



the NEW

Launched 13 Nov 1965 in Groton CT
1st Overhaul began Nov 1971 in Newport News VA



STIMSON
DRAFT!



VOL. 2026 #11

NOVEMBER 2026

USS HENRY L. STIMSON ASSOCIATION

Launched 13 November 1965 in Groton Connecticut

Association Officers & Board of Directors 2025 - 2027

PRESIDENT <u>Jerry [CJ] Blevins</u>	VICE PRESIDENT <u>Paul Clark</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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We didn't get many replies from the last newsletter with this question so we are trying again. Please understand the numbers received will enable the committee to make many decisions on what to do and the cost of the reunion. This is not a commitment, only a survey. If you are planning or thinking about attending send an email to 655webmaster@ssbn655.org with either of these words and number expected.

SURE [making plans to attend] **POSSIBLY** [hope to attend] **THINKING** [maybe attend]

Doug and Gary are working on the tours/trips in order to complete the registration form. It will be sent out when finalized.

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REUNION CONTROL CENTER

2027 Stimson Reunion #14

HOTEL: Hilton Garden Inn
Indianapolis South/Greenwood

DATE: Oct 6-10, 2027

LOCATION: Indianapolis IN
Reunion Committee:

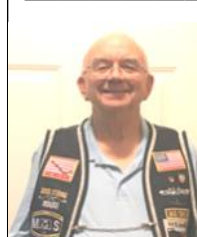
Gary & Mary Owen and Doug Cooper

The hotel is undergoing a complete renovation this coming winter. They have obtained a bank of 55 reserved rooms for \$140/night with breakfast included. RV parking is permitted in the hotel parking lot.



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

As we celebrate Thanksgiving with family and friends let us not forget shipmates and family that we have loss and those active-duty personnel away from home this year. Safe travels for all of you that are travelling during the holidays.



Chaplain's Corner - Bruce Stefanik [MS1(SS) B 73-77, 655 Assoc Life Member, USSVI/Holland Club USS Asheville Base]:

Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Psalm 105:1

November is the month of giving special thanks. Think of all the good things you have. You should

find that there are more good things in your life than bad.
Give the bad things to God. He has a way of making all things Good.
May you be blessed this day. Remember to give God thanks for all you have this November.
//Bruce



**Ship's Historian - Larry Knutson
[MMCS(SS) B 79-81 USSVI/Holland Club Charleston Base]:**

Some of you may remember many irreplaceable items were stolen from our storage locker back in Nov 2020.

Pictures may be of items we no longer have.
This banner was used on the brow during the



1971-1973 shipyard timeframe.
Many of you still haven't asked for a copy of your check-in card. if you were on the Gold Crew during the time when Bob Weeks was the CO you had to complete a check-in card for him. If you're interested in receiving your card please mail the secretary 655webmaster@ssbn655.org.

**From The Editor & Secretary - Nick Nichols
[TM1(SS) G/SY1/B 70-75; FTCS(SS) B COB 85-89, Assoc Life Member, USSVI/Holland Club Charleston Base]:**



Pictures: At the end of the newsletter you will see several pictures sent to me by Skip Shepherd [TM2(SS) B 73-75]. Most are in the TR of the Stimson.

Holland Club Induction: A couple of months ago I was talking to Russ Ningen [ETR2(SS) / LCDR

Ret] and he mentioned he would like to join the SUBVETS but there wasn't a Base near him to attend. I asked him to think about joining Charleston Base. That way he will at least be kept up to date on SUBVET happenings through our correspondence. A couple weeks later I received his application and dues. Russ is now a Life member of both National and Charleston Base. As soon as he became a member he was eligible for the Holland Club (any SUBVET who has been qualified for more than 50 years). On October 13 Charleston Base held a ceremony to induct Russ into the Holland Club.

There are 22 Stimson shipmates who are members of Charleston Base. I asked them via email to try to attend the base meeting for this special induction. Seven were able to attend. I accepted the induction on behalf of Russ.

Congratulations Russ. Wish you could have been here.
You can watch a video of that induction on our base YouTube channel at:

Special Holland Club Oct 2026

More Pictures: I recently received a couple of pictures from Chuck Mihalko [ETR2(SS) / LCDR Ret.] and I let him know they will be running in the newsletter this month Take a look...you might see a much younger version of yourself. Pictures are circa 77-78 and are on a page at the end of this newsletter.

Thanks for sending them Chuck!!
Belt Buckle Request: I have not heard from Denis on whether anyone was able to provide him with a belt buckle so I'm going to run with his request for another month.

Denis Miller [IC2(SS) G mid 80s, qualified 1984). If anyone can help him contact him at denis2793@gmail.com:
"I would like to get my hands on an enlisted belt

Submarines Lost During the Month of November

USS ALBACORE (SS-218)	November 7, 1944 – 11 th War Patrol	Lost with all hands – 85 souls
USS GROWLER (SS-215)	November 8, 1944 – 12 th War Patrol	Lost with all hands – 86 souls
USS SCAMP (SS-277)	November 16, 1944 – 8 th War Patrol	Lost with all hands – 83 souls
USS CORVINA (SS-226)	November 16, 1943 – 1 st War patrol	Lost with all hands – 82 souls
USS SCULPIN (SS-191)	November 19, 1943 – 9 th War Patrol	Lost with 43 souls – 41 became POWs 21 survived the war

Five Boats and 376 Men Lost

[illegible]

Linda and I had the good fortune to attend the Navy Ball in October. It was a great time, even if it did start two hours late due to electricity being out. Also gave us a chance to dress up and spend some time with not only some retirees but plenty of active duty Sailors and their dates. For the second year I was able to wear my uniform. Always gets a few looks because it is double knit.

[illegible]

655webmaster@ssbn655.org

[illegible]

In addition to the qual card page, I am now adding your qual year (if I have it) to the online Sailing List. This can be whether you qualified on

Qualification Cards of Stimson Sailors



1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10

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



WELCOME ABOARD: Found & Updated

(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 on our Sailing List but without an email.

ET1(SS) Joseph L. Getchel B 73-76

[updated by member & Don Ort]

MM1(SS) Walter Upchurch SY1/B 72-75

MMCM(SS) Retired

[updated by member]

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. 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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Bruce / Vickie Stefanik [MS1(SS) B 73-77, 655 Assoc Life Member, USSVI/Holland Club USS Asheville Base]:

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

9.21.26: Email from Vicki: Thank you all for your prayers. I am doing well. The assistant surgeon said I was doing better than their 40-year-olds when she came to see me Friday after breakfast and upgraded my diet from clear liquid to full liquid for lunch. Then when she came back after lunch with Dr. Rapp's associate, they decided to discharge me. We got home Friday late afternoon and took naps. I am sleeping much better here at home. I am feeling the 5 incisions. I am on a full liquid diet for a week and then will progress to a soft diet for 3-4 weeks. The liquid diet gets old fast. Thanks again for your prayers. Vicki

9.13.26: Email from Vicki: My surgery is set for September 17th and will include at least one overnight in the hospital. I have to go to Prisma Health Hillcrest Hospital in Simpsonville for this. Dr. Rapp said he will do it laparoscopically.

7.12.26: Email from Vicki: I hope to find out when my surgery will be when I go back to see the surgeon on the 29th. He is taking the time to get copies of my tests and a previous surgery. Currently we are in Atlanta with our daughter. Her husband is being transitioned into hospice from cancer.

6.18.26: Email from Vicki: I received a call yesterday from the surgeon in Greenville that the surgeon here referred me to. What he sent must have stressed how much I need what they can't do locally. They rearranged a few other patients to get me in for the appointment next Wednesday. They found when doing my knee pre-op that my large hiatal hernia had allowed my stomach to move up into my lungs. A follow up barium swallow test by my gastroenterologist confirmed that this was impeding my ability to eat so they sent me to the surgeon here. I will definitely be having surgery, just have to find out when.

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Timothy Breit [ETN3(SS) G 75-77]

Cards to: 500 NW Island Lake Rd Poulsbo WA 98370

9.21.26: Email from Tim: Still able to get around, lots of messages. Thanks for checking on me. Went to the Patrick Henry reunion this summer.

5.25.26: Email from Tim: I have been diagnosed with non alcohol related cirrhosis of the liver.

also suffered a dislocated shoulder. This required reverse joint replacement.

George Stevens [MT2(SS) G 68-71]

Cards to: 3025 Winterhaven Dr., Lake Havasu City, AZ 86404

9.21.26: Email from George: My heart is doing better; it's beating normally most of the time.

1.23.26: Email from George: Ann is doing better but still in pain - so no real change there. Me, I tried boron and it didn't help my arthritis but then I realized I was already taking it with my multivitamin. I did find that turmeric seems to help. My heart has been up and down. Was doing better after giving up chocolate but then started back with aFib again. Realized that I ran out of cayenne about the same time. Have started taking it again and my heart is doing better again.

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Bob 'Doc' Dougherty [MM1(SS) G/SY1/G 70-74]

Cards to: 2600 Eberly Street, Hatboro, PA 19040

9.21.26: Email from Elaine: We would like to thank all that sent well wishes and especially

prayers for Doc. He is improving slowly but he's improving which is the name of the game. He is currently doing cardio rehab 3 times a week. They work him hard and increase his levels accordingly. He is tired after the rehab session but otherwise he holds his own while working out. He's got a way to go but he definitely is going in the right direction. Please keep those prayers

coming. They are powerful. Doc and Elaine
4.17.26: Email from Elaine: Doc was admitted for the 3rd time this year on March 25 and discharged on April 7. He is on 24/7 oxygen. He continues to struggle with breathing whenever exerting any type of energy. Just going 2 or 3 feet is a struggle even with having oxygen. He is scheduled for an Ablation on May 21. This is usually an outpatient and also considered a low-risk operation. However, with Doc's weakened condition this will be high risk and also involve at least an overnight stay in the hospital with the chance he might be in for 3-5 days. Hopefully this will help with his breathing problem although the doctor only gives it a 60% chance of helping. All prayers are greatly appreciated.

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John Cole [LT B WEPS 78-80, USSVI Member-at-Large, CDR Ret.]

Cards to: 5914 Ruby Dr Pearland TX 77581-8926

NO RECENT UPDATES

5.7.26: Email from John: I am now home again after multiple hospital in (109) and out (21) of the last 130 days. A December 2, 2025 stroke (my second) started it off. Only the left side was affected as I received the clot busting shot right away so only minor residual affects.

Next.... I damaged my left Achilles tendon so was non-weight bearing for most of January through the middle of April. During this time, on February 23, 2026 I had a third stroke which was centered in the portion of the brain that controls my vision leaving me totally blind.

Thank The LORD!!! It has improved to the point that I have a limited kind of short-ranger tunnel vision on most days while other days I am left with shapes and shadows. Doctors say the eyes are fine, it is the Parkinson's and Stroke affecting the brain. However, it now seems that the biggest concern is the COPD and heart failure that is leaving me short of breath.

'If It's Not One Thing Its Another', Getting Older

Is Not for the Faint at Heart That's for Sure!
We pray that all are doing much better and can get off the Binnacle List soon. V/R, John & Susan Cole

Bye for now, Very Respectfully. John F. Cole Cdr.,
U. S. Navy Retired, 100% Disabled 05/12/1964 To 08/01/1994, E1-E9 & O1E-O5 Vietnam through Desert Storm

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Diane Meigs [wife of Ken Meigs ETR2(SS) G Comm 65-70 Plank, SV MAL Base HC, Assoc. Treasurer & Life Member]

Cards to: 1537 Pebble Beach Ct Medford OR 97504

10.6.26: Email from Ken: Diane completed a PET scan and a follow up review with her oncologist. The PET scan showed limited cancer growth even though she still was receiving chemo for her cancer. She can no longer tolerate chemo that almost took her out all on its own but her oncologist prescribed an alternative drug that usually only helps 40% of those who take it. She is now on oxygen that seems to help a bit with her low energy levels. If this other drug does little or nothing, then she has ~4-6 months to live. So, we're rearranging a number of things in our lives and I want to spend as much time with her as I can but I seriously doubt that we will be able to attend our coming reunion. Prayers for Diane and information on any alternative cancer treatments would be greatly appreciated!!

6.25.26: Email from Ken: Diane's cancer has grown a little bit from the beginning of the year to the end of May and was now found in her liver and in 1 kidney but a separate MRI brain scan did not show it being there. That it is in her kidneys and liver is the first time that it has gone beyond her lung. Her oncologist is on vacation but on July 1st, we will be meeting to determine what her treatment plan will be.

2.7.26: Email from Ken: Diane has had some post chemo (treatment #1) complications that we're working through with the help of friends from church who have gone through similar treatments.

1.30.26: Text from Ken: They found more cancer in Diane. She started her 1st of 4 chemo treatments on 30 Jan hopefully will remove the cancer that was uncovered in a PET scan a couple of weeks ago. There will be a 3-week interval between each of the treatments.

**Sandy Hastie [CAPT B 80 (Oct-Dec)
CO-1 patrol]**

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

NO RECENT UPDATES

12.29.25: Email from Sandy & Donna:

Dear Family and Friends,

We thank everyone who has faithfully prayed for both of us. 2025 has been a year of challenges; however, we also continue to find joy and gratitude each day and thank God for the many blessings He has bestowed on us. Here are our current statuses.

Donna continues to have severe chronic back and leg nerve pain. No doctors we have seen are able to offer a reliable solution, which is depressing but, as we understand it, is not an unusual occurrence. She saw the doctor that did her EMG and he thought a spinal epidural in the "hot spot" that showed on her EMG could provide some relief. He believes this spot is causing some, if not the majority of her pain. The injection is scheduled for early February, first available appointment. She is on the wait list in case an earlier appointment comes available. As often is the case, doctors are often booked up four to eight weeks ahead and that is the case here. The other option is a spinal stimulator, which has limited effectiveness and is not strongly recommended because of the metal rods in her back. However, that remains a possibility down the road.

Sandy has had some positive news. Specifically, for his heart, he was approved for a procedure to replace his aortic heart valve. This was done a month ago and has helped with his fatigue, dizziness, and lymphedema swelling in his legs. On Wednesday this week, we saw the doctor who did the procedure and he said Sandy's heart was working well – a very positive outcome! His fractured right collar bone from a fall a month and a half ago is healing well and he has almost 100% use of his right shoulder and arm – another positive outcome as this is the arm he uses his cane to help him walk. He had a PET/CT scan on 30 November and, although he will never be cancer free, the scan showed the Keytruda was controlling the cancer well except for two spots in his right hip that were growing slowly. He may have to go back on chemo at some time;

however, for now, that is not necessary – another positive outcome.

So, for now, Sandy will try to exercise more to maintain good health and we will continue to look for a solution or solutions to help Donna's challenges.

With love and thanks, Donna and Sandy

Did You Know?

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3-second tech genius: Want to remove the background from any photo on your iPhone? Open the photo, long-press on the subject and watch it lift right off the background. Tap **Copy** and paste it into a text, email or note. You just did in two seconds what used to require Photoshop. Android users, open the photo in **Google Photos**, tap the subject and hit **Copy Image**. True genius right there.

=====

3-second tech genius: Forgot to lock your car and you're already halfway across the parking lot? Don't walk back like a sucker. Hold your key fob under your chin, press lock and listen for the beep. Your skull acts like an antenna and amplifies the signal. I know it sounds ridiculous. I know you'll feel silly doing it. Try it anyway, it works.

=====

Spam texts have passed spam calls. Stop replying "STOP." Responding confirms your number is active and lands you on more lists. Don't do it.

• **iPhone: Settings > Apps > Messages > Screen Unknown Senders, on.**

Android: Messages app > Settings > Spam Protection > Filter Spam Calls, on. Then call your carrier. AT&T, Verizon and T-Mobile all have free spam-blocking tools that most customers never activate. One phone call and it's done.

GREAT LINKS TO SPEND TIME WITH

655 Association Website

www.ssbn655.org

SEA STORIES, COMMENTS and JUST GOOD THINGS From Our Shipmates

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Submitted by George Stevens [MT2(SS) G 68-71]

Based on the "Unseen Burden" doc, I submitted a claim for some of my conditions. I didn't know but of those conditions, three are associated with Agent Orange. As required, the VA Services sent me letter asking for proof that I was exposed to it. Naturally I contacted my advocate with questions as to why I got the clarification request and I speculated that the toxic chemicals I was exposed caused the letter generation. He generated a reply letter that he will send off, I thought the text of the letter was important enough that others wanting to file a claim may want to see it. The text follows; I did mark the three conditions as examples to be used as applicable.

1. Clarification of Exposure Type:

I do not claim direct boots-on-the-ground or territorial waters herbicide (Agent Orange) exposure. My claim for (- EXAMPLES - Prostate Cancer (Radical Prostatectomy), Atrial Fibrillation (AFIB), and Bilateral Lower Extremity Neuropathy) is strictly based on **Toxic Exposure Risk Activity (TERA)** under the PACT Act (38 U.S.C. § 1168) incurred during my active-duty military service aboard U.S. Navy submarines.

2. In-Service Submarine Toxic Exposures (TERA):

During my submarine service, I experienced continuous, 24/7 chronic exposure to a closed, recirculated atmosphere containing known chemical toxicants, hazardous vapors, normobaric hypoxic air, and radiation:

- **Monoethanolamine (MEA / Amine Vapor):**
Continuous exposure to volatile amine off-gassing from \$CO_2\$ scrubbers.
- **2190 TEP Lubricating Oil & DBNP:**
Inhalation and dermal exposure to nitrated 2,6-di-tert-butyl-4-nitrophenol (DBNP) compounds generated from turbine generator lube oils.
- **Normobaric Hypoxic Environment:**
Continuous 24/7 exposure to artificial atmospheres maintained at reduced oxygen levels (19%) and elevated carbon dioxide concentrations.
- **Ionizing Radiation:** Exposure associated with nuclear propulsion operations (Cohort 1 TERA eligibility).

3. Request for Medical Opinion under 38 U.S.C. § 1168:

Because participation in a Toxic Exposure Risk Activity (TERA) is established by my submarine service records, and because current diagnoses exist for my claimed conditions, I request that the Department of Veterans Affairs concede TERA exposure and schedule a VA C&P Medical Examination with a formal medical nexus opinion pursuant to 38 U.S.C. § 1168 to evaluate whether my submarine toxic exposures contributed to or caused my (- conditions -).

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Submitted by Nick Nichols

I saw this on an email and thought I would share with my shipmates. I had several great COBs, one or two that weren't so great. Don't think I ever referred to them as they say in the last sentence. Be blessed shipmates!!!

COB

On a U.S. Navy submarine, one individual stands between the Commanding Officer's orders and the enlisted crew's daily reality: the Chief of the Boat, universally known as the COB.

Reaching this position requires roughly two decades of undersea service. By the time a submariner becomes a COB, they have earned the rank of Senior Chief or Master Chief Petty Officer, survived countless deployments, and accumulated thousands of hours operating in the deep. While junior officers rotate off the ship every few years, the COB represents decades of unbroken deck-plate experience and technical mastery.

As the senior enlisted advisor aboard, the COB carries a massive scope of responsibility. Operationally, the COB monitors shipboard discipline, manages watch bills, oversees qualification programs, and directs the daily rhythm of the ship. Administratively, the COB controls the crew's living conditions, down to rack assignments and watch schedules.

For the Commanding Officer, the COB is an indispensable partner. The CO (Captain) holds absolute legal authority, but the COB possesses the pulse of the ship. A wise Captain relies on the COB to deliver candid truth, flag morale issues before they turn critical, and ensure command intent translates into flawless execution.

For the enlisted crew, the COB acts as both an unyielding disciplinarian and a fierce advocate. Submariners do not look for a "nice" leader; they

rely on a tough, fair, and hyper-competent father figure who shields them from unnecessary officer bureaucracy while holding them to brutal standards.

It is a demanding, high-pressure role that earns deep respect across the submarine force, even if sailors affectionately joke that the acronym COB really stands for "Crabby Old Bastard."

The Lean Submariner

Here's the latest posts on the blog. Still going strong. The link to his blog is

<https://theleansubmariner.com/>

As we wait for Columbia to be finished and brought on line, this question still remains

By **Mister Mac** on October 3, 2026

May 1960: You've got Polaris, why on earth do you need bigger carriers?

You've got Polaris, why on earth do you need bigger carriers? This was the first speech given to the Navy League by Secretary Franke. Franke served in the new Kennedy administration. The source document comes from amalgamated press releases recorded from 1959-1962.

[Continue reading](#)

"There are men working in the sail... do not raise, lower, rotate or radiate from any mast or antennae... there are men working in the sail!"

By **Mister Mac** on October 3, 2026

Submarine Sail

So, the "sail" on modern submarines isn't for sailing, but it's where they keep periscopes and radar stuff. It evolved from older designs going back to the late 1700s with Robert Fulton's Nautilus.

[Continue reading](#)

One of the most profound influences on submarine operation and development: Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz

By **Mister Mac** on September 29, 2026

Submarines: "from a boy to a giant"

One of my favorite pastimes is discovering unique stories about the United States Submarine force and the development through the ages. There is no better witness to the phenomenal growth than that of one of the most profound influences on submarine operation and

development: Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz. The most fascinating thing about this man was that he came from such a humble beginning in Fredericksburg, Texas where he originally desired an appointment to the Military Academy. Fortunately for the world, he failed to gain entry and instead went to the Naval Academy where he graduated with distinction in his class.

[Continue reading](#)

The Beginning of a New Era – September 30, 1954

By **Mister Mac** on September 30, 2026

In the beginning... I was born in 1954 in the Mon Valley area. That area is where the Monongahela River winds through the of western Pennsylvania.

The area was famous for the many steel mills and coal mines and the air growing up was always smokey and had distinct odors depending on which way the wind was blowing. One facility which was not known for any smoke or smell was an old airport that had been converted into a factory that made components for the Navy....

[Continue reading](#)

Even in times of peace, the Navy still needed sailors

By **Mister Mac** on October 1, 2026

Navy Day 1922 – Opportunities for Young Men

In 1922, the United States Navy was in a quandary. The civilian leadership had recently completed its goal of limiting the growth of the civilized world's naval forces. This dream of lasting peace was certainly an admirable one by the Harding administration. Diplomacy seemed to be an answer to the endless wars that had plagued Europe and beyond.

[Continue reading](#)

October 4, 1957 – The event that pushed America to Polaris

By **Mister Mac** on October 4, 2026

October 4, 1957: The event that pushed America to Polaris Since the early 1950's, the east and west were engaged in a dramatic race to use technology to dominate the conversations and reality that would shape the course of human events. The power of the atom was already being used to demonstrate extraordinary power in the form of newer and more powerful weapons. Both

sides openly tested their weapons in dramatic ways.

Continue reading

Remembering the 637 Boat

By **Mister Mac** on October 6, 2026

Post Number 637 – Commemorating the USS Sturgeon SSN 637

Over forty years ago when I first volunteered for submarine duty, one of the hottest boats in the fleet was the boats of the 637 Class. These workhorses were responsible for so many missions during the Cold War that it would be impossible to catalog them all on a single blog post.... Service and Sacrifice seem to fit that title very well

Continue reading

The Illusion of Peace is Seemingly Eternal

By **Mister Mac** on October 10, 2026

Navy Day 1923 – Illusions of Peace

Editorial from the DAILY KENNEBEC JOURNAL Wednesday, October 10, 1923 “I knew by the smoke that so gracefully curled Above the green elms, that a cottage was near, And I said, ‘If there’s peace to be found in the world, A heart that was humble might hope for it here.’”

It is become a present-day custom to have a day fixed as an occasion to induce consideration of some topic, which it is thought needs consideration and is not in a way to get it otherwise. Navy Day is such an occasion. The day set is October 27, the anniversary of the birth of Theodore Roosevelt...

Continue reading

Another year, another Navy Birthday

By **Mister Mac** on October 11, 2026

Happy Birthday 1947 – Predicting the Future of Naval Warfare

The official Navy Birthday is now celebrated on October 13 every year thanks to Admiral Zumwalt declaring that day as the one to remember. But it has not always been celebrated on that day or with the same focus.

In 1947, the aftermath of the Second World War was being felt all around the world. The Iron Curtain had been declared, the Cold War was starting to emerge and the Navy was undergoing many changes....

Continue reading

Happy Casimir Pulaski Day

By **Mister Mac** on October 11, 2026

Post Number 633 – USS Casimir Pulaski SSBN 633

A salute to one of the many unsung heroes of the Cold War: The USS Casimir Pulaski (SSBN-633)

This post was started in September of 2018 but I am updating and including it as part of the 41 for Freedom Series. Of all the boomers I have researched to date, the information about the man it was named for is pretty brief. Despite that, his name lives on even today in America as large Polish communities and even Presidents recognize several days during the year as Casimir Pulaski Day.

Continue reading

The Origin of Submarine Dolphins

By **Mister Mac** on October 13, 2026



The Origin of Submarine Dolphins – All Hands Magazine January 1961

Submarine Warfare Insignia

One way to distinguish a United States Navy Submariner from any other sailor is to see the dolphins predominantly displayed on his or her uniform. Officers wear a gold version and enlisted wear a silver version. I have seen many stories over the years about the origin of the insignie but this article from the Navy's All Hands Magazine seems to sum it up nicely.

The common name for the insignie is Dolphins although in my time, they were also known as “Fish”. That’s interesting in some ways since a dolphin is a mammal and not a fish...

Continue reading

Early Submarine Development Around the World

By **Mister Mac** on October 20, 2026

“Information from other sources sheds rather a different light on the matter.” Underestimating any enemy can be dangerous. Recently, I was

browsing through the national archives and found some declassified documents dating back to the 1920's about submarine development abroad. During that time frame, there was a great desire on all parts of the world to limit arms and particularly battleships and all types of seagoing warships. The cost of the Great War was still bearing down on the economies of all of the participants, so stemming the flow of money into warships was an easy decision. Unfortunately, this savings did not take into account the nature of the nations involved to want to continue their domination of the seas in both commerce and arms.

[Continue reading](#)

Simon Lake Was a Dreamer

By **Mister Mac** on October 25, 2026

Blockades and Submarines – An Opinion From a Master Submariner in 1939

Simon Lake was by any measure a Master Submariner. A prolific inventor, he held over two hundred patents at the time of his death in June of 1945 (just a few months short of the end of the war was largely shaped by submarine warfare).

Lake was a dreamer and had many ideas about peaceful uses for submarines. As a young man, he had read Jules Verne's 1870 novel *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, Lake and was intrigued by the prospects of undersea travel and exploration.

[Continue reading](#)

Happy Navy Day – October 27th

By **Mister Mac** on October 27, 2026

October 27, 1922 was the very first Navy Day in the United States

October 27, 1922 was the very first Navy Day in the United States. Former President Theodore Roosevelt had been born on that day and it was selected by the Navy League and the Navy Department most appropriate day to celebrate the United States Navy.

This celebration was not just held in the United States. Newspapers at the time reported that celebrations were held in London, Paris and Rome (among others). Washington DC practically came to a standstill that day as ceremonies were held at Arlington and the statue of John Paul Jones. The War Department was shut down so

members could attend one of the dozens of events around the city.

[Continue reading](#)



The Computer Corner

By: George Birmingham [ET1(SS) G/SY1/G 69-74, Assoc. Life Member, USSVI/Holland Club Carolina Piedmont Base]

What different USB icons actually mean – USB4

Greetings Shipmates, and welcome back! Back in February of this year the Computer Corner provided information on the ever-changing world of USB cables. Well, welcome to the world of USB4! You have likely started seeing these at your local retailers and Amazon. They use a USB-C connector, but that's where the resemblance ends. So here are some links to help you understand the array of cables available, and how device ports are marked to accommodate data transfer, device charging, video connections and anything else they may dream up. You may find this handy if a new laptop or desktop PC is in your future.

USB Symbols explained: What USB Port Icons and Logos Mean

USB4 communications is not the same as **USB-C** communications in terms of speed. **USB-C** is the physical, oval-shaped plug and port. **USB4** is the high-performance communication standard (protocol) that runs through that same physical port to handle data and video. Note that all USB4 connections use the USB-C connector, but not all USB-C style ports support the speeds supported by USB4.

If you have a newer PC, built after USB4's 2019 release date you can determine if your device supports USB4 as follows:

- **Windows Settings:** Go to *Settings* > *Bluetooth & devices* > *USB* to check for "**USB4 Hubs and Devices**".
- **Device Manager:** Expand *System devices* and look for a **USB4 Host Router** device.

Hopefully this will help you avoid purchasing a cable promising higher speeds for a PC that does not support it.

As always, shipmates, comments and suggestions for future topics are welcomed. Contact me at subvet_ssbm@bellsouth.net. And if you have a difficult computer or network problem you need help with, contact me. I'm always glad to help out if I can. //George



The Security Corner
By: George Birmingham [ET1(SS)
G/SY1/G 69-74, Assoc. Life
Member, USSVI/Holland Club
Carolina Piedmont Base]

How To Spot A Credit Card Skimmer

Greetings shipmates! This month we will look at the many ways the credit card readers we routinely insert our credit cards into, or tap to provide our card information, can be abused and steal our information.

Payment card skimmer fraud remains a common, evolving threat where criminals secretly modify point-of-sale terminals, ATMs, and gas pumps to capture sensitive financial data. These malicious devices typically function by reading the information stored on your card's magnetic stripe as you complete a transaction, which fraudsters then use to create counterfeit cards, drain bank accounts, or sell stolen details online.

Contactless payment technology and EMV chip insertion are both highly secure methods for in-person transactions, as they rely on dynamic encryption rather than static data transmission. While "tap-to-pay" is often considered more convenient for daily purchases, both options essentially utilize the same underlying cryptographic security models to generate unique, one-time transaction codes.

How To Spot A Credit Card Skimmer: **Before You Swipe or Dip**

How to spot and avoid credit card skimmers

And from our FBI, comes this information about skimming fraud:

Skimming and Skimming Scams

As always, shipmates, comments and suggestions for future topics are welcomed. Contact me at subvet_ssbm@bellsouth.net. And if you have a difficult computer or network problem

you need help with, contact me. I'm always glad to help out if I can. //George



VETERANS AFFAIRS - RETIREE INFO - AARP
<https://www.va.gov/>
And FLEET RESERVE

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THE LINKS BELOW WERE TAKEN FROM
THE EMAILS I RECEIVE FROM MANY
SOURCES. These are not in any order so
take a look at each of them and decide what
want to continue reading. You DO NOT have
to have special accounts to view this
information. There may be some general
areas of information in here that will be of
help to some of you.

VA

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Fraud Alert: Watch Out for Phishing Scams

Phishing attacks might sound silly, and some of their variants including smishing attacks, vishing attacks, and quishing attacks might sound like the sort of prank your buddies would play on you. But they are deadly serious strategies that malicious actors are using to defraud many, including veterans. Knowing the warning signs for these attacks, including what you will be asked for from emails, texts, or even QR codes, and what information is out of bounds to be given in these scenarios can help veterans avoid fraud.

Read More...

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New Findings on Hearing Assistance, Prediabetes and the Flu

In this most recent research wrap-up, the VA reports research on multiple topics, including advancements in dealing with prediabetes and an anti-viral medication that reduces hospitalization for people suffering with the flu. Perhaps most notable is their blurb on the implementation of a personal amplification device in use in LA hospitals that allows veterans with hearing loss--even those who have not yet been diagnosed--to hear an amplified version of their doctors and nurses that cuts through hospital noise.

Read More...

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The 2026 Veterans Benefits Guide is Now Available Online

As it is always important to stay up to date with the healthcare available to you as veterans, the 2026 Veterans Benefits Guide is a must have to keep bookmarked and available for reference.

A complete listing of phone numbers and websites of VA services, starts on the third page of the Federal Benefits booklet.

Download the Benefits Book
(PDF, 116 pages, 1.4 MB)

Read More...

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Survey finds overwhelming opposition to TCVA bill

A new DAV survey of more than 4,200 veterans, their family members, caregivers and survivors shows overwhelming support (93%) for protecting veterans earned benefits and overwhelming opposition (71%) to the omnibus Take Care of America's Veterans Act (TCVA) unless a provision (Section 108) containing historic cuts to veterans' benefits is removed.

Read more

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VA Improves Health Information Sharing With Community Providers

As it is always important to stay up to date with the healthcare available to you as veterans, the 2026 Veterans Benefits Guide is a must have to keep bookmarked and available for reference.

Read More...

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2027 VA DISABILITY PAYMENT INCREASE

Your VA disability compensation is increasing in 2027. But what does that mean for your monthly payment? The SITREP breaks down the projected dollar amounts and explains when you'll see the increase.

Watch now

=====

Here Is the 2027 Pay Raise for Disabled Veterans and Military Retirees

Know the new benefit rates for veterans given by the VA — updated just a week ago, the recent COLA (cost-of-living-adjustment) that the VA has undergone has lead to increased benefits for many veterans. Knowing what you deserve is half the battle, so be sure to take a look!

Read More...

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Managing appointments on My HealtheVet

You may know that you can schedule and cancel some appointments online. But have you tried these other features of My HealtheVet's online appointments tool?

- Request approved community care health appointments
- Review and print appointment lists
- Add appointments to your personal digital calendar
- Find the facility location for your appointments
- Get the after-visit summaries from some of your appointments

Review your travel pay reimbursement claims

Learn more about managing appointments on VA.gov and get answers to common questions from Veterans like you.

Learn more

=====

Take care of your spine

A flexible spine supports healthy movement and a long, active life. Try these gentle stretches and exercises to support a healthy, pain-free spine.

Learn how to take care of your spine

=====

Turning 65: Know your healthcare options

If you're a Veteran and turning 65 years old, you may be eligible for Medicare and TRICARE for Life. The right healthcare depends on your specific needs.

Learn more about your coverage options

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Don't miss a message from VA

My HealtheVet on VA.gov is our new health portal for managing your health care online. We now use the email address listed in your VA.gov profile to send you any health care notifications.

We want to make sure you get all your notifications about updates like prescription refills, secure messages, and test results. We encourage you to review the email address listed in your profile.

How to review and update the email in your VA.gov profile

To be sure you don't miss any notifications, you can check which email you have saved in your VA.gov profile. Just follow these steps:

Sign in to VA.gov with you Login.gov or your

Login.gov or **ID.me** account. [Learn more about signing in to VA.gov](#)

1. Once you're signed in to VA.gov, your name will be at the top of any VA.gov webpage. Click or tap on your name and select **Profile** from the drop-down menu.

2. Under **Contact information**, select **Manage your contact information**.

3. Scroll down to review your **Contact email**. If you need to update your email, select **Edit** and then save your update.

We'll send any health care notifications to the new email address you have saved in your VA.gov profile. You can update your email address or other contact information at any time.

[Manage your profile](#)

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SIGN IN & TRACK YOUR CLAIM

Top of Form

Check the status of your VA claim, decision review, or appeal in one secure place.

Sign in to va.gov to see where it stands, review requested or submitted evidence, and access available decision letters—so you can stay informed about what's next. Covers many disability, pension, survivor, burial, and housing benefits, plus certain dependent-related requests.

[Learn more](#)

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Hearing Aids and Supplies Made Easy
Order supplies online and get help with adjustments from home.

Did you know that VA provides comprehensive hearing health care, including hearing aids, to all Veterans enrolled and eligible for VA care? We provide both in-person and virtual options. You can even order things like batteries and cleaning supplies through VA at no cost.

Untreated hearing loss can have serious impacts on your health, including depression, dementia, and cognitive decline. If you're experiencing hearing loss, don't wait to seek treatment. Find out how you can get started with audiology (hearing health care) at VA. And if hearing aids are right for you, learn how to maintain them from the comfort of your home. How VA makes hearing care easy and accessible

VA provides audiology care at more than 650 sites through both traditional face-to-face care and through teleaudiology. Teleaudiology means you can receive hearing health care at a clinic

local to you or at home. VA has a few ways we make this possible:

- Clinic-to-clinic teleaudiology: Go to a local clinic and connect with a health care provider at a larger facility
- Clinic-to-home teleaudiology: Receive care from the comfort of your own home
- Remote hearing aid programming: Connect with an audiologist to adjust and fine-tune hearing aids from home
- Order supplies through VA: Order by mail, on the phone, or online and have supplies shipped directly to you

How to get started with hearing health care

You can schedule a VA audiology appointment without a referral from a primary care provider or any other health care professional. To access audiology services including hearing aids follow these steps:

Register for VA health care

- You can register online, by phone, by mail, or in person at the VA medical center of your choice. Complete the enrollment process to become eligible for VA health services.

Learn how to apply for VA health care

Schedule an appointment

- Once you're registered and enrolled in VA health services, you may schedule an appointment at a VA audiology and speech pathology clinic for a hearing evaluation. You can schedule an appointment by calling your local facility, through the online appointment tool on My HealtheVet, or by sending a secure message to your provider.
 - Find a VA audiology clinic near you
 - Schedule an appointment on My HealtheVet
 - Send messages on My HealtheVet

When you meet with an audiologist, they'll test your hearing. The audiologist will discuss your options based on your hearing loss, lifestyle, and personal needs. You'll make the decision together regarding hearing aids and other assistive technology.

There is no cost for hearing aids from the VA, though you may pay a co-pay for your visits.

How to order hearing aid supplies online

To order supplies online, you must have been prescribed the supplies by a VA provider and received them within the past 2 years. If eligible,

you can get these hearing aid supplies free of charge:

- Batteries
- Domes
- Wax guards
- Cleaning supplies
- Desiccant (drying products)

To order, you'll sign in to VA.gov and fill out an online order form. You can follow the link below or find this link on the My HealtheVet homepage. You'll also find instructions to order by phone or mail.

Order medical supplies on VA.gov

You'll need a few items to place your order:

- Shipping address
- Hearing aid brand, model, and serial number
- Specific items you need (battery size, type of wax guard, etc.)

If you need help with this information, your local audiology clinic can assist.

Once you place the order, a confirmation email and tracking number will be sent within 1 to 2 days. Supplies should arrive in 7 to 10 days. Orders may take longer if the supplies are out of stock.

Reorder supplies 30 days before you need more.

For any ordering issues, email dalc.css@va.gov for help.

Help with maintaining hearing aids

For help with maintenance and adjustments, first, contact the VA audiology and speech pathology service that issued your hearing aid.

Find the phone number for your local VA health facility

If you need repairs, you can send your VA-authorized hearing aids to our VA Denver Logistics Center. We provide repairs at no cost.

Learn how to request hearing aid repairs through the Denver Logistics Center

Or call us at 877-677-8710 (TTY: 711). We're here Monday through Friday, 8:15 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. ET.

<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthevet/ss20260720-hearing-aids-and-supplies-made-easy>

Heavily Damaged Submarine USS Connecticut Now Won't Return To Service Until 2027
The Navy hoped Connecticut would be back

by 2025, then this year, and it is now planning for its final retirement with repairs still underway.

(THE WAR ZONE 28 SEPT 26) ... Joseph Trevithick and Howard Altman

The U.S. Navy's schedule for getting USS Connecticut, one of its prized Seawolf class nuclear attack submarines, back into service has slipped into next summer. The boat suffered severe damage, especially to its bow, in a collision with an underwater seamount in the South China Sea in 2021.

The service had previously hoped that repairs would be finished before the end of this year, and planning is also now underway for the submarine's retirement in 2031. This would mean it could serve for just four years before being pulled from service once and for all.

"USS Connecticut (SSN 22) is currently undergoing a complex Extended Docking Selected Restricted Availability (EDSRA) at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard & Intermediate Maintenance Facility. Current work consists of structural and systems restoration and required lifecycle maintenance," a Navy official told TWZ today. "The Navy's target completion date for the availability is the summer of 2027. PSNS & IMF is dedicated to executing this work with the highest standards of safety, technical accuracy, and craftsmanship to ensure the ship returns to the fleet ready to take its place at the tip of the spear in defense of our nation's interests."

USS Connecticut is the second of just three Seawolf class submarines commissioned between 1997 and 2005, the others being USS Seawolf and USS Jimmy Carter. The Jimmy Carter, which came last, is a one-of-a-kind subvariant of the design that is optimized for underwater espionage missions. However, the Seawolf and Connecticut also feature advanced capabilities compared to other submarines in the Navy's inventory today, and the service utilizes all three for a variety of specialized tasks, for which they are in very high demand.

After USS Connecticut hit the seamount in October 2021, the submarine first limped to Guam, and then made its way to San Diego in southern California. From there, it headed north to the Puget Sound area, where it has been ever since. The Navy's investigation into the incident

put heavy emphasis on how a weak command environment and lax attitudes toward the performance of key tasks had put the submarine on a path to the accident, as you can read more about in detail here.

Continue reading in the link

<https://www.twz.com/sea/heavily-damaged-submarine-uss-connecticut-now-wont-return-to-service-until-2027>

Sailors reminisce, say final goodbye to USS Georgia before retirement

By [Riley Ceder](#) Tuesday, Sep 22, 2026



USS Georgia returns to Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Georgia, for the final time before decommissioning on July 27, 2026. (Lt.j.g. Mackenzie Park/Navy)

U.S. Navy service members who served aboard the Ohio-class guided-missile submarine USS Georgia over its more than forty years in service spoke to the Navy and paid homage before its decommissioning.

Sailors bid a fond farewell to a boat that gave them lifelong memories, camaraderie and lessons about resilience and paying it forward, according to a release.

"I take pride in what we did because I could see the effect," said Electronics Technician (Nuclear) 2nd Class Trenton Maybee, who served aboard the ship and monitored its nuclear reactor. "We answered the call."

The Georgia arrived at its homeport of Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Georgia, on July 27, 2026, for the final time before its inactivation process began.

The USS Georgia was commissioned on Feb. 11, 1984, as an Ohio-class ballistic missile submarine with Cold War nuclear deterrence in mind, but later redesignated as a guided-missile

submarine on March 1, 2004.

Continue reading article

First C-130J For Navy's New E-130J Phoenix II Ballistic Submarine Communications Fleet Delivered

The E-130J will be taking over the Take Charge And Move Out mission from the jet-powered E-6B Mercury.

(THE WAR ZONE 17 OCT 26) ... Thomas Newdick

The U.S. Navy has taken delivery of the first C-130J-30 Hercules airframe destined to become an E-130J Phoenix II, the service's next-generation aircraft for maintaining communications with its nuclear ballistic submarines. The aircraft will now undergo extensive mission-systems integration before it can begin testing for the Take Charge and Move Out (TACAMO) mission.

Lockheed Martin handed over the newly built aircraft at its facility in Marietta, Georgia, on October 15. The delivery marks the start of the transition from the Navy's aging E-6B Mercury fleet to the turboprop-powered E-130J, which is intended to provide a survivable communications link between national leadership and U.S. Navy nuclear ballistic missile submarines, including the ability to send them orders to launch strikes while they are submerged.

"Today's delivery from the historic Marietta line represents far more than a new airframe; it marks the foundation of our future strategic deterrence posture," Capt. Roger Davis, program manager for the Navy's Airborne Strategic Command, Control, and Communications program office (PMA-271), said in a statement.

"Through our close partnership with Lockheed Martin and our industry team, we are ensuring our nation maintains an unshakeable communications lifeline to our ballistic missile submarine fleet."

The aircraft is the first of three C-130J-30s initially procured by the Navy in September 2024. It will be transferred to Northrop Grumman, the E-130J program's prime contractor and mission-systems integrator, for conversion. Collins Aerospace is providing the very low frequency (VLF) communications system, a key component of the TACAMO mission.

TACAMO aircraft provide a means for the president, secretary of defense, and U.S.

Strategic Command to communicate with nuclear forces, including submarines submerged at sea. The mission is designed to preserve the ability to transmit emergency action messages even if conventional communications infrastructure is disrupted or destroyed.

Continue reading at link:

<https://www.twz.com/air/first-c-130j-for-navys-new-e-130j-phoenix-ii-ballistic-submarine-communications-fleet-delivered>

Navy Establishes New Chief of the Boat Rating to Strengthen Submarine Enlisted Leadership UNITED STATES

10.19.2026

Story by Petty Officer 1st Class Jaimar Carson Bondurant

Chief of Naval Personnel

ARLINGTON, Va. — A submarine's chief of the boat stands at the intersection of command, crew and mission. The Navy's Submarine Force now wants that role to have a career path of its own.

On Oct. 1, 2026, the Navy Enlisted Occupational Classification System Board established the Chief of the Boat, or COB, as a separate rating for senior chiefs and master chiefs. The plan would move the current mix of COB billets out of their source technical ratings and into dedicated COB senior chief and master chief billets.

The change addressed a gap in the submarine force's enlisted leadership structure. Experienced technical Sailors are needed to serve as chiefs of the boat, where they fill critical command-level leadership billets. However, when Sailors leave their original ratings their technical communities lose some of their most capable trainers, mentors and leaders.

The new rating addresses uneven advancement opportunities and gaps in technical leadership. A separate rating allows the force to manage COBs as command leaders while enabling technical ratings to retain experienced senior enlisted Sailors.

Force Master Chief Christopher Bean, Submarine Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, said the initiative reaches beyond a change in how billets are coded.

Continue reading at the link

DVIDS - News - Navy Establishes New Chief of the Boat Rating to Strengthen Submarine

Enlisted Leadership

Bell From Former US Navy Submarine Released By Marshall For Crew Reunion (WOWKTV 20 OCT 26) ... Mitchell Hoy

A long line of vehicles departed Marshall University's Memorial Student Center Tuesday morning, forming an escort headed to San Antonio, Texas.

The VIP was a ship's bell from the USS John Marshall.

Former sailors of the now-decommissioned nuclear submarine are meeting in the Lone Star State for a crew reunion.

Police officers, the American Legion and some of the boat's former crew are safeguarding the bell to its destination.

"We're here honoring the submariners of the USS John Marshall," said American Legion Post #93 Commander Mark Duty.

Post #93 took the convoy to Grayson, Kentucky, where a Kentucky-based American Legion Post took over.

Marshall has housed the bell for more than two decades, and allowing the ex-crew members to take it to the reunion required a release from the National Register. One former John Marshall sailor traveled from Florida when he heard the ship's bell would be heading to the gathering.

"I drove up from Daytona Sunday," said Don Frank, who served as a nuclear machinist's mate on the sub. "And then we're going to be in San Antonio Wednesday."

The USS John Marshall was commissioned into the naval service as an Ethan Allen-class submarine in May of 1962, serving three decades as a fleet ballistic submarine and attack submarine. It's the only US Navy ship to be named for Founding Father John Marshall.

"It was a boomer sub, so we carried missiles," Frank said. "We operated out of Guam, but we had two crews. So, when you didn't have the boat, you got to live in Hawaii which was a pretty good deal."

After the reunion, the bell will return to the Marshall campus, where it will continue to preserve a piece of the submarine's history.

<https://www.wowktv.com/news/west-virginia/cabell-county-wv/bell-from-former-us-navy->

submarine-released-by-marshall-for-crew-reunion/

Pentagon Announces First US Submarine Joining Submarine Rotational Force-West (NAVY TIMES 26 OCT 26) ... Riley Ceder

The Pentagon on Monday announced the first submarine to be assigned to an Australian rotational force comprising four U.S. fast-attack submarines and one UK fast-attack submarine.

The USS Colorado will be the first U.S. Navy Virginia-class fast-attack submarine assigned to Submarine Rotational Force-West, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth announced in conjunction with representatives from the United Kingdom and Australia.

SRF-West, which is expected to reach initial operating capacity in 2027, will assist a fleet of U.S. and British nuclear-powered fast attack submarines aboard Australia's HMAS Stirling installation near Perth.

"SRF-West will accelerate Australia's readiness to own, operate, maintain, and regulate a sovereign, conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability, as well as support submarine deployments by expanding maintenance options and sustainment infrastructure in the region for AUKUS partners," a Pentagon statement read.

AUKUS is a trilateral security partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States designed to promote a safe Indo-Pacific region.

The U.S. stood up Naval Support Activity Stirling in Western Australia in June, providing "services and programs for U.S. service members, civilian personnel, contractors and their families" assigned to Submarine Rotational Force-West, according to a service release.

The new rotational force will increase the region's maintenance resources and bolster a sustainment framework.

On May 30 in Singapore, Hegseth met with Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence Richard Marles and UK Secretary of State for Defence John Healey to discuss AUKUS objectives to defend the Indo-Pacific region.

The Australian and UK officials confirmed that Australia was slated to meet its scheduled delivery of a conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine in the next few years.

The four officials also emerged from the meeting with news that the three nations were focused on developing and fielding uncrewed undersea vehicles to provide defensive and

offensive military capabilities throughout the region.

<https://www.navytimes.com/news/2026/10/26/pentagon-announces-first-us-submarine-joining-submarine-rotational-force-west/>

USSVCF Scholarship Chair Dr. Alan Fickett



Greetings Shipmates,

The USSV Charitable Foundation Scholarship Committee (USSVCF) announces the 2027-28 Academic Year USSVCF Scholarship Program for USSVI members and the children, grandchildren, stepchildren, and legal guardian children of USSVI members (including Associate members of 2 years standing) as of October 31, 2026. For 2027-28, an additional category of eligible applicants has been added: Eligible applicants and USSVI members in good standing who seek scholarship funding for trade, technical, career education, and apprenticeship programs at accredited institutions (Qualified submarine veterans who are not USSVI members may join by clicking the link: <https://www.ussvi.org/>).

The USSVCF Scholarship website provides a guided, semi-automatic step-by-step procedure for application for consideration for a United States Submarine Veterans Charitable Foundation Academic Scholarship. <https://subforcescholarships.smapply.io/prog/ussvcf-scholarship-2027-28/>

Hard copy applications cannot be submitted. All applicants must use this application process. All applications must be completed and submitted via this website no later than 11:59 PM on May 19, 2027. Specific notes and instructions are provided as necessary in each segment or Part of the application. Each Student Scholar Applicant must have registered using their full name and personal email address. Using a family member's registration will disqualify the registration. Applicant contact information must be complete.

To register and apply, click on: <https://subforcescholarships.smapply.io/prog/ussvcf-scholarship-2027-28/>

Questions or assistance may be requested via email at <mailto:scholarship@ussvcf.org>

Dr. Alan G. Fickett, Chairman
USSVCF Academic Scholarship Program

Three Balao-class submarines conducted historic enemy engagements in November, 1944.

On 17Nov44, the USS Spadefish (SS-411), under the command of LCDR Joseph Enright, sank the 29,000-ton escort carrier *Shinyo*. A wolfpack had spotted the aircraft carrier and its escorts in Formosa Strait, but their long-range torpedo launches were not successful. Based on the reports from the wolfpack, *Spadefish* positioned itself onto the likely course for *Shinyo* and shot six torpedoes at her at about 2100 on 17Nov. Enright's description of the event follows:

The carrier burst into flames and started settling by the stern. The fire could be seen spreading the length of the ship below the flight deck... The carrier was loaded with planes that could be seen rolling off deck as the ship settled aft and took a starboard list. When last seen the bow was sticking up in the air, still burning. The stern was on the bottom in 23 fathoms of water."

On 21Nov44, the USS Sealion (SS-315) sank the *Kongo* in the East China Sea. This was the only Japanese battleship to be sunk by a submarine and the last battleship in any navy to be sunk by a submarine. [In addition to the historic sinking, this patrol also provides a description of the resolution and ability of WWII submariners.]

SS-315, *Sealion II*, was under the command of CDR Eli Reich. Off of Shanghai, during a drill, the crew fired a torpedo with the outer door closed. The torpedo smashed through the door and put the tube out of commission. A day later, a battery explosion in an electric torpedo forced the sub to surface in a fleet of Japanese junks. *Sealion II*, opened the outer door and ejected the torpedo by backing down at flank speed.

Four days later, *Sealion II* picked up four ships on radar, two battleships, the *Kongo* and the *Haruna*, and two escorts. At flank speed, on the surface, Reich tracked the ships for 3-hours before firing six, slow electric torpedoes at a range of 3,000-yards. Reich observed and heard three hits on the *Kongo*. The battleship maintained 16-kts and *Sealion II* followed for several hours. Finally, the damaged *Kongo* had to slow to 11-kts and *Sealion II* began another approach. Reich reported the following:

*0524 Tremendous explosion dead ahead-sky brilliantly illuminated, it looked like a sunset at midnight. Radar reports battleship pip getting smaller-that it had disappeared-leaving only the two smaller pips of the destroyers. Destroyers seen to be milling around vicinity of target. Battleship sunk-the sun set.
0525 Total darkness again.*

On 29Nov44, USS Archerfish (SS-311), sank the largest warship by a submarine in history. Commanded by CDR Gordon Underwood, SS-311 torpedoed the 59,000-ton Japanese aircraft carrier *Shinano* on its maiden voyage and only hours out of the Yokosuka shipyard. The *Shinano* was 60% larger than the Lexington-class and 33% larger than the Midway-class which was commissioned at the end of WWII. On the surface outside of Tokyo Bay, *Archerfish* picked up the *Shinano* exiting the bay on radar, at 24,700 yard, at a speed of 20-knots (kts.) Staying on the surface at flank speed, *Archerfish* hoped the aircraft carrier's zigzag course would gain them a firing position. During this six-hour chase, the *Archerfish* also radioed two alerts to Admiral Lockwood. At 0300, when the *Shinano* turned towards the sub, the *Archerfish* submerged and sixteen-minutes later fired all four forward tubes, followed shortly by two stern tubes. The CO saw one strike at the stern of the *Shinano* before diving to evade an escort destroyer. The sub heard additional hits and saw no sign of the aircraft carrier when they surfaced at 0610. The *Shinano* had actually continued underway until she sank at 1040.

Charleston Base History

This is the first of many articles Association Member Bob Granzow [MIDN [LT USN] B 71 [May-July]] plans on sending for print in the newsletter. Personally, I look forward to reading each and every one of them.

USS Tillman (DD-641), USS Beatty (DD-640) and USS Hobson (DD-464) were Gleaves-class destroyers built at Charleston Navy Yard 1941 and 1942.

During 1942, the exact layout of the splotches and waves in a "Measure 12 Modified" scheme was left up to the individual shipyard or ship captain. The applied highly similar, unique flowing patterns to the destroyers completing fitting-out at their docks during that specific season.

USS Beatty and Tillman looked nearly identical from a distance, subtle differences in their early bridge structures and rigging—combined with the precise placement of the dark camo splotches on the bow—distinguish this specific frame as the Ingraham.

Wartime Service:

USS Tillman served honorably in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters during World War II, participating in Operation Torch and the invasion of Sicily before being decommissioned in 1947.

USS Beatty also served in the Atlantic and Mediterranean but met a tragic end when she was sunk by German aircraft on November 6, 1943.

USS Hobson (DD-464) – A Decorated Combat Veteran

Commissioned in about 8 months later January 1942, the Hobson went on to have a sprawling, legendary combat career across both the European and Pacific theaters, earning **6 battle stars** and a **Presidential Unit Citation**:

Operation Torch (1942): Protected the aircraft carrier *USS Ranger* as Allied forces invaded North Africa.

U-Boat Hunter-Killer (1943–1944): Joined the *USS Bogue* hunter-killer group, successfully helping sink the German U-boat **U-575**.

D-Day / Utah Beach (1944): Provided vital naval gunfire support directly off Utah Beach during the Normandy landings.

Invasion of Southern France (1944): Served as part of the Delta Assault Force during Operation Dragoon.

Okinawa & Kamikaze Attacks (1945): Converted into a destroyer-minesweeper (DMS-26), she was sent to the Pacific and survived heavy action and direct hits from Japanese Kamikaze suicide planes during the invasion of Okinawa.

(Note: Irony followed the Hobson after the war. After surviving all of WWII, she suffered a fate mirrored by the Ingraham—she accidentally collided with the aircraft carrier USS Wasp during an exercise in 1952, breaking in half and sinking with the loss of 176 sailors. There is a monument located at the Charleston Battery. Each year on the last Sunday in April, FRA Branch 269 lays a wreath at the monument. This is then followed by a Memorial Service conducted at the FRA Home in Goose Creek.) **USS Hobson Tribute Historical Marker**

**USS Tillman (DD-641), at left, and USS Beatty (DD-640) center, on the ways at the Charleston Navy Yard, South Carolina, 20 December 1941.
U.S. Naval Historical Photograph.**



**USS Tillman (DD-641) NYC, Empire State Building just right
and above colors**



Pictures from Chuck Mihalko



A-Gang Fall 1977

USS Henry L. Stimson (SSBN 655) (Gold)

(Photo courtesy of Gary Stickle)

Top row L-R: MM2(SS) Jim McDonald, MM2(SS) Bryon McCall, MM3(SS) Harold Meager, MM1(SS) Dennis Stokely

Middle row L-R: MM3(SS) Bob Kind, MM3 Gary Stickle, MM3(SS) Tommy O'Conner, MM2(SS) Robert Myers

Bottom row L-R: MMC(SS) Newell 'Soupy' Campbell, MM3(SS) Jeff Mires, ENS Chuck Mihalko



A-Gang 1978?

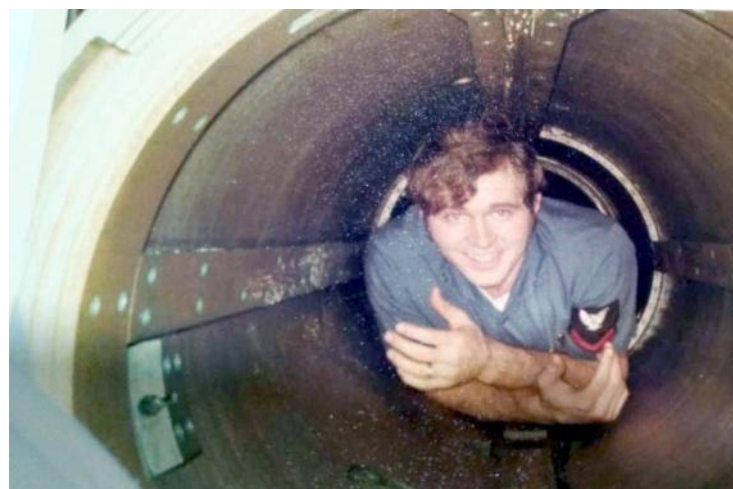
USS Henry L. Stimson (SSBN 655) (Gold)

(Photo courtesy of Gary Stickle)

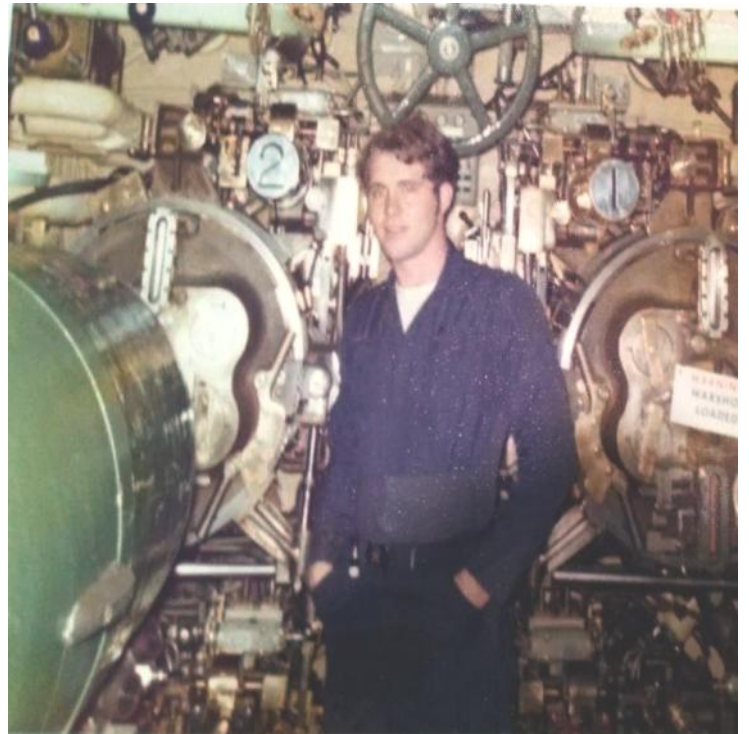
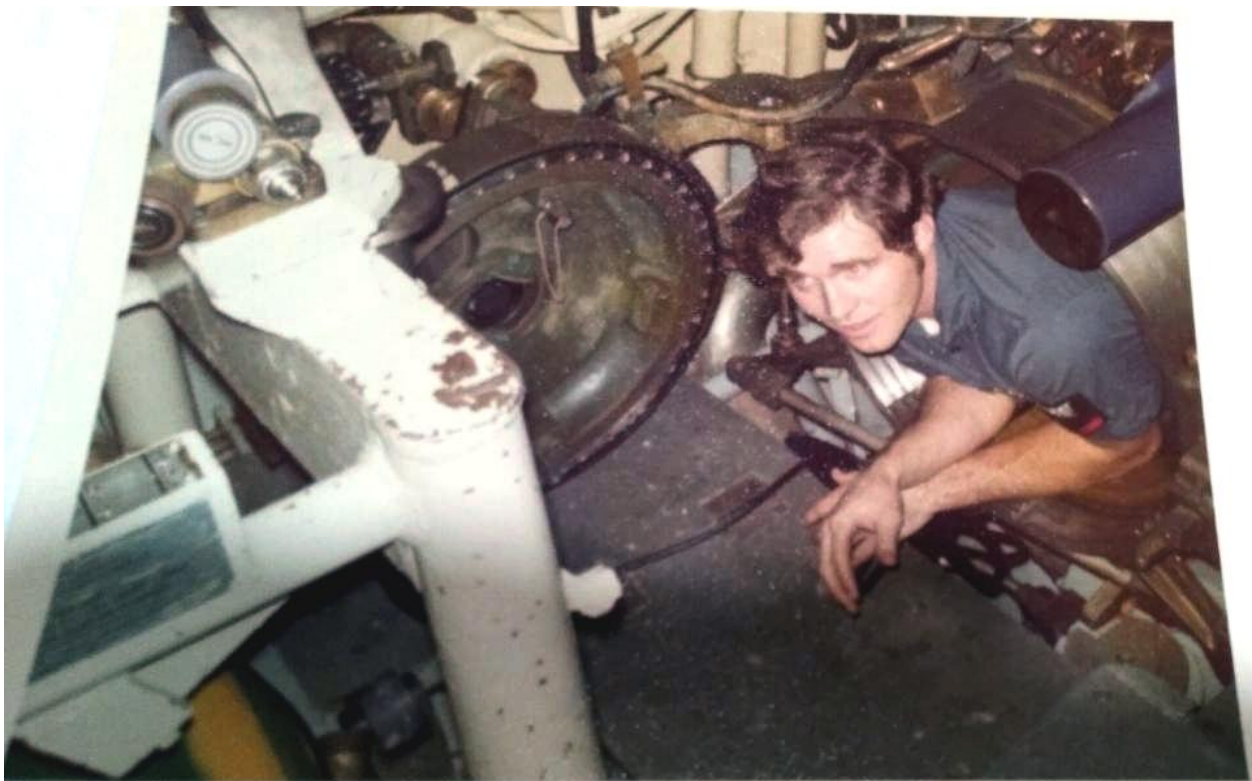
(TOP LEFT TO RIGHT) LT(JG) RICKNER, MM2(SS) MCCALL, MM2(SS) RUSSELL, MM3(SS) MEAGER, MM1(SS) STOKELY, MMC(SS) ANTOS, MMCS(SS) PUTNAM

(BOTTOM LEFT TO RIGHT) MM1(SS) CROCKER, MM2(SS) O'CONNOR, MM2(SS) MIRES, MM2(SS) KIND, MM2(SS) STICKLE, MM1(SS) McDONALD

Pictures from Skip Shepherd



Pictures from Skip Shepherd



This was submitted by Charleston Base Member Olin Thomas CWO4 Ret.

The text discusses the Polaris Tartan that many of us who served in Holy Loch were familiar with. Great historical info for us 'old' Sailors.

Tartan Details - Polaris Military

The information held within The Scottish Register of Tartans for the "Polaris Military" tartan is shown below.

STA ref: 222

STWR ref: 222

Designer: MacIntyre of Strone, Alexander

Tartan date: 01/01/1964

Registration date: This tartan was recorded prior to the launch of The Scottish Register of Tartans.

Category: Military

Restrictions:

Registration notes: Although known as 'Polaris' for many years, this tartan's correct name is 'Polaris Military' and was designed in 1964 by Alexander MacIntyre of Strone, for the officers and men of the American Submarine base at the Holy Loch. Polaris was the name of the nuclear missile carried by the U.S. Navy's ballistic missile submarines in the 1960's and not, as mistakenly thought, the name of a specific submarine.

The idea came from Captain Walter F Schlech of the USS Proteus AS19 who was Commander of the submarine squadron. The Lord Lyon of the time apparently exploded when the tartan was submitted to him and is quoted as saying "We don't record tartans for submarines. It is nonsense. I have never heard of a ship's tartan in the whole history of Scotland!"

While not necessarily tartan-related, mention should also be made of Mission Specialist Laurel Clark, who was killed in the Space Shuttle Columbia disaster in 2003. Clark, a Naval Doctor, was stationed at the US Navy submarine base at Holy Loch, Scotland with Submarine Squadron (SUBRON 14). According to a number of accounts, she was very proud of her Scottish heritage, and a piper played at her wedding to a fellow naval officer she had met at Holy Loch. On the morning before the tragic accident, Mission Control used Scotland the Brave as the wakeup call for Columbia in honour of Clark. The well-known pipe tune was also played at her funeral, along with Amazing Grace at Arlington National Cemetery.

The Polaris (Military) tartan (ITI #222) is worn today by the Pipes and Drums of the US Naval Academy. The navy blue represents the naval uniform, the dark green the depths of the oceans and the Royal Blue and gold overchecks represent the 'Blue' and 'Gold' crews who alternate.

<https://www.tartanregister.gov.uk/tartanLargeImage?ref=3350>

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Registrations since 5 Feb 2009

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Where tartans were recorded before the establishment of the Scottish Register of Tartans (SRT) on 5 February 2009, the original Scottish Tartans Authority (STA) and the Scottish Tartans World Register (STWR) reference numbers have been retained. The new SRT reference number can be found in the address box on your browser (url).

The registration criteria now applied by the Register conforms to the Scottish Register of Tartans Act 2008. These criteria are different to those previously applied by either the STA or the STWR. You may wish to refer to the [STA](#) website for further information on the original recording of this tartan.

