

TORPEDO ALLEY



Vol. 8, No. 10

October 2012

United States Submarine Veterans - Charleston Base Newsletter

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 11 2012 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 Click to email Phone Number

Chief of the Boat	Rick Sparger	843-553-5594
Public Affairs	Ed Stank	843 863-8474
Veterans Affairs	Jim Morrison	843-832-9716
Chaplain	John Nichols	843-452-3189
Membership	Carl Chinn	843-875-3098
Holland Club	Vacant	
Scholarship	Julian Villegas	843-871-6135
Newsletter	Steve Morawiec	843-410-0131
Storekeeper	Ken Hutchison	843-553-0935
Webmaster	John Nichols	843-452-3189
Historian	George Scharf	843 873-3318

Base Officers Click to email Phone Number

Commander	Carl Chinn	843-875-3098
Vice Commander	Jerry Stout	843-871-9533
Secretary	Vacant	
Treasurer	Terry Trump	843-873-9563

Minutes of the Sept 2012 meeting

Attendance for the September 2012 meeting was 110.

Opening Ceremony: Base Commander Carl Chin called the meeting to order. A quorum was present and the meeting started at 1900.

Introductions: Gordon Long, RM2 (SS)

Secretary: Asked for a motion to accept the minutes as published in the newsletter. Seconded and the motion was carried.

Treasurer: Terry gave report for the month of August 2012.

Vice Commander: Attended the National Convention in Norfolk, VA. I was present at the closing ceremony of the WW II Veterans. It was a very moving event and was a great tribute to our WW II veterans who have contributed so much to this great nation.

Storekeeper: Two of our members have visited Clyde Peters. It was noted that he received a zero grade in conduct. 2013 calendars are in. This year is dedicated to the most decorated boats of WW II. June's boat is the USS Barb SS

220 and we have one of the former crew members in attendance tonight. Bravo Zulu to Willie Jones, WW II submarine veteran extraordinaire. Calendar price is \$10.00 each.

Scholarship: Tickets are still available for the 24" wooden dolphins being raffled off at this year's Christmas Party. A thank you card has been received from the grandson of Ray Sparks for his scholarship. He states it will be put to good use.

Public Affairs: Ed Stank has relieved Larry Starland as Public Affairs. He is glad to be back in the fold. Charleston Base meetings will be posted in the local section of the Post and Courier.

Chaplain: During our next meeting, we will conduct a short memorial service for our shipmate, TM2(SS) Samuel Ernest Strickland, a World War II submarine veteran, who departed on eternal patrol on June 11, 2012. We learned of his funeral service too late to participate, but offered the family a Memorial Service when they were ready.

- Welcome back to Richard Cleeve.
- Bob Bruce was in the VA hospital on August 14th for an infected salivary gland. He went home on August 16th and on the following Sunday, August 26th, he passed away at home. A military ceremony was held at the Ladson VFW on Thursday, August 30th.
- Barry Wilson had colon surgery on August 22nd and the surgeon was able to get the entire tumor. He is now recovering. There will be some chemo. The good thing is that his pancreatic cancer is still in remission.
- Carol Hix went to Summerville Medical ER on August 28th then transferred to Trident ICU the following day. He was diagnosed with a bleeding ulcer and discharged on August 31st. He is doing well.
- Jimmy Legg had back surgery on August 30th at Roper St. Francis. The surgery went well. He was discharged on August 31st and is doing well.
- Tom Lufkin is a Red Cross Disaster volunteer and was deployed for a couple of weeks to Hattiesburg MS to support the relief effort after hurricane Isaac came through. He is here tonight.
- Clyde Peters continues to decline as his Parkinsons Disease progresses. The VA has decided that he needs 24 hour care and he can't remain at home. He is at Mt. Pleasant Manor Nursing Home, 921 Bowman Rd, Rm. 323. Visitors are very welcome. Also remember Sue as she ensures he is cared for.
- Art Hance shattered one of the bones in his left foot and he's now in a cast. He is here tonight.
- Lee Allison had an MRI this past Tuesday and will have the results the first of next week.
- Our new National Chaplain, Ray Fritz, is from Lake Wylie, SC.

The following shipmates departed on Eternal Patrol this past month. None were members of Charleston Base. Online memorial entries were made.

STSCM (SS) Pete Manias, US Navy, Retired, departed on eternal patrol as a result of cancer on August 25th in CT. He served on Archerfish, Finback, and Norfolk as well as the COMSUBLANT TRE Team and was the COMSUBLANT Force Sonarman before retiring in 1997. Pete was not a member of USSVI.

Harry John Wamboldt, US Navy Veteran, departed on eternal patrol as a result of cancer on August 30th. He served on Barbel (SS 580) from 1968 to 1974. He lived in Mount Pleasant, SC. Harry was not a member of USSVI.

We have received the following cards:

From Evelyn Fuhr, Ken's wife: I want to thank you for the cards. They do lift my spirits.

From Ed Stank: To my brothers of the 'phin. I have always been proud to call myself a submariner, but your support over the past year has increased this pride tenfold. Pauline and I thank you for all the prayers and kindness during this stressful time.

Webmaster: Our website: <http://www.ussvicb.org/> Please have your photograph taken if you haven't already done so. Also, please complete your Page 2 if you haven't already done so.

Veteran's Affairs: No report

Little David: No report

Holland Club: John Lookabill has tendered his resignation and we will be looking for a new chairman. A Holland Club member would be a nice choice.

SUBVETS WWII: Ed Stank reports that he will be going to Kings Bay the end of next month for the WW II SubVets Memorial Ceremony. WW II Sub Vets has been dissolved, but we will still meet at Ryan's in Summerville every third Thursday every other month.

Next meeting will be next month on October 18th. It has also been determined that the Ladies of WW II SubVets will now be regular members of our chapter as they have put up with these old DBFer's for over 70 years.

The Veterans Associations of Anderson, SC has invited the WWII SubVets to attend the annual parade on the 10th of November. Let me know so I can answer the letter they sent us.

Lee Allison is still a work in progress. He will be getting an MRI next Monday to determine what needs to be done to repair his nerve.

Historian: No report

Nuclear Historian: While attending the recent CPO Selectee breakfast I posed the following question. What does the word "snipe" mean? This seemed to snow about 90% of them until I called them f**kin' nukes.

Those in attendance seemed to understand then. The following story seems to relate to the above tidbit. A NUC was seated next to a little girl (who happened to be the daughter of AUX-ILIARY-MAN) on an airplane when the NUC turned to her and said, "Let's talk. I've heard that flights go quicker if you strike up a conversation with your fellow passenger." The little girl, who had just opened her book, closed it slowly and said to the NUC, "What would you like to talk about?" "Oh I don't know" said the NUC. "How about nuclear power?" and he smiles. "OK," she said. "That could be an interesting topic, but let me ask you a question first. A horse, a cow and a deer all eat the same stuff – grass. Yet a deer excretes little pellets, while a cow turns out a flat patty and a horse produces clumps of dried grass. Why do you suppose that is?" The NUC, visibly surprised by the little girl's intelligence, thinks about it and says, "Hmmm, I have no idea." To which the little girl replies, "Do you really feel qualified to discuss nuclear power when you don't know shit?"

Membership: Dues are due 1 October 2012. Please be prompt in paying your dues.

Fleet Reserve: Monthly meeting next Thursday the 20th. If you haven't joined why the hell not?

Newsletter: Snail mail newsletter went out today. Electronic newsletter is promulgated. If you didn't receive it please let me know. Send me your inputs as this is your newsletter. Letters to the editor, articles or anything else pertinent.

District Commander: The lowest number of the USSVI membership voted in the latest National election: 2681 out of 13,000.

Next year's convention will be in Rochester, MN.

The 2014 convention will be in the San Francisco area.

The WW II SubVet Memorial in Kings Bay will not be supported by BBQ. Springfield Hotel and Suites are taking reservations at \$49.00 per night. Contact me for info.

Public Events: The Summerville JROTC has invited us to pull our float in the Homecoming Parade on the October 17th – a Wednesday afternoon at approximately 1400.

The same JROTC will be having a Salute to Veterans on the 5th of Oct.

We have also been invited to pull the float in the Anderson Veterans Parade.

Details on all three of these events will be promulgated when known.

Chief of the Boat: I attended the CPO breakfast; if you didn't attend you missed a good one. Several drawings were done plus a 50/50 with \$115.00 going to the winner and the CPOs of NPTU donated the other \$115.00 to Charleston Base. Thanks to the CPOs.

The CPO pinning Ceremony will be tomorrow the 14th at 1300. Directions are up front to Bowman Center.

I also attend the National Convention and I have to echo the Vice Commander's assessment on the WW II Ceremony. It was fabulous. Several VIP were in attendance and gave glowing remarks.

I will say that if you've never attended a National Convention, it is a major suck-ass event. All in all it is a very impressive event. I met Mr. Tom Connley on the elevator and he stated that I was from Charleston Base. He said that he is pretty much persona non grata here and I said it was pretty much the truth. Enough said. I did see John Peters there and he is not looking real good. That's all I got.

Base Commander: Information about the hog roast: It will be on the 13th of Oct at 1100 with chow going down at 1300. Please answer the email about how many people you are bringing (including yourself). Cost is \$5.00 per member and \$5.00 for the first guest. Each additional guest is \$10.00.

If your last name begins with A – M, bring a side dish; N – Z a dessert.

Christmas Party is 1 December 2012. Cost is \$15.00 each for you and spouse or significant other. Additional guests are \$20.00 each. Volunteers are needed for set up and break down. Please email or text Steve Morawiec to volunteer.

Old Business: At the last meeting we tabled a motion concerning the building fund and the Save the Clamagore fund. Ken Hutchinson reviewed his motion and announced that he was rescinding the motion to allow more time to see what happens with the Clamagore.

New Business: Chief Opie will be organizing next year's submarine ball and is seeking suggestions for where to have the event.

Ed Stank has information about South Carolina probate procedures concerning personal property. See him for more info.

Submarine Veterans license plate - Ed Stank is going to pursue the procedure for getting the SubVet Tags for South Carolina. If you are interested please see Ed for more info.

Good Of The Order: Ed Stank is organizing a reunion for the USS Nathan Hale next year in Branson, MO. See Ed for more details.

Mike Emerson: My little blue pickup has an advertisement on the back that states: American by birth and a submariner by choice. I was stopped for speeding in Yellowstone Park (doing 25 in a 15 zone). The Ranger stated that he liked what he saw on my truck and did not give me a ticket. It does pay to advertise.

Neck has stated that he has pulled the After Battery into the 21st century by going high-tech. Instead of reading a crotch novel on the shitter he is now using his Iphone to text and call his shipmates long distance (he also has his own personal ET). He has several new items for sale. See Neck for details.

Rodney says thanks for bringing all the new underwear for our homeless vets.

Ed Simokat is a native of the Rochester, MN and is offering information about the local area for the upcoming convention next year.

The newsletter editor makes a motion to publicize the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting via the website. Motion seconded and carried.

Marty Sessler has checked into a custom cover for the float. The existing tarp is too large. He has obtained a quote for approximately \$950.00 for a reinforced cover. Motion made and seconded. Discussion: cost is no object per the COB and Neck. The motion passed.

Depth Charge: \$336 to the winner.

Meeting Adjourned: The Base Commander adjourned the meeting at 2000.

One of the things that makes our military the best in the world is the certain knowledge of each soldier, sailor, airman, and Marine that they can always count on their comrades should they need help - that they will never be abandoned. Senator Jon Kyl

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

October Birthdays

Alfano	Czulewicz	Harden	Niebeling
Alkire	Esch	Hayes	Opie
Anderson	Feller	Hinks	Palenchar
Bailey	Ford	Holzel	Peters
Beach	Gillitzer	Hostetter	Pruitt
Bonow	Gnodle	Leonhardt	Roup
Britton	Griggs	Lindberg	Scharf
Camp	Gulick	Lloyd	Skorepa
Campbell	Hall	Lookabill	Tolbert
Cline	Hansen	McDonald	Wilson
Cyrek	Hanson	Nathan	Yingling

DON'T FORGET TO VOTE ON NOVEMBER 6TH!!!

Notes From The Chaplain

A prayer for voting - "Lord, thank You for placing me in a nation where I have the freedom to vote for my leaders. Help me to take this honor seriously. Please give me wisdom to cast my vote for the candidates You want me to support. Amen."

STANDING WATCH

If there's one thing a boat Sailor understands, it's standing watch. We've stood topside watch in the best and worst weather; enjoyed watches on the bridge when the water is calm and when it was a beast; and sat for long hours while underway trying to make it through the mid-watch in the torpedo room, the engine room and all spaces in between.

It is easy to see why Psalm 121 is a favorite Psalm for those in the military. It addresses people in dangerous situations where one slip-up could be disastrous. It speaks to those who might bake by day and freeze by night. It is written for people who must always be on guard—for people in harm's way. It was written for God's people of all times and places, people who need help. It was written for us.

'I lift up my eyes to the hills—where does my help come from?

My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot slip—he who watches over you will not slumber;

indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

The LORD watches over you—the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.

The LORD will keep you from all harm—he will watch over your life;

the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore'

(Psalm 121).

The psalmist repeated the word "watch" several times. The one standing watch is the LORD. That's where our help comes from. Is he capable of providing whatever help we need? He had sufficient power to bring the universe into existence. Can we count on him? He never sleeps; he doesn't even take naps. Will he step in to personally involve himself in our protection? Day or night he will be there to block whatever might harm us.

And to what extent will he do this? He stands watch not just over a part of our life, but over all of it—during our youth and our old age, over our body and our soul. He stands watch not just for a day or a year but always and forever.

So, what does this mean? How do pain and failure, disease and disaster fit into this picture? Does it mean we will never be wounded—in body or spirit? Does it mean we get a free pass for the heartaches of life?

No, we get a free pass through the worries of life. For, if this Psalm is true—and God does not lie—then we surely have no cause for worry. Nothing will happen to us purely by accident. Everything will ultimately work out for our good. We are not on our own. We belong to none less than the holy LORD God.

He, personally, stands watch over us—for all time and for eternity.

From the Membership Chairman:

2013 dues are due on 1 October 2012. There are still 87 Charleston Base members (names posted below) who have not paid their Base/National dues. Please pay as soon as possible.

Baker, Tim	Cager, Clemon	Dale, George	Gomez, Terry	Kimzey, Roy	McFarland, D	Opie, Craig	Samples, Gary	Villegas, Julian
Barnette, Richard	Campbell, Newell	Davis, Pat	Graham, James	Knaub, Michael	McRae, F.C. "Mac"	Owens, William	Sabo, John	Watson, John
Barnhart, Dean	Carlson, Erik	Donofrio, Donald	Griggs, Dewey	Knutson, Larry	Morrison, Jimmy	Paris, Larry	Saucier, Joseph	White, Howard
Becker, Gary	Chase, Ervin	Dygert, Kevin	Gulick, James	LaForce, Christian	Morrow, Robert	Peters, Clyde	Schaffer, Jerome	Wise, Richard
Bergamo, Andrew	Christiansen, Jacob	Euper, Phillip	Hanson, Alvin	Langley, Robert	Murray, Timothy	Phillips, Charles	Sickle, James	Wood, Charles
Betz, Robert	Clift, Marvin	Everett, Stephen	Hayden, Christopher	Lanier, Mark	Nathan, Norris	Pickett, Russell	Silvers, Monty	Yates, Jim
Bohling, Charles	Cline, Michael	Farr, Craig	Hayes, Joseph	Leal, Lewis	Nettles, Harry	Preston, Dallas	Smith, Joseph	Yingling, Thomas
Bolin, Randall	Cox, Larry	Fenton, Donald	Hofen, Karl	Litzenberger, Ron	Neufeld, Wayne	Pruitt, William	Stoll, Albert	
Brown, Gary	Curtis, Steven	Fitzpatrick, William	Isaman, Robert	Lowe, Bob	Northrop, Donald	Rackley, Emmett	Tolbert, Buddy	
Burke, William	Czulewicz, Thomas	Gallagher, George	Kimbrell, Jimmy	Massey, Roy	Olsen, Odell	Roberson, James	Van Swearingen, Joseph	

Submarine News

CNO: Women Aboard Attack Subs Next Year

After years of anticipation, a date for assigning women to attack submarines has been set: next year. Attack boats represent the next phase of the Navy's gradual integration of the submarine force, which began last year when female officers joined ballistic- and guided-missile subs. Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jon Greenert told sailors recently that this new phase would begin as soon as next year, when female officers are assigned to Virginia-class subs.

"I think next year we're going to bring some officers into the Virginia class," Greenert said Aug. 22 at an all-hands call in New London, Conn. So far, the fleet's first female submariners have fit well into billets on Ohio-class boomers and guided-missile boats. But with two dozen female officers entering submarines each year, officials are looking for more hulls and more opportunities. That's why they're moving to integrate the Virginia class, the Navy's latest class of attack boats. Recruiters are seeking talented female midshipmen for sub duty, but the number of volunteers has been lower than officials anticipated.

"They're not quite as high as we thought they'd be, frankly, in the officer ranks," said Greenert, who explained the integration effort will continue gradually, hewing to lessons from the earlier integration of ships and aviation squadrons, such as putting female officers onboard first and providing them with female mentors. But he hinted the Navy may soon start looking for female enlisted volunteers, too.

"What about the enlisted?" he asked. "We need chiefs and first class females that would be willing and ready to go into submarines." The CNO did not say when enlisted women may join the sub force, but his comments signaled it likely would be part of a later phase of the integration.

While attracting a lot of press coverage, women remain a very rare presence in the sub force. There were only 24 women assigned to boats as of Aug. 30, counting both female submarine officers and Supply Corps lieutenants serving as their mentors. They serve aboard the blue and gold crews of the ballistic-missile subs Wyoming and Maine and the guided-missile sub Ohio, as well as the gold crew of the guided-missile sub Georgia.

Five more crews are planned to be integrated in January: Georgia's blue crew, and blue and gold crews on the guided-missile sub Florida and ballistic-missile sub Louisiana. Sub leaders haven't selected which Virginia-class subs will be integrated or planned specifically for when the first female crew members will report aboard them, a Submarine Forces spokeswoman said. The next wave of 24 female submariners is now in the officer training pipeline, with 18 more waiting to enter after them, said Cmdr. Monica Rousselow.

Navy Expected To Award EB Two Major Contracts For USS Miami Repairs

GROTON - The Navy is expected to award Electric Boat the two major contracts, totaling about \$450 million, to repair the USS Miami, severely damaged in a fire last May. The Navy will award a planning contract this month to support the engineering that will guide the repairs and to purchase parts for the Groton-based submarine. The repair contract will be awarded in the spring.

In a recent briefing on the repairs, the Navy told congressional staffers that EB will receive both contracts because of the extensiveness of the repairs and because of the company's expertise as the manufacturer of the submarine, according to a staff member who attended the meeting and asked not to be identified. The work will be a joint effort between EB and the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, since the submarine is staying at the naval shipyard, where the fire occurred, the staffer said.

The first contract will be about \$100 million, followed by an award of roughly \$335 million in the spring, the person said, and EB will have, at its peak, 300 employees working on the project.

"We'd be pleased to support the Navy if we're awarded the contract, and we're still standing by to see whether or not we get it," Electric Boat spokesman Robert Hamilton said Wednesday. A spokeswoman for the Naval Sea Systems Command said she could not confirm the recipient of the contract until it is awarded.

The Miami (SSN 755) was in a dry dock at the Maine shipyard for maintenance and upgrades when it caught fire May 23 and burned until the next day. The shipyard worker accused of setting the submarine on fire has been charged with arson.

The repairs are much more significant than those Portsmouth had planned for the overhaul and involve rebuilding sections of the boat, the staffer said. The person also said the USS Providence, which was scheduled for maintenance

at the shipyard, may now go to EB for the work since the Miami will remain at the Maine shipyard for longer than expected.

EB built the Miami, a Los Angeles-class submarine, for \$900 million. It was commissioned at the Naval Submarine Base in Groton in 1990 and arrived at the Portsmouth shipyard in March for a 20-month overhaul. The Navy has said it will fix the submarine by April 30, 2015, because the Miami still has 10 years remaining in its roughly 30-year service life, making it eligible for at least five more deployments.

Navy Wants Nearby GA Airport Closed

The Navy has asked the FAA to close down a small airport close to the Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base in Georgia, after a pair of skydivers inadvertently landed on their property last month. Rear Adm. John C. Scorby, commander of the Navy's Southeast Region, sent a letter on Tuesday to the FAA's district office, outlining the Navy's concerns.

Seven skydivers from St. Mary's Airport have landed on the base in the last three years, including the two on Aug. 12, Scorby said. He said such landings could potentially cause "needlessly dangerous reactive responses." The skydiving operator, The Jumping Place, has already moved to another airport while it looks for a new permanent base.

City councilman Jim Gant told the Florida Times-Union that that city would like to relocate the airport, and land is available, but there is no money to make it happen. The airport, which should be an asset to the city, instead has become a "spear in the city's side and somebody twists it every week," he said. He added that since the Navy base brings in \$600 million a year, and the airport is home to "maybe a dozen planes," if it comes to a choice between the airport and the Navy, he expects the Navy will win.

New Commander Takes Over Navy's Submarine Forces

The Navy has a new top commander guiding its submarine forces. Vice Adm. Michael Connor relieved Vice Adm. John Richardson at a ceremony Friday atop the attack submarine New Mexico at Norfolk Naval Station. During his two-year tenure, Richardson integrated women into the Navy's submarine force and sought to decentralize authority, giving submarine commanders more flexibility. Richardson said those changes increased the Navy's war readiness.

"Our business is war fighting and preparing for war," Richardson said from a stage on top of the submarine. "Our hope is that by doing that business in a very convincing way - by becoming masters of the undersea domain - we will deter anybody from taking us on." Richardson will lead the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program.

Connor, who previously served as assistant deputy chief of naval operations for warfare systems, is now the Navy's top submarine commander and will directly manage the force's Atlantic Fleet. He also will serve as commander of NATO's Allied Submarine Command.

Adm. John C. Harvey Jr., head of Fleet Forces Command, thanked Richardson for his leadership and welcomed Connor to what he called one of the Navy's most important responsibilities. "These boats and these sailors are truly the asymmetric advantage our Navy has in the maritime domain," Harvey said. "No nation's navy can touch our submarine force, and every nation's navy knows it." Several former seamen who were in town for the U.S. Submarine Veterans National Convention, including a few World War II veterans, attended the change of command.

Nuclear Submarine Fire Sparks Two Navy Probes

Investigators aim to learn why the blaze spread so fast and to find ways to reduce in-dock hazards

KITTERY, Maine -- Setting sail aboard a nuclear-powered submarine that can travel deep underwater at speeds topping 30 mph with complicated equipment and an arsenal of weapons has inherent danger. But there's potential for a bigger risk when the sub is in dock for major work.

Submarines that are being overhauled, like the USS Miami, which suffered \$450 million in damage in a fire in May, are often crowded with shipyard workers and equipment. Temporary systems are established and there are cables running throughout the sub. Deck plating is sometimes removed, creating holes in passageways.

"Submarines face different dangers, perhaps bigger ones, when they're being overhauled or repaired in an industrial setting," said Peter Bowman, a retired Navy captain and former Portsmouth Naval Shipyard commander.

On the USS Miami, those who battled the fire that started May 23 said it knocked out lighting, and a crew member broke ribs when he fell into a hole.

It took the efforts of more than 100 firefighters to save the USS Miami in dry dock at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard after a civilian shipyard worker allegedly set a fire that quickly spread through its forward compartments.

Two Navy panels are continuing wide-ranging investigations aimed at identifying factors that contributed to the rapid spread of the fire as well as ways to reduce hazards and improve firefighting response in the future.

The Navy hopes to complete the investigations by month's end. Bowman and Jerry Holland, a retired Navy rear admiral and submarine commander, said that an industrial setting exposes submarines to hazards that normally wouldn't be present at sea, when the ship's entire crew is present and all equipment and systems are in shipshape and in full operating order. Some of the most serious ship and submarine calamities in U.S. naval history have happened with a vessel at dock, in construction or under repair.

In 1960, another nuclear-powered submarine, USS Sargo, suffered serious damage and the loss of one crew member during an oxygen fire at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. And 50 shipyard workers died when the aircraft carrier Constellation caught fire during construction at Brooklyn Naval Shipyard later that year in New York. The submarine Guitarro sank during construction in 1969 at Mare Island Naval Shipyard in California; watertight doors and hatches couldn't be closed because of cables and hoses. Minor problems can become big problems when a vessel's sophisticated damage control systems are offline, said Norman Polmar, a naval analyst and author.

"When the sub is not operational, you can't count on the normal tried-and-tested damage control, firefighting and other safety systems," Polmar said. In the case of the USS Miami, firefighters reported that going into the sub was like stepping into a blast furnace, and a forensic study concluded that the temperature may have hit 1,000 degrees in areas, the Navy told the Associated Press. The pressure hull was subjected to less heat, with isolated areas hitting 700 degrees. "However, for the most part, the hull was not exposed to temperatures above 350 degrees," said Dale Eng, a Navy spokesman. The Navy intends to repair the submarine, which is based in Groton, Conn., with a goal of returning it to service in 2015.

Former shipyard worker Casey James Fury of Portsmouth, who's accused of setting the fire, remains held without bail while awaiting trial in federal court in Portland. Fury told Navy investigators that he set the fire because he was feeling anxiety and wanted to go home. The criminal case could have bearing on the release of the Navy's findings. While investigators hope to complete their work by month's end, they won't make their findings public if it interferes with the criminal case, said Pat Dolan, spokeswoman for the Navy Sea Systems Command.

Navy Admiral Makes Case For Longer Duties At Sea

BANGOR — The Navy shrank from 390,000 Sailors to 320,000 during the past decade while demand for its ships and submarines ballooned. More Sailors are needed at sea, requiring a rebalancing, the Navy's chief of personnel said during an all-hands call Monday at Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor.

"Adjusting gaps at sea is my primary focus," Vice Adm. Scott Van Buskirk told about 500 Sailors at Bangor Theater. The USS John C. Stennis is a good — but exaggerated — example. The Bremerton-based aircraft carrier returned from a seven-month deployment to the Middle East on March 2 and wasn't scheduled for another until January. But with tensions remaining high in that region, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta ordered the ship back out to sea for eight more months. The directive came July 16; the Stennis departed Aug. 27; there was little time to round out a crew. Sea duty incentive programs were already in place, and helped, but the turnaround was too quick. The Navy changed its policy July 12 to enable it to send Sailors with critical skills to sea before their shore duty was completed. They'd receive a lump sum based on the number of months of shore duty lost. Sailors on land the longest would go first, and they had to have been there at least two years. Two hundred seventy-one Sailors took this route to the Stennis. The policy is meant to be temporary, but that depends on world situations.

"We use a variety of long-term and voluntary initiatives to support our seagoing force," Van Buskirk said in announcing the policy. "Now, while these actions begin to take traction, we've determined that we need to take additional measures to reduce these gaps at sea."

Long-term measures include Sea Duty Incentive Pay and the Voluntary Sea Duty Program. The first offers Sailors in pay grades E-5 through E-9 in jobs undermanned at sea to get a monetary incentive for extending their sea assignment or curtailing shore duty to return to sea duty. It began in 2007 and is adjusted often to meet Navy needs. Sailors get a lump-sum payment based on the length of the sea-duty extension or shore-duty curtailment, ranging from \$500 to \$1,000 per month.

The Voluntary Sea Duty Program, which was announced in January, allows Sailors and their families to stay in their same duty location or move to a duty station of their choice if they extend at sea or return to sea duty early. They can take advantage of both programs at the same time.

Besides sea vs. shore duty, the Navy's working on balancing manpower among jobs, or rates. Some are crowded, others thin on numbers. Sailors in overmanned rates might not advance and face little potential in the Navy if they don't convert to a different rate. There are too many sharp Sailors being recruited, and 70 percent re-up. The Navy

has never had a higher-quality workforce, said Van Buskirk, who set the playing field Monday and then fielded questions for 40 minutes. Sailors asked about rate quotas, retention bonuses, retirement, deployment times and advancement cycles.

"To remain competitive, you have to be assignable, distributable and deployable," Van Buskirk told the Sailors. The admiral met with senior Sailors later Monday, then was off to Naval Air Station Whidbey Island and Naval Station Everett.

Obama aids Egypt as it tries to buy U-boats

(please don't shoot the messenger – ed.)

President Barack Obama's deputies are negotiating a \$1 billion aid package with Egypt's new Islamist government, even as Egypt's cash-strapped military revealed that it is trying to buy \$1 billion worth of German submarines that could threaten Israel's fast-growing offshore energy projects. The German government has pointedly declined to deny the incendiary revelation about Egypt's request to buy the two submarines.

Instead, the German government offered vague support for Israel, which is facing renewed threats from Iran's nuclear program and the Muslim Brotherhood's rise to power in Egypt. "There has been no change in the German government's position towards Israel, in the commitment the German government feels towards Israel's security," a spokesman for Germany's prime minister's told Der Spiegel, a major German newspaper.

State Department spokesman Victoria Nuland did not respond to an inquiry by The Daily Caller.

The submarine purchase will likely be an issue in the U.S. election, because both parties are vying for support from a relatively large concentration of swing-voting Jewish Americans in Florida. During the Democrats' convention in Charlotte, for example, several speakers declared that Obama is a strong supporter of Israel's defense.

"The Democratic platform reflects the president's unflinching commitment to Israel's security and future as a Jewish state," former Rep. David Wexler declared Sept. 4. "To strengthen Israel's qualitative military advantage, the president has increased security assistance to Israel to record levels — more than any other president," he claimed. Those declarations came after party leaders OK'd a platform document that did not recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Obama reversed the decision, and directed that Jerusalem be cited in the platform document. Islamist groups, including Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood and their supporters in the United States, oppose any recognition of Israel and its capital city.

But the brotherhood's hostility is constrained by its need to revive Egypt's stalled economy and to feed its population of over 80 million. The Islamist government recently won promises of aid from Arab countries, and hopes to complete the \$1 billion loan-forgiveness deal with Obama's deputies by the end of the year. The U-boat controversy began Sept. 31 when Egypt's leading newspaper, Al-Ahram, reported that the country's chief naval officer, Osama al-Gindi, said "We have agreed to a deal with Germany to procure two submarines of the latest 209 Class."

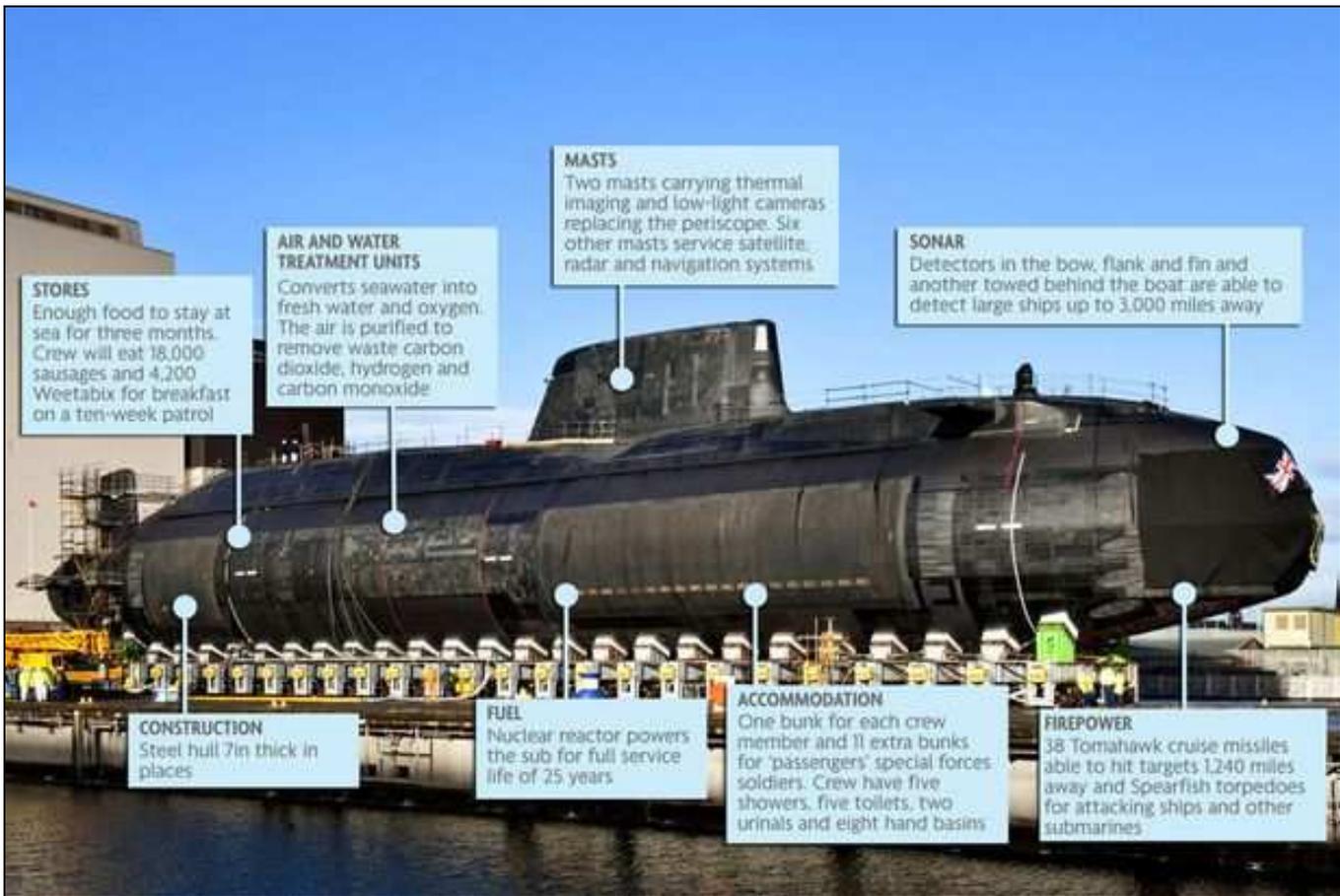
The Type 209 submarines are among the most advanced non-nuclear submarines available. They're made in Germany, which has a long history of submarine production. In German, submarines are called U-boats. The Type 209 submarines can stay underwater for lengthy periods, are sufficiently quiet to elude easy detection and can launch attacks without being identified. They can carry 14 torpedoes, mines or missiles that can sink ships or destroy oil rigs.

Israel has already bought six of the U-boats to protect its trade routes from future attack by any of the many Muslim-majority states around the Mediterranean Sea. Three of the U-boats are in Israel already, where they also are being used to protect Israel's network of offshore drilling rigs that are developing the nation's newly discovered underwater reservoirs of oil and gas.

Supersub: Nuclear giant submarine launches which can sit in the Channel and hear a ship in New York

After 20 million man-hours and a cost of £1 billion, this is Britain's newest nuclear attack submarine. The Ambush is the most sophisticated and deadly sub ever built and has sonar technology so sensitive it can sit beneath the English Channel and hear a ship leaving port in New York. But before the Hunter Killer craft slips into the Irish Sea on her maiden voyage today, the Daily Mirror was given a look at the Royal Navy's latest weapon.

Moored at Devonshire Dock, in Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, Ambush is twice as big and has twice the fire-power of our current nuclear sub HMS Trafalgar, which blasted Gaddafi forces in Libya. Ambush, made by BAE Systems, already has enough nuclear fuel to sail for a quarter of a century non-stop and could circle the world without surfacing.



She's also one of the quietest sea-going vessels built, capable of sneaking along an enemy coastline to drop off special forces or tracking a boat for weeks. Foreign forces will find it almost impossible to sneak up undetected by her incredibly powerful sonar equipment that can hear halfway around the world.

Commander Peter Green was appointed commanding officer of Ambush in 2009 while it was being built. The 47-year-old Royal Navy stalwart from Lancaster, said: "The level of capability we see with Ambush is unparalleled. This sub is a huge step forward in underwater operations. And her listening ability is quite awesome. She has a sonar system with the processing power of 2,000 laptop computers.

"It is possible this class of submarine is the most advanced in the world. And it is a huge privilege to be in command of her and her crew." Ambush is the second of Britain's Astute class submarines – the first of which is still undergoing sea trials – and could be in operation in the next 12 months. She is so high-tech that her makers have done away with the traditional periscope, replacing it with a camera system called Optronics which operates both night and day using infra-red technology.

Commander Green added: "Her Optronics system gives us much greater clarity than a periscope." Most of the weapons and defence systems aboard Ambush are top-secret and details cannot be revealed. Commander Green added: "Very few people get to see inside one of these submarines. "She is so sophisticated that her limitations are based on the humans on board – we can go to sea for 90 days approximately. She'd keep going but we need to stop off and get food."

Ambush is capable of firing a Tomahawk missile into an enemy compound from 1,200 miles away. Her 103-strong crew live in cramped conditions, many of them slotted into bunk-bed systems like CDs in a music rack. Each of their bunks is two metres long by one metre wide, and just 18 inches high. If you jolt your head upwards by a few inches you headbutt the man above you or the ceiling and there are up to 18 sailors in one room. Commander Green said: "It can be tough at times being a submariner but you wouldn't last long in a crew if you couldn't hack it.

"You have to have the ability to get on with others and be part of a team or it won't work." Ahead of today's launch he added: "We are grateful to all the people who have worked hard to construct this vessel. The crew cannot wait to start sea trials and take this magnificent vessel a step closer to beginning operations."

Report Slams CO Accused Of Faking Death

Cmdr. Michael Ward, the attack submarine skipper fired in August after allegedly faking his own death to break off an extra-marital affair, was "impaired" from the responsibilities of submarine command by the illicit romance and his efforts to manage its fallout, according to the Navy's investigation of the incident released Tuesday.

"Commander Ward's dishonesty and deception in developing, maintaining and attempting to end his inappropriate relationship with [redacted] were egregious and are not consistent with our Navy's expectations of a commissioned officer," wrote Capt. Vernon Parks, head of Submarine Squadron 12, in endorsing the official investigation. Parks fired Ward on Aug. 10.

Ward's command tour proved to be very short. He was fired only seven days after taking command of the Groton, Conn.-based sub Pittsburgh, becoming the 13th of the 16 COs relieved for cause this year. At admiral's mast Sept. 5, Rear Adm. Rick Breckenridge ruled that Ward violated three articles of the Uniform Code of Military Justice: dereliction of duty, conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman, and adultery. Ward received a punitive letter of reprimand, said Submarine Group 2 spokeswoman Lt. Cmdr. Jen Cragg.

Ward, a married 43-year-old, met a 23-year-old woman on an online dating service in October 2011, according to the report and an article by The Day, the Connecticut newspaper that published her allegations anonymously. She and Ward met when he was in Norfolk in October 2011 while he attended the Joint Forces Staff College and in May when he was there for training as a prospective commanding officer.

For unknown reasons, Ward attempted to break off the relation in July. He sent her an email from a fake account, supposedly from one of Ward's special operations buddies. "Bob," the name Ward gave to the email's author, told the woman that Ward had been killed, implying that it was on a hush-hush special ops mission. But when the woman, along with her sister and mother, drove to Ward's house in Virginia to pay their respects, the new owner said that Ward had only moved to Connecticut to take command of a submarine.

Later in July, Ward met in Washington, D.C., with someone, whose name was redacted, to discuss the pregnancy. The woman lost the baby from complications soon thereafter, the report said, and the relationship ended. The report closes a chapter on what had been a headline-grabbing scandal for the Navy. Officials said Ward had fallen short of the mark as an officer and as a CO, charged with exemplary conduct in safeguarding his sub and his crew.

"Commander Ward's actions," Parks wrote, "were especially not consistent with our Navy's expectations of an officer entrusted with the command of a naval warship and its crew."

Sub Vets in Norfolk

On a warm, blue sunny September morning in the heart and soul of Navy country, hundreds of submariners from yesterday and today gathered for the 2012 United States Submarine Veterans Incorporated/Submarine Veterans of World War Two Convention. Past and present undersea warriors from around the world came together to honor the memories of their shipmates who gave their lives while serving their country, and to celebrate the more than five decades of service that many of the organization's current members have to date.

This year's convention in the "Mermaid City" Norfolk, Va., honored several veterans whose date of qualifying on submarines reaches back before many of our nation's earliest submarine battles. World War II veteran Lt. Cmdr. (Ret.) Walter Anderson recalled his days aboard Gato-Class Submarine USS Dace (SS 247), during the Battle of Leyte Gulf, which began in December 1941. "The camaraderie on the submarines is great," he said. "One of my fondest memories comes from the Battle of Leyte Gulf. I was involved in that. A sister ship, USS Darter (SS 227), went out at night and Darter got one of its heavy cruisers damaged and one sunk and the next night Darter ran aground. We picked up the whole crew and had a double crew until we got back to Darwin, Australia, eating peanut butter and some kind of soup."

Anderson explained that although Darter was destroyed and space on board Dace was limited, the crew's spirits were still high, reveling in the subs' success against the enemy. The Web site Hazegray.org explains the incident Anderson reminisced about, citing that Darter and Dace made contact with the Japanese Center Force approaching Palawan Passage Oct. 23, 1944. Immediately, Darter flashed the contact report, one of the most important of the war, since the location of this Japanese task force had been unknown for some days.

The two submarines closed the task force, and with attacks on the cruisers of Center Force, initiated the Battle of Surigao Strait phase of the decisive Battle for Leyte Gulf. Darter sank the heavy cruiser Atago and seriously damaged the cruiser Takao. With Dace, she tracked the damaged cruiser through the tortuous channels of Palawan Passage until just after midnight of Oct. 24 to 25 when Darter grounded on Bombay Shoal. As efforts to get the submarine off the shoal began, a Japanese destroyer closed, but then sailed on. With the tide receding, all Dace's and Darter's

efforts to get her off failed. All confidential papers and equipment were destroyed, and the entire crew taken off to Dace.

Anderson's adventurous and rewarding experience serving in the submarine community was not the only one retold during the week, but rather echoed as other seasoned submariners shared their memories from the depths. "My last official act in the Navy in October 1971 was to take the Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle 1 Mystic down off San Clemente Island and certify her for test depth where we opened the hatch at 3,000 feet in a simulated sub hull," said Lt. Cmdr. Richard McPherson (Ret.) with a look of certainty on his face. "We opened the hatch and pulled the Sailors out in a simulated hatch and simulated hull."

McPherson explained that Mystic is one of two classes of DSRV in the fleet. He also added that while working with the Navy's DSRVs was an exciting and memorable time in his career, he always likes to talk with sub vets from World War II to learn about their experiences and how things have changed. "My highlight of this year's convention was meeting the World War II guys," he said. "I'm partial to them. My father was in the Navy from 1939 to 1966, so I grew up in a Navy family. I am looking forward to meeting all of the World War II vets, talking about them and what they have accomplished and doing what we can to support the Navy, especially submarines, in the future."

One person with insight into the present and future of the submarine force is COMSUBLANT Force Master Chief Kirk Saunders. While visionary, Saunders expressed his honor and excitement to speak before the group of submariners at the Holland Club Induction Breakfast. "I realize as much as anyone does how important it is to come out and speak with some of the true heroes of the Submarine Force and I am truly honored to be in the presence of such a proud group of submariners this morning," said Saunders, addressing the crowd of modest submariners who listened intently to each word spoken by the Atlantic submarine fleet's top enlisted advisor.

Vice Adm. John Richardson, who was commander, Submarine Forces until he turned over his duties to Vice Adm. Mike Connor, Sept. 7, echoed Saunders' sentiment about the vets in a statement earlier this year. Submarine veterans from the World War II era and beyond say they have high hopes for the future of the force. "I look forward to associating with the young people who are carrying the torch for the sub force," said Alan "Shane" Foraker who started his Navy career as a machinist's mate in 1960 and retired as a commander. "The young people who are continuing in today's Navy are fully capable of doing great things with these incredible machines and I am cautiously optimistic about the Navy opening up the force to women. We've got a complete change of sea [coming], but we are able. The world has changed and our mission has taken on a new character, but that mission remains the same." Retired Vice Adm. Albert "Al" Konetzni, a renowned submariner and former deputy of what is now commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, echoed the same sentiments during his national convention speech.

"I know that being a submariner means much to every individual here who has served this nation," Konetzni said. "I feel the same way and can truthfully say that earning my coveted dolphins was one of the most important moments in my professional career. Lately, I've given considerable thought to what makes us such a strong fraternity, and perhaps more importantly, why do our submarines, manned by young Americans averaging 22 years old, perform so well under the most arduous of conditions for very long periods of time during deployments."

"What caught my interest was a research hypothesis characterized by 'personnel authenticity' and 'community connection' defining great leadership. The submarine environment, in the past and today, is made of officers, chiefs, and Sailors who are forced to be 'authentic' because there is no personal or psychological privacy on a submarine. Submarines make a person 'authentic' or they fail and leave. Regarding 'community connection;' all of us are taught on day number one that submarining is a team sport. We all understand early on that the newest crewmember is as important as the skipper or chief of the boat when it comes to operating the 'boat' or 'sewer pipe' safely in times of war or peace; at great depths; far from home, for months on end. This connection or community spirit has always driven our crews to be close knit teams."

COMSUBLANT's current Inspector General Pat Urello, who is also a veteran limited duty officer of the submarine force, agrees that today's submariners, and those of the future, are more than fit to carry the torch.

"Today's submariners are doing an outstanding job. They are intelligent, they are bright and technologically savvy and they are honoring our service with their service. I think it is outstanding that the Navy will integrate women into the submarine force," said Urello who spent 30 years in the submarine force. "As force master chief mentioned during today's breakfast, these women [that the Navy are integrating into the submarine force] are the best of the best and have already proven that they are where they belong and I am sure that we will integrate women into all of our subs in the near future."

Visit A Virginia Fast Attack Submarine

<http://www.businessinsider.com/here-is-why-the-navy-is-betting-it-all-on-the-high-tech-virginia-class-submarine-2012-7#the-virginia-class-submarine-is-a-new-breed-of-high-tech-post-cold-war-nuclear-subs-1>

Iran Launches Tareq 901 Submarine, Sahand Destroyer

Iran's Navy has launched the overhauled super-heavy Tareq 901 submarine and indigenous Sahand destroyer in the southern port of Bandar Abbas. The super-heavy Tareq 901 submarine, which was repaired by Iranian experts, and Sahand destroyer were successfully launched on Tuesday on the order of Leader of Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei. Iranian Navy Commander Admiral Habibollah Sayyari said on May 29 that the entire overhauling process had been done by Iranian experts. "The country of origin had failed to deliver plans of the submarine's parts and was insisting to repair the sub in its own basins. However, the Iranian Navy has now developed the plans anew and has acquired a much significant expertise in the overhaul of the kilo-class submarines. With such a success Iran is among a handful of countries which can overhaul such submarines," Sayyari said.



"Anti-radar systems, wings, pneumatic systems, compressed air systems, pumps and sensors, telecommunication systems, propelling systems, and engine parts were among the parts repaired in the project all by Iranian engineers. This shows that Iran can achieve its goals by all means," said Rear Admiral Abbas Zamini, the manager of the project. In recent years, Iran has made great achievements in the defense sector and gained self-sufficiency in essential military hardware and defense systems. The country has repeatedly made it clear that its military might is merely based on the state's defense doctrine of deterrence and that it poses no threat to other countries.

World's most sophisticated and powerful nuclear submarine

- **Carries dozens of cruise missiles capable of hitting targets 1,200 miles away**
- **Her sonar can detect vessels moving on the other side of the ocean**
- **Powerful nuclear reactor allows her to cruise non-stop for 25 years**
- **HMS Ambush is so hi-tech the giant submarine doesn't even need a periscope**



She cost around £1 billion to build, has sonar so sensitive it can hear other vessels 3,000 miles away and carries a giant payload of 38 deadly Tomahawk cruise missiles. HMS Ambush, the Royal Navy's newest nuclear attack submarine, is one of the most sophisticated and powerful vessels of her type ever built. The giant Astute-class sub, which was launched today, is so hi-tech she doesn't even need a periscope.





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SUBVETS NEWS & VIEWS

USSVI Newly Revised Constitution and Bylaws are now posted online

The newly revised C&B are on the USSVI web site. They include changes made by the PA's in the latest (2012) election cycle. The changes to the documents are highlighted in red."

Go to www.ussvi.org then click the DOCUMENTS button, then the ORGANIZATION button.

US Submarine Veterans Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) Week!

Shipmates: We are establishing a US Submarine Veterans Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) Week! Each year the K4K Week will begin on Monday of the week that includes Veterans Day. This year it will be November 5th through the 11th.

This is being done to:

1. Establish a focus for local and national recognition of USSVI's Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) Program by media and the general public. This in turn will result in advancing our Creed and Purpose.
2. Take advantage of a period when Child Care Facilities are more likely to welcome visits by Veterans.
3. Have Sub Vets interact with Children, their families and facility staff at a time when the appreciation for Veterans is at its highest.
4. Bring joy to Children in need and the Sub Vets who visit them!

In addition to other K4K visits made during the year, I encourage USSVI Bases to schedule and make a K4K visit to Kids during that week, or as close to the week as possible.

For bases encountering resistance to K4K visits please let me know. I can have Child Care Facilities we visit contact those in your area to help obtain access. Please order any supplies early so that the USSVI National Storekeeper, or whoever your supplier is, has time to fill your orders.

"We begin by imaging that we are giving to them we end by realizing that they have enriched us" - Pope John Paul II

For those who are involved in our K4K Program, thank you for your support of children in need, and the USSVI!

USSVI submarine themed general purpose cards and envelopes available

For some time the submarine themed greeting card has been available to the bases and members for their use through the National Chaplain. The cards are now 'homeported' with the National Storekeeper and are available for purchase in lots of 25 ea. They can be used for such things as a 'binnacle list' get well, 'eternal patrol' sympathy , birthday greetings or for general correspondence between submariners.

The card size is 5.5 inches by 8.5 inches and includes an envelope. The front cover of the card is of a underwater WWII diesel submarine. Inside, directly in back of the front cover is an enlarged USSVI emblem. The inside lower part of the card is blank to allow any message to be written by the Base representative.

At a delivered cost of approximately \$1.00 ea, these high quality cards are a real bargain and these cards and envelopes can be purchased in lots of 25 ea for \$29.95, which also includes the current cost of shipping.

To order these cards, please make your check out to USSVI for \$29.95 and mail it to:

Barry Commons
USSVI National Storekeeper
2603 Main St PMB 293
Oakley CA 94561

Be sure to identify your base name and the address where the cards are to be sent.

To see the face of this card, follow the link:

https://www.ussvi.org/Documents/Online_Organization_BinnacleListCard.jpg

USSVI on Facebook

For several years USSVI has had a FACEBOOK presence for the USSVI Virtual Museum and the USSVI Submarine Veterans National Office. If you're a FACEBOOK user, visit and "Like" our pages. Tell your sub-buddies as well. There are some really great pictures in the photo albums there.

End of an era - Submarine Veterans of WWII disbands

The National SVWWII organization, established in 1955 to honor WWII subvets and remember the submarine men lost in WWII, formally closed it's national administration at the joint USSVI-SVWWII Convention in Norfolk this year.

"There are memorials all over this country they've built," said retired Vice Adm. Al Konetzni, who has long been close with the World War II veterans even though he is not of that era. "These guys started in 1955 doing this for their buddies, so they would not be forgotten. It's a wonderful story of self-image. They said, 'Hey, we're going to do it, and we will do it.'"

Walter "Gus" Kraus, final President of SVWWII said the WWII sub veterans considered themselves a unique group and that uniqueness forged a strong bond. The end of the organization, he said, also represents the "end of an era where we were able to get together and blow our own horn, remembering the circumstances under which we fought."

"They will never be forgotten, ever, ever, ever," said Konetzni, a former deputy commander of U.S. Fleet Forces Command and the U.S. Atlantic Fleet. "They gave us our traditions and our spirit. They were our leaders."

Of the remaining 2,146 WWII members, due to the passage of time and the ravages of age, only 62 were able to attend the closing ceremony.

1,102 of these WWII men are also members of USSVI.

Each of the SVWWII Chapters has the option to continue meeting as a local 'sub club' and all World War II Submariners are always welcome to attend USSVI meetings in their area.

2012 Voting Result charts and Base member participation chart

To see these charts, go to www.ussvi.org, then click the DOCUMENTS Button. Then click the ELECTIONS button and the links are there to see.

2012 National election results:

As announced at the annual business meeting in Norfolk Today (ABM) -

2012-2014 National Officers

Commander: Michael Bircumshaw

Sr Vice Commander: Carl Schmidt

Jr Vice Commander: Al Singleman, Jr

Secretary: Tom Conlon

Treasurer Richard McPherson

2012-2014 Region Directors

Northeast Director: Michael Naughton

Southeast Director: Dick Kanning

Central Director: Wayne Standerfer

Western Director: John Mansfield

2012-2013 District Commander of the year: Vic Van Horn

2012-2014 Immediate Past Natl Cdr: Patrick Householder

All the proposed amendments were Accepted.

2013 Convention: Rochester MN

2014 Convention: Burlingame CA (SFO Area)

Debriefing the Recently Concluded USSVI National Election

In the just concluded USSVI national election, 2,671 members voted, including approx 200 by mail. The online electronic voting system was heavily used for several reasons.

It was designed to be completely private and secure. Second, it was intended to be very convenient and easy for a member to vote online. Third, it is very economical for all concerned -no stamps, no printing, etc. Did you use this online voting system? If so, how did it work out for you?

If you have any particular critique or comment regarding this the system, please reply back to householderp@comcast.net

Navy & Veteran News and Other Gouge

FVAP Provides Update on Military Voting

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) hosted a press conference this week to provide an update on Pentagon voting assistance initiatives for the current election cycle. FVAP Acting Director Pam Mitchell said that "voting assistance for our absentee military... has never been better" and referenced data that shows this year's online requests for absentee voting cards is comparable to the number received in 2004, the last time a sitting president was running for reelection.

This information differs from a recent report by the Military Voting Protection Project, a military voting advocacy group, that states the number of requests from service members for absentee ballots is remarkably low this year, specifically faulting the Defense Department's (DoD's) voting assistance offices. FVAP is also under fire from the DoD Inspector General's office because investigators weren't able to make contact with approximately half of the 224 Installation Voter Assistance Offices DoD claims to maintain at military bases around the world.

State election officials across the U.S. have noted a rise in military voting in recent election cycles, however FVAP reports a disturbing increase in the rate at which active duty voters have not received requested absentee ballots. The rate of un-received ballots rose from 16 percent in 2008 to 29 percent in 2010.

Legislative Update: Agent Orange Reform

One of FRA's top legislative priorities is support for legislation that would allow veterans who served off the coast of Vietnam to cite exposure to toxic herbicides relative to veterans' disability ratings and claims. The Association strongly supports the "Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act" (H.R. 3612, S. 1629) and the "Agent Orange Equity Act" (H.R. 812), both of which would allow so-called "blue water" veterans to be compensated for their service-connected disabilities related to their exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides.

Last February, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) added 47 ships to their list of Navy and Coast Guard vessels that are presumptive for exposure to Agent Orange due to duty in the coastal waters and inland waterways of Vietnam. There are now 214 ships on the VA's presumptive list, which is available at www.fra.org/agentorange. If a service member served aboard any of these vessels during the described time period and they have any of the 14 diseases recognized as Agent Orange-related, they may have a creditable claim for VA disability compensation.

DFAS Requires Direct Deposit

The U.S. Treasury Department has mandated that the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) use only direct deposit when sending payments to retirees and annuitants beginning on March 1, 2013. Direct deposit eliminates the possibility of a lost or stolen check, reduces the opportunity for identity theft, and provides payment in a more timely and efficient manner. Although most beneficiaries already have direct deposit, DFAS urges the small number who are still using regular mail to set up direct deposit with their bank or financial institution now to avoid the last-minute rush in February.

To learn more about starting or changing direct deposit, visit:

<http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/manage/direct-deposit.html>

House Passes New Stolen Valor Act

The House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a modified "Stolen Valor Act" bill (H.R. 1775) this week in response to a U.S. Supreme Court decision (*United States v. Alvarez*) handed down in July. The court declared the original "Stolen Valor Act of 2005" unconstitutional, saying that false claims of military service and awards were protected as free speech. Rep. Joe Heck (Nev.) sponsored the current bill that establishes a more narrow focus than the 2005 law and would make it a crime to lie about having received decorations with the intent of obtaining "anything of value." Many Constitution scholars believe this more narrowly focused bill will pass constitutional review since its impact is limited to individuals who benefit from fictional accounts of military service.

Rep. Heck's bill was introduced last year and Senator Scott Brown (Mass.) has introduced the Senate companion bill (S. 1728). The legislation now moves to the Senate for further consideration. Senator James Webb (Va.) has also introduced similar legislation ("Military Service Integrity Act," S. 3372) and plans to offer the bill as a floor amendment to the Senate version of the FY 2013 Defense Authorization Act (S. 3254).

Members are urged to use the FRA Action Center at <http://www.capwiz.com/fra/issues/alert/?alertid=61558341> to ask their Senators to support this legislation.

Executive Order to Improve Mental Health for Vets, Troops and Families

President Obama recently signed an Executive Order aimed at reducing suicides and improving mental health services for veterans, active duty personnel and their families. The order requires the VA to increase capacity of its Veterans Crisis Hotline by 50 percent to ensure that veterans identified as being a danger to themselves or others are connected with a trained mental health professional within 24 hours. The order allows VA to refer veterans in need of immediate mental health care to the TRICARE network and directs the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to expand outreach efforts to service members and veterans, and fill all vacancies for mental health staff positions. The Departments of Defense (DoD) and VA are required to also establish an inter-agency task force to coordinate their efforts, and VA and HHS will establish at least 15 pilot programs involving community-based health providers to expand mental health services in areas not well served by VA.

As many as 18 veterans are committing suicide daily and long waits for mental health care services reported at some VA facilities across the country are a major concern for FRA, along with the growing backlog of unresolved VA disability claims.

In related news, the 2012 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention report was recently released and details a national strategy for reducing the number of suicides that includes community-based approaches. The report, prepared by the U.S. Surgeon General and the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention, specifies new ways to identify people at risk.

TRICARE Prime Fee Changes Effective October 1

TRICARE Prime enrollment fees for retirees and their families will increase to \$269.28 for individual retirees and \$538.56 for retirees and their family members, effective October 1, 2012. Survivors of active duty deceased sponsors, medically retired service members and their dependents are exempt from these increases. Active duty service members and their families also continue to have access to TRICARE Prime with no enrollment fee.

Prime beneficiaries who enrolled before October 1, 2011, did not incur the 13-percent fee increases imposed on new enrollees last year. The increases that take effect next week reflect the 13-percent increase that were levied on new enrollees last year, plus a 3.1-percent increase that is equal to the annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for 2013.

Those who enrolled before October 1, 2011, currently pay \$230/year for individuals and \$460/year for families. Those who enrolled on or after October 1, 2011, pay \$260/year for individuals and \$520/year for families. After October 1, 2012, all Prime beneficiaries (except those exempted) will pay \$269.28/year for individuals and \$538.56/year for families.

Beneficiaries can opt to pay their enrollment fee monthly, quarterly or annually. To make changes visit <http://www.tricare.mil/mybenefit/home/Costs/HealthPlanCosts/TRICAREPrimeOptions/EnrollmentFees> or call the representative for your TRICARE region:

North Region/HealthNet Federal Services - 1-877-874-2273

South Region/Humana Military Healthcare Services - 1-800-444-5445

West Region/TriWest Healthcare Alliance - 1-888-874-9378

On The Web

Some Websites and Blogs of Interest to USSVICB Members

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Navy History

USS BARB

Thirty-nine years ago, an Italian submarine was sold for a paltry \$100,000 as scrap. The submarine, given to the Italian Navy in 1953, was originally the USS Barb, an incredible veteran of World War II service with a heritage that should not have been melted away without any recognition. The U.S.S. Barb was a pioneer, paving the way for the first submarine to launch missiles and it flew a battle flag unlike that of any other ship.

In addition to the Medal of Honor ribbon at the top of the flag identifying the heroism of its Captain, Commander Eugene 'Lucky' Fluckey, the bottom border of the flag bore the image of a Japanese train locomotive.

The U.S.S. Barb was indeed, the submarine that SANK A TRAIN !

July 18, 1945 In Patience Bay, off the coast of Karafuto, Japan.

It was after 4 A.M. and Commander Fluckey rubbed his eyes as he peered over the map spread before him. It was the twelfth war patrol of the Barb, the fifth under Commander Fluckey. He should have turned the submarine's command over to another skipper after four patrols, but had managed to strike a deal with Admiral Lockwood to make a fifth trip with the men he cared for like a father. Of course, no one suspected when he had struck that deal prior to his fourth and should have been his final war patrol, that Commander Fluckey's success would be so great he would be awarded the Medal of Honor.

Commander Fluckey smiled as he remembered that patrol. Lucky Fluckey they called him. On January 8th the Barb had emerged victorious from a running two-hour night battle after sinking a large enemy ammunition ship. Two weeks later in Mamkwan Harbor he found the mother-lode... more than 30 enemy ships.

In only 5 fathoms (30 feet) of water his crew had unleashed the sub's forward torpedoes, then turned and fired four from the stern. As he pushed the Barb to the full limit of its speed through the dangerous waters in a daring withdrawal to the open sea, he recorded eight direct hits on six enemy ships.

What could possibly be left for the Commander to accomplish who, just three months earlier had been in Washington, DC to receive the Medal of Honor? He smiled to himself as he looked again at the map showing the rail line that ran along the enemy coastline.

Now his crew was buzzing excitedly about bagging a train!

The rail line itself wouldn't be a problem. A shore patrol could go ashore under cover of darkness to plant the explosives... one of the sub's 55-pound scuttling charges. But this early morning Lucky Fluckey and his officers were puzzling over how they could blow not only the rails, but also one of the frequent trains that shuttled supplies to equip the Japanese war machine. But no matter how crazy the idea might have sounded, the Barb's skipper would not risk the lives of his men.

Thus the problem... how to detonate the explosives at the moment the train passed, without endangering the life of a shore party.

PROBLEM?

If you don't search your brain looking for them, you'll never find them. And even then, sometimes they arrive in the most unusual fashion. Cruising slowly beneath the surface to evade the enemy plane now circling overhead, the monotony was broken with an exciting new idea: Instead of having a crewman on shore to trigger explosives to blow

both rail and a passing train, why not let the train BLOW ITSELF up?

Billy Hatfield was excitedly explaining how he had cracked nuts on the railroad tracks as a kid, placing the nuts between two ties so the sagging of the rail under the weight of a train would break them open. "Just like cracking walnuts," he explained. To complete the circuit [detonating the 55-pound charge] we hook in a micro switch... and mounted it between two ties, directly under the steel rail.

" We don't set it off - the TRAIN will." Not only did Hatfield have the plan, he wanted to go along with the volunteer shore party. After the solution was found, there was no shortage of volunteers; all that was needed was the proper weather... a little cloud cover to darken the moon for the sabotage mission ashore.

Lucky Fluckey established his criteria for the volunteer party:

- [1] No married men would be included, except for Hatfield,
- [2] The party would include members from each department,
- [3] The opportunity would be split evenly between regular Navy and Navy Reserve sailors,
- [4] At least half of the men had to have been Boy Scouts, experienced in handling medical emergencies and tuned into woods lore.

FINALLY, Lucky Fluckey would lead the saboteurs himself.

When the names of the 8 selected sailors was announced it was greeted with a mixture of excitement and disappointment.

Members of the submarine's demolition squad were:

- Chief Gunners Mate Paul G. Saunders, USN;
- Electricians Mate 3rd Class Billy R. Hatfield, USNR;
- Signalman 2nd Class Francis N. Sevei, USNR;
- Ships Cook 1st Class Lawrence W. Newland, USN;
- Torpedoman's Mate 3rd Class Edward W. Klingsmith, USNR;
- Motor Machinists Mate 2nd Class James E. Richard, USN;
- Motor Machinists Mate 1st Class John Markuson, USN; and
- Lieutenant William M. Walker, USNR.

Among the disappointed was Commander Fluckey who surrendered his opportunity at the insistence of his officers that as commander he belonged with the Barb, coupled with the threat from one that "I swear I'll send a message to ComSubPac if the Commander attempted to join the demolition shore party."

In the meantime, there would be no harassing of Japanese shipping or shore operations by the Barb until the train mission had been accomplished. The crew would 'lay low' to prepare their equipment, practice and plan and wait for the weather.

July 22, 1945 Patience Bay [Off the coast of Karafuto, Japan]

Waiting in 30 feet of water in Patience Bay was wearing thin the patience of Commander Fluckey and his innovative crew. Everything was ready. In the four days the saboteurs had anxiously watched the skies for cloud cover, the inventive crew of the Barb had crafted and tested their micro switch. When the need was proposed for a pick and shovel to bury the explosive charge and batteries, the Barb's engineers had cut up steel plates in the lower flats of an engine room, then bent and welded them to create the needed digging tools. The only things beyond their control were the weather.... and the limited time. Only five days remained in the Barb's patrol.

Anxiously watching the skies, Commander Fluckey noticed plumes of cirrus clouds, then white stratus capping the mountain peaks ashore. A cloud cover was building to hide the three-quarters moon. So, this would be the night.

MIDNIGHT, July 23, 1945

The Barb had crept within 950 yards of the shoreline. If it was somehow seen from the shore it would probably be mistaken for a schooner or Japanese patrol boat. No one would suspect an American submarine so close to shore or in such shallow water.

Slowly the small boats were lowered to the water and the 8 saboteurs began paddling toward the enemy beach. Twenty-five minutes later they pulled the boats ashore and walked on the surface of the Japanese homeland. Stumbling through noisy waist-high grasses, crossing a highway and then into a 4-foot drainage ditch, the saboteurs made their way to the railroad tracks. Three men were posted as guards, Markuson assigned to examine a nearby water tower. The Barb's auxiliary man climbed the tower's ladder, then stopped in shock as he realized it was an enemy lookout tower . . . an OCCUPIED enemy lookout tower. Fortunately the Japanese sentry was peacefully sleeping. And Markuson was able to quietly withdraw to warn his raiding party.

The news from Markuson caused the men digging the placement for the explosive charge to continue their work more quietly and slower. Twenty minutes later, the demolition holes had been carved by their crude tools and the explosives and batteries hidden beneath fresh soil.

During planning for the mission the saboteurs had been told that, with the explosives in place, all would retreat a safe distance while Hatfield made the final connection. BUT IF the sailor who had once cracked walnuts on the railroad tracks slipped or messed up during this final, dangerous procedure. . his would be the only life lost.

On this night it was the only order the sub's saboteurs refused to obey, and all of them peered anxiously over Hatfield's shoulder to be sure he did it right. The men had come too far to be disappointed by a bungled switch installation.

1:32 A.M.

Watching from the deck of the submarine, Commander Fluckey allowed himself a sigh of relief as he noticed the flashlight signal from the beach announcing the departure of the shore party. Fluckey had daringly, but skillfully guided the Barb within 600 yards of the enemy beach sand.

There was less than 6 feet of water beneath the sub's keel, but Fluckey wanted to be close in case trouble arose and a daring rescue of his bridge saboteurs became necessary.

1:45 A.M.

The two boats carrying his saboteurs were only halfway back to the Barb when the sub's machine gunner yelled, ' CAPTAIN!' There's another train coming up the tracks! The Commander grabbed a megaphone and yelled through the night, "Paddle like the devil!", knowing full well that they wouldn't reach the Barb before the train hit the micro switch.

1:47 A.M.

The darkness was shattered by brilliant light and the roar of the explosion!

The boilers of the locomotive blew, shattered pieces of the engine blowing 200 feet into the air. Behind it the railroad freight cars accorded into each other, bursting into flame and adding to the magnificent fireworks display. Five minutes later the saboteurs were lifted to the deck by their exuberant comrades as the Barb eased away. . slipping back to the safety of the deep.

Moving at only two knots, it would be a while before the Barb was into waters deep enough to allow it to submerge. It was a moment to savor, the culmination of teamwork, ingenuity and daring by the Commander and all his crew. Lucky Fluckey's voice came over the intercom. "All hands below deck not absolutely needed to maneuver the ship have permission to come topside." He didn't have to repeat the invitation.

The Barb crew sunk a Japanese TRAIN!

On August 2, 1945 the Barb arrived at Midway, her twelfth war patrol concluded. Meanwhile United States military commanders had pondered the prospect of an armed assault on the Japanese homeland. Military tacticians estimated such an invasion would cost more than a million American casualties.

Instead of such a costly armed offensive to end the war, on August 6th the B-29 bomber Enola Gay dropped a single atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima, Japan. A second such bomb, unleashed 4 days later on Nagasaki, Japan, caused Japan to agree to surrender terms on August 15th. On September 2, 1945 in Tokyo Harbor the documents ending the war in the Pacific were signed.

The story of the saboteurs of the U.S.S. Barb is one of those unique, little known stories of World War II. It becomes increasingly important when one realizes that the [8] eight sailors who blew up the train near Kashiho, Japan conducted the ONLY GROUND COMBAT OPERATION on the Japanese homeland during World War II.

[Footnote: Eugene Bennett Fluckey retired from the Navy as a Rear Admiral, and wore in addition to his Medal of Honor. [4]FOUR Navy Crosses. . a record of heroic awards unmatched by any American in military history.]

In 1992, his own history of the U.S.S. Barb was published in the award winning book, THUNDER BELOW. Over the past several years proceeds from the sale of this exciting book have been used by Admiral Fluckey to provide free reunions for the men who served him aboard the Barb, and their wives.

Fluckey graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1935, and lived to age 93.