

# TORPEDO ALLEY



Vol. 11 No.12

Dec. 2015

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

**Base Meeting:**

BOD: 03 Dec. 1800

Membership: 10 Dec. 1900

**Location:**

Fleet Reserve Association Branch 26

Low Country Home

99 Wisteria Rd.



Base Commander	Rick Wise	843.875.5559
Vice Commander	Rick Sparger	843.553.5594
Secretary	Mike Ciesielko	843.324.0011
Treasurer	Mike Welch	843.300.9022

Interim Chief of the Boat	Rick Sparger	843.553.5594
Veterans Affairs	Ken Curtis	843.797.1268
Membership	Rick Sparger	843.553.5594
Scholarship	George Scharf	843.873.3318
Storekeeper	Ron Chambers	843.821.2268
Historian	George Scharf	843.873.3318
Public Affairs	Ronnie Kerstetter	843.367.1026
Chaplain	Nick Nichols	843.452.3189
Holland Club	Bill Freligh	843.553.1115
Newsletter	George Fuchs	941.580.2333
Webmaster	Nick Nichols	843.452.3189
Kaps for Kids	Vacant	



## Submarines Lost During the Month of December

USS CAPELIN (SS-289)	December 2, 1943	1 <sup>st</sup> War Patrol	Lost with all hands – 76 souls
USS SEALION (SS-195)	December 10, 1941	Bombed in Philippine SY	
		First submarine lost in World War II	
			Loss of 5 souls
USS F-1/CARP (SS-20)	December 17, 1917	Collision with USS F3 (SS 22)	Loss of 19 souls
USS S4 (SS-109)	December 17, 1927	Rammed by USCG Paulding	
			Lost with all hands – 40 souls

### Four Boats and 140 Men Lost During the Month of December

#### USSVI Charleston Base Meeting Minutes

The attendance for the November 2015 meeting was 100.

**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 November 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.

**Honorary Charleston base member Induction:** Rick Wise introduced Robert (Bob) Temple and presented him with an Honorary Charleston Base member Award.

**Introductions:** The following men introduced themselves at the meeting: SKC (SS) John L. Townsend Jr, Qual Boat: USS Mariano G Vallejo SSBN 658; FTG1 (SS) Eugene “Gene” Babich, Qual Boat: USS Benjamin Franklin SSBN 640; Jay Rowland MM(SS), Qual Boat: USS Threadfin SS 410.

**Secretary:** Base Secretary Mike Ciesielko reported that the October meeting minutes had been published in the newsletter and on the base website. Mike asked the group for a motion to accept the minutes as written. Butch Bryar made a motion to approve the October meeting minutes as published. The motion was seconded by Ken Curtis.

**Treasurer:** Base Treasurer Mike Welch was not present Rick Wise gave a report on the Charleston Base finances. The base financial report is now located as a password protected file on the base website under Documents and Resources. The password is the same as needed for the Sailing List.

**Vice Commander:** Gave us a BZ for Tolling of the Boats.

Parades will be Harleyville, Elloree and Summerville. Dates and times are posted on the website events page.

**Chaplain and Webmaster:** Base Chaplain and Webmaster Nick Nichols gave the following report:

#### November Report

##### Highlighted boat of the month:

USS Growler was lost on Nov 8, 1944 with the loss of 86 men when she was sunk in the South China Sea. Winner of two Navy Unit Commendations, Growler was on her 12th war patrol, and was lost while attacking a convoy, probably as a result of a depth charge attack or victim of a circular run by one of her own torpedoes.

- **FCSN(SS) John Irving Clarkin** departed on Eternal Patrol in Conneaut Lake PA. John was a WWII Veteran, a member of USSVI, USSVI Requin Base and Charleston Base, and Holland Club. He qualified USS PIPER (SS-409) in 1944. He also served on USS PRAIRIE AD-15, USS LIVERMORE DD-429, and USS SEA ROBIN SS-407 and was in the Navy 1941-1945.
- **Ray Bryant** is now at MUSC for tests. He was transferred there after being in Trident for a couple of weeks, getting a blood transfusion and tests. He had to have a third chest tube put in last night with the hopes that he can get the largest tube taken out shortly. I talked to him today and he is undergoing tests for a possible liver transplant. If that happens he will need transportation assistance for doctors’ appointments, etc. I’ll let everyone know what’s needed if a transplant happens. Ray is very tired and in some pain but said that he would really like to see some of his shipmates. Many of you have gone to see him and he has really appreciated it.
- **Bill Hall** is home and recovering from surgery to remove a brain tumor. Barbara says there will be more surgery as soon as Bill is strong enough. No visitors or calls at this time and many thanks for prayers. Barbara
- **Rich Alfano** is recovering well from pneumonia.
- **Dot Campbell**, Soupy’s wife, is home after her stay in the hospital but will be having further tests.

- **Steve Everett** is battling breast cancer. Please remember Steve in your prayers and thoughts.
- **Clemon Cager 'CC'** is still recovering from his motorcycle accident in June.

**NOTE:** I would like to stress the importance of making sure you, and your family, know the location of your DD214. This is required to prove veteran status if you are seriously ill or in case of death.

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.

**WEBMASTER NOTES:**

There are now 4 advertisers on the site and these will also be placed in the newsletter each month.

**Newsletter:** George Fuchs had no report.

**Veterans Affairs:** Ken Curtis had no report.

**District Commander:**

**Membership:** Ed Stank reported that base membership Cards are on order. Membership is now 329 members.

Calendars are on sale for the scholarship fund.

The next national convention is in Reno NV next August 14<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup>. Airfare is expensive.

Ed has stated he is going to the Victory House next Tuesday and the Tuesday after the Christmas party. Get your Donations in.

Rick Wise mentioned that John Moody sent a check for \$500.00 for the Victory House.

**Storekeeper:** Ron Chambers had no report.

**Holland Club:** Bill Freligh had no report.

**FRA:** Larry Cox gave us the following report.

Dec 19<sup>th</sup> there will be a Children's Christmas party. The FRA Christmas party is that night.

**Scholarship:** George Scharf reported that its time to start submitting applications.

**Submarine Veterans of World War II:** George Scharf reminded us we are down to 7 WWII vets in membership.

**Rec Committee:** Rich Cox reported that the Christmas Party will be the Fifth of December. Social hour will be 1800 dinner served at 1900. We will have Turkey and Ham for Dinner. Tickets will be \$15 each for Subvets and \$25 each for non subvets. Tickets will be on sale until 23 November.

**CRAMA:** Butch Bryar had no report.

**Nuclear Historian:** Rick Carlson reported:

**Two Alabama Nuclear Power School Students**

A good old Alabama Nuclear electrician won a bass boat in a raffle drawing. He brought it home and his wife looks at him and says, "what you gonna do with that. There ain't no water deep

enough to float a boat within a 100 miles of here." He says, I won it and I'm a-gonna keep it. His Alabama Nuclear Machinist mate best friend came over to visit several days later. He sees the wife and asks where his best buddy was. She says, "He's out there in his bass boat", pointing to the field behind the house. The Alabama Nuclear machinist mate best buddy heads out behind the house and sees his his buddy in the middle of a big field sitting in a bass boat with a fishing rod in his hand. He yellows out to him, "What are you doing?" His Nuclear trained electrician replies, "I'm fishin'. What does it look like I'm a doin'?" His Nuclear machinist mate yells, "It's people like you that give people from Alabama a bad name making everybody think we're stupid. If I could swim, I'd come out there and whip your ass!"

**The After Battery:** Steve "Buddha" says he is planning for their annual Hog roast. The After Battery members donated \$512 to the Freedom foundation.

**Chief of the Boat:** Mentioned we lost a member at the WWII convention in Kings Bay. His name was FT(SS) Chuck Taylor. He was from the central Florida base.

The COB reported that from now on Members of the Holland club will get Rockers for additional years of qualification for every additional five years after the original Fifty.

3<sup>rd</sup> of December is the Harleyville parade. 12<sup>th</sup> of December is the Ellorece Parade and 13<sup>th</sup> of December is the Summerville Christmas parade.

Larry Knudson will be our new Membership coordinator after Ed Steps down.

Ronnie Kerstetter is our new Public Affairs officer.

**Base Commander:** Rick Wise wanted two volunteers to go over the Base By laws. They will meet sometime in January. Steve Morowiec and Dan Hunt volunteered.

**Old Business:** Ed commented that National has a Scholarships awards program as well.

**New Business:**

The new Charleston base Budget was presented by base commander Rick Wise. There was a motion by Nick Nichols to accept the Budget as written. Ken Curtis seconded the motion. The Budget was voted on by the base and passed on a voice vote.

Rick read a motion that was made by Ray Sparks for the NTPU Legacy Award.

USSVI-Charleston Base will make a Submariners Legacy Award to the Officer and Enlisted Submarine-designated students in each Naval Nuclear Power School graduating class as recommended by the Naval Nuclear Power School. The award materials will be determined by the Board of Directors but will not include a cash award. Ken Curtis Seconded the Motion. The motion passed on a voice vote.

**Good of the Order:** The Fleet reserve drawing was won by Scotty Freligh.

The depth charge was won by Marty Sessler. He donated \$100 to the Scholarship fund.



PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE  
 USSVI CHARLESTON BASE CHRISTMAS PARTY  
 SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2015  
 1800 – SOCIAL HOUR 1900 – DINNER  
 AT THE FRA HOME, GOOSE CREEK  
 ENTERTAINMENT: SALTY DOGS BAND  
 FOOD  
 SOCIAL HOUR: APPETIZERS  
 DINNER: HAM, TURKEY, ETC. AND DESSERT  
 DOOR PRIZES THROUGHOUT THE EVENING  
 DEPTH CHARGE DRAWING  
 TICKETS  
 \$15.00 PER PERSON FOR USSVI MEMBERS/SPOUSES  
 (WW II SUBVETS – FREE)  
 \$25.00 PER PERSON FOR OUTSIDE GUESTS

**Upcoming Events for December 2015**

**Thursday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> 1900,** Harleyville Christmas Parade.  
 Lineup will begin at 1700. Parade starts at 1900. Usually pretty  
 chilly so wear or take “something” to keep you warm.

**Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup>,** Charleston Base Christmas party to be  
 held at the FRA. Flyer attached. Lot of planning and time went in  
 to this party. Should be a great time for all. Hope to see you there.

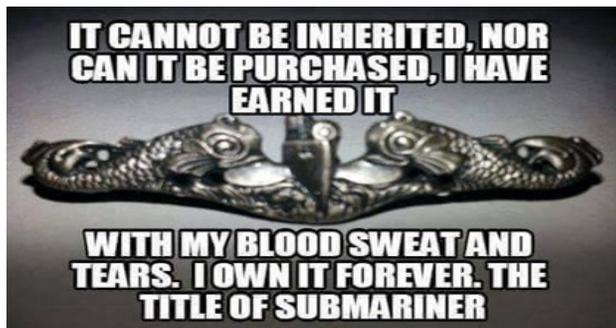
**Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup>,** Victory House Veterans Home visit.  
 Meet at VFW on Bellwright Road at 1000. Will return about 1300.  
 We will be taking Christmas donations to the Victory House

**Thursday, December 10th,** THERE WILL BE NO REGULAR  
 BASE MEETING THIS MONTH.

**Saturday, December 12th, 1800,** Elloree, SC Christmas Parade.  
 Lineup will begin at 1630. Parade starts at 1800. First time we  
 have pulled in this parade. Hope to see you guys and family there.

**Sunday, December 13, 1400,** Summerville Christmas Parade.  
 Lineup will begin at 1100. Parade starts at 1400. Always a nice  
 attended parade. Hope to see you there.

**Friday, December 25<sup>th</sup>,** Christmas Day. Wishing you and yours a  
 safe and Very Merry Christmas.



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### FRA News

#### President Signs Budget Deal and House Approves New NDAA

President Obama signed into law the two-year budget deal and in response the House approved a new National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA-H.R. 1356) similar to the bill that was vetoed, a major difference being that it trims \$5 billion from various programs, dropping FY 2016 annual spending from \$612 billion to \$607 billion. The specific reductions were agreed to by House and Senate Armed Services Committees and House and Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittees.

The newly enacted budget deal eliminates the \$38 billion cut in the FY 2016 Defense budget mandated by sequestration. FRA opposes these mindless, across-the-board cuts to the Defense budget, and we thank all Shipmates who used the FRA Action Center to weigh in on this issue. The agreement lifts the debt ceiling for the federal government until March 31, 2017, and eliminates a 52-percent Medicare premium increase for certain Medicare beneficiaries. The new NDAA includes:

- Creation of a new “blended” military retirement system for those who join the military after January 1, 2018;
  - Increased pharmacy co-pays for family members and retirees for prescriptions filled off base or by mail. These increases will range from \$2 to \$4 depending on whether drugs are brand-name or filled at retail outlets;
  - An active duty pay increase of 1.3 percent, which is lower than the civilian wage increase of 2.3 percent;
  - Authorizing Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) benefits for a second spouse, when the first divorced spouse is deceased;
  - Reducing BAH rates by one percent each year until 2019; Continuing dual Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) payments to service members married to other service members;
  - Establishing victim’s rights for sexual assault and domestic abuse; and
  - Rejecting the Administration’s request to reduce stateside commissary funding.
- The FY 2016 Defense Authorization bill (H.R. 1356) was placed on

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the fast track since the fiscal year started October 1, 2015, and the government has remained open due to a Continuing Resolution that would have expired on December 11. Congress still has to pass all 12 appropriations bills for the remainder of the fiscal year.

#### TRICARE Surpasses Two Million Flu Vaccines Given Through Retail Pharmacies

The Defense Health Agency (DHA) wants to remind beneficiaries that when the weather starts to cool, it means that flu season is here again. TRICARE makes it easy to get your flu vaccine at no cost from more than 45,000 participating retail pharmacies. More than 2 million TRICARE beneficiaries have gotten a free flu vaccine under the TRICARE Retail Vaccination program since it began in 2010.

“The flu vaccine helps protect hundreds of thousands of TRICARE beneficiaries from the flu every year,” said Dr. George Jones, chief of the DHA Pharmacy Operation Division. “Hitting 2 million prescriptions is a great sign that this program is making flu vaccinations more accessible and affordable.”

Getting the flu vaccine every year is the most effective way to lower your chances of getting the flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone six months and older get a flu vaccine every year. Serious cases of the flu can lead to hospitalization and even death. The elderly, young children and people with serious health issues are at a higher risk for getting the flu.

TRICARE covers two forms of the flu vaccine—the flu shot and Flu Mist. The CDC recommends a normal flu shot for everyone aged 6 months to 64 years of age. There is a high dose version for those older than 65. Flu Mist is for those between the ages of two and 49 years old, but not pregnant women.

If beneficiaries choose to get the flu vaccine in a retail pharmacy, they must make sure to get it from the pharmacist. Some retail

pharmacies now include medical clinics, but if someone other than a pharmacist (like a nurse, doctor or physician's assistant) administers the vaccine, TRICARE may not cover it.

TRICARE also covers vaccines from a beneficiary's primary care doctor. Depending on the TRICARE plan, there may be copay for the office visit. Active duty service members need to follow their service policy for getting and reporting vaccines.

"If you haven't gotten vaccinated yet, there is still plenty of time left in flu season," says Dr. Jones. "Get vaccinated now, for yourself and your family." For more information, go to [www.tricare.mil/flu](http://www.tricare.mil/flu).

### **Senate Passes Revised NDAA**

The U.S. Senate passed a revised version of the National Defense Authorization Act on Tuesday, November 10. The revised \$607 billion legislation was approved in the Senate with a 91-3 vote and made it through the House of Representatives last week with a 370-58 vote.

President Obama's signature will be the next step for the legislation. The president vetoed the original \$612 billion version because of extra war funding in the 2016 Department of Defense budget.

Some of the cuts to the new version include \$250 million to Obama's counterterrorism fund, \$250 million to Military readiness and a little more than a billion in fuel savings.

The bill also includes provisions that ban the transfer of prisoners to United States soil, which has long been a core component of the administration's plan to close the Guantánamo prison. A White House spokesman said President Obama would sign it despite provisions that will make it extremely difficult for him to fulfill his promise of closing the terrorist detention center.

**Problems Continue for Vets Trying to get Mental Health Care at VAA** new report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) has found that the VA is still struggling to manage patients' schedules, at least in the mental health care arena where some veterans have waited nine months for evaluations. A review of 100 patient cases by the GAO found that while 86 patients seeking an initial mental health evaluation generally were seen within an average four days of scheduling an appointment, they actually waited an average of 26 days from their first request for mental health treatment to get that appointment, and some waited up to 279 days. GAO also found that at one medical center, schedulers were not using the VA's appointment system and were managing appointments manually—a practice that sidesteps oversight and, in the scandal that exploded last year, drew allegations of scheduling failures and use of "secret wait lists."

"The way in which the Department of Veterans Affairs calculates veteran mental health wait times may not always reflect the overall amount of time a veteran waits for care," Debra Draper, GAO's health care director, said.

### **TRICARE Beneficiary Survey**

Congress created the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission (MCRMC) two years ago, and used one of its recommendations this year to drastically change military retirement for future generations. Defense officials must implement sweeping changes for those who join the military on and after January 1, 2018. Next year, congressional leaders have vowed to implement recommendation 6 of the MCRMC final report, which will

radically change the military health system.

Unlike the retirement changes, the health care recommendation impacts current beneficiaries. The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is currently collecting data on this issue and has requested assistance in surveying all facets of military beneficiaries—Guard, Reserve, Active Duty, Families, Retirees, etc. Here is the link to their TRICARE survey: <http://survey.highroadsolution.com/f/998692/8b25/>. FRA will also be conducting a survey on health care in the months to come.

### **DHA Wants Beneficiaries to be Aware of Diabetes Symptoms**

The Defense Health Agency (DHA) wants beneficiaries to learn how to reduce the risks of diabetes. Diabetes is a condition in which your body does not properly process food for use as energy. Your body turns most of the food you eat into glucose, or sugar, to use for energy. The pancreas, an organ near the stomach, makes a hormone called insulin that helps glucose get into our cells. When a person has diabetes, the body cannot make enough insulin, or does not effectively use the insulin it does make. This deficiency causes sugar to build up in your blood.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), diabetes can cause serious health complications including heart disease, blindness, kidney failure, and lower-extremity amputations. Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in the United States. CDC estimates that approximately 29 million people are living with diabetes in the United States. As a result of better treatments, people with diabetes are now living longer and enjoying a better quality of life than in the past. Research studies have found that moderate weight loss and exercise can actually prevent or delay type 2 diabetes in adults considered to be at high-risk for developing diabetes. The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) estimates that by 2040, over 640 million people may be living with diabetes.

People who think they might have diabetes must visit a physician for diagnosis. Common diabetes symptoms include:

Frequent urination,

Excessive thirst,

Unexplained weight loss,

Extreme hunger,

Sudden vision changes, and

Tingling or numbness in the hands or feet.

Unfortunately, some people may have no symptoms at all. For a complete list of symptoms and information on the types of diabetes, visit the CDC's Basics About Diabetes web page at <http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/diabetes.html>.

TRICARE covers diabetic supplies through the pharmacy and medical benefits. Your doctor can perform screenings, answer your questions, explain what a diagnosis means and provide details about the best treatment for you. Visit the TRICARE website to learn more about coverage at: <http://www.tricare.mil/CoveredServices/IsItCovered/DiabeticSupplies.aspx>.

## **USWN Arts. For Dec. 2015**

### **30-YR Shipbuilding Plan Mary-Louise Hoffman, Executive-Gov.com, Nov 2**

*CBO: Navy Could Spend \$552B to Build Ships Over Next 3 Dec-*

ades

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that spending for new vessels specified in the U.S. Navy's latest shipbuilding plan would average 18.4 billion in 2015 dollars a year, or about \$552 billion over the next 30 fiscal years.

CBO said Thursday its projection of the 30-year cost of the Navy's planned shipbuilding initiatives is 10 percent higher than the military branch's estimate.

The Navy aims to procure as many as 308 aircraft carriers, surface combatants, amphibious ships, submarines, combat logistics and support ships from 2016 to 2045.

The agency also forecasts the cost of executing the 2016 Navy shipbuilding plan to be one-third more than the branch has spent over the past three decades.

It may be difficult for the military service to implement its plan with its current funds under the Budget Control Act of 2011, CBO added.

### **New Anti-Ship Missile Gives China's Subs a Long Reach** **Leo Timm, Epoch Times, Nov 2**

Dozens of China's nuclear- and non-nuclear-powered submarines, as well as surface ships, will pose a significant threat to American naval assets with the deployment of a new anti-ship cruise missile, U.S. naval intelligence says.

The U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence confirmed that the Chinese regime produced and deployed its YJ-18 anti-ship cruise missile on several ships and submarines of China's People's Liberation Army Navy, according to an Oct. 28 report by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission.

The new weapon is a major step up from the previous mainstay of Chinese submarine-based anti-ship weapons. While the previous YJ-82 had an attack range of 20 nautical miles, the new YJ-18 is capable of hitting targets 290 nautical miles away. While in flight, the cruise missile maintains a speed of about 600 miles-per-hour, or about Mach 0.8, then speeds up to Mach 3.0 (three times the speed of sound) as it approaches the target.

The supersonic sprinting phase the YJ-18 takes "reduces the time adversary forces have to engage the missile," the report says, while its subsonic cruising speed saves fuel and increases the overall attack range.

Chinese forces are investing heavily in space-based coordination and guidance systems for tracking vessels and aircraft, which

the YJ-18 and other new Chinese weapons will use to receive targeting data for ships over the horizon. At the same time, the YJ-18 itself is likely to take a stealthy, radar-evading flight path skimming a few meters above the ocean surface.

The Commission's report says that because the YJ-18 can be deployed on a wide variety of Chinese vessels, its deployment "could have serious implications for the ability of U.S. Navy surface ships to operate freely in the Western Pacific in a contingency."

The missile, with its increased range, can be launched from many of China's submarines, which vastly increases the area that U.S. ships would have to patrol and search during a potential military conflict.

The long-range and supersonic capability of the YJ-18 also means Chinese forces have a better shot at overwhelming the anti-air defenses protecting American carrier groups. This echoes the Cold War-era Soviet tactic of saturation attacks by large numbers of heavy long-range anti-ship missiles—a ploy intended to offset the overall advantage in technology and assets enjoyed by the United States Navy.

### **Past... Present... Future... Submarine Force Has Grown to Become A** **Vital Part of the Navy's Arsenal Phyllis Tolzman, Florida** **Times Union, Nov 4**

*Submarines have lurked beneath the vast world waters for as long as the U.S. Navy's 240-year existence.*

Albeit a mystical notion to some in the beginning, submarines are now capable of conducting a wide variety of missions including anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare, land attack, intelligence gathering, mine reconnaissance, supporting special forces, and nuclear deterrence.

#### *In the beginning*

The world's first submarine used in warfare, the 8-foot-long Turtle, debuted during the American Revolution.

With an oak made, walnut-shell-shaped casing it bobbed just below the water's surface. The one-person craft was paddled using a hand-crank. Its captain attempted to affix explosives to British ship HMS Eagle's belly.

While unsuccessful, its underwater warfare capability validated the great possibilities ahead to thwart the enemies who threatened America's freedom.

It would be almost 100 years later until H.L. Hunley, a Confederate submarine during the Civil War would be credited with being the first combat submarine to sink a warship, although following her successful attack, was lost along with her crew before she

could return to base.

While the first submarines hold historical significance and set the stage for submarine warfare, it wasn't until 1900 that the Navy commissioned its first submarine, the USS Holland (SS-1). Holland sub was bigger, stronger and just a tad faster than its predecessors, clocking in at 5 knots and reaching depths of more than 50 feet.

#### *Sub Force's Wartime Utility Becomes Apparent*

Continuous advancements carried over to the Balao Class submarine, which emerged during World War II and led to the sudden realization of the submarine fleet's true and utter importance.

As Adm. C.W. Nimitz endorsed, "We shall never forget that it was our submarines that held the lines against the enemy while our fleets replaced losses and repaired wounds." The Balao became the "backbone" of the submarine service in the vast Pacific depths during World War II and would remain a treasured asset for nearly four decades.

#### *Dawn of the Nuclear Age*

Thanks to the many contributions of Admiral Rickover, in 1954 the sub's diesel and gasoline-powered days were nearing the end when the Navy introduced USS Nautilus (SSN 571) — the world's first nuclear-powered submarine.

Shortly after, the Navy boasted the world's first ballistic missile submarine the George Washington Class, fully armed with Polaris missiles. Built between 1958 and 1965, the George Washington, Ethan Allen, Lafayette, James Madison, and Benjamin Franklin classes made up the fleet of ballistic missile submarines known as 41 for Freedom. Dubbed Boomers, each carried 16 ballistic missiles with a thousand—plus mile reach.

#### *Today's Silent Force*

From the one-person vessel fueled only by crank, to today's nuclear powered submarines that can stay submerged for unimaginable lengths of time without resurfacing, the Navy's submarine force continues to evolve to meet the nation's warfighting mission and to keep American's safe from harm.

Today's nuclear-powered submarines will be a defensive mainstay for decades to come.

High-tech vessels such as the seek-and-destroy Los Angeles Class, noted as the backbone of the fast attack sub fleet for more than 20 years, and its partners, the Seawolf and Virginia are the hunters beneath the sea. Armed with Tomahawk cruise missiles they can defy the enemy from virtually anywhere on the globe.

The Navy's underwater fleet continues to evolve to meet the nation's warfighting mission and to keep American's safe from harm. The Ohio class is a great example of that.

The Navy's largest and stealthiest sub, Ohio Class is able to remain undersea for lengths at a time without resurfacing, cruising deep below, providing the nation with the most survivable leg of the nuclear deterrence Triad.

Undoubtedly, the Navy will remain dominant so long as the nation's next great subs remain valued and understood. Yet none of the successes past, present and future would even be possible without the Silent Service.

#### **Submarine Training Center Opens New Facility in Guam** **Submarine Force Pacific Public Affairs, Nov 5**

Naval Submarine Training Center Pacific Detachment Guam (NSTCP Det Guam) celebrated the grand opening of its newest tactical team trainer with a ribbon-cutting ceremony held September 30 in the NSTCP Det Guam training building.

The Ship Control Operator Trainer (SCOT) is one of the next generation training tools capable of providing the necessary training to submarine crews in order to safely operate submarines in all undersea environments.

This new, high-tech trainer will be vital to submarine training in Guam. "This trainer is critical to developing a submarine crew's forward deployed skills for the hazardous assignments of today's submarine force," said Capt. Michael Martin, NSTCP commanding officer.

The SCOT's new motion platform provides the most extensive and accurate submarine simulations available. Simulating the entire range of submarine scenarios including vertical ascents and descents, submerged maneuvering, surfacing and submerging transitions are at the heart of the new trainer's functions.

The SCOT is the first in a series of new, advanced trainers that will arrive in Guam in the coming years. With addition of the MT-1000 fire trainer in the Spring of 2016 and the Virtual Interactive Display Equipment (VIDE) for nuclear training in early 2017, Guam is poised to provide additional state of the art training to submarines homeported at Guam.

For more news from Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, visit [www.csp.navy.mil](http://www.csp.navy.mil).

#### **Nukes And Submariners Get Seven New Ratings** **Mark D. Faram, Navy Times, Nov 12**

*It's no secret that sailors identify with their ratings - and thousands of sailors are about to get new ones.*

For 18,395 nuclear power and submarine sailors, the Navy has created seven new service ratings and will issue the new titles and rating abbreviations - just in time for Christmas.

"The creation of these seven new service ratings assists in the identification and classification of submarine and nuclear-trained sailors that have acquired specific skills and training," said Sharon Anderson, spokeswoman for the chief of naval personnel. "This measure improves the Navy's ability to track these sailors in the training pipeline and in the fleet."

Anderson said the changes are administrative in nature and will be largely transparent to sailors. No new career fields are being created, nor will these sailors have to sew on any new rating badges when the new service ratings take effect, which is expected by Dec. 18.

Sailors in the three nuclear power ratings and in four submarine non-nuclear fields - navigation, communications, auxiliary and weapons - now officially have what the Navy calls a "service rating" to call home. That begs the question, what's a service rating?

Enlisted sailors serve in one of 57 general ratings, which have a single rating badge and two- or three-letter abbreviation, like BM for boatswain's mate or AG for aerographer's mate.

For example, aviation boatswain's mate is a general rating, but under that are three service ratings specific to fuels, aircraft handling, and launching and recovery equipment.

Service ratings are used for advancement, so that ABEs only compete with other ABEs for their next stripe, rather than also vying with ABFs and ABHs.

All seven new service ratings, until now, had been what the Navy classifies as "exam ratings," which had titles and abbreviations that were used to identify sailors during testing and advancement.

Three of the four new submarine service ratings once had life under current or former general ratings. Submarine quartermasters and radiomen were merged into the electronics technician rating in 1994. Also in the 1990s, submarine qualified torpedoman's mates were merged into the machinist's mate rating. Both TM and RM names and abbreviations were later eliminated from the surface force through two other rating mergers; there are still QMs in the surface fleet.

And though a generation of sailors have come and gone since the Navy executed these mergers, calls for recreating these three ratings under their old names and abbreviation have yet to die down. Sources say the idea to recreate the radioman, submarine

quartermaster and torpedoman's mates general ratings are still being discussed in the submarine community.

But personnel officials say the creation of the seven new service ratings is not an official step toward recreating these much-loved extinct ratings.

"The purpose of this ... change was to enable these sailors as well as the nuclear trained sailors to be tracked better by the personnel system," Anderson said. "It was not meant to create, split out, or consolidate any of the ratings."

Here's the new submarine career service rating titles and abbreviations and which NECs will be folded in under each:

EMN: Electrician's Mate, Nuclear Power

Includes Navy Enlisted Classifications: 3301, 3302, 3354, 3359, 3364, 3371, 3372, 3376, 3377, 3384, 3389, 3394, and 9901.

ETN: Electronics Technician, Nuclear Power

Includes NECs: 3301, 3302, 3353, 3359, 3363, 3371, 3372, 3373, 3376, 3377, 3383, 3389, 3393, and 9901.

MMN: Machinist's Mate, Nuclear Power

Includes NECs: 3301, 3302, 3351, 3355, 3356, 3359, 3365, 3366, 3371, 3372, 3376, 3377, 3385, 3386, 3389, 3395, 3396, and 9901.

ETV: Electronics Technician, Submarine, Navigation (ETV)

Formerly Quartermaster, submarines. ETV includes NECs: 14GM, 14NM, 14NO, 14NP, 14NV, 14TK, 14XM, 14XO, and 3329.

ETR: Electronics Technician, Submarine, Communications

Formerly Radioman, submarines. ETR includes: 14AA, 14AB, 14BH, 14CM, 14EM, 14HH, 14TM, 14RO, 14TO, 14ZA, 14ZQ, and 14ZR.

MMW: Machinist's Mate, Non-Nuclear, Submarine Weapons

Formerly Torpedoman's Mate, submarines. MMW includes: 4233, 4235, and 4247.

MMA: Machinist's Mate, Non-Nuclear, Submarine Auxiliary

MMA includes: 4231, 4234, 4246, 4252, and 4253.

**Before Cost Overruns, The US Has Plans For \$1 Trillion In Nuclear Force Modernization Over The Next Thirty Years From NextBigFuture.com, Nov 16**

According to a January 2015 Congressional Budget Office (CBO) report, the direct costs of the US administration's plans for nuclear

force modernization will total about \$350 billion between fiscal 2015 and fiscal 2024. This is just the tip of the spending iceberg, as most of these modernization programs are still in the research and development phase. Over the next 30 years, the bill could add up to \$1 trillion, according to three separate independent estimates.

**Congressional Armed Services Committees to Angle for Higher Defense Budget in FY17** *Valerie Insinna, Defense Daily, Nov 16*

The Bipartisan Budget Agreement might not preclude a fight in fiscal year 2017 over Pentagon spending, as the chairmen of both congressional armed services committees want to see a greater investment in defense, a Senate Armed Services Committee aide said Monday.

The budget deal agreed to by Congress and the White House in October lifted the fiscal 2017 budget caps on defense from \$536 billion to \$551 billion and sets a limit of about \$59 billion for wartime spending, giving a total \$610 billion for national security.

"That's not what I think we had hoped for. We had hoped to see more growth," Christian Brose, SASC staff director, said during a panel discussion at the Center For Strategic and International Studies' Global Security Forum 2015.

The budget deal authorized a greater increase to the defense spending caps in 2016 than in 2017, Brose noted, and lawmakers such as SASC Chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.) and his House counterpart, Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) will likely fight to further increase the 2017 defense budget.

"The other factor that I think could pay into this in an interesting way is the election. I think you already see presidential candidates on both sides arguing for a higher defense topline," he said.

Next year, President Barack Obama will likely submit a budget that hews closely to the budget deal, said Steve Kosiak, a former associate director for defense and international affairs at the Office of Management and Budget. However, future budgets could see the inflation of the wartime spending account, or Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO), to pay for expenses usually in the base budget.

"As long as we're making two-year or one-year deals and incrementally dealing with this, the use of OCO as a gimmick to circumvent caps and help the base is too tempting to probably avoid on some level," he said.

The current budget deal will provide at least some level of stability for the rest of President Barack Obama's term, but the next administration will have to grapple with another four years of fi-

ancial planning under the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2011 spending levels.

Meanwhile, the Defense Department will manage several major programs of record including the development of the Ohio replacement submarine and the ramp-up of F-35 Joint Strike Fighter procurement.

"Just absorbing that, I think is going to be considerably challenging," Brose said. "We need more money for defense."

Brose believes that the tides are turning in favor of increased defense spending. Hawkish Democratic and Republican candidates are hoping to gain their party's presidential nominations, and congressional lawmakers are becoming more concerned about the level of defense spending, he said.

But Kosiak warned that even a person who advocated increasing the Pentagon's budget as a presidential candidate may back away from that position when having to draft a budget that takes into account other U.S. priorities and concerns.

"This isn't [just] about defense, this is about the overall budget," he said. "Do you raise taxes? Do you scale back Social Security and Medicare?"

**Submarines: On women and China** *Jeanette Steele, San Diego Union & Tribune, Nov 18*

It's an interesting time to be in the submarine business.

China's expansion of its submarine fleet poses a credible threat to U.S. warships if tensions over Taiwan or the South China Sea turn hot.

That's according to a RAND Corp report this year that estimates China's modern submarine force stands at 41 vessels, up from two in the mid 1990s.

Meanwhile, roughly 60 percent of the United States' 72 submarines — or about 43 — operate in the Pacific. However, the American Navy is also on a building spree. Sixteen new Virginia-class fast-attack submarines are in the works.

Also, the U.S. submarine force has slowly integrated women since 2010, when the Navy announced it would begin opening the formerly all-male bastion.

The transition has not been perfectly smooth.

Enlisted sailors on the Georgia-based submarine Wyoming secretly recorded shower-room videos of female submarine officers. Ten sailors were punished for involvement earlier this year.

These are some of the issues facing Rear Adm. Fritz Roegge, named commander of the Navy's Pacific submarine fleet in September.

Roegge visited San Diego's Submarine Squadron 11 this month and spoke to The San Diego Union-Tribune.

In part because of China's rise, he said, "I think our Navy looks to the submarine force — being able to stay hidden underwater, taking advantage of our stealth. Our Navy expects our submarine force to lead the way."

Q: A Navy submarine test fired a Trident II D5 missile on Nov. 7 off the Southern California coast. The unannounced evening test was highly visible and spurred widespread public speculation about meteor showers and UFOs. Can you give the larger context of what that was about?

A: It wasn't unusual. We shoot ballistic missiles for a number of reasons. Sometimes it's testing of improvements to missile systems, or it's to validate the effectiveness of missiles we have in inventory.

Q: Why was it so visible, and was the Navy surprised by the public reaction?

A: With a nighttime shot, that fiery plume from the booster is highly visible. We had great atmospheric conditions as well that allowed it to be seen for a long way. If it had been cloudy, you might have seen it for five seconds.

I would expect there to be some attention. We don't publicize in advance what we intend to do operationally. We'll notify mariners of areas to stay out of. But beyond that, we're not looking to inform our competitors of what we're doing ahead of time.

Q: What does the growth of China's submarine force mean for American subs in the Pacific?

A: It means there's a lot of very interesting activity going on out there. Part of what combatant commanders might task us to do is to go and understand what's going on in the undersea environment.

The better prepared we are to fight and win, the less likely we will ever have to. That goes back to the importance of testing, like with the missile launch. We are satisfying ourselves that our systems work, but we are also clearly signaling our capabilities to those who might otherwise want to try to challenge us.

Q: Was the Trident test a show of force?

A: It was a test. But if there are other messages that people want to (see,) I understand they will draw their own conclusions.

Q: Female officers started serving on submarines in late 2011, but the Navy only this summer named the first enlisted woman who will train for submarine work. What's taken this long?

A: I don't think it's because of an obstacle or any particular challenge. It's because we in the submarine force, we are all engineers and nukes (nuclear technicians) at heart. We are very methodical in how we do things. This was a phased approach.

In many cases, it requires modifications to the ships in order to ensure basic privacy. On the officer side, it required no modifications. But on the enlisted side, it required modification to the hull.

On an Ohio-class submarine, the crew is berthed in nine-person bunk rooms. They took a bunk room adjacent to a (bathroom), and they provided direct access.

Q: What about on the majority of U.S. submarines, which are the smaller, fast-attack variety? The Navy has announced enlisted women won't serve on the older Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarines, which are the backbone of the current fleet. (Five Los Angeles-class submarines are assigned to San Diego.)

A: What we determined we could execute quickly but cost effectively is, beginning with the next Virginia-class submarines to be built, to build them from the ground up with male and female spaces.

Q: The Navy won't retrofit the 12 existing Virginia-class fast-attack submarines?

A: We might. But currently the plan is to try to get this right from the ground up.

Q: Was it a cost-savings decision to not retrofit?

A: Not necessarily. We already have more than enough work to do when we get submarines into (shipyards).

Q: What's your assessment of how integration of women is going?

A: We are now at the point where the first female officers have completed their initial tours at sea and rotated to shore duties. Now they are approaching decisions on what to do with their remaining naval service. Ultimately, the best metric of our mutual success is to what extent those women decide they want to continue to serve as submariners.

Q: Regarding the videotaping of women in showers, what's your comment? Is there something about the isolated nature of the submarine service at play here?

A: It was simply sailors who did not understand what it means to treat a fellow shipmate with dignity and respect. The submarine force has tried to communicate very clearly our expectations of professional conduct. It's not professional conduct of men to women. It's conduct of shipmates to shipmates.

### Academy Seniors Drafted For Navy, Marine Corps Branches

Meghann Myers, NAVY TIMES, Nov 19

**ANNAPOLIS, MD.** – Years of hard work and physical conditioning were rewarded Thursday as more than 1,000 college students were officially notified of the teams they'll be playing for after graduation. No, it wasn't the NFL draft. It was service assignment day at the Naval Academy.

Midshipmen, all 1,077 seniors, huddled up in their companies to hear the news. The Class of 2016 will send 808 fresh ensigns to the Navy and 269 2nd lieutenants to the Marine Corps next year.

Twenty-Ninth Company shook up the notifications this year, gathering its 38 seniors in a Bancroft Hall lounge room for a professional sports-style draft, calling each mid up to pose for photos with either a Navy or Marine Corps hat and jersey.

"With the first pick in the 2015 service assignment draft, the United States Marine Corps ground selects Midshipman 1st Class Jerome Alexander," Company commander Marine Capt. D.J. Green bellowed to cheers.

The group's selections leaned heavily toward Marine Corps and Navy aviation, with 10 mids selecting Navy pilot – four of them women – and four for naval flight officer, as well as seven Marine ground officers and three pilots.

They differed widely from the fleet-mandated numbers the Navy Department sets every year.

Service assignments for the Class of 2016:

- Surface Warfare: 249
- Submarines: 137
- SEAL: 38
- Explosive Ordnance Disposal: 15
- Navy pilot: 241
- Navy NFO: 79
- Medical: 15
- Supply: 10
- Civil Engineer Corps: 5
- Intelligence: 19
- Information Warfare: 7
- Information Professional: 2
- Oceanography: 1
- Marine Corps ground: 170

- Marine Corps pilot: 95
- Marine Corps NFO: 4

'One Of The First'

While Naval Special Warfare remains closed to women pending a decision late this year, 11 female mids selected to join the submarine force, a specialty that began to be integrated in 2011 and is set to open to enlisted women next year.

Midshipman 1st Class Samantha Steere, a Bellevue, Washington native, was a plebe planning to study engineering when women first started reporting to subs.

Steere, 21, fell in love with the community, she said, during a visit to a ballistic missile submarine the summer after her sophomore year. The following summer, she was able to visit two newly-integrated Virginia-class attack subs, she said, solidifying her plans.

"The officers seemed like people I would hang out with, and people I could see myself becoming one day," she told Navy Times.

She got a chance to speak to the women aboard, who had just a few months of experience under their belts at the time, to see what it was like being at the forefront of the community.

"It's exciting because I'm going to be one of the first, but then that's also scary, because if I run into problems, I don't know – really, there's no one I can ask about it, there's no one I can compare myself to," she said.

She did get contact information for the officer she spoke to, however, to ask for advice in the future.

The most glaring aspect, she said, will be her minority status on a boat, but she said being among the only 25 percent of women that make up Annapolis' student body prepared her.

And the male submariners she met, she said, made her feel comfortable. Surprisingly, she said, one of their issues on the boat was being too respectful of the women.

"When the watch team is coming off of watch, they'll wake up the next rotation. So the women were saying that the men were scared to wake them up, scared to come into their rooms and nudge them," she said. "So they just kept saying, 'We're just like you, we're fine.' There's a difference between being inappropriate and doing your job."

Her decision to go subs also came on the heels of the ballistic missile sub Wyoming's shower video case, which she said she was not pleased to hear about.

But spending time in the fleet eased her worries.

"It was brought up by the men on the submarine that I was on, and they were all horrified that had happened," she said. "The majority of men in the community want women to succeed. They see the value in it."

New Frontiers

The Class of 2016 is the first to graduate mids from its brand new cyber operations major. Midshipman 1st Class Zac Dannelly, one of the department's stars, will be joining the fleet as an information warfare officer.

"It's a lot of fun. Every class we take, it's the first time it's ever been offered," he told Navy Times. "We've been able to have quite a bit of say in the development of the major."

Dannelly, 22 and a Louisville, Kentucky native, said he's a 10th-generation service member.

"So for 10 generations my family has served, and all of them have fought against whatever's threatened our values the most," he said. "Right now, it really is the cyber domain."

While others in his family have fought in Vietnam or in the war on terror, the computer science lover said he was looking forward to defending his country in cyberspace.

"I saw immediately that there was where I was going to be the link in the chain for my family," he said.

Following 29th Company's draft, mids scattered throughout Bancroft Hall to meet up with their friends. For many of the Marine-selects, it was straight to the barber chair, where a ship-mate gave them a celebratory buzz cut as a voluntary ritual welcoming them to the Corps.

Future ground combat officer Midshipman 1st Class Nick Jaqua, 22, smiled as he leaned back in a folding chair in the hallway, his fellow Marine-selects gathered around him.

"I feel great," he said.

### **China's Navy 'Restrained' Facing U.S. Provocations: Admiral John Ruwitch, REUTERS, Nov 20**

**SHANGHAI** – China's top admiral said his forces have shown "enormous restraint" in the face of U.S. provocations in the South China Sea, while warning they stand ready to respond to repeated breaches of Chinese sovereignty.

Beijing, which claims almost the entire energy-rich South China Sea through which \$5 trillion in ship-borne trade passes yearly, has stepped up a program of land reclamation and construc-

tion in disputed islands and reefs there that has sparked concern in the Asia-Pacific region.

The United States has called for a halt to China's artificial island building, and in recent weeks has tried to signal its determination to challenge Beijing over the disputed sea by sending military ships and planes near the islands.

"The Chinese navy has closely monitored the provocative actions of the United States and issued several warnings, while exercising enormous restraint in the interests of safeguarding the overall situation in bilateral relations," said Wu Shengli, commander of the People's Liberation Army Navy, according to a report on the defense ministry's website late on Thursday.

"If the United States carries out repeated provocations despite China's opposition, we have the ability to defend our national sovereignty and security."

Wu made the comments in a meeting in Beijing on Thursday with Admiral Scott Swift, commander of the United States' Pacific fleet, the report said.

Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei also claim parts of the South China Sea.

China's Defence Ministry said on Friday that the navy had recently carried out anti-submarine drills in the South China Sea, with submarines, warships and ship-borne helicopters.

State television showed warships conducting live-fire drills and troops deploying from amphibious vehicles on to beaches.

It did not say when the exercises happened, nor where exactly. Such drills are not uncommon.

In the Philippines on Wednesday, U.S. President Barack Obama said China must stop the land reclamation.

Obama planned to raise the South China Sea dispute at another summit this weekend in Malaysia, his main Asia policy adviser Daniel Kritenbrink said.

Swift was in Shanghai earlier this week where the USS Stethem, an Arleigh-Burke class destroyer, made a port call.

It was the third visit first to China by a U.S. navy vessel this year and the first since a similar guided missile destroyer, the USS Lassen, angered Beijing by sailing near one of China's man-made islands late last month to challenge the 12-nautical-mile territorial limits China claims around the artificial islands.

(Additional reporting by Ben Blanchard and Michael Martina in Beijing; Editing by Stephen Coates and Sanjeev Miglani)

### **Submarine Crews Get New Work Space At Newport News Shipbuilding Staff, *The Daily Press*, Nov 23**

The crews of Virginia-class submarines have additional work space at Newport News Shipbuilding to use while their ships are under construction.

The shipyard, a division of Huntington Ingalls Industries, opened the facility Monday, according to a company news release. It includes office space, classrooms, galley and bunks for male and female sailors.

The first floor houses office space and a calibration lab for Newport News and AMSEC employees.

"As we have ramped up the Virginia-class submarine program to a rate of two boats a year, we recognized that we needed a state-of-the-art building capable of supporting submarine crews at this increased pace," said Ken Mahler, Newport News' vice president of Navy programs.

Members of the future USS Indiana currently work in one of three spaces set aside for crew members. The three spaces are needed because crews from different boats overlap at the yard.

### **Navy's Ship-Inspired Helmets Are Beautiful Scott Allen, *DC SPORTS BOG (WASHINGTON POST)*, Nov 30**

The Navy football team's hopes of playing in a New Year's bowl ended with Friday's loss at Houston, but if there were a College Football Playoff for innovative uniform designs, Navy would be the No. 1 seed.

The Midshipmen, who wore helmets inspired by the "Don't Tread on Me" flag for last year's win over rival Army, on Monday announced a new set of Under Armour-designed "Navy Fleet" uniforms for this year's game on Dec. 12.

The coolest part? Position groups will wear hand-painted helmets featuring one of seven designs, each paying tribute to a different historic Navy ship. They look incredible.

Linebackers' helmets will feature a cruiser, for instance, while senior quarterback Keenan Reynolds's helmet will feature an aircraft carrier, a nod to his role as the "ultimate decision maker." Here's the full breakdown of the helmets, via a Navy release:

Linebacker: Cruiser

Provides anti-air defense and packs the biggest punch of Naval surface ships representative of the linebackers on the Navy football team.

Defensive Back: Destroyer

Known for significant fire power, speed, and anti-missile defense as are Navy's defensive backs.

Wide Receiver: Submarine

Predominantly utilized as blockers, wide receivers play a key role in driving the Navy rush attack, taking on a stealth-like persona as they blend into the rhythm of the offense but bring significant fire power when called upon, just like a Naval submarine.

Lineman: Amphibious Assault Ships

Just as a lineman's job is to create a hole for a running back or linebacker, these ships are utilized to establish the "beach head" that enables the invading force to gain access and ultimately accomplish their objective.

Quarterback: Aircraft Carrier

The QB of the Naval Fleet, the aircraft carrier is the ultimate decision maker; the "quick strike" weapon of the Naval fleet.

Running Back: Littoral Combat Ship

Like running backs, these fast and nimble ships can navigate through both crowded shallow and deep waters.

Kicker/Special Teams: Minesweeper

Much like the specific task of the Navy special teams, this small ship has a unique mission of identifying and eliminating mines.

Other features of the "Navy Fleet" uniforms include the use of a "Battleship gray" color and the rally cry "Damn the torpedoes!" printed on the pants and gloves. Navy can clinch its first 10-win season since 1905 with a win over Army.

### **Special Fund Could Save Billions On New Nuke Subs: Forbes, CBO Sydney J. Freedberg Jr., *Breaking Defense*, Dec 1**

Paying for the Navy's new nuclear missile subs through a special fund with special authorities "could potentially save several hundred million dollars per submarine," according to a recent Congressional Budget Office study. House Armed Services sea-power subcommittee chairman Randy Forbes, father of the National Sea-Based Deterrence Fund, is unsurprisingly touting this little noticed conclusion of the respected CBO at a hearing this afternoon with CBO lead author Eric Labs. The Congressional Research Service's highly respected Ron O'Rourke is at the witness stand as well.

"This sea-based deterrence fund is acquisition reform at

its finest,” Forbes told me before the hearing. “It’s not just us making the argument now.” CBO’s rough estimate of “several hundred million” in savings is about five percent of the \$7.3 billion cost per sub, but other experts have suggested the savings could be 10 or 15 percent, Forbes said. Across the 12-sub Ohio Replacement Program, he said, “we’ve got the opportunity to save billions of dollars.”

The CBO figure is just one sentence of a 41-page study of Navy shipbuilding. But it gives Forbes a new weapon to change the debate over the submarine fund, which has been criticized as an accounting gimmick at best and a Navy budget grab at worst.

The Navy is profoundly nervous that the Ohio Replacement Program will eat up so much of its traditional “shipbuilding & construction, naval” (SCN) account that it has nothing left for carriers, destroyers, attack submarines and so on. So Forbes helped create the fund as a way to pay for the subs outside the Navy budget altogether. The critics immediately saw two problems. First, creating a new fund doesn’t create any new money to put in it. Second, moving the ORP expense outside the Navy budget implicitly raids the other services to pay for it.

But Congress didn’t just create the fund: It also gave it special acquisition authorities not available to traditional shipbuilding under SCN. It can begin construction in advance, fund a single sub incrementally over multiple years, and, most significantly, buy components for multiple subs in a single bulk purchase.

All these savings are possible for other shipbuilding programs, but it takes special authorization from Congress. Forbes argues that these measures don’t automatically translate.

“This is one of those areas where the planets line up just right,” Forbes told me. “We absolutely know we’re going to build 12 of these boats” — that number is considered a minimum to sustain constant deterrent patrols — which means you can plan advance purchases and bulk buys with greater precision. Most weapons programs will start out with one number of ships, aircraft, or vehicles to buy and end up with another, Forbes argued: not here.

Not everyone buys this argument. “My question is this: why can’t Congress provide the same authorities for ORP in an account within the Navy budget?” asked CSIS budget guru Todd Harrison. “I think they are conflating two separate issues into one. Giving the ORP additional authorities to make the acquisition more efficient is one issue. Putting the funding in a separate account outside of the Navy’s topline is a separate issue.”

Indeed, the CBO report itself notes that providing bulk-buy and other authorities to the regular SCN fund could produce significant savings, albeit without offering a figure.

“There are two big reasons why [we have] a special fund,”

Forbes told me, “We not only want the cost savings — which is important — but we also get better cost visibility so we can watch it in this fund.”

And, though Forbes didn’t say it, there is of course the politics: pulling the ORP out of the Navy budget and giving it its own fund makes Congress’s priorities plain.

### **USS Ohio Hosts Royal Malaysian Navy Staff, Kitsap Sun, Dec 1**

Sailors from the guided-missile submarine USS Ohio (SSGN 726) gave a tour to sailors of the Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) and Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA), while in Sepanggar, Malaysia, Nov. 17.

The purpose of the tour was to give Malaysian sailors a look into how U.S. submariners live and work aboard one of the largest submarines in the U.S. Navy.

“We wanted to know how the U.S. submarines operate,” said Sub Lt. Syehmi Rohani of the MMEA. “We were very interested to know how you guys operate and live inside the submarine.”

While aboard, the Malaysian sailors were shown the torpedo room, battle management center, main control center, missile control center, diesel generator, dry dock shelters, medical and crew’s mess.

“The U.S. has sub capabilities that no other country has in the world,” said Master Chief Fire Control Technician William Greene, Ohio’s chief of the boat. “To let them get a glimpse of what that looks like and what we have to bring to the table as a partner, I think is important. This breaks the ground for more working together in the future.”

USS Emory S. Land (AS 39) and Ohio’s visit to Malaysia continues the U.S. Navy’s ongoing commitment to theater security, cooperation and friendship with local partner navies.

Emory S. Land is a forward deployed expeditionary submarine tender on an extended deployment conducting coordinated tended moorings and afloat maintenance in the U.S. 5th and 7th Fleet areas of operations.