



**STIMSON KEEL LAID
4 APRIL 1964**



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY
TO OUR
SUBMARINE FORCE**

VOL. 2024 #4

APRIL 2024

USS HENRY L. STIMSON ASSOCIATION SSBN655 NEWSLETTER

Association Officers & Board of Directors 2023 - 2025

PRESIDENT <u>Jerry [CJ] Blevins</u>	VICE PRESIDENT <u>Ray [Rita] Kreul</u>	SECRETARY <u>Nick [Linda] Nichols</u>	TREASURER <u>Ken [Diane] Meigs</u>	PAST PRESIDENT <u>Tom [Marie] Krauser</u>
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Other Positions 2023 - 2025

HISTORIAN / CUSTODIAN <u>Larry [Linda] Knutson</u>	WEBMASTER / NEWSLETTER <u>Nick [Linda] Nichols</u>	CHAPLAIN <u>Bruce [Vicki] Stefanik</u>
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**REUNION CONTROL CENTER
2025 Stimson Reunion
Fall of 2025
Groton CT**

From the Editor:

In my email last month I referred to the Julian Calendar and the use of Julian dates. One of our association members made a correction to my comments. It was a good lesson so take heed:

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Submitted by Rick Towner, CDR G CO 90-92
Editorial comment...it's the Gregorian calendar...a refinement on the Julian Calendar. The latter added a leap day every four years...but this was too much as a year is slightly less than 365.25 days...so Pope Gregory modified the calendar as follows: Leap year every four years unless the year is divisible by 100 except it is a leap year if divisible by 400. Thus 1900 was NOT a leap year where 2000 was. At the time the Gregorian calendar was adopted by most of Europe, the calendar had gotten more than a week out of date. England didn't adopt it until around the middle of the 1700s by which the Julian calendar

was 11 days out of synch. Interesting fun fact: George Washington was born in 1732...before England adopted the Gregorian calendar (and thus the American colonies), so the date on the calendar when Washington was born said 11 Feb. Today we celebrate his birthday as the 22nd.... which conforms to the Gregorian calendar. Submitted just to keep the record straight. **KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK!**



From the Association President - Jerry Blevins, LT(SS) B 76-79, USSVI USS Groton Base, 655 Assoc Life Member:

Some shipmates may remember Dick Young's announcement at our 2021 reunion about his efforts towards obtaining the necessary support and funding to construct a monument to the USS Cincinnati (SSN-693) and one that would incorporate her sail, rudder, and diesel.

The fruition of his efforts was announced on March 7th at the Voice of America (VOA) Museum in West Chester, OH. Although Dick and his associates have further challenges, they are

The direct link to the Association Eternal Patrol page is: <http://ssbn655.org/eternal-patrol/eternal-patrol.html>



WELCOME ABOARD: Found & Updated Shipmates

(Shipmate has been added or information has been updated on our Sailing List. Please check the online Sailing List for shipmates contact info.)

NOTE: Don Ort, MM1(SS) G/SY1/G 69-74, CWO4 Ret, continues to locate our Stimson shipmates who are on our Sailing List but without an email address.

MM1(SS) Don Kornowski B 65-69 Comm & Plank Owner

[update by shipmate]

BINNACLE LIST UPDATES: If you know of a shipmate who should be on the binnacle list please let me know. I will contact the shipmate for permission to add them to this list. I only add those who have given permission.

I am using the binnacle list as an ongoing story for each person on it. By doing it this way you will be able to understand the update better than if you do not remember what their health issues were.

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Loree Riggs, MM2(SS) G Comm 66-69, Assoc. Life Member & Past Secretary, USSVI USS Springfield Base & Holland Club

Cards to: 8 Penacook Dr., Rochester IL 62563

3.27.2024: Loree is currently in hospice care due to his lung disease. He is on oxygen 24/7 and his mobility is limited. The VA has rated him at 100% service disability based on his exposure to asbestos during the time he was in the Navy. He is able to take phone calls and would really enjoy talking to some of his shipmates. His phone number is on the Stimson Sailing List.

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Michael Schwarzott, STS2(SS) B 75-76

Cards to: 7935 Edgebrook Circle Apt 1 North Charleston SC 29418

3.5.24: Email from Michael: On Feb 25, 2024 I started having severe sharp pain on my right side off and on. After a few days with them becoming more frequent and stronger I went down to the Charleston Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center to get checked out and after a CT diagnosed with kidney stones and pain was in passing it and given Norco for the pain. The next night I went back to work. Not even 2 hours later I was sicker than ever vomiting and feeling drunk/drugged out I knew better. I couldn't even use my badge code to get out of the secure area of the airport the police escorted me out to catch the employee shuttle. After getting home I waited 3 more days sick as a dog and not getting better went back to the VA ER being very short of breath and other recognizable symptoms took right back to the specialized tests was diagnosed with sepsis from the kidney stones damage done. In that short of time, I went to a critical health situation to one in a couple more days deadly. I'm on the mend hopefully home in a couple of days.

3.29.24: Update from Michael: I am doing well now. Went back to work for 3 days this week. Now I am off until the 7th. Having outpatient surgery Tuesday so they can remove the stent and take the stone out. I will be to work on the 7th FT with no restrictions. All from a kidney stone that most just pass though in a lot of pain. I can tell you when it hit me on Thursday night while at work it was like I was very confused, could not think straight, airport police had to help me get out of the airport. Got to the employee parking and know I was very confused on how to get the gate to open and just sat there for a while. I don't remember driving home at all. My former roommate came over to check on me and my car was parked right in the middle of the parking lot. To tell you the truth I don't remember the weekend at all. I'm just thankful It was caught before it started damaging the other organs. I dodged a bullet there!

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Diane Meigs, wife of Ken Meigs, ETR2(SS) G 65-70 Plank Owner, Association Treasurer & Life Member, USSVI Member-at-Large & Holland Club

Cards to: 1537 Pebble Beach Ct, Medford OR 97504

3.25.2024: Email from Ken: Almost all of her treatment-related side effects have abated. She can now swallow OK and the radiation-induced skin blisters are gone. She says her physical health is about 90% of normal. She sleeps much less during the daytime. They have not completed recent labs so we're not sure if her white & red blood cell counts are back up to normal. For the next 2 years, she will undergo CT & PET scans but the quarterly infusions of an immunologic agent are still on hold due to concerns about potential negative side effects. I request prayers that we are able to incorporate this therapy because studies have shown improved outcomes when this therapy has been added to a patient's treatment algorithm. Her spirits are back & she's been able to go back to church to fellowship with her friends. God bless always, Ken

1.24.2024: Email from Ken: Diane is in her 5th of 7 weeks of Chemotherapy (2 drugs, 1 day/week) and radiation therapy 5 days/week. A couple of weeks ago we had been given word that the cancer finally was no longer growing, but today we just got the first word that they now believe that it has actually shrunk a little, which often is not the case until after radiation therapy is over. So far we have been able to stay ahead of any side effects which easily can be therapy-limiting, especially since one of her chemo agents tends to have a cumulative effect over the course of therapy, both for cancer killing ability, but as well as increasing her risk of side effects.

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Bruce Stefanik, MS1(SS) B 73-77, 655 Assoc Life Member, USSVI USS Asheville Base:

Cards to: 50 Fairway View Dr., Etowah NC 28729

3.24.24: Email from Vicki: Bruce is doing very well. The final phase study of one ALS medication showed it did not work as expected so his doctor said he could stop taking it. This was the one that

Bruce described as drinking battery acid so he is happy about it.

The adaptation of the house began January 2nd and was just completed. Final inspection with the VA Construction Specialist was the 20th. He was very impressed with the quality of work by our contractor and his subs.

Bruce had to go to the VA hospital in Salisbury for a driving evaluation which he passed with flying colors. The examiner said he was only the 2nd ALS patient she had who has passed. This was required before we could get an adapted vehicle that can transport his power chair. We should have the van this week.

1.22.2024: Email from Vicki: Bruce is doing well physically. He is on all 3 meds for slowing progression- liquid, pill & powder that he says tastes like battery acid. His doctor says some people can't handle taking it. His medical care other than his Wake Forest ALS team is mostly now with the Asheville VA Medical Center. They want to make sure he has everything he will eventually need in place well before he needs it. The VA PT took us to the office that does ramps. When they saw the ALS diagnosis, we had an appointment the next day with OT to order a ramp for the front door which was installed the Thursday before Christmas. Before we left there, he had a grabber to pick things up, an order for a Fall button & an appointment to be measured & fitted for his custom-made power chair.

The house is in construction which began January 2 and is planned to be finished mid-March. We are sleeping in the guest room and take showers at the Y as he can't easily get into the tub with the drop foot. The VA Specially Adapted Housing is changing our master bath into a wet room for easy wheelchair use and widening 3 doorways.

Bruce's VA medical care is now home based which is what they do for ALS patients. His PA and nurse were here last week to get to know us. The team dietitian will be here Tuesday. We should also get visits from the team OT and social worker. The VA has been fantastic.

He is currently wearing an eye patch for a

palsy in the 2nd nerve of the right eye which causes double vision. It will take up to 6 months to heal. He has had 2 before which are diabetic connected. He is keeping our eye doctor since they have the Neuro ophthalmologist who has been treating him. And he wants to continue using our dentist so our regular insurance will cover those.

My left knee decided to do something the Saturday before Christmas. No blood clot or fracture and the bones are great so I am waiting on an MRI scheduled on the 29th.

Please continue to pray for Bruce's long-term ALS and my knee issue.

11.17.2023: We had a very good first visit to the Wake Forest ALS Clinic. My doctor added 2 medications and he recommended me as a good candidate for a Capture Study out of the University of Miami where they follow your chart entries after each clinic visit. The respiratory therapist gave me breathing exercises. The physical therapist explained why we really should have hardwood in our bedroom because of future equipment needs. The nutritionist taught us that ALS patients do better on the Mediterranean style diet so we will be converting to that. And the social worker connected us with the NC ALS Association social worker who gave us a whole notebook of resources.

And we have selected the contractor to do the VA adapted housing work the Adaptive Housing Construction Specialist said would be needed. They want to make sure it is done before it will actually be needed.

Just continue to keep us in your prayers.
11.1.2023: In summer of 2022 I started having problems with my right foot. In August '22 it was diagnosed as drop foot and I was fitted with a brace to keep from tripping. The orthopedic leg specialist referred me to a spine specialist to determine the cause. From the MRI he thought I should have problems on my left side so he referred me to a neurologist. After her testing she felt it was more than diabetic neuropathy and she referred me to the neurology clinic at Wake Forest.

June 1st, I met with the doctor at Wake Forest. After his review of the reports from the first three doctors and his examination he voiced his suspicion but wanted to wait 3 months and do his own testing. On September 6th I had the testing at Wake Forest Diagnostic Neurology. After a little over a year of doctors and tests I have been diagnosed with ALS. I have been put on the medication that slows progression and will begin working with the specialists at the Wake Forest ALS Clinic in mid-November.

Thank you for your prayer support as we begin this journey.

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Elam Lee Mauk, EMCM(SS) B 65-69 COB 66-68 Plank, Assoc. Life Member, USSVI USS Sailfish Base Holland Club

Card to: 4000 Ibis Way Unit 201 Venice FL 34292

2.20.2024: Email from Gretchen Glaub: John has joined the USS Sailfish Base and received the following email from the Base Commander.

Elam is a member of the USS Sailfish Base:

- I called his home and spoke with his wife. He is in the Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans Nursing Home in Port Charlotte with dementia. I have added him to our binnacle list. Bill Heck, USS Sailfish Base Commander

9.17.2023: Email from Angie Mauk: Elam Lee has been in dementia for the past two years, Of course we cannot travel. Hope your reunion is a great success, We will miss you all

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Sandy Hastie, CAPT B 80 (Oct-Dec) CO-1 patrol

Cards to: 75 Lambeth Dr., Asheville NC 28803-3425

2.18.2024: Email from Sandy: Dear Friends, we met with our local oncologist on Wednesday, February 14 to review Sandy's February 11 PET/CT scans.

Although preliminary, the scans showed the three cryoablation operations reduced the size of the cancer nodules that were in my left glute area, right shoulder, and right chest wall. The next scans in May will tell a more complete story. But, our oncologist, our surgeons, and we are

cautiously optimistic that the May scans will show the operations significantly reduced or eliminated the nodules. This would help reduce the cancer load on the Keytruda immunotherapy and will hopefully allow Keytruda to more easily control the remaining cancer nodules.

Sandy is still recovering from the operations but making good progress.

We thank you for your prayers and for God's graciousness in answering them!

Warmly, Donna and Sandy

1.20.2024: Email from Sandy: Dear Friends, The three operations are done and we are planning to head home tomorrow [from Boston]. *The first one had the greatest after operation pain and the doctors were wise to schedule that one first. The nodules they went after during this operation had grown which accounted for much of the pain.*

The doctors said each of the operations went well. Their success will be monitored by the PET/CT scans I receive every three months. They don't expect to see much change until the second set of scans. The first set will be in early February and the second in May.

The doctors and we believe this is a step forward in the battle to keep going with Keytruda treatments. Time will tell. We have a faithful God and we trust in Him.

Our daughter, Cameron, who lives in Massachusetts visited us twice, once with her daughter, which helped keep our spirits up and was appreciated.

We thank you for all your prayers! They work!
Warmly, Donna and Sandy

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Ron 'RG' Hyson, STS1(SS) B 70-75, Assoc. Life Member, USSVI Hampton Roads Base, Holland Club, STSCM(SS) Retired

Cards to: 3425 MacDonald Rd., Virginia Beach VA 23464

3.26.2024: Email from Jean: The results of Ron's evaluation on January 2024, compared to last year, scored significantly lower on a test of global cognition. His doctor reported that Ron has transition to the Moderately Severe Stage of

dementia. Also, he was prescribed an additional medication to help with his anxiety and agitation. The medicine is working great!! We now have a happier and calmer household.

Thank you for all the prayers, caring thoughts, cards, letters, pictures, and memories Ron has received. They really brighten his day.

Jean/Ron

5.24.23: Email from Jean: I really don't have any updates, just taking it one day at a time. We have started attending some social events at our local VFW and Ron enjoys the camaraderie of his VFW buddies, this certainly raises his spirits. Please keep checking in. Your thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated.

1.29.23: Email from Ron 'RG': After my diagnoses of Alzheimer's, February 2022, I had to have my Aortic Heart Valve replaced in April followed by Cardio Rehab from June to August of 2022. I entered a CBD Oil Study from July to October through EVMS, Eastern Virginia Medical School, to help with my anxiety and agitation. It seemed to help a lot. January 2023, I was reevaluated for my Alzheimer's and I am now in the moderate stage. I was prescribed new medication to help with my memory and anxiety. It seems to be working very well. Thank you for all your prayers, RG and Jean

GREAT LINKS TO SPEND TIME WITH

655 Association Website

www.ssb655.org

Enjoy these videos from the 2023 Stimson Reunion #12 Decommissioning + 30 Years

Association Eternal Patrol Service

<https://youtu.be/nGqEWt9tEKU>

Association Business Meeting

<https://youtu.be/5aEbCOXG12w>

Reunion Banquet Program Reunion

Chairman Harry Nettles Guest Speaker Sam Johnson, Decom CO

<https://youtu.be/OH7cLPcq24g>

How a Michigan beach town became home to a highly-decorated WWII submarine

MUSKEGON, MI - An 82-year-old piece of storied World War II history has called the Muskegon Lake channel home since 1987, thanks to strong community support and the formation of a new museum.

The USS Silversides fought in the war from April 1942 to July 1945. Painted on the side of the ship like a tattoo are 30 Japanese flags representing the enemy ships the submarine sank during its 14 patrols. The submarine ranks third highest among all WWII submarines in ships sunk, today it is the nation's most famous surviving WWII submarine.

<https://www.mlive.com/life/2024/03/how-a-michigan-beach-town-became-home-to-a-highly-decorated-wwii-submarine.html>

Submitted by Jim Bob Gutierrez

Cold War Shadows Beneath the Waves: The Collision of USS Baton Rouge and Russian Sub B-276 Kostroma

In the wake of the Soviet Union's dissolution, the world found itself navigating the murky waters of a new geopolitical era. Amidst this uncertainty, on February 11, 1992, an underwater clash underscored the lingering mutual suspicions between the world's former Cold War adversaries. The USS Baton Rouge, a nuclear-powered Los Angeles-class attack submarine, collided with Russia's Sierra-class B-276 Kostroma near the Russian naval base at Severomorsk, in a region teeming with strategic significance and naval activity.

SEA STORIES, COMMENTS and JUST GOOD THINGS From Our Shipmates

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Submitted by Skip Shepherd, TM2(SS) B 73-75

Welcome Home

Pdoggbiker March 9

As a veteran, how do you feel when a stranger approaches and says **WELCOME HOME** or **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE** when out in public? Here's one man's take on it:

By Robin Bartlett

The phrase 'thank you for your service' started to be used in the late '90s. It became even more popular in recognition of the heroism on the part of firefighters, police, and first responders in the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11th and the War on Terror that followed. The saying is commonly used today to greet all veterans and active-duty soldiers as well as politicians and first responders. It is the "phrase du jour" for Veterans Day (originally Armistice Day) honoring those who served in the military, and Memorial Day (originally Decoration Day) honoring those who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of their country.

But some veterans, especially Vietnam veterans, feel that the phrase is overused, and may even find it offensive. These men interpret the words as meaningless sentiments such as "Have a nice day" and react with a quiet, modest "thank you" all the while thinking they have no true understanding of the meaning of those words.

If you were a combat veteran in Vietnam, humped the boonies for a year, and placed your life on the line every day in service to your country, you often believe your actions deserve more respect than what is so commonly communicated by thank you for your service. Many Vietnam veterans believe that saying those words alleviates the civilian guilt for not having served. A common belief within my group is while I was humping the jungle and eating C-rations in that God-forsaken country, you were eating french fries in the food court at the mall.

An Uneasy Thanks

According to a Cohen Veterans Network poll commissioned in November 2019, 49% of veterans don't actually like to be thanked and are uneasy with the expression thank you for your service.

Here is a quote from my book with permission given by Robert Flourney from a Facebook post, Reflections of an Artillery Forward Observer with an Air Cav Rifle Company:

"Many of us arrived in Oakland 12 hours after leaving a fire base, some after walking point on a

patrol, still wearing the red dirt of that duty, and were on the streets in civies a few hours later with some travel pay to make their way back to Ohio, Alabama, or New Jersey. And when the hugs and tears of our families were done with, we would look around, somewhat bewildered, with a head full of “what now?” Ensuing nights filled the mind with sounds of popping flares, and hammering of an M-60, the constant boom of artillery and the whop whop whop of Hueys coming and going, left us dazed and confused to have left all that behind so suddenly. Many of us sank into silence, most tried to explain our experience to uncomprehending parents, and spouses. So many sought the solace of fellow vets at the local VFW or Legion Hall, usually accompanied by liquor which too frequently led to loud, aggressive behavior. How many of us wanted to go back? Back to the jungle, to the fire bases that we hated, but where likeminded men with singular purpose treated us like brothers, silent respect and understanding hanging over us like a warm blanket. Our homecomings were, all too frequently, the beginnings of frustration and despair.

Yet, most just moved on, putting it all behind us. Regardless of how we handled the homecoming, there was never a welcome home feeling from our country much less from the people who never served. We didn't look for it, expect it, or even think about it. It was a non-issue. So, Vietnam vets became an obscurity in the landscape of America, an awkward presence that most vets acknowledged with their own silence. But, decades later, when old ghosts started creeping out of their closets, and the wisdom of age made its way into their reflections, combat veterans from the Vietnam war began remembering their experiences in softer toned colors, instead of the garish bright reds and oranges that they brought home with them. A kind gentleness emerged as they sought their brothers from long ago. The greeting “welcome home” emerged not as a resentful “we never got a proper welcome”, but simply as a soft nod of the head to those who made it back so long ago. Two simple words that belong exclusively to them and their

kin; brothers who know – as only they can know. Those men own the words, another right shoulder patch seen only by those who also wear one there.”

Vietnam vets are a special breed. We come in many shapes and colors. You will notice more and more of us these days as Vietnam veterans begin to walk in the boots of their WWII and Korean brothers. Some proudly wear ball caps denoting the unit in which they served with pins showing their decorations. Our hair is going grey. We have wrinkles on our faces, and some suffer from the ravages of age, battle wounds, PTSD, the scourge of toxic burning and Agent Orange. But as our numbers gradually decrease, just as our brothers in previous wars have faded, we ask only for a few kind words of acknowledgment that we served to protect the freedoms and life you now enjoy.

A Game changer

When you meet us, I encourage you to greet us with a phrase that shows you truly care and have a deeper understanding of those of us who served in our war. There is nothing wrong with saying thank you for your service and it is sincerely appreciated by most veterans. But if you want to tell us that you honor our sacrifice, bring lumps to our throats and tears to our eyes, say Welcome Home and watch the reaction. It's a game-changer. How do you feel about it? Leave your comments below.

Robin Bartlett has contributed earlier articles to this website. See below:

The Trail – A short video

The Computer Corner

I'm sure most of you, if not all, have or are using Amazon services in one manner or another. This is a great article concerning keeping your account safe.

Scary signs that someone hacked your Amazon account

Have you ever received a package that wasn't intended for you? How about an empty box? While delivery errors happen, they could signify

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Changes in the Aging Brain: Dementia Basics

Did you know there are 4 common types of dementia? Read about symptoms to watch for and when to talk to your doctor.

Learn more.

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Virtual Physical Therapy at Home

Physical therapy can improve balance, strength, and mobility. Try physical therapy through VA Video Connect, from the comfort of home.

Learn more.

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COPD: What You Should Know

If you have trouble breathing, it could be a sign of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD. Find out if you should talk to your doctor.

Learn more.

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Is Your Environment Hurting Your Health?

Health isn't just about diet and exercise. Making simple changes in your daily surroundings can be key to improving your health.

Learn more.

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Diabetes: Keeping Your Heart Healthy

Did you know that 1.5 million Veterans with diabetes are at a higher risk of heart disease? Here are 6 tips to help lower your blood pressure and protect your heart.

Learn more.

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Get the Most out of Your Vegetables

Vegetables are key to getting the nutrients your body needs. But does it matter which ones you pick or how you prepare them? Try these tips to get the most out of your veggies.

Learn more.

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Cancer: Diagnosing and Preventing

Cancer is scary. But regular screenings can help detect early signs of cancer so it can be treated or in some cases prevented.

Learn more.

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Easy Access to Urgent Care

Did you know...eligible Veterans can get easy access to urgent care? Read more about urgent care benefits through VA health care and share the outreach kit with Veterans and their families.

Learn more

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Expands Veteran-themed Podcast Lineup

Wreaths Across America Radio, a 24/7 internet radio station that airs podcasts and radio shows aimed at educating and entertaining Veterans, now offers more than 50 shows, including seven new Veteran-themed programs.

Learn more

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VA Health Care Expands for Veterans

All Veterans exposed to toxins while serving can enroll in VA health care.

As of March 5, 2024, millions of Veterans are eligible for VA health care years earlier than called for by the PACT Act. Apply for the care you deserve today.

Learn more

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Move Well with Tai Chi

Tai chi supports focus, balance, and strength. It can even help relax your mind. Try these videos from a VA recreation therapist to get started.

Watch now.

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Where Are My Medications?

We heard your feedback: finding your medication history isn't always as easy as it should be. Here are some updates and tips to make it easier to find your medications on My HealtheVet.

Learn more

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Stroke Awareness: Get the Facts

Brain damage from strokes can be lessened if treated quickly, but it's easy to mistake signs of a stroke for something else. Know the different types of stroke and their warning signs.

Learn more.

Appointments: Ask These Questions

It's easy to forget important questions during

appointments with your doctor. Get the most out of your visit with these helpful tips.

[Learn more.](#)

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Eating Healthy on the Run

Need to eat on the run? Being in a rush doesn't mean that you can't eat healthy. Try these tips to get good nutrition fast.

[Learn more.](#)

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Could It Be Depression?

We all feel sad or worn down at times. But these may be signs of depression. My HealtheVet's anonymous screening tool can help you decide if it's time to ask for support.

[Learn more.](#)

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Telehealth: Get Care at Home or on the Go

Whether you're a frequent traveler or you live far from your VA medical center, telehealth makes it easier to get the care you need.

[Watch now](#)

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VA Will Consolidate Direct Deposits

Veterans will no longer be able to use multiple bank accounts for different veteran benefits under new anti-fraud measures being rolled out by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This change will impact approximately 50,000 students who receive the GI Bill and other VA benefits in separate direct deposit accounts. VA is sending weekly emails and text messages to this group of veterans and beneficiaries informing them of the upcoming change and asking them to select one bank account going forward. If students do not consolidate their bank accounts by April 20, VA will continue to send payments but will designate the non-education benefit payment account as the primary bank account. Read more for details on how to choose a single bank account for direct deposit.

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**Veterans Service Officer
John Dudas**



'Millions' of Veterans Exposed to Environmental Hazards Will Be Eligible for VA Health Care on March 5

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/02/26/millions-of-veterans-exposed-environmental-hazards-will-be-eligible-va-health-care-march-5.html>

[ESRC=mr_240304.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=mr&utm_campaign=20240304](#)

VA Now Has One Centralized Phone Number for all Customer Service

<https://www.military.com/benefits/2020/12/17/va-now-has-one-centralized-phone-number-all-customer-service.html>

Bill Allowing Disabled Veterans to Collect Full Benefits Gets New Push from Supporters on Capitol Hill

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/06/supporters-vow-not-give-stalled-bill-let-disabled-vets-collect-full-benefits.html>

[ESRC=eb_240307.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eb&utm_campaign=20240307](#)

Alabama Bill Aims to Create State Health System for Veterans and Their Families

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/05/alabama-bill-aims-create-state-health-system-veterans-and-their-families.html>

[ESRC=eb_240306.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eb&utm_campaign=20240306](#)

Veterans' Gun Rights Amendment Included in Compromise Must-Pass VA Spending Bill

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/04/va-couldnt-report-vets-deemed-mentally-incompetent-gun-background-check-database-under-latest.html>

[ESRC=navy_240305.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=navy&utm_campaign=20240305](#)

Veteran Travel Reimbursement Headaches Prompt VA to Pursue New Options for Claims Filing, Processing
[https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/02/27/veteran-travel-reimbursement-headaches-prompt-va-pursue-new-options-claims-filing-processing.html?](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/02/27/veteran-travel-reimbursement-headaches-prompt-va-pursue-new-options-claims-filing-processing.html?ESRC=navy_240305.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=navy&utm_campaign=20240305)
[ESRC=navy 240305.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=navy&utm_campaign=20240305](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/02/27/veteran-travel-reimbursement-headaches-prompt-va-pursue-new-options-claims-filing-processing.html?ESRC=navy_240305.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=navy&utm_campaign=20240305)

Court Rules that Veterans' Caregivers Can Appeal VA Eligibility Decisions
[https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/04/court-rules-veterans-caregivers-can-appeal-va-eligibility-decisions.html?](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/04/court-rules-veterans-caregivers-can-appeal-va-eligibility-decisions.html?ESRC=eb_240305.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eb&utm_campaign=20240305)
[ESRC=eb 240305.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eb&utm_campaign=20240305](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/04/court-rules-veterans-caregivers-can-appeal-va-eligibility-decisions.html?ESRC=eb_240305.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eb&utm_campaign=20240305)

Newport News Leaders Say Navy Could Invest \$400M in Downtown Housing for Sailors
[https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/04/newport-news-leaders-say-navy-could-invest-400m-downtown-housing-sailors.html?](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/04/newport-news-leaders-say-navy-could-invest-400m-downtown-housing-sailors.html?ESRC=eb_240305.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eb&utm_campaign=20240305)
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Navy Fires Commander of USS Ohio -- 3rd Submarine Skipper Relieved in 7 Months
[https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/14/navy-fires-commander-of-uss-ohio-3rd-submarine-skipper-relieved-7-months.html?](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/14/navy-fires-commander-of-uss-ohio-3rd-submarine-skipper-relieved-7-months.html?ESRC=navy_240319.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=navy&utm_campaign=20240319)
[ESRC=navy 240319.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=navy&utm_campaign=20240319](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/14/navy-fires-commander-of-uss-ohio-3rd-submarine-skipper-relieved-7-months.html?ESRC=navy_240319.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=navy&utm_campaign=20240319)

Pre-need eligibility for burial in a VA cemetery (NEW – you don't have to wait till death)
<https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/pre-need-eligibility/>

USS Idaho Submarine Christened amid Unprecedented Demand for Workers
[https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/18/uss-idaho-submarine-christened-amid-unprecedented-demand-for-workers.html?](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/18/uss-idaho-submarine-christened-amid-unprecedented-demand-for-workers.html?ESRC=mr_240325.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=mr&utm_campaign=20240325)
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Florida Residents Living Out of State Need to Check Driver's License, Registration Status
[https://www.military.com/money/personal-finance/florida-residents-living-out-of-state-need-check-drivers-license-registration-status.html?](https://www.military.com/money/personal-finance/florida-residents-living-out-of-state-need-check-drivers-license-registration-status.html?ESRC=eb_240315.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eb&utm_campaign=20240315)
[ESRC=eb 240315.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eb&utm_campaign=20240315](https://www.military.com/money/personal-finance/florida-residents-living-out-of-state-need-check-drivers-license-registration-status.html?ESRC=eb_240315.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eb&utm_campaign=20240315)

Electronic Health Record System Unveiled at VA and Pentagon's Largest Shared Health Care Facility
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[ESRC=eb 240312.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eb&utm_campaign=20240312](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/11/va-and-pentagon-roll-out-shared-electronic-health-record-system-chicago-bug-fixes-continue.html?ESRC=eb_240312.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eb&utm_campaign=20240312)

Bill Allowing Disabled Veterans to Collect Full Benefits Gets New Push from Supporters on Capitol Hill
[https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/06/supporters-vow-not-give-stalled-bill-let-disabled-vets-collect-full-benefits.html?](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/06/supporters-vow-not-give-stalled-bill-let-disabled-vets-collect-full-benefits.html?ESRC=navy_240312.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=navy&utm_campaign=20240312)
[ESRC=navy 240312.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=navy&utm_campaign=20240312](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/06/supporters-vow-not-give-stalled-bill-let-disabled-vets-collect-full-benefits.html?ESRC=navy_240312.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=navy&utm_campaign=20240312)

Veteran Toxic Exposure Fund Overhaul Proposal Ignites Fierce Debate over PACT Act Benefits
[https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/21/va-says-gop-plan-overhaul-pact-act-fund-could-cut-benefits-veterans-exposed-toxins.html?](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/21/va-says-gop-plan-overhaul-pact-act-fund-could-cut-benefits-veterans-exposed-toxins.html?ESRC=mr_240325.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=mr&utm_campaign=20240325)
[ESRC=mr 240325.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=mr&utm_campaign=20240325](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/21/va-says-gop-plan-overhaul-pact-act-fund-could-cut-benefits-veterans-exposed-toxins.html?ESRC=mr_240325.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=mr&utm_campaign=20240325)

These States Passed New Military Income Tax Cuts in 2023

https://www.military.com/daily-news/2023/12/20/these-states-passed-new-military-income-tax-cuts-2023.html?ESRC=mr_240325.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=mr&utm_campaign=20240325

Veteran Toxic Exposure Fund Overhaul Proposal Ignites Fierce Debate over PACT Act Benefits

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Tricare Users Can Now Refill Prescriptions Through MHS Genesis Electronic Health Record System

https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/21/tricare-beneficiaries-log-30000-prescription-refills-first-week-of-electronic-health-record-system.html?ESRC=eb_240322.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eb&utm_campaign=20240322

250,000 Veterans Agree to \$6 Billion Settlement with 3M over Earplugs Alleged to Cause Hearing Loss

https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/27/250000-veterans-agree-6-billion-settlement-3m-over-earplugs-alleged-cause-hearing-loss.html?ESRC=eb_240328.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eb&utm_campaign=20240328

Military's Rural Tricare Beneficiaries Are Struggling to Find Care Amid Post-COVID Hospital Closures

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Veterans: What's Taxed and What's Not on Your Federal and State Returns

https://www.military.com/money/personal-finance/veterans-whats-taxed-and-whats-not-your-federal-and-state-returns.html?ESRC=navy_240326.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=navy&utm_campaign=20240326

VA Plans to Cut 10,000 Jobs This Year on Medical Side of the House

https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/03/19/va-plans-cut-10000-jobs-year-medical-side-of-house.html?ESRC=eb_240320.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eb&utm_campaign=20240320

This article was in the CHINFO NEWS CLIPS 11 MAR 24

NAVAL HISTORY:

100 Years Ago Friday, The First Submariner Received The Medal Of Honor

(NAVY TIMES 08 MAR 24) ... Sarah Sicard

Their service is often silent, but valorous nonetheless, and exactly a century ago Friday, a Navy submariner became the first of his kind to receive the Medal of Honor.

President Calvin Coolidge presented Torpedoman's Mate 2nd Class Henry Breault the military's highest military decoration on March 8, 1924.

Actions in the Panama Canal the year before led Breault to become the silent service's first Medal of Honor recipient.

On the Atlantic side of the canal, Breault was serving aboard the USS O-5 on Oct. 28, 1923, when a commercial vessel struck the sub, sinking it in less than a minute, according to his Medal of Honor citation.

Breault was in the torpedo room at the time of the collision but managed to make it to the hatch and escape.

But according to Navy General Orders 125 from Feb. 20, 1924, he soon realized a fellow submariner was left behind.

"Upon reaching the hatch, he saw that the boat was rapidly sinking," the orders read.

“Instead of jumping overboard to save his own life, he returned to the torpedo room to the rescue of a shipmate whom he knew was trapped in the boat.”

That shipmate was Chief Electrician’s Mate Lawrence Brown. The ship’s compartments were flooding fast, but Breault secured the watertight door to the torpedo room, giving the pair precious air and time. Breault locked himself and Brown inside. Safe there, they planned to wait for salvage divers.

Brown’s account made it into an article called “The O-5 is Down!” by Capt. Julius Grigore, Jr., published in a 1972 edition of the U.S. Naval Institute magazine “Proceedings.”

“Breault and I separated to pound on each of the boat’s sides. In this way, the rescuers would know there were two of us,” Brown recalled. “Breault played a kind of tune with his hammer, indicating to the diver that we were in good shape and cheerful. Neither of us knew Morse Code. We had no food or water, and only a flashlight. We were confident we could stay alive for forty-eight hours.”

It took 31 hours, but the pair was rescued.

“Breault’s shipmate almost certainly would have died had Breault not intervened at the risk to this own life,” note National Medal of Honor Museum records.

This action prompted the vessel’s commanding officer, Lt. Harrison Avery, to submit Breault for a Navy Cross.

Researcher Ryan Walker speculates in a 2022 article that the reason Avery did not recommend the Medal of Honor is because Avery’s lower rank didn’t permit him to do so.

Control Force Commander Rear Adm. Montgomery Taylor ultimately made the adjustment and upgraded the recommendation to a Medal of Honor.

“The unusual heroic conduct of Breault and his devotion to duty, particularly in that he almost surely saved Brown’s life at the risk of his own and in that his devotion to duty saved a [considerable] loss of Government property, deserves recognition,” Taylor wrote.

Breault reenlisted several times and was

promoted to the rank of Torpedoman’s Mate 1st Class, according to his service record. His last duty station was at the submarine base in New London, Conn.

He ultimately served in the Navy for 20 years before developing a heart condition, which claimed his life on Dec. 5, 1941. He was 41 years old.

The Vermont state legislature is honoring his service 100 years later with a resolution to be presented on March 15.

Though born in Connecticut, he is accredited to Vermont, according to his citation.

Breault specified that he was from Vermont when he received the award, Bill Mattoon of the Green Mountain Base Submarine Veterans group wrote in an email to Military Times.

“For us Submariners in Vermont, this is a special moment in our history,” Mattoon said.

<https://www.navytimes.com/off-duty/military-culture/2024/03/08/100-years-ago-friday-the-first-submariner-received-the-medal-of-honor/>

First Columbia Nuclear Missile Sub At Risk Of 1-Year Delay Due To Supplier Problems

(USNI NEWS 11 MAR 24) ... Mallory Shelbourne and Sam LaGrone

THE PENTAGON – The lead ship in the Columbia-class ballistic missile submarine program is facing a potential one-year delay due to supplier issues, putting the Navy’s number one acquisition program at risk and creating a potential gap in the U.S. nuclear strategic deterrent, five people familiar with the delay told USNI News.

The future USS District of Columbia (SSBN-826) could deliver in Fiscal Year 2028 instead of its planned FY 2027 delivery, the sources confirmed to USNI News.

Capitol Forum first reported news of the delay on Monday.

The largest hurdle for District of Columbia is the bow module of the submarine that is under construction at HII’s Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia, two sources familiar with the delay told USNI News. The overall program is facing

additional delays from the steam turbines that Northrop Grumman is under contract to build for the Navy.

Under the teaming arrangement for the Columbia program, lead contractor General Dynamics Electric Boat assembles the central barrel of the submarine's hull at its yard in Groton, Conn., and its manufacturing facility in Quonset Point, R.I. Those modules built in New England are married to bow and stern sections that are constructed at Newport News and sent by barge up to the Columbia assembly hall in Connecticut. HII has been late in delivering the sections, delaying the timeline for construction.

Newport News delivered the stern of the lead boat in January, USNI News previously reported. Likewise, the turbines that translate the steam generated by the submarine's nuclear reactor to mechanical and electrical energy have also hit manufacturing delays, causing blockages in production.

A spokesman for HII's Newport News referred USNI News to General Dynamics Electric Boat when asked about the potential schedule slippage. A spokesman for General Dynamics referred USNI News to the Navy.

Asked about the initial report during the Navy's Fiscal Year 2025 budget briefing on Monday, Under Secretary Erik Raven pointed to Secretary Carlos Del Toro's 45-day shipbuilding review.

"We're seeing stress across the industrial base and again I think putting this in the context of the Secretary's 45-day review will add additional depth and context to the challenges that we're seeing across the shipbuilding portfolio and we expect to have that done fairly soon," Raven told USNI News.

The Navy's Fiscal Year 2025 budget books, released Monday with the annual budget request, list District of Columbia as delivering in October 2027, the same schedule listed in last year's documents.

When asked about the potential delay, a Navy spokeswoman referred USNI News to Raven's comments from the budget briefing and said more information on the program will be available when

the service releases the results of the 45-day review that began in January. The Navy is expected to publish the review later this month, USNI News understands.

The service began to express concern over potential program delays last year. In a March 29 hearing before the House Appropriations Committee's defense subcommittee, Del Toro warned the panel that the program was facing major headwinds.

During her confirmation hearing in September, now Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti said the \$132 billion program was still meeting its timelines, but the margin was eroding.

"Columbia started out on an accelerated schedule. We are no longer on the accelerated schedule, but we are meeting the contracted delivery schedule for Columbia," Franchetti told lawmakers at the time.

"We are continuing to work closely with industry against all those challenges that I described earlier and continuing to provide the right level of oversight so we understand where we are. It is [an] all-hands-on deck effort to ensure that we stay on time," she added.

The Columbia program, which recapitalizes the sea-based leg of the U.S. military's nuclear triad, has a razor-thin schedule margin because each boat needs to replace the submarines in the Ohio class one-for-one. To provide some cushion, the Navy is planning to perform short extensions for up to five Ohio-class ballistic-missile submarines that would stretch each boat's service life by three years. Starting with USS Alaska (SSBN-732), each boat would undergo an 18-month maintenance availability for the extension. But the service has several years and budget cycles before it needs to make a final decision on the extensions.

Under U.S. Strategic Command requirements, the Navy's submarine force must be able to surge 10 ballistic missile submarines should a nuclear contingency arise. There are currently 14 SSBNs in the Navy's inventory. Without a service life extension for the Ohio-class boats, the inventory would dip to 13 in FY 2027, then 12 in FY 2029,

according to the FY 2024 long-range shipbuilding blueprint. Without the extension, the number would then decrease to 11 in FY 2030 through FY 2032.

<https://news.usni.org/2024/03/11/first-columbia-nuclear-missile-sub-at-risk-of-1-year-delay-due-to-supplier-problems>

Navy Delays Next-Generation Submarine Start To Early 2040s

(DEFENSE NEWS 14 MAR 24) ... Megan Eckstein

The U.S. Navy is pushing back the start of construction on its next-generation attack submarine by nearly a decade, citing tight budgets and a need to fund current and near-term operations.

A Navy spokesperson told Defense News construction on the lead ship of the SSN(X) program, which will follow the Virginia-class attack submarine, is now planned to start in the “early 2040s.” The Navy last year planned to begin the ship class in 2035, and it was previously set for a 2031 start.

In its fiscal 2025 budget, the Navy is seeking to delay spending on several modernization programs, including SSN(X), the DDG(X) next-generation destroyer, and the F/A-XX next-generation fighter.

Three years ago, in the spring of 2021, the Navy was readying for a FY28 start for DDG(X), an FY31 start to SSN(X), and a generic 2030s start to F/A-XX, the manned fighter that fits into a larger Next Generation Air Dominance family of systems.

The service has already delayed the DDG(X) program to a FY32 start, reflected in last year’s budget request. Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro previously told Defense News he didn’t want to rush the DDG(X) program and wanted to ensure the technology and workforce are ready for the transition from the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer to the follow-on program.

The Navy spokesperson said the DDG(X) is still planned to go into construction in FY32, despite delayed research and development

dollars in the FY25 budget.

The spokesperson did not have an updated timeline for F/A-XX, though the Navy has historically been tight-lipped about the program.

Navy Undersecretary Erik Raven spoke about the budget request on March 8, noting “our guidance directs us to take risk in future modernization when there are hard choices to be made.”

“If you look at F/A-XX, or the other X [next-generation] programs, we knowingly took risk in the schedule for development of those programs in order to prioritize those key investments — whether that’s readiness, or investing in our people, or undersea, to make sure that we make those programs whole,” he added.

Raven on March 13 told Defense News that, for “any acquisition program, we are looking to move out in the most responsible way forward. And that includes the ability to develop the technologies to the right level of maturity, to make sure that they are inserted in programs at the right point.

“That does take investment, and again, we are taking risk in some of these areas. But fundamentally, no matter what our budget levels, we have to run good acquisition programs,” Raven continued.

The Navy is asking for \$586.9 million for SSN (X) design and development efforts in FY25, up slightly from the \$544.7 million it requested in FY24.

It seeks \$102.7 million for DDG(X), down from FY24’s \$187.4 million request. And for F/A-XX, the Navy wants \$454 million in FY25, compared to \$1.5 billion in FY24.

<https://www.defensenews.com/naval/2024/03/14/navy-delays-next-generation-submarine-start-to-early-2040s/>

Navy SEALs On Snowmobiles Raced Across The Frozen Arctic To Link Up With An Attack Sub That Broke The Ice During A Special Ops First

(BUSINESS INSIDER 15 MAR 24) ... Ella Sherman

Deep in the Arctic Circle, US Navy SEALs and allied soldiers recently raced across the frozen ground on snowmobiles to link up with a surfaced submarine that had busted through the ice in a historic training exercise that put the sub-zero skills of the special-operations forces to the test.

Last week, over 400 special operations forces, including Navy SEALs, US Army Green Berets, US Army 160th SOAR crews, as well as foreign partners, participated in drills as part of the broader Arctic Edge 24 training event.

During one first-of-its-kind training event, special operations MH-47G Chinook helicopters dispatched SEALs, other special-operations personnel, and snowmobiles onto the Arctic terrain to retrieve and deliver a package dropped from a Lockheed C-130 Hercules plane to the Navy attack submarine USS Hampton that had breached the icy surface only moments earlier.

This was the first time special-operations personnel, special-operations aircraft, and snowmobiles have worked together to execute an operation involving a submarine that had surfaced through thick ice so deep in the Arctic Circle.

"Naval Special Warfare's unique ability to conduct complex operations in the water column, and in maritime domains such as the Arctic, discourages aggression from potential adversaries," Capt. Bill Gallagher of Navy Special Warfare Group TWO Commodore said in a release on the training.

Special-operations forces from other countries, including Norway, Canada, Denmark, and the United Kingdom also participated in the exercise, which stretched from Alaska, across Canada, and into Greenland, to help integrate new strategies for optimal sub-zero Arctic combat.

The training was carried out as a way to prepare for threats. Previously, the US had less focus on the Arctic, but with Russia and China having an increased presence in the region, the US now has more interest in pursuing Arctic training.

There's more pressure on the US military to invest in crucial resources such as icebreakers, strong ships that easily cut through ice to create

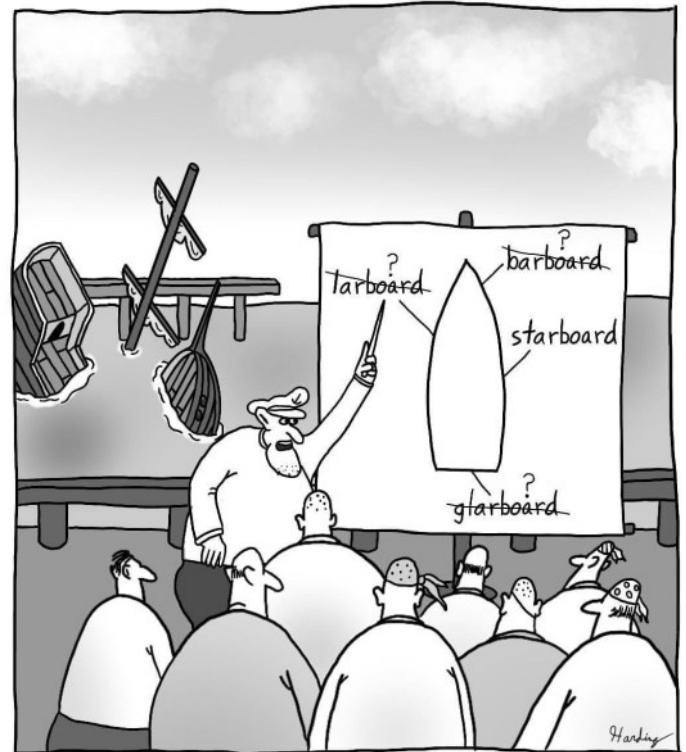
pathways. The US fleet is vastly disproportionate to Russia's, but readiness is about more than icebreakers.

While this Arctic Circle drill aimed to familiarize elite special-operations forces with complex operations on Arctic terrain, other elements of the training pushed them to adapt to ever-changing terrain to develop skills necessary for combat in this environment.

US and allied military personnel training in the Arctic must work in temperatures below -40 degrees Fahrenheit and master essential cold-weather survival skills to avoid freezing to death.

Terrain and ground conditions can be significant challenges for ground troops and those dealing with logistics in the Arctic. Troops focused on combat may have to clear snow for artillery or other heavy equipment, while personnel dealing with approaching aircraft may need to clear ice for helicopters to land.

<https://www.businessinsider.com/us-navy-seals-test-artic-warfare-skills-in-new-exercise-2024-3>



"I've called this here meeting so we can face a hard truth. It's time to rethink our entire naming scheme."



1 AGang 81



2 Haircut



3 Onwatch



4 Gold 69#2 -



5 Gold 69#3 -



6 Richard_sk -



7 Gold 69#1



8 Topside



9 Topside



10 Award



11



12



13

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The Navy knows how to plan for the future.



When the 41 for Freedom were built the missile tubes were a little over 6 feet in diameter. The Polaris missiles were only 4.5 feet in diameter so they put a sleeve in the tube to accommodate the smaller missile. The next generation of SLBM was the Poseidon which entered service in 1971. With the sleeves removed the missile was a perfect fit.

The Poseidon had the same 2,5000 nautical mile range as the Polaris A3 and offered multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle (MIRV) capability. MIRV capacity was either ten or fourteen warheads.

The arrival of the Ohio-class submarines in 1981 was a big leap forward. They are huge with 24 missile tubes. The first few carried the Trident I missile. The first submerged launch of the Trident II D5 missile was made from the USS Tennessee (SSBN 734) Blue crew on 2 August 1990.

Retired Captain Ken Barker told me the whole story. Ken and I were on the Clamagore and Jallao together prior to Nuke School.

It became known as the Pin Wheel Launch. The missile burst out of the water with its rocket engines ignited and, instead of going down range it made a few loops and landed back in the water. The range officer had to destroy it. Later that year, after fixing the problem Captain Ken Barker and the Gold crew got all the glory with the first successful submerged launch of the Trident II. The missile flew over Africa and splashed down in the Indian Ocean.

This big bird is capable of carrying up to twelve MIRV's, however the SALT treaty limits the warheads to eight. It has a published range of more than 4,000 nautical miles and an accuracy of ninety meters. This gave the United States a first strike capability. This was a contributing factor in the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Consider this possibility. Two Ohio-class submarines at opposite ends of the globe. One in deep water of the Northern Pacific at 45 degrees north, 180 degrees west and another in deep water in the South Atlantic off the coast of South Africa at 45 degrees south and on the Prime Meridian. Together they could cover all targets on the face of the earth.





A montage of seven views taken on 2 October 1981 showing parts of the launching of a Trident I C-4 missile from the submerged nuclear-powered strategic missile submarine USS *Francis Scott Key* (SSBN 657) and the Trident's re-entry bodies as they plunge into the earth's atmosphere and then into the Atlantic Ocean.

In 1986 Ronald Reagan met with Mikhail Gorbachev in Reykjavík, Iceland to discuss a reduction in their nuclear arsenals. The talks broke down because Reagan would not give up the Strategic Missile Defense Initiative (SDI), dubbed Star Wars. Gorbachev feared that Star Wars would upset the balance of power. What good would their Ballistic Missiles be if we could destroy them in flight with an anti-missile defense.

In 1989 Polish activist Lech Walesa and the Solidarity movement was instrumental in bringing about the fall of communism in Poland. The following year Walesa was elected to the newly reestablished office of President of Poland.

The Soviet Union did not respond. This was the dawn of the collapse of the Soviet Union. In 1991, when Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev resigned, and declaring his office extinct, turned over its powers, including control of the Soviet nuclear missile launch codes, to Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

It is never one thing that brings about global changes, but a combination. Gorbachev's policies of Glasnost and Perestroika helped bring about the fall of the Soviet Union. The Catholic Church elected the first non-Italian Pontiff in more than 400 years, who just happened to be Polish. Mass communication. The Soviet Union could no longer keep its citizens in the dark.

Nuclear weapons are okay as long as you don't have to use them. Since World War Two man has developed weapons too terrible to use. Intercontinental ballistic missiles are able to annihilate entire cities with very little warning.

During the Cold War, the Soviet Union and the United States amassed arsenals that could destroy each other's cities, airports and factories. It was called MAD. Mutual Assured Destruction. We made deterrent patrols to keep the peace. Nuclear deterrence only works if your adversary believes you have the capability and the will to use your weapons. The success of the Navy's SLBM program

resides in the fact that neither side ever had to launch a missile in anger.



James Gutierrez

Author's Bio: The Navy paid my way through the University of New Mexico on the condition I accept a Commission. In 1964 I became a U.S. Navy Ensign. I wanted to fly so the Navy paid my way to get a Private Pilot's License my senior year under the FIP program. That spring I was sent to interview with Admiral Rickover. I was redirected from flying in the air to cruising under the waves. After the Submarine Service I worked as Mechanical Engineer in petrochemicals, refineries, and was involved in the build at River Bend Nuclear Power Station in Saint Francisville, Louisiana
James Gutierrez, LT USN

Four WWII boats were reported lost during the month of April: USS Pickerel (SS-177), USS Grenadier (SS-210), USS Gudgeon (SS-211), and the USS Snook (SS-279).

The *PICKEREL* was a Porpoise-class, the *GRENADIER* and *GUDGEON* were Tambor-class, and the *SNOOK* was a Gato-class.

Sources:

1. U.S. Submarine Losses World War II, NAVPERS 15,784, 1949 ISSUE
2. "*Silent Victory*", Clay Blair, Jr. Bantom Books, 2nd printing, 1975

USS Pickerel (SS-177)



Edward N. Ayer, GMC



Charles A. Powell, RMC



Frederick L. Meischke, EMC

The *PICKEREL* was one of the seven P-class subs transferred from COMSUBDIV 14 at San Diego and Pearl to the newly formed COMSUBRON 5 in Manila in October, 1939. Unfortunately, she was also the first submarine lost in the Central Pacific area. She began her seventh and final war patrol from Pearl Harbor on 18Mar43. She topped off with fuel at Midway on 22Mar43 and proceeded towards the east coast of northern Honshu. She was never heard from again.

A post-war Japanese report detailed an attack on a submarine off of the northern tip of Honshu on 03Apr43. Since the *PICKEREL* was the only U.S. submarine in that area at that time, the Navy lists that attack as the probable cause for her sinking.

PICKEREL sank a total of five ships totaling 16,100 tons, and damaged 10 others, totaling 9,100 tons during her first six war patrols. She had no success on her first patrol off of the east coast of Vietnam. She sank two freighters between Manila and Surabaya on her second patrol. The *PICKEREL* again had no success on her third patrol along the Malay Barrier and none on her fourth patrol in the Philippines. During her shortened fifth patrol when she was enroute from Australia to Pearl Harbor for refit, she damaged a freighter in the Marianas. Her sixth patrol was conducted in the Kuriles patrolling the Tokyo-Kiska traffic lanes. She logged sixteen attacks during this patrol and is credited with sinking a freighter and two sampans, and damaging an additional freighter and eight sampans.

USS Snook (SS-279)



John F. Walling, CDR



Robert B. Adams, MoMMC



Harold M. Johnson, MoMMC



John N. Wright, ENS



David J. Hurley, EMC

The *SNOOK* was credited with sinking 16 enemy ships, totaling 76,100 tons during her first eight patrols. All of her patrols were out of Pearl Harbor.

She had four war patrols in 1943 with her first patrol in April, 1943 along the China Coast off of Taiwan. She sank 3 freighters (8,600-tons) during this patrol. On her second patrol, *SNOOK* covered the East China Sea area where she sank two freighters (11,000-tons). Returning to the East China Sea for her third patrol, the *SNOOK* sank one transport and one freighter (combined total of 10,000-tons). During her fourth patrol, off the Mariana Islands, she sank two freighters (8,440-tons).

Her 4 patrols in 1944 began when she left Pearl Harbor on January 6. The *SNOOK* returned to the East China Sea on her fifth patrol where she was credited with sinking four freighters and a freighter-transport (combined total of 21,050-tons). In the same area on her sixth patrol, *SNOOK* was not credited with any sinkings. Her seventh patrol was in the Luzon Strait area where she sank three freighters (16,600-tons). The *SNOOK* had contact with only three ships, while patrolling the Kurile region north of Japan on her eighth patrol, and made no attacks. On her ninth and final patrol, the *SNOOK* departed Guam on 28Mar45 with USS *Burfish* (SS-312) and USS *Bang* (SS-385) to execute a coordinated patrol in the Luzon Strait, the south coast of China, and the east coast of Hainan. The USS *Tigrone* (SS-419) exchanged radio messages with *SNOOK* on 08Apr45, at which time the *SNOOK* reported her position as about 100 miles east of Hainan Island. The *SNOOK* was never heard from again.

USS Gudgeon (SS-211)



Ben W. Dickenson, ENS
with brother Bill



Stephen Kohut, MoMMC



John M. Powles, PhMC

During her first eleven patrols, *GUDGEON* was credited with sinking a total of 17 ships, for 71,050 tons. She left Pearl Harbor on 11Dec41, on her first war patrol, enroute to the Marshall Islands and is credited as the first U.S. submarine to sink an enemy combatant. On 27Jan42 she caught the Japanese submarine I-173 on the surface, reportedly with an inattentive topside crew that was smoking and sunbathing. The CO fired a spread of three torpedoes that apparently scared the Japanese crew to their deaths. With the release of the torpedoes, the *GUDGEON* lost depth control and by the time she returned to periscope depth, the Japanese submarine was not in sight. There was no sounds of explosions and no further sounds of the Japanese propeller. The CO, LCDR Grenfell surmised that the Japanese crew panicked and dove with all hatches open. Subsequent intercepted Japanese messages confirmed the I-173 was lost and never heard from again.

The *GUDGEON* was credited with sinking one large and one medium freighter, in the South China Sea, on her second war patrol. She was one of the unsuccessful submarines at the Battle of Midway for her third patrol. During her fourth patrol, while transiting from Pearl Harbor to Fremantle, she sank four freighters in the vicinity of Truk Island. During her fifth patrol, off of Papua, New Guinea, she was credited with sinking three freighters and damaging a fourth. On *GUDGEON*'s sixth patrol to and from the southern Philippines, she made no attacks. In the Java Sea and Strait of Makassar on her seventh war patrol, the *GUDGEON* sank two freighters (15,000 tons). Her eighth patrol was a transit from Fremantle to Pearl Harbor with a principal patrol area off the Philippines. She was credited with sinking 2 freighters (23,000 tons) during this patrol.

Following an extended refit in Pearl Harbor, the *GUDGEON* sank 1 freighter (3,200 ton) off of the Mariana Islands during her ninth patrol. In The East China Sea, on her tenth patrol, she sank 2 freighters (7,600 tons). She returned to the same area on her eleventh war patrol and was unsuccessful in her only attack on a large transport. The *GUDGEON* left for her twelfth war patrol from Pearl Harbor on 04Apr44. She was never heard from again after topping off at Johnston Island on 07Apr44.

USS Grenadier (SS-210)

Crewmembers who died in Japanese Prisoner of War Camps



George W. Snyder, Jr., MM3



Justiniano G. Guico, StM1



Charles Doyle, M0MM1



Charles F. Linder, MM2

The *GRENADIER*'s first patrol, out of Pearl Harbor in Feb42, was a disaster. While on station off of Tokyo Bay, she shipped a large quantity of water down her conning tower hatch, which disabled the drain pump, trim pump, main hydraulic pump, low pressure blowers, and one air compressor. She unsuccessfully expended six torpedoes during her single attack and returned two weeks early. Not uncommon early in the war, her CO was removed from command and left submarine service.

She spent her second patrol off of Formosa in the East China Sea, in Apr42, and was credited with sinking a 14,400-ton transport. Transiting from Pearl Harbor to Fremantle in Jul42, she conducted her third patrol enroute, damaging but not sinking a large tanker. In Oct42, on her fourth patrol, she laid mines off of Haiphong in the South China Sea, and didn't attack any enemy vessels during the remainder of the patrol.

The *GRENADIER* began her fifth patrol, in Jan43, with her fourth CO, LCDR Fitzgerald, and damaged three small freighters in the Java Sea

The sinking of the *GRENADIER*, during her sixth war patrol, was described by LCDR Fitzgerald, her CO, after his rescue from a Japanese POW camp at the end of the war.

On the night of 20Apr43, in the Malacca Strait on the surface, the *GRENADIER* spotted a Japanese plane and crash dived. A bomb from the plane exploded while she was passing 120-feet. The *GRENADIER* settled on the bottom at about 270-feet, leaking severely from the aft hatches and without any propulsion. During the next few hours, a bucket brigade followed by the use of a rigged pump prevented the flooding from reaching the motors. At dusk, she surfaced and continued repairs. Minimum steerage was achieved on a single shaft and the CO believed that nothing further was possible at sea. Early the morning of April 23rd, the CO observed two approaching ships on the horizon and then a Japanese plane passed overhead. The CO decided to scuttle the sub and surrender the entire crew to the approaching Japanese merchant ship. Not uncommon, the crew was tortured including waterboarding of LCDR Fitzgerald. All but four crew members (MoMM1 Charles Doyle, StM1 Justiniano G. Guico, MM2 Charles F. Linder, and MM3 George W. Snyder, Jr.) survived the POW camps.

It's A Very Small World in Ancestry **Don Ort - Gold/SY1/Blue 69-74 and Tom Krauser - Blue 72-74**

When Tom came aboard the Stimson in 1972 in the Engineering Division, Don gave him a lot of his qualification checkouts and helped him get qualified. They have maintained contact throughout the years at many of the reunions and became friends. They also discovered that they both had a very strong interest in Ancestry and tracking their past Ancestors. This led to many discussions between us of different ways to use ancestry to track our family histories.

As we compared our family trees, we noticed many "surnames" that were common to both of our trees. We wondered at the time if there were any connections between our family trees and "somehow" we could be "distant" cousins. We also noticed that many of our ancestors were here in the 1600's, as part of "The Great Migration," and many were from the same locations, primarily around Hingham, Plymouth, Massachusetts and the Isle of Wight, Virginia. Remember that in the 1600's, these were very small communities of immigrants and there was a very good chance that there were marriages between our two families. Still at that time, our trees were not focused on these connections and we only "suspected" we might be "distant cousins."

In our last newsletter, we discussed the **FamousKin.com** program and how to use it to see if there were "famous kin" in your tree. As we were looking at FamousKin for both our trees, we noticed that we had a lot of famous kin in "common" to both of us. At that point, we suspected that we were somehow related as "distant cousins" because there were so many "common" famous kin connections.

As we started to add some of these "famous kin" to each of our trees, we noticed that there were "surnames" in common in both our trees that could be a connection if we researched them.

We shared our Ancestry Trees with each other, including living people, so we could examine each other's trees for any ancestors in common.

To make the comparisons easier, we used split screens (or dual monitors), with one tree on the left side and the other tree on the right side of the screen. Putting each tree in a "horizontal" format with each of us listed as the "**Home**" person of that tree, we could then see our "direct ancestors" (grandparents) stretching to the right in each tree. Examining each tree and looking at the "surnames" and dates, there appeared to be many common "surnames" that lived around the same time period. If you "right" click on that person with a similar surname, you could see their birth/death information and if they were in similar locations between the two trees.

The next step was to use "Tree Search" in both trees to list that "surname" on both screens to see all the ancestors in each tree with that surname. To do this it is easy to open a "new tab" on each side of the screen and start "another copy" of Ancestry (Remember you can have "multiple copies" of Ancestry running in each "Browser.") Open any Profile in each tree, then use the "**Tree Search**" option and select "**List of all people**" option. Type the "surname" into the "**Last Name**" on both sides and click "**Search**" on both sides. This gives an alphabetical list of all people in each tree with that "**Last Name**" and shows the Birth/Death dates and locations for each person.

By comparing both lists you may see similar names in both lists. Even if the names do not match, you may also see dates and locations that are similar to each other in both lists. If they were from similar locations, this was a very strong indication that they were "related" in both trees.

The next step would be to take that person from both trees and try to make a connection to the other tree. For example, Tom might see that he had a "great grandparent" with that surname further up his tree related to that location. By researching, either in his tree or creating a "test tree," and working his family tree downward toward the person in Don's tree. Don could also work upwards in his tree to try

to get to the “common ancestor” in Tom’s tree. Once a connection is made, then looking at Don or Tom in their tree would show the relationship between them.

One of the first “surnames” to stick out was “Hawkins” in both our trees. Using the process above, we discovered that **John Henry Hawkins Sr (1643-1690)** was Don’s 7th Great-Grandfather and Tom’s 9th Great-Grandfather. After the connection was made, Ancestry showed that Don and Tom were “**6th cousins 4x removed**” by “this” connection. Thus, we confirmed that we were indeed “distant cousins” and there may be many more connections yet to be discovered from other common surnames.

Continuing this process with other surnames, we discovered (so far) that we have several other great-grandparents in common plus several “marriages” where our cousins married each other to “connect” our trees through marriage.

Tom created a “Custom Tree Tag” called “**DO Common Ancestor**” and added it to these common ancestor Profiles so that “**Tree Search**” would show all these common Ancestors later. Tom also added remarks in the “**Suffix**” field such as (DO: 7th GGF – TK: 9th GGF) so that would be visible when looking at those Profiles. Remember the Suffix field can hold 128 characters of information and can be used to add additional information about that Profile.

So far, the following is a list of some of our “common direct ancestors” plus there are many more “cousin marriages” between our trees. We are still researching several other possible “direct ancestors” between our trees.

It should also be noted that Tom Krauser and Jerry Blevins are 6th cousins 1x removed and Don Ort is related to the Blevins line by marriage to several cousins in his lines.

Don is also related by several marriages of his cousins to the Krauser line but that is still being researched to make the connections. Thus, Don is related to Tom on both Tom’s father and mother’s sides.

Just a few of the connections between Don Ort and Tom Krauser are as follows:

<u>Common Ancestor</u>	<u>Don</u>	<u>Tom</u>
John Henry Hawkins 1643-1690	7 th GGF	9 th GGF
Mary Elizabeth Dewes 1645-1697	7 th GGM	9 th GGM
Capt. Symon or Simon Miller 1642-1684	5 th GGF	9 th GGF
Margaret Gaines	5 th GGM	9 th GGM
Thomas Sturman 1588-1654	10 th GGF	11 th GGF
Ann Porter 1588-1654	10 th GGM	11 th GGM
John Church 1520-1578	x th GGF	15 th GGF
Margaret Philippa Wiseman 1526-1593	x th GGM	15 th GGM

Family Search recently sent Don a “connection” between him and Abraham Lincoln (16th President of the US). Since Abraham Lincoln was already in Tom’s tree as his 2th cousin 5x removed through his Lincoln family line, this was another connection to be researched. Using the connection that Family Search sent to Don, we were able to make the following connections between our trees.

	Don	Tom
Don Ort (1947- ?)	Self	6 th cousin 4x
Georgia Galloway (1929-1967)	Mother	5 th cousin 5x
Walter Rhodes Galloway (1879-1932)	GF	4 th cousin 4x
George H. Galloway (1846-1930)	GGF	3 rd cousin 7x
James Monroe Galloway (1817-1897)	2 nd GGF	2 nd cousin 8x
Susannah Dishman (1793-1863)	3 rd GGM	1 st cousin 9x
Jeremiah Ewing Dishman (1752-1841)	4 th GGF	7 th cousin 7x
Sarah Reynolds (1723-1808)	5 th GGF	6 th cousin 8x
Cornelius Reynolds (1684-1734)	6 th GGF	5 th cousin 9x
William Reynolds (1655-1700)	7 th GGF	4 th cousin 10x
Cornelius Reynolds (1605-1685)	8 th GGF	3 rd cousin 11x
Thomas Reynolds (1590-1662)	9 th GGF	2 nd cousin 12x
Thomasyn Church (1567-1634)	10 th GGF	1 st cousin 13x
James Thomas Church (1540-1596)	11 th GGF	12 th GGU
John Church (1520-1577)	12 ^h GGF	13 th GGF
Margaret Wiseman (1521-1585)	12 th GGM	13 th GGM
Martha Church (1541-1577)	11 th GGA	12 th GGM
William Cain Reade (1565-1635)	1 st cousin 12x	11 th GGF
Ruth Mary Reed (1605-1662)	2 nd cousin 11x	10 th GGM
Sarah Ann Whitman (1633-1718)	3 rd cousin 10x	9 th GGM
Sarah Jones (1660-1702)	4 th cousin 9x	8 th GGM
Mordecai Lincoln (1686-1736)	5 th cousin 8x	7 th GGF
John Morris Lincoln (1716-1788)	6 th cousin 7x	6 th GGF
Abraham Lincoln (1744-1786)	7 th cousin 6x	5 th GGU
Thomas Lincoln (1778-1851)	8 th cousin 5x	1 st cousin 6x
Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)	9 th cousin 4x	2 nd cousin 5x

So, Don and Tom, using both their trees, confirmed that they were indeed cousins through many different ancestor lines. Don and Tom are still searching for other connections between their trees !!

It should also be noted that Tom is also “cousins” with several “Blevins” from the Stimson. Tom’s mother was a Blevins and the following shipmates have been confirmed to be Tom’s cousins:

Jerry Blevins (current President of Stimson Association) (Blue 76-79) - 6th cousin 1x removed

Michael Blevins (Gold 67-70) - 5th cousin 2x removed

Doug Blevins (Gold 68-69) - 5th cousin 2x removed

Michael and Douglas Blevins were brothers on the Stimson at the same time.

Someone approached Jerry Blevins at the last reunion and said their mother was also a Blevins but Jerry could not remember who it was, so we have no further information on who that person was to see if there is a connection.

IT IS INDEED A VERY SMALL WORLD IN ANCESTRY!!!