, he traveled the country to attend reunions with former Lamprey crewmates.

His survivors include his wife, Bonnie Cross; eight daughters, Shirley Shanks, Katherine Sayko, Marie Purdy, Joy Gunkle, June Petitt, Cathy Melton, Lois VanderWoude and Marcy Cox; seven sons, Hugh Cross, Herbert Surrell, Kenneth Cross, George Cross, Alex Surrell, Lonnie Cross and Steve Cross; 52 grandchildren, 99 great-grandchildren; and seven great-great-grandchildren.

*Soldier, rest! Thy warfare o'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Dream of battled fields no more.*

Days of danger, nights of waking. -Sir Walter Scott

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. Buy several for great gifts! To get your coin(s) see Julian Villegas or Carl Chinn. Make sure you have one for "when you get challenged"!



Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay Celebrates Diversity

By Stacey Byington, Trident Refit Facility Public Affairs, May 19, 2011

KINGS BAY, Ga. (NNS) -- Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay and other tenant commands hosted a diversity fair for military and government workers, May 19. Throughout the year, the Navy recognizes nine different minority groups with a dedicated month focused on each specific group. These include Black History Month in February, Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month in May; Hispanic Heritage Month in September/October; and National American Indian Heritage Month in November. The Kings Bay Diversity Fair combined several of those into one.

"Diversity is all the different characteristics and attributes of our individual Sailors and government employees who enhance the mission readiness of the Navy," said Capt. Jim Jones, executive officer, Trident Refit Facility, who opened the event. "The Navy reflects diversity at all levels and employs top-performing people whose diverse backgrounds, experiences and skills help us meet today's challenges."

The event meshed the food and entertainment of several cultures that directly influence the Kings Bay community.

The Navy Band Southeast combo "Pride," performed throughout the afternoon with a mix of pop, rhythm and blues, classic rock, modern rock, dance, Motown, soul, hip-hop, swing, country and disco music.

Other entertainment included authentic Polynesian dances from Hawaii and Tahiti, Cherokees of Georgia dancers from the Cherokees of Georgia Tribal Council,; and the Trinity Dancers from Kingsland, Ga.

In addition to the food and entertainment, different groups from the installation were able to reach out to

service members, civilians, and family members to inform them of opportunities for education and different workshops.

The Kings Bay Navy College Office invited representatives from more than 24 universities and colleges that offer off-duty educational opportunities. The schools included King Bay's eight on-base partners as well as several off-base schools from the local area and many others from around the country that offer a wide range of distance learning opportunities.

Additionally, representatives from the Fleet and Family Support Center offered two sessions of '10 Steps to a Federal Job,' and 'Career One-Stop,' aimed at providing assistance for job seekers.

The Buffalo Soldiers Motorcycle Club, Jacksonville Chapter, educated fair attendees on the role that Buffalo Soldiers played in the history of the United States.

"Today's Navy has the most highly qualified, highly motivated, and highly trained forces of men and women in our history," said Jones. "We are stronger today because we are more fully representative of all Americans."

Military History

During the spring of 1941 before the United States entered World War II, German U-boats were patrolling the seas of the Atlantic Coast, disrupting U.S. shipping supply lines to Britain and France. The U-boats targeted some ships off the North Carolina coast, where there were no Marine Corps air patrols. That began to change when Lt. Col. Thomas J. Cushman landed the first plane at Cherry Point on March 18, 1942. Three months later, U.S. Army Air Corps pilots were flying Lockheed A-29 Hudsons from Cherry Point on patrols off the coast, searching for German submarines. It didn't take long for the patrols to pay off. Lt. Harry J. Kane spotted a German U-boat on July 7, 1942, and sent it to the bottom of the ocean, marking the first time a Cherry Point plane, or any American plane, had sunk a German U-boat. "The sinking of the U-701 by Lt. Harry Kane and his air crew was a very significant event during the Battle of the Atlantic," said author Ed Offley, who is currently writing the book "U-701: The U-boat that brought the Battle of the Atlantic to America's Shore." "For the first five months when the United States and Germans were at war, the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Army air forces failed to create an effective anti-submarine defense along the entire U.S. East Coast. The result was the massacre of civilian shipping. The catastrophe along the East Coast was sometimes as bad as the attack on Pearl Harbor." During the first six months of the war, the battle brewing in the Atlantic was not lost on military officials. "The losses by submarines off our Atlantic seaboard and in the Caribbean now threaten our entire war effort," Gen. George Marshall is quoted as saying on June 19, 1942.

In an oral history interview from the East Carolina manuscript collection from 1981, Kane, who died in 1990, recalled coming to Cherry Point and his role in the sinking of the U-701. "Yes, it was a new base; in fact, there were hardly any paved streets. The runways were paved, the streets, as I recall, were all dirt," Kane said. "The ranking Marine Corps officer at Cherry Point was a lieutenant colonel. There were no Marine Corps pilots at Cherry Point. There were two Navy squadrons and one Army squadron manning the whole base, the whole Marine Corps Station at Cherry Point. Kane's squadron covered the offshore waters of the Carolina coast looking for German U-boats. He said the planes would fly 25 miles off Cape Lookout and then head north or southwest, patrolling the ocean from north of Cape Hatteras to near Charleston, S.C. The missions were about 5 to 5 1/2 hours and there were three each day, which, between all the planes, covered the coast 17 out of 24 hours. "We would go out and fly and we could hear them talking to each other on the radio in German," Kane said. "We kept on flying that patrol which got quite boring, because you never would see anything, see freighters and so forth like that and convoys and we had instructions of what to do about convoys and how to patrol over them. I saw an awful lot of ships being sunk or right in the act of sinking." On July 7, 1942, Kane and his five-man crew took off from Cherry Point at 10:15 a.m. with duty to patrol south of Cape Lookout to Charleston, S.C. Ordinarily the planes would fly low, about 100 feet over the water, but on this day Kane was flying at about 1,500 feet in and out of the clouds. "I was mostly in them we'll say for two or three minutes and I'd break out for 30 seconds and then be back in them for two or three minutes," Kane said. "So on one of these that we broke out we saw something on the water that was actually closer to shore than we were." He estimated it was seven to 10 miles closer to shore than his plane. "We broke out of the clouds a number of times and by this time, I'd gotten everybody in the crew to try to help me decide what it was and finally we thought, well, it might be a submarine, and, we weren't sure, so we turned to a heading of almost due west and stayed up in the clouds, and I remember that I throttled back the airplane to try to cut down on the noise," Kane said. He said he stayed in the clouds for about five miles. "I broke out of the clouds, diving down from about 1,500 feet," he said. "By this time, I was only maybe four or five miles away from this object on the water. By now it began to look like it might very well be a submarine. "About this time the people on the boat, which was a submarine, must have seen me, because suddenly it submerged. Course, as soon as we saw this, we knew it was a submarine, there was no doubt then, and so we pushed the throttles all the way forward on the airplane and then proceeded as fast as possible to the point where the submarine had gone down. "I yelled at the

bombardier to get down there underneath and get ready to go and get the bomb doors open and all this excitement and everything and we were moving pretty fast that time. I think in my report I said something like 225 miles an hour." Kane's plane dived toward the sub at 50 feet and dropped three depth charges. "I think that the first one missed, I'm not sure. I think the second one was a very good shot, and I think the third one was a very good shot," Kane said. "Well, I pulled up slightly and made an abrupt turn and I could see this terrific explosion. Might have been the last one of the three depth charges. It was like a great big enormous bubble, and I'm just going to guess that it was 50 feet high and, of course, at this time we knew it was a submarine, but we didn't know whether we'd definitely gotten it or not." Kane circled back and saw men coming to the surface and eventually counted 17 Germans. "I threw out all my life preservers and the life raft that we had, and, of course, we were still about, you know, 20, 25 miles out," Kane said. The U-701 came to rest on the ocean bottom 10 miles east of the Diamond Shoals Light Tower. Seven members of U-701 survived. That Kane had sunk a U-boat was, at first, not believed. "Well, first of all, nobody would give me credit for sinking the submarine," he said. "I hate to say this, but evidently there's an awful lot of rivalry between the different branches of the service, and I was in the Army Air Corps. Of course I was attached to the Marine Corps because I was at Cherry Point, which was a Marine Corps station. The Navy was there and the Navy, to my knowledge, didn't care to say that the Army had sunk the submarine, or the Army Air Corps had sunk the submarine, and, they wouldn't say, you know, even though I told them that I'd sunk one and all that; they wouldn't believe me. "And until they found the seven survivors two days later, they wouldn't. Then they had to give me credit. It wasn't the case that they wanted to, they had to." Kane returned to the skies but later the squadron commander sent him and his crew to Norfolk, Va., and didn't tell them why. When he arrived, he was taken into a building where civilian men were armed with machine guns. Kane was introduced to the captain of the U-701. "I don't remember exactly what they said, _This is the captain of the German submarine; this is the pilot that was responsible for sinking you' or whatever," he said. "And this is the part I love. He was very badly sunburned," Kane said. "That was the worst thing. See their head and shoulders were out in the sun all the time, but he stood up the best he could and came to attention and threw me a salute and said, _Congratulations, good attack.' "And really, I mean it's just something that you just can't ever forget. So that was the story and that's all there was to it back in 1942, and until I started looking in 1979, and found Horst Degan." Kane would later become friends with Capt. Horst Degan through correspondence. In one of the letters, Degan told Kane of the attack from the sub's

perspective. "He tells me the story from his point of view, which is quite something, and he has a little aside written in there where he says "Thanks Harry for the life preservers that you threw. ' So, I mean it sort of means something," Kane said. Adm. Adolphus Andrews had recommended Kane be decorated with the Navy Flying Cross for his actions on July 7, 1942. "Now the humorous part is there ain't no such thing as a Navy Flying Cross, and therefore I never got one, but I did get the Distinguished Flying Cross," Kane said. "No, the Distinguished Flying Cross is Navy, Marine Corps, Army, whatever. It's a quite high decoration. But, it's the same for any branch of the service. It has to do with flying, of course, you know." Four months after the first planes arrived at Cherry Point, the base proved its importance with Kane's sinking of the U-701. It wasn't long after that air patrols, and British and American Navy ships began to win what has been called the Battle of the Atlantic, and crucial supplies for the war effort were safely arriving in England and other allied ports. "Cherry Point was a vital air base in terms of patrols for German U-boats," Offley said. "What made it effective was the various services breaking down and doing effective anti-submarine patrols. That's what finally drove the U-boats offshore."

Tricare User Fees Update 67

On 4 MAY the House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee rejected the Pentagon plan to raise TRICARE Prime 13 percent and approved a 1.6 percent across-the-board pay raise for active duty personnel at a NDAA markup. Subcommittee Chairman Rep. Joe Wilson (R-SC) said, —It is my goal to ensure that we are doing everything possible to ensure that they (service members) have the benefits and support that they deserve. The Subcommittee would bar for one-year any increase in fees for participants in the TRICARE Prime health program. However, the Subcommittee's mark (version of its NDAA personnel and quality of life provisions) faces an uncertain future. House Armed Services Committee Chairman Rep. Howard —Buck McKeon (R-CA) and Ranking Member Adam Smith are at odds with Rep. Wilson. It is broadly reported that the Committee Chairman and Ranking Member support an amendment that would increase TRICARE Prime 13 percent as the Pentagon proposes and tie future increases to the Cost of Living Allowance increases in retirement pay. Senate. The Defense Department presented testimony 5 MAY before the Senate Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee on its proposal to increase TRICARE rates. Robert F. Hale, the Pentagon's Chief Financial Officer, told elected Senators that the President's plan would —save at least \$3.2 billion over the next five years. Describing the plan, Hale said —working age military retirees under 65 would pay an

additional 13 percent monthly for participation in TRICARE Prime, all retirees would pay higher co-payments for prescription drugs, and the Department of Defense would wash its hands of managing TRICARE by attaching automatic yearly fee increases that would likely average, at minimum, 6 percent. According to the Pentagon CFO, the time is right to raise fees because TRICARE enrollment fees have not increased since Congress appropriated funds for the program in 1994. The Senior Official told the panel that if the proposal is enacted, the plan would cost certain retirees an estimated \$430 million over the next five years and all retirees and their families an estimated \$2.5 billion in out-of-pocket costs for pharmaceutical increases. Members of the military community are urged to contact their legislators and express their disapproval of DoD's proposals. An expedited way to do this is to go to <http://capwiz.com/naus/issues/alert/?alertid=45252501> and forward them the preformatted message available there.

Tricare User Fees Update 68

Military retirees enrolled in the TRICARE program likely will see a fee increase in the next year, a panel of defense experts and former Pentagon officials said 10 MAY. "The chances are good" that Congress will agree to raise participant fees modestly starting in 2012 for military retirees eligible for TRICARE health care coverage, said Lawrence Korb, a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress who was an assistant secretary of Defense during the Reagan administration. Korb spoke at an event sponsored by the liberal-leaning think tank that also included David S.C. Chu, former Defense undersecretary for personnel and readiness and currently president of the Institute for Defense Analyses; Rudy deLeon, senior vice president of national security and international policy at CAP and Chu's predecessor at the Pentagon; and Vice Adm. Norbert Ryan, president of the Military Officers Association of America. The House Armed Services Subcommittee Military Personnel earlier this month approved a version of the fiscal 2012 Defense authorization bill that included a provision to prohibit for one year fee increases to TRICARE Prime, one of the options in the military's health care plan. A House Armed Services spokesman said, however, that the full committee's markup will include a fee increase in 2012 and an indexed increase tied to the cost-of-living adjustment beginning in 2013. The prospects on the Senate side are looking up, too, now that Sen. Jim Webb (D-VA), who had earlier expressed strong reservations about a fee hike, said in his latest statement that he is keeping an open mind about initiatives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of military health care benefits. The Defense Department had proposed a 13% increase in 2012, indexed thereafter to slightly more than

6%. Defense's fiscal 2012 budget request includes \$52.5 billion for the TRICARE program, a 300% increase from its budget a decade ago. And in April, the military launched the TRICARE Young Adult Program, a provision in the fiscal 2011 Defense Authorization Act that gives unmarried dependents who don't have their own employer-based insurance the option of buying month-to-month health coverage until age 26. Previously, children were eligible for TRICARE until age 21, or 23 if they were full-time students. Defense Secretary Robert Gates has repeatedly called for a fee increase for working-age military retirees enrolled in TRICARE, but it is a politically sensitive subject, with lawmakers and advocates of the military wary of appearing ungrateful for the sacrifices of service members. All four panelists at the CAP event, however, agreed that the time has come to raise participant fees modestly and begin the debate on how to restructure the system to rein in costs while providing enrollees with quality health care that is affordable to them. While fees associated with the cost of health care for most Americans, including federal civilian employees, have spiked over the years, participant fees under TRICARE were set in 1995 and remain at \$460 per year for the basic family plan. The cost for comparable coverage for federal workers is between \$5,000 and \$6,000 annually. Ryan, whose organization advocates for service members and their families, said he supported a modest fee increase for 2012, and increases tied to the cost of living thereafter. He also said the creation of a mail-order system for pharmaceutical delivery would produce more savings to the department. One of the byproducts of TRICARE's low cost has been that some enrollees who already have employer-sponsored insurance through a civilian job opt for enrollment in TRICARE Prime, which has the lowest out-of-pocket costs in the TRICARE system. Many military retirees are still young enough to have second careers after they leave the service. "We all know when there is no cost, people overuse the system," Korb said. "Some [civilian] employers would pay their employees to take TRICARE," Chu said, criticizing that practice. The former defense undersecretary said TRICARE needs to be revamped, but in a way that "preserves the excellence of the system." Korb argued for even farther-reaching reforms to TRICARE, including increased cost-sharing to encourage responsible use of TRICARE for Life benefits and limiting double coverage for working-age retirees above a certain income level. "I think the TRICARE debate will be part of the federal health care debate," Chu said.



Navy Sea Story

The Navy used to require officers to foot their total moving expenses out of pocket and file for reimbursement at their new duty station and they might be reimbursed several months later. In August of 1870, LCDR J. P. Fyffe had orders to be CO of a frigate out of San Francisco. His current duty station was in New London, Connecticut. He did not think it right that his moving expenses should be out of pocket.

The following is what happened.

LCDR Fyffe sent a message to the Secretary of the Navy requesting that the Navy either lay out the money or supply him with railroad tickets or transportation via naval vessel.

The reply came from the Chief of Bureau of Navigation:

To: Lieutenant Commander J. P. Fyffe

In reply to your letter of the 18th: Your request is contrary to Navy regulations. Carry out your orders.

The orders also stated: While carrying out these orders, you will keep the Bureau informed of your whereabouts. (There was nothing which stated when he was supposed to arrive in San Francisco or by what means.)

LCDR Fyffe donned his best uniform and strapped his sword to his small travel kit.

At sunrise on the 25th of August, he walked out of New London and headed westward for San Francisco. By sundown he reached East Haddam where he sent the following telegram to the Chief:

25 August - Compliance orders number 1998. LCDR Fyffe en route New London to San Francisco on foot. This telegram to keep Bureau informed my whereabouts. Made good 22 miles this date. Spending evening in hayloft in Mount Parnassus. Very respectfully, Fyffe.

Every evening for the next few days he sent a telegram. 26 August - En route on foot. Made good 31 miles this date. By gracious consent, Mayor of Bristol, am spending night Mayor's stables. Have noticed he has hybrid mules specially bred for tropics. Suggest Navy investigate.

27 August - En route on foot. Made good only 1 1/2 miles this date. Rained all day. Staying overnight at Litchfield with my father's friend, General Holmes. I find standard boot worn by naval officer inadequate for prolonged walking. Suggest Surgeon General investigate.

28 August - Spending night Lakeville. Lovely country. Expect to buy home here as soon as I get reimbursed travel voucher submitted by me to Navy three years ago. Tomorrow I enter New York State.

29 August - En route on foot. Make 28 miles this date despite badly worn boots. People not familiar Navy uniforms this area. Great crowd walked part way with me. I sang them sea chanties. Populace thinks it a great sign of democracy for commanding Officer of his ship to walk 3000 miles to new station. Police Chief, Hudson, New York has given me best cell in jail for overnight.

30 August - Enroute on foot. Arrived Albany . Request Recruiting Officer be authorized issue me new shoes. Boots fell apart noon today. Entered Albany barefooted. Will remain Seward Hotel two days awaiting answer. Earning my keep as bartender. Local rum far superior than served in Navy. Am sending sample. Very respectfully, Fyffe.

31 August - Fyffe received the following message: I strike my colors. Secretary of the Navy authorized Recruiting Officer, Albany issue you boots and provide quickest transportation from Albany to San Francisco. Even Chief of Bureau Navigation can laugh when outsmarted!

World's Oldest Submerged Submarine Finally on Dry Land

The 75-year-old Lembit, considered the world's oldest submarine afloat, was pulled ashore on the evening of May 21.

Preparatory work to get the submarine out of the water started at midnight to avoid the wake produced by high-speed vessels.

Nevertheless, getting the 600-ton ship onto dry land posed a greater challenge than initially expected, according to ETV.

Lembit's new home will be the seaplane hangar of the Maritime Museum, where the submarine will be restored and turned into a land-based exhibit.

The museum has also acquired more than two hundred original designs of the ship which will be used to restore the interior of the pre World War II submarine.

Keel Laying Ceremony to be Held for Newest Submarine

By Submarine Group 2 Public Affairs Office, May 19, 2011

NEWPORT NEWS, Va (NNS) -- Newport News Shipbuilding, a division of Huntington Ingalls Industries (HII), will host a keel laying ceremony May 20, for the new submarine USS Minnesota (SSN 783), the third U.S. Navy ship named for the North Star state.

Ellen Roughead, wife of Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead, will serve as the ship's sponsor and keel authenticator for the ceremony. Roughead will authenticate the keel by chalking her initials onto a metal plate. Her initials are then welded onto the plate, which will be permanently affixed to the ship.

The ceremony can be viewed live at www.tvworldwide.com/events/hii-nns/110520/ Minnesota will be the 10th of a projected 30 Virginia-class submarines. Construction began in February 2008 and her name was announced July 15, 2008. The name Minnesota was selected to honor the state's residents and their continued support of the U.S. military. The state is

home to 46 Medal of Honor recipients spanning the Civil War to the Vietnam War.

HII designs, builds and maintains nuclear and non-nuclear ships for the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard and provides after-market services for military ships around the globe.

Minnesota is being built under a teaming arrangement between HII and General Dynamics Electric Boat. Upon completion, the submarine will be 7,800-tons and 377-foot long, which is slightly longer than a football field. She has a 34-foot beam, will be able to dive to depths greater than 800 feet and will operate at speeds in excess of 25 knots submerged. Minnesota is designed with a nuclear reactor plant that will not require refueling during the planned life of the ship, reducing lifecycle costs and increasing underway time.

Sessler Awarded

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Summerville Journal Scene



Friday, April 1, 2011, could have been a Friday, much like many others. Instead, Special Agent Nathan Sessler, a member of the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, or AFOSI, was patiently waiting in his Air Force service dress uniform for his awards ceremony to begin at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland. Andrews Air Force Base was a long way from Summerville, South Carolina where he grew up and his family still lived. Then again, a lot of things had happened since those days.

While Agent Sessler was waiting, he looked over and smiled at his family who were also patiently waiting. After all, it wasn't every day that your son came back from a tour in Afghanistan. His mother, Sharon, and sister, Lauryn sat on either side of his father, Martin. Mr. Sessler, a retired Command Master Chief Petty Officer, looked perfectly poised awaiting orders much like he had for those 20 plus years of service as a submariner in the U.S. Navy. Agent Sessler's family

knew they were there for awards presentations, but Nathan had never told his family exactly what he did in Afghanistan or what would transpire during the awards ceremony.

Finally, the moment had come. First, Agent Sessler was awarded the NATO, Non-Article 5 medal for participation in NATO combat and humanitarian missions in Afghanistan. He stood at the position of attention while the ceremony proctor read the citation and his Air Force Commander pinned the medal on his uniform. Then came the Afghanistan Campaign medal for successful completion of his tour of duty in the countries capital, Kabul. Before the third medal was awarded, Mr. Sessler was called to the front to present and pin on the final, and most telling medal: the Joint Service Commendation Medal. With a look of surprise and a little shock, Mr. Sessler proceeded to the front of the auditorium and took his place next to Special Agent Sessler. Both father and son stood, side-by-side, over thirty years of voluntary military service between them while the citation was read:

“The Joint Forces Commendation medal is hereby presented to Special Agent Nathan Sessler, United States Air Force, whom distinguished himself by exceptionally meritorious actions while deployed in support of operation Enduring Freedom as an Offensive Counterintelligence Operations Officer from 1 April 2010 to 12 September 2010...During this time, SA Sessler ran one of the most sensitive Counterintelligence Operations in the Joint Operating Area.... SA Sessler risked his life daily and led over 120 sensitive Offensive Counterintelligence missions outside of US or Coalition controlled areas the highest operational tempo of anyone assigned to the team...”

As the proctor finished the last line Mr. Sessler turned toward his son and pinned the medal to his chest. Agent Sessler, in line with the oldest of military traditions, rendered a sharp salute to his father. Retired Command Master Chief Petty Officer Sessler snapped sharply to the position of attention and returned the same.

With the section focusing on Agent Sessler coming to a close, Agent Sessler presented a gift to his family to thank them for all of their love and support. It was a shadow box with a U.S. flag that Agent Sessler personally carried with him during his deployment to Afghanistan. The certificate that accompanied the flag was made out to his father. It said, “This flag was flown in the face of the enemy during multiple combat missions in Afghanistan on 11 Sept 2010 ... May you treasure this unwavering symbol of Freedom for our Country, our way of life, and your selfless service” referencing Mr. Sessler’s service in the United States Navy.

Agent Sessler’s most recent trip to Afghanistan contributed to his total of over 755 days overseas during his military career to include deployments to Saudi

Arabia, Egypt, Korea, Haiti, Afghanistan, Iraq, and numerous countries in Africa. During Agent Sessler’s 13 years in the Air Force, eight of which have been in OSI, he has been awarded 21 individual military medals and 23 individual military awards. Some of Agent Sessler’s most recent decorations include the Humanitarian Service Medal, Armed Forces Service Medal, multiple Air Force Achievement medals, multiple Air Force Commendation Medals, and his first Joint Service Commendation Medal. Currently, Special Agent Sessler is stationed at Marine Corp Base Quantico, Virginia and still serves in the Air Force Office of Special Investigations.

Missing WWII Sub Found with 42 Entombed Sailors PR Newswire, May 24, 2011

KEY WEST, Fla., -- An exploration team led by Tim Taylor aboard the expedition vessel "RV Tiburon" has located and documented the wreck of the WWII submarine USS R-12.

The R-12 was lost on June 12, 1943 in 600 feet of water, sinking in less than 15 seconds.

She sank nearly 70 years ago taking 42 US servicemen to their deaths off the coast of the Florida Keys, USA.

The reason for her loss remains unknown.

R-12 began its career as a World War I era sub that was re-commissioned for service in World War II. At the time of the sinking R-12 was engaged in war time patrol operations near Key West. Only two officers and 3 enlisted men survived the disaster that claimed 42 lives. In making the discovery, the team deployed a state of the art autonomous underwater robot which collected first ever imagery of the remains of R-12. They are collaborating and sharing their findings with the US Navy.

RV Tiburon is launching an expedition in the Spring of 2012 to further investigate the possible causes of the sinking, and collect detailed archeological baseline data.

Bataan Lays War Heroes to Rest at Sea

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Elijah G. Leinaar, USS Bataan Public Affairs, May 22, 2011

USS BATAAN, Mediterranean Sea (NNS) -- Sailors aboard multipurpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) committed a World War II prisoner of war along with four other Sailors to their final resting places May 21 during a burial-at-sea ceremony while the ship operated in the Mediterranean Sea.

Chief Electrician's Mate (Ret.) Marion "Turk" Turner, who was held captive by the Japanese for three and a half years in the 1940s after his submarine USS Perch (SS-176) was attacked, had a special relationship with Bataan and the crew who delivered him the deep.

Turner, a "Defender of Bataan and Corregidor," because of his service in the Pacific during World War II and his time spent with Bataan Death March survivors in a Japanese prison camp, had been meeting monthly with other POWs and defenders for decades over breakfast at Bunny's Restaurant in Suffolk, Va.

In May, fresh from supporting Operation Unified Response in Haiti, Sailors from Bataan began attending the monthly breakfasts and had the opportunity to establish a relationship with the survivors and to get to know the 92-year-old Turner.

His legacy is now tied to Bataan, where he made a significant impact on Sailors' lives by sharing his stories. "Turk's story brings to life the history of Bataan," said Aircraft Maintenance Master Chief (AW/SW) Noel Vergara. "He reminds us personally of the sacrifices we make in the military, and although he was a prisoner of war, he knew he was going to be rescued. He always had a positive outlook on things, and we live a better life now because of the sacrifices he made."

It's those sacrifices Bataan's Sailors are making on a daily basis while deployed to the Mediterranean Sea that help them appreciate what so many like Turner have done before them.

"I think that when they see this [ceremony] they think these guys are war heroes, and that these are the true heroes of the past," said Vergara. "It's really an honor for us to be able to render them these services."

Vergara along with Capt. Steve Koehler, Bataan's commanding officer, met with Turner and the group of veterans regularly at the breakfasts, and had grown close to them over the past year.

"I've had two great honors prior to this," said Koehler.

"One, pinning a purple heart on him sixty years hence, and two, having his wife ask me to speak at his funeral and lay his remains to rest in the deep. It's been such a privilege to do both for him and for her. I'll never forget it."

Koehler was visibly moved during the ceremony when he committed Turner's cremains to rest, and he said knowing Turk was truly an honor.

"Sailors need to remember the heritage that we have in the Navy, and Turk is a shining example of that," said Koehler. "Connecting with our past is important to make sure we do everything right in the future."

Burials at sea have long been a part of naval tradition, but it's not very common that the burial detail is so closely tied to the veteran.

"It's precisely because of those who have gone before us that we have the Navy we have today," said Cmdr. Steve Souders, Bataan's command chaplain. "Coming to know him and his story ... I just have tremendous admiration for him. He was very welcoming, very friendly and very open about his experiences as a POW. He loved to have fun, loved to laugh, loved to have breakfast with us, so it was a joy to have the experience to know him."

Turner's wife, along with the other families of those honored during the burial will be presented with a ceremonial folded flag, and the shell casings from the rounds fired during the 21-gun salute. A letter from the

captain, a chart listing the latitude and longitude of where the cremains were committed, and still photos of the ceremony will also be provided.

Bataan is the command ship of the Bataan Amphibious Ready (ARG) group, supporting maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of responsibility.

For more news from USS Bataan (LHD 5), visit www.navy.mil/local/lhd5/.

Submarine Memorial Ceremony Weekend

Lois and I spent the past weekend with over 50 submarine veterans. We gathered with these submarine veterans in Spruce Valley, North Carolina. Spruce Valley is just a dot on Highway 226 North in the Blue Ridge mountains. Carol and "Hop" Hopkins accompanied us. Hop is a submarine veteran who joined the Navy after I had retired! They live near us in Salisbury as does Charlie and Carolyn Cross, who also attended this ceremony. Charlie and Carolyn have also become close friends here in Salisbury. Our Hotel, the Skyview Valley Inn is located on 226N and is built up against the mountain and comes right to the edge of 226N.

The best can be said of the Inn is that it is "rustic." Lois used a chair for a bedside table and I used a refrigerator (didn't work) for my bedside table. There were no phones or mirrors in the room other than the small mirror on the medicine cabinet. The view was outstanding when you looked out the bathroom window. Oh, you could not close the bathroom door either.

But the owners turned the entire hotel over to the submariners. Bar, dining room and everything else. We occupied the entire 16 rooms in the Inn. We ate, drank and partied without anyone being in our way.

The Gathering was to have a ceremony at the Moonshine Mountain WWII Submarine Memorial. This Memorial was built by Chief Harrell Jewel Flowers. Chief Flowers retired from the submarine service and purchased an entire mountain top. He built his home atop the mountain (what a view). He also over the years built a Memorial to the 52 submarines and 3,505 crew members lost during WWII. A photo of the Memorial is attached and you can see that he did an outstanding job.

We gathered on Armed Forces Day with a Color Guard, a 40 star flag (this was the USA Flag during WWII), a special flag that submarines flew and a bugler.

Just locating this memorial is quite a feat. Matter of fact, our Chaplain got lost and did not make the event until it was over. Moonshine Mountain is out of Burnsville, NC and Moonshine Mountain Road (where the memorial is built) is just a small side road up to the top of Moonshine Mountain. Only the few people who live up this road will probably ever be the people who see this memorial. Other than we former submariners who have gather annually to pay tribute to our shipmates who are on Eternal Patrol. This is a shame but that is the way it is!

While we had the ceremony the area was "sacred ground." We take this ceremony very serious. The 52 submarines and 3,505 men lost composed less than two percent of the US Navy at the time. However, they accounted for over 55 percent of all enemy ships sunk during WWII. This submarine Navy sank 214 Japanese warships and 1,178 merchant ships. More than the entire surface Navy and US Air Force!

Did you know that at present 850 WWII service personnel die each day. That's over 2,500 a month!

We called the name of each submarine lost and tolled the bell after each name. Upon completion of the calling of the boats, the bugler played taps. Hop was the bugler, with a little help from a special bugle.

We hung around, took photographs, remembered shipmates and wiped tears from our eyes.

Back at the hotel we drank a toast to these shipmates on Eternal Patrol. We drank more than one toast and also drank some without a toast! We all were ready when the dinner bell rang. Our Hotel Owners had prepared a great meal, which we all enjoyed.

After dinner awards were given out. One to the person that had been qualified in submarines the longest - I won that award. Then one to the oldest submarine sailor in the room - I won that award. Then one to the oldest WWII submarine sailor - I won that award. I was the only WWII submarine sailor in the room! Lois and Carol won one for having served in the US Navy. The submarine ladies made the awards, which were very nice. Anyone need a home made potholder?

I can tell you that the other submarine sailors went out of their way to take care of Lois and I. I felt honored to be representing the WWII submarine sailors. Most were amazed that I joined the Navy at age 16. Completed my first war patrol at age 17 and had active service not only during WWII, but during the Korean War and the Viet-nam War.

It was a nice weekend and we all felt gratified that we did the ceremony. The same Hotel was booked for the 2012 ceremony so if Lois and I are around you can find us on Moonshine Mountain sometime during the month of May. Until then we will be anchored out in Salisbury, NC. I'll bet our friends the Hopkins and Charlie and Carolyn will also make the trek back to Moonshine Mountain. After all, Charles and Hop know the way to Moonshine Mountain.



For mothers, wives and children, for home and country pride
Our flag will guard the freedom Of land and ocean wide.

The Final Inspection

The Soldier stood and faced God,
Which must always come to pass.
He hoped his shoes were shining,
Just as brightly as his brass.

'Step forward now, Soldier ,
How shall I deal with you?
Have you always turned the other cheek?
To My Church have you been true?'

The soldier squared his shoulders and said,
'No, Lord, I guess I have not.
Because those of us who carry guns,
Can't always be a saint

I've had to work most Sundays,
And at times my talk was tough.
And sometimes I've been violent,
Because the world is awfully rough.

But, I never took a penny,
That wasn't mine to keep...
Though I worked a lot of overtime,
When the bills got just too steep.

And I never passed a cry for help,
Though at times I shook with fear.
And sometimes, God, forgive me,
I've wept unmanly tears.

I know I don't deserve a place,
Among the people here.
They never wanted me around,
Except to calm their fears

If you've a place for me here, Lord,
It needn't be so grand.
I never expected or had too much,
But if you don't, I'll understand.

There was a silence all around the throne,
Where the saints had often trod.
As the Soldier waited quietly,
For the judgment of his God.

'Step forward now, you Soldier,
You've borne your burdens well.
Walk peacefully on Heaven's streets,
You've done your time in Hell.'

Author Unknown~

It's the Soldier, not the reporter
Who has given us the Freedom of the Press.

It's the Soldier, not the poet,
Who has given us the Freedom of Speech.

It's the Soldier, not the politicians
That ensures our right to Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of
Happiness.

It's the Soldier who salutes the flag,
Who serves beneath the flag,
And whose coffin is draped by the flag.