

TORPEDO ALLEY



Vol. 11, No.8

Aug. 2015

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

Base Meeting:

BOD: 6 Aug, 1800

Membership: 13 Aug, 1900

Location:

Fleet Reserve Association Branch 26

Low Country Home

99 Wisteria Rd.



Base Commander	<u>Rick Wise</u>	843.875.5559
Vice Commander	<u>Rick Sparger</u>	843.553.5594
Secretary	<u>Mike Ciesielko</u>	843.324.0011
Treasurer	<u>Mike Welch</u>	843.300.9022

Chief of the Boat	<u>Ken Hutchison</u>	843.553.0935
Veterans Affairs	<u>Ken Curtis</u>	843.797.1268
Membership	<u>Ed Stank</u>	843.212.5610
Scholarship	<u>George Scharf</u>	843.873.3318
Storekeeper	<u>Ron Chambers</u>	843.821.2268
Historian	<u>George Scharf</u>	843.873.3318
Public Affairs		
Chaplain	<u>Nick Nichols</u>	843.452.3189
Holland Club	<u>Bill Freligh</u>	843.553.1115
Newsletter	<u>George Fuchs</u>	941.580.2333
Webmaster	<u>Nick Nichols</u>	843.452.3189
Kaps for Kids	<u>Walt Deal</u>	843.871.4143



Submarines Lost During the Month of August

USS BULLHEAD (SS 332)	August 6, 1945 – 3 rd War Patrol	LOST WITH ALL HANDS – 84 SOULS
USS FLIER (SS 250)	August 13, 1944 – 2 nd War Patrol	LOST WITH 83 SOULS; 8 MEN SURVIVED
USS S-39 (SS 144)	August 14, 1942 – 3 rd War Patrol	NO LOSS OF LIFE
USS HARDER (SS 257)	August 24, 1944 – 6 th War Patrol	LOST WITH ALL HANDS – 79 SOULS
USS COCHINO (SS 345)	August 26, 1949	NO NAVY LOSS OF LIFE; ONE CIVILIAN LOSS; TUSK LOST 6 SOULS DURING THE RESCUE

FIVE Boats and 253 Men Lost

August 14, 1945 - VJ Day – Victory in the Pacific

CHAPLAIN’S REPORT:

FORGIVENESS AT HOME

Let all bitterness wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you. Ephesians 4:31-32 (NKJV)

Sometimes it’s easy to become angry with the people we love most, and sometimes it’s hard to forgive them. After all, we know that our family and close friends will still love us no matter how angry we become. But while it’s easy to become angry at home, it’s usually wrong.

The next time you’re tempted to lose your temper or to remain angry at a close family member or close friend, ask God to help you find the wisdom to forgive. And while you’re at it, do your best to calm down sooner rather than later because peace is always beautiful, especially peace between family and close friends.

--A Prayer for Today--

Lord, sometimes I am quick to anger and slow to forgive. But I know that your seek abundance and peace for my life. You command us to forgive; let me obey you as I follow the example of your son Jesus who forgave His persecutors. As I turn away from anger, Father, let me claim to the peace that you intend for my life. Amen.

JULY REPORT:

USSVI Charleston Base Meeting Minutes The attendance for the July 2015 meeting was 93. Opening Ceremonies: The meeting was called to order by Base Commander Rick Wise. A quorum was present and the meeting started at 1900. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the Invocation and the Tolling of the Boats lost in July was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols. The USSVI Creed was read by Base Secretary Vice Commander Rick Sparger. Rick welcomed the members and guests to the meeting. Introductions: There were no new people present. Secretary: Base Secretary Mike Ciesielko reported that the June meeting minutes had published in the newsletter and on the base website. Mike asked the group for a motion to accept the minutes as written. Nick Nichols made a motion to approve the June meeting minutes as published. The motion was seconded by A.J.Tisserotti. Treasurer: Base Treasurer Mike Welch was not present therefore no

financial report was given Vice Commander: Gave us a heads up about See Saw days in September. The Float will be implemented. Chaplain and Webmaster: Base Chaplain and Webmaster Nick Nichols gave the following report: July Report: Highlighted boat of the month: S-28 (SS 133) was lost on July 4, 1944 with the loss of 49 crew members. She was conducting training exercises off Hawaii with the US Coast Guard Cutter Reliance. After S-28 dove for a practice torpedo approach, Reliance lost contact. No distress signal or explosion was heard. Two days later, an oil slick was found near where S-28 had dove.. The exact cause of her loss remains a mystery. □ Madge Hill sent us a hand-made card to thank us for our help with Doc’s funeral. It is attached to this document. □ RMCM(SS) William David Clark departed on Eternal Patrol on Friday, June 11th in Charleston. He was 91 years old. His Funeral Service will be held on June 15th. Dave was not a member of USSVI. □ Marvin Miller will be having knee surgery sometime in the near future. □ Steve Everett has been diagnosed with breast cancer. He underwent surgery yesterday and is still very tired and sleeping a lot. Waiting on pathology to determine further treatment. Please remember Steve in your prayers and thoughts. □ Walt Deal is doing well in his recovery after his hip replacement. He really enjoyed his stay at Lifecare Rehab saying that it was as good as a 5 star hotel...but he doesn’t want to do it again anytime soon. □ Tom Skorepa has been undergoing radiation treatment for prostate cancer. The treatment has left him tired. Please give him a call if you have a chance. □ Ray Bryant was in Trident for a week due to fluid buildup around his left lung. He told me that 5 liters of fluid was removed. He is home now but still has many health issues that he is dealing with. Please remember him in your prayers and thoughts. □ Tom Scott fell at home. He was running a high temp and found out he had an infection and pneumonia. The medicine really, as he said, “knocked me on my butt.” He is doing well now. □ We had several family-related deaths this month: o Mrs. Virgie Chinn, 91, Carl's mother passed away o Mr. Floyd Swanson, 94, Linda Nichols’ father passed away o Mrs. Maxzine Lester, 90, Pam Hudson's mother passed away o Mrs. Donna Litzenberger, 84, Ron Litzenberger’s mother passed away □ Diane McBride’s cancer has come back. It is in the lungs and has spread to the lining of the intestines. Diane is Beetle Bailey’s daughter. □ Clemon Cager ‘CC’ was involved in a motorcycle vs deer accident ~2am on June 27th. CC is in Roper Rehab rm 3913. The deer is dead.

CC has many injuries. Open fracture of the left ankle fixed with pins and screws; good movement in the foot and toes so should heal with no problems. Was wearing safety glasses which kept gravel from getting in his eyes but contributed to a broken left eye socket and broken bridge of his nose. Road rash to his head and face due to NO HELMET. 7 ribs on the left side and 2 ribs on the right side broken. 3 cervical fractures and will be in neck brace for next 3-6 months. Some nerve damage between left shoulder and left hand. NO VISITORS until further notice. SCP (Shipmate Contact Program) is still going well. Please checkup on your shipmates and let them know you care about their wellbeing. I'm asking you to: Take a look at the Sailing List and contact at least 4 shipmates during this coming month (1 per week). Contact can be by email but phone is preferred Contact someone outside your table of friends; someone you don't see at the meeting. Make no reports unless you feel there's something I need to know about. Several follow-ups were made on those who've had surgery or illnesses in the last couple of months along with the base sending additional cards. If you know of shipmates or spouses from other bases who are having a difficult time, had surgery, etc. and would like for USSVI Charleston Base to send them a card please send their name and address to the Chaplain via email or phone call. Newsletter: George Fuchs had nothing to report. Membership: Ed Stank reported that base membership is now 331 members and that the new membership cards are in. National dues will increase 5 dollars in September. Public Affairs: Tom Clark has resigned and we need a volunteer for this position. Storekeeper: Ron Chambers had nothing to report. Veterans Affairs: Ken Curtis informed us that they are going to replace the DD-214 with an ID card. This will make life easier for Veterans. Affordable care act-you must be covered with minimum essential medical insurance or pay a fee. Tri care meets the requirement for minimum essential coverage. January 2016, DFAS will provide IRS form 1095C to all US Military and 1095B to all US Military retirees and all other individuals having tri care coverage. It makes sure you don't get fined. FRA: Larry Cox had nothing to report and handed out red tickets. Scholarship: George Scharf reported that one of our WWII veterans Bill Weaver made 3 walking sticks and donated them to the Scholarship committee. We will raffle them off next month. Still working on the Car Show. It will probably be in October. Submarine Veterans of World War II: George Scharf reminded the base that Swamp Fox will have a meeting on Thursday, 20 August at 1100 at Golden Corral in North Charleston. \$12 per person. CRAMA: No report. Rec Committee: We have volunteers for the rec committee Al Dempster and Rich Cox. The third Volunteer was Elmer Feeser. Nuclear Historian: Rick Carlson related the following: In the past I have covered Naval lore and legend. I have covered some of our heroes. You know the OFFICERS.... Gone are the REAL Heroes. The cannon-cockers, sail makers, bosuns, torpedomen, enginemen, throttlomen, quartermasters, radiomen, IC men, signalmen, You know skivie wavers, means the same thing. Gone for us are mid rats, hot sticky buns, hot fresh bread, hot bunking, hand dives, green boards, out of bounds pass, DC

stencils, hopping gravity, taking ICV'S, blowing sanitary, venting sanitary-inboard. No more Diesel Boats, No more boomers, No more Beer Ball games, No more nooners, No more pro pay, No more monkey pod DBF pins in the Clean Sweep Bar in Lockwood Hall (the officers club in Pearl Harbor). We once used fenders to tie up. Now we use suspenders to keep our pants up. We are a little fatter, a little slower. I'd like to mention our unsung heroes but heroes none the less. You may recall some or all of them. The shithouse mouse, the Laundry Queen, The Cranks (mess cooks for all you aft personnel). The turd Chasers, The topside watches, the messenger of the watch, the battery charging electricians, the duty firecontrolman (he was normally in charge of filling the coke machine on the barge), the yeoman, (you recall the guy was always busy typing the Rickover letter), the duty radioman (he was always changing the crypto typewriter ribbon) during all hands working parties. Did I mention the Sonar girls, or the nurse, and all non-watch standers wherever they are! Let us not forget the riders from squadron, from the shipyard, INSERV inspectors, Nay team, the non-watch standing, head of the chow line, movie watching, no load personnel. Did I mention they also take up a bunk. District Commander: District Commander reported that next meeting Ed Stank will be district commander. The After Battery: Steve "Buddha" let us know that the "after battery" hats are back in stock. Also they make all different kinds of baked bread \$4 a loaf. Chief of the Boat: If you send us emails on our official USSVICB emails please make sure it is official business. Base Commander: Rick Wise announced he is the new base Commander for our Subvets Old Business: The float is almost ready to go and has built in storage so we don't have to search for stuff. Ed announced that he will be visiting the Victory House Tuesday 14 July. He will leave at 10am on Belwright road. Rick Sparger commended the guys who helped for the Victory house picnic last month. New Business: No new Business. Good of the Order: The depth charge was won by James Graham. He donated \$64 to the Scholarship fund. Benediction: Nick Nichols gave the following prayer: Al and Connie Dempster gave the Base Chaplain a copy of the Navy Chaplain's "Prayers at Sea" handbook. The meeting was closed with the Submariner's Prayer as written in the Prayer Book. "Almighty, Everlasting God, the Protector of all those who put their trust in Thee: hear our prayers in behalf of Thy servants who sail their vessels beneath the seas. We beseech Thee to keep in Thy sustaining care all those who are in submarines, that they may be delivered from the hidden dangers of the deep. Grant them courage, and a devotion to fulfill their duties, that they may better serve Thee and their native land. Thought acquainted with the depths of the ocean, deliver them from the depths of despair the dark hours of the absence of friendliness and a goo ship's spirit. Bless all their kindred and loved ones from whom they are separated. When they surface their ships, may they praise thee for thou are there as well as in the deep. Fill them with Thy Spirit that they may be sure to their reckonings, unwavering in duty, high in purpose, and upholding the honor of their nation. Amen" Meeting Adjourned: Following the benediction by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols, the

FRA News

Military Suicides Reduced in First Quarter of 2015

Suicides among active duty troops dropped in the first quarter of calendar year 2015 compared to the same time in both 2013 and 2014, according to information released by the Department of Defense (DoD) last week. 57 active duty service members (30 soldiers, 14 airmen, 10 sailors and three Marines) died by suicide, a 22 percent decline from the first quarter of 2014 and a 7 percent drop from 2013's first quarter. But while the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps all saw lower death tolls, the Army saw an increase of 11 percent over the same time period. The Association welcomes the recent reduction in active duty suicides and appreciates the inclusion in the FY 2015 NDAA of an additional \$18.8 million targeted for special operations units that have experienced an increase in suicides over the past year.

FRA supported the "Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act," which was introduced January 7, 2015 (H.R. 203/S. 167-P.L.114-2). The measure was sponsored by Rep. Tim Walz (Minn.) and Sen. John McCain (Ariz.) respectively and had bipartisan support. It was signed into law (P. L. 114-2) February 12, 2015 and requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the DoD to allow for an annual independent third party evaluation of their mental health care and suicide prevention programs. Service members or military family members experiencing a mental health crisis can get help by calling the Veterans Crisis Line at 800-273-8255 and pressing 1.

Veterans ID Card Bill to Help Reduce Identity Thief Sent to President

The House approved a Senate amendment to the "Veterans Identification Card Act" (H.R. 91) and sent the bill to the president to be signed into law. The intent of the bill is to minimize the threat of identity theft and make it easier for veterans to prove their military service. Under current law, some veterans who did not serve for at least 20 years or receive VA health services must carry paper documents (DD 214) to prove their veteran status. These forms, used by many veterans, contain Social Security numbers and other details that could put veterans at risk of identity theft. The bill's sponsor, Rep. Vern Buchanan, (Fla.), called it "an example of what Congress can accomplish when lawmakers put partisanship aside and address the country's needs." Buchanan's Southwest Florida district includes more than 70,000 veterans, many of whom are age 65 or older. The bill allows the VA to charge the veteran a fee to cover the cost of the program.

In related news, Social Security numbers, family information, health records and even fingerprints of 21.5 million federal employees—including potentially millions of military person-

nel—were included a massive data theft last month from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), officials acknowledged. The Department of Defense (DoD) confirmed that records of current and former service members dating back to at least 2000 were breached.

New, Stricter Military Lender Rules Coming Soon

The Department of Defense (DoD) and the Consumer Finance Protection Bureau (CFPB) are working together to develop stricter rules meant to rein in abusive predatory lending to military service members and their families. The authority to implement such a regulation stems from the FRA-supported Military Lending Act (MLA), which was a component of the FY 2007 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). CFPB Director Richard Cordray, testifying before the Senate Banking Committee, said "Service members will have new important protections that they probably should have had several years ago.... Rules established in the past have proved too soft. Lenders are able to "swim around" them, which is why we were directed to come up with a broader set of protections. FRA supports more robust MLA protections. The Association works to ensure that the MLA and the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) is enforced by regulatory agencies, including the CFPB, Office of Military Affairs and the DoD.

FRA Calls for White House to Honor Fallen Marines, Sailor

Many FRA shipmates shared their frustration about the delay in lowering flags at federal facilities following the deaths of four Marines and one sailor killed in Chattanooga, Tenn. In response, FRA issued a "Making Waves" alert asking members to use the FRA Action Center to request the president issue a proclamation to lower the flags at U.S. government facilities to honor these fallen sea service comrades. The Association thanks those who responded to the alert, which was removed from our website when the president issued the proclamation five days after the shooting.

FRA's service flags at the National Headquarters have been draped and the United States flag outside of the headquarters has been placed at half-staff in honor of the Chattanooga shooting victims. This practice will continue for 30 days, from July 20 through August 20, 2015.

Need for BAH Confirmed by Real Estate Study

Zillow Real Estate Research, a firm that analyzes trends in the real estate markets, recently released a study of Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) that indicates service members are not receiving enough BAH to put them on a comparable footing with their private sector counterparts. The firm compared spending on rent and mortgage, factoring in total uniformed service compensation (both pay and allowances).

When renting a home: The average uniformed service member spends 41.6 percent of his or her income on rent, compared to the average U.S. citizen, who spends 30 percent.

When purchasing a home: The average uniformed service member spends 31.5 percent of his or her income on mortgage payments, compared to the average U.S. citizen, who spends 15 percent.

For more information on the study, go to: <http://www.zillow.com/research/military-home-values-9656/> and <http://www.zillow.com/research/military-affordability-9807/>

The obvious conclusion from the research is that this is not the time to be cutting BAH. The House and Senate are currently working to resolve the differences between the two chambers' versions of the FY 2016 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA-S. 1376/H.R. 1735). The Senate bill would reduce BAH for active duty and mandate awarding BAH only to the higher ranking member of a member-married-to-member couple. (The House version of the NDAA does not make include BAH cuts or reductions in dual-service couples' allowances.) FRA argues that the cuts in the Senate NDAA will be detrimental to service members and will only create a marriage penalty for service members who marry other service members.

Shipmates are urged to use the FRA Action Center (action.fra.org/action-center) to weigh in on this issue and other issues on the pending FY 2016 NDAA. The votes by the Senate and the House are expected as early as next week.

TRICARE Coverage Travels with You

The Defense Health Administration (DHA) wants beneficiaries to know that TRICARE is portable and travels with the beneficiary whether the travel is for business or pleasure.

Beneficiaries should receive all routine care and get prescriptions filled before traveling. Beneficiaries should plan to have enough maintenance medication for the entire trip and be sure to pack medication in carry-on luggage.

With routine care complete, a beneficiary's only health care concern should be urgent or emergency care. The first line of defense when deciding what kind of care is needed is TRICARE's Nurse Advice Line (NAL) at 1-800-TRICARE (874-2273). A registered nurse can answer urgent care questions and schedule next-day appointments at military hospitals and clinics if necessary. Best of all, the NAL is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so there is no need to worry about availability as you travel between time zones.

In the event of an emergency, seek care at an emergency facility. A TRICARE Prime beneficiary needing emergency care should notify the primary care manager (PCM) or regional contractor within 24 hours or the next business day. If only

urgent care is needed, get a referral from the primary care manager or call the NAL to get advice on when and how to seek care for an urgent problem.

Standard beneficiaries can visit any TRICARE-authorized, network or non-network provider; simply call the doctor to schedule an appointment. Referrals are not required, but you may need prior authorization from your regional contractor for some services. If you use a non-network provider, you may have to file your own claim. You may also have to pay up front for your care, so look for a network provider for treatment and save your receipts to file a claim later. Using a network provider exercises the TRICARE Extra option, giving you a five percent cost-share discount.

U.S. Family Health plan participants should call customer service 1-800-748-7347 for care. Be sure to save all of your health care receipts. Beneficiaries enrolled in the U.S. Family Health Plan cannot use the Nurse Advice Line.

TRICARE Overseas Program (TOP) beneficiaries traveling in the United States can call the Nurse Advice Line for health care advice, but if they ultimately seek care from a provider, they will need to call their TOP Regional call center to coordinate care.

TRICARE covers services that are medically necessary and proven safe and effective. For information about your health plan, visit the TRICARE website at www.TRICARE.mil.

From Veterans' Affairs Officer

The Affordable Care Act, your taxes and you

Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), all Americans including all military members (active duty, retired, Selected Reserve, or Retired Reserve) and their eligible family members must have health care coverage that meets a minimum standard called minimum essential coverage or pay a fee. Your TRICARE coverage meets the minimum essential coverage requirement under the ACA.

"The term "active duty" means full-time duty in the active service of a uniformed service for more than 30 consecutive days".

Beginning in January 2016, DFAS will be providing IRS Form 1095-C to all U.S. military members, and IRS Form 1095-B to all Retirees, Annuitants, former spouses and all other individuals having TRICARE coverage during all or any portion of tax year 2015.

An IRS Form 1095 documents you (and your family members, if applicable) have the minimum essential coverage. More information will be forthcoming about the delivery method of these forms.

These forms will document the information that DFAS will provide to the IRS on yourself and your authorized family members. The forms will be required to be reported with your 2015 federal tax return. DFAS will provide you with IRS Form 1095 series forms no later than Jan. 31, 2016

You can find more information about the impact of the Affordable Care Act on your federal income tax at: <http://www.irs.gov/Affordable-Care-Act>, or <http://www.dfas.mil/taxes/aca.html>.

You can act now to make sure your forms remain secure once they are available using myPay. Just look for the link to "Turn On/Off Hard Copy of IRS Form 1095" in your account and select Electronic Delivery Only. Your information will remain safe until you need it.

Schedule of Base Events for August: Slow month

1800 6 Aug. Board meeting at FRA, followed by flag detail training.

1900 13 Aug. Subvet meeting at FRA.

1800 22 Aug. Dinner/Dance at the Fleet (See flyer p.11)

SubVet Wives Schedule of Events for August:

1130 19 Aug. Luncheon at Continental Corner, Summerville.

USWN Articles Jul 2015

Final Request Granted

Lt. j.g. Daniel Mongiove, Portsmouth (NH) Herald, June 30

Thresher Widow Unites With Husband At Sea

About 200 nautical miles east of Cape Cod, Mass., the submarine USS Annapolis (SSN 760) fulfilled the final request of devoted Navy wife and mother Irene Harvey, by laying her cremated remains to rest at sea with her husband, Lt. Cmdr. John "Wes" Harvey, on April 23.

Wes was the commanding officer of USS Thresher (SSN 593) when the submarine was lost at sea, on April 10, 1963, during sea trials.

All persons aboard perished, including 112 Navy personnel and 17 Portsmouth Naval Shipyard civilian workers and contractors.

Irene's idyllic life, having married her high school sweetheart when he graduated with distinction from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1950, and raising two young sons (Bruce and John), was shattered, along with the lives of all family members who suffered loss that day.

"When [my father] died I was 8 years old," recalled Bruce. "We always did things as a family, like going to the beach or visiting the pool at the officer's club."

In the face of tragedy, Irene persevered, noted Bruce with

pride.

"She believed that the meaning of life is not to be found in mere survival. Instead, life's purpose is to be found somewhere in the process of caring, sharing, and loving," said Bruce. "As a nurse and Navy widow, [Irene] touched many lives."

Irene passed away at 87 years of age, on Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2014, leaving behind Bruce; his brother John; Bruce's wife Maresa; and, two grandchildren, Laura and John.

She also left behind a last request: to be buried at sea alongside her husband.

In a solemn Navy tradition, USS Annapolis (SSN 760) fulfilled Irene's wish.

As the Los Angeles Class, fast-attack submarine transited from its homeport in Groton, to a shipyard maintenance period in Kittery, Maine, Annapolis paused near the last known location of Thresher.

With engines and all unnecessary work stopped, lights dimmed to low-level, and the national ensign lowered to half-mast, Annapolis Executive Officer, Lt. Cmdr. Jared Severson, conducted a religious service and the committal of Irene's cremains. A gun salute and the playing of taps concluded the ceremony.

The chance to fulfill a Navy widow's wish, honor a Submariner who had made the ultimate sacrifice, and reflect on the loss of Thresher, was an important opportunity for the entire Annapolis crew, said the submarine's Commanding Officer Cmdr. Kurt Balagna.

"To reunite Cmdr. and Mrs. Harvey at sea was an honor," stated Balagna.

It was also somber, he said, as he thought about Thresher's loss due to a series of catastrophic events while conducting sea trials. After Annapolis' shipyard period, the submarine and crew will be conducting similar trials.

"My crew will be in a similar situation in two years when Annapolis conducts its own sea trials," noted Balagna. "The burial reminds us that submarining is a dangerous business and it's every Submariner's responsibility to remain vigilant and alert to ensure the safety of everyone aboard."

Such vigilance is the foundation of the Submarine Safety Program (SUBSAFE), instituted on Dec. 20, 1963, after the loss of Thresher, said Annapolis' Chief of the Boat, Master Chief Jason Avin.

"The men who lost their lives on USS Thresher paved the way for submarine force safety and process improvement," said Avin.

SUBSAFE provides maximum reasonable assurance that a

U.S Navy submarine maintains watertight integrity and the ability to surface should a boat experience flooding.

“By doing things right every day and staying vigilant, we do our best to honor the Sailors who took Thresher on eternal patrol,” assured Avin.

For Bruce Harvey, Annapolis has done more than that; Annapolis honored his father and mother by reuniting them on eternal patrol.

Lt. j.g. Daniel Mongiove is assigned to the Public Affairs Office at the U.S. Naval Submarine Base in Groton, Conn. This article originally appeared in the base publication the Dolphin and is reprinted here by permission.

Vietnam Gets Fourth Submarine From Russia amid South China Sea Tensions Prashanth Parameswaran, The Diplomat, July 1

The fourth of six Kilo-class submarines Vietnam bought from Russia arrived on Tuesday amid continued tensions in the South China Sea, local media sources reported.

According to Thanh Nien News, the submarine, codenamed HQ-185 Da Nang, arrived at Cam Ranh Port in the south-central province of Khanh Hoa on Tuesday morning transported by the Dutch-registered cargo ship Rolldock Storm. It was part of a deal Vietnam reached with Russia’s Admiralty Shipyards for six Project 636 Kilo-class diesel-electric submarines for \$2 billion back in 2009. Under the agreement, signed during Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung’s visit to Moscow, Russia agreed to provide the submarines, train Vietnamese crews and supply necessary spare parts.

The HQ-185 was reportedly launched on March 28, 2014 at the Admiralty Shipyards in St. Petersburg, Russia, and had a trial run on the Baltic Sea. It set sail for Vietnam in the middle of May this year.

The remaining two submarines are expected to be delivered to Vietnam by 2016. The fifth, codenamed HQ-186 Khanh Hoa, underwent a trial run in the Baltic Sea on June 8.

The latest delivery comes amidst simmering disputes in the South China Sea, where both Vietnam and China are claimants alongside the Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Taiwan. In just this month alone, Vietnamese fishing craft have clashed with Chinese boats near the disputed Paracel Islands, while reports last week indicated that Beijing had redeployed an oil rig near contested waters. On Tuesday, China also announced that its some of its land reclamation projects had been completed, and that the focus would now shift to the construction of facilities on these features, which, as I emphasized previously, would also include military equip-

ment (See: “The Truth About China’s South China Sea Land Reclamation Announcement”).

The Kilo-class submarines are some considered to be one of the quietest diesel submarines in the world, and are designed for anti-submarine warfare and anti-surface-ship warfare. Several analysts, including Carlyle Thayer at The Diplomat, have explored how Vietnam People’s Navy (VPN) may use them to counter Chinese naval capabilities in the South China Sea.

Russian Submarines To Receive New Sonar Absorbent Composites (Russia) Nikolai Novichkov, HIS Janes 360, July 5

Russia's Krylov State Research Center (KSRC) has developed innovative new technologies, which will reduce the ability of sonar to detect Russian submarines, according to Valeriy Shaposhnikov, chief of KSRC's endurance and shipping hull construction unit.

"We have developed the appropriate technologies and constructions made of composites," Shaposhnikov said. These new multilayer composites the company is using have a structure and consistency that absorb sonar signals, thereby preventing the detection of a submarine via hydroacoustics. "Such effect is provided by the extremely complex inner structure of the composite developed by KSRC," he added.

The innovative developments are currently undergoing stand trials, which include strength tests. According to Shaposhnikov, the control surfaces of a submarine can be made from the new composites.

Shaposhnikov's unit in KSRC is currently conducting trials of full-scale specimens of components from Russian diesel-electric submarines, in particular a Lada-class submarine (Project 677) rudder blade made of the special composites.

In his opinion, it is likely that the new composites will be integrated onto Russian submarines. "We have made great progress to this end," Shaposhnikov said. "The design bureaus take the decisions whether our innovations will be applied or not, as they have responsibility for their production ... The main advantage that our new technologies can bring is the reduction of probability of an underwater object's detection."

Russia Wants to Make India A Global Hub for Submarine Upgrade, Maintenance and Repair (Russia)

Manu Pubby, Economic Times, July 9

ST PETERSBURG – Russia says that it wants to make India a global hub for the upgrade, maintenance and repair of conventional submarines and its leading shipyard is in final talks to select an Indian joint venture partner for a mega project to set up facilities here.

With contracts worth several thousand crores in the offing for the upgrade of Russian origin diesel electric submarines – several from the Indian Navy itself – the joint venture has the potential of making the selected Indian shipyard a serious player in the international market.

Officials from the state-run Zvyozdochka shipyard told ET that a memorandum of understanding could be signed within a month as it is in final talks with an Indian partner for the project. Russian engineers have already visited the Indian yard and advised it on changes to be made as well as investments needed to execute the project.

"We are in the process of negotiating with an Indian shipyard and if these negotiations are successful, it could become our partner for future tasks of modernising Kilo class submarines. Not just for India but for third nations as well," Evgeny V Shustikov, Deputy Director General of Zvyozdochka told ET.

While the Russian side is reluctant to share details, it is learnt that several rounds of talks have taken place between Zvyozdochka and the Gujarat-based Pipavav Shipyard that has recently been bought over by Anil Ambani's Reliance. A final round of talks are expected to take place in August.

Explaining the project, Shustikov says that the Russian side is looking at a joint venture model with partners in India who can execute work orders from the region. India alone is looking at the imminent second life extension of at least four Kilo class submarines. This would give the fleet almost 15 more years of service life. "Our estimate is that we will be loaded with work for at least 15-20 years," Shustikov says.

Other nations that operate Kilos in the region include Iran with three submarines of the same class and Nigeria with six. In addition, Russia has recently sold six upgraded Kilo class submarines to Vietnam that will require overhauling and repairs in the coming years and is pursuing several other orders in the region.

"India could become a second center in the world for Kilo class upgrade. For certain nations it is easier to send the submarine for repair to India than to any other place. It is also a good chance for India to master the repair and upgrade of this class of vessel," Andrey Baranov, deputy CEO Rubin design bureau that has designed the Kilo class, told ET.

18,000-Ton Submarine In Japanese Port Shows Depth Of U.S. Ties

Isabel Reynolds, Bloomberg News, July 14

The USS Michigan is an 18,000-ton demonstration of deepening U.S.-Japan military ties against the backdrop of an increasingly muscular China.

Equipped with about 150 Tomahawk guided missiles, the 170-meter (560-foot), nuclear-powered submarine glided into the port of Yokosuka earlier this month. The floating display of strike capability arrived just 50 kilometers (31 miles) from Tokyo as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was prepar-

ing to ram legislation through parliament to let Japan defend its only formal ally.

The legal changes back up his 2014 reinterpretation of the nation's pacifist constitution and would allow Japanese troops to fulfill guidelines set in April on expanding cooperation with the U.S. around the world. The ruling Liberal Democratic Party intends to pass the bills Thursday, Kyodo News said.

"Japan cannot defend the lives and property of its people alone," Yukio Okamoto, a diplomat-turned-political analyst, told a parliamentary hearing about the bills on Monday. "These laws will strengthen the alliance with the U.S."

The Michigan's newly appointed captain, Joe Turk, showed reporters around the Ohio-class submarine, including the torpedo launcher and a lock-out chamber that lets special forces divers exit while submerged. Able to produce oxygen and fresh water, the Michigan's deployments are limited only by the food on board.

Japan has stepped up joint activities with the U.S. in recent years, particularly training for its nascent marine corps such as the re-taking of captured islands. Japan is embroiled in separate disputes over the sovereignty of islands with China, Russia and South Korea.

Pacifist Constitution

Ships from the two forces conducted a month-long joint cruise in the South China Sea in October, and Japanese troops are currently taking part in an exercise with U.S. personnel on the sidelines of a larger U.S.-Australian exercise near Darwin.

Japan's inability to participate in "collective self-defense" limits its ability to perform some types of exercises with the U.S., according to Narushige Michishita, a professor of security studies at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies in Tokyo.

Rather than take part in joint search-and-destroy exercises while in Japan, the USS Michigan's crew of about 165 kept co-operation with Japanese counterparts low key. They visited one another's ships and discussed training topics.

Many Japanese are concerned about the potential threat from China as the neighbors jostle over rights to a chain of uninhabited East China Sea islands.

Polls show people are also wary of the closer military links to the U.S. that the new laws could bring. A survey published by the Asahi newspaper on July 13 found 31 percent of respondents said the coming changes would help keep Japan secure, while 42 percent said they wouldn't.

"The good news is that the Self-Defense Forces will now be able to work very closely, not only with the U.S., but other countries," Michishita said.

From Kinloch to Nuclear Submarine Commander
Sharon Anhalt, The St. Louis American, July 22

It was a fascination with planes and a desire to serve in the military that spun a dream for a kid from Kinloch, Missouri. In his humble neighborhood, he had watched planes fly in and out of Lambert Airport. The dreams to fly and to serve his country were dreams chased and realized by Captain Richard R. Bryant, USN (retired).

Bryant talks about the days before cable television when the local stations played old World War II movies that inspired him to one day be one of those gallant pilots.

According to Bryant, “My interest in STEM began with a dream, so I’d tell young children to chase your dreams and don’t allow your environment to predict what you’re capable of.”

To realize his dream, a young Richard Bryant set his future in motion. He applied and was accepted to the United States Naval Academy. At the academy, he received classes in the engineering disciplines and settled on Marine Engineering. In addition, he discovered all of the fascinating things that submarine forces do.

He said, “I fell in love and never looked back.”

It was his passion and perseverance that led him to earn a B.S. in Marine Engineering from The United States Naval Academy in 1988, a Masters of Engineering Management from The George Washington University in 1995 and in 2005, earn a M.S. of National Security Affairs from the National War College.

Bryant had a stellar military career as a career nuclear submarine officer; he served aboard four submarines and made multiple overseas deployments in support of U.S. national security objectives. He commanded the nuclear fast attack submarine USS Miami (SSN-755) and served several tours at the Pentagon.

Now retired from the military, Bryant is the assistant to the president at Telecommunication Systems, Inc. in Annapolis, Maryland. He is a husband and father of four children who keep him busy and on the move.

“My children all play instruments and are very competitive at the state level. Two of my sons are wrestlers and at their level, wrestling is a year-round sport,” Bryant said.

“I find my support of them and their activities gives me access to some things that have traditionally been my favorite past times – music and sports. I grew up playing instrumental music and sang in the glee club at the Naval Academy.”

When asked to give parents advice on the importance of a STEM education, Bryant replied, “A good solid foundation in the STEM subjects supports all potential academic career paths. Parents should understand that while their children may believe the hype that STEM is harder, they

should change that around. Show them that it is more rewarding, well worth it, and that it can be fun.”

In terms of life lessons for young children, he urged, “Be inspired, find your passion, pursue your dreams, set goals, overcome obstacles, chart your course and never give up.”

USS Cheyenne (SSN 773) Transits the Southeast Loch of Pearl Harbor COMSUBPAC Public Affairs, July 23



PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii - (July 23, 2015) - The fast-attack submarine USS Cheyenne (SSN 773) transits the Southeast Loch of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, passing the half-masted flag of another fast-attack submarine, USS Charlotte (SSN 766). National ensigns aboard all vessels of the U.S. Navy fly at half-mast, honoring the five fallen service members of the shootings in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on July 16, 2015. Both Los Angeles-class submarines are with Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, home-ported at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Steven Khor/Released)

Sailor Accused Of Taking Secret Photos Of U.S. Submarine
Edmund H. Mahony, Hartford Courant, July 25

The FBI says a sailor took illegal photographs of classified systems on the U.S. Navy's Groton-based, nuclear-powered attack submarine USS Alexandria and later tried to destroy the evidence when he learned that the Navy and FBI were investigating.

The Navy was alerted to the security breach when the town dump foreman in Hampton found a cellular telephone in a Dumpster and decided to keep it to replace his own. When he noticed that the phone contained photographs, he showed them to a retired Navy chief, who called the Naval Criminal Investigative Service.

U.S. Attorney Deirdre M. Daly said Friday that a federal grand jury has charged Kristian Saucier, 28, of Arlington, Vt., with unlawfully retaining photos taken inside restricted areas of a nuclear attack submarine, and obstructing an investigation.

Federal authorities did not respond to questions about the case, including what, if anything, investigators think Saucier intended to do with the photographs. A government affidavit filed in court said Saucier admitted that the photographs were found on his telephone, but denied taking them.

"We vehemently deny that Mr. Saucier ever intentionally did anything to harm the U.S. or aid a foreign national," said his attorney, Derrick Hogan, of Albany, N.Y. "The government is trying to levy an espionage charge against him. The government is trying to make it a lot bigger than it is."

Saucier served as a machinist's mate aboard the Alexandria from September 2007 to March 2012.

The Alexandria is a Los Angeles, or 688-class, attack boat designed to hunt and destroy enemy submarines. The attack submarines, which also have been used in top-secret intelligence missions, date to the 1970s but remain an important element of the U.S. fleet.

About half the class was built in Groton by the Electric Boat Division of General Dynamics. The submarines' design and performance characteristics remain classified.

Naval and FBI investigators said in court filings that Saucier's telephone contained photographs of the ship's reactor, reactor compartment and maneuvering compartment, where the nuclear power, steam and electrical systems of the submarine are operated and monitored through control panels.

The investigators said that photographs of the control panels were of such clarity that gauges could easily be read, revealing the Alexandria's position at the time of the photograph, as well as its maximum speed, which is classified. An engineer reading the photos could "determine significant design characteristics of a U.S. nuclear submarine, including its reactor plant," the investigators said.

After FBI and Naval investigators first questioned Saucier, federal prosecutors said he used a hammer to destroy a laptop computer and a camera, which also allegedly contained photographs. Saucier's grandfather told investigators that he later found Saucier's laptop computer on his farm in Hampton.

Saucier told his grandfather that, when the computer stopped working, he used it for target practice, according to a law enforcement affidavit.

Following his service on the Alexandria, Saucier was assigned to the Naval Nuclear Power Training Unit in Ballston Spa, N.Y., as an instructor candidate. He is now a First Class Petty Officer assigned to the Naval Support Activity Base in Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

He is free on \$100,000 bail and is scheduled to appear in court on Monday in Hartford. If convicted, he faces maximum penalties of 10 years and a fine of up to \$250,000 for unauthorized retention of defense information and 20 years and a \$250,000 fine for obstruction of justice.

Navy Gets Mileage Out Of Its Guided-Missile Submarines - While It Can *Erik Slavin, Stars and Stripes,* July 29

The USS Michigan and three others like it can pack more conventional missile firepower than any other submarines — and in about a decade, they're probably going away.

Guided-missile submarines like Michigan can also stay at sea longer and deploy larger groups of Navy SEALs than the service's more plentiful fast-attack subs.

For all their advantages, Navy officials acknowledge they are luxury items in a fiscal environment that doesn't support building replacements.

As the Navy's submarine fleet shrinks over the next 13 years due to the retirement of its Cold War-era subs, it will look toward less expensive technology to offset the loss of boats like Michigan, service officials told Stars and Stripes.

However, as long as the Navy has its guided missile subs, they are getting plenty of use. USS Michigan had been on deployment for 21 months when it pulled in to Yokosuka Naval Base for a port visit earlier this month.

"My operational commander would like us to be at sea every minute that I can be," said Capt. Joe Turk, Michigan's Blue Crew commanding officer. "The only thing that limits sustainability is food."

Michigan's separate Blue and Gold crews typically fly from Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor, Wash., to Guam every four months or so, where they swap out command of the boat.

Michigan entered service as one of the Navy's 18 Ohio-class nuclear trident missile submarines, known colloquially as "boomers."

When the Navy cut the number of nuclear-missile subs to 14, it converted four of them to carry up to 154 Tomahawk missiles.

The four submarines began global deployments during the past decade. In 2011, the USS Florida took part in a guided-missile submarine's largest-scale conventional combat operation when it fired 90 Tomahawks in the effort to defeat former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi's forces.

When a guided-missile submarine isn't firing Tomahawks, it functions much more like a smaller fast-attack submarine, though it retains the typically higher-ranking captain and crew structure of a boomer.

Both the guided-missile subs and fast-attacks conduct surveillance, train to fight ships and other subs, and conduct special operations.

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Guided-missile subs have multiple lockout chambers to deploy SEALs and their vehicles underwater. They also have an extra 200 feet of length and a little more width than fast-attack subs, meaning special operators have more room to get comfortable, said Capt. Brian Humm, commodore of Submarine Squadron 19.

“[Special operations] is physically intensive — they work hard,” Humm said. “It’d be nice if they had own racks, it’s nice that they have tons of gear to work out with and ... larger facilities.”

However, those are amenities that aren’t likely to last into the long term.

The current 30-year Navy shipbuilding plan calls for guided-missile subs to be decommissioned between 2025 and 2027.

By October 2028, the total number of attack and guided-missile subs would drop to 41, down from 57 today, before climbing back to 48 boats in 2036.

As those numbers drop, the Navy will also ask Congress to fund an Ohio-class replacement in order to preserve

what the Pentagon considers the most survivable leg of its nuclear deterrent.

It will cost the Navy \$96 billion to acquire the 12 ballistic missile submarines slated to replace the 14 Ohio-class subs carrying nuclear payloads., according to a 2015 General Accountability Office estimate.

At that price, no one has pushed hard to build four more as guided-missile subs. Instead, many in the Navy and Congress are backing an addition that would add more armament to the latest class of fast-attack subs.

The Virginia Payload Module would lengthen the mid-section of Virginia-class subs and allow them to carry 76 percent more torpedoes and Tomahawks. The addition would increase cost of the \$2.8 billion subs by 13 percent, according to a Congressional Research Service report in June.

That figure doesn’t include the Tomahawks themselves, which cost about \$1 million each, depending on what cost factors are included.

For now, multiple sailors aboard USS Michigan said they were happy to serve aboard a boat that combines fast-attack missions with Ohio-class dimensions.

There are a few more systems aboard a guided-missile sub than on a fast-attack version; however, most of what gets learned to earn “dolphins” — the distinctive pin worn by a submarine-qualified sailor — transfers seamlessly to any of the Navy’s boats, said Chief of the Boat Jason Puckett, of Columbus, Ohio.

“The basics of being a submariner are the same, no matter the platform,” Puckett said.

Richardson: New Ballistic-Missile Sub 'Absolutely Critical' for the Country *Richard R. Burgess, Seapower Magazine, July 30*

ARLINGTON, Va. - The planned replacement for the Navy’s nuclear deterrent submarine force is the Navy’s top acquisition priority and must be funded, the nominee to be the next chief of naval operations said.

Testifying July 30 in his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Capitol Hill, ADM John M. Richardson, director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program, said the Ohio Replacement ballistic-missile submarine (SSBN) is an “absolutely critical program for the country.”

Richardson, who in his current position directly is involved in the program, said in response to Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., “The current requirement requirements for the Ohio Replacement program are exactly what we need.

“We intend to leverage all of those lessons to design and deliver the Ohio [Replacement] class, using many of the same tools that have been successful in [the] Virginia [-class attack submarine],” he said. “We hope to bring to you a design that is very mature — one of the key successes of the Virginia program. We hope to provide you a stable build plan that, if funded with predictable funds, will allow the team of shipyards at Newport News and Electric Boat to allocate risk and deliver those submarines along with the Virginia class at the lowest possible price.”

In response to a question from Sen. Jack Reid, D- R.I., Richardson said, “There some things you must build into the ship that you must get right from the very start, and then there are some things inside the ship where you allow technology to mature and advance. A critical component that must be addressed from the start, in addition to the missile tubes, is stealth. We’ve made a great deal of time and energy to make sure that we have the stealth requirement to the submarine right.”

Richardson agreed with the assertion of Kaine that even with relief from the budget sequester for the Defense Department (DoD), its restriction on non-Defense Department funding, such as that of the nuclear energy and nuclear weapons programs of the Department of Energy, could negatively the Ohio Replacement program.

“We are doing everything in the Navy to make sure that we not only get the requirements right and stable but that we treat our cost targets like any other performance parameter for that program

and we are driving and on a good track to achieve all of those cost targets,” Richardson said in response to a question from Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn. “Having said that, there will be a significant investment for the nation, one that I believe must be done. If we absorb that entire cost within the Navy, that will come at a tremendous price in terms of our other responsibilities in ships and aircraft. I don’t want to leverage that on our sister services, so I look forward to working closely together with department and Congress to address this.”

Adm. Richardson Dodges SASC Questions On China
Sydney J. Freedberg Jr., Breaking Defense, July 30

CAPITOL HILL – Adm. John Richardson sailed through his Senate confirmation hearing this morning. But two ominous issues breached the surface, hinting at growing conflict between the administration and Hill Republicans over how to handle China.

Richardson, an experienced submariner nominated for Chief of Naval Operations, deftly dodged the difficult questions from Senate Armed Services Committee: Does U.S.-China cooperation on nuclear reactors help their military? Should the U.S. challenge China’s territorial claims in the South China Sea? But as both Beijing and Capitol Hill step up the pressure, he may not be able to dodge for long.

“Admiral, is China an adversary?” Sen. Tom Cotton asked bluntly.

“China is a complex nation,” Richardson replied. “Many of the things they’re doing have an adversarial nature to them,” he said, notably the construction of pseudo-islands in the South China Sea.

So why are we helping them build up their nuclear navy? the senator asked.

The Nuclear Question

The U.S. has had a “1-2-3 agreement” on civilian nuclear cooperation with China since the Reagan administration, back when Beijing was a counterbalance to Moscow. That 30-year deal is up for renewal, but Cotton and fellow conservative Mark Rubio are opposing it. The grounds: U.S. civilian reactor technology transferred to China for civilian purposes could end up in military hands. Specifically, Curtiss-Wright AP-1000 pumps – designed to cool Westinghouse nuclear reactors – were transferred to Westinghouse’s Chinese partners, who also just happen to make the pumps for China’s new ballistic nuclear missile submarines (SSBNs). Pumps are one of the noisiest components of a nuclear sub, so better pump technology makes subs harder to find.

“This is very troubling to me,” Cotton said this morning. “I imagine any increase in the capability and lethality of the PLA Navy would also worry you.”

“This is something I obviously watch extremely closely,” said Richardson, a career submariner. The details

are highly technical and highly classified, the admiral went on, but the Navy has looked “very closely” at the civil nuclear agreement. He gave it this less than ringing endorsement: “I believe that in the aggregate, we would be better with a renewed successor agreement than without it.”

Cotton pressed him: “Even if you suspected or knew that the PLA Navy was going to divert civilian nuclear technology towards nuclear naval systems?”

“I can say with a fair degree of confidence we are better with this agreement than we are without,” Richardson said.

The admiral’s written answers to the committee’s questions in advance of the hearing go into more detail on the upsides: “While it is impossible to state that there will be ‘no risk’ [of civilian technology being put to military use], the successor U.S.-China Atomic Energy Act Section 123 Agreement ensures continued U.S. access to China’s civilian nuclear complex, allowing for the development of a culture of best practices on nuclear security and safety, as well as the opportunity to ensure Chinese nonproliferation policies are consistent with international nonproliferation norms.” There’s also the attraction of selling U.S. nuclear reactors to the largest and most energy-hungry country on the planet.

The South China Sea

In both this morning’s hearing and in his written testimony, Adm. Richardson made clear that China’s building program in the South China Sea was “destabilizing.” What he didn’t make clear was what the administration plans to do about it – even when the committee pressed him.

In fact, there are rumors of a disagreement between the White House and the military’s Pacific Command on a crucial question: whether to fly or sail within 12 nautical miles of the new Chinese bases. China claims its constructions in the South China Sea are permanent and inhabited islands, which would legally mean they are each surrounded by territorial waters and airspace for 12 miles in every direction. The U.S. considers them to be artificial and temporary structures, which under international law means they have no legal impact on other nations’ rights of passage in the surrounding seas or airspace. The Chinese have made it clear they think that flying or sailing within 12 nautical miles of these structures would be an unmistakable challenge to their claims.

“Sailing inside 12nm is a key component to any freedom of navigation campaign that seeks to reject China’s claims to these man-made islands,” one Senate staffer told me. “Secretary [of Defense Ashton] Carter’s speech in Singapore was excellent, but now it’s time we back up his strong words with very visible actions.”

“There seems to be a confusion in our policy,” Sen. Dan Sullivan said at the hearing. At the recent Shangri-la conference in Singapore, he said, “Sec. Carter stated we will continue to fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows (and that) turning an underwater rock into an airfield simply does not afford the rights of sovereignty or permit

restrictions on international air and maritime transit. However, PACOM commander [Harry] Harris just two weeks ago at the Aspen Security Forum stated it is U.S. policy to afford a 12-(mile) limit around all (features) in the South China Sea ... to include islands and formations.”

“It’s absolutely important that the Navy continue to be present in that region,” Richardson said, “(but) we do have to respect the legitimately claimed territorial boundaries.”

“Does that mean respecting that?” Sullivan said, pointing scornfully to a photo of China’s airstrip atop one of the structures known as Fiery Cross Reef.

“I’d have to at look exactly which of those claims are legitimate,” Richardson demurred. “It’s a dynamic situation there. There are competing claims down there ... We need to get down there, understand the truth, and make that very clear.”

“Mr. Chairman,” Sullivan said, turning to Sen. John McCain (himself no fan of Obama’s foreign policy), “I’ll be submitting questions for the record to make sure the policy of the United States is clarified.”

“Good luck,” the irascible chairman growled.

Will China Have A Mini U.S. Navy By 2020? **Prashanth Parameswaran, The Diplomat, July 30**

A former admiral does the math – and the results are quite striking.

Much has been written about China’s ongoing efforts to become what President Xi Jinping called a “great maritime power” and how the United States should respond. In light of this, it is useful to think about the future trajectory of the of the increasingly modern and powerful People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), which has been charged with both defending China’s sovereignty in ‘near seas’ (eg. Taiwan) and protecting Chinese interests in the ‘far seas’.

Rear Admiral Michael McDevitt, now a senior fellow at the Center for Naval Analyses (CNA), has attempted to do exactly that. In a recent paper delivered at a two-day CNA conference on Chinese maritime power, seen by The Diplomat, McDevitt projects what China’s ‘far seas’ navy will look like in 2020 and how it would rank alongside the United States and other players – Britain, France, Japan, India and Russia. Getting a sense of the PLAN’s ‘far seas’ capabilities is important since it tells us the extent to which it might be able to project power further from China’s shores.

McDevitt’s results, though not entirely surprising, are nonetheless quite striking. According to his projections, on paper by 2020 China’s navy will already increasingly look like a smaller version of the U.S. Navy and will be “the second most capable ‘far seas’ navy in the world.” In five years, the PLAN’s capabilities would dwarf most other navies – China would have as many aircraft carriers as Britain and India, more nuclear attack submarines than either Britain or France, and as many AEGIS-like destroyers as all the oth-

er non-U.S. navies combined. China would have two aircraft carriers, 20-22 AEGIS like destroyers and 6-7 nuclear attack submarines, while United States would have eleven aircraft carriers; 88 AEGIS like destroyers; and 48 nuclear attack submarines.

While China would still be far behind the U.S. Navy, its growing capabilities could already begin to have significant implications for the United States and other actors in five years, McDevitt argues. He paints a rather grim picture. By 2020, seeing Chinese warships in the far reaches of the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean would become a much more routine affair, and some U.S. allies and partners may grow increasingly nervous. It would also become more challenging for the U.S. Navy to keep track of far seas deployed PLAN submarines, while U.S. sea control off of the Middle Eastern and East African hot spots can no longer be assumed. Most alarmingly, McDevitt notes that the image of a Chinese 'global' navy will attenuate perception of U.S. power.

The key qualifier, of course, is on paper, a point that McDevitt himself clearly acknowledges. Perhaps most obviously, looking purely at quantity hides the significant qualitative differences that exist between U.S. and Chinese equipment. Rising numbers also tell us little about how operationally competent PLAN far seas forces will be. These include lingering questions about the reliability of combat systems, the training of its sailors, and the functionality of the command structure. Furthermore, straight-line projections cannot reflect the domestic constraints China many face in the coming years that could alter the trajectory of its naval development, including an economic slowdown. Asked how China might confront these challenges, McDevitt said he expected the country to "muddle through," but that China also did not need to "breathe too hard" to come close to the numbers he projected.

Furthermore, in many ways the United States is still well-positioned to counter threats that a more modern, capable PLAN may pose. As McDevitt noted during the conference, submarines, for instance, continue to remain a distinct American asymmetric advantage. Even here, though, he warned that numbers still do count, a point that former Admiral Gary Roughead also emphasized in his keynote address to the conference on Tuesday. "We need as many subs as we need to make sure that the Chinese worry about that a lot," McDevitt said.