

TORPEDO ALLEY



Vol. 8, No. 9

September 2012

United States Submarine Veterans - Charleston Base Newsletter

USSVI Creed

"To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds, and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution"



Base Meeting:

September 13 2012 Social hour 1800 General Meeting 1900

Location:

Fleet Reserve Association Branch 269
Low Country Home
99 Wisteria Rd
Goose Creek, South Carolina Phone 843-569-2962

Special Officers Click to email Phone Number

Chief of the Boat	Rick Sparger	843-553-5594
Public Affairs	Ed Stank	843 863-8474
Veterans Affairs	Jim Morrison	843-832-9716
Chaplain	John Nichols	843-452-3189
Membership	Carl Chinn	843-875-3098
Holland Club	John Lookabill	843-797-2991
Scholarship	Julian Villegas	843-871-6135
Newsletter	Steve Morawiec	843-410-0131
Storekeeper	Ken Hutchison	843-553-0935
Webmaster	John Nichols	843-452-3189
Historian	George Scharf	843 873-3318

Base Officers Click to email Phone Number

Commander	Carl Chinn	843-875-3098
Vice Commander	Jerry Stout	843-871-9533
Secretary	Theron Irving	843-817-5118
Treasurer	Terry Trump	843-873-9563

Minutes of the Aug 2012 meeting

Attendance for the August 2012 meeting was 111.

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

The Base Commander deviated from the normal meeting order to allow Gary Semler's daughter Andrea to give a heartfelt thanks for the memorial service at the After Battery.

Introductions: George Bass, WWII Vet, Joe Lunn, Don Ulmer (former CO USS Clamagore (SS 343)), Andy Dewar, Isaac Stan, Dick Bishop, Bret Moyan, Stan Yoakum, Bruce Fulmer - CPO selectee with no charge book, Charles Frye - CPO selectee with no

charge book, David Pefly - CPO selectee with no charge book. Welcome aboard to all.

The Base Commander deviated from the normal procedure to allow Mack Burdett, Director of Patriots Point, to discuss the ongoing USS Clamagore project. Mr. Burdett attended a previous meeting the day before with members of the Clamagore Association. His stance is that he has to address the project from a business point of view. His estimate is that it is going to take approximately \$3,000,000 to do the project. Some decisions from the meeting are as follows:

Clamagore will require a dry-docking.

Hire a Marine Engineer to do a thorough survey and inspection to determine a time line. A rough estimate is 24 months.

Mr. Burdett has pledged to go to his Board of Directors to request more time if it is found that the Clamagore is in fact sound and not in danger of sinking. He will be forthcoming with a full report when it is available. USSVI and the Clamagore Association have launched a fund raising campaign to raise monies for this project.

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

Treasurer: Terry put forth an invitation to any member who wants to inspect the books to come forward after the meeting. Terry gave the July Report.

Vice Commander: Received a letter from Palmetto Pride congratulating USSVI on our award for the Adopt a Highway program.

A reminder of our National Convention located in Norfolk, VA in September.

Kings Bay WW II Memorial 31 Oct to 4 Nov.
Applications are available from me.

Palmetto Base in Lexington is having a cruise on Lake Murray at the end of September. See me for details.

Storekeeper: If you need anything he is there

Scholarship: Raffle tickets are available for the wooden dolphins – drawing at the Christmas Party.

Public Affairs: Pictures of meeting with Rep Scott have been sent to the American Submariner.

Chaplain:

- **Pauline Stank, Ed's wife**, passed away peacefully on Tuesday evening, July 31st. A memorial service was held this past Monday evening and almost 60 members and wives attended to support Ed and his family.
- **Greg Czech**, a member of Denizens of the Deep, is improving his strength in his legs but still having trouble with his finger/hand movements. His morale is good but he is struggling.
- **Tom Skorepa** had a hernia operation on July 19th. He is doing very well.
- **Bill Buxton** had surgery on July 16th to fix the broken arm and elbow. He was sent to Health South on the 20th and released to home on the 28th.
- **Linn Rogers** collapsed at Trident Hospital while volunteering on July 18th. He required CPR 3 times while being rushed to the ICU. It was determined not to be a stroke or heart attack but probably some nerve issue causing problems with his heart. He had a pacemaker installed on the 23rd. After some time in Health South he is now home and doing well.
- **Lee Allison** will be having an MRI soon. The after-surgery appointment noted a tear in the nerve sheath for his left leg. The MRI hopefully will determine how to correct this issue and relieve the pain in his leg.

- **Walt Deal** had his knee replaced on Tuesday and is now home doing very well. Starts rehab tomorrow.
- **Ev Fuhr**, Ken's wife, is doing much better.
- **Jimmy Legg** will be having back surgery on January 21st at Roper St. Francis. He has been told to take it easy until the surgery.
- **Larry Cox** had bypass surgery of femoral artery to get better circulation to his right foot. He is doing very well.
- **Terry & Lucy Trump** had a traffic accident on July 18th. The car was damaged but they were OK except for being sore.
- **Beverly Euper**, Phil's wife, has kidney disease and diabetes. She has also had a foot and several fingers amputated and goes to dialysis three days a week. He wanted everyone to know there is a reason he has not been at the meetings.

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

- **CDR Michael Charles Davidson, US Navy, Retired**, passed away on Thursday, July 19th. He was a former Commanding Officer of Naval Consolidated Brig Charleston. He was not a submariner.
- **CAPT Robert Joseph Lewis, USN, Ret.**, departed on EP in VA on June 6th. He qualified on the TENCH and then went to the Academy. He then served on Theodore Roosevelt, Sturgeon, Tunny, as XO of Lewis and Clark and CO of Woodrow Wilson. He was not a member of USSVI.
- **Jim Beauchamp**, the son of CWO3 James Beauchamp, passed away in NY. James is a member of Hampton Roads Base and a Plankowner of the Thomas Jefferson SSBN 618.

Webmaster: Our website: <http://www.ussvicb.org/>

The following are available on the website:

- DOCUMENTS: Page 2 and Important Instructions for the family
- OFFICERS: Listing of base membership as of 1 January 1998

Newsletters from 1997 forward will be available soon on the web site.

Please have your photograph taken if you haven't already done so. Also, please complete your Page 2 if you haven't already done so.

Veteran's Affairs: No report

Little David: No report

Holland Club: No report

SUBVETS WWII: Lee Allison is experiencing a lot of pain after his recent surgery. He has a nerve sheath that is torn and will require repair. Keep him in your prayers. Bi-monthly meeting will be on 16 August 2012 at Ryan's in Summerville. FYI - an average of 35 WW II Vets are being lost each month.

Historian: No report

Nuclear Historian: A young Ensign approached the crusty old Master Chief and asked him about the origin of the commissioned officer insignias. "Well ENSIGN its history and tradition. First, we give you gold bar representing that you are valuable BUT malleable. The silver bar of a lieutenant JG represents value, but less malleable. When you make lieutenant you are twice as valuable so we give you two silver bars. As a Captain you soar over military masses, hence the eagle. As an Admiral, you are star. Does that answer you question??" "Yeah answered the Ensign, but what about the lieutenant commander and commander?" The wise old Master Chief answered "Now son that goes waaaaaay back in history. All the way back to the Garden of Eden. You see son, we have always covered our pricks with leaves."

Membership: Keep your dues coming in. Thanks for your response.

Fleet Reserve: Southeast Convention will be at the Radisson on Aviation Ave. on 21st -25th. Indoor picnic will be held on Labor Day.

District Commander: National Website is shut down for voting due to hacking. Paper ballots are available in the newest issue of the American Submariner.

Don't forget the up coming WW II Memorial on 31 Oct - 4 Nov 2012 in Kings Bay. Wives attending will also have to fill out an application.

Chief of the Boat: This year's hog roast will be on October 13th at the Cooper River Partners site.

Base Commander: The CPO selectee breakfast is at 0600 on 11 September 2012 at Cracker Barrel in Summerville.

Old Business: None.

New Business: Ken Hutchinson made a motion to take the money from the building fund (\$1409.00) and put it into the Clamagore fund. Motion seconded. Discussion: Should the building fund be disestablished? COB made a motion to table the motion until next month. Motion seconded. Motion carried.

Good Of The Order: Ed Stank is organizing a USS Nathan Hale (SSBN 623) reunion in September 2013 at Branson, MO. See Ed on this.

Ed expressed his gratitude for the support shown to him and his family during their resent bereavement by the Charleston and Tar Heel Bases.

Rusty Pickett - Rusty reported on the current thoughts of the Patriots Point Board to build a road through the space presently occupied by the Cold War Memorial. Rusty reiterated that tonight's discussion should be

held in house until we get a decision from the board. He believes that they (the Patriots Point Authority) don't know or understand what type of a hornet's nest that they are stirring up. Rusty, a college student of the 60's, knows how to protest and we have a few people who have withstood depth charge attacks. Legal avenues are also being pursued. And as private citizens, we should write to the board members, (Names and addresses are available on the Patriots Point Web site) and our government representative. Due process should be followed. (*Don't forget what that one man in Tianamen Square did in 1989 - Editor*)

A motion was made that USSVI Charleston Base take a philosophical stand of being against the movement of the Cold War Memorial. Motion seconded and carried.

Rodney McKanna is collecting new underwear for homeless vets. Please bring an unopened package of underwear to the next meeting.

A book by Captain Ulmer, former CO of the Clamagore, was auctioned off for the Clamagore Fund. Bob Grabowski had the highest bid @ \$100.00.

Depth Charge: Drawing winner was Ron Kozlowski.

Meeting Adjourned: The Base Commander adjourned the meeting at 2045.

"The wonder is always new that any sane man can be a sailor." Ralph Waldo Emerson

September Submarines Lost

USS GRAYLING	SS 209	September 9, 1943
USS Cisco	SS 290	September 28, 1943
USS S-5	SS 110	September 1, 1920
USS S-51	SS 162	September 25, 1925

September Happenings

September 13 - Regular Monthly Meeting
September 5-16 - [Charleston Restaurant Week](#)
September 15 - [Charleston Scottish Games](#)
September 30 - [Taste of Charleston](#)

September Birthdays

Ashton	Bolin	Bowles	Carswell
Clark	Cousino	Curtis	Gravley
Hartley	Hunter	Hutchison	Ingbretson
Katen	Knaub	Knutson	Kopczynski
Lanier	McRae	Moody Rob	Morrow
Neufeld	Stump	Sumner	Villegas
Wilson L.	Wilson W.	Roberts	(August belated)

Notes From The Chaplain

This is the first of what I hope to be a monthly note of encouragement to our base's membership. I came across this 'devotion' as I was roaming the web looking for something else. It caught my eye ... and then my heart. Hopefully, it will do the same for you.

INTEGRITY: The Heart of Navy Core Values by A Submariner

The following essay was written by a young enlisted submariner as a disciplinary assignment after a Captain's Mast for taking a shortcut in a maintenance procedure. Both the author and his Commanding Officer have agreed to its publication.

Integrity is the heart and the very essence of each Navy Core Value, but more importantly, it is the foundation on which every aspect of submarine operations is built. Integrity must be the standard instilled within the innermost heart of every man who takes a submarine to the uttermost depths of the sea. It is integrity that bonds the crew of a submarine so tightly together that when faced with any circumstance, each individual can trust his shipmate to meet the needs of the moment. Integrity comes from within each man's heart and is revealed through his respect for the standards of conduct. As a submariner, it is my duty and responsibility to maintain the highest degree of integrity while serving my country with honor, courage, and commitment in the United States Navy.

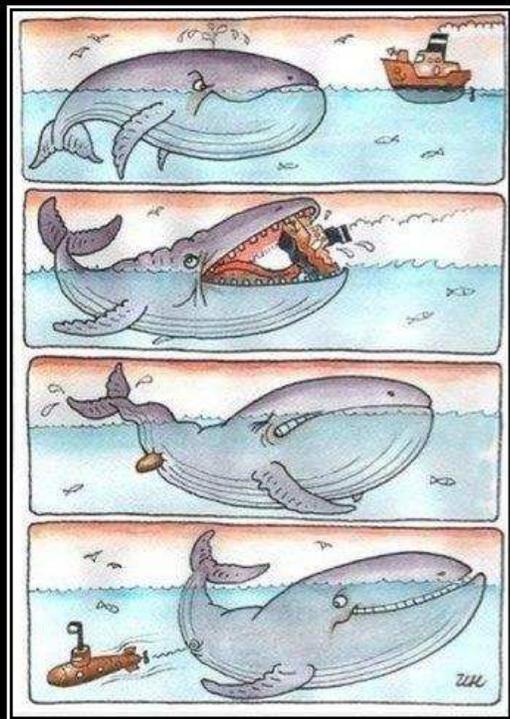
When I think of the word "integrity" as a submariner, I think naturally of the phrase watertight integrity. When we shut the hatches, we value the assurance that no water is going to enter into the people tank, because those hatches have been inspected, both during PMS, and just before shutting them. As a member of the Auxiliary Division, I have been taught the importance of taking care of our hatches and ensuring the quality of their condition whenever we inspect and conduct maintenance on them. Every one of my shipmates' lives depends on my personal integrity in ensuring that our hatches are squared away. And even when they are rigged for dive, they are second-checked to guarantee their water-tightness.

I say all of this to illustrate the importance of integrity on a submarine. Every submariner is entrusted with the responsibility to operate this vessel of war according to the procedures established for each ship's system. This ensures the safety of our operation and our ability to complete each mission successfully. No matter how big or small the task I am entrusted with, one mistake could threaten the lives of every one of my shipmates. The procedures that we use today have been written through trial and error in the blood of submariners who have served before me. Following these procedures is not just a recommendation; it is our duty to use them. There is not always someone looking over my shoulder to make sure that I use required procedures to operate a system or conduct maintenance, nor should there need to be. It is only

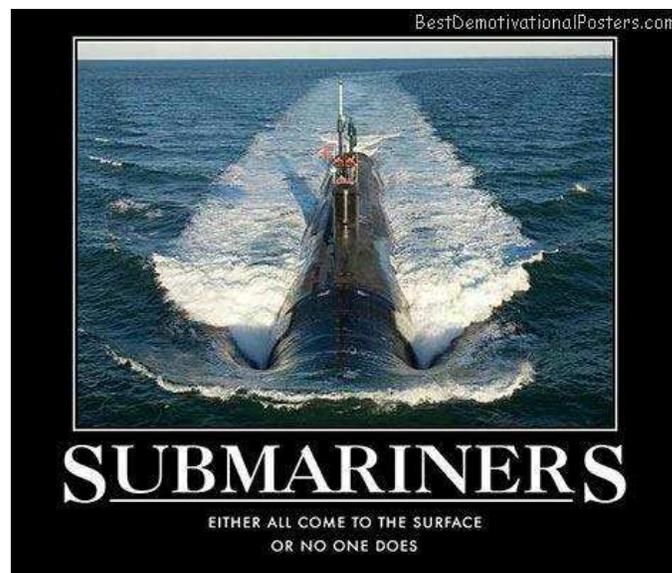
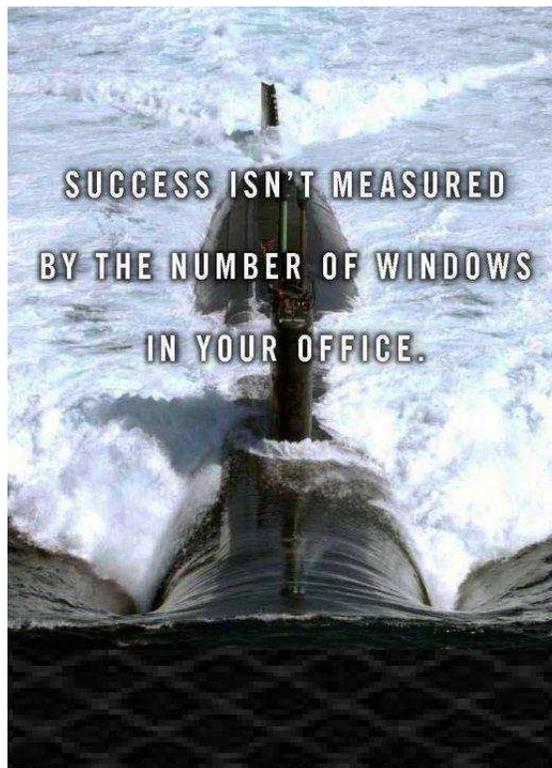
my personal integrity that guarantees I will accomplish an assigned task properly.

There is no room for compromise in the integrity of our word and deed. We are faced with important decisions every day of our lives. It is vital that we evaluate every detail of every situation before we make a decision. I have learned that rushing myself in that process usually results in poor judgment. When I rush to accomplish a job, I lose sight of both what is important and the possible consequences of my actions. The focus becomes only getting the job done by any means possible. Looking back at the mistake I made in attempting to accomplish PMS without a procedure, I see that the time I saved was not worth the compromise of my integrity. Trying to rush my work actually cost my shipmates and me more time and effort than if I had done it properly the first time, not to mention the consequences of my actions if something had gone wrong.

As a submarine sailor I must adhere to the Core Values of the Navy to maintain the military standards of responsibility, order, and discipline. I must have the Honor to deal rightly with all that is entrusted to me - to be loyal, obedient, and respectful to all those appointed over me and to accept my duty of service. I need to have the Courage to stand up for what is right, even when faced with adversity. Courage accompanied with honesty will guide me to the right decisions. I need to be committed to my responsibility and duties as I obey the orders given to me. Commitment requires self-discipline and a devotion to maintain the highest standards of integrity in my profession. An outstanding submarine crew is one that operates consciously as a team to protect the freedom of their country, while observing Core Values within their hearts. In closing, I would like to say that writing this essay has given me the opportunity to meditate on what it means to be a submariner. Integrity is the key essential of the submarine service. I believe we must focus on being consistent in word and deed to maintain our integrity with responsibility, order, and discipline. I have worked hard to build a reputation for being a trustworthy auxiliaryman, but it only takes one mistake to destroy the respect for my integrity that I worked so hard to gain. It is my duty to set the standard for integrity as a member of the Auxiliary Division, and as a submariner on board my ship. I do realize that I am not perfect and will make mistakes, but it is from those mistakes and the mistakes of others that we can learn and grow in our experiences throughout life. I thank God, the author of integrity, for the wisdom to discern its value and for showing the need to apply it to every area of my life.



How submarines
Are made



Move It!



Submarine News

Accused Sub Arsonist Says He Was 'Blurry' From Prescription Drugs

KITTERY, Maine — A civilian painter accused of lighting a fire on a nuclear submarine to "get out of work" was taking three prescription drugs and an antihistamine at the time, he told investigators.

"He explained that he was taking Celexa for anxiety and depression, Klonopin for anxiety, Ambien for sleep and Xertec (sic) for allergies," according to a criminal complaint filed against the painter, Casey Fury of Portsmouth.

During an investigation, Fury told a special agent from the Naval Criminal Investigative Service that the cocktail of pharmaceuticals affected his mind, according to federal records. Whether the drugs contributed to Fury allegedly committing arson, or affected his ability to give a "knowing and reliable" confession, could be part of his defense, some lawyers say.

Fury, 24, faces a possible lifetime prison sentence for federal charges alleging he used his BIC lighter to ignite rags aboard the USS Miami, sparking a fire that took 12 hours to extinguish. According to court records, the Navy estimates damage to the \$900 million submarine will cost \$400 million to fix.

Federal prosecutors say Fury met with an NCIS agent July 20, when he signed a document agreeing to give a voluntary statement and to take a lie detector test, both without a lawyer. It was then, the Navy alleges, Fury confessed to starting the USS Miami blaze, as well as a second, smaller fire on June 16.

Fury was interviewed the day after the May 23 submarine fire and denied any involvement, according to Navy investigators, "because he was scared and because everything was blurry to him and his memory was impaired due to his anxiety and the medications he was taking at the time."

"He may not have known what he was doing," said defense lawyer Mark Stevens. "It's scary stuff."

Use of Ambien alone has been employed as a defense in criminal cases, most notably by Ambien users faced with charges alleging they were driving while intoxicated. According to the U.S. National Library of Medicine, Ambien is a brand name for zolpidem, which is prescribed as a sleep aid and falls within a class of drugs known as "sedative-hypnotics."

The Library of Medicine cites side effects including a "drugged feeling," while Ambien's labels warn users they may eat, drive or have sex while sleeping, then have no recollection of the acts.

In 2006, Ki Yong O, 36, of Andover, Mass., killed a man during in an Ambien-induced sleep-driving crash, according to Forbes magazine. In November 2007, Forbes reported, a judge acquitted O of vehicular homicide, stating he couldn't find "beyond a reasonable doubt" that O "was voluntarily intoxicated when he operated his motor vehicle."

Fury is being represented by attorney David Beneman, who has declined to discuss the case. But other lawyers say Fury's use of Ambien and other pills could play a role in his defense.

"Sometimes when you mix these drugs, there are unintended consequences," said lawyer Ryan Russman. "I would imagine his counsel will look closely at how all these drugs affected his behavior — his mental state when the crime was committed."

Russman said if he were representing Fury he would consult with a toxicologist about the effects of Ambien and the other drugs on a person's ability to recall events and participate in legal proceedings.

Defense lawyer Alan Cronheim said, to his knowledge, the Ambien defense has only been used successfully in motor vehicle cases because "it affects driving." Whether Fury's alleged use of Ambien and other drugs affected his "conduct" is another issue, he said, and "something his lawyer will look at."

Prosecuting lawyers interviewed for this report had a dimmer view of defenses based on prescription drug use, or reported no first-hand knowledge of such cases.

"We're aware that it's been used as an excuse," Rockingham County Attorney James Reams said of Ambien use.

In his tenure as the county's top prosecutor, Reams said Ambien has only been raised during a criminal case once. In that instance, he said, it was raised by a defense attorney in the context of attempting to discredit a victim by questioning her memory as a result of taking Ambien.

Fury is scheduled to appear for a one-hour bail hearing Aug. 1 in the U.S. District Court of New Hampshire.

Associate Attorney General Jane Young said she hasn't seen any Ambien cases and Portsmouth Police Capt. Cory MacDonald, who is also a prosecutor, said he had no comment about prescription drug use as a defense.

Stevens said he's had two clients who were "driving around in their PJs" after taking Ambien and were charged with driving while intoxicated. He said in both instances the charges were reduced when his clients' use of Ambien was presented as evidence.

"If someone can get in a car, and turn the key, and start driving, and not know they were doing it, it's scary," he said.

Stevens said he'd never take the sleeping pill. "I'd rather go three days without sleep," he said.

Russia Scraps Its Final Cold War Submarine

Russia's State Atomic Energy Corporation Rosatom has signed a contract with Italy for the decommissioning of the last existing Northern Fleet nuclear submarine no longer in operation. The co-operation is part of a financial scheme sustained through the Global Partnership against the spread of weapons and materials of mass destruction, initiated by the G8 countries in 2002.

For years, Russia has been looking for a suitable funder to cover the large-scale scrapping of its remaining retired nuclear-powered submarine fleet. Now, Italy has stepped forward to provide US\$ 8.4 million to remove the reactor compartments from the Cold War vessel which is laid up at Nerpa naval yard on the Kola Peninsula.

Some 66 reactor compartments are still to be moved on-shore to the storage location in Saida Bay. The storage facility already holds 47 reactor compartments, with seven more to follow in August and September this year, according to the head of Rosatom's submarine dismantling office Anatoly Zaharchev.

'That is more than 40% of the total reactor compartments in question,' he says. The US\$ 181 million facility in Saida Bay was constructed in 2006 specifically to house these particular submarine parts because of the fact that their highly radioactive nature poses a significant safety hazard.

The USA has promised to add in US\$ 1.2 million to cover any costs of transporting the spent nuclear fuel from the submarine's two reactors, destined for Russia's reprocessing plant in Mayak.

Meanwhile, Russia reports it has injected 50 million rubles (US\$ 1.51 million) in the enterprise during 2012 so as to prepare reactor compartments for storage in Saida Bay; and the same amount will be contributed in 2013 towards the scrapping process.

Submarine Culture Workshops - Value Added to the Submarine Force (don't shoot the messenger – ed.)

What is a Submarine Culture Workshop (SCW)? An SCW is a leadership tool used to assist a submarine Commanding Officer (CO) and his leadership team in its pursuit of operational excellence. SCWs started in 2005 based on the very successful Aviation Culture Workshop (ACW) program which started in 1996 and was initiated to reduce aviation mishaps.

An SCW identifies potential hazards to operational excellence resulting from at-risk behaviors that have become "accepted norms" within the command. The workshop focuses on communications, integrity, and trust throughout the command and works to identify command issues not readily captured by inspection or survey programs. A team of two senior reserve submarine officers go to the command for two days, conducts one-on-one interviews, conducts six two-hour small group seminars to discuss their culture, and then provides feedback to the CO and Command Leadership Team on things that are going well and potential areas of improvement. The team collects the perceptions of the crew which must then be validated to determine root causes. The workshop results are provided to the CO to improve his command and are not reported elsewhere. And who conducts each of these SCWs? The Submarine Force Reserve Component (SFRC)!

SCWs, sponsored by the two Submarine Type Commanders, are an efficient way to provide the CO of a submarine with a thorough, unbiased look at his command, providing him actionable information that he can use to increase the operational effectiveness of his boat. SCWs are done voluntarily at CO's requests, ideally early in their tour. Three key aspects of a SCW are:

- The Command Team is given the results of the SCW immediately at the conclusion of the workshop, so the information is current and can be acted on right away,
- The live interaction format allows facilitators to probe into areas of concern for the crew, and
- The results and feedback are held confidential for the CO only who decides what action needs to be taken.

The workshops have been extremely well received by all parties involved, from the junior sailors to the CO. Based on the value provided and the success of the program, the demand for the workshops has doubled in the past three years, with the SFRC scheduled to conduct a record 30 workshops this fiscal year. Recent comments from the CO to the junior enlisted ranks, as well as the SCW facilitators, are reflective of the program's value.

Commanding Officer Feedback:

- "This is an absolute must for any CO. We have no other vehicle to accurately gauge the climate and culture in our commands!"
- "The SCW identified several areas that I would never have identified on my own, that might impede operational effectiveness."
- "I value the SCW process and insights they offer and have added them to the standard practice on every boat executing availabilities here. I have found executing the SCW mid-avail has helped the COs focus their efforts and as a result has had positive impact on retention, attrition, and overall crew performance."

Department Head Feedback:

- "This is a good format for obtaining qualitative and quantitative (although subjective) assessments in a consequence free forum"
- "I feel that I can be open and honest with comments and feedback, and that I can trust your team"

Chief Petty Officer Feedback:

- "Key points/attributes of overall command climate that I had not thought about"
- "It was very informative and somewhat eye-opening"
- "Where we are, what is really happening at the command"

Junior Enlisted Feedback:

- "The chain of command cares"
- "Programs exist for legitimate feedback"
- "It was great to speak without being in trouble"
- "Just learned some of the things that the command is doing well and talked about some problems that need to be addressed"

SCWs will continue to be a key tool in our Submarine Force's pursuit of operational excellence. A priority of the Design for Undersea Warfare is to enable success while managing risk. SCWs are a key enabler and have demonstrated their value and will continue to provide a tremendous impact to our Submarine Force.

India Quietly Gate Crashes Into Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles Club?

NEW DELHI: India in April yanked open the door of the exclusive ICBM (intercontinental ballistic missile) club with the first test of Agni-V. Now, if DRDO is to be believed, India has quietly gate-crashed into an even more exclusive club of nuclear-tipped submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs).

The annual awards function of the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) on Tuesday will see PM Manmohan Singh hand over the technology leadership award to a scientist, A K Chakrabarti of the Hyderabad-based DRDL lab, for the successful development of the country's first SLBM.

Apart from India, this capability has been acquired only by four nations, the US, Russia, France and China. Now, the SLBM system is ready for induction, says the award citation. Long shrouded in secrecy as a black project, unlike the surface-to-surface nuclear missiles like Agni, the SLBM may now finally come out of the closet. Called different names at different developmental phases, which included Sagarika for an extended period, the SLBM in question is the K-15 missile with a 750-km strike range.

Celebrations, however, may be a little premature. Much like the over 5,000-km Agni-V that will be fully operational only by 2015 after four-to-five repeatable tests, the K-15 is also still some distance away from being deployed. While the SLBM may be fully-ready and undergoing production now, as DRDO contends after conducting its test several times from submersible pontoons, its carrier INS Arihant will take at least a year before it's ready for deterrent patrols.

India's first indigenous nuclear-powered submarine, the 6,000-tonne INS Arihant, is still undergoing harbor-acceptance trials with all its pipelines being cleared and tested meticulously on shore-based steam before its miniature 83 MW pressurized light-water reactor goes critical.

The submarine will then undergo extensive sea-acceptance trials and test-fire the 10-tonne K-15, which can carry a one-tonne nuclear payload, from the missile silos on its hump.

Only then will India's missing third leg of the nuclear triad - the ability to fire nukes from land, air and sea - be in place. INS Arihant has four silos on its hump to carry either 12 K-15s or four of the 3,500-km range K-4 missiles undergoing tests at the moment. The first two legs revolve around the Agni missiles and fighters like Sukhoi-30MKIs and Mirage-2000s jury-rigged to deliver nuclear warheads.

The sea-based nuclear leg in the shape of SLBMs is much more effective — as also survivable being relatively immune to pre-emptive strikes — than the air or land ones. Nuclear-powered submarines, which are capable of operating silently underwater for months at end, armed with nuclear-tipped missiles are, therefore, considered the most potent and credible leg of the triad.

With even the US and Russia ensuring that two-thirds of the strategic warheads they eventually retain under arms reduction agreements will be SLBMs, India with a clear no-first use nuclear doctrine needs such survivable second-strike capability to achieve credible strategic deterrence.

USS Buffalo Moors Aside USS Emory S. Land in Thailand

PATTAYA, Thailand - The Los Angeles-class fast attack submarine USS Buffalo (SSN 715) comes alongside the submarine tender USS Emory S. (AS 39). Buffalo, homeported in Guam, is on a western Pacific deployment while Emory S. Land is on an extended deployment to Guam, conducting coordinated tended moorings and afloat maintenance in the U.S. 7th fleet area of operations.



New Indonesian Submarines Will Inspire 'Fear' in Nation's 'Enemies': Defense Ministry

Indonesia plans to more than double its submarine fleet by 2020, the Defense Ministry announced on Tuesday as the nation began preparations for the construction on three new vessels. Ministry spokesman Brig. Gen. Hartind Asrin said the submarines will be a vital component in the defense of Indonesia's maritime borders.

"[Our] enemies will fear us when we have them; because they are beneath the ocean, invisible," Hartind said. The underwater vessels will be constructed with South Korean technology in a joint partnership between domestic shipbuilder PAL and South Korean submarine makers. They will be similar to Malaysia's "Skorpene" submarine, Hartind said.

"The construction of each submarine is expected to take three years," Hartind told the Indonesian news portal tempo.co. Indonesia currently has two diesel-powered German submarines in operation, he said.

The first of these new submarines will be constructed in South Korea, with Indonesian technicians on location. The remaining submarines will be constructed by state-owned shipbuilder PAL, Hartind said. The ministry spokesman did not know how much the submarines cost.

Russia's First Borey-Class Subs For Pacific Deployment

Russia's first two Borey-class strategic submarines will be ultimately deployed with the Pacific Fleet says Defense Minister. The submarines Yury Dolgoruky and the Alexander Nevsky are undertaking test runs in the White Sea and are expected to be commissioned by the end of 2012.

"I am absolutely certain that the first two subs will be initially placed with the Northern Fleet and will be redeployed to the Pacific Fleet after all the infrastructure there is ready," said First Deputy Defense Minister Alexander Sukhorukov recently.

Two more Borey class submarines are under construction at the Sevmash shipyard in the port city of Severodvinsk on the White Sea. The Russian Navy is expected to receive at least ten Borey class submarines by 2020. The new submarines, to be armed with Bulava ballistic missiles, will constitute the core of Russia's strategic submarine force after 2018.



USS Maryland Returns to Kings Bay

KINGS BAY, Ga. (Aug. 1, 2012) The Ohio-class ballistic missile submarine USS Maryland (SSBN 738) transits the Saint Mary's River. Maryland returned to Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay following routine operations.

New Report Suggests Navy Should Build Three Submarines Annually

The Navy could buy three attack submarines annually for many of the years between 2014 and 2023 to prevent a shortfall in the fleet, according to the Congressional Budget Office. The office recently reviewed the Navy's shipbuilding plan and found that if the Navy follows it, the service will have too few attack submarines, ballistic-missile submarines and destroyers.

To prevent that shortage, the office says, the Navy could step up the production rate for both attack submarines and destroyers in the near term, and begin purchasing the new ballistic-missile submarines in 2019 as originally planned. The current plan delays the start of construction on the new class by two years.

"I am pleased that we're getting that kind of validation from a neutral source because I think when some of us are making the case for stronger production levels, it sometimes gets discounted as parochial," U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney, D-2nd District, said Thursday. "This report really demonstrates that there are going to be real challenges with the fleet size if we're not careful."

If the Navy buys five attack submarines earlier in the 30-year plan and five fewer from 2025 to 2034, it could "maintain the desired inventory level," CBO said in its report. U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., said that in theory, the accelerated schedule "certainly makes good sense." But, he said, the question remains whether funding would be available and how the change would affect the industrial base, since more employees would be needed through 2023 but not after.

"What's really maybe most significant is the recognition that the shortfall, or the shortage in submarine building, needs to be addressed and we need to build more, not fewer," Blumenthal said. Electric Boat in Groton and Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia build two Virginia-class submarines annually under a teaming agreement, and EB is designing the ballistic-missile submarine to replace the Ohio-class boats. The number of attack submarines in the fleet will drop below the stated requirement of 48 as the Los Angeles-class submarines - which generally were built at rates of three or four per year during the 1970s and 1980s - retire more quickly than they are scheduled to be replaced.

"We ought to be building two submarines a year, at a minimum, but in no way imperiling our defense industrial base and specifically our skilled workforce by creating uncertainty and instability in the program," Blumenthal said. Courtney said there's "no question" EB could build more submarines. "Both in terms of the space that's down there and the employee base, they could handle it," he said.

He added that the three-per-year rate merits consideration and funds could be reallocated within the budget. "Priorities can be changed based on changing perceptions of our security needs," he said. "We've been talking about the shortfall on the (House Armed Services) Seapower Subcommittee for the last five years. This report suggests that the message is getting through."

CO of attack submarine Pittsburgh fired

The commanding officer of a Groton, Conn. based attack submarine was fired Friday for "allegations of personal misconduct," Submarine Group 2 said in a Sunday news release. Cmdr. Michael Ward, CO of Los Angeles-class submarine Pittsburgh, was fired by Capt. Vernon Parks, commander of Submarine Development Squadron 12, SUBGRU 2 spokeswoman Lt. Cmdr. Jennifer Cragg said.

Cragg, citing an ongoing investigation, declined to comment on the nature of the alleged misconduct or whether it had taken place on Pittsburgh. It was a short end to Ward's stint in command. He had only taken charge of the crew a week before. He was temporarily relieved by Cmdr. Michael Savageaux, the officer Ward relieved on Aug. 3.

Ward is the Navy's 13th commanding officer fired this year and the fifth the Navy said was fired for misbehavior. The Navy said that Ward had fallen short of the mark and that the penalty was swift. "Our Navy has a very clear and unambiguous standard regarding the character of our commanding officers, spelled out in the Charge of Command," Parks said, referring to a memo issued last year reiterating the responsibilities of command. "I reviewed this charge with Cmdr. Ward before he assumed command. He understood the Navy's high standards for command leadership and he failed to uphold them."

(Read more on this at - [Washington Post](#) - ed.)

Silent Running Russian attack submarine sailed in Gulf of Mexico undetected for weeks, U.S. officials say

A Russian nuclear-powered attack submarine armed with long-range cruise missiles operated undetected in the Gulf of Mexico for several weeks and its travel in strategic U.S. waters was only confirmed after it left the region, the Washington Free Beacon has learned.

It is only the second time since 2009 that a Russian attack submarine has patrolled so close to U.S. shores.

The stealth underwater incursion in the Gulf took place at the same time Russian strategic bombers made incursions into restricted U.S. airspace near Alaska and California in June and July, and highlights a growing military assertiveness by Moscow.

The submarine patrol also exposed what U.S. officials said were deficiencies in U.S. anti-submarine warfare capabilities—forces that are facing cuts under the Obama administration's plan to reduce defense spending by \$487 billion over the next 10 years.

The Navy is in charge of detecting submarines, especially those that sail near U.S. nuclear missile submarines, and uses undersea sensors and satellites to locate and track them. The fact that the Akula was not detected in the Gulf is cause for concern, U.S. officials said. The officials who are familiar with reports of the submarine patrol in the Gulf of Mexico said the vessel was a nuclear-powered Akula-class attack submarine, one of Russia's quietest submarines. A Navy spokeswoman declined to comment. One official said the Akula operated without being detected for a month. "The Akula was built for one reason and one reason only: To kill U.S. Navy ballistic missile submarines and their crews," said a second U.S. official.

"It's a very stealthy boat so it can sneak around and avoid detection and hope to get past any protective screen a boomer might have in place," the official said, referring to the Navy nickname for strategic missile submarines. The U.S. Navy operates a strategic nuclear submarine base at Kings Bay, Georgia. The base is homeport to eight missile-firing submarines, six of them equipped with nuclear-tipped missiles, and two armed with conventional warhead missiles.

"Sending a nuclear-propelled submarine into the Gulf of Mexico-Caribbean region is another manifestation of President Putin demonstrating that Russia is still a player on the world's political-military stage," said naval analyst and submarine warfare specialist Norman Polmar.

"Like the recent deployment of a task force led by a nuclear cruiser into the Caribbean, the Russian Navy provides him with a means of 'showing the flag' that is not possible with Russian air and ground forces," Polmar said in an email. The last time an Akula submarine was known to be close to U.S. shores was 2009, when two Akulas were spotted patrolling off the east coast of the United States.

Those submarine patrols raised concerns at the time about a new Russian military assertiveness toward the United States, according to the New York Times, which first reported the 2009 Akula submarine activity. The latest submarine incursion in the Gulf further highlights the failure of the Obama administration's "reset" policy of conciliatory actions designed to develop closer ties with Moscow. Instead of closer ties, Russia under President Vladimir Putin, an ex-KGB intelligence officer who has said he wants to restore elements of Russia's Soviet communist past, has adopted growing hardline policies against the United States. Of the submarine activity, Sen. John Cornyn (R., Texas), member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said, "It's a confounding situation arising from a lack of leadership in our dealings with Moscow. While the president is touting our supposed 'reset' in relations with Russia, Vladimir Putin is actively working against American interests, whether it's in Syria or here in our own backyard."

The Navy is facing sharp cuts in forces needed to detect and counter such submarine activity. The Obama administration's defense budget proposal in February cut \$1.3 billion from Navy shipbuilding projects, which will result in scrapping plans to build 16 new warships through 2017.

The budget also called for cutting plans to buy 10 advanced P-8 anti-submarine warfare jets needed for submarine detection.

In June, Russian strategic nuclear bombers and support aircraft conducted a large-scale nuclear bomber exercise in the arctic. The exercise included simulated strikes on "enemy" strategic sites that defense officials say likely included notional attacks on U.S. missile defenses in Alaska.

Under the terms of the 2010 New START arms accord, such exercises require 14-day advanced notice of strategic bomber drills, and notification after the drills end. No such notification was given. A second, alarming air incursion took place July 4 on the West Coast when a Bear H strategic bomber flew into U.S. airspace near California and was met by U.S. interceptor jets. That incursion was said to have been a bomber incursion that has not been seen since before the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. It could not be learned whether the submarine in the Gulf of Mexico was an Akula 1 type submarine or a more advanced Akula 2.

It is also not known why the submarine conducted the operation. Theories among U.S. analysts include the notion that submarine incursion was designed to further signal Russian displeasure at U.S. and NATO plans to deploy missile defenses in Europe.

Russia's chief of the general staff, Gen. Nikolai Makarov, said in May that Russian forces would consider preemptive attacks on U.S. and allied missile defenses in Europe, and claimed the defenses are destabilizing in a crisis. Makarov met with Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in July. Dempsey questioned him about the Russian strategic bomber flights near U.S. territory.

The voyage of the submarine also could be part of Russian efforts to export the Akula. Russia delivered one of its Akula-2 submarines to India in 2009. The submarine is distinctive for its large tail fin. Brazil's O Estado de Sao Paulo reported Aug. 2 that Russia plans to sell Venezuela up to 11 new submarines, including one Akula.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Moscow's military is working to set up naval replenishment facilities in Vietnam and Cuba, but denied there were plans to base naval forces in those states. Asked if Russia planned a naval base in Cuba, Lavrov said July 28: "We are not speaking of any bases. The Russian navy ships serve exercise cruises and training in the same regions. To harbor, resupply, and enable the crew to rest are absolutely natural needs. We have spoken of such opportunities with our Cuban friends." The comment was posted in the Russian Foreign Ministry website.

Russian warships and support vessels were sent to Venezuela in 2008 to take part in naval exercises in a show of Russian support for the leftist regime of Hugo Chavez. The ships also stopped in Cuba. Russian Deputy Premier Dmitri Rogozin announced in February that Russia was working on a plan to build 10 new attack submarines and 10 new missile submarines through 2030, along with new aircraft carriers.

Submarine warfare specialists say the Akula remains the core of the Russian attack submarine force. The submarines can fire both cruise missiles and torpedoes, and are equipped with the SSN-21 and SSN-27 submarine-launched cruise missiles, as well as SSN-15 anti-submarine-warfare missiles. The submarines also can lay mines. The SSN-21 has a range of up to 1,860 miles.

Navy to repair sub that caught fire in Maine

PORTLAND, Maine — The U.S. Navy intends to repair a nuclear-powered attack submarine that was severely damaged by a fire while in dry dock and then return it to the fleet, Navy officials Friday. While engineering assessments are ongoing, the Navy has decided to repair the USS Miami and is committed to doing so, Navy spokeswoman Lt. Courtney Hillson told The Associated Press.

"Our goal is to return the Miami to the fleet because this makes sense operationally and fiscally," Hillson said. There had been lingering questions over whether it would make financial sense to repair the 22-year-old submarine, which is based in Groton, Conn. Early estimates put the damage at \$400 million. A former shipyard worker from Portsmouth, N.H., is charged with setting the fire on May 23 while the sub was in dry dock at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, for a 20-month overhaul.

The fire got out of control, and the submarine's steel hull trapped heat, causing superheated smoke and a stubborn fire that took more than 100 firefighters about 12 hours to extinguish. The fire caused heavy damage to forward compartments including living quarters, a command and control center and the torpedo room but did not reach the back of the submarine, where the nuclear propulsion components are located. Two crew members, three shipyard firefighters and two civilian firefighters were hurt.

The Navy previously requested the reallocation of \$220 million for unfunded ship repairs for the current fiscal year, with the understanding that some of it would go to the USS Miami. Additional money would be required to complete the repairs to the Los Angeles-class submarine, officials said. A Navy official said more information is expected next week.

Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine and a member of the Senate Defense Appropriations Committee, said the committee has approved \$150 million to begin repairs and she vowed to continue efforts to secure funds to complete the project. "It will mean so much to the workforce to be able to fix the ship in Kittery," she said in a statement. The Navy will provide a briefing for congressional staff on the Miami, said U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney, a Democrat whose eastern Connecticut district includes the Naval Submarine Base in Groton. Electric Boat, which built the Miami and is based in Groton, likely will be involved along with the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in making the necessary repairs, Courtney said.

"This is not a normal repair and maintenance job," he said. "This is major body work." Sen. Olympia Snowe, R-Maine, said she'll work with other lawmakers and stakeholders to ensure that shipyard workers have "the resources they require to rapidly return the USS Miami to sea." Last month, the Navy announced its intent to enter into an agreement with Electric Boat for advanced planning for potential repairs that would be performed at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

Some observers had questioned whether the extreme heat damaged the structural integrity of the hull, which must withstand extreme pressure when the sub travels deep underwater. The Navy said it's confident that the sub can be made seaworthy. "We will make repairs, which require time, and we will coordinate with engineers and technical experts," Hillson, the Navy spokeswoman, said from the Pentagon. "However, we will do so without putting sailors at risk. The safety of our personnel will continue to be our priority."

The Naval Criminal Investigative Service said shipyard worker Casey James Fury confessed to setting the fire. Fury, 24, told the NCIS that he set the fire because he was feeling anxiety and wanted to go home but his medical leave had been used up. Fury, who faces charges that carry a maximum penalty of life in prison, has been ordered held without bail pending trial in U.S. District Court.

Navy 'Running Out Of Sailors To Man Submarines'

Britain's nuclear deterrent is at risk because the Navy does not have enough sailors to man its submarines, Ministry of Defence officials admit. Internal documents warn that a lack of recruits for the Submarine Service may leave attack submarines and boats carrying the Trident nuclear missile stranded in port. A separate threat comes from a predicted 15 per cent shortfall in engineers by 2015.

One in seven posts for weapons officers at the rank of lieutenant will also be vacant, raising operational questions over the boats equipped with nuclear and cruise missiles. Many submariners are being poached by the civilian nuclear sector and those who remain are being forced to go to sea for longer and more frequently. Adml Lord West, the former First Sea Lord, said the situation was "very worrying" and he hoped the Navy had mechanisms in place to make up for the shortfall.

The gaps facing the Submarine Service are disclosed in the Risk Register of the Defence Nuclear Executive Board. Under the "Risk" heading of "Submarine Manpower," the MoD's internal safety watchdog said: "There is a risk that the RN will not have sufficient suitably qualified and experienced personnel to be able to support the manning requirement of the submarine fleet."

The Navy has a fleet of six attack submarines and four Vanguard boats that carry the Trident nuclear missile, but the personnel issues could mean they cannot be deployed. The report found that the recruiting and retention of submariners was also threatening operations. "Inability to recruit, retain and develop sufficient nuclear and submarine design qualified personnel will result in an inability to support the Defence Nuclear Programme," the document said. It also questioned whether industry can deliver the Trident replacement, warning of the "erosion of manufacturing capability, cost growth, time delay, and poor performance of contractors." The Navy is carrying out a senior officer manpower review looking at ways to improve "quality of life" for submariners. It is understood that some submarines are putting to sea with only 85 per cent of their full complement.

Submariners are subsequently being forced to deploy more frequently and do more jobs. When the hunter-killer HMS Triumph returned home earlier this year it had been at sea for 13 out of the previous 17 months. There are 5,000 submariners in the Navy, but with deployments lasting four months or more continuously under the surface it is proving difficult to attract recruits.

A "dearth of experienced mid-career people" is threatening the Service and would continue "into the next decade," warned the Defence Nuclear Safety Regulator annual report. Lord West said: "There's no doubt that recruiting and keeping highly qualified nuclear engineers has been tough. Nuclear engineers have also become highly sought-after by the civil industry as this country has not trained enough." A redacted copy of the Risk Register was provided to the Nuclear Information Service. Peter Burt, the director of NIS, which promotes nuclear safety awareness, said: "These risks highlight major pitfalls ahead and that Trident replacement is far from a forgone conclusion. How effective we are at mastering these risks will determine whether Britain can remain in the nuclear weapons business."

A Navy spokesman said: "To ensure that the Royal Navy continues its excellent nuclear safety record, we review the nuclear propulsion programme to identify and manage any possible future risks; this report is part of that process."

U.S. Looks To Develop Unmanned Vessel To Hunt for Diesel Submarines

The growing number of adversaries able to build and operate quiet diesel electric submarines is a national security threat that affects U.S. and friendly naval operations around the world. To address this emerging threat, DARPA recently awarded a contract for Phases 2-4 of its Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) Continuous Trail Unmanned Vessel (ACTUV) program to Science Applications International Corporation, McLean, Va.

During Phases 2-4 the ACTUV program will attempt to design, construct and demonstrate an unmanned vessel that tracks quiet diesel electric submarines for months at a time spanning thousands of kilometers of ocean with minimal human input.

"Key features and technology for the vessel include advanced software, robust autonomy for safe operations in accordance with maritime laws, and innovative sensors to continuously track the quietest of submarine targets," said Scott Littlefield, DARPA program manager.

If successful, ACTUV would create a technological strategic advantage against the burgeoning quiet submarine threat and reduce manpower and other costs associated with current ASW trail operations. "Our goal is to transition an operational game-changer to the Navy," said Littlefield. "This should create an asymmetry to our advantage, negating a challenging submarine threat at one-tenth their cost of building subs. The program also establishes foundational technologies for future unmanned naval systems."

During Phase 1 the program refined and validated the system concept, completing risk reduction testing associated with submarine tracking sensors and maritime autonomy. Operational prototype at-sea testing is expected in mid-2015.

Life on board a British nuclear submarine

They hug cruise missiles in their sleep, don't see women for months and their biggest fear is 'going wibble'. Stephen Moss joins the crew of HMS Triumph.

'Just don't be in the toilet when we dive deep," executive officer David "Bing" Crosby advises me. "The bulkheads bend and you can't open the doors." Forget all the technical stuff about monitoring "the Bubble" when you dive – I never quite understand the role of that mysterious piece of equipment – this is the kind of practical guidance I need. I vow to stick close to Bing, second-in-command on the nuclear submarine HMS Triumph, and a funny, down-to-earth bloke.

"It's like having children," he says as the younger officers grapple for space at the first morning briefing I attend. "I've got children, and sometimes I think they're worse." This seems to be meant affectionately. I have been on the boat – submarines are always called boats, never ships – for less than 24 hours and am writing this log at a depth of 60m. Sorry, I spoke too soon. We are just rising to periscope depth – 18m below the surface – and the tall desk on which I am typing has started to list. At least I'm not in the toilet.

I joined HMS Triumph in Crete for the final week of its 10-month deployment. I had never been on a submarine before and don't especially like confined spaces. I plan to get off at Gibraltar six days from now, though the captain warns me this may not be possible if there is fog as the launch can't come alongside.

HMS Triumph distinguished itself last year in Libya, firing missiles at Gaddafi's key installations, including the one which hit the colonel's compound. The submarine's captain, Robert Dunn, feels they have been largely written out of the Libyan campaign and is keen his crew get their due. "If it be a sin to covet honour, I am the most offending soul alive," he tells me over breakfast, quoting Henry V. "Faint hearts never fucked a pig" is another of his maxims, which may be a translation from Clausewitz's *On War*. The book sits on a narrow shelf in his small cabin beside the control room.

This is Capt Dunn's final command; in fact his very last week at sea. At 48, and after three years in charge of HMS Triumph, he will be getting a desk job. It is also Chief Petty Officer Simon Johnson's final week at sea. There is a nice moment during my week aboard when the submarine (never sub, an egregious Americanism) has to surface to pass through the Straits of Messina. We go through at sunrise and Chief Johnson, who is up on the bridge, tells me it's the first time he has sailed past Stromboli since he was on the frigate HMS Leander at the start of his naval career 30 years ago. The volcano has bookended his life at sea.

I ask Chief Johnson why he switched from surface ships to submarines. "I got drafted in 1983 and didn't have any choice," he says. "I tried to get out of it. I didn't want to be a submariner. If you ask a general service chap what they think about submarines, they'll say: 'Horrible, dirty, noisy, you can't have a shower, you're always stinking.' Well, in the old days that might have been the case – water was very restricted – but you can see yourself; conditions are not that bad. On my first boat, Spartan, at the back end of 1983, it all clicked – it was a completely different way of life from general service."

He goes on to cite what most submariners say is what they like about life beneath the waves: the relative informality. There are, of course, distinctions between officers and ranks, but in so confined a space nothing like the rigidities of surface ships; the sense of being an elite, what one able seaman calls a "brotherhood"; the camaraderie that comes from knowing they rely entirely on each other. When a man, whether officer or rating, becomes a submariner, he is awarded a badge formed from two dolphins and a crown.

The badge admits you to an exclusive club – there are around 3,500 operational submariners in the UK. It means that, in the event of an emergency, you will be a help, rather than a hindrance. Until then, in the uncompromising language of submariners, you are an "oxygen thief".

"Everyone who wears the dolphins badge has a common ethos, common training and a common focus," says Lieutenant Stuart Keillor, an impressive 31-year-old Scot who will one day command a submarine. "No one does this job unless they want to. There's a lot of willpower in putting yourself into this environment for a long period. There's a lot of loyalty; and for that reason I'm very comfortable with my shipmates. There's a high expectation of the trainees that come on here. They've got a lot to prove, but once they're in the club, you can be confident they've reached a certain standard."

I know I will never be in the club. Climbing the ladders between decks exhausts me; I am forever hitting my head on protruding bits of metal; and once in the control room, while leaning against the periscope, I stumble backwards and accidentally press a button. Luckily, it is the button that says "search" and not the one next to it that says "attack". I don't want to be responsible for a missile assault on Algeria, to which we happen to be close at the time. The submarine is two separate worlds: the front half, where the men (and at the moment it is all men, though there are likely to be female submariners from next year) sleep and eat and make war; and the back half, where the nuclear reactor sits beneath the tunnel that separates for'ard from back'aft and where the engines are. I don't spend much time back'aft, but I do visit for a back'afties' treat – potatoes baked on the engine throttle. At a crude level, a submarine crew is divided into those who make war and those who make the engines work. "We push, they fight," as one back'aftie explains succinctly.

The engineers call the nuclear reactor "the big kettle". It is what enables one of these fast-attack submarines to go on long operations, with no need to come into port for refuelling. Having it on board is a huge responsibility, as HMS Triumph's marine engineering officer, Lieutenant Commander Andy Sharp, makes clear. "It's never going to explode," he says when I ask him what's the worst thing that could happen, "but it could melt. If a nuclear submarine had an accident that caused it to have a slump and melt and drop out the bottom of the boat, I don't think we'd have a nuclear fleet any more. That would be the end of nuclear submarines. It's that level of responsibility." That pressure is enormous, but it works: to its credit, the navy has managed, over half a century, to run a fleet of submarines without a major incident.

HMS Triumph's cramped conditions add to the claustrophobia. Photograph: Gary Calton for the Guardian
A key distinction to grasp is between fast-attack submarines such as HMS Triumph, which are armed with conventional cruise missiles (the UK has seven such boats in varying degrees of readiness), and the four nuclear-armed submarines, one of which is always on patrol, ready to unleash its Trident nuclear missiles if apocalypse beckons. The latter – called ballistic submarines or bombers – are, at 180m long, almost twice the size of Triumph, have bigger crews and are, according to the men who have served on them, deadly boring. "Their job is to stay silent," says one petty officer. "You have no contact with the outside world." The bombers stay at a constant depth, move very slowly and do everything to avoid detection. It is three months of suspended animation; 180 men aspiring to the life of a flat fish, though a highly educated one – many are doing Open University degrees to pass the time and improve themselves.

Another man tells me the crew on board one bomber used to amuse themselves by pretending to be motorbikes, and this rings true. "Spinning a dit" is a phrase you hear a lot on board HMS Triumph. It means telling a tale – a tale that grows with the telling. Even on a fast-attack sub, if there is nothing to attack and you grow tired of listening to passing whales and pretending to target nearby destroyers, life can get repetitive, so the men slip into other worlds. One of the crew has a large tattoo on his back: "Never stop me dreaming," which might stand as a motto for all of them.

One evening, I wander into the control room at about midnight. The watch officer and sonar operators are discussing an important philosophical question: would it be more painful to be struck by a whole tuna or a tin of tuna? This is never resolved. These epistemological issues can be sustained over weeks.

On my fourth day aboard, I make my greatest discovery: that a badger, washed into the bilge tank in Bahrain, is being kept back'aft. There is a roster to feed it, and somehow it is being kept alive. I insist on seeing it – what a wonderful story! Of course, say the back'afties, come by this evening. After a couple of hours, even in my dim-witted, mind-clouded, headachy state, I realise I have been conned. Do they even have badgers in Bahrain?

But the fantasy has become important to some of the crew. "It helps pass the time," the head badger-keeper tells me. "It takes the edge off the situation," says one of the senior ratings. "If you get into a situation that's a bit tense, mentioning the badger brings everything back down to earth. If you tried to remain alert 100% of the time it would fatigue you. The ability to relax allows you, when required, to be on the ball." It's the ability to switch instantly from badger mode to potential nuclear meltdown mode that defines a good crew.

This is a highly segregated society, yet also a very organic one. There are three separate messes, for officers, senior ratings and junior ratings, each situated on the short corridor that serves as the men's living space. The separate messes with their different atmospheres – the Xbox is never off in the junior rates mess – suggest division, yet everything else implies unity. The pay structure is relatively flat: Capt Dunn earns around £85,000; the most junior rating gets £30,000. What other organisation has that sort of ratio between top and bottom? And every crew member, officer or rating, has to know everything about the boat – the function of every one of the thousands of valves. There are half a dozen trainees on the boat studying for their dolphin badges, and they are forgoing all sleep to memorise the handbook they have been given in time for a test that could be sprung on them at any time.

Chief Petty Officer Paul "Jakie" Foran, the likable but occasionally terrifying Scot who oversees these tests, expects dedication, and woe betide any trainee (AKA oxygen thief) who is discovered having a cup of tea in the junior rates' mess when he could be unearthing the secret of the magazine spray drench system. "To me you're useless until you're qualified," says Chief Foran. "I'm a bastard, but in a nice way."

You learn early whether you will survive in this world. One young officer who wants to transfer from surface ships is aboard studying for his dolphins, and is reckoned to have too many airs and graces. The crew are merciless in mocking this affront to their democratic values. He expects to be shown where every valve is and what it's for; don't be absurd (or words to that effect), says Chief Foran, you must find out for yourself. Forget sleep.

Forgetting sleep is easy. The crew work 12 hours a day, split into six-hour watches, with changeovers at 1 and 7. Back'afties, because of the heat in which they're working, have shorter but more frequent shifts. When they're not working, most men will be in their "rack", but sleeping on a submarine is no fun. The captain, alone on the boat, gets his own cabin; the senior officers share; and everyone else is in hot, cramped, fetid dormitories. Bed space is so limited that some of the most junior ratings have to "hot bunk", sleeping in the bed vacated by a man who has just gone on watch.

You can hardly move in the bunk – sitting up is impossible – and if you turn over you are likely to tip out and end up on the floor. You have to share your rack with a gas mask and various other bits of safety equipment, plus a lot of your own gear. There are small lockers, but I am never offered one, so sleep with bag, clothes and shoes in the bed. Each bunk has an air vent, which does offer some respite from the heat but also blows a blast of cold air into your right ear. "If the air stops blowing, it means something bad has happened," one of the men tells me reassuringly. One morning I am woken by a sudden thud and fear the worst. Later, I discover it was just air being released – a routine operation.

Crew members often hug the cruise missiles to stay cool while they sleep. Several men mention "coffin dreams" – nightmares in which the sleeper shouts out that the control room is flooding or he is being pursued by a torpedo. I sympathise: though I have no nightmares – I don't sleep deeply enough for that – the racks do feel like coffins. A better option is to sleep in the "bomb shop", where the missiles and torpedoes are kept. It is the quietest, most spacious room on the boat and hugging an 18ft cruise missile keeps you cool.

A few men go "wibble" after years under water; they just can't stand it any more – the lack of proper sleep, the absence of privacy, the endlessly repeated conversations, the cycle of meals (it's Wednesday so it must be curry), the unspoken dangers. How do you know when someone has gone wibble? "The noisy ones go quiet, and the quiet ones suddenly become noisy," one man tells me. Chief Johnson recalls one experienced submariner who went wibble and started keeping a book of shipmates he thought had wronged him. "You're on my list as well," he told Johnson before being taken off the boat. He only agreed to leave as long as he could be designated captain of the rescue vessel.

The men who go doolally are, however, the exceptions. Most get into a routine – working, sleeping (as best they can), reading (Kindles are a godsend in this confined world), watching films, spinning dits and dripping. Dripping is another key part of the submariner's lexicon: it means moaning, usually in a lighthearted way and often about the food. "Ah, you found the one mushroom in the mushroom soup," says Lieutenant Gareth Batsford, who as well as being the resident film buff in the officers' mess is also one of the boat's aphorists. "You wouldn't believe the inability of well-educated, well-trained Royal Navy officers to change bloody toilet rolls," he drips at one point.

I penetrate many aspects of submarine life in my six days aboard, but sex remains elusive. "There's a saying – what happens at sea stays at sea," says medical assistant Richard Bastianpulle teasingly. "I've not really thought about it, except when I'm in bed ... by myself. People let off steam when they come alongside. I'll let you read between the lines on that." The boat will usually come into port every two months or so to pick up provisions, and the men – the single men at least – can get quite frisky.

There is one openly gay man on board. "They don't treat me any different to anyone else," he says. "I didn't tell anyone at first. I let them ask me rather than me tell them. But it's better to be open and honest than to try and deny it. People will catch you out and they'll start spreading malicious rumours." He gets ribbed about his sexuality, but says everyone gets ribbed about something. "Ribbing doesn't bother me. I let it go over my head. Some days it'll get to you, but you have to brush it off and forget about it."

The key thing is that bantering must never turn into bullying. The navy, which has become alert to equality and diversity in the past decade, is now good at stamping out bullying, which would destroy the esprit de corps in a community this small and close-knit. Christopher Herbert, a 34-year-old from St Vincent, who I discover up in the dry provisions store mixing his own rap song on a computer, says he has never suffered racial abuse on the boat. "It's zero tolerance," he says.

On my last night in the officers' mess we watch Operation Petticoat, an old submarine film with Cary Grant and Tony Curtis. They must have seen it a dozen times, but love it. The officers – especially Lieutenant Commander Crosby, who misses his young children hugely – cry easily during movies. Andy Sharp gives his recipe for the sort of movie that plays well on board, especially with the back'afties: "Some token violence, some top bollocks on view from time to time, definitely some love interest, a car chase, and it must have a happy ending." Most of these teak-like submariners, even Chief Foran, are softies at heart.

I do manage to get off at Gibraltar, two miles off the coast in a heavyish swell. A dinghy comes alongside, bashing against the side of the submarine, and one of the crew pushes me into it. The timing of the leap is crucial. Get it wrong and you will be dripping in a literal sense. I end up upside down in the dinghy and wrench my shoulder. I'm just not built to be a submariner, and seem to lack Cary Grant's swagger. I am loaded on to a small patrol vessel, which pipes its salutation to the departing submarine. I am relieved to be breathing fresh air, yet sad not to be heading home with HMS Triumph. As a parting gift, the captain has given me an honorary dolphins badge, and I will treasure it always. Despite all my shortcomings, I feel I was starting to become part of the life of the boat. Me and the badger.

US Military Scientists are Working on Unmanned Long-Endurance Submarine

US military scientists are developing an unmanned submarine that can hang around underwater for several months to track the presence of enemy submarines. DARPA, the US Defense Advanced Research and Projects Agency, awarded a contract to the Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) to develop the design, which is meant for the products of the ASW (Anti-Submarine Warfare) ACTUV (Continuous Trail Unmanned Vessel) program to offset the diesel-electric submarines, which are a potential risk to the US Navy and its global allies.

SAIC is engaged in Phases 2, 3 and 4 of the ACTUV submarine program to design, develop, and conduct sea trials of an unmanned vessel that is capable of tracking diesel electric submarines, covering thousands of kilometers of sea with reduced man power. Particularly, Phase 2 is the 'Design a vessel' stage and Phase 3 is the 'Build a vessel' stage, while Phase 3 is the 'Test a vessel' stage. Phase 1, which dealt with the refinement and validation of the system concept, is already completed.

If successful, the ACTUV submarine program will deliver a superior technology to the US Navy and reduce the navy's manpower expenses in addition to other benefits. Operational unmanned submarine sea trials are slated to commence between the second quarter and third quarter of 2015.

DARPA's ACTUV program manager, Scott Littlefield stated that the vessel will feature robust autonomy ensuring safe operations according to maritime laws, advanced software, and advanced sensors to constantly track enemy submarines. In addition, the program creates foundational technologies for upcoming unmanned naval systems.

Historic World War II submarine USS Cod assured of future home on Cleveland lakefront

CLEVELAND, Ohio — Representatives of the USS Cod Submarine Memorial were assured by city officials Wednesday that the World War II vintage vessel will continue to be a valued part of Cleveland's lakefront, easing some concerns regarding the attraction's future. Paul Farace, memorial director, has wondered about the impact of a proposed office complex on city-owned property where the Cod is docked, ever since the Geis Cos. of Streetsboro announced those development plans earlier this month.

Farace said the Cod's current location draws many of its 25,000 annual visitors from people who park at Burke Lakefront Airport and spot the sub while walking to the nearby Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum. He and other Cod representatives met Wednesday with Ward 3 Councilman Joe Cimperman and Chris Warren, chief of regional development for Mayor Frank Jackson.

Farace said he was assured by Cimperman and Warren that the Cod is an integral part of the lakefront. "The Cod is a very important treasure," Warren said after the meeting. "We are committed to a continued presence of the Cod on the lakefront, and we will work with the Cod toward that goal."

But Farace noted he was asked to be open to the possibility of moving the memorial elsewhere on the lakefront. Geis officials were not at the meeting and have not returned calls over several days for comment. Farace said the Cod pays the city \$375 a year to rent a 25-car parking lot along the 312-foot dock where the Cod is berthed. The site also includes a small grassy area for exhibits and maintenance facilities, and where commemorations, weddings, funerals and holiday events are held.

The Cod, which sank 15 Japanese ships during World War II, came to Cleveland in 1959 as a Navy Reserve training vessel. When the Navy decommissioned the sub in 1972 and announced plans to scrap it, a local "Save the Cod" campaign was launched and the memorial created in 1976.

Farace said the Cod Memorial has been designated as a National Historic Landmark. Farace said he was not aware of the proposed office development until he read about it in The Plain Dealer. "Every time a lakefront master plan is introduced, nobody comes to us and asks, 'How does your operation work?' " Farace said. "Nobody understands how the Cod works, except for us."

After the meeting, Farace said he was cautiously optimistic regarding the future of the Cod. "They told me that any place you go, or if you stay, you'll get the things you require to maintain and preserve the Cod," Farace said. "When they say they like the Cod, and they want it to remain a vital part of the lakefront, what more can we ask for?"

SUBVETS NEWS & VIEWS

Ed Smith of Smith's Heating and Air Receives USSVICB Plaque



On Friday August 10th, a contingent from Charleston Base presented a plaque to Ed Young in appreciation of his hard work, generosity and dedication to Charleston Base activities. The presentation was long in coming, but we finally pinned Ed down. Ed, owner of Smith's Heating and Air Conditioning of North Charleston, has been very generous with his time, talent, and resources in assisting with many Charleston Base activities. A hearty 'well done' to Ed Young!

In the photo, from left to right are: Carl Chinn, Ed Young, Marty Sessler, Rick Sparger, Ken Hutchison.

2012 South Eastern Region Report

Read the 2012 South Eastern Region Report [here](#).

Cheating To Save The Nukes

The U.S. Navy has again dismissed allegations that there is pervasive cheating on the many qualification exams members of submarine crews must regularly take. This comes two years after the captain of the USS Memphis was dismissed, along with ten percent of his crew, because they cheated on nuclear equipment qualification tests.

Since then, former crewmen and officers on nuclear subs have kept coming forward to insist that the practice was widespread. The reason was that the tests had been made more and more difficult, beyond the point where it made any sense. Rather than lose a lot of nuclear power system personnel, the officers tolerated cheating. More senior commanders, caught in the middle, looked the other way. The Navy insists that this has not, and is not, happening.

Read more about this [here](#).

The USSVI 990 Tax Return

The USSVI 990 Tax Return for 2011 is posted for viewing at www.ussvicb.org under the DOCUMENTS Button, then ORGANIZATION.

Please keep in mind that the numbers are significantly different than the Budget numbers because the IRS has us on a calendar tax year from January 1st through December 31st while our Budget is based on our operating fiscal year of

September 1st through August 31st.

A second thing you need to keep in mind is that the 990 Corporate Tax Return includes the numbers from the Base End of Year Reports as they are considered branches of USSVI and included in our tax reporting while the Budget numbers only consider the National revenue and expenses. Finally, an event of significance was noted in that for the first time in the history of our organization USSVI and its bases exceeded the million dollar mark in total revenues. Our net assets work out to be roughly 1.5 million with 1 million held by the Bases and half a million held by the National organization.

Navy & Veteran News and Other Gouge

Fraternization Is A Given In The Military By Mike Cohen (Virginia Pilot)

Once again, the Navy brass is going to battle stations over fraternization in the ranks. That comes as no great surprise, of course, given the number of captains, commanding officers and command master chiefs fired for inappropriate relationships over the past year or so. While fraternization always has been a fact of life in our modern Navy, its effects on military readiness and the Pentagon purse are evidently a bit harder to sweep under the rug when it starts decimating command staffs.

What is somewhat surprising is that after more than three decades of gender integration - and an endless variety of scandals, investigations, studies and useless behavior-modification programs - the Navy still thinks it can come up with training that will persuade those in the higher ranks not to socialize with their subordinates. Good luck. When human institutions challenge Mother Nature, they will lose every time.

The futility of attempting to stop men and women from doing what comes naturally is perhaps best illustrated in the way Field Marshal Josip Broz - also known as Tito of Yugoslavia - kept the discipline in his 30 percent female partisan army during World War II. He established a firm policy of chastity, with immediate execution as the penalty for violators. But even his "have sex and die" policy didn't stop dozens of libidinous couples from becoming casualties of his firing squads.

Difficult as it is for some to accept, there is a reason military organizations have been predominantly single gender throughout most of history. And the idea that the services could become co-ed without a huge sociological cost has been preposterous from the beginning.

Despite all sorts of promises from Congress in those early years that inappropriate relationships would not be tolerated in the armed services and would not impede discipline, anyone with any common sense knew better.

The services have been creative in dealing with these issues. To make things look better, they have gradually changed several regulations to redefine wrongs as rights. For example, while pregnancy was once grounds for discharge, a sailor who finds herself with child now enjoys nearly two years of nondeployable status at the expense of the taxpayer.

The Naval Academy has even gone so far as to create the "love chit" - written approval of a relationship between midshipmen of different classes (that would otherwise be fraternization) provided that both partners are not in the same battalion. Indeed, the Academy is a far cry from the no-nonsense institution that I attended more than four decades ago.

All of this regulatory backpedaling has been accompanied by a public relations campaign that produces rehearsed answers when the troublesome issues are raised.

"It's expensive to do the right thing," retorted a captain when I mentioned the enormous cost of pregnancy and sex-related discipline problems, which total in the billions every year.

Considering that this money could be more productively spent on military hardware or retaining valuable personnel, it's puzzling how wasting it on problems that add no military value can be characterized as the right thing.

And now the ante has been raised to the point where the brass can no longer afford to simply accept consensual relations between the ranks as a cost of doing business.

So let me humbly suggest that the good admirals not throw good money after bad on another futile training program.

If senior officers find fraternization worth the risk of their careers, and if Tito's troops found it worth dying for, mere training is unlikely to change Mother Nature.

Military Retirees Turning 65

What does a military retiree need to do when he/she turns 65? Does he/she need Medicare if the retiree already has TRICARE? Will the retiree personally have to sign-up for Medicare or will TRICARE do this for him/her? Questions like these are normal for beneficiaries who aren't sure of their options when celebrating their 65th birthday.

TRICARE and Medicare are separate programs. Medicare is health insurance for people age 65 or older, as well as for people under age 65 who qualify for Social Security disability insurance. TRICARE for Life (TFL) is TRICARE's Medicare-wraparound coverage and is available to all Medicare-eligible TRICARE beneficiaries. In order to be covered by TFL, beneficiaries must have Medicare Part A (hospitalization) and Part B (medically-necessary services like doctors' services, outpatient care, home health services, and other medical services) coverage.

For TFL beneficiaries, Medicare is the primary insurance and TFL acts as the secondary insurance, minimizing out-of-pocket expenses. There is no enrollment fee or paperwork associated with TFL, however, beneficiaries must sign up for Medicare Part B as soon as they become eligible to avoid late-enrollment penalties. There is a standard monthly premium for Part B coverage, based on income.

For more information regarding Medicare enrollment, beneficiaries can call at 800-633-4227 or visit www.medicare.gov and click the "Retiree Insurance" tab on the left side of the page.

Information about TRICARE and Medicare coverage, can be found at www.tricare.mil or call Wisconsin Physicians Service at 866-773-0404.

New Health Care Benefits Bill

Rep. Jon Runyan (NJ) introduced the "Military Health Care Protection Act" (H.R. 6266) that seeks to protect TRICARE beneficiaries from excessive and unfair enrollment fee increases and significant hikes in pharmacy co-pays. The bill is companion legislation to Senate legislation (S. 3203) introduced by Senators Frank Lautenberg (NJ) and Marco Rubio (FL). These proposals seek to protect TRICARE beneficiaries from excessive and unfair enrollment fee increases and significant hikes in pharmacy co-pays (Standard, Prime, and TRICARE-for-Life) included in the Administration's FY 2013 budget request. The bills emphasize that military service is unlike other civilian occupations and associated health care benefits are earned through 20 or more years of arduous service and sacrifice.

The bills prohibit any TRICARE fees, and pharmacy co-pays from exceeding that year's percentage increase in retired pay. Further, the proposals prohibit dependents of members who died while on active duty or from an injury, illness, or disease incurred while on active duty, from being charged an enrollment fee for TRICARE coverage.

TRICARE Pharmacy Options

The TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) issued a statement to remind TRICARE beneficiaries that they have several pharmacy options, including military pharmacies, TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery and 56,000 network pharmacies.

Military treatment facility (MTF) pharmacies fill prescriptions free of charge, up to a 90-day supply for most medications. Not all medications are available at MTF pharmacies, but beneficiaries can use the TRICARE formulary search tool, (http://pec.ha.osd.mil/formulary_search.php) to determine if a medication is available. Registered users may also use TRICARE Online to request prescription refills at www.tricareonline.com

TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery is another option with low or no co-pays for beneficiaries. It's safe, convenient and easy to use from home, when traveling on a temporary assignment or moving to another TRICARE region. Prescriptions are mailed to any address in the United States and its territories. Beneficiaries can get up to a 90-day supply for most medications with minimal out-of-pocket costs. Once registered, beneficiaries can sign up for automatic refills or request them by mail, phone or online. TRICARE recommends home delivery option for prescriptions needed on a regular basis.

Beneficiaries who choose to fill or refill prescriptions at a retail network pharmacy can get up to a 30-day supply. Certain vaccines are covered for zero co-payment at participating network pharmacies. Call 1-877-363-1303 or visit www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE/ to find a participating pharmacy.

Force Cuts Skip Flag Officers by Sam Fellman (Navy Times)

Admiral numbers creep up despite a fleet cut in half since the Cold War

Over the past two decades, the fleet and the force have plummeted from Cold War highs. Only one segment of the Navy has bucked that ebb tide: admirals.

Twenty-nine more flag officers are serving today than in 2002, the start of the latest draw down that has axed 60,459 Sailors from the service. The tally of flags rivals their predecessors who served at the tail end of the Cold War, when the fleet still numbered 570 ships, roughly double today's 286-ship fleet. The rise in admirals stands in stark contrast to the fate of the enlisted force, which has historically suffered the bulk of the cuts; the latest round will force out 2,946 Sailors by Sept. 1 via enlisted retention boards.

These contrary fortunes have brought renewed attention to one tell-tale manpower metric: the Sailor-to-admiral ratio.

In 1990, there were 2,051 Sailors for each admiral. In 2012, there are 1,085 Sailors for each admiral - nearly double the brass footprint.

The Navy and some defense experts say the admiral expansion reflects the heavy demand for experienced, competent officers in the post-9/11 era. But it also means a top-heavy force, as each flag officer is entitled to aides, offices, vehicles and drivers, travel money and other trappings of admiralty. Slashing this had been a crusade for Robert Gates, the previous defense secretary, who called last year for eliminating more than 100 general and flag officer positions across the services.

The Navy has fallen from its high-water mark of 257, set in 2010. And the tally will retreat further; it's expected to hit 235 by October 2013, according to official Navy figures provided to Congress annually in the service's budget request. But some believe the number is still too high - out of whack with the rest of today's Navy.

"It's an abomination," said retired Capt. Lawrence Korb, who served as a top Pentagon budget official in the Reagan administration, after reviewing the figures. "You've got almost as many admirals as ships."

Korb, now a defense expert at the liberal Center for American Progress, added: "It's unfair to the Sailors, and it gives the perception to the American people that there's a lot of waste in the defense budget."

The Navy chalks up the rise in flag officers to increasing demand, especially for joint billets, and points out that the figure will drop over the next six years.

"Since 9/11, the demand for additional Navy flag officers has increased," Rear Adm. Denny Moynihan, the Navy's top spokesman, said in an Aug. 8 interview. "In addition to providing the Marine Corps with senior health executives, chaplains, [Judge Advocate General officers] and acquisition professionals, the Navy is providing flag officers to fill the joint force leadership positions established by the Department of Defense at U.S. Africa Command and U.S. Northern Command."

'Bloated Force'

The Navy is not the most brass-heavy service. That distinction belongs to the Air Force, which sports 302 generals for a force roughly the same size as the Navy.

There were 876 airmen for each Air Force general as of March 31, the latest count available. The Army, with the largest enlisted force, clocks in third with a ratio of 1-to-1,456; the Marines are essentially where the Navy was in 1990, with a ratio of 1-to-2,073.

Admirals aren't cheap. For instance, a one-star with 24 years of service who lives in Washington, D.C. with dependents receives \$180,270 annually, including both base pay and basic housing allowance. Pay, of course, only increases with higher rank and more years of service. The top four-stars, such as the combatant commanders and service chiefs, receive \$20,587.80 per month in salary alone, according to the 2012 pay chart.

The Navy paid its admirals a total of \$39.3 million in salaries for fiscal 2011, budget documents show. That doesn't include special pays or the basic housing allowance, which varies by location and dependents.

And that's only their compensation. This does not include the cost of the additional staffs the officers lead, or the amenities to which they're entitled - the very outlays that Gates, the former defense secretary, attacked.

"The Navy now has over two dozen more admirals than it did just 10 years ago," said Ben Freeman, a national security expert at the nonprofit Project on Government Oversight, which has advocated for cutting flag and general officers. "With enlisted, officers, and the fleet all shrinking, what exactly are these new admirals commanding?"

"Taxpayers that are financing this bloated force deserve an explanation."

The Fleet Reserve Association, a nonprofit group that advocates for enlisted Sailors, Coast Guardsmen and Marines on Capitol Hill, viewed the latest data as further evidence of "brass creep," as the trend of the services to add generals is known.

"FRA questions the current number of Navy flag officers and associated billets - particularly since there have been major end-strength reductions and nearly 3,000 career enlisted personnel are being involuntarily separated due to the [enlisted retention boards]," retired Master Chief Musician Joe Barnes, FRAs national executive director, said in a statement.

The Navy says the spike in admirals is an outcome of Pentagon strategy, which has called for - and funded - joint billets. At present, 68 flags are serving in these joint positions, Moynihan said. If these are excluded, then the Navy has held steady at roughly 160 flags since 1990, according to the Navy Flag Matters office, which oversees detailing and organization for one- to four-star positions.

If these numbers are used, the Navy's admiral-to-Sailor ratio has still doubled from 1-to-3,282 in 1990 to 1-to-1,649 in 2012. However, these numbers rely on the total number of enlisted, whether or not they served in joint-funded billets; the Navy was unable to provide corresponding data on the number of enlisted and non-flag officer assignments funded by joint funding for these same years.

As part of Gates' push to reduce the flag force, the Navy is dropping 14 flag billets by a pay grade and is eliminating 11 altogether, reductions over the next six years that occur as current office-holders leave their positions, said Moynihan, who retired Aug. 10.

Still, the Navy's admiral creep predates the post-9/11 decade, the data shows. Admirals have been spared from the successive draw-downs, from the steep "peace dividend" after the Cold War and the last decade of cuts, as their ranks hold steady over a vastly smaller force.

In fact, the services' top-heavy composition has snowballed for decades, said Korb, the assistant defense secretary for manpower, reserve affairs, installations and logistics from 1981 to 1985, who recalled being asked at the time why the services had so many more admirals and generals per enlisted than they had had in World War II.

So why do Navy leaders invariably cut Sailors instead of admirals? "Because they're the ones doing the cutting," Korb said.

On The Web

Some Websites and Blogs of Interest to USSVICB Members

[SSBN USS Maine](#)

[The USS Perch \(SS 313\)](#)

[Author Don Keith](#)

[Homemade Submarine \(oh those clever Russians\)](#)

(email your favorite links for publication to [steve](#))

Navy History

WWII DIESEL BOAT ERA by Michael Skurat

There have been many major changes in the U.S. Navy Submarine Service since the WWII Diesel Boat Era. It might be interesting historically to note some of them.

Initially there were only seven pay grades (actually eight). They ran from one to seven with Apprentice Seaman (AS) as one, Seaman Second Class

(S2/c) as two, Seaman First Class (S1/c) as three, Petty Officer Third Class (e.g. MM3c) as four. Petty Officers Second and First Class as five and six. Chief Petty Officers were initially promoted to "seven A" for one year (Acting Appointment) and then to Chief Petty Officer as pay grade seven. There were no Master or Command Chief, etc. The "C" for Chief Petty Officers preceded the rate designation, for example CMM not MMC as today. For all of the seaman ratings there was a comparable Fireman (F)

The Officer's rank structure has remained consistent with minor exceptions. During WWII a five star Fleet Admiral rank was added and bestowed on Nimitz and King. No one promoted to that rank since WWII. Another thing there was no Commodore rank utilized. Officers were promoted from Captain to Rear Admiral (lower half) and hence to Rear Admiral (upper half). The Rear Admiral (Lower Half) replaced the Commodore rank. As it is custom to call any Commanding Officer Captain it also was custom to call a Submarine Squadron Commander Commodore.

Before WWII an Apprentice Seaman's pay was \$21.00 per month. Pays increased in WWII with Apprentice Seaman to \$50.00 per month and to around \$120.00 per month for a Chief. All personnel on Submarines got 50% submarine money and 20% sea duty pay. When added together added up to about 80% extra pay.

If you were married and/or had dependents your pay was reduced by \$28.00 per month the U.S. Navy supplemented another \$22.00 and your dependent was sent a monthly check for \$50.00. Consequently, an Apprentice Seaman would get \$22.00 per month. However, enlisted personnel below pay grade four could not marry without the permission of their Commanding Officer. This breached more often than observed and obviously many entered the service married.

At one time the Navy Paymasters would pay personnel with \$2.00 bills so that when spent it would indicate to the local economy the impact of the service. Also when being paid by the Paymaster on board a tender you would line up with your "pay chit" to draw your pay. When you reached the pay desk you would salute the Paymaster, put your fingerprint on the "pay chit" and draw your money. There was a posted pay list indicating what you had on the "books" and you could draw all or whatever amount you desired

Submarine and sea pay were a real boon especially when sea store cigarettes at six cents a pack and a bottle of beer on Bank St. was twenty-five cents. Later when you came in off patrol you would have that back pay and be really flush.

Due to rapid expansion of every aspect of the U.S. Navy, if you could cut the mustard, promotions were forthcoming. Many a serving enlisted person commissioned (called mustangs) or advanced in rating because of the enormous need to fill billets in new construction and replace casualties. Classes at the U.S. Naval Academy graduated early. Personnel with special qualifications were coming into the service rated and/or commissioned. You could see a Chief Petty Officer with no hash marks. These ratings were derided and called "slick arms" (no hash marks) and/or "Tajo" ratings by the old-timers. Some enlisted personnel commissioned as regular line officers, Warrant Officers and Limited Duty Officers (LDOs) in specific areas. Such commissions initially were considered temporary with reversion back to their permanent grades at the conclusion of hostilities

They created many specialty ratings. In their "Crow" specialty designator was a diamond with a letter inside, e.g., the letter "A" would be for a coach or professional athlete who would conduct physical conditioning, etc. Most, if not all, of these ratings ceased to exist with the end of the war. Some referred to these as "square knot" rates.

There were right and left arm rates. Right arm rates were considered "Sea Going Rates" (BM, QM. GM. SM, FC, TM, etc.) and the "Crow" was worn on the right arm. Left arm rates were ancillary and were MM, Y, EM, RM, MOMM, ET, etc. Right arm rates were senior to left arm ratings. There was no Boatswain Mate Third Class they were called Coxswains.

Seamen and Firemen wore a "watch stripe" round the right shoulder - white for seamen red for firemen. There was other colors of "Watch Stripes" for aviation, CBs, etc. Indication of rate was on uniform cuffs. One white/red stripe for AS/FA, two for S2c/F2/c and three for S1/c and F1/c. The present diagonal 1, 2, or 3 stripe(s), in color was originally for WAVE uniforms and after WWII were adopted for the present enlisted uniform and the watch stripe was eliminated.

The "T-Shirt" a part of the enlisted uniform initially served two purposes. (1) It was to be worn without the Jumper on work details, especially in tropical locations. (2) It was meant to have the high white neckline to show in the "V" of the Jumper. Some personnel, to enhance the appearance would cut the tab off and wore the "T-shirt" backward for a better appearance especially if with age and washings it seemed to sag. The popularity of the T-Shirt expanded into wide public acceptance after WWII and is now utilized, not only as an undergarment but as outerwear with various designs, logos, etc.

There were no Silver Metal Dolphins for enlisted personnel. Dolphins for enlisted personnel consisted of embroidered "patches". (white for blues and blue for whites) sewn on the right forearm. Silver Metal Dolphins for enlisted personnel was authorized after WWII.

All enlisted personnel wore embroidered "patches" as distinguishing marks e.g., if you were a designated striker you could wear the insignia for that specialty on the left upper sleeve.

Other distinguishing marks for enlisted personnel were "patches" on uniforms, e.g., an Expert Lookout "patch" binoculars, a diver a divers helmet (M for Master. with degree of qualification indicated on the chest section of the helmet. These worn on the right upper sleeve and there were many of them. One "perk" that has persisted is the wearing of gold rating insignia and hash marks for those with 12 years of good conduct.

Chief Petty Officers merely pinned their fouled anchor hat insignia to the front top of their hat covers. The black band and background for the insignia was initiated after WWII.

Officers did wear Gold Metal Dolphins as they do today.

Unknown today was also the fact that there was a dress white uniform for enlisted personnel. The collar and cuffs were blue and were adorned with piping. What is worn today are "undress whites". Pictures of them are in old "Bluejacket Manuals".

Officers wore swords for ceremonial occasions as they do today but back before WWII Chief Petty Officers had a cutlass for ceremonial dress occasions.

Another uniform item that is now passé is the flat hat. Once the ribbon had the name of your ship but this discontinued for security reasons and all flat hats merely had U.S. Navy in gold on the ribbon. In boot camp all of your uniform items were stenciled with your name and service number. There were no doors on lockers and each item had a prescribed method of folding and stowing. It was even prescribed as to how you would pack your seabag.

Originally, the entire submarine base was literally below the railroad tracks. Later as the base expanded it was called "lower base". Most of the upper base buildings, i.e., Morton Hall, Dealey Center, etc., were constructed for WWII. The road from the present main gate past the golf course was the Groton-Norwich road. About half way up the road was an overhead railroad bridge. The entrance to the base was under the bridge and the Marine guard stationed there in a guard shack. The base commanders office was housed in a small brick building about half way between the training tower and the Torpedo Shop.

Submarine School - six weeks enlisted and three months for officers.

Of some 250,000 men who applied for submarine duty less than 10% made it to Sub School and many of those washed out. Submarine School was the sole tyrannical domain of one Chief Torpedoman Charles Spritz. Submarine School was called "Spritz's Navy". He ruled with an iron hand and was feared by instructors and students alike. He had little regard for rate whether you were a Seaman First Class or a Petty Officer First Class. To call him eccentric was a gross understatement. He did not smoke, did not drink and was single. It is open to debate as to if he ever even pulled a liberty. His total devotion was to the Submarine School. It was universally conceded that he had gone "asiatic", not 100% stable and perhaps as a youngster he might have been dropped on his head.

He insisted that personnel, at all times, be properly and neatly attired in the regulation "Uniform of the Day" without exception. No tailor made, proper rolled neckerchief down to the "V" in the Jumper with immaculate white T-Shirt showing, shoes well shined, etc. He did not permit smoking nor any type of horseplay. He demanded that all personnel move at a fast pace.

Chief Spritz had the uncanny ability to be everywhere at all times and pity the poor individual who crossed his path. His discipline was swift and sure. He felt it was his personal mission to ascertain that anyone leaving sub school for submarine duty was in every respect ready. He had many axioms but his favorite was "There is room for anything on a submarine except a mistake". Sub school students were not "boots", many, if not most, had time in the U.S. Navy and were rated.

There is an article in POLARIS issue of August, 2000 (Submarine Saga segment) which delves into more detail relative to Chief Spritz and is briefly incorporated here as it is a definite part of the Diesel Boat Era.

Sub Vets of WWII in recognition of respect, and a fealty obligation to this once feudal lord and master, wear a "Spritz's Navy" patch on their vests.

It would seem that the screening at Sub School served us well. Friction between members of the crew was unbecoming and unacceptable. If an individual demonstrated an inability to "get along" he could be transferred to another boat. If the same conduct prevailed there he would be transferred out of submarines.

The training tower caused many a wash out for both physical and mental reasons. If a person could not "pop" his ears it could cause pain and even bleeding from the ears. Your voice changed dramatically to a high pitch under pressure. All personnel had to qualify from the 100' lock with the Mommson Lung. Right after the war it was noted that some German submariners had made emergency escapes using free ascents. A number of crews from boats went to the tower and made free ascents.

We had less pomp insofar as the ceremony observed when a member of the crew qualified than is apparent today. The individual, thrown over the side then sewed dolphins on his uniforms and wore them with pride. They have always been, and always will be, a badge of honor regardless of manner in which bestowed.

There was less reverence on some other occasions also, e.g., when a "Good Conduct Medal" was awarded to a member of the crew it would be given by the Captain (or perhaps the Exec) at quarters amid "hoots and hollers" with cries of "Undiscovered Crime". There was also a bonus system for awards ranging from \$1.00 per month for the Good Conduct Medal to \$5.00 per month for the Congressional Medal of Honor.

"Tailor Made" dress blues were the uniform of the day for liberty. The jumper was skin tight with a zipper in the side so that it could be taken off. Accentuated bell bottoms were mandated. The inside of the cuffs were decorated with embroidered color decorations, usually dragons, etc., and were only visible when the cuffs were turned up.

When you made Chief you initially bought the cheapest hat you could find since it was also considered appropriate and properly respectful to have all of the crew urinate in your first hat.

Sad to note in this day and enlightened age all of the military services of the United States were segregated during our era. The practice abolished by President Truman over 50 years ago. Stewards, at that time, recruited from America territories and from American minorities. Even in such a tight knit group as American Submarines two racks in the Forward Torpedo Room hung off the overhead beneath The Torpedo Loading Hatch were reserved for the Stewards. Rated Stewards wore uniforms similar to Chiefs.

The submarine sailor was a very irreverent individual with an avid distaste for regulations, etc. The average life span of a submarine sailor was four patrols (about a year). Despite bravado, that thought prevailed to varying degrees depending upon the individual. That premise however, was unsaid but used as an excuse for hell-raising. Rarely mentioned in tales of WWII submarine lore was the fact that going through minefields was as apprehensive as being depth charged.

Submarine Officers and crews were very young - anyone past thirty was a very old man. Admiral Charles Lockwood (Uncle Charley) Com Sub Pac was most forgiving, as were Skippers and Execs, of transgressions of both Officers and men. Returning from patrol crews were treated extremely well.

Another "perk" of the submarine force was that any record of "minor" disciplinary action that a member of the crew suffered would be entered into the "page 9" of his service record. Virtually all disciplinary action was handled internally on the boat. However, both the original and carbon copy (BuPers Copy) retained in his jacket. When transferred, the original and copy, removed by the Yeoman to be deep sixed. Unless there was a serious offence personnel transferred with a clean record.

Many friendships were formed in sub school, plus other training and schools and transfers were not uncommon due to the needs of new construction, promotions, etc. Consequently, the force became even more closely knit. It was the rare boat that did not have personnel whom you knew.

Submariners were very independent and resourceful, both individually and as a group. Needs

(and desires) of the boat as prescribed by the U.S. Navy, did not always coincide with what was considered proper nor adequate. Therefore, a system of "midnight requisitioning" and "midnight small stores" developed to enhance efficiency. This avenue of acquisition considered a solemn duty in promoting the war effort. Those proficient and innovative in this endeavor were greatly admired. It was an art as well as a science executed individually or as a group cooperative effort. Some of these escapades took great ingenuity as well as "brass balls". As a term of affection they were called "scroungers" and/or "dog robbers". If a Skipper or Exec made an "innocent" passing remark that some particular thing might be "nice" it would appear mysteriously in due time.

On board an informal, but professional, attitude prevailed. Although we had an evaporator to make fresh water, battery watering was primary. In the design and scheme of things, personal hygiene or washing of clothes did not seem to be considered. One Engineering Petty Officer, called the "Water King" ran the evaporators. Personal hygiene

or washing of clothing was an afterthought. The use of after-shave lotions, deodorants and especially talcum powders prevailed. Large cans of "Lilac" were the norm, purchased inexpensively and sprinkled liberally.

To the unacquainted it could appear that the rapport between Officers and men was quite informal and to a degree it was but it in no way detracted from efficiency, military courtesy, tradition or discipline. There was a strong mutual respect. Aye-Aye Sir, Very Well and Well Done were accorded as appropriate. The vast majority of the crew was rated and competent in their skills. Obviously so were our officers. There was no such thing as stenciled ratings on dungaree shirts so a person coming aboard a submarine at sea would have a difficult time determining any individuals rate. Also there was an axiom that in submarines "you left your rate on the dock". Ability was the hallmark.

When conditions approached that of a Chinese garbage scow junk with an over flowing head and the crew in dire need of fumigation the Skipper might decide to allow showers piecemeal by sections. You lined up to enter the shower, the Chief of the Boat turned on the water for 2 seconds and shut it down while you soaped down. You were then allowed a correspondingly brief rinse.

Each member of the crew was allotted one locker which measured about 12" high, 18" wide and about 18" deep. You kept your uniforms under your mattress. Your rack had a plastic zip around cover. Your mattress was encased in a "mattress cover" which was akin to an oversized pillow case. Able to be turned over once and some even turned them inside out and got two more uses. Less the uninitiated be stunned by that you must be cognizant of lack of water for regular laundry.

Internal communications on board were conducted by the 1MC and 7MC phone and speaker systems.

To reenter a submarine after handling lines etc. when returning to port was a shocking revelation. It was impossible to believe that you had survived that malodorous environment. Politely put the atmosphere was conducive to a shanty town house of ill repute that also was inundated by a backup of its sewer system. Pity the poor relief crew that had to come on board and make the boat shipshape again.

You could immediately identify an Electrician on a submarine. He was the individual with the most shredded moth eaten dungarees.

Ribald humor was the tenor of the day. No topic or human frailty was off limits. Nothing was sacred. Horseplay and trickery were the order of the day. The antics and demeanor of the crew, both at sea and ashore, would not be socially acceptable nor politically correct nowadays. I fear that the late Admiral Rickover would have been aghast.

One real advantage was food, especially when you first went out. Although they were ridden without mercy the cooks did an excellent job of feeding the crew. We ate family style off china plates. Our officers ate exactly what the enlisted personnel did. The stewards would come back to the After Battery Galley and fill their serving plates and bring it to the Forward Battery for the Wardroom. When leaving port rations were stored in every conceivable space (including the shower since it wouldn't be needed). However, as supplies diminished the cooks were hard pressed to come up with varied favorable menus. All boats had "open icebox" so you could prepare and cook anything you wanted at any time as long as you cleaned up after yourself. The After Battery "Mess" was for chow, off duty recreation, meeting space and a hang-out.

This is a collective attempt at recollection after the passing of a half-century so any errors or omissions hopefully forgiven as "senior frailties". Much of this is collective memory and is a compilation of boats in general. There is no pride of authorship so any comments, additions, corrections and/or deletions are welcome and appreciated. This is merely a historical comparison as best one can do and is in no way a negative reflection between "then and now".

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Read the June 10th issue of the Sub Base Gazette [here](#).