



PRIDE RUNS DEEP



"To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of 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."

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Editor's Corner

Welcome to the latest issue of your *Periscope* newsletter—one of the longest on record! This proves it: send me good stuff to include (especially photos) and I'll add the pages to put it all in. Deal? Now excuse me while I turn my attentions to your forthcoming issue of *American Submariner*. The sub publications never stop. ;-) —Jeff

The U.S. Navy's Great Nuclear-Powered Attack Submarine Shortage is Real

(Reproduced from the 19FortyFive website - Published April 13, 2025)

by Brent M. Eastwood



Virginia-class nuclear-powered attack submarine at sunset. (Photo: U.S. Navy.)

Not Enough U.S. Navy Submarines?

Yes. There must be a way to counteract the growth of the Chinese and Russian navies. China has the world's largest maritime branch, and Russia has a great collection of nuclear-powered fast-attack and boomer subs that can fire nuclear missiles.

Naval war planners are looking to U.S. submarines to pick up the slack, but there are just not enough to completely deter Russia and China. Plus, American submarines are needed to patrol the waters in the Middle East and fire cruise missiles at insurgent and terrorist groups when needed.

How Many Submarines Does the U.S. Have?

Seventy-one U.S. submarines are active in the U.S. Navy, but that number fluctuates. Fifty-three (that number can also go up or down) are fast attack boats, plus fourteen boomers carrying nuclear missiles and four guided missile submarines.

(concluded on page 13)



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From the Wardroom...



Dave Vanderveen,
Base Commander

Shipmates and Ladies,

We had a dozen-and-a-half folks at the August meeting at the Los Angeles County Fire Museum, which is a spectacular place. BZ to Ken Dorn for arranging it for us! Our September meeting will be at the VFW Post 3173 in Anaheim, where we'll tune up the state flags we use for Memorial Day, giving them more readable numbers to correspond with the boat monuments for which they're intended. It'll be a potluck lunch, so please check the meeting notice deeper in this issue to learn what to bring.

Our Elections Committee is working diligently to identify candidates for the jobs which will be open. Soon after the start of the month, they'll post a ballot which we can use to elect the coming year's Base Officers. Please vote, even if a candidate is unopposed, because it reinforces those who invest themselves in our organization. Installation of newly elected officers will occur at the October meeting, and the decision will be made in this month's meeting about that venue.

Bonefish Base is working to divest themselves of the submarine-on-a-trailer they use for parades. They have difficulty protecting it from the weather because they no longer have covered storage for it. Two other bases which seemed like possible recipients have declined to take it, so who knows what will happen. L.A.-Pasadena Base does not have capability to store it, so we may lose its use in the Independence Day Parade. More to come on that.

As always, please let your own good judgement protect your health and safety. We don't want to lose you!

Dave

Dave Vanderveen, Commander
Los Angeles-Pasadena Base



Aug. General Meeting Sailing List

Susan Bolton
Darin Detwiler
Ken Dorn
Sam Higa
Glen McNeece (and wife)
Bill Moak
Jeff Silveira
Mike Swanson
Ray Teare
Cindy Teare
Dave Vanderveen
Dennis Walsh



Minutes of August 16, 2025 General Meeting

Base Commander Dave Vanderveen called the General Meeting of the L.A.-Pasadena Base to order at the Los Angeles County Fire Museum in Bellflower, CA at 1115 hours. Dave then led the Pledge of Allegiance on the museum floor, following that with the Statement of the USSVI Purpose, and finally, a request for a Moment of Silence for our departed shipmates.

Bill Moak made a motion to approve last month's published Minutes and accept them into the base record; this was seconded by Glen McNeece and passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

Dave explained that the Treasurer's Report had been reviewed, approved and accepted into the base record by the E-Board, and that to comply with our By-Laws asked Treasurer Sue Bolton to present the report to the General Members attending today. *(The same report appears in the E-Board Minutes elsewhere in this issue as usual.—ed.)*

New Visitor at Meeting:

Jeff Silveira: former STS2(SS), in the area from Maryland. Previous boats include USS JOHN MARSHALL (SSBN-732—on which he qualified in 1976—and USS WHALE (SSN-638). Member, USSVI Tri-State Base.

Membership Update:

Our membership is static; we still have 99 total members. We're working on four new memberships, including two chiefs on the Naval Weapons Station.

Memorial Update:

The committee formed to focus on the 50th anniversary of the Memorial Day Ceremony in 2027 discussed process and thoughts, including the *Bonefish* submarine model float/trailer. Discussion included overall concerns about costs and storage and safety of the *Bonefish*.

New Business / Good of the Order:

Jedd Silveira, Glen McNeece, and Darin Detwiler discussed submarine memorials they'd visited.

There were positive comments shared about all the photos in the latest *Periscope* newsletter. *(Thanks, guys! You send 'em to me, I'll put 'em in. It's always been that simple.—ed.)*

(concluded on next page)



Binnacle List

Keep these shipmates in your thoughts—better yet, get in touch!

- **Sam Aboulafia** continues treatments. Mike Cailor visits often, but suffers from his own health issues. Both can always use cheerful communications:

Sam Aboulafia:
cell: 702-274-7256
email: Aboulafiasam@gmail.com

Mike Cailor:
cell: 813-585-7615
email: rmcgfish@gmail.com

- **Ed Arnold** doesn't get around like he used to. Get in touch at:
cell: 714-797-9286
email: earnold725@aol.com

**Ad Still Here by
Popular Demand!**



Just the Place for Killer MidRats!

Hey, know anyone on boats out of New London? Or, planning a visit to Groton yourself? Drop anchor at this local dive: **Wings'n'Pies** at 924 Route 12, just down the road from the Base's Main Gate. Your editor enjoys firsthand knowledge that the pizzas here are some of the tastiest and sloppiest around. Forget those extra napkins—just wipe your greasy fingers on your shirt and they'll think you've been hanging out with the A-Gang!

General Meeting Minutes...

(concluded from previous page)

Darin Detwiler shared about a submarine-themed escape room he's learned of on Catalina Island.

Bill Moak discussed calendars for 2026, asking about interest. He also discussed the new Navy challenge coins (USN 250th and Submarine 125th): \$20 each.

Dave Vanderveen mentioned he had new service pins ordered and all but the 30th year version have come in.

Sam Higa reminded all about the opening for a new Base Commander in the upcoming elections.

Darin Detwiler inquired about the items and prices in our ship's store.

Ken Dorn shared about the availability and use of the L.A. County Fire Museum for future base meetings. He also set up a table for us to gather for lunch at Kalaveras Mexican Cuisine down the street.

Base members in attendance shared time at the L.A. County Fire Museum and thanked the docents for their hospitality and the great care they took of us.

Upcoming Meeting Locations:

- **SEPTEMBER:** VFW Hall in Anaheim (805 E. Sycamore St., Anaheim, CA 92805). We'll work on the flags: inventorying, inspecting, and making sure they're clearly marked for next year's Memorial Day ceremony.

- **OCTOBER:** TBD. For new officer installation, we're considering the Radiant Brewery in Anaheim or the VFW Military Museum in Simi Valley.

There being no further business, Mike Swanson motioned for adjournment; this was seconded by Ray Teare and passed unanimously, ending the meeting at 1153 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

Darin Detwiler

Secretary, L.A.-Pasadena Base, USSVI



PRIDE RUNS DEEP

Sept. Meeting Back at the VFW Hall

Sept. Meeting

Date: Sept. 20, 2025

This month we're back at Anaheim's VFW Hall with our standard potluck arrangement. So please bring your own plates & utensils, plus your own drinks and a dish to share (see below).

Parking's behind the building.

Location:

VFW Post 3173, Anaheim
805 East Sycamore Street
Anaheim, CA 92805

Times:

- E-Board Meets: 10:00-11:00
- General Mtg.: 11:00-Noon
- Lunch: Noon
(must vacate premises at 1:00)

Lunch: Potluck. Assignments by last name as follows. Remember to bring needed serving utensil(s).

A-H — Main Dish

I-R — Salad or Vegetable

S-Z — Dessert



Sept. Birthdays

We hereby extend the happiest of wishes to all our L.A.-Pasadena Base birthday celebrants!

Gary Wheaton..... 9/5
Bill "Skippy" Dillon..... 9/6
Jim Rogers 9/11
Ron Jones..... 9/14
John Lucio 9/20
Ernie McNeece..... 9/21
Vanessa Butler..... 9/22
Ron Thompson 9/23
Dennis Yure..... 9/27

Ship's Store

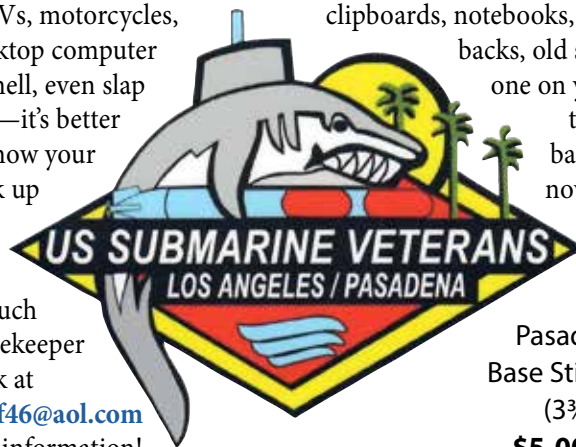
2026 Calendars Now Available!

Order your calendar through Bill Moak or the National Storekeeper.



L.A.-Pasadena Base Logo Stickers!

They're not just for the refrigerator, bubblehead! Stick 'em on cars, trucks, RVs, motorcycles, clipboards, notebooks, lap-backs, old steamer one on your than a base pride now!



Get in touch with Storekeeper Bill Moak at golfnsurf46@aol.com for more information!

L.A.-Pasadena Base Sticker (3¾x5) **\$5.00 ea.**



USSVI Logo Patch (9¾x6¾) **\$11.00 ea.**



L.A.-Pasadena Base Patch (3¾x5) **\$5.00 ea.**



Holland Club Member Patch (3x3) **\$6.00 ea.**



Submarine Force Challenge Coin **\$20.00 ea.**

LOS ANGELES - PASADENA BASE

2025 FLOWER FUND and BOOSTER CLUB

A special thank you to the following folks whose generous contributions this year have helped make our base activities and charitable functions possible:

- Bill Dillon • Bud Fox • Bob Schieve • Ken Dorn (multiple) • Sally Moran
- Scott Hultner • Willie Williamson • Greg Paulson • Dennis Bott (multiple)
- Harold Staggs estate • Dave Vanderveen • Ed Barwick (multiple)
- Robert Cailor (multiple)



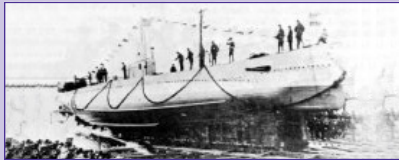
Booster Club and Flower Fund donations are welcome in any amount and are often also popular with 50/50 Drawing winners at our base meetings. Contributions can be made in cash or by check payable to L.A.-Pasadena Base of USSVI. Checks may also be sent to Sue Bolton at 13561 Iowa Street, Westminster, CA 92683-2637. To ensure proper credit, be sure to indicate Booster Club or Flower Fund on your check. Thanks!

UNITED STATES SUBMARINE FORCE LOSSES ON ETERNAL PATROL

"I can assure you that they went down fighting and that their brothers who survived them took a grim toll of our savage enemy to avenge their deaths."

— Vice Admiral Charles A. Lockwood, USN

SEPTEMBER TOLLING OF THE BOATS



USS S-5 (SS-110)



USS GRAYLING (SS-209)



USS POMPANO (SS-181)

USS S-5 (SS-110)

Lost on September 1, 1920 when a practice dive went very wrong; she sank at a steep down angle, her bow touching bottom and her stern eventually rising about seventeen feet out of the water. In a dramatic rescue, her exhausted crew all squirmed out of a small hole cut into the exposed hull two days later. Elaborate salvage attempts were ultimately unsuccessful, and S-5 settled to the bottom, abandoned. No deaths nor serious injuries had been suffered.

USS GRAYLING (SS-209)

Presumed lost on Sept. 9, 1943 of unconfirmed causes near the Tablas Strait during her eighth war patrol. Some evidence suggests she may have been rammed in shallow water west of Luzon, but she may also have gone down as a result of operational error or other factors. She had sunk two enemy ships before never being heard from again. Seventy-seven men were lost, including a U.S. Army Air Force passenger whose presence aboard was only recently discovered.

USS POMPANO (SS-181)

Pompano was lost at some point in September or early October 1943, while conducting her seventh war patrol. Before her loss, she had sent two cargo ships to the bottom. Japanese records indicate a submarine in *Pompano*'s patrol area off the Aomori Prefecture near Shiriya Zaki was destroyed on September 17 by an air and depth charge attack. But the exact cause of *Pompano*'s loss remains uncertain: if not sunk by this air/sea attack, then she likely fell victim to a mine sometime between September 9—when she radioed in a ship sinking—and October 5, when she was set to return to Midway. Her suspected final ship sinking, the *Taiko Maru*, actually took place on September 25, so it's more likely her loss to a mine is the correct theory. *Pompano* went down with seventy-seven men.

USS S-51 (SS-162)

Lost on September 25, 1925 when she sank in a collision with the SS *City of Rome*, a British ocean liner, off Block Island, Rhode Island. Thirty-three men perished in the accident.

USS CISCO (SS-290)

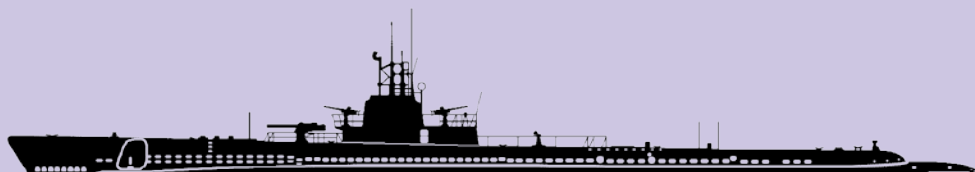
Lost on September 28, 1943, during her first war patrol in the Sulu Sea west of Mindanao. Seventy-six men were lost.



USS S-51 (SS-162)



USS CISCO (SS-290)



WE REMEMBER For those who gave their lives in defense of our country WE REMEMBER

“U.S. Caught Off Guard”: France’s New Nuclear Sub with 620-Mile Missiles Triggers Panic Inside Pentagon War Room

France has unveiled its latest military marvel, the De Grasse, a state-of-the-art nuclear submarine set to redefine naval warfare with its unparalleled stealth, endurance, and multirole capabilities, marking a significant milestone in the nation’s ambitious Barracuda program.

(Reproduced from the Sustainability Times website - Published June 5, 2025.)

by Eirwen Williams



Illustration of France’s De Grasse nuclear submarine, showcasing its stealth and advanced capabilities. (Image generated by AI.) Y’tthink?—ed.

The unveiling of the *De Grasse*, France’s newest addition to its fleet of nuclear submarines, marks a significant leap in naval technology and strategic military capability. As part of the ambitious *Barracuda* program, this cutting-edge vessel represents a pivotal step in replacing the aging *Rubis*-class submarines and ensuring the French Navy remains at the forefront of maritime defense. The *De Grasse* exemplifies the perfect blend of stealth, endurance, and multirole flexibility, embodying the future of underwater warfare. This momentous development not only fortifies France’s naval prowess but also contributes to NATO’s strategic deterrence in key maritime regions.

France’s Nuclear Attack Submarine: A Tech Marvel

The *De Grasse* is a testament to the technological and strategic advancements of the *Barracuda* program, a €10 billion initiative spearheaded by the French defense pro-

curement agency and the French Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission. This program is a cornerstone of France’s efforts to modernize its naval forces by introducing six state-of-the-art nuclear-powered attack submarines by 2030. With Naval Group as the prime contractor, the program encapsulates a national endeavor involving over 2,500 personnel, including 800 subcontractors.

Naval Group’s collaboration with TechnicAtome has been crucial in developing the nuclear steam supply system, a vital component of the submarine’s propulsion. The rollout of the *De Grasse* marks a critical milestone, highlighting the excellence of France’s naval industry and its contribution to national sovereignty. Each *Barracuda*-class submarine, including the *De Grasse*, displaces between 4,700 and 5,200 tons, spanning 324 feet in length with a beam of 28 feet. These dimensions underscore the vessel’s balance of stealth, endurance, and multirole flexibility.

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New De Grasse French Attack Submarine

(concluded from page 7)

270-Day Endurance: Game-Changer in Naval Ops

The *De Grasse* boasts an impressive endurance capability, with a hybrid propulsion system centered on a pressurized water reactor. This reactor, derived from components used in other elite French naval assets, allows for extended patrol durations exceeding 270 days per year. Armed with a formidable array of weaponry, including MBDA's naval cruise missiles with a range of over 620 miles, the submarine is poised to deliver precise strikes on land targets.

The inclusion of SM39 Exocet anti-ship missiles and advanced F21 heavyweight torpedoes further enhances its tactical versatility. With additional features like a diver's lockout chamber and an optional dry deck shelter, the *De Grasse* is equipped for the deployment of Special Forces and autonomous underwater systems, elevating France's capabilities in strategic reconnaissance and covert operations. As one of only a few nations capable of designing and building nuclear submarines, France solidifies its position as a leader in underwater warfare technology.

Impact on NATO and Global Maritime Security

The addition of the *Barracuda*-class submarines to the French fleet is set to enhance NATO's submarine presence in both the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean. This development aligns with NATO's increasing emphasis on underwater awareness and strategic deterrence, providing the alliance with enhanced capabilities to counter potential threats. The technological advancements embodied in the

De Grasse and her sister vessels are critical to maintaining a competitive edge in global maritime security.

The *Barracuda* program, a product of over two decades of development, not only bolsters France's ability to deter threats but also ensures that its naval forces are equipped with the most advanced underwater warfare technology. By integrating these cutting-edge submarines into its fleet, France contributes significantly to collective defense efforts and its commitment to global security and strategic stability.

Looking Ahead: The Future of Underwater Warfare

The successful rollout of the *De Grasse* heralds a new era in naval capabilities, setting a benchmark for future submarine technology. As sea trials for the vessel commence in 2026, following rigorous shore-based systems testing, the anticipation surrounding its operational integration grows. This achievement is a testament to the enduring commitment and expertise of the French naval industry.

As the *Barracuda* program continues to unfold, the strategic implications for France and its allies are profound. The deployment of such advanced submarines raises important questions about the future of naval warfare and the evolving dynamics of maritime power. How will these developments shape global security strategies in the coming decades, and what new challenges will arise as nations strive to maintain a balance of power in the world's oceans?

The author used artificial intelligence to enhance this article.

China Proposes Transfer of Yuan Subs to Indonesia

(From Naval News website, June 15, 2025)

On June 12, 2025, there was some speculation in the foreign media that Beijing had quietly proposed transferring three ex-People's Liberation Army Navy Type 039A *Yuan*-class attack submarines to Indonesia, a prospect first hinted at during the Indo Defence 2025 Expo in Jakarta. The move would give the Indonesian Navy an interim underwater punch at a moment when its

aging Type 209 fleet faces mounting availability problems and the long-awaited *Scorpène* Evolved programme has yet to take effect. The offer, reported by several defence outlets covering Indo Defence, adds urgency to Indonesia's search for stop-gap boats and underscores the subtle realignment at play in South-east Asian procurement circles.

The *Yuan*-class boats displace about 1,850 tonnes surfaced and 2,300 tonnes submerged, employ an air-independent propulsion module

and field six 533 mm tubes capable of launching heavyweight torpedoes and YJ-series anti-ship cruise missiles. The class is regarded as one of the quietest non-nuclear submarines in PLAN service.

Strategically, accepting ex-PLAN submarines would let Jakarta reconstitute a credible deterrent in the Natuna Sea while signaling flexible engagement with China even as it remains tied to a longer-term Franco-Indonesian industrial partnership with the *Scorpène* acquisitions.

Pentagon Tests Breakthrough Dual-Purpose UnderSea Drone-Torpedo

VATN's Skelmir S6 drone weighs only fifty pounds and features a mere 6-inch diameter shell.

(Reproduced from the Warrior Maven website - Published May 20, 2025.)

by Kris Osborn



Could this high-tech new AI-enabled torpedo-drone be the preferred maritime weapon of the future? (VATN photo.)

Swarms of cylindrical undersea torpedo-drones may soon blanket threat areas with acoustic surveillance, send real-time threat data to human decision makers and overwhelm enemy ships and submarines with explosive firepower, due to the rapid emergence of a multi-functional Autonomous UnderSea Vehicle able to operate as both sensor and kinetic attack weapon.

Of course the famous Tomahawk Block IV cruise missile can perform both ISR and attack using a “loiter” ability and two-way datalink, yet achieving this kind of dual purpose connectivity beneath the surface presents an entirely new realm of technological challenges. An industry innovator called VATN sought to anticipate the growing Navy need for autonomous undersea weapons and sensors and built several variants of a new undersea “torpedo-drone.”

The Pentagon is fast-experimenting with a small, deployable AI-enabled undersea drone capable of performing

forward surveillance and also attacking as a highly lethal lightweight torpedo. The 5-ft.-long cylindrical drone can launch from a submerged attack submarine or surface drone to track enemy targets, surveil high-risk areas, engage in limited degrees of real-time undersea communication and destroy enemy ships and submarines as directed.

Made by a start-up innovator called VATN, the *Skelmir* S6 drone weighs only fifty pounds and is six inches in diameter, and the company’s *Skelmir* S12 is a larger vehicle operating with a 12.75-inch diameter stretching 20-ft. long.

“Both of these vessels can carry a variety of payloads. They carry sensors. They can carry electronic warfare effects. They can act as decoys or they can carry kinetic effects and act as a torpedo. The larger one can be a one-to-one replacement for lightweight torpedoes,” Nelson Mills, founder and CEO of VATN, told *Warrior* in an interview.

(concluded on page 10)

Pentagon Tests New Torpedo-Drone

(concluded from page 9)

An air-breathing Tomahawk can easily use RF and GPS to enable real-time data exchange, yet a similar connectivity beneath the sea has been an area of challenge and focus for U.S. Navy futurists and weapons developers. The concept is to of course not have to surface and rely upon RF and GPS, but rather leverage transport layer technologies able to move data beneath the surface quickly, accurately and in real time. The Navy and its industry partners have continued to make rapid progress with these efforts.

“There are a variety of companies developing, really. Solid acoustic communications that allows you to communicate with the vehicle underwater at ranges of 1 to 8 kilometers, depending on the conditions. So we’ve been able to adapt that to effectively change missions, add new parameters and things like that. Bandwidth is very low though, so you’re not, like, sending images back and forth. It’s basically texting with the vehicle,” Mills said.

Surface-, Land-, Air- and Submarine-Launched

The drone-torpedo is what Mills referred to as platform “agnostic,” meaning it can launch from a submarine, surface vessel or land location of any kind.

“We’re actually completely platform agnostic. So you could launch it from a submarine, you could launch it from a larger UUV or from an unmanned surface vessel. We actually already did that and fully autonomously launched from a USV. We also have folks that just launched these from the beach, throw them off the side, or even airdrop them. So it really depends on the user and what they need to do. We try to enable most launching modalities,” Mills said.

Although undersea drones have been in existence for many years now, the cutting edge of these kinds of technologies relates to transport layer undersea connectivity, autonomy, collective or swarm operations and AI-enabled, dual-purpose platforms. The U.S. Navy, for example, is amid what one could describe as a “drone” explosion, given the fast-growing number of unmanned surface and undersea platforms now being developed. VATN’s *Skelmir* aligns with this Navy technological emphasis and is engineered to operate autonomously and “collectively” network with other drones and manned platforms.

“The vehicles have a full autonomy stack. So they have a variety of behaviors and can react in real time to sensor inputs. For example, if they detect a target using sonar or a ping or an acoustic pinger, they can avoid that target if they’re just doing obstacle avoidance, or they can home in

on that target,” Mills explained. “We are already working on real-time collaborative autonomy. We’ve launched directly off of USVs and collaborated with them fully autonomously, and then our vehicles themselves can collaborate with each other, making strategies assigning different roles in real time as targets are detected, right? Sending say one vehicle off to track a target while another vehicle goes to fill a gap made by that vehicle going off, right?” Mills said.

Collective autonomy, unmanned-to-unmanned data sharing and the ability to coordinate information exchange across a small fleet of unmanned platforms has been a focus for the Navy for quite some time through efforts such as Ghost Fleet. This often involves computing at the edge wherein forward-operating platforms are positioned to bounce new incoming information off of a vast database, perform analytics and share critical time-sensitive data autonomously across the force without needing human intervention. (*What could possibly go wrong?—ed.*) AI-enabled systems can solve problems and, for instance, identify an enemy target, find weak areas in an enemy perimeter, or coordinate intelligence exchange with surface and even air platforms. As part of this equation, Mills explained that the *Skelmir* drones operate with automatic target recognition, meaning they can instantly bounce incoming sensor data off of a vast database to make instant target verifications.

“In real time our vehicles can adapt, and the advantage there is that you’re really creating a true force multiplier. Instead of a soldier having to mission-plan each individual vehicle in detail, he can mission-plan a whole swarm of vehicles, give them certain behaviors and constraints, and [then] put them out in the water [to] go do their thing. That’s a real force multiplier, because our goal is not that you have one operator/one vehicle, but you have one operator/many, many vehicles,” Mills said.

The advent of technologies of this kind are likely inspiring new tactics and concepts of operation given that they enable host ships to operate at safer stand-off distances, yet still operate with closer-in surveillance and attack technology.

Kris Osborn is President of Warrior Maven – Center for Military Modernization. Osborn previously served at the Pentagon as a highly qualified expert in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army—Acquisition, Logistics & Technology. Osborn has also worked as an anchor and on-air military specialist at national TV networks. He’s appeared as a guest military expert on MSNBC, The Military Channel, and The History Channel. He also has a Masters Degree in Comparative Literature from Columbia University.

Can the USS Ohio Really Deter China on Her Own?

Sure, the presence of the Ohio will serve as a check to any twitchy Chinese force—for now. But the balance of military power in the Indo-Pacific is shifting away from the United States.

(Reproduced from The National Interest website - Published May 19, 2025.)

by Brandon J. Weichert



USS Ohio (SSGN-726.) (U.S. Navy photo.)

There is a crisis brewing in the United States Navy. It lacks adequate numbers of warships and submarines to dominate the High Seas, as the branch's doctrine demands.

Multiple successive presidential administrations have waxed eloquent about the need to expand the size of America's navy—especially in light of the China challenge. Yet little movement has been made on this herculean task. To compound matters, the Navy is overcommitted to its nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, and there simply are not enough of those to go around.

When the Eagle's Away, the Dragon Will Play

Thanks to the ongoing crisis in the Mideast, the United States has been forced—until recently—to deploy two of its precious aircraft carriers to the region. This has left the Indo-Pacific woefully underdefended at a time when Beijing, America's principal rival on the world stage, is increasingly assertive in what it perceives as its own sphere. To close the gap, the Pentagon deployed the USS *Nimitz*, a legendary but aging carrier that is set to be decommis-

sioned when it returns to port from the Indo-Pacific area of operation. This is not good enough: a carrier months away from the scrap heap, floating just outside Chinese missile ranges and too afraid to tempt fate by going further, is hardly the demonstration of force that Washington was hoping it would be.

Thankfully, reports from Guam indicate that there is at least one backstop for the rusty old *Nimitz*. That's an *Ohio*-class guided-missile submarine, the USS *Ohio* (SSGN-726). Converted from the *Ohio*-class ballistic missile submarine (SSBN), the *Ohio*'s appearance in Guam—one of the most important staging grounds for U.S. forces forward-deployed in the Indo-Pacific—indicates a dark understanding on the part of the Pentagon. On some instinctive level, American defense planners understand that carriers—especially carriers like the ancient *Nimitz*—are nowhere near as fearsome to a rising China as they would like them to be.

Indeed, the *Ohio*'s appearance in the region is meant to let Beijing know that America has the capacity to punch back against China's impressive anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) capabilities arrayed throughout the region.

(concluded on page 12)

Can Ohio Go It Alone Against China?

(concluded from page 11)

About the Ohio-Class Submarine

Ohio-class guided-missile submarines carry an array of offensive weapons that pose a true threat to Chinese and North Korean forces in the region.

Bringing upwards of 154 Tomahawk cruise missiles into any battle, the *Ohio* has a range of 1,000 miles—and has a proven track record of dominating whatever area in which she is assigned to operate. Beyond her cruise missile capacity, the *Ohio* has an impressive covert warfare capability, too. She can carry U.S. Navy SEAL teams onboard that can be deployed for a variety of devastating behind-enemy-lines attacks.

The inherent covert nature of submarines means that, in today's contested global commons, the Navy should be prioritizing these systems. Unfortunately, the Navy lacks the requisite number of submarines—notably guided-missile subs—to make much of a difference. Sure, the presence of the *Ohio* will serve as a check to any twitchy Chinese force—for now. But the balance of military power in the Indo-Pacific is shifting away from the United States.

Incidentally, the U.S. Navy has only four *Ohio*-class SSGNs. So, even as a backstop, the USS *Ohio* isn't much if the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) and Air Force (PLAAF) opt to initiate hostilities. In a certain respect, America's force posture today resembles the little Dutch boy, hopelessly plugging the holes appearing in the dike—until, finally, his ten fingers and toes are simply insufficient in number to address these challenges.

A single rusted out carrier and a solitary *Ohio*-class submarine that, while harder than a carrier to spot with surveillance, is very much detectable with Chinese technological capabilities today, doesn't make for an impressive form of deterrence. It reeks of desperation. A grave geopolitical crisis is unfolding in the Indo-Pacific, and that crisis is about to come to a head unless radical changes to the defense posture of the U.S. military are made starting now.

Brandon J. Weichert, a Senior National Security Editor at The National Interest as well as a contributor at Popular Mechanics, consults regularly with various government institutions and private organizations on geopolitical issues. He can be followed via Twitter @WeTheBrandon.

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SUBMARINES IN NEED OF ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

USS *Columbia* (SSN-771)
USS *Connecticut* (SSN-22)
USS *Delaware* (SSN-791)
USS *Greeneville* (SSN-772)
USS *Helena* (SSN-725)
USS *Hyman G. Rickover* (SSN-795)

USS *Montana* (SSN-794)
USS *North Dakota* (SSN-784)
USS *Kentucky Blue* (SSBN-737)
USS *Kentucky Gold* (SSBN-737)
USS *Maine Blue* (SSBN-741)

Questions?

Jack Messersmith
(928) 227-7753
or e-mail
MesserJ109@gmail.com

Virginia-Class Program Speeded Up

(concluded from page 1)

There's a need to have many more fast-attack submarines. The Navy is supposed to have sixty-six. That's a big problem because shipyards are not building them fast enough to reach that number.

The number of fast-attack subs has remained the same for about ten years. The fleet may not reach the required sixty-six until the 2050s. This is viewed by many on Capitol Hill as unacceptable, and some lawmakers are hopping mad.

Powerful Senate Members Are Raising Alarm Bells

The chairman of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, Roger Wicker, started banging the drum for more attack submarines in 2023.

"Demands on our submarine maintenance capabilities have also stretched our military's readiness. Nearly 40% of U.S. attack submarines cannot be deployed because of maintenance delays. For example, the USS *Connecticut* had an accident in the South China Sea in 2021 and likely won't be operational until 2026. The U.S. submarine industrial base is producing an average of 1.2 *Virginia*-class attack submarines a year, short of the two our Navy needs. There are many reasons for this underperformance. For years, the U.S. government purchased only one submarine annually—hardly enough to maintain a strong industrial base," he wrote in an article for the *Wall Street Journal*.

We Need More Nuclear Submarine Force Sailors

There's also been a shortage of crew members in the submarine force. This reflects the overall state of recruiting in the U.S. military. Sailors who pass through submarine training are an elite force requiring lengthy and complex preparation.

These sailors must be knowledgeable to pass the rigorous Nuclear Power School. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Navy focused on retaining existing submarine officers and enlisted personnel. Now, the emphasis is on recruiting new people, but the Navy lost a few years during a stagnant period when the number of sailors for its subs did not grow.

Maintenance Efforts Can't Keep Up with Demand

As Senator Wicker mentioned, maintenance is another problem. Many subs are simply inactive and must be repaired for various reasons. The Navy knows this and wants to get more boats into active service quicker, but this may not happen until 2027 or 2028.

Meanwhile, defense contractors are not equipped to get more subs back in the water. "General Dynamics' Electric Boat and HII's Newport News Shipbuilding, simply do not have enough capacity for all the needed submarine repairs," according to Bryan Clark, director of the Hudson Institute think tank's Center for Defense Concepts and Technology.

Shortage of Skilled Workers

Part of this also results from a lack of skilled maintenance workers and submarine builders. Qualified workers are difficult to recruit, which was true even before the pandemic.

Some American subs are indeed ready to "surge" when needed, while others are fully operational. This makes a difference when one examines all the potential naval combat flashpoints worldwide.

China is making more territorial claims in the East and South China Seas. It also has designs in Taiwan. North Korea has a growing submarine force. Russia's swift, silent, and deadly boats patrol several operational theaters. It'll take more U.S. subs to counteract these types of threats.

What Can Be Done About Our Attack Subs?

Lawmakers like Wicker will encourage the administration's national security team to invest more funds in submarine warfare, but there are deeper problems than money. The U.S. industrial base is inefficient in quickly making new subs, while maintenance is still problematic too. It seems like everyone can identify and describe the issues, but there are few solutions.

Brent M. Eastwood, PhD, is the author of Don't Turn Your Back On the World: a Conservative Foreign Policy and Humans, Machines, and Data: Future Trends in Warfare, plus two other books. Brent was the founder and CEO of a tech firm that predicted world events using artificial intelligence. He served as a legislative Fellow for U.S. Senator Tim Scott, advising the senator on defense and foreign policy issues. He's taught at American University, George Washington University, and George Mason University. Brent is a former U.S. Army Infantry officer. He can be followed on X @BMEastwood.



PRIDE RUNS DEEP

Bells, the Center of the Universe

by Bob “Dex” Armstrong

Keep a zero bubble...

Dex.



A definition of contentment from my diesel days: racked out in the middle rack inboard, riding in the wake of a carrier, reading a sex book, and scratching your athlete's foot on a bunk chain. It never got any better than that. Not unless someone could figure out how to run the boat aground on a nudist beach.

In port, however, there was Bells. The sign read “Bells Bar and Naval Tailors,” but to us it was just Bells. You could be sliding away from a pier in East Jeezus, Balookastan, and yell to another SUBRON Six boat, “See you bastards in Bells!”

Every bluejacket on both boats knew exactly what you were talking about.

Someone recently asked, “Is there a good submarine bar in Norfolk—like the Horse & Cow?”

I have no gahdam idea what a Horse & Cow is, was or may be in the future. But there was a time when Bells was the center of the submersible bluejacket's world. If Thelma's signature wasn't on your qual card, you simply weren't a qualified boat sailor. Look under “Filthiest head in North America” in the Guinness Book of World Records and all it says is “Bells, Hampton Blvd.”

Bells is gone now, of course. But sure as hell not forgotten. Each year, thousands—maybe hundreds of thousands—of old, worn-out smoke-eating, gravel-gut, rock-crusher propulsion submariners show up at the hallowed site. It's become a religious pilgrimage.

Most people just see a big ol' asphalt parking lot. But a genuine SUBRON Six man can shut his eyes and smile as it all comes back.

In the background, Johnny Cash is singing “Don't Take Your Guns to Town” from the most abused jukebox in North America. This while Thelma is yelling, “Which gahdam tables want the two pitchers, four drafts, and Slim Jims?!”

“Hey Thelma—darling, sweetheart, fulfillment of all my fantasies and dreams—what does it take for a valiant defender of the free world to get a pack of Beer Nuts?”

“Nuts? I'll give you nuts! 'You don't pipe down, I'll kick your nuts up next to your eyeballs!”

Right off, it was evident Thelma never attended Vassar.

“I'm only gonna say this once tonight, boys: Keep the gahdam wet glasses off the f*cking pool table felt!”

The pool table had a playing surface that was later used as a topographic model for the Ho Chi Min Trail. You could gently place a ball in the middle of the table, release it, and watch it do

a drunken wobble toward whichever side of the table was closest to the equator. You could be a world champion pool hustler and still lose at Bells. The secret was in knowing how to bank shots off mole tunnels and avoid gopher holes. But at least it was green and *resembled* a pool table.

Bells was noted for four-star cuisine. If you were a Slim Jim gourmet or an authority on Beer Nuts, pickled pig's feet, hard-boiled eggs, and hot Polish sausage which floated in liquid that could dissolve a medium cruiser turret, Bells was your kind of place. I was told that Bells' Polish sausage was the subject of a heated debate at the 1964 Geneva Arms Reduction Talks. The only thing I know from my own experience with them was that they could set the seat of your “Fruit-of-the-Looms” on fire the next morning.

Yes, as you stand there in that empty parking lot, it indeed all comes back. You would think that the city fathers of Norfolk—once the home of our reckless warriors of the deep, protectors of the American way, drunken leap-froggers of parking meters—would, out of simple begrudging respect, install a chrome floor drain as a monument at the site so we could pee down it just like everyone did at Bells every Saturday night. Hell, it might be so popular, Norfolk could hold the “Festival of the Floor Drain.”

Did the Horse & Cow have a sign over the bar that read, “Sailors and Dogs Keep Off the Female Employees”? Could you get your uniform steamed and pressed at the Horse & Cow while you sat in the bar in socks, skivvies and white hat, drinking beer? Did kids there go around with a box and a tin can hanging around their necks saying, “Buff 'em up, motherf*ck? One fine shine—one thin dime!”?

Was there a Thelma equivalent there to yell, “I'll kill the next sonuvabitch who drops a quarter in that gahdam thing and punches La Bamba five times!”

Do they have that kind of rich tradition?

If you call for a cab, when you tell them what bar you want them to pick you up from, do they say, “Are you shitting me? I wouldn't come down there with a large caliber handgun.”

When you sit down at your table in this Cow place, does a big blonde come over and plant two great big warm ones between your shoulder blades, lean over and whisper, “What are we havin' tonight, sailor boy?”

Hell, maybe they've franchised Bells and named 'em after farm animals—who knows? The secret giveaway would be the floor drain in the men's room.... Plus the sign over the door reading, “ALL THIS WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE DEVOTED PATRONAGE OF THE DRUNKS OF SUBRON SIX.”

New Members

We proudly welcome aboard:

Frank M. Berezney

SK2(SS) E-5 Petty Officer (2nd)

Contact: daughter Catherine

528 S. Cardiff Street

Anaheim, CA 92806-4334

cell: 714-337-3936

email: frank.berezney@gmail.com

Qualified in 1969 on USS *Spinax*

(AGSS-489); served 1967-1971.

Also on *Greenfish* and *Gudgeon*.

Brian M. Senior, Life Member

(EM1-SS E6—Petty Officer 1st Class)

Son of the Seniors; Spouse: Tamar

2015 Windmill Lane

Alexandria, VA 22307-1951

cell: 202-594-2050

email: briansenior@hotmail.com

Served '82-'94; qual'd on *Silversides*

(SSN-679) in '86; Nuc Operator;

in Navy Reserves 1990-1994.

Kathleen A. Carder

Associate; Significant Other of

Bill Moak; sponsor: Ray Teare

2865 Helm Street

Simi Valley, CA 93065-5257

cell: 662-335-5602

e: KathleenCarder@Outlook.com

David "Dave" Geske

(ICC-SS) E-7 Chief Petty Officer)

Spouse: Evelyn

4567 Pennyroyal Drive

Corona, CA 92878-3283

cell: 801-889-0178

email: dave.geske@outlook.com

Served '75-'86; qualified on *Thomas*

Jefferson (SSBN-618) in '77. Also

aboard *Ohio* (SSBN-726) '79-'82.

Charles B. "Charlie" McCarthy, Jr.

(LCDR - 04 - LCDR) Spouse: Anita

19068 Shadow Ridge Lane

Yorba Linda, CA 92886-2763

cell: 714-720-3837

email: cbmatylca@aol.com

Qualified in 1966 on *Geo. Bancroft*

(SSBN-643); served 1959-1976.

Laurie Ann Mabry

Associate; niece of Shipwreck

Kelly; sponsor: Ron Jones

Spouse: Harry

5923 Mildred Avenue

Cypress, CA 90630-4631

cell: 714-309-2367

laurieannmabry7082@gmail.com



**"Get'cher Chapter News Here
— Read All About It! —"**

When News Breaks, We Pick Up the Pieces...

Darin Tours Museum Boat

A visit aboard USS Cobia (SS-245) in Manitowoc simply proves too good to pass up. Old boats rule!



**Top
two
pics:
Darin
Detwiler
visits the
USS Cobia.**



**At the
Cobia
dockside
display.**



**Aboard
the USS
Dolphin
in San
Diego.**



Aboard qual boat William H. Bates.



**On the
Albacore.**



More Chapter News...

USS Helena (SSN-725) Retired in July

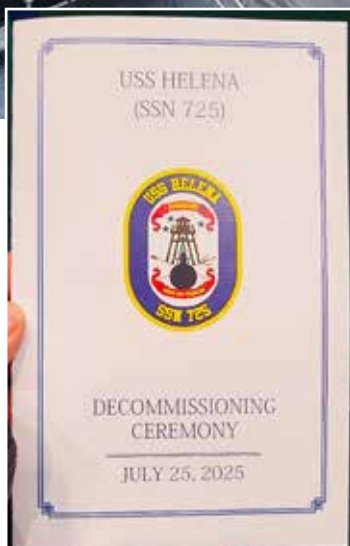
L.A.-Pasadena Base Member Attends Decommissioning Ceremony



L.A.-class boat USS Helena (SSN-725) shown in the beginnings of being put out to pasture in Bremerton Subase in July. The old girl has served her country well.



Beauchamp Tran and his wife Lupé.



One of our youngest base members, Beauchamp Tran, attended the decommissioning of USS Helena (SSN-725) back on July 25 in Bremerton, Washington. She was the last of the three boats he served aboard from 2005 to 2006; his special duty was Reactor Control. Beau qualified on USS Dallas (SSN-700) in 2000. He also served aboard USS Portsmouth (SSN-707). Rank/rate: ET1(SS) E6-Petty Officer 1st Class.

As mentioned in last month's *Periscope*, this particular retirement brings a tear to your editor's eye because *Helena* was the boat he lucked into getting aboard for a Distinguished Visitors Embark way back in March of 2001. What an exciting day—the ride of my life!

We wish to thank Membership Chair Marilyn Senior for keeping me up to date with member activities.—ed.



More Chapter News...

Our Building Six Plaques Put to Good Use!

Dave Vanderveen Recently Shared Photos from the Military Museum Where Some of L.A.-Pasadena Base's Boat Plaques Wound Up. Cool!



Plenty of really cool-looking military stuff on display!

Don't our old plaques look good? So glad they found a nice, new home!





John P. Holland

L.A.-Pasadena Base 50-Year Holland Club

(75-year members noted with *)

Arthur B. Schwartz.....	2025
Scott Hultner.....	2024
Stanley O. Westrick	2024
Ronald R. Jones.....	2023
Gerard A. Krudwig.....	2022
Gregory M. Paulson	2022
Michael J. Swanson.....	2022
Ralph J. Hansen	2021
Robert F. Schive, Sr.....	2021
Larry D. Long.....	2021
G. Judson "Jud" Scott, Jr....	2021
Edward E. Kushins	2020
Bruce Evan Neighbors	2020
Frank M. Bereznay	2019
David H. Vanderveen.....	2019
Dennis Bott	2018
Robert "Mike" Cailor	2018
Robert Miller.....	2018
Roger C. Dunham, MD ...	2017
Richard McPherson.....	2017
Harry "Bill" Moak.....	2017
Louis A. Myerson	2017
Elliot Rada	2017
Ronald G. Wagner	2017
Dennis J. Walsh.....	2017
Michael Kish	2016
Charles B. McCarthy, Jr....	2016

(concluded next page)



Los Angeles-Pasadena Base 2025 Calendar of Upcoming Events

January 18	Monthly Meeting at Taco Surf, Los Alamitos
February 15	Monthly Meeting at VFW Hall, Anaheim
March 15	Monthly Meeting - Radiant Brewery, Anaheim
April 19	Monthly Mtg. - Clearman's Galley, San Gabriel
May 10	Field Day at the Memorial Site - 0900
May 17	Monthly Meeting at VFW Hall, Anaheim Nominating Committee Appointed Call for participants in the Huntington Beach 4th of July Parade
May 24	Field Day at the Memorial Site - 0900
May 26	Memorial Day Service - 1100 Submarine Memorial, West
June 21	Monthly Mtg. - Simi Valley Military Museum Call for nominations for 2026 Base Officers
July 4	116th Annual... Huntington Beach 4th of July Parade
July 19	LeRoy Stone Memorial Picnic at Dennis Walsh's Residence
August 16	Monthly Meeting - L.A. Fire Dept. Museum 2026 Base Officer Candidates Announced
September 20	ANNUAL BUSINESS MTG. at VFW Hall Election of Officers
October 18	Monthly Meeting - Location TBD Annual Officer Installation Luncheon
November 15	Monthly Meeting - Thanksgiving Theme
December 20	Annual Christmas Luncheon at the Los Alamitos Golf Course

(Holland Club Roster, concluded)

Gary Wheaton.....	2016
Lawrence R. Butler	2015
Samuel T. Higa	2015
Harry P. Ross.....	2015
Charles H. Senior	2015
Larry E. Smith.....	2015
Sam Aboulafia.....	2014
David Palagyi.....	2014
Earl Thomas Peratt, Jr.	2014
David D. Semrau, DDS	2014
Ray Tracy Teare.....	2014
Milton Harry Boudov	2013
Kenneth Jon Dorn	2013
M. Mark Hoffer.....	2013
Michael P. Klein	2013
Ronald L. Levenson.....	2013
Edward L. Arnold.....	2012
T. Michael Bircumshaw ...	2012
Raymond Cheesebrough .	2012
John V. Mahan	2012
Lee Melody	2012
Clyde Matthew Turner.....	2012
George R. Walrath	2012
John L. Weisenberger	2012
Edward A. Barwick	2011
Joseph W. Koch, Jr.	2011
Stephen D. Diumentì	2009
David Whittlesey	2009
Dennis A. Yure.....	2009
Armen Bagdasarian.....	2008
Paul A. Riggs	2008
Rex L. Shields	2008
Francis R. Traser	2006
Ronald K. Thompson	2004
James Rogers	2003
*William F. Long.....	1999
*Kenneth E. Chunn.....	1998
*Patrick Zilliacus.	1994
*William J. Dillon.....	1993



E-Board Meeting Minutes of August 16, 2025

The Los Angeles-Pasadena Base, United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Executive Board Meeting was conducted at the Los Angeles County Fire Museum in Bellflower, CA on Saturday morning, August 16, 2025. A quorum was *not* met, but the following members were on hand for the meeting:

In attendance:

- Dave Vanderveen, Base Commander
- Darin Detwiler, Base Secretary
- Sue Bolton, Base Treasurer
- Bill Moak, COB
- Ken Dorn, Director
- Sam Higa, Member
- Mike Swanson, Member

Base Commander Dave Vanderveen called the meeting to order at 1000 hours. Minutes of the prior General meeting were reviewed. Bill Moak moved to accept the minutes into the base record; this was seconded by Dave Vanderveen and unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Financial Report: Sue Bolton

The Treasurer's Report as of August 14, 2025 was read into the Minutes by Base Treasurer Sue Bolton.

Checking	\$25,749.34
Cash On Hand	\$50.00
Uncleared Checks:	\$00.00
Total	\$25,799.34

All vendors have been paid up-to-date.

Income:	\$00.00
Expenses:	\$00.00

Flower/Booster Club Additions:

\$00.00

There were no questions nor corrections needed. Bill Moak moved to approve the Treasurer's Report and accept it into the base record; this was seconded by Dave Vanderveen and passed unanimously.

Base Election Update:

Sam Higa reported a list of potential officer candidates being pursued.

(concluded on next page)

Reactor Builds Progress for Columbia & Virginia-Class Subs

Reproduced from the *Zona Militar* website; May 23, 2025

During a hearing before the U.S. Congress, officials from the Department of Energy and the U.S. Navy affirmed that the reactor program to equip the new *Columbia*- and *Virginia*-class nuclear submarines is progressing, marking a significant step toward incorporating both platforms into the fleet.

Admiral William Houston, Director of Naval Nuclear Propulsion, reported that in 2024 significant progress has been made in the construction of the reactor cores that will be installed in the first three *Columbia*-class submarines, with the second and third cores still in production.

The U.S. Navy also confirmed at the end of last month its decision to procure the final two Block V *Virginia* submarines, namely the future USS *Baltimore* (SSN-812) and USS *Atlanta* (SSN-813), with an investment of \$18.5 billion. Like the other ten subs in the class, these will be built by General Dynamics Electric Boat Corp. and Huntington Ingalls.

As for the *Columbias*, there's an estimated delay of 12 to 18 months affecting the construction of the future USS *District of Columbia* (SSBN-826), the lead vessel in the class. The Navy expects to commission this submarine in 2029, while the future USS *Wisconsin* (SSBN-827) and USS *Groton* (SSBN-828) are expected to follow closer to the original timeline, entering service in 2032 and 2034, respectively.

E-Board Meeting Minutes...

(concluded from previous page)

New Business / Good of the Order:

We were honored with a distinguished visitor today:

CMDCS (SS) Paul Workman: Command Senior Chief, NAVWPNSTA Seal Beach. Previous boats include USS ALASKA (SSBN-732), USS OHIO (SSGN-726), and USS TEXAS (SSN-775). He's a member of another base and is interested in becoming a dual member with our base. He shared that the newly reported Command Master Chief, NAVWPNSTA Seal Beach, is also submarine-qualified. He shared that his first day on the job at his current post included participating in the Memorial Bricks project and that he was surprised to learn of the memorial's existence.

Upcoming Meetings:

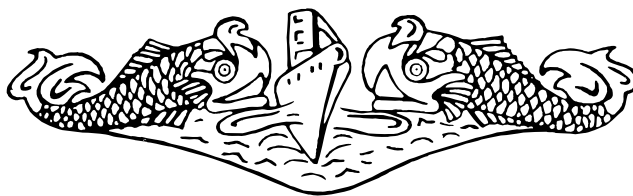
- SEPTEMBER: VFW Hall in Anaheim (805 E. Sycamore St., Anaheim, CA 92805). We'll work on the flags: inventorying, inspecting, and making sure they're clearly marked for next year's Memorial Day ceremony.

There being no further business, Dave Vanderveen motioned for adjournment; this was seconded by Bill Moak and passed unanimously, ending the meeting at 1101 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

Darin Detwiler

Secretary, L.A.-Pasadena Base, USSVI



PRIDE RUNS DEEP

A Recent Letter from Subvet Mark Hoffer ... to Kathleen, Our Base's Sunshine Girl

July, 2025

Dear Kathleen Carder, "Sunshine Girl,"

Thank you again for the birthday card. I am now ninety years old and probably the most unusual member of the submarine family. I started out as an Ensign in Medical School and a Navy Intern at Philadelphia Naval Hospital. Then I spent six months in Officers Sub School, two months in Deep Sea Diving School (hard hat), and six weeks in underwater swim school. I served as a Submarine and Diving Medical officer in Key West—attached to the underwater swimmers and submarine squadron for one year during the Cuban Missile Crisis. I then was transferred to the *Thomas Edison* (SSBN-610: Blue Crew) for a year which included one three-month patrol. After that I was a civilian as an Orthopaedic Resident in New Orleans for four years. I was most interested in Orthopaedic care of disabled children. I eventually became the Chairman of the Orthopaedics Dept. at UC Irvine. Finally, I was asked to transfer to the Army Reserve because they really needed Orthopaedic Surgeons. The Army sent me for two months here and there for short reserve stints between my academic surgical duties. This included being deployed me to an Army field hospital on the Iraq-Saudi border for six months during Operation Desert Storm. There followed two more deployments of six months for the Balkan Wars in Germany and then Kosovo. I retired as a Colonel (USA). Now that I have confessed about my peculiar career, I hope you'll all continue to welcome me into your submarine family and send me those yearly birthday cards.

Mark

Mr. Mark Hoffer

Wherein
we present
occasional
letters of
interest...
—ed.



Only a Certain Breed

For Those Who Wear Dolphins

by Andrew Dingley

(Submitted from the Web by Bill Moak—thanks, Bill!)

Only a certain breed of soul
Will chase the silence down,
Beneath the waves where shadows drift
And steel becomes your crown.
They walk through hatches sealed with trust,
They sleep where dangers lie,
And hear the hum of secrets kept
Where no light dares to try.

They do not ask for songs or fame,
Nor medals on their chests,
Their glory lies in things unseen,
In silence, sweat, and rest.
They bear the watch in blackened depths,
With eyes that scan the dark,
And every breath they take beneath
Could be their final mark.

Only a certain breed will know
What waits beyond the foam,
Where hulls are held by will alone,
And fear must stay at home.
They wear the dolphins not for show,
But for the depths they've known,
For they have gone where none belong,
And brought each other home.

They've danced with ghosts in sonar's sweep,
They've drifted past the edge,
They've felt the crush of an ocean's hand
And held their sacred pledge.
They know the pipes, the vents, the valves,
The drill that never ends,
The power plant, the silent run,
The brothers they defend.

You cannot earn it in a book,
You cannot fake that call,
It's carved in sweat, in sleepless nights,
In answering the fall.
And when you see that dolphins badge

Upon another's chest,
You nod, and know, you've both been down,
And passed the hidden test.

Only a certain breed will go
Where few would dare to tread,
To live among the currents
Where the living meet the dead.
They wear the dolphins not for pride,
But for the price they've paid,
To serve beneath, with honor kept,
In silent steel and shade.

Only a certain breed...
And they are never truly gone.
The sea remembers.
And so do we.



An Open Letter from Our Membership Gal

Dear Membership,

I'm thinking about our old friend Bill Thomas and his wife Flora—remembering the good ol' days when there were so many WWII members and their wives still active. Such fond memories. It really breaks my heart that they're no longer with us, having departed on Eternal Patrol. Flora lived to be over a hundred years old and just passed fairly recently. While she was alive, she never missed having her hair done every week. When she could no longer drive, she had someone take her to her beauty shop. Chuck just sent me this Bill Thomas obituary (below), and I wanted to share it with our members.

Some know this stuff already, but to refresh a few memories, and inform newcomers of some history...

I was the Treasurer and Secretary of the Wives of WWII Submarine Veterans after I first joined Los Angeles-Pasadena Base, helping out until attrition caused them to fold in 2012, along with the Submarine Veterans of WWII. I was also Treasurer and Membership Gal for Los Angeles-Pasadena Base in the first years of my membership, which began in 2007. Those early years with the WWII Wives and Veterans were the most fulfilling and fun times in my memory. Below also is a photo of some of our Wives. As far as I know, only three of us from the photo are still around: Sally Moran, Shawn McPherson and myself.

Rosa Hagendorn, a longtime member of the Wives group as well, is also still around, but doesn't appear in the photo. She and her husband Bill had moved to Temecula by then and could no longer regularly attend our meetings. Both were prime figures in helping to get our WWII Submarine Memorial - West built; Bill departed on Eternal Patrol back on Nov. 8, 2009. Happily, I just talked with Rosa yesterday!

Shawn is Richard McPherson's wife—much younger than the rest of us. Richard was one of our base commanders prior to moving to Idaho. He attended the Western Region Roundup hosted by our base this year on the *Queen Mary*.

Sally and Rosa are so pleased the memorial bricks they purchased so long ago have finally been installed at our Memorial site; I'm hoping they'll come to see them in person soon. Rosa still lives in Temecula, but Sally has now moved from Temecula to Indio. Sally's husband, Harry Watson, departed on Eternal Patrol back on April 10, 2015. (Sally and Rose had each purchased bricks to honor their spouses.)

Back in the beginning, we enjoyed three separate monthly meetings in Building 6 at the Naval Weapons Station—with a great lunch afterwards. The Wives were such great cooks!

Just some historical tidbits, me to you!

Warm regards,

Marilyn

Marilyn Senior
1278 W. Sepulveda Street
San Pedro, CA 90732-2948
Email: marilyn.senior@gmail.com
Phone: 310-503-3915

L to R, standing: Marilyn Senior, Sharon Kaye Bell, Barbara Hudspeth, Charlene Hughes, Bea Reynolds, Bonnie Ryerson, Ethel Chavis, Shawn McPherson, Jan Maynard and Barbara Bolton.
L to R, sitting: Dorothy Clobes, Kaye Staggs, Sally Moran and Flora Thomas.



Thomas, William M.
Resident of Santa Ana, California
February 3, 1922 - February 19, 2018

WWII Veteran, U.S. Navy Submarine Service, U.S. Confirmed Silver Star William Thomas, longtime Santa Ana resident, passed away on February 19th after a short illness. He is survived by Flora, his loving wife of over 50 years, his daughter Barbara (husband Charles), nine grandchildren and many great-grandchildren and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, brother Robert (WWII), daughter Beverly, son Robert, and grandson Bradley.

Bill was the second son born to Hannah and Ernest Thomas in Chicago, Illinois. After high school he attended Purdue University, worked for Public Steel Corp as an inspector in the lab, before joining the Navy in 1942. Upon finishing Basic Training, he completed the new Radar Technician School. He then volunteered for Submarine Service duty and reported aboard the USS Tilefish (SS307) submarine during WWII. He was on board for six war patrols. During one of the first dives, the USS Tilefish (SS307) accidentally continued diving until she reached a depth of 600 feet before leveling off and returning to periscope depth. Another unusual event was when an owl was captured on the surface and taken below as the mascot of the boat. A wise old owl rode through the ensuing war patrols and returned to the skies later.

Bill was awarded the Silver Star "For Gallantry in Action". As a Radio Technician his work contributed to "the execution of torpedo attacks which resulted in sinking approximately 9,000 tons of enemy shipping." (Central Highlight, 1945). The Silver Star is a rare award, bestowed on less than one in every 250 veterans of military service. USS Tilefish (SS307) would go on to win five Battle Stars for her patrols during World War II and one for missions she undertook along the coast of Korea.

Following the war, he was an engineer with Chicago studios of ABC working on Magnetic Tape for Delayed Broadcasts. He also taught night school engineering at DeVry University in Chicago before being recruited by Hughes Aircraft Company in El Segundo, moving his family to California.

At Hughes, Bill attended the company radar school and spent 12 years in the Field Service and Support Division designing equipment for the U.S. Air Force. He went on numerous field assignments, one of which was to Georgia where he met his wife Flora. In 1959 he joined the radar division where he wrote specifications for the built-in self-test of airborne radar system equipment. He enjoyed a successful career as an Engineer and retired 30 years ago.

Bill wants to be remembered for his military service, his love of playing cards - especially bridge and poker, he also enjoyed many other table games. He and his partner won a gold medal for playing duplicate bridge during the entire 14-day Princess cruise to Hawaii in 2010. He and his wife Flora enjoyed many vacations domestically and internationally; they were fond of cruises. They both were active members of the U.S. Submarine Veterans WWII, Los Angeles Chapter, attending local and national events. Bill was the longtime Treasurer of that organization.

We remember him for his commitment to his wife and family, his personal integrity, and his loyalty to the Navy and our United States of America. Memorial Services will be held at 9:30am on April 29th at the WWII National Submarine Memorial - West in Seal Beach.






And Still More Chapter News...

Latest from Our August Fire Station Meeting

Shutterbug Darin Detwiler Keeps Us Current with Images from the Gathering

Visitor Jeff Silveira—former STS2(SS)—in the area from Maryland. Previous boats include USS JOHN MARSHALL (SSBN-732)—on which he qualified in 1976—and USS WHALE (SSN 638). Member, USSVI Tri-State Base.



JEFF SILVEIRA (FORMER STS2(SS))
MEMBER, TRI-STATE BASE



Previous boats include:
USS JOHN MARSHALL (SSBN 732)
USS WHALE (SSN 638)

Previous boats include:
USS ALASKA (SSBN 732)
USS OHIO (SSGN 726)
USS TEXAS (SSN 775)

Visitor CMDCS (SS) Paul Workman: Command Senior Chief, NAVWPNSTA Seal Beach. Previous boats include USS ALASKA (SSBN-732), USS OHIO (SSGN-726) & USS TEXAS (SSN-775). He's a member of another base and is interested in becoming a dual member with our base. He shared that the newly reported Command Master Chief, NAVWPNSTA Seal Beach, is also submarine qualified. He shared that his first day on the job at his current post included participating in the Memorial Bricks project and that he was surprised to learn of the memorial's existence.



CMDCS (SS) PAUL WORKMAN
COMMAND SENIOR CHIEF, NAVWPNSTA SEAL BEACH

(more on next page)



Additional Chapter News...

More from Our August Fire Station Meeting



Darin designed this hypothetical fire patch just for fun!



Base meeting attendees dine at the Kalaveras restaurant afterwards.



The legendary L.A. County Emergency! Squad 51 lives on at this Fire Dept. Museum in Bellflower.



Emergency! Engine 51 also now resides at the museum.

(more on next page)



Additional Chapter News...

More from Our August Fire Station Meeting



Bill surveys this new turf.



Mike and Sue get all caught up.



Saluting the colors.



Discussion begins.



Obligatory group shot as L.A.-Pasadena Base makes the most of a Saturday visit to the Fire Dept. Museum in Bellflower—continuing a new tradition of occasionally moving the monthly meeting around to fresh and interesting venues. Way to go, shipmates!

2026 United States Submarine Veterans Calendar

SILENT HUNTERS

Los Angeles-class submarines continue to play a critical role in national security. Their ability to operate undetected has ensured strategic deterrence and supported global military operations for decades.



Just \$13.75
plus shipping

The L.A. Boats



It is our purpose 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.

Los Angeles-class submarines continue to play a critical role in national security. Their ability to operate undetected has ensured strategic deterrence and supported global military operations for decades. Show your support for the Silent Service and these crucial hardworking boats with this latest beautiful wall calendar from USSVI.

2026 Calendars Available Now!

Individual calendars are **\$13.75 + \$4.63 shipping**. Order yours today by credit card at ussvination-storekeeper.com or by sending your check or money order made payable to USSVI to:

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USS PROVIDENCE (SSN 719)
2003, she earned the nickname "Big Dog of the Red Sea" for launching the most Tomahawk missiles during the conflict. The submarine also played a key role in launching Tomahawk missiles against Libyan air defenses during Operation Odyssey Dawn in 2011. In popular culture, Providence is featured in the 1986 Tom Clancy novel *Red Storm Rising*, alongside her sister submarines, USS *Roston* (SSN 703) and USS *Chicago* (SSN 721). After 37 years of dedicated service, Providence was decommissioned on August 15, 2022.

August 2026

(Five submarines and 251 men lost)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24*	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

July	August	September	October	November	December
S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S
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5 6 7 8 9 10 11	2 3 4 5 6 7 8	6 7 8 9 10 11 12	4 5 6 7 8 9 10	8 9 10 11 12 13 14	6 7 8 9 10 11 12
12 13 14 15 16 17 18	9 10 11 12 13 14 15	13 14 15 16 17 18 19	11 12 13 14 15 16 17	15 16 17 18 19 20 21	13 14 15 16 17 18 19
19 20 21 22 23 24 25	16 17 18 19 20 21 22	20 21 22 23 24 25 26	18 19 20 21 22 23 24	22 23 24 25 26 27 28	20 21 22 23 24 25 26
26 27 28 29 30 31	23 24 25 26 27 28 29	27 28 29 30 1 2 3	25 26 27 28 29 30 31	29 30 1 2 3 4 5	27 28 29 30 31 1 2
3 4 5 6 7 8	30 31 1 2 3 4 5	4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	6 7 8 9 10 11 12	3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Proceeds to benefit USSVI operations and projects.



Didn't know there was another submarine squadron in Los Angeles besides USSVI's L.A.-Pasadena Base, didja? Visit The SubCommittee to find out more.
www.subcommittee.com



*In memory
of the
fifty-two
submarines
lost in
World War II*

SEALION
S-36
S-26
SHARK I
PERCH
S-27
GRUNION
S-39
ARGONAUT
AMBERJACK
GRAMPUS
TRITON
PICKEREL
GRENADIER
RUNNER
R-12
GRAYLING
POMPANO
CISCO
S-44
DORADO
WAHOO

CORVINA
SCULPIN
CAPELIN
SCORPION
GRAYBACK
TROUT
TULLIBEE
GUDGEON
HERRING
GOLET
S-28
ROBALO
FLIER
HARDER
SEAWOLF
DARTER
SHARK II
TANG
ESCOLAR
ALBACORE
GROWLER

SCAMP
SWORDFISH
BARBEL
KETE
TRIGGER
SNOOK
LAGARTO
BONEFISH
BULLHEAD

