

TORPEDO ALLEY



Vol. 7, No. 10

October 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 of America and its Constitution”



Base Meeting:

October 13, 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

Special Officers Phone Number

Chief of the Boat	Rick Sparger	843-553-5594
Public Affairs	Larry Starland	843 863-8474
Veterans Affairs	Jim Morrison	843-832-9716
Chaplain	John “Nick” 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	Ken Hutchison	843-553-0935
Webmaster	John “Nick” Nichols	843-452-3189
Historian	George Scharf	843 873-3318

Base Officers Phone Number

Commander	Carl Chinn	843-875-3098
Vice Commander	Marty Sessler	843-871-1536
Secretary		
Treasurer	Terry Trump	843-873-9563

Minutes of the September 2011 meeting

Attendance for the September 9, 2011 meeting was 81

Opening Ceremony: Base Vice Commander called the meeting to order. A Quorum was present and the meeting was commenced at 1900. Pledge of Allegiance, Invocation, USSVI Creed.

Introductions: One new person was 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 Trump gave a Base financial report for September 2011.

Vice Commander: New chairs on order, Float repairs to be completed.

Newsletter: No report

Membership: Dues are due by 1 Oct 20011 VC will accept due tonight.

Storekeeper: Has calendars for \$9.00, pick up any special orders.

Scholarship: No report

Public Affairs: Summerville NJROTC will be using WWII vets in halftime of game on 28 Oct. Lee Allison will represent the Navy.

Chaplain: Ken Curtis made the Chaplain's report in Nick's absence.

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.

Webmaster: No report

Veteran's Affairs: No report

Little David: Rick Wise, Beetle Bailey and several other CB subvets participated at a dedication by the Berkeley County War Veterans at the Berkeley County Museum on 25 June.

Holland Club: No report

SUBVETS WWII: Has calendars for \$8.00, next meeting 20 Oct at Ryan's in Summerville.

Historian: No report

Recreation Committee: No report

District Commander: National Treasure is resigning and position is open to anyone.

Fleet Reserve: 13 Aug (Saturday night) @ 1900 hours - mortgage burning party. Any subvet can join the Fleet Reserve and are encouraged to do so, Larry Cox has plenty of forms.

Chief of the Boat: Spirit of America Program the 16 & 17 of Sept tickets are free. See Saw parade in Harleyville this Saturday line -up at 1000, Hog Roast at Short Stay on 22 Oct 2011.

Base Commander: John Nichols has a free laser printer ,Bill Roup has free books to read.

Nuclear Historian: Presented story about difference between grandpa and grandma.

Old Business: Jim Lewis spoke about Old Salts Pig Roast and how much active duty involvement they and that we should try get to more from here. Float will be in St Patrick's Day parade in Savannah GA.

New Business:
American legion BBQ this Sat from 1100-1600.

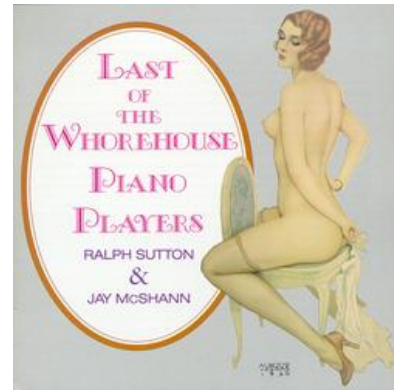
Chief selectee's breakfast at the Cracker Barrel in Summerville 0600 on 13 Oct 2011, they also are having a car wash this Sat at the Walgreen's off base. Joe O'Saben gave a \$100 donation to building fund from sale of home to Sub Vet relative.

Good Of The Order: Lee Allison has calendar and three pictures that he would like everyone to sign to send to Jack Stevenson's son.

Ed Simokat has 4 tickets for this weekend's Clemson game, make a donation to Sub Vets fund. Depth Charge drawing was held, winner Benny McDonald, \$233: he donated \$50 back to Charleston Base.

Ray Sparks won a donated American Flag.

Meeting Adjourned: The Base Commander adjourned the meeting at 2008.



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



Alfano	Alkire	Bailey, W	Bonow
Britton	Camp	Campbell, N	Czulewicz
Esch	Feller	Forbes	Gnodle
Griggs	Gulick	Hall	Hansen
Harden	Hayes, J	Hayes, L	Holzel
Hostetter	Johnson, E	Lindberg	Lloyd
Lookabill	Nathan	Niebeling	Palenchar
Peters	Pruitt	Rohrsen	Roup
Skorepa	Tolbert	Wilson, B	Yingling

2012 USSVI Dues Are Due Soon

2012 dues are due on 1 October 2011. Please pay your dues on or before 1 October.

Make checks payable to USSVI. Amount owed list will be at the meetings.

October Submarines Lost:

USS Wahoo	SS 238	October 11, 1943
USS Dorado	SS 248	October 12, 1943
USS Seawolf	SS 197	October 3, 1944
USS Escolar	SS 294	October 17, 1944
USS Darter	SS 227	October 24, 1944
USS Shark II	SS 314	October 24, 1944
USS Tang	SS 306	October 24, 1944
USS O-5	SS 66	October 11, 1923

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

Al Alessandra, 2005

OCTOBER HAPPENINGS!

- October 13 – Regular Monthly Meeting
- October 20 – Sub Vets of WWII Meeting, at Ryan's on 17A in Summerville; 1200
- October 22 – Hog Roast at Short Stay, starts 1200, \$5 each, bring a side or dessert

Trick
or
Treat

Annual Christmas Party



The Charleston Base Christmas Party will be on 3 December 2011. It will be held at the same location as the past several years; **Gatherings** in beautiful downtown Dorchester, SC.



Same rules as always...

you must have a ticket to attend and **THERE WILL BE NO TICKET SALES AT THE DOOR!**

Cocktails at 1700, Dinner at 1830

Dress is not prescribed, come comfortable, as you desire. Coat and tie, slacks and shirt, etc.

Tickets will be available starting October meeting. **Last day to buy tickets is 10 November meeting.** Buy early!

Also available at the hog roast. Ticket price: \$15 per person for member and spouse/girlfriend. \$20 per person for all other guests.

SSGNs Finally See Combat

Strategypage.com, Aug 30, 2011

August 30, 2011: With nearly all of Libya overrun by rebels, it was possible to get a close look at how well the American Tomahawk TLAM-E did in its first combat use. The missile performed as predicted. Most of these Tomahawks were fired during the initial air attack on March 19th. Moreover, most of the Tomahawks (over a hundred) launched on that day were fired by one ship; the nuclear submarine USS Florida. This was the first time an SSGN saw combat, but not the first time nuclear subs have fired missiles in wartime (U.S. SSNs have fired Tomahawks several times.)

The USS Florida was one of four Ohio class ballistic missile submarines (SSBN) converted to cruise missile submarines (SSGN). The USS Florida and the other three SSGNs entered service over the last five years, and this is the first time one of them fired its missiles in combat. Each of these Ohio class boats now carry 154 Tomahawk cruise missiles, and provides space for 66 commandos (usually SEALs) and their equipment.

The idea of converting ballistic missile subs, that would have to be scrapped to fulfill disarmament agreements, has been bouncing around since the 1990s. After September 11, 2001, the idea got some traction. The navy submariners love this one, because they lost a lot of

their reason for being with the end of the Cold War. The United States had built a powerful nuclear submarine force during the Cold War, but with the rapid disappearance of the Soviet navy in the 1990s, there was little reason to keep over a hundred nuclear subs in commission. These boats are expensive, costing over a billion each to build and over a million dollars a week to operate. The four Ohio class SSBN being converted each have at least twenty years of life left in them.

The idea of a sub, armed with 154 highly accurate cruise missiles, and capable of rapidly traveling under water (ignoring weather, or observation) at a speed of over 1,200 kilometers a day, to a far off hot spot, had great appeal in the post-Cold War world. The ability to carry a large force of commandos as well was also attractive. In one sub you have your choice of hammer or scalpel. More capable cruise missiles are in the works as well. Whether or not this multi-billion dollar investment will pay off remains to be seen, but it certainly worked off Libya.

And then there's the new Tomahawk. The RGM-109E Block IV Surface Ship Vertical Launched Tomahawk Land Attack Missile weighs 1.2 ton, is six meters (18 feet) long, has a range of 1,600 kilometers, getting there at a speed of 600-900 kilometers an hour, flying at an altitude of 17-32 meters (50-100 feet) and propelled by a jet engine generating only 600 pounds of thrust.

Accuracy is on a par with JDAM (10 meters/ 31 feet). The Block IV Tomahawk can be reprogrammed in flight to hit another target and carries a vidcam to allow a missile to check on prospective targets.

But there's always something new. Last year, there was a successful test of the new JMEW (Joint Multi-Effects Warhead System) warhead for its Tomahawk Block IV cruise missile. The new, 450 kg (1,000 pound) warhead is designed mainly for penetrating underground bunkers, but it will also provide excellent blast effect for less robust targets. Exact penetration was not revealed.

JMEW uses laser terminal guidance, enabling it to hit within a few meters (ten feet) of its aiming point. JMEW can also hit moving targets.

Service Honors Henry Native Who Commanded WWII Submarine

Congressional Medal of Honor winner went down with his ship

The Journal Star (South Carolina), September 7
HENRY — A ceremony Sunday preceding a large 9/11 memorial service will honor a local war hero and attach additional meaning to a torpedo that has stood mounted in Central Park downtown for nearly four decades.

The service, scheduled for 2 p.m., will honor the memory, valor and sacrifice of John Phillip Cromwell, a Henry native who earned the Medal of Honor for actions as commander of a submarine during World War II.

The service is being organized by the Peoria base of the United States Submarine Veterans Inc., said James Hafele, a Peoria attorney who served on a submarine in the 1950s and is now commander of the Peoria unit. Cromwell was born in Henry on Sept. 11, 1901, so this special commemoration will come on the 110th anniversary of his birth, Hafele noted.

"Our whole purpose is to call attention to the Congressional Medal of Honor," Hafele said. "It's so unusual for a small town like Henry to be the birthplace of a Medal of Honor recipient."

Cromwell was awarded that honor posthumously for his actions as commander of the USS Sculpin submarine in November 1943 near the Gilbert Islands in the South Pacific. After a battle with a Japanese vessel left the sub seriously damaged, he ordered most of his crew to abandon ship so they could be rescued.

Cromwell himself, however, had extensive knowledge of broader military intelligence and planning, and he chose to sacrifice his life rather than risk disclosing secrets under the pressure of enemy interrogation, Hafele said.

"He voluntarily went down with the sub so he would not reveal any information," Hafele said.

The torpedo memorial in Central Park was dedicated in 1974. It contains plaques honoring Cromwell and the submarine service.

"There have been 66 submarines that have been lost since the birth of the submarine service," Hafele said, "all the way from the old diesel boats to the current nuclear boats."

One person paying respects at the memorial Tuesday was Chip Lanham, a Vietnam veteran from South Carolina who is a crew member on the USS LST 325, a restored World War II battleship, which has been docked in Henry for tours since Friday and will be in Peoria later this week.

"I heard about (the Cromwell memorial) from another crew member, and I decided to jump ship and take a walk," Lanham said.

Cromwell's descendants have scattered to distant areas, and none are expected to attend Sunday's service, according to email exchanges provided by Hafele.

"We very much appreciate the significance of the memorial service you are conducting," wrote his grandson, John P. Cromwell III, in California.

A large 9/11 service featuring comments from a retired New York police officer who was at the scene will take place later Sunday. That will begin about 6:15 p.m. with a solemn procession of emergency vehicles from the Henry Fire Department.

"The Strongest reason for the people to retain the right to keep and bear arms is, as a last resort, to protect themselves against tyranny in government."

-- Thomas Jefferson

Tricare Pharmacy Copay Update

In 2010 Congress blocked DoD from increasing TRICARE-related fees through September 30 of this year. That moratorium expires soon and based on action earlier this year, it is clear Congress no longer intends to block fees. AFSA has confirmed that the new prescription copayments below will take effect for all non-active duty TRICARE beneficiaries on 1 OCT 2011. Copayments for active duty beneficiaries will remain the same. 30 Day Supply Retail Pharmacy Formulary Generic \$5 Formulary Brand \$12 Non-Formulary \$25 90 Day Supply Home Delivery Formulary Generic \$0 Formulary Brand \$9 In May, the House voted to allow DoD to raise TRICARE Prime Fees and pharmacy copays for military beneficiaries. In June, the Senate Armed Services Committee agreed with their House colleagues that fees should be raised but the full chamber has yet to act on that legislation. It is unclear as of the writing if TRICARE Prime fee will rise also. Language in the House and Senate versions of the FY 2012 National Defense Authorization Act would increase TRICARE Prime fees to \$520 per year for family coverage and to \$260 per year for individual coverage.

Military Retiree Pay Dates to Change

Defense Finance and Accounting Service
CLEVELAND, Sept. 6, 2011 - Paydays for military retirees and those who receive portions of retired pay are changing for the months of September and December, as the Defense Finance and Accounting Service changes its pay schedule to comply with the 2011 National Defense Authorization Act.

The 2011 NDAA requires military retiree pay to be processed on the first day of the month. When that day falls on a weekend or national holiday, the pay date is moved to the previous business day.

This year payments normally scheduled for Oct. 3, 2011 will be issued on Sept. 30, 2011 and payments normally scheduled for Jan. 3, 2012, will be issued on Dec. 30, 2011. For the calendar year 2011, this means military retirees will receive 13 rather than the normal 12 payments.

The 13th payday on Dec. 30 falls within the 2011 tax year, which could affect the tax liability of some retirees and those who receive portions of their retired pay.

Customers should speak with a tax advisor, the Internal Revenue Service or their state tax authority to determine if their tax withholding will satisfy federal and state income taxes when they file returns next year. DFAS cannot provide tax advice.

For tax year 2012 and beyond, retirees will receive their normal 12 payments.

This change affects regular retired pay, Concurrent retirement and disability pay and combat related special compensation. The new rule also applies to retiree

allotments, garnishments and court-ordered former spouse and child support payments. It does not affect annuity payments.

If retirees need to make changes to their federal or state tax withholding, the quickest and most secure way to do so is through myPay. Available 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week, myPay enables eligible users around the world to make routine changes to their pay information, including tax withholding, that become effective within days.

Customers who cannot access myPay can change federal withholding amounts by completing a new IRS Form W-4 or W-4P, or change state withholding amounts using a DD 2866. These forms can be found on the DFAS web site, www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/forms.html, and should be mailed or faxed to the below address once completed:

Defense Finance and Accounting Service
U.S. Military Retired Pay
P.O. Box 7130
London, KY 40742-7130
Fax: 800-469-6559

It may take up to 30 days for changes to be made when mailing in a paper form.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service provides responsive, professional finance and accounting services to the men and women who defend America. DFAS pays about 6.4 million people and in FY 2010 made 8.1 million travel payments, paid 11.4 million commercial invoices, made \$578 billion in disbursements to pay recipients, and managed \$487.9 billion in military retirement and health benefits funds.

General Dynamics Electric Boat To Provide Photonics Masts For Virginia-Class Attack Subs In \$33 Million Contract

By John Keller, Military Aerospace, Sep 18, 2011
GROTON, Conn., 18 Sept. 2011. General Dynamics Electric Boat, the Groton, Conn.-based U.S. Navy submarine manufacturer, won a \$32.9 million Navy contract modification for three backup photonics masts for Virginia-class fast-attack submarines.

The Virginia-class submarine uses photonics masts instead of traditional periscopes. Photonics masts do not penetrate the submarine's hull, and do not extend physically into the vessel's control room.

The photonics mast records information digitally with mast-mounted cameras, transmits the data through optical fiber into the boat, and processes the data with on-board image processors.

Each photonics mast has an HDTV digital color camera, an infrared camera, and a laser range finder. For more information contact General Dynamics Electric Boat online at www.gdeb.com.

Viet Nam: Something to think about

- Most of the surviving parents are now deceased.
- There are 58,267 names now listed on that polished black wall, including those added in 2010.
- The names are arranged in the order in which they were taken from us by date and within each date the names are alphabetized. It is hard to believe it is 36 years since the last casualties.
- Beginning at the apex on panel 1E and going out to the end of the East wall, appearing to recede into the earth (numbered 70E - May 25, 1968), then resuming at the end of the West wall, as the wall emerges from the earth (numbered 70W - continuing May 25, 1968) and ending with a date in 1975. Thus the war's beginning and end meet. The war is complete, coming full circle, yet broken by the earth that bounds the angle's open side and contained within the earth itself. The first known casualty was Richard B. Fitzgibbon, of North Weymouth, Mass. Listed by the U.S. Department of Defense as having been killed on June 8, 1956. His name is listed on the Wall with that of his son, Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Richard B. Fitzgibbon III, who was killed on Sept. 7, 1965.
- There are three sets of fathers and sons on the Wall.
- 39,996 on the Wall were just 22 or younger.
- 8,283 were just 19 years old.
- The largest age group, 33,103 were 18 years old.
- 12 soldiers on the Wall were 17 years old.
- 5 soldiers on the Wall were 16 years old.
- One soldier, PFC Dan Bullock was 15 years old.
- 997 soldiers were killed on their first day in Vietnam
- 1,448 soldiers were killed on their last day in Vietnam
- 31 sets of brothers are on the Wall
- 31 sets of parents lost two of their sons
- 54 soldiers on attended Thomas Edison High School in Philadelphia . I wonder why so many from one school
- 8 Women are on the Wall. Nursing the wounded
- 244 soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War; 153 of them are on the Wall
- Beallsville, Ohio with a population of 475 lost 6 of her sons
- West Virginia had the highest casualty rate per capita in the nation. There are 711 West Virginians on the Wall

- The Marines of Morenci - They led some of the scrappiest high school football and basketball teams that the little Arizona copper town of Morenci (pop. 5,058) had ever known and cheered. They enjoyed roaring beer busts. In quieter moments, they rode horses along the Coronado Trail, stalked deer in the Apache National Forest . And in the patriotic camaraderie typical of Morenci's mining families, the nine graduates of Morenci High enlisted as a group in the Marine Corps. Their service began on Independence Day, 1966. Only 3 returned home.
- The Buddies of Midvale - LeRoy Tafoya, Jimmy Martinez, Tom Gonzales were all boyhood friends and lived on three consecutive streets in Midvale, Utah on Fifth, Sixth and Seventh avenues. They lived only a few yards apart. They played ball at the adjacent sandlot ball field. And they all went to Vietnam . In a span of 16 dark days in late 1967, all three would be killed. LeRoy was killed on Wednesday, Nov. 22, the fourth anniversary of John F. Kennedy's assassination. Jimmy died less than 24 hours later on Thanksgiving Day. Tom was shot dead assaulting the enemy on Dec. 7, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.
- The most casualty deaths for a single day was on January 31, 1968 ~ 245 deaths
- The most casualty deaths for a single month was May 1968 - 2,415 casualties were incurred. For most Americans who read this they will only see the numbers that the Vietnam War created. Those who survived the war, and the families of those who did not, will see the faces, feel the pain that these numbers created. They are, until they too pass away, haunted with these numbers, because they were friends, fathers, husbands, wives, sons and daughters. There are no noble wars, just noble warriors.

Not only the Vietnam War, I pray for and thank every fallen Warrior and surviving Warrior.
GOD bless you all!

Admiral Osborne Scholarship Fund

We are offering a Charleston Base Challenge Coin for sale. ALL proceeds go into the scholarship fund. Coins only cost \$7 each for an additional \$1 is a protective plastic capsule. To get your coin(s) see Julian Villegas or Carl Chinn.



New Pin For Sailors Guarding Nuclear Arms

By Mark D. Faram, Navy Times, Sept 26, 2011

More than 900 sailors could soon rate a new qualification insignia and designator, thanks to a pin approved last month by the Uniform Board and announced in NAVADMIN 260/11.

The nuclear weapons security breast insignia will be available only to those in the 9,200-sailor strong master-at-arms rating — and they can only qualify by serving at one of two commands.

The badge is in production and expected to hit Navy uniform stores in August 2012.

"This pin was developed as an incentive to encourage sailors to take an assignment at one of the two strategic weapons facilities," said Lt. Cmdr. Manny Arcelona, master-at-arms community manager.

Other incentives for those who take orders to a SWF are \$75 monthly special duty assignment pay, accelerated advancement to E-3 for junior sailors and sea duty credit for a shore duty job.

"Guarding our nation's strategic nuclear assets is arduous duty, and we feel this will give recognition to those who attain and maintain their qualification in this duty," Arcelona said.

Those who serve at the Navy's Strategic Weapons Facility Atlantic at Kings Bay, Ga., or SWF Pacific in Bangor, Wash., will be allowed to qualify. Both are co-located with ballistic-missile submarines.

Sailors who guard strategic nuclear weapons at these facilities work along-side a Marine Corps security battalion; only those filling billets working with Marines can qualify.

In addition, sailors must be qualified in the senior post or watch station associated with their paygrades, Arcelona said.

The badge's criteria were approved in May and outlined in Military Personnel Manual article 1220-061. While the article doesn't specifically limit the badge to masters-at-arms — it leaves the door open to "enlisted members" — Arcelona said the way it's written will make it difficult for other sailors assigned to those commands to qualify. Right now, 905 master-at-arms billets at these commands will allow sailors to meet the full requirements.

"Though we have corpsmen and admin support personnel at these commands, only those sailors who do the [strategic weapons-related] missions will be able to qualify," he said.

Because the job relates to nuclear weapons, sailors must be certified in and remain qualified for the Nuclear Weapon Personnel Reliability Program for at least 12 months. That qualification is outlined in Secretary of the Navy Instruction 5510.35B.

There's no provision allowing sailors who previously served at either of these commands to qualify

retroactively. Those sailors would have to return for another tour to rate the pin and designator.

The 1¼- by-1-inch insignia is similar to the rating badge worn by masters-at-arms. Both metal and embroidered versions will be produced for wear on dress uniforms and the blue camouflage Navy working uniform. It won't be allowed on the desert or woodland NWU.

It can be worn alone or with other warfare insignia.

Those who get the badge can continue to wear it once they transfer to another command, unless their eligibility for the Nuclear Weapons Personnel Reliability Program is revoked because of misconduct.

Those with the badge who become disqualified for reasons not related to misconduct can continue to wear the badge if their commanding officer agrees.

The pin wasn't actually what the community wanted, though, Arcelona said.

"Our proposal and the package submitted was to simply get the SWF into the Expeditionary Warfare Specialist Program," he said. "But leadership decided the program rated its own special badge and qualification, and we are very satisfied with that outcome."

Senior Enlisted Submariners To Get Boost In Pay

SASEBO NAVAL BASE, Japan — The Navy has increased the pay for senior enlisted submariners to entice more to remain in the Navy past 18 years of service, Navy officials announced Wednesday.

Starting Oct. 1, the Submarine Duty Incentive Pay for a senior chief petty officer with more than 18 years of service will rise from \$415 per month to \$550, according to a Navy news release. The same pay for a master chief petty officer will rise from \$425 to \$600 per month.

There has been high retention in most ratings, the release states, but incentives were needed to ensure some ratings remain filled. The Navy decided to specifically target senior submarine supervisors.

"The incentive pay will encourage senior enlisted submariners to return to sea in a department chief petty officer, senior enlisted adviser, or chief of the boat (command master chief) billet," Rear Adm. Tony Kurta, director of military personnel plans and policy, said in the release.

For more information, [view the complete NAVADMIN.](#)

"The democracy will cease to exist when you take away from those who are willing to work and give to those who would not"

-- Thomas Jefferson

SubVet News - #2011-094

NEWS-01: Ask the National Commander!

Submitted by: Office on 9/21/2011

Got a question about USSVI? This is your opportunity to ask National Commander Michael Bircumshaw about whatever is on your mind.

Ground rules, keep it clean and positive.

We want to build a better and more satisfying organization for all our shipmates. Our mission is to remember our fallen shipmates, encourage fraternalism between subvets and benefit our submarine family. Your suggestions to help achieve these ends will be very much appreciated.

If it is something personal that relates to your situation only, please email me directly at nc@ussvi.org. Otherwise, post your message on the blog referenced below so that other shipmates can benefit from the exchange.

<http://ussvi.wordpress.com>

TRICARE Expands Program

Week of August 29, 2011

TRICARE officials are expanding the number of preventive vaccines covered at retail network pharmacies. The expanded program covers immunizations for measles, mumps, shingles and many other preventable diseases. To see the expanded list of vaccines available from authorized TRICARE retail pharmacies visit the TRICARE Vaccines webpage at www.tricare.mil/vaccines. Beneficiaries check ahead before making a trip to their pharmacy to make sure the pharmacy is part of the TRICARE network and authorized to offer the vaccines. Ensuring that the pharmacy has the needed vaccine in-stock is also recommended.



Ponderisms

- 1· I used to eat a lot of natural foods until I learned that most people die of natural causes.
- 2· There are two kinds of pedestrians: the quick and the dead.
- 3· Life is sexually transmitted.
- 4· Healthy is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.
- 5· The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.
- 6· Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in hospitals dying of nothing.
- 7· Have you noticed since everyone has a camcorder these days no one talks about seeing UFOs like they used to?
- 8· Whenever I feel blue, I start breathing again.
- 9· All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.
- 10· In the 60's, people took acid to make the world weird. Now the world is weird and people take Prozac to make it normal.
- 11· How is it one careless match can start a forest fire, but it takes a whole box to start a campfire?
- 12· Who was the first person to look at a cow and say, 'I think I'll squeeze these dangly things and drink whatever comes out'?
- 13· If Jimmy cracks corn and no one cares, why is there a song about him?
- 14· Why does your OB-GYN leave the room while you get undressed as if they are not going to look up there anyway?
- 15· If quizzes are quizzical, what are tests?
- 16· If corn oil is made from corn, and vegetable oil is made from vegetables, then what is baby oil made from?
- 17· Do illiterate people get the full effect of Alphabet Soup?
- 18· Does pushing the elevator button more than once make it arrive faster?
- 19· Why doesn't glue stick to the inside of the bottle?

“How we think shows through in how we act. Attitudes are mirrors of the mind. They reflect thinking.”

David Joseph Schwartz

“Be careful the environment you choose for it will shape you; be careful the friends you choose for you will become like them.”

W. Clement Stone

Don't Ask, Don't Tell Policy Ends

September 19, 2011, 10:40 p.m.

DUXBURY, Vt. — At midnight, just as the Pentagon began allowing gays to serve openly in the military, Navy Lt. Gary Ross and his partner of 11 years sealed their marriage vows.

The Arizona men chose Vermont for their nuptials in part because it is in the Eastern time zone.

"We feel that it's important that as soon as we're allowed to commit to each other that we do," Ross said before the ceremony. "It's important not to hide anymore."

Hours before the change was to take effect, the American military was making final preparations for the historic policy shift. The Pentagon announced that it was already accepting applications from openly gay candidates, but officials said they would wait a day before reviewing them.

Ross, 33, and Dan Swezy, a 49-year-old civilian, both of Tucson, also chose Vermont because it was the first state to allow gays to enter into civil unions, and one of six that have legalized same-sex marriage.

Justice of the Peace Greg Trulson proclaimed their marriage at exactly midnight.

Pentagon Press Secretary George Little said Monday that the military was prepared for the end of "don't ask, don't tell," a law adopted in 1993 that allowed gays to serve as long as they did not openly acknowledge their sexual orientation. Commanders were not allowed to ask.

In preparation for Tuesday's repeal, all branches of the military have spent several months training personnel and updating regulations. Lifting the ban halts all pending investigations, discharges and other proceedings that were begun under the old law.

President Obama signed the law that repealed "don't ask, don't tell" in December and, in July, certified that lifting the ban would not diminish the military's ability to fight. Some in Congress remain opposed, however, contending that the new policy may undermine order and discipline. Existing standards of personal conduct, such as those pertaining to public displays of affection, will continue regardless of sexual orientation.

Ross, a 2002 graduate of the Naval Academy, is a surface warfare officer at the Army's Ft. Huachuca. Their Tucson home is about a two-hour commute from the fort, which is near the Mexican border.

When he returns to work Thursday, Ross isn't planning to advertise that he's married to a man.

But he said the end of the ban will simplify many aspects of his life.

The old system "requires you to lie several times a day," he said. He hopes being able to talk about his relationship will make his work easier too.

"If you're standing watch at midnight on a surface ship, there's not much to talk about," he said. "It becomes very difficult to trust someone you can't be honest with."

It's time to man battle stations

21 September 2011

Yesterday, the Administration put out its plan to cut the deficit by \$3 trillion over the next 10 years, including specific proposals for \$27 billion in cuts in the military retirement and health care package.

The Administration plan envisions:

Establishing an annual enrollment fee for TRICARE For Life.

Another (unspecified) retail pharmacy copay hike
Establishing a BRAC-style commission to recommend "modernizing" the military retirement system

Most upsetting, the stated intent of the proposals is to "align government programs with those in the private sector" and address the "measurable disparity between the fees most retired private sector workers pay...and what retired military personnel pay."

Those words show a shocking insensitivity to the extraordinary demands and sacrifices imposed on career service members and families.

Our strong stance has attracted a major media blitz. Our staff experts have been quoted in The New York Times, The Washington Post, USA Today, and The Lou Dobbs Show in the last two days alone. We anticipate a great deal of media attention over the next few weeks due to MOAA's reputation as a reliable source.

Now is the time for all MOAA members to mobilize. Please urge your officer friends to join MOAA and start actively working to protect their interests and those of the current and future force.

This isn't just about equity. It's about an attack on the core elements that sustain the quality career force that protects our national security.

Any who continue to sit on the sidelines jeopardize their own interests, the military community's, and the nation's future capability to sustain a strong national defense.

Start by sending this [MOAA-suggested message](#) to your elected officials.

This battle is just beginning.

Sincerely,



VADM Norb Ryan, USN (Ret)
President

"A friend should be one in whose understanding and virtue we can equally confide, and whose opinion we can value at once for its justness and its sincerity."

Robert Hall