

TORPEDO ALLEY



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Newsletter of Charleston Base, United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.

Base Meeting:

BOD: January 5, 2014

Membership: January 8, 2014



Location:

Fleet Reserve Association Branch 26

Low Country Home

99 Wisteria Rd.

Goose Creek, South Carolina.

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BOATS LOST IN JANUARY

BOAT NAME	HULL NR.	DATE LOST	SOULS LOST
USS SCORPION	(SS-278)	5 Jan. 1944 4th War Patrol	Lost with All Hands - 76 souls
USS ARGONAUT	(SS-166)	10 Jan. 1943 3rd War Patrol	Lost with All Hands - 105 souls
USS SWORDFISH	(SS-193)	12 Jan. 1943 13th War Patrol	Lost with All Hands - 89 souls
USS S-36	(SS-141)	20 Jan. 1942 2nd War Patrol	No loss of life
USS S-26	(SS-131)	24 Jan. 1942 2nd War Patrol	Lost with 46 souls - 3 rescued

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER—The Power of Words

The wise store up knowledge, but the mouth of the fool hastens destruction. Proverbs 10:14

All too often, in the rush to have ourselves heard, we speak first and then engage our brain . . . with unfortunate results. God's Word reminds us that, "*Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing*" (Proverbs 12:18).

If we strive to be a source of encouragement to friends and family, then we must use our words carefully. Words are important: they can hurt or they can heal, they can lift up or discourage, and reckless words, spoken in a hurry, cannot be erased.

Today, determine to use your words carefully. Use words of kindness and praise, not words of anger or derision. Remember that you have the power to heal others or to injure them, to lift others up or to hold them back. When you lift them up, your wisdom will bring healing and comfort to a world that needs both.

--A Prayer for Today--

Dear Lord, You have instructed me to choose my words carefully so that I might be a source of encouragement and hope to everyone I meet. Keep me aware that I have influence on many people. Let the words that I speak today be worthy of You. Amen.

Editor's Note: In case anyone missed the last verse to the Navy Hymn (Eternal Father, Strong to Save), Here it is, as printed in American Submariner, Vol. 2014 Issue 4:

Lord God, our power evermore,
Whose arm doth reach the ocean floor,
Dive with our men beneath the sea;
Traverse the depths protectively.
O hear us when we pray, and keep
Them safe from peril in the deep.

VA Notes. *Courtesy of our Base Secretary, Rick Wise:*

COLA increase also applies to Disability payments.

Washington, DC – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), in collaboration with other federal agencies and partners, will sponsor the 4th annual National Veterans Small Business Engagement (NVSBE), December 9-11, 2014, at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, Ga.

The premier event for Veteran-Owned Small Businesses, the NVSBE is expected to attract as many as 3,000 attendees offering the chance to learn best practices from federal and commercial procurement decision makers. More than 400 exhibitors and 25 government agencies along with private industry partners, such as Lockheed Martin, Document Storage System, Inc. (DSS) and Boeing, will also participate in the event. The theme of this year's event, **ACCESS**, is focused on promoting and supporting small Veteran-owned business' access to

economic opportunity.

MILITARY FUNERAL SUPPORT

The Department of Defense Directive 1300.15, Military Funeral Support, establishes three distinct categories of veterans and the level of military burial honors each category minimally receives. The three categories are:

----Those who die on active duty or were awarded the Medal of Honor receive, upon request, full military honors: casket bearers, firing party, bugler, officer or noncommissioned officer in charge, bugler, and chaplain, if requested.

----Those who retired from military service receive full honors, if requested and resources permitting. At a minimum, a service representative will attend the interment service and present the interment flag to the next of kin.

----Those that were honorably discharged may have a service representative, if requested and resources permitting, who will attend the interment service and present the interment flag to the next of kin.

For more information, contact Mortuary Affairs and Casualty Support Division: Mr. Thomas Ellis, (703) 325-5304 or LTC Steward, (703) 325-5314

Veterans' Burial Payments Now Automated Courtesy VA

WASHINGTON – New burial regulations will now allow the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to automatically pay the maximum amount allowable under law to most eligible surviving spouses more quickly and efficiently, without the need for a written application.

Under former regulations, VA paid burial benefits on a reimbursement basis, which required survivors to submit receipts for relatively small one-time payments that VA generally paid at the maximum amount permitted by law.

“VA is committed to improving the speed and ease of delivery of monetary burial benefits to veterans’ survivors during their time of need,” said Acting VA Secretary Sloan Gibson. “The recent changes allow VA to help these survivors bear the cost of funerals by changing regulations to get them the benefits more quickly.”

This automation enables VA to pay a non-service-connected or service-connected burial allowance to an

estimated 62,000 eligible surviving spouses out of a projected 140,000 claimants for burial benefits in 2014. Surviving spouses will be paid upon notice of the veteran’s death using information already in VA systems. The burial allowance for a non-service-connected death is \$300, and \$2,000 for a death connected to military service.

This revised regulation will further expedite the delivery of these benefits to surviving spouses, reduce the volume of claims requiring manual processing, and potentially make available resources for other activities that benefit veterans and their survivors.

For more information on monetary burial benefits, visit <http://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/claims-special-burial.asp>.

Medicare Rates

November 14, 2014

Medicare officials announced that monthly premiums for Medicare Part B (outpatient care) will remain the same for beneficiaries in 2015. The basic Medicare Part B premium is \$104.90 per month.

Beneficiaries with 2013 adjusted gross income (plus tax-exempt interest income) over \$85,000 or \$170,000 if married and filing jointly will continue to pay higher means-tested premiums.

The means-tested rates also will remain flat in 2015. Means-tested rates range \$146.90 to \$335.70 per person per month, depending on income. The Part B annual deductible will also stay at \$147. This marks the second year in a row Medicare rates have not increased.

Another announcement noted the Medicare Part A deductible, which people pay when admitted to a hospital, will increase \$44 in 2015 to \$1,260. That deductible covers up to 60 days of Medicare-covered inpatient hospital care. Beneficiaries will pay \$315 per day for days 61 through 90 in 2015 (up from \$304 in 2014) and \$630 per day for hospital stays beyond 90 days (up from \$608 in 2014). The daily coinsurance rate for days 21 through 100 in a skilled-nursing facility will rise from \$152 to 157.50.

Heightened Security Measures

Norfolk – As part of an ongoing program to heighten security measures at Naval installation Entry Control Points (ECPs), handheld ID scanners continue to be implemented at all Navy installations in the Mid-

Atlantic region and other installations throughout the Navy.

The scanners, controlled by ECP sentries, will scan all Common Access Card (CAC), TESLIN or Navy Commercial Access Control System (NCACS) cards of personnel entering a military installation. "The Navy has adopted this Navy physical access control system (NPACS), and part of that is the Navy Access Control Management System, NACMS," said Steve Murley, Non-Guard Services regional manager. "NCAMS involves handheld scanners that will scan ID cards for authorized access into the base."

According to Murley, the scanners being implemented in the Mid-Atlantic will eventually be used at all naval installations in the United States.

Have Health Questions? Call the TRICARE Nurse Advice Line Courtesy TRICARE

Sometimes it's hard to know when to seek medical help for urgent health problems. Having access to a trusted medical professional at a moment's notice is invaluable. The new TRICARE Nurse Advice Line (NAL) does just that. TRICARE beneficiaries in the continental United States, Alaska and Hawaii can get health advice by calling the NAL, toll-free and 24/7. The NAL number is 1-800-TRICARE (874-2273).

The NAL is a team of registered nurses who answer urgent healthcare questions. They give beneficiaries professional medical advice to help decide whether self-care is the best option, or they should see a healthcare provider.

U.S. Navy Chief Vows To Counter N. Korea Provocations Oh Seok-min, Yonhap News Agency (S. Korea) December 9

SEOUL – The United States will continue to beef up its naval capabilities in the Pacific region in order to deter North Korea's provocations including its ballistic missile threats, the U.S. Navy chief said Tuesday.

The pledge by U.S. Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus comes amid growing concerns over the North's evolving missile threats. In late October, Pyongyang reportedly conducted a test of an ejection launcher that helps fire missiles from submarines in an indication that it is making headway in its efforts to develop a submarine-based ballistic missile.

"The concerns are that the North will take some provocative actions that will allow the situation to get out of control," Mabus told reporters in Seoul.

He arrived here on Sunday for a four-day visit during which he met Seoul's Defense Minister Han Min-koo and the chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff, Adm. Choi Yun-hee, among others, to discuss issues of mutual concern.

Stressing that "any sort of ballistic missile threat or capability of North Korea is potentially very dangerous," the secretary said the very threats led the U.S. to have been pushing for a rebalance toward the Pacific region.

"One of the things I am proud of in my time as secretary is that we are growing our fleet. We are growing not only the numbers but capabilities of our fleet," said Mabus, who has led America's Navy and Marine Corps since 2009.

Noting that some 60 percent of the 70 ships ordered by the U.S. Navy over the past five years will be sent to the Pacific, including "the most modern platforms" such as ballistic missile defense destroyers, littoral combat ships and an amphibious ready group, he said the U.S. will be a fleet of more than 300 ships by the end of this decade.

"There will be more ships to be in this region to do exercise to hopefully deter any sort of actions and to make sure that we are ready for working with the Republic of Korea (ROK)," he said, using South Korea's official name.

As ways to counter ballistic missile threats from Pyongyang, he said the U.S. maintains interoperability with the South Korean military in terms of detecting and tracking the missile launches by adopting the same Aegis combat systems and carries out "the very intensive regiment of exercises."

While refusing to confirm media reports on North Korea's recent launch of a new submarine capable of firing ballistic missiles, Mabus stressed a growing importance of the maritime domain and called for "the ability to meet whatever threats, whatever occasions comes over the horizon."

North Korea has ratcheted up tensions on the Korean Peninsula by continuing its provocative actions along the border regions. With the de facto inter-Korean maritime border, known as the Northern Limit Line (NLL), being a power keg, the two Koreas briefly exchanged fire in October as a boat from the North violated the NLL in the latest incident.

Last month, Seoul sources also said North Korea is believed to have completed construction of the new

submarine after importing a Soviet-era Golf-class diesel submarine and reverse-engineering it.

He also stressed the trilateral cooperation among South Korea, the U.S. and Japan despite some diplomatic tensions between Seoul and Tokyo over historical rows.

"The common threat to the ROK, Japan and the U.S. is so serious and so close, that danger and response to it would be the thing that would override everything else," Mabus said.

"We've seen evidences of close working trilateral relationships ... It is important to build those relationships and do those exercises and when crises occur, that is the thing that takes precedence."

Russian Navy To Focus Strategy On Arctic Zone And Black Sea

Damien Sharkov, Newsweek, Dec 9

The Russian navy has unveiled plans to strengthen its presence in the Black Sea and the Arctic zone, heavily focusing its military strategy on the two regions for the next 15 years according to the head officer of the Russian navy, admiral Victor Chirkov.

Speaking in front of the Russian government's Marine Board on Tuesday, Chirkov said the new naval doctrine, which is in place until 2030, will see Russia strengthen its presence around Crimea and the North Pole.

"The role of the Arctic in the period between now and 2030 will grow objectively," he explained. "This is a result of the need to strengthen Russian presence in region, to explore it, to defend national interests and promote national security around the Arctic."

A crucial part of the new strategy, according to Chirkov, will be "modernising the facilities" on the North Sea route which is the shipping lane that connect's Russia's northernmost waters with the North Pole, Scandinavia and Alaska.

Russia's territorial claim over the North Pole has seen Putin at odds with the governments of Canada, Norway, Denmark and the U.S., over the rights to access the oil rich region.

A military overhaul of Russia's northernmost perimeter is expected to be part of the new strategy with heavy militarisation plans for the Murmansk area, Franz Josef Land, Wrangel Island and at Cape Schmidt, which were all announced in October. Most recently, the Russian navy successfully tested new underwater ballistic missiles in November,

firing them from the Alexander Nevsky submarine in the Barents Sea, north of Scandinavia.

Chirkov added that the waters around Crimea will also assume the "highest priority" under the new naval plans.

"The Black Sea region is extraordinarily important and Crimea specifically," the admiral added. "We are facing a considerable amount of work in incorporating Crimea in accordance with Russia's maritime policy.

"In that regard the most difficult problem to resolve will be securing a legal framework that is welcoming of Russia in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait," Russia's top seaman said.

According to Chirkov, the construction of energy pipelines across sea will be another very important aspect of the navy's new strategy, with the cancellation of the South Stream project confirmed. Although neither the U.S. nor the EU have recognised Russia's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine earlier this year as legitimate, Moscow has always had a strong naval presence in the region in the form of the Black Sea Fleet, once a strategic Soviet Naval stronghold.

Russian military presence in Crimea has been maintained since 1997 after Ukraine and Russia struck a deal to share facilities on the Black Sea and in the Sea of Azov. Russia currently has more than 10,000 servicemen stationed there and over 40 warships under the control of the Black Sea Fleet.

Russia's defence budget is expected to hit a record high in 2015 despite the country suffering from an economic slowdown. The Ministry of Defence projects some 3.3 trillion rubles (\$81 billion) will be spent on defence.

New Atomic Submarine Joins Russian Navy

globaltimes.cn, Dec 11
The Sevmash Shipyard in the northern Russian port of Severod-vinsk has confirmed the delivery of the nuclear submarine Vladimir Monomakh to the Russian Navy Wednesday.

The Project 955 vessel completed a full round of testing earlier this year, including a test launch of an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) in Kamchatka on Sept. 10.

The nuclear submarine will join the Russian Navy in an official flagraising ceremony on Dec. 19, naval sources confirmed on Wednesday.

According to Itar-Tass news agency, a total of eight new Borey submarines have been commissioned

under the auspices of Project 955, with the last vessel in the series due for completion by 2020.

The subs will be equipped with 16 Bulava missiles each and will together form the basis of the Russian Navy's strategic nuclear capability over the coming decades.

U.S. Navy's Newest Addition To Fleet Could Be A Robotic Spy 'Fish'

Daily Press, Dec. 11

It's a fish. It's a sub. No, it's Nemo.

The Navy's newest drone is an underwater robot disguised as a fish — a tuna to be more specific, though the project has been dubbed Silent Nemo, after the popular Disney film about a clown fish. Currently under testing by the Chief of Naval Operations Rapid Innovation Cell and Boston Engineering, the unmanned underwater vehicle is able to make tight turns and move through the water quietly, making it ideal for surveillance and reconnaissance missions. Once in the fleet, it could be used to inspect the hull of a ship, check waters for threats such as mines or protrusions, deliver payloads including sonar and guidance packages, and access otherwise denied areas.

Capt. Jim Loper, head of the concepts and innovation department at the Navy Warfare Development Command in Norfolk, couldn't say when Nemo would be fully integrated into the fleet. It could become operational as soon as next year, he said.

The 5-foot, 100-pound armature was modeled after a bluefin tuna and uses a rear caudal fin to move through the water just like the fish. The fin is about 10 times quieter than a rotating propeller.

"The idea is to take millions of years of evolution," said the project's manager, Marine Corps Capt. Jerry Lademan. "This fish has perfected itself by swimming around the water for millenia, so what we are trying to do with this project, the idea of biomimicry, is to reverse engineer what nature has already done to optimize design for us."

So the final product looks like a fish and swims like a fish.

"It looks alive," Lademan said.

On Thursday, the black robotic fish — also known as GhostSwimmer — glided through the waters at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek controlled by a joystick. It can swim autonomously, but that feature is in the early stages of testing and

development.

Loper and Michael Rufo, director of the advanced systems group at Boston Engineering, which specializes in unmanned systems and robotics, said it would take only months to complete the technology for Nemo to swim on its own.

Rufo said the fish's combination of "efficiency, maneuverability and speed" make it relevant for naval operations. It can submerge up to 300 feet, he said, though it has not yet been tested at those depths.

While no weaponry has been developed for Nemo, Loper said the full scope of applications hasn't been exhausted.

"Let your imagination run wild," he said.

The Chief of Naval Operations Rapid Innovation Cell, or CRIC for short, picked up the project about a year ago after initial development by the Office of Naval Research in 2008.

Loper said CRIC's mission is not to bypass the typical military acquisition process, which is extremely costly and time consuming, but to speed up the testing of innovative ideas and get practical feedback from sailors at sea.

"We like to think of ourselves along the lines of a venture capital model," he said. "It takes years and years to get stuff from the drawing board out to the fleet. The CNO realizes that that time line needs to be compressed dramatically.

"What better way to do that than take the ideas that are coming from the young folks that are out there in the fleet and turn those around into prototypes and get them moving," Loper said. "That's where something like Silent Nemo comes."

He called it "harnessing the brainpower of youth." Lademan, the Marine leading the project, is just 27. Nemo is just one of about a dozen projects that CRIC is overseeing, Loper said. The cell provides management and overhead costs.

So far, the Nemo project has cost about \$1 million, according to Loper. Once fully developed and tested, CRIC works with private companies to see it produced then the Navy puts in its order.

12 Sailors Implicated In Submarine Shower Scandal

Navy Times, Dec. 11

Up to a dozen sailors are suspected of viewing secretly recorded videos of their female shipmates undressing in a submarine shower over a period of 10 months, according to a new investigative report

obtained by Navy Times.

The scandal has marred the Navy's gender integration effort begun four years ago.

While it appears only one sailor has been implicated in the videos' production and distribution, 11 are suspected of watching them and failing to report the matter to their commanders.

It's unclear precisely how many women were recorded. Navy officials said they believe it's either three or four. All are assigned to the ballistic-missile submarine Wyoming, which is based in Kings Bay, Ga., and are among the first female sailors to serve in the submarine force.

Navy Times first exposed the scandal Dec. 3, just one day before the Pentagon released its annual report on sexual assault within the military. The recent, unclassified incident report informed the chain of command, including top Navy leaders, that the command investigation has wrapped up.

According to the second incident report, 12 male sailors are suspected of viewing the videos taken from August to November 2013 and March to June 2014. The videos were first reported to the command in mid-November.

Submarine Force Atlantic confirmed the second incident report, but a spokesman declined to elaborate about the command report's findings. All of those implicated are petty officers, most of whom had seen or known about the videos but did not report it, said a senior Navy official familiar with the investigation. The official emphasized that only one sailor, a second class petty officer, is believed to have recorded and distributed them using a smart phone.

"This was not 11 guys, each with different" cameras, said the source. "It was really one guy doing the videography piece and then sharing it with other people."

"We think the seven videos were shot with a cellphone," he added.

Naval Criminal Investigative Service continues to investigate the potential legal violations in the filming and distribution, the Submarine Force Atlantic spokesman said.

The report will be forwarded up the boat's chain of command for endorsement before any punishment or adjudication is handed down.

The scandal is a major blight for a community that has touted an otherwise smooth effort to integrate women onto submarines, beginning four years ago with the first female supply and sub officers. Women first reported to the Wyoming in

late 2011.

In a letter to submarine leadership, the fleet's top submariner insisted that the filming doesn't take away from the community's integration successes, noting that 59 female officers are assigned to three ballistic-missile submarines and four guided-missile submarines in Kings Bay and Bangor, Wash.

"The performance of these women and the crews to which they are assigned have been overwhelmingly successful," Vice Adm. Michael Connor said.

Female officers are due to join fast-attack submarines next year, with enlisted women joining crews in the following years.

A ballistic missile sub typically has 15 officers and 140 enlisted on board, with unisex showers in "officer country." When a woman is using the shower, for example, she puts up a sign to indicate it is in use by a female officer and men must wait to enter until it's unoccupied.

It's possible that the cameras caught both men and women showering, but the final incident report only cites women as victims

Upcoming Events for January 2015

Thursday, January 1st, New Year's Day, HAPPY NEW YEAR to all hands and their families.

Lots of football to watch!!

Thursday, January 8th, Charleston Base monthly meeting at the FRA, 99 Wisteria Road, Goose Creek. Kitchen opens at 1700. Social hour starts at 1800. Meeting starts at 1900. Hope to see everyone there.

Sunday, January 25th, FRA planning to have another fine Navy breakfast. Time will be 0900 to 1130. More info to come later.

December 2014 Harleyville Christmas Parade



November 2014 Summerville Veteran's Day Service

