

The MidWatch

The Quarterly Newsletter

Perch Base, USSVI
Phoenix, Arizona

WWW.PERCH-BASE.ORG

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Editor: Chuck Luna
Contact: newsletter@perch-base.org

On The Cover: USS John Warner SSN 785 successfully completes first set of sea trials.

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USSVI Creed:

Our organization's purpose is . . .

"To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country.

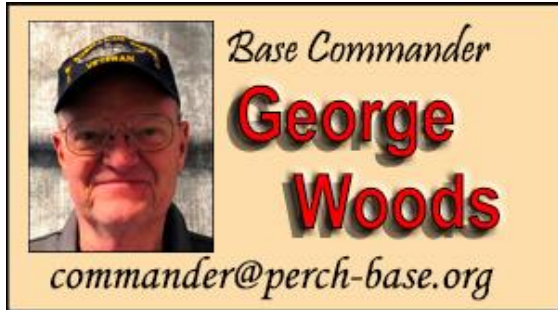
That their dedication, deeds and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution.

In addition to perpetuating the memory of departed shipmates, we shall provide a way for all Submariners to gather for the mutual benefit and enjoyment. Our common heritage as Submariners shall be strengthened by camaraderie. We support a strong U.S. Submarine Force.

The organization will engage in various projects and deeds that will bring about the perpetual remembrance of those shipmates who have given the supreme sacrifice.

The organization will also endeavor to educate all third parties it comes in contact with about the services our submarine brothers performed and how their sacrifices made possible the freedom and lifestyle we enjoy today."





From the Wardroom:

It's spring in AZ. and our base calendar is beginning to fill with a variety of activities. While we are still dealing the effects of Covid 19, most of the mask mandates have been rescinded. We all must continue to keep ourselves and family healthy and safe.

The Perch Base Annual Awards 2021 Banquet was held on January 15th, 2022. We had 47 attendees at the Pebble Creek Clubhouse in Goodyear. Two Sailor of the year awards were presented, the 2020 Sailor of the year was Marcia Unser, Base Secretary. The 2021 Sailor of the Year was Joseph Trotter Base Treasurer. We enjoyed the guest speaker Captain Vernon J. Parks Jr Ret. We Inducted Donald Petty into in the Holland Club having been qualified in submarines for 50 years in 2021.

Over the past quarter we have averaged 28 -30 members at our base meetings.

Our Annual Picnic lunch is back at The White Tanks Regional Park. We have our usual ramada and look forward to seeing you on Saturday April 9th.

The Western Regional Roundup will be April 25-29, 2022, at the Silver Legacy Resort, Reno, NV.

Memorial Day at National Cemetery will be May 30 will include wreath presentations and tolling of the lost boats.

The 2022 USSVI convention is August 24-27 at the Hyatt Regency Buffalo / Hotel and Conference Center Two Fountain Plaza, Buffalo, New York 14202. Their Convention committee has many interesting events planned going to both sides of Niagara Falls and visiting the Buffalo & Erie County Naval and Military Naval Park and the USS Croaker SS 246.

The 2023 USSVI Convention is in Tucson AZ. August 2023. Tucson Base and Perch Base are sponsors and we look forward to having the members of Perch Base participate.

We have gained and lost a few members over the first quarter of 2022, including Edward Gonsowski, 1/7/22, Jack Patterson, 1/14/22, Eugene V Crabb 1/24/22.

We are glad to announce that we have a new Store Keeper John Beckett. If anyone is interested in serving as our Events Coordinator, please let us know.

At our last meeting in March, Carl Miner our Vice Commander was elected to a two year term.

Call and bring a friend to the meeting! We currently have 168 members. Let's try for 175!



Since the last MidWatch was issued, pictures have been added to the Perch Base website for the Cdr. Eugene Crabb Eternal Patrol Notice, posting photos for the Vice Commander election and photos of the Laveen parade. Other additions included the Don DeMarte interment (thanks to pictures provided by Don Unser,) Annual Banquet photos, updating and posting of

the Event Calendar on the Sailing Orders page (extended through December 2023), posting the previous MidWatch newsletter and snail-mailing copies to the 6 members without email. Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day photos at Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza and pictures of the completion of the inventory were also posted. I encourage all who haven't visited the website to check out the photos on our website for those events.

Another major activity with the website since the last MidWatch was issued has been arranging with Namecheap, our website hosting company, for a dedicated IP address that is ONLY used by Perch Base. As a result, if other websites from Namecheap send spam, resulting in a poor reputation on the Namecheap shared server, it will not be seen on our dedicated server IP address and will not be blocked by spam screening services such as Cloudmark.

During the previous three months, there were 3,278 page views on the Perch Base website during 1,662 sessions by 1,094 users based on Google Analytics. These numbers are generally typical and are the reason I am willing to keep putting effort into maintaining our website. Besides entering the website via the homepage, the Glossary and the Eternal Patrol page receive the most visits.

During the previous three months, the Facebook PAGE had 720 Facebook Page Reaches (The number of people that saw any content,) and the PAGE has 116 likes.

As always, if you have suggestions for the Perch Base website or our Facebook page, please send them to webmaster@perch-base.org.



The **Barents** Observer



A Yasen class nuclear-powered multi-purpose submarine sails out to the White Sea in the Russian north. Photo: Sevmash

Sevmash readies two more subs as Putin elevates role of nuclear weapons

In wake of big conventional losses in Ukraine, the role of nuclear weapons in Moscow's defence and deterrence strategy may get elevated even further, says an expert on Russian military posture.

By Thomas Nilsen

March 16, 2022

Preparations are in full swing this week at the giant Sevmash yard in the north Russian city of Severodvinsk. Two brand new nuclear-powered submarines will as soon as the sea ice melts sail out in the White Sea for testing.

The "Generalissimo Suvorov" is of the 4th generation Borei-A class strategic submarines to be armed with 16 Bulava ballistic missiles, each capable of carrying six nuclear warheads.

The second submarine to sail out for sea trials is "Krasnoyarsk" of the Yasen-M class.

Both vessels are now being prepared by the commissioning teams, the shipyard's own TV-news channel Vesti Sevmash reports.

"All work is carried out in accordance with the schedule," noted Mikhail Fedyanovsky, head of the delivering team.

While Fedyanovsky is interviewed in front of the submarine, work on installing the rescue pod to the sail takes place in the background.

The solemn ceremony for "Krasnoyarsk" was performed last July. Unlike older attack submarines built in the late Soviet period, the Yasen-M class are multi-purpose vessels that can carry different weapons, including the most advanced new long-range Tsirkon hypersonic cruise missiles.

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There are ten silos for vertically launched cruise missiles.

Despite Russia's current economical meltdown following international sanctions, the Sevmash shipyard assures it will follow the orders of President Putin to "increase the pace renewal of the Navy, build modern surface and submarines of various designs and classes."

Katarzyna Zysk, a professor of international relations at the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, says to the Barents Observer that new submarines are a top priority in Putin's weapons modernization effort.

She notes that both the Borei and Yasen play "central roles in Russia's defence and deterrence."

"Moreover," Zysk explains, "both are highly prestigious projects. There's a special place in Putin's heart for the navy."

The professor expects no immediate changes.

"The construction program and financial resources assigned to it, may not be immediately affected by the economic meltdown that is ensuing. The mid- and long-term perspective are, however, far more uncertain," Katarzyna Zysk says.



Additional to "Krasnoyarsk", the Sevmash yard has four more Yasen-class vessels at different stages of construction. The submarines will be based both with the Northern Fleet on the coast to the Barents Sea and with the Pacific Fleet in the Far East.

Professor Katarzyna Zysk with the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies says nuclear weapons play an important role in Putin's military modernization programs.

There are also four more Borei-class ballistic missile carriers to be floated out in Severodvinsk by 2029 when the class will be the backbone of Moscow's sea-based nuclear deterrence. The Borei-class replaces the older Delta-IV and Delta-III submarines currently sailing deterrence patrols, including under the Arctic sea-ice.

Katarzyna Zysk says Russia's big losses of conventional weapons in the Ukraine war could heighten the importance of nuclear weapons even more, including those deployed on submarines.

"Given the weakening of the Russian conventional forces, the role of nuclear weapons in Russian defence and deterrence may get elevated even further."

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Zysk elaborates: “Notably, to date, nuclear deterrence has proved highly effective for Russia in the ongoing confrontation: Putin’s threat of a major escalation to a nuclear level has been among key reasons for the restraint of the West in imposing a military cost and getting directly involved in the war in Ukraine.”

Ahead of the hand-over ceremony of the “Novosibirsk” submarine last December, President Putin warned that Russia is prepared to take military measures to counter NATO’s unfriendly steps.

“In the event of continuation of the obviously aggressive line of our Western colleagues, we will take adequate retaliatory military-technical measures, and react toughly to unfriendly steps,” the president said in his speech to the Collegium of the Defense Ministry.



With all the craziness going on right now from the COVID-19 Pandemic, I think it’s a good time to remind everyone to update their contact lists. Please make sure we have your correct information, with your mailing and/or physical address (if they are different), your phone number and your email address. Also make sure to contact us if you are in need of anything,

sick, or have to stay in the hospital. Instruct your loved ones/care giver on how to contact us so we can stay abreast of your situation and help if possible.

For your convenience here’s something we got from national to help:

— — — — —
USSVI Member: Please cut out and attach this note to your will or final instructions.

**** IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS ****

In the case of my death, please immediately notify the U.S. Submarine Veterans Inc., (USSVI) at 877-542-3483 or 360-337-2978 and give the person on duty the information regarding my death, funeral, and burial arrangements, plus who they can contact for follow-up and support.



Treasurer
**Joe
Trotter**
Treasurer@perch-base.org




Secretary
**Marcia
Unser**
secretary@perch-base.org



Storekeeper
**John
Beckett**
storekeeper@perch-base.org



Chief of the Boat
**Don
Robertson**
cob@perch-base.org



Historian
**Chuck
Emmett**
historian@perch-base.org



Chaplain
**Governor
Joy**
chaplain@perch-base.org



Past Commander
**Howard
Doyle**
past-commander@perch-base.org

U.S. Navy reestablishes Submarine Squadron Eight

18 February 2022

From Commander, Submarine Force Atlantic Public Affairs

The U.S. Navy reestablished Commander, Submarine Squadron (COMSUBRON) 8 during an official ceremony at Naval Station Norfolk, Friday, Feb. 18.

COMSUBRON 8's re-establishment is intended to distribute and align the responsibility for command and control of submarines assigned to Commander, Submarine Squadron 6, based in Norfolk, Va., during the submarines' sustainment phase and maintenance shipyard periods.

COMSUBRON 8 was initially disestablished in a ceremony on April 28, 2011, and the squadron's original roles and responsibilities were merged with COMSUBRON 6.



This move returns the control of new submarine construction and ongoing submarine operating maintenance schedules of Los Angeles-class attack submarines and Virginia-class submarines homeported in Norfolk, Va. to COMSUBRON 8.

COMSUBRON 6 retains the operational responsibility of preparing Norfolk-based submarine crews in all facets of operations, to include tactical and operational readiness for war, inspection and monitoring duties, nuclear and radiological safety, and the development and control of submarine operating schedules and logistical support coordination of all submarine operations in the Virginia Capes operating areas.

Vice Adm. William Houston, Commander, Submarine Forces, was the keynote speaker for the establishment ceremony.

“Normally we have a change of command which can be upsetting as it means someone is moving on, but this ceremony is nothing but good news as we are reestablishing a squadron,” said Houston. “The reestablishment will give us a squadron that can concentrate on maintenance and new construction and that skillset, while we have another squadron that is focused on operational units.”

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Capt. Brian Hogan took command of submarines previously under COMSUBRON 6, relieving Capt. Jason Pittman, commodore, COMSUBRON 6, of responsibility of new submarine construction and ongoing submarine operating maintenance schedules.

“I would first like to congratulate Brian on assuming command of Submarine Squadron 8,” said Pittman. “He brings to the team a wealth of invaluable experience and I cannot think of anyone more right for the job than him. It is an important day for the entire Submarine Force and the entire Navy. We are building a dedicated team that will lean in and learn new and innovative ways to build and repair our submarines.”

After assuming command of COMSUBRON 8, Hogan gave remarks on reestablishing the squadron.

“Submarine Squadron 8 was established back in the 1940s, so we are simply restoring Submarine Force normalcy by reestablishing it here today,” said Hogan. “This time around, Squadron 8 is focused on shipyard readiness. It is difficult to transition a submarine and its crew into the shipyard and back out as the boat and crew both transform themselves for operational readiness. It is important we get these transitions right, and it is now our job to do it successfully.”

COMSUBRON 8 will step in to provide administrative, manning, logistical, training, operational planning and readiness support for Los Angeles-class attack and Virginia-class fast attack submarine during periods of maintenance and improvement.

Fast-attack submarines are multi-mission platforms enabling five of the six Navy maritime strategy core capabilities – sea control, power projection, forward presence, maritime security and deterrence. They are designed to excel in anti-submarine warfare, anti-ship warfare, strike warfare, special operations, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, irregular warfare and mine warfare. Fast-attack submarines project power ashore with special operations forces and Tomahawk cruise missiles in the prevention or preparation of regional crises.

The Submarine Force and supporting organizations constitute the primary undersea arm of the Navy. Submarines and their crews remain the tip of the undersea spear.

Future USS Oregon Delivered to U.S. Navy

28 February 2022

From Team Submarines Public Affairs

GROTON, Conn. – The Submarine Force’s newest attack submarine, the future USS Oregon (SSN 793), delivered to the U.S. Navy on Feb. 26. PCU Oregon is the twentieth Virginia Class submarine that are co-produced at General Dynamics Electric Boat and Huntington Ingalls Industries – Newport News Shipbuilding (HII-NNS) through a long-standing teaming agreement. Oregon is the eleventh Virginia Class delivered by GDEB and the second Block IV configured submarine.



“Oregon is in excellent condition and the captain and crew have expertly taken the ship through her paces,” said CAPT Todd Weeks, the Virginia Class Program Manager who rode the boat during its sea trials. Delivery of a Virginia Class Submarine is the culmination of almost 10 million work hours by the shipbuilders under the exacting standards imposed by Naval Sea Systems Command and Naval Reactors under the direct oversight of the Supervisors of Shipbuilding at both company locations. “Each organization works tirelessly with the others focused on getting ships to sea as the first step in ultimately arriving at its Squadron and homeport where it becomes a vital asset to the Nation.”

Virginia Class Submarines are built to operate in the world's littoral and deep waters while conducting anti-submarine warfare; anti-surface ship warfare; strike warfare; special operations forces support; intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; irregular warfare; and mine warfare missions. Their inherent stealth, endurance, mobility and firepower directly enable them to support five of the six maritime strategy core capabilities - sea control, power projection, forward presence, maritime security, and deterrence.

The submarine’s sponsor is Mrs. Dana Richardson, wife of former Chief of Naval Operations, ADM John Richardson.

Oregon is the third U.S. Navy ship to honor the state. The first USS Oregon was a brigantine ship purchased in 1841 and used for exploration until 1845. The second Oregon (BB 3) was commissioned on July 15, 1896. While decommissioned in 1906, she was later recommissioned in 1911 and remained in the reserve, until stricken from the Navy list in 1942.

International community works together at U.S. Navy's ICEX 2022

08 March 2022

From Lt. Seth Koenig, Commander, Submarine Force Atlantic Public Affairs

U.S. NAVY ICE CAMP QUEENFISH – Joining U.S. military forces at Ice Exercise (ICEX) 2022 are personnel from the Royal Canadian Air Force and Navy, as well as the United Kingdom Royal Navy.

“Our ICEX 2022 team includes key contributors from the British and Canadian armed forces,” said Rear Adm. Richard Seif, commander of the U.S. Navy’s Undersea Warfare Development Center in Groton, Connecticut, and the ranking officer at ICEX 2022. “It’s in all of our best interests to understand the Arctic region and the unique environment it represents. We have a proud tradition of working together with partners and allies in the Arctic and will continue to do so.”



Canadian aircraft were among the first to carry crucial camp construction equipment to a remote ice floe 160 nautical miles off the coast of Alaska, where the floating Ice Camp Queenfish was built.

“The Royal Canadian Air Force’s support to ICEX 2022 in the Arctic is just one example of daily collaboration with our American allies, which includes 24/7 NORAD operations,” said Maj. Gen. Eric J. Kenny, commander of 1 Canadian Air Division, Canadian NORAD Region, Joint Forces Air Component and Search-and-Rescue Region Trenton.

“Our ski-equipped CC-138 Twin Otters and the crews that fly them are well-equipped to operate in even the harshest of northern environments in order to provide logistical support to the United States Navy during this exercise,” he continued.

Chief Petty Officer Glenn Scott of the U.K. Royal Navy’s Maritime Warfare Center is serving as an ice camp watch officer at ICEX 2022 and one of six United Kingdom personnel taking part in the exercise, along with two submariners and two submarine logistics officers.

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“We have a longstanding relationship working together in the Arctic,” said Scott. “Taking part in the Ice Exercises allows us to share best practices and continues to grow our Arctic capabilities. It's vitally important that we maintain the connections that we build during ICEX, because they greatly enhance our abilities to conduct Arctic operations.”

ICEX 2022 is a joint combined exercise that takes place over the course of a month north of the Arctic circle, with personnel stationed at the temporary Ice Camp Queenfish, built on a floe of Arctic ice in international waters, as well as in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, and two operational U.S. Navy submarines. ICEX allows the Navy to assess its operational readiness in the Arctic, increase experience in the region, advance understanding of the Arctic environment, and continue to develop relationships with other services, allies and partner organizations.

“The value is huge to work with other Arctic nations here,” said Howard Reese, director of the Navy’s Arctic Submarine Laboratory, the organization charged with planning, coordinating and executing ICEX. “It’s important for both the U.S. and our international partners and allies to be involved in exercises like this to keep our personnel trained in Arctic operations. Just as it is anywhere in the world, working together in the Arctic allows us to understand each other’s operations and integrate seamlessly whenever the need arises.”



Previous Quarter Highlights

Fourth Quarter events for Perch Base.

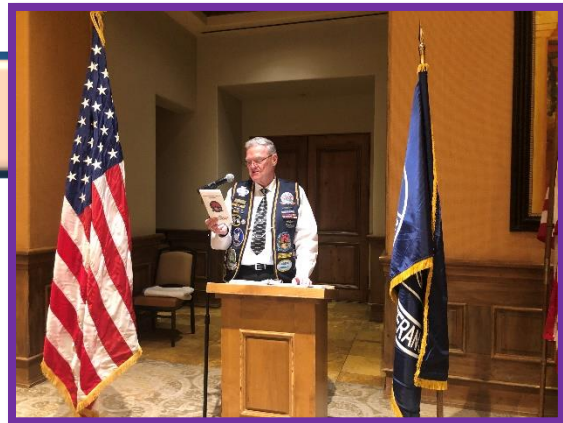
For more Pictures and details check out our [website](#).

Click on any photo for a larger picture.

Annual Awards Banquet

Perch Base held its Annual Awards Banquet on January 15, 2022, at the Pebble Creek Clubhouse.

Perch Base Commander, George Woods, opened the Annual Banquet.



Base Commander George Woods introduced our guest speaker, Captain Vernon J. Parks, Jr (ret) and upon completion of his presentation, him and Howard Doyle presented Captain Vernon a plaque of appreciation.



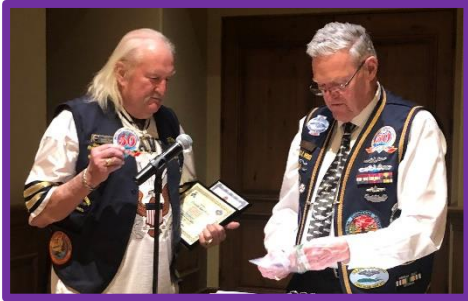
Since COVID caused last year's banquet to be cancelled, there were two "Sailor of the Year" awards presented.

Howard Doyle, our Past Base Commander presented the 2020 award for "Sailor of the Year" to Marcia Unser, our Base Secretary.

Base Commander, George Woods, Presented the 2021 award for "Sailor of the Year" to Joe Trotter, Base Treasurer.



Previous Quarter Highlights (cont.)



Don Petty was then inducted into the Holland Club and received a certificate from USSVI National, a certificate from Perch Base, a Holland Club patch, and a Holland Club coffee cup.

The Silent Auction benefitted the base and was coordinated by Perch Base member Brad Seidel.



A good turnout of members, families and friends attended the banquet.



Previous Quarter Highlights (cont.)

Laveen Parade

Eight Perch Base members participated on February 5, 2022 in the 21st Annual Laveen Community Parade.

This year's theme was "Laveen Launches Forward!"

87 entries participated in the parade.



Staging the USS Phoenix (SSN-702) float. (l-r) Carl Miner & Don Robertson.



Staging the People Trailer.



Round up the usual suspects! (l-r) Dan Marks, Chris Gahan, George Woods, Carl Miner, Joe Trotter, Howard Doyle, Don Robertson & Marcia Unser.

No, we didn't offer bribes, but we gladly shared our stereotypical donuts with the Phoenix PD., staging directly behind us.



The Line

I saw a line of sailors,
They seemed so far away.
Their uniforms were brilliant white
Despite the cloudy day.

I couldn't see their faces
Their rates, left arm and right,
But on and on the column grew
It really was a sight.

And then I saw another group
Quite different from the first.
Their beards and shaggy haircuts
Their uniforms the worst.

Playing Acey Ducey
And smoking cigarettes
And endless games of poker
Drinking coffee, making bets.

I asked a nearby sailor,
Who are those wretched lads?
"Oh, them, they're submariners,
They're altogether bad.

They hid beneath the surface
On submarines of old.
Their missions were so secret,
They never could be told.

And every one a scoundrel
With language foul and blue.
They just weren't proper sailors
Believe me, it's all true."

And suddenly a rush of wind
Blew all the clouds away
The angels came and passed the line
The gamblers stopped their play.

The other sailors grumbled
"We've been standing in this line
For what seems an eternity?
And faithful all this time."

The angel said, "Just wait a bit
Your time will come soon well.
But these boys get to go home now,
They've done their time in hell.

Their boat went down so quickly,
There wasn't time to pray.
But God heard every mother,
Who lost her son that day."

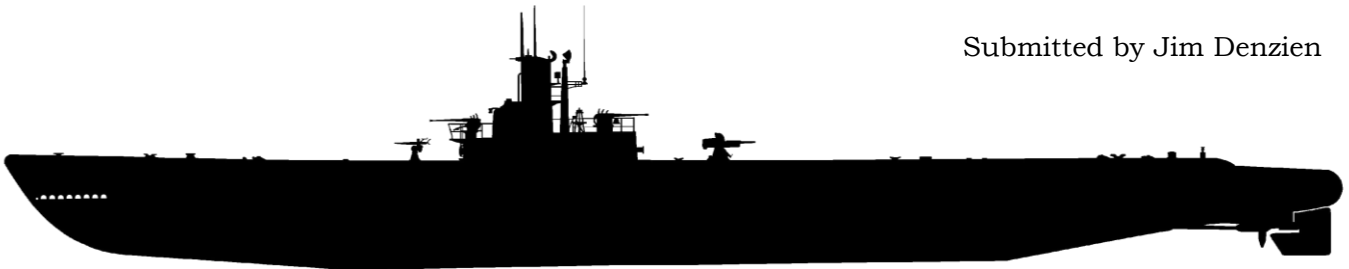
The submariners rose as one
And walked into the light
They all went down together,
As one, they all took flight.

So pray for submariners
When you think of those we've lost
The freedom we enjoy today
Came with a heavy cost.



Robert W. MacPherson
CWO USN Retired

Submitted by Jim Denzien



Signal Ejector Shenanigans

Submitted by Chris Gahan, MMC/CWO3 (SS), Ret.

In January of 1974, the USS Sculpin (SSN-590) departed on a scheduled six-month WestPac deployment from Submarine Base San Diego. I had reported for duty about a year earlier after graduating from the S5G prototype in Idaho Falls. Up until this deployment, I was immersed in challenges of Sub and nuclear quals. The Sculpin had undergone a limited availability at Mare Island Naval Shipyard and participated in numerous training exercises where the signal ejector was often utilized in preparation for this deployment. Being a non-qual nub, I recall that this was my first experience with hot bunking which was a delight, traversing the boat by walking on 20-pound tin-cans of various commodities that required some fancy footwork to navigate, the numerous 16 mm movie canisters carefully stowed in the reactor tunnel and running out of fresh milk and eggs within a week of leaving port.

The purpose of the signal ejector was to launch pyrotechnic signals, evasion devices, radio transmitters and bathymetric instrument. On the Sculpin, there were two signal ejectors. One forward in the torpedo room and one aft in engine-room. I was a Nuc-machinist mate, so the aft signal ejector was in my realm and the on-watch sections were trained to operate it when directed. Since this was weapon's department and not propulsion plant equipment, we tended to relish operating the signal ejector and were envious of shipmates who had the opportunity to play torpedomen. The signal ejector was between the aft maneuvering wall and the starboard turbine generator. My recollection was that the signal ejector on Sculpin was utilized most often to launch pyrotechnic devices either smokes, flares, or a combination of both during the pre-deployment training exercises. The smoke and flares came in various colors. Each color had a different meaning. Black and white used to mark general location. Yellow designated that a submarine was rising to the surface during a training exercise. The Green simulated a torpedo attack which basically meant "BANG, YOU'RE DEAD". Red was used only to signal an emergency distress.

The signal ejector was basically a mini-torpedo tube with a barrel length of 3.5 feet and a bore of 3 inches welded to the hull at a 45° angle about 6 feet above the ERUL deck. To operate the device, the breech door was opened, the designated pyrotechnic device was loaded, and the breech door closed. With breech door closed the interlocks allowed the tube to be flooded with seawater and equalized with the outside sea pressure. The air flask is charged with the specified high-pressure air set point required to successfully launch the pyrotechnic device and then the muzzle door was opened. When ordered from the control room, the firing valve is actuated ejecting the pyrotechnic device with high pressure air in the air flask. The muzzle door is closed, air flask vented, the ejector drained of seawater and ready to be reloaded or secured.

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The USS Sculpin arrived in Hong Kong in mid-April for a week of R&R. I had completed my submarine qualifications and my shipmates were looking forward to celebrating this achievement by drinking my dolphins and generally letting off a little steam. Hong Kong had no facilities which could supply shore power. We moored, starboard side, next to a Navy sea-going tug anchored in the harbor and the reactor was left operating to supply the ship's hotel loads. While the nose-conner's could rotate in-port duty sections, the Nuc's were on port and starboard watches to operate the reactor and steam plant. I did manage a couple days of liberty in Hong Kong and appropriately wetted my dolphins. With most of the crew on liberty, those on duty settled into tedious watch standing duty routine. Submariners and monotony do not mix well at all as it leads to some very creative mischief.

On one my duty days, a bull session between the topside watch and maneuvering arose over the sound powered circuit. This monotony induced conversation was a blow-by-blow description of the vessels in harbor, with a special interest in passing sampans. Some of the sampans attempted to come along side to sell all types of merchandises and market commodities. The topside watch was tasked to chase them off or alert the Duty Chief if he needed support. I don't recall who first came up the idea of chasing off the sampans utilizing the signal ejector and watered-filled Coke cans brought back from liberty. Nevertheless, this creative challenge energized the group into action. The duty section leadership was not spending a lot of time in the engineering spaces. So, left to our own devices, we filled the Coke cans with water and plowed ahead preparing the signal ejector for our first salvo. With the topside watch as the targeting director and maneuvering relaying target coordinates, our first victim came within estimated range, and we fired our first shot. It was short. While awaiting for the next mark, additional adjustments were performed on the signal ejector air flask pressure. With next sampan in range, we fired again, a miss but closer. We continued this process until all the collected water-filled Coke cans (about 6-8) were expended. The last two shots finally hit the side of the targeted sampan. We celebrated our victories then secured the signal ejector and returned to tedium of watch standing.

To this day, I am still amazed that participants of this clever endeavor never received any formal condemnation. I don't remember neither the on-duty officers or chiefs nor our division officer or LCPO ever addressing this incident. Of course, the boat's scuttlebutt spread this event throughout the crew. As the Sculpin departed Hong Kong, I remember the smirks and off-handed comments from shipmates and a scowl and an especially strong negative comment from the weapons LPO. I did not realize at the time, but this was my last time I would ever operate a signal ejector.

(Note: A hearty "BZ" to Governor Joy, TMSC (SS), Ret. for the signal ejector technical refresher).

DO YOU BELIEVE IN GHOSTS?

By Dan Marks, Perch Base Webmaster

"This is a no sh*tter..."

This past January 2022, I received a Facebook Messenger text from a gent asking me to help find and contact Bill Ledford who left his vest at the Nipomo, California, American Legion Hall the other day. They wanted to return his vest. The reason he said he contacted me was that based on the nametag on the vest, Bill is actually a member of the USSVI 'Southern Arizona Cactus Chapter', rather than the American Legion. He later sent me some pictures of Bill's vest to help give me some clues.

I found Bill Ledford!

I located Bill at Green Valley Memorial Gardens, a cemetery in Green Valley, AZ. He had passed onto Eternal Patrol almost 25 years ago on May 13, 1997. Thus, I have concluded that it had to be the ghost of Bill Ledford that attended the Nipomo American Legion meeting!

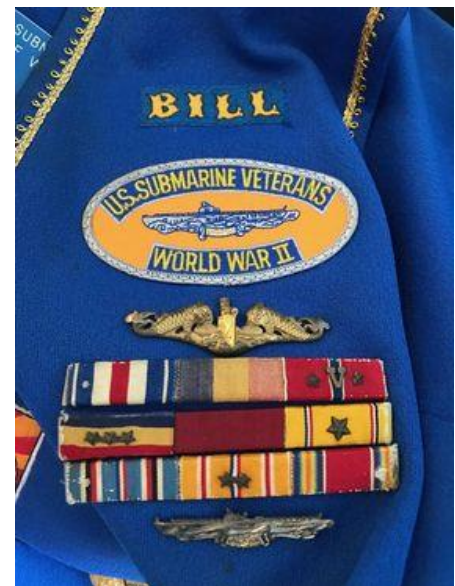


The first thing that struck me when I saw the photos was that Bill's membership patch wasn't for the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. (USSVI) as stated in the Messenger text. The patch was for the U.S. Submarine Veterans of World War II (USSVWWII.) The Southern Arizona Cactus Chapter used to meet in Sahuarita, south of Tucson and adjacent to Green Valley. Bill Ledford had been a Base Commander of the chapter.

The next thing that struck me was that the pictures included his ribbons.

Ribbons are always positioned in order of precedence with the highest order on the upper-left. That red,

white and blue ribbon is the Medal of Valor! That ain't no gedunk medal and they don't just give those away. I searched the Medal of Valor registry and found that the medal was awarded September 1943, to "*Torpedoman's Mate First Class William E. Ledford, United States Navy, for heroic conduct during war patrols in enemy controlled waters during World War II. In charge of the forward torpedo room of a United States Submarine during three war patrols. Torpedoman's Mate First Class Ledford, through expert performance of his duties, assisted materially in the sinking of an important amount of Japanese shipping.*" I am impressed; Not only was the Nipomo American Legion Hall visited by a ghost, but it was a VIP ghost!



Continued on next page

Here's the complete ribbon set in order of precedence:

Medal of Valor
Navy and Marine Corps
Bronze Star with "V" device for meritorious service or for combat actions and 2 additional service stars.
Navy Presidential Unit Citation with 3 additional service stars (total 4 citations)
Navy Good Conduct ribbon
American Defense ribbon with an additional service star
American Campaign ribbon
Asiatic – Pacific ribbon with two additional service stars
World War II Victory ribbon

The vest also included a war patrol pin, which shows the broadside of a Gato-class diesel submarine. Unfortunately, the poor clarity of the photo prevented me from counting the number and color of the services stars, so I can't tell how many war patrols he was credited. Each gold star represents one war patrol, and a silver star represents 5 war patrols if there are more than the 3 that fit in the pin. Not all war patrols were credited by the fleet commanders, as determined by sinking (or assisting in the sinking) of at least one enemy vessel or the accomplishment of a combat mission that was considered as equally important. Based on the dates of his boat assignments however, I calculate Bill completed 6 successful war patrols on the USS Trigger (SS-237), 3 successful war patrols on the USS Silversides (SS-236), and 2 successful war patrols on the USS Tirante (SS-420). That's 11 war patrols!

The next puzzle was the gold Submarine Warfare pin, a.k.a, Dolphins. Bill Ledford qualified on the USS Skipjack (SS-184) in 1941 as a Torpedoman's Mate Third Class, which would result in silver Dolphins. In fact, he served on seven diesel boats, working his way up to Chief Torpedoman's Mate. Ultimately, Bill accepted a commission in 1947 and left the Navy in 1947 as a LTJG, which explains the gold Dolphins.

The last puzzle of this ghost story is Bill Ledford's ghostly presence at the Nipomo American Legion meeting. I told the American Legion folks that I perhaps someone donated the vest to the Post, but no one knew the legacy of what they have. They certainly appreciated learning of Bill Ledford's history. However, I might be wrong. Maybe it **WAS** the ghost of Bill Ledford attending the meeting and he forgot his vest!



Upcoming Events

Remember to check Perch-Base.org often for up-to-date information on all events.

Annual Picnic Meeting at White Tanks Park

Saturday, April 9, 11 AM to 2 PM

There will be no meeting at Dillon's. Perch Base will be providing the picnic meal, including soft drinks and water, however there is a \$7.00 fee per vehicle to enter the park which must be paid by the driver. All Arizona sub vets and their families are cordially invited! You are allowed to bring your own beer, but no glass containers, please. If you're coming, we'll need a head count by April 2.

[20304 West White Tank Mountain Road, Waddell, AZ 85355](#), Ramada 4F.

(Left-click address, above, for a Google map)

A few volunteers are needed to come early/stay late to help the COB.

Monthly General Meetings

Saturday's, May 14 & June 11

At Dillon's KC Bar-B-Que restaurant

[20585 North 59th Avenue, Glendale, Arizona.](#)

(Left-click address, above, for a Google map to Dillon's.)

The official meeting starts at Noon

50/50 Raffle drawing (Must be present to win).

Memorial Day

Monday, May 30, 8:00 AM

This is one of the two most important events of our yearly calendar. Because of the large crowds at this event, and the scarcity of available seating, it is strongly urged that everyone get there no later than 7 a.m.

As in previous years, we will follow with the Tolling of the Boats in the Circle of Remembrance at the World War II Submarine Torpedo monument. [23029 N. Cave Creek Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85024](#)

Deadline for the Summer Quarter MidWatch

Friday, June 17, 2022

All input must be into Chuck Luna, [Communications Officer](#), to be included in the next MidWatch Newsletter to be published on Friday, July 1, 2022.



Second Quarter Birthdays

APRIL

1 Robert Faulkner
11 Submarine Force
13 James Wall
14 Rick Simmons
16 James Edwards
16 Donald Walbaum
18 Tom Farley III
22 Billy Johnson
25 Bruce Williams
30 Davy Jones

MAY

2 Donald Shafer
3 Doyle Egg
7 Stanley Reinhold
8 Ramon Samson
11 George Woods
12 James Tolsma
13 Duane Kanitz
17 Steven Balthazor
18 Joseph Hawkins
24 George Gillette
25 Donald Robertson
25 Richard Noreika
26 Vic Van Horn
29 Charles Tobias
30 Carl Scott

JUNE

3 James F. Newman
4 Steve Snyder
5 Ralph Jennings
7 Robert "Matt" Hayball
7 Dan Marks
11 Glenn Posniack
12 Gerald Maly
17 Donald Petty
19 Michael Weeks
20 David Fyock
20 James Ratte
27 James Evans



**HAPPY
Birthday**



Perch Base CLASSIFIEDS

Your chance to advertise for free! Items from Base Members to other Members, and almost anything is far game. Exceptions: alcohol, drugs, illegal, commercial items or anything in general poor taste. Send your ad to: newsletter@perch-base.org



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Good of the Order

Base Ride Share

In need of a ride to a base meeting or event?

Like to help a shipmate in need of a lift?

Please contact:

Dan Marks at webmaster@perch-base.org

Or

Marcus Hensley at storekeeper@perch-base.org

0ⁿ Eternal Patrol



Departed shipmates from previous quarter.

For more Pictures and details check out perch-base.org.

Edward Gonsowski, Lt USN



Perch Base Member Edward Gonsowski, departed on Eternal Patrol on January 7, 2022, at the age of 68. Our condolences to his family.

Ed joined the Navy and trained as a nuclear officer. He qualified on the USS Sunfish (SSN-649) in 1981. He left the Navy in 1982 as a Lieutenant and became a member of Perch Base in 2014.

Ed was interred at the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona in Phoenix, in SECTION 78 SITE 2035.



Jack Patterson, QM1(SS) (Ret)

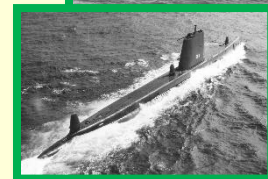
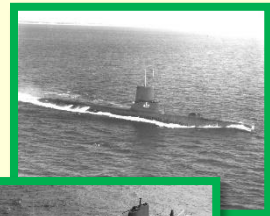


Perch Base Holland Club member Jack Patterson, QM1(SS) USN (Ret.) passed on to Eternal Patrol on January 14, 2022.

Jack served and qualified on the USS Sea Robin (SS-407) from 1951 to 1954 and on the USS Pickerel (SS-524) in 1960.

Jack also served two tours in Vietnam and as a tugboat master.

Services with Military Honors were on Friday, March 11, 2022 at 10:30 AM at the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona.



Departed shipmates (cont.)

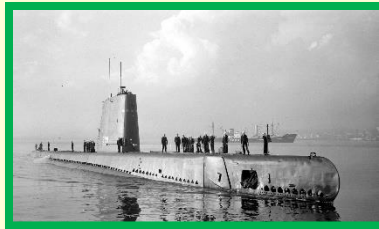
Eugene "Gene" Vernon Crabb, CDR, USN (Ret)



Perch Base Life and Holland Club member Gene Crabb, passed on Tuesday, February 8, 2022. Our condolences to his wife Suzanne and family.

Gene had been the Captain of the USS Bashaw (AGSS-241) from 1966 to 1968, as well as the Executive Officer (XO) of the USS Grayback (SSG-574), a Regulus missile boat, and the USS Remora (SS-487).

His ashes will be scattered at sea at a future date.



**SAILORS REST YOUR OAR!
YOUR WATCH HAS ENDED.
Your Brothers of the 'Phin Have
the Watch.
Fair Winds and Following Seas,
Shipmates.**



LEST WE FORGET THOSE STILL ON PATROL



Tolling of the Boats for April

3	USS Pickerel (SS-177)	1943	74 men lost
8	USS Snook (SS-279)	1945	84 men lost
10	USS Thresher (SSN-593)	1963	129 men lost
18	USS Gudgeon (SS-211)	1944	80 men lost
22	USS Grenadier (SS-210)	1943	4 lost as POWs

Tolling of the Boats for May

3	USS Lagarto (SS-371)	1945	86 men lost
22	USS Scorpion (SSN-589)	1968	99 men lost
23	USS Squalus (SS-192)	1939	26 men lost
29	USS Stickleback (SS-415)	1958	no loss of life

Tolling of the Boats for June

1	USS Herring (SS-233)	1944	83 men lost
12	USS R-12 (SS-89)	1943	42 men lost
14	USS Golet (SS-361)	1944	82 men lost
18	USS Bonefish (SS-223)	1945	85 men lost
19	USS S-27 (SS-132)	1942	no loss of life
20	USS O-9 (SS-70)	1941	34 men lost
30	USS Runner (SS-275)	1943	78 men lost

2022 Perch Base Operations Supporters

These are the Base members and Friends who donate monies or efforts to allow for Base operations while keeping our dues low and avoid raising money through member labor as most other organizations do.

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John Beckett
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Mary Denzein
Howard Doyle
Howard Enloe
Thomas Farley
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Dave Heighway
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