

TORPEDO ALLEY



Vol. 8, No.2

February 2012

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:

Second Thursday of the month, February 9, 2012
Social Hour: 1800
Meeting starts: 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	Ervin Chase	904-327-6045
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	Theron Irving	843-572-2731
Treasurer	Terry Trump	843-873-9563

Minutes of the January 2012 meeting

Attendance for Jan 12, 2012 meeting was 97

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

Introductions: New people introduced. Craig Opie, ETC (SS), Mike “Knobby” Moud MSCM (SS), Charlie Hudson Guest, USMC. Welcome aboard.

Secretary: No meeting in December

Treasurer: Terry Trump gave end of year base financial report.

Vice Commander: Marty Sessler thanked everyone who turned out for Christmas parades with the float. A special thanks was given to Ken Hutchison who pulled the float in all three parades.

Chaplain: January Report:

- Jim Lewis had his left knee replaced in November and was discharged on Thanksgiving.

On Dec. 21st he had neck surgery to relieve the issues in his right arm and hand.

- Rich Alkire had his lung surgery on Nov. 30th and is doing well.
- Jim Kimbrell had surgery on his back in Nov. He contacted a staph infection and has been treating the wound area. Jim is doing well.
- Bill Roberts fell on Dec. 6th and fractured the bone around the pin in his left leg from his artificial hip. He spent several weeks in rehab and finally made it home this past Tuesday. He really thanks everyone who visited, called and sent cards. It made a world of difference to him.
- Elsie Wilson, wife of Rex Wilson, has been diagnosed with Stage IV cancer in the brain, lungs and liver. The last I heard the treatment was still being determined.
- CPO Submarines Robert G. "Bob" Lovell, USN Retired, departed on Eternal Patrol on December 10th. Bob was not a member of SUBVETS.
- Stan Standrich was in the hospital just before Christmas with blood clots in his leg. He has been diagnosed lung cancer. Stan had his port put in today and began his 10 days of radiation treatments. Said he is going to join the 'bald is beautiful' club we have in the SUBVETS. He will begin his chemo after 10 days.
- 'Hutch' Hutchinson was put in the hospital for some heart related problems just before New Years. He was moved to the ICU due to more severe problems. Hutch has now been taken off the ventilator and is now in the 4th floor cardiac intermediate care unit. He is weak and no visitors are allowed at present.
- Gerry Farr is scheduled for knee replacement on the right knee on Monday Jan. 16th. He expects to be in Trident for about 3 days.
- CPO Submarines Charles B. Rutherford, USN Retired, departed on Eternal Patrol on Jan. 9th. Charles was not a member of SUBVETS. He had served on 8 boats: Seafox, Cabezon, Sea Devil, Cusk, Segundo, Bream, Bushnell, Batfish, Penguin and Sennet.
- Mike Slattery has a new job as a project manager for the Kings Bay SUBASE chow hall. He will be commuting between KB and Charleston and will try to make as many events as possible.

NOTE: This month we saw two of our shipmates go on Eternal Patrol and they were not members of the SUBVETS or Charleston Base. We are losing several this month from our Sailing List for non-payment of dues. Shipmates we need to do better at recruiting and also keeping those who are already members. When you

meet someone in town that enquires about our group make sure to get their name, phone number and email address (if they will give it to you) and then pass that info on to Carl so that we can begin some active recruitment. As an organization we need to be taking care of our shipmates.

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.

Newsletter: New newsletter editor Ervin Chase gave instructions to Base on how to get in touch with him for newsletter inputs. Active duty working hours were discussed.

Storekeeper: Calendars for sale. Orders of Base items can be made by getting in touch with Ken Hutchison.

Holland Club: Induction ceremonies will be held in April for 13 inductees.

SUBVETS WWII: Calendars will be available for 2012. SubVets WWII will cease to exist after National Convention in Norfolk this year. Swamp Fox chapter will turn over all assets to USSVICB. Amberjack Memorial will be maintained by SubVets CB. SUBVETS WWII will meet on the 3rd Thursday of February at Ryan's in Summerville.

Veteran's Affairs: No Report

Little David: No Report

Scholarship: Applications are on Base website. Deadline is extended to April 15th.

District Commander: No Report.

Historian: No Report.

Nuclear Historian: Rick Carlson related to all about the current pay scale and stated how we will all be missing out. TDU ops will never be the same with the Cooks being trained as TM's. Packages and Junk were discussed. Electile Dysfunction was discussed. A tale of lion taming by a Beautiful Blonde and a tough old sailor in his 70's was told.

Chief of the Boat: Base float will be pulled in the St. Patty's Day Parade on 17 March. Oyster Roast will be the 25^h of Feb at Bushy Park. Annual Picnic will be on the 5th of May at Bushy Park. Fee for these events will

be \$5.00 per member + 1 guest. All other guests will be \$10.00. Kids 14 and under are free.

Base Commander's comments: Our functions are for CB members and their guests only. They are not open to the general public. \$200.00 was motion made and seconded for float repair. Discussion from floor about new LED lights for float. Vice Commander stated that this could be brought up at a later date. Current need is for lens for the tail light assembly. Motion for \$200.00 carried. BC is asking for help for the COB at various base functions. Base by-laws are being reviewed. Any suggestions should be forwarded to Base Executive Board for review and comment. Annual audit will be held this year. Results will be published when done. British Submariner's will be in town for the Huntley memorial service and the BC suggested that they be invited to our oyster roast as our guests. Distinguished Submarine Sailor of the year for 2012 entries should be submitted soon. John Paul Pardeau, Honorary Member, was presented with a plaque for all his dedicated help with our base functions.

Old Business: South East Regional Convention will be in Mobil, Alabama on April 16 – 20th.

New Business: Thank you letter to Rick Carlson for donation of 100 movies to Veteran's Home.

Good of the Order: Magazines given to Veteran's Home by Nick Nichols. Free hat given to Korean War Vet. Depth Charge drawing: \$262.00 to winner. 676783 winning number. Winner is Dave Taylor. Mr. Taylor donated \$62.00 to the scholarship fund.

Meeting Adjourned: The Base Commander adjourned the meeting.

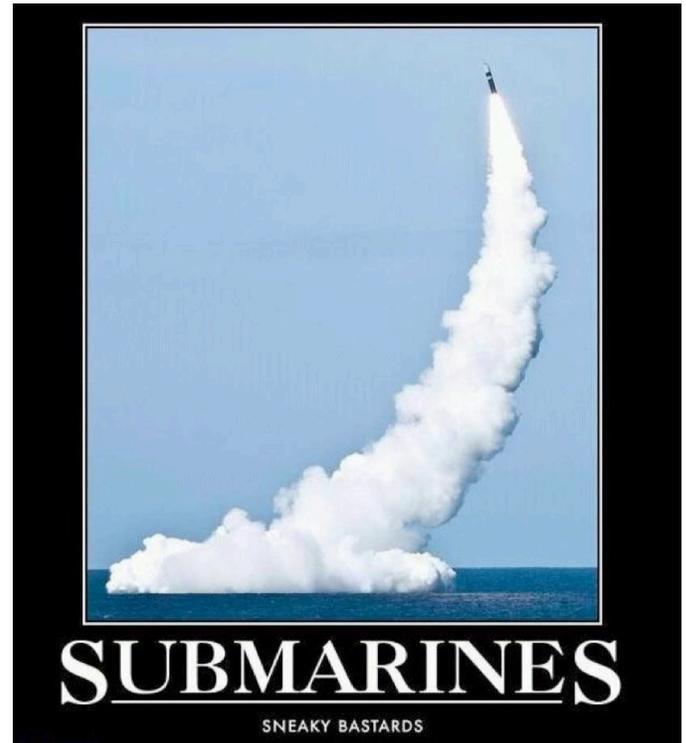
February Submarines Lost:

USS Shark	SS 174	February 11, 1942
USS Amberjack	SS 219	February 16, 1943
USS Grayback	SS 208	February 26, 1944
USS Trout	SS 202	February 28, 1944
USS Barbel	SS 316	February 4, 1945
H.L. Hunley		February 17, 1864

February Events

February 16th - SUBVETS WWII meeting at Ryan's in Summerville at 1100.

February 25th - Oyster Roast at Cooper River Partners Picnic Area, food is served at 1300.



Rust threatens WWII-era sub in Pittsburgh

The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — A World War II submarine that is a popular tourist attraction in Pittsburgh has rusted below the water level and may need costly repairs, officials said.

The Requin isn't going to sink but may need as much as \$2 million in repairs, the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review reported Saturday.

Requin is docked on the Ohio River, at the Carnegie Science Center. Officials there said there is no danger, and visitors are still welcome.

"But we want to correct the problem as quickly as we can," said Ann Metzger, co-director of the center.

The Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County approved a \$125,000 grant Friday to begin determining the damage.

"We will use the funds to conduct an official maritime assessment of the situation, as well as for engineering work, to determine what needs to be done," Metzger said.

Although the Navy inspects the sub annually, it does not have money to conduct the assessment, Metzger told the paper.

Repairs could be made on a drydock, or in place by installing an underwater sea wall and pumping out the river water, the paper reported. That way visitors could watch the progress.

Once center officials have an idea of the scope and cost of repairs, they will begin fundraising.

The Navy launched the submarine on New Year's Day 1945. Commissioned as a standard fleet submarine in April, Requin did not see active duty during World War II. But the vessel was at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, when the war ended in August that year.

It later served in the Mediterranean Sea with the Sixth Fleet, and was decommissioned in 1968.

Requin has been in Pittsburgh since 1990. Visitors can see how the submarine worked, including the tiny kitchen and the cramped bunks in which service members slept.



US Navy Revisiting Feasibility Of A Sub-

Launched Global Strike Weapon

With proposed defense budget reductions creating a need to reshape American military forces, the US Department of Defense is once again looking into the possibility of developing a sub-launched "Prompt Global Strike" (PGS) weapon as a means of reinforcing America's power projection capability.

Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta announced during a press conference on January 26 that the administration's proposed Fiscal Year 2013 budget request of \$525 billion includes funding for the US Navy to renew efforts to develop a non-nuclear, sub-launched missile capable of striking a target anywhere in the world within an hour of launch. The only weapons presently available in the inventory capable of hitting global targets so quickly are nuclear Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs). ICBMs are subject to severe restrictions regulating their numbers, deployment, warhead capacity, and range by multiple international treaties.



USS Ohio (SSGN 726) arrived in Yokosuka, Japan, Oct. 16 for a scheduled port visit. (U.S. Navy Photo). Back in the mid 2000s the U.S. Navy converted four nuclear missile submarines (SSBN) into guided-missile submarines (SSGN) providing conventional strike and improving the Navy's clandestine operational support capabilities.

Back in 2000, the US Navy attempted to adapt the D-5 Trident missile for use as a Prompt Global Strike weapon, but met with strong opposition from members of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Committee members, and other legislators, expressed their concern that the launch of a modified non-nuclear Trident would be mistaken for a nuclear strike and could potentially spark a nuclear retaliatory strike from Russia.

During the January 26 press conference, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey assured the audience that advances in missile technology now made it possible for a purpose-built PGS weapon to be sufficiently recognizable so it would not be mistaken for a nuclear strike. He indicated that Navy engineers now had the technology to develop a missile with a distinctive trajectory and trademark speed that would

preclude the possibility of mistaken identity.

The Department of Defense's renewed interest in development of a sub-launched PGS is tacit recognition that advanced conventional weapons are needed to meet the security demands of the new century to maintain US military superiority. Such weapons are sparking increased interest as fiscal reality forces a reduction in American forces and weaponry.

Defense sources have long lobbied for deployment of a non-nuclear PGS weapon, arguing that such a weapon would be invaluable for taking out high-profile targets like Osama Bin Laden quickly and with minimal risk to combat forces. Such a weapon would also serve to bolster the Defense Department's missile defense shield and would add a much needed warfighting capability ideally suited for service with a smaller, more flexible US military force.

In his address, Mr. Panetta did not provide any specifics regarding the ships expected to carry a PGS weapon. It is not yet known if the Navy plans to deploy the PGS missiles aboard the older Ohio-class subs or the newer Virginia-class submarines or both.

U.S. Navy Breaks The Wrong Record

January 11, 2012: The U.S. Navy broke a record in 2011, as it relieved (removed from their job) 35 senior commanders. Worse yet, 27 of them were commanding or executive officers on ships. This was higher than the previous record year, 2003, when 23 were relieved. Since the end of the Cold War in 1991 the U.S. Navy has been experiencing a larger number of warship captains and other senior naval commanders getting relieved. It's currently over five percent of ship captains a year. At the end of the Cold War, in the late 1980s, the rate was about 3-4 percent a year. So why has the relief rate gone up? And why hasn't the navy been able to do anything to reverse this two decade long trend?

There appears to be a number of reasons for this, some of them new and unique, often having to do with the growth of political correctness. But most of the other reliefs appeared to be traceable to the rating system (where commanders evaluate their subordinates each year). Obviously, too many unqualified officers are getting promoted to commands they cannot handle. Seeking a solution, the navy queried commanders for new ideas for the evaluation system. One of the more interesting ones was to hold commanders responsible for their evaluations. Thus, when a commander was up

for promotion one of the items considered would be the accuracy of their past evaluations. After all, the higher your rank, the more important it is for you to pick the right people for promotion. The navy has also looked at how corporations handle this evaluation process and discovered that it was common to poll subordinates for evaluations as well. The navy was aware that some commanders consult senior NCOs (chiefs) on evaluations. Chiefs have a lot of experience and see officers a bit differently than more senior officers.

Another problem was a major modification, two decades ago, in these fitness reports in which written comments on many aspects of an officer evaluation were changed to a 1-5 ranking system. The new method also forced raters to rank all their subordinates against each other. This was unfair to a bunch of high performing officers who happened to be serving together and being rated by the same commander.

Even more worrisome was the fact that only a small percentage of reliefs have to do with professional failings (a collision or serious accident, failing a major inspection, or just continued poor performance.) Most reliefs were, and still are, for adultery, drunkenness, or theft. Or, in one case, telling jokes that sailors enjoyed but some politicians didn't.

With more women aboard warships there have been more reliefs for, as sailors like to put it, "zipper failure". Typically, these reliefs include phrases pointing out that the disgraced officer, "acted in an unprofessional manner toward several crew members that was inappropriate, improper, and unduly familiar". Such "familiarity" usually includes sex with subordinates and a captain who is having zipper control problems often has other shortcomings as well. Senior commanders traditionally act prudently and relieve a ship commander who demonstrates a pattern of minor problems and who they "lack confidence in".

Most naval officers see the problem not of too many captains being relieved but of too many unqualified officers getting command of ships in the first place. Not every naval officer qualified for ship command gets one. The competition for ship commands is pretty intense. This, despite the fact that officers know that whatever goes wrong on the ship the captain is responsible.

It's a hard slog for a new ensign (officer rank O-1) to make it to a ship command. For every hundred ensigns entering service, only 11 of those ensigns will make it to O-6 (captain) and get a major seagoing command (cruiser, destroyer, squadron). Officers who do well commanding a ship will often get to do it two or three times before they retire after about 30 years of service.

But with all this screening and winnowing why are more unqualified officers getting to command ships, and then getting relieved because they can't hack it? Some point to the growing popularity of "mentoring" by senior officers (that smaller percentage that makes it to admiral). While the navy uses a board of officers to decide which officers get ship commands the enthusiastic recommendation of one or more admirals does count. Perhaps it counts too much. While the navy is still quick to relieve any ship commander that screws up (one naval "tradition" that should never be tampered with), up until that point it is prudent not to offend any admirals by implying that their judgment of "up and coming talent" is faulty. In the aftermath of these reliefs, it often becomes known that the relieved captain had a long record of problems. But because he was "blessed" by one or more admirals these infractions were overlooked. The golden boys tend to be very personable and, well, look good. The navy promotion system is organized to rise above such superficial characteristics but apparently the power, and misuse of mentoring, has increasingly corrupted the process.

And then there is the problem with the chiefs, history, and zero tolerance. Asking the chiefs (Chief Petty Officers, the senior NCOs who supervise the sailors) might provide some illumination about officer potential. Unfortunately, over the last decade officers have been less inclined to ask their chiefs much. The "zero tolerance" atmosphere that has permeated the navy since the end of the Cold War has led officers to take direct control of supervisory duties the chiefs used to handle. The chiefs have lost a lot of their influence, responsibility, and power.

The problem is that, with "zero tolerance" one mistake can destroy a career. This was not the case in the past. Many of the outstanding admirals of World War II would have never survived in today's navy. For example, Bill "Bull" Halsey ran his destroyer aground during World War I, but his career survived the incident. That is no longer the case. It's also well to remember that, once World War II began, there was a massive removal of peacetime commanders from ships. The

peacetime evaluation system selected officers who were well qualified to command ships in peacetime but not in wartime. Same pattern with admirals.

Another problem is that officers don't spend as much time at sea, or in command, as in the past. A lot of time is spent going to school and away from the chiefs and sailors. For example, while the navy had more ships in the 1930s than it does today, there were fewer people in the navy. That's because back then 80 percent of navy personnel were assigned to a ship and had plenty of time to learn how to keep it clean and operational. With that much less practical experience it's understandable that more captains would prove unable to do the job.



This movie was made about the USS Cusk in 1950 starring Glenn Ford and Viveca Lindfors. Ford plays the fictitious Commander Talbot, a submarine captain who was determined to show that missiles could be launched from submarines.

This movie uses actual film footage from some of the Cusk's early missile launches, as well as footage of launches from the USS Tunny (SS-282) and the USS Carbonero (SS-337). These missile launches took place off-shore of the Point Mugu, California test site where the Cusk also made her famous first launch.

