



Vol. 16 No. 6

September 2020

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

**Base Meeting:**

BOD: September 3, 1800  
 Membership: September 10, 1900

**Location:**

FRA Branch 269  
 Low Country Home  
 99 Wisteria Rd.  
 Goose Creek, SC



Base Commander	Mike Ciesielko	843.324.0011	Chief of the Boat	Joe Lunn	843.747.5368
Base Vice Commander	Tom Lawson	843.327.3282	Veterans Affairs	Tom Lawson	843.327.3282
Secretary	Gordon Long	843.214.2353	Membership	Larry Knutson	843.860.1155
Treasurer	Gordon Williams	843.553.3015	Scholarship	Carl Chinn	843.437.5515
			Storekeeper	Ken Hutchison	843.553.0935
			Historian	George Scharf	843.873.3318
			Public Affairs	Jerry Stout	843.568.5923
			Chaplain	Nick Nichols	843.452.3189
			Holland Club	Bill Freligh	843.553.1115
			Newsletter	Rick Wise	843.875.5559 (H) 843.276.0899 (C)
			Social Media Coordinator	Lewis Leal	843.270-8870 social@ussvicb.org
			Webmaster	Nick Nichols	843.452.3189
			Kaps for Kids	Mike Emerson	843.302.2650



## Submarines Lose During the Month of September

<b>USS S-5 (SS 110)</b>	<b>Sep 1, 1920 – Practice Dive</b>	<b>No loss of life</b>
<b>USS GRAYLING (SS 209)</b>	<b>Sep 9, 1943 – 8<sup>th</sup> War Patrol</b>	<b>Lost with all hands – 76 souls</b>
<b>USS S-51 (SS 162)</b>	<b>Sep 25, 1925 –Collision off Block Island</b>	<b>Lost with 33 souls; 3 survivors</b>
<b>USS CISCO (SS 290)</b>	<b>Sep 28, 1943 – 1<sup>st</sup> War Patrol</b>	<b>Lost with all hands – 76 soul</b>
<b>USS POMPANO (SS 181)</b>	<b>September, 1943 – 7<sup>th</sup> War Patrol</b>	<b>Lost with all hands - 77 souls</b>

### Five Boats and 262 Men Lost

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#### Upcoming Charleston Base Events

Charleston Base Board of Directors Meeting	Thursday, Oct 1	1800	FRA Branch 269, Goose Creek
Charleston Base Meeting (Social Hr starts 1800)	Thursday, Oct 8	1900	FRA Branch 269, Goose Creek

#### From the Editor

I hope to get this edition out by September 1 since I go in to get radioactive (Cs-131) seeds implanted in my prostate and I don't know how well that will go. I'm not nearly as concerned as when I had my Aortic valve replaced in 2018 but there's always a possibility of unforeseen problems.

As you can see I was successful in getting the newsletter out.

## From USSVI National

Normal message traffic from USSVI will be published each month in the newsletter. If the message is of immediate interest to the membership it will be sent out by the Base Secretary. Messages are arranged in the order received

## Nothing To Report

### From the Scholarship Committee:

Hey Guys!

We KNOW you've missed us so we have a new raffle for you. This one is going to be the same only different. This raffle will be held via mail and e-mail. You send your money in regular mail and we will send you your ticket numbers via e-mail (and we'll keep track too), The scholarship fund is only running about 18% of what it was last year at this time. With no income there can be no scholarships awarded.

This is a wonderful way to spend some of the money you've saved during the COVID shutdown and support our great cause!

This raffle is [open to anyone](#), not just Base members. So if you know someone who wants to get in please let them know! All takers welcome!

The raffle is for gift cards to Top Dawg Tavern on Dorchester Rd. It is a great place to get a bite and/or have a cool one. They have in-restaurant dining, take-out and outdoor seating.



9512 Dorchester Road, Summerville, SC 29485

\*Seven for \$7 LUNCH! 7 lunch options for only \$7 available M-F, 11-4

\*Happy Hour Monday-Friday, 4-7p

\*LIVE MUSIC on the patio Wednesday, Friday and Saturday nights

\*Tuesday: 60¢ Wings and Half-Price Boneless Wings

\*Burger Night every Wednesday (4-close): \$6 Tavern Burgers, Happy Hour all night, Whiskey Wednesday

\*Thursday: any appetizer \$6, \$3.50 any Pint, \$5.50 any glass of Wine/Sangria

**Ticket cost is six (6) for \$5; no singles. There will be three (3) prizes awarded! [3 chances to win!](#)** All prizes are gift cards to Top Dawg Tavern.

**First place is \$40**

**Second place is \$30**

**Third place is \$20**

Again, here's how it will work:

You send in your money via regular mail and we will send you your ticket numbers via e-mail (picture) after we receive funds. ***Please provide e-mail address with payment.***

Payment can be cash or check made payable to Carl Chinn.

Drawing will be held October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Send money to:

Carl Chinn

217 Brailsford Rd.

Summerville, SC 29485-5405



TO BENEFIT THE  
CHARLESTON SUBMARINE VETERANS'  
**Admiral Osborn Scholarship Fund**



The Scholarship Committee will hold a HUGE sale of miscellaneous household goods, tools, sports, toys, etc. Deals galore!

All proceeds go to the United States Submarine Veterans Charleston Base's Admiral James Osborn Scholarship Fund. Scholarship is available to tri-county high school seniors with a relationship to a qualified submariner. ***\*\*To donate items call 843-437-5515\*\****

**Date: Saturday, Nov. 14, 2020** (Rain date Nov. 21)

**Where: 1825 Old Trolley Rd  
Summerville, SC**

(Halloween Express / Rodney's Rockets)

**Time: 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.**



# SHOTGUN RAFFLE

All proceeds go to the United States Submarine Veterans Charleston Base

## Admiral James B. Osborn Scholarship Fund

Scholarship is available to tri-county high school seniors with a relationship to a qualified submariner



### WINCHESTER REPEATING ARMS SUPER X4 WATERFOWL HUNTER - MOSSY OAK SHADOWGRASS BLADES

- SYNTHETIC STOCK WITH IMPROVED ERGONOMICS, SMALLER PISTOL GRIP AND TEXTURED GRIPPING SURFACES give your hands a sure, non-slip grip. Full coverage Mossy Oak® Shadow Grass Blades camo finish
- BACK-BORED TECHNOLOGY provides optimum shot patterns that are dense and even
- INVECTOR-PLUS CHOKE TUBE SYSTEM offers consistent patterns to match your target situation
- HARD CHROME-PLATED CHAMBER AND BORE make these surfaces highly resistant to corrosion and wear from steel shot
- VENT RIB gives you a smooth, clean sighting plane
- TRUGLO® LONG BEAD™ FIBER-OPTIC FRONT SIGHT offers a true, precise sight picture
- ACTIVE VALVE GAS SYSTEM cycles a wide variety of loads while reducing “felt recoil”
- QUADRA-VENT™ PORTS vent excess gases for cleaner operation
- DROP-OUT TRIGGER GROUP allows for easy cleaning
- AMBIDEXTROUS CROSSBOLT SAFETY is easily reversible
- LARGER BOLT HANDLE AND BOLT RELEASE BUTTON are faster and easier to operate
- LENGTH OF PULL SPACERS allow stock adjustments to achieve a perfect fit
- INFLEX TECHNOLOGY RECOIL PAD directs “felt recoil” down and away from your cheek to reduce flinch and fatigue

**Gauge** 12

**Barrel Length** 26"

**Length of Pull** 14 1/4"

**Drop at Heel** 2"

**Magazine Capacity** 4

**Barrel Finish** Mossy Oak Shadow Grass Blades

**Chokes Included** Full, Modified, Improved Cylinder

**Dura Touch Finish** No

**Front Sight** Fiber Optic

**Barrel Material** Steel

**Recoil Pad** Inflex 1, Small with Hard Heel Insert

**Sling Swivel Studs** Matte Blued

**Trigger Finish** Matte Black

**Bolt Slide Finish** Matte Blued

**Trigger Material** Alloy

**Trigger Guard Engraving** None

**MSRP** \$1,069.99

**Chamber Length** 3 1/2"

**Overall Length** 47"

**Drop at Comb** 1 3/4"

**Weight** 7 lbs 0 oz

**Rib Width** 1/4

**Stock Finish** Mossy Oak Shadow Grass Blades

**Receiver Finish** Mossy Oak Shadow Grass Blades

**Chamber Finish** Chrome Plated Chamber and Bore

**Choke System** Invector-Plus Flush

**Stock Material** Composite

**Checkering** Textured Grip Panels

**Receiver Material** Aluminum Alloy

**Trigger Guard Finish** Matte Black

**Magazine Type** Tubular

**Trigger Guard Material** Alloy

**Choke Wrench Included** Flat Wrench

**Ticket price: \$10 each**

**Drawing to be held February 11, 2021**

# United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base

## Minutes of Business Meeting

### 10 September 2020

#### Opening Ceremonies:

The September 2020 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko with a quorum of two officers and a total of \_\_\_ members. The meeting started at 1900. Vice Commander Tom Lawson and Secretary Gordon Long were not present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Base Commander Mike Ciesielko and recited by the members in attendance. The Invocation and the Tolling of the Boats lost during the month of was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols.

Submarines lost during the month of September:

<b>USS S-5 (SS 110)</b>	<b>Sep 1, 1920 – Practice Dive</b>	<b>No loss of life</b>
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<b>Five Boats and 262 Men Lost</b>		

**First Class Machinist Mate, Submarines, David Robert Saari, US Navy Retired – Departed on Eternal Patrol August 13, 2020**

The USSVI Creed was read by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko.

Base Commander Mike Ciesielko welcomed members to the meeting.

#### Introductions of New Attendees:

One man was present at the Base meeting for the first time: Keith Dye – MMCM(SS)

#### Old Business:

NONE

#### New Business:

NONE

#### Secretary – Gordon Long:

Not Present

[The Minutes from the August Base meeting had been published in the Base Newsletter and promulgated on the Base website.]

#### Treasurer – Base Commander for Gordon Williams:

The Treasurer's Report for August has been published and promulgated on the website.

There were no additions or deletions. The report was approved as provided.

Gordon Williams reported that a one-year lease agreement was signed by Habitat for Humanity [Next to FRA] and Charleston Base to store the float under their shelter.

#### Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

##### Highlighted boat of the month:

CISCO was lost on Sept 28, 1943 on her first war patrol with the loss of 76 men in the Sulu Sea west of Mindanao. Japanese records tell of sighting a submarine leaking oil in the area where the Cisco was known to have been on duty. Japanese records state she was sunk by bombs and depth charges.

There are several shipmates and family members who have given me information which they wish to be kept confidential at this time.

**MM1(SS) David Robert Saari** departed on Eternal Patrol on August 13. He joined the Navy in 1953 and retired in 1977. Dave was Life Member of USSVI National [2010], Life Member of Charleston Base [2010], a Holland Club member, the FRA Branch 269, VFW, American Legion. He qualified on USS TRUMPETFISH SS-425 in 1960, and served on LAFAYETTE SSBN-616, JAMES MONROE SSBN-622, and SIMON BOLIVAR SSBN-641. A note of condolence from Charleston Base was placed on the funeral home website.

**Dave is the 8<sup>th</sup> CB brother that has departed on Eternal Patrol since March when COVID began.**

**Tim France** was in the hospital ICU with pneumonia mid-August. He is now on an antibiotic protocol and is home. Tim is a recent addition to the base but lives in Bluffton SC and will only attend a couple of meetings each year.

**Gary Williams** had a lengthy surgery on his back this morning. He will be between the hospital and rehab for the next two weeks. No visitors but you can send cards to his home.

**Steve Everett** is still undergoing chemo and says it's wearing him out. Really misses the meetings.

**Linn Rogers Sr.** was in Trident ICU due to a fall in mid-August. He is now home in Hospice Care. They brought in a hospital bed for his use. He seems much more satisfied to be at his home versus the hospital. He's in good spirits. **Roger Gibson** received the results from a heart valve test. The valves that were operating at 30% are now normal. **Harry Nettles** had successful retina repair on his left eye. **Gene Weir** has low-grade lymphoma which is very treatable. He is taking pills daily and an injection every four weeks. **George Burton** is undergoing treatment for lung cancer. His most recent scans shows great improvement. **Rick Wise** will have his nuclear medicine done on October 2. **Bob Snyder** is home with palliative care but is in a lot of pain from the medications given to him to alleviate the pain. Please complete/update your page 2 if you have not done so. Of all the Eternal Patrols this reporting period, no one had a page 2 on file.

**Webmaster – Nick Nichols:**

Website is constantly updated.

Make use of the EVENTS page on the Charleston Base website. All events that are put out to the membership via email will be listed and updated on the events page.

Pictures will now be on the USSVI National website. Please take a look at your profile on the National site and update it if needed. Many have missing info.

**Important Computer Info – Nick Nichols:**

If you still have a Windows 7 computer, it must not be used on the internet. Microsoft is no longer supporting this operating system and has not been providing security updates for some time now.

**New ID Cards – Nick Nichols:**

New retirees and family members will be getting new IDs similar to the CACs that are provided to active duty members. Only if you have to get a replacement ID card, will you will get the new type; otherwise you will not ever have to get one.

**USSVI Annual Convention – Nick Nichols:**

The 2021 USSVI Annual Convention will be held in Orlando, Florida in August. More information later.

**Submarine Veterans of WWII – Mike Ciesielko for George Scharf:**

Nothing to report.

**Social Media – Lewis Leal:**

Nothing to report.

**Kaps for Kids – Mike Emerson**

Not present.

[Kaps for Kids events are on hold until the hospitals contact us to resume visits.]

**Membership – Larry Knutson**

We have a new USSVI member – Woody Woodsmall joined tonight as Life Member of both National and Charleston Base. Welcome!

**VA – Tom Lawson**

Not present

**Scholarship – Carl Chinn**

The Rummage Sale will be held soon. The actual date is yet to be determined.

The new Scholarship application form is on the Base website. Please be sure to use the new form.

The committee has a couple of submarine lighters that were donated – Bancroft and Polk. These are for sale to benefit the scholarship fund. See Carl.

Some Base members provided cash donations to the scholarship fund. Carl read their names and donations.

The committee has raffle tickets for gift cards in varying dollar amounts to Top Dawg Tavern on Dorchester Rd. The drawing will be held at the Base Meeting in October.

**Special Events – Rick Sparger**

We are planning a Base picnic on October 17 at Bushy Park. The Base will provide hamburgers/hotdogs and members

are asked to bring a side dish or two. Rick asked for a show of hands; receiving good response about those willing to attend. We need to have all hands willing to help for this event. If members want to bring something else to cook, Rick will be bringing a grille for you to use. He may even borrow a fryer. The Base will provide some beer also. We do not expect to have a Christmas party this year, but plan on a Base meeting in December instead. Rick also requested that the Base provide beer/wine for the picnic. Mike Ciesielko volunteered to cook.

**CRAMA – Butch Bryar**

Not present.

**Nuclear Power School – Ray Sparks**

Not Present.

**Fleet Reserve Association – Rick Sparger**

Nothing to report.

**Public Affairs – Jerry Stout**

Not present

**Newsletter – Rick Wise**

Rick prepares the Base Newsletter and the Base Meeting Minutes get added at the end.

Rick thanked Carl Chinn for his input to the Newsletter.

If anyone has anything that you would like to put in the Base Newsletter, please send it to Rick.

**Comptroller – Rick Wise**

The Base carried over several thousand dollars from 2019 to 2020. Nothing to report.

**Recreation – VACANT**

**Storekeeper – Ken Hutchison**

If anyone is in need of something, please call Ken. You can also simply send him an email.

Since the number at our meetings are smaller right now, the ladies servicing our tables before the meeting are getting significantly less. There is an extra tip jar if you are able to help.

**COB – Joe Lunn**

Not present.

**Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko**

Mike reminded everyone to clean up the tables before departure.

Mike will be reviewing the positions of those holding an office as part of Charleston Base. Some, due to health reasons are unable to fulfill the need of the position. Others are lacking in performance of the need of the office. At the next meeting, he may be asking for others to volunteer for various jobs.

**Good of the Order**

**After Battery – Ken Hutchison**

Nothing to report.

**Gun Club**

No activity at this time.

**Nuclear Historian – Rick Carlson**

Not Present

**Drawings & Auctions**

Depth Charge – Lindsay Nelson

**Closing Ceremony**

Chaplain Nick Nichols led the group in a prayer of Benediction.

Base Commander Mike Ciesielko announced adjournment of the meeting with three simulated blasts of the diving alarm.

Meeting closed.



# With the Navy's submarine maintenance woes, there may yet be hope

By: David B. Larter May 7, 2019

WASHINGTON — Connecticut Democrat Rep. Joe Courtney was surprised when he saw the Los Angeles-class attack submarine Boise's long-delayed overhaul on the Navy's 2020 "unfunded priorities" list.

The hapless Boise returned from a patrol in 2015, and it hasn't gone back on patrol since. The inactivity has caused Boise to lose its dive certification, one of three attack subs in the fleet currently unable to submerge. It's been four years and counting, and now it wasn't even funded in the Navy's fiscal 2020 budget request.

The Boise's availability, unfunded to the tune of \$290 million, "sort of jumped off the page," Courtney told two senior Navy officials in a March hearing on Capitol Hill. The \$306 million availability for the attack sub Hartford was also listed as unfunded.

"There's been a lot of talk about them being kind of in the queue for an awful long time," said Courtney, whose district includes the General Dynamics Electric Boat shipyard that constructs the Virginia-class attack submarines and will, along with Huntington Ingalls Industries' Newport News shipyard, construct the Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines.

The answer from the Navy's top acquisition official was complicated. Nuclear maintenance is conducted in public shipyards in Norfolk, Virginia; Portsmouth, New Hampshire; and Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. But delays and schedule backlogs for other ships — aircraft carriers and ballistic missile submarines — have also driven delays into the attack sub maintenance schedule.

Seeking to ease the burden on public shipyards, the Navy turned to HII's Newport News yard for the maintenance, but those jobs also fell behind. Overhauls for the Los Angeles-class attack submarines Helena and Columbus are behind by 12-18 months, as Newport News balances work on the Virginia class with preparations for the Columbia class and a new maintenance requirement.

"The challenge with Boise has been delays we've seen with the other submarines in the private yard maintenance," said James Geurts, the Navy's head of research, development and acquisition. "And quite frankly, we just can't get Boise in until we get the current submarines in the — in the docks at Newport News out. That slipped Boise in [FY]20.

"We had planned to do it this year, that slipped it into '20. That occurred after the '20 budget was put together. That's why it showed up on the unfunded list."

The story here is years old.

Last year, the Government Accountability Office found that in total, between 2008 and 2018, attack boats waiting to go into maintenance had sat idle for 10,363 days. That's years of lost time and a large chunk of which would certainly have been operational availability.

In 2014, the then-head of Naval Sea Systems Command, Vice Adm. William Hilarides, told an audience at the annual Submarine League symposium that he was in a "tail chase" with sub maintenance.

Part of the problem was increased demands from overused aircraft carriers, and another part of the problem was a continuing effort to refuel all the Ohio-class ballistic missile subs. And still another problem stemmed from budget cuts and a federal hiring freeze that left 2,000 jobs unfilled at the public yards. And attack boats were set to suffer the most pain, as aircraft carriers and ballistic missile subs would take priority.

"They are significantly behind, and we will not catch back up," Hilarides told the audience.

## Digging out

There may be light at the end of the tunnel for the Navy's attack submarine woes.

Some of the Navy's problems will resolve themselves after ballistic missile subs are refueled, said Bryan Clark, a retired submarine officer and analyst with the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments.

"The big factor here is that attack submarines are last in line when it comes to maintenance," Clark explained. "And that maintenance is done in the public yards, both the refueling and non-refueling overhauls. So that's why you see submarines like Boise who have been waiting a long time to get in, because carriers had a lot of maintenance backlog.

"And working through that backlog pushed SSBN refuelings back, and that in turn pushed attack subs to the end of the line. Now that they are working through the carrier backlog and the SSBN refueling is now largely completed, that's going to mean the attack submarines can be brought back into the public shipyards. So that's a structural issue that's going to work itself out."

But other aspects of the Navy's quest to dig out of the submarine backlog are thornier and will require the service to make long-term commitments to private shipyards, Clark said. One of the main issues with assigning attack subs to private shipyards is that they are not necessarily set up as maintenance shops: They're more so built and organized as new construction yards.

Naval Sea Systems Command acknowledged as much in a recent statement to the *Virginian Pilot* as part of a story on the delays of Columbus and Helena, which the command attributed to "the workforce's inexperience in conducting submarine maintenance, which differs greatly from new construction."

Working through those issues will take time, Clark said.

"It's a totally different job from ship construction," he added. "So that will take some time to build up a workforce and capacity that's dedicated to ship maintenance, instead of taking folks who were working new construction and simply

repurposing them for overhauls. There are some growing pains associated with adjusting to doing that kind of work.”

### **Demand signal**

The other step to solving the attack boat woes involves sending a consistent demand signal to private shipyards, Clark continued.

“If there is a demand signal from the Navy, if the Navy says this is something we are going to continue to do ... then you’ll see Electric Boat and Huntington Ingalls make the investments in the workforce and the planning capacity to support that,” Clark said.

“But until they see a projected demand signal that goes out several years, they are probably not going to make significant investments in that. And that means these jobs will continue to be ad hoc and drawn from their existing capacity, which means that they are bringing in folks who are used to doing ship construction and having them do maintenance, and it’s going to take longer,” he added.

Providing a demand signal was one of the main intentions behind the 30-year ship maintenance plan rolled out earlier this year by Geurts, the acquisition official. But if the companies are going to invest significant dollars in building out a maintenance operation and workforce, the Navy is going to have to put up a little more than just a plan.

“The 30-year ship maintenance plan is an interesting document from their perspective when it comes to thinking about strategy,” Geurts said. “But when it comes to spending money on hiring extra people, establishing an organization that does planning for maintenance availabilities and overhauls, then you are talking about spending real money. You only want to do that if you have a sense of how much work will be there for you to do.”

One way to do that would involve a review of the Navy’s maintenance contracts. In the surface-ship maintenance world, the Navy has flipped between awarding ship maintenance to yards in blocks of two or more ship availabilities, and individually awarding each availability.

Both routes create unique problems.

“For submarine maintenance availabilities, they’ve traditionally been contracted individually,” Clark said. “Which from the industry side is not a predictable demand signal around which you can hire a workforce or invest in a planning and organization capacity. So the Navy may need to look at some sort of longer-term contracting mechanism to give the shipyards a more predictable demand signal.”

Working with Congress to extend the time the Navy has to obligate operations and maintenance dollars might help the service provide more long-term maintenance contracts, Clark said, adding that bundling submarine maintenance availabilities would also provide predictability for private yards.

### **Navy releases documents from the sinking of the Maine-built submarine USS Thresher**

**David Sharp, Associated Press, September 23**

The Navy began releasing documents from the investigation into the deadliest submarine disaster in U.S. history Wednesday, but said the documents released under a court order don’t shed any new light on the cause of the sinking. The first documents released were 300 pages from the official inquiry into the sinking of the USS Thresher on April 10, 1963.

The loss of the nuclear-powered submarine and all 129 men aboard during a test dive in the Atlantic Ocean delivered a blow to national pride during the Cold War and became the impetus for safety improvements.

“The loss of Thresher was a defining event for the submarine service,” said Rear Adm. William Houston, director of the undersea warfare division in the office of the chief of naval operations at the Pentagon.

The Thresher story was already well known. It had undergone sea trials and was back in the ocean for deep-dive testing about 220 miles off Massachusetts’ Cape Cod.

The first sign of trouble was a garbled message about a “minor difficulty” after the 279-foot submarine descended to more than 800 feet.

The crew indicated it was attempting to empty ballast tanks in an effort to surface. The crew of an accompanying rescue ship heard something about the “test depth.” Then the sailors listened as the sub disintegrated under the crushing pressure of the sea.

The Navy inquiry found weaknesses in the design and construction of the first-in-class nuclear-powered submarine, which had been built at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, and based in Groton, Connecticut.

The documents released Wednesday included the timeline of the sinking, evidence lists, reports, testimony and correspondence. But there were some redactions. Even more than 50 years later, technical details including the test depth were redacted.

In the documents, the Navy said it believes an interior pipe burst and caused electrical problems that caused an emergency shutdown of the nuclear reactor.

Resting on the ocean floor at a depth of 8,500 feet, the Thresher looks as though it went through a “shredding machine” and is spread out over a mile, University of Rhode Island oceanographer Robert Ballard told the Associated Press in 2013. Ballard used his 1985 discovery of RMS Titanic as a Cold War cover for surveying the Thresher.

Not everyone was satisfied with the Navy’s conclusions.

Retired Capt. James Bryant, commander of a Thresher-class submarine, requested the documents under the federal Freedom of Information Act and ultimately went to court to demand the documents’ release. He thinks there’s more to be learned from the documents, most of them classified.

Michael Shafer, whose father and uncle both died on the Thresher, said some of the families need to review the documents to see for themselves and fully understand what happened. His suspicion is that the Navy was pushing the limits and placing personnel at risk during the Cold War.

"I want to know the truth, the whole truth. Not some smoke screen from the Navy," he said Wednesday from St. Petersburg, Florida.

A judge in February ordered the Navy to release the documents. The coronavirus pandemic delayed their review. Eventually, more than 1,000 pages of documents will be released.

If there was a silver lining, it was that the tragedy so shook the Navy that it accelerated safety improvements and created a program called SUBSAFE, an extensive series of design modifications, training and other improvements.

One submarine has sunk since then, the USS Scorpion in 1968, and it was not SUBSAFE-certified, the Navy said.

Some of the improvements included better welding techniques and changes to the ballast system that allows a submarine to surface.

Joy MacMillan, one of four siblings who lost their father, the submarine's chief radioman, said it's helpful to know the deaths spurred safety improvements. But it's still important for the families to have the documents, and some closure.

"After being 57 years in the dark, it's time for the families to know any and all information so that we can put it away. We can say, 'Mistakes were made. Let's move on,'" MacMillan, of Brentwood, New Hampshire, said Wednesday.

The sinking was the first of a string of calamities in 1963.

The March on Washington was a turning point in the Civil Rights movement, but the Vietnam conflict grew, white supremacists bombed the 16th Street Baptist Church in Alabama and President John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

## HUMOR

### First Woman POTUS

The year is 2024 and the United States has just elected the first woman as President of the United States.

A few days after the election, the president-elect calls her father in Daytona Beach and asks, "So, Dad, I assume you will be coming to my inauguration?"

"I don't think so. It's a long drive; your mom isn't as young as she used to be, we'll have the dog with us, and my arthritis is acting up in my knee."

"Don't worry about it, Dad, I'll send Air Force One or another support aircraft to pick you up and take you home, and a limousine will pick you up at your door," she said.

"I don't know. Everybody will be so fancy. What would your mother wear?"

"Oh, Dad," she replied, "I'll make sure she has a wonderful gown custom-made by one of the best designers in New York."

"Honey," Dad complained, "You know we can't eat those rich foods you and your friends like to eat."

The President-elect responded, "Don't worry, Dad. The entire affair is going to be handled by the best caterer in D.C. And I'll ensure your meals are salt-free. Dad, I really want you to come."

So her parents reluctantly agreed, and on January 20, 2024 arrived to see their daughter sworn in as President of the United States.

The parents of the new President are seated in the front row.

The President's dad sees that a Senator is sitting next to him and leans over and whispers, "You see that woman up there with her hand on the Bible, becoming President of the United States?"

The Senator whispered in reply, "Yes, sir, I sure do."

Dad leans back, arms folded, and says proudly: "Her sister is a Navy Chief!"

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Kathy Sumner - MBA / Realtor – License# 91234

843.475.7431 – [KathyHSumner@kw.com](mailto:KathyHSumner@kw.com)

[www.SumnerPropertyGroup.com](http://www.SumnerPropertyGroup.com)

1180 Sam Rittenberg Blvd, Charleston SC 29407

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Patrick Villegas  
Loan Officer *"Specializing in VA Loans and VA Refinances"*  
2000 Sam Rittenberg Blvd. Ste. 2020, Charleston, SC 29407  
[Patrick@tabormortgage.com](mailto:Patrick@tabormortgage.com)  
NMLS 1520207 (843) 224-9272

Patrick Villegas  
Loan Officer *"Specializing in VA Loans and VA Refinances"*  
2000 Sam Rittenberg Blvd. Ste. 2020, Charleston, SC 29407  
[Patrick@tabormortgage.com](mailto:Patrick@tabormortgage.com)  
NMLS 1520207 (843) 224-9272