



November/December 2025
VOL MMXXV Issue 06

Clear The Baffles

GOLD COUNTRY BASE



Our purpose is "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 may be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments and to pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution.



Folsom's 25th Annual

WAYNE SPENCE VETERANS DAY PARADE

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11 *at* 9 A.M.



Inside

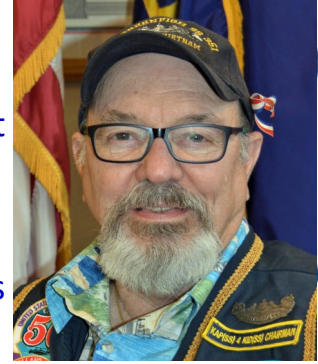
- Page 2- Commander's Corner
- Page 3-6 Officers Country
- Page 7- Base & National Officers
- Page 8- Lost Boats - December
- Page 9-10 Base Meeting Minutes
- Page 11- Birthdays, Lighter Side,
- Page 12- Booster Club, Vets Information
- Page 13-16 Gold Country News & Events
- Page 17-19 December 7th Guest Speaker
- Page 20-22 Year in Review
- Page 23- USSVI Regional News
- Page 24 Featured Boat
- Page 25- Submarine Facts of Interest
- Page 26-27 WW II Submarines
- Page 28- US Navy Submarine News
- Page 29- Support Base Members Business
- Page 30- Publishing Information



Now Hear This!

First Call to Morning Chow & Gift Exchange Tuesday January 13, 2026 0930 Dennys Restaurant 1000 N. Sunrise, Roseville
eBoard Meeting (On Zoom) January 17, 2026 0900
Meeting ID: 902 151 4965 Passcode: SubVet
Next Meeting—January 24, 2026 Potluck @ 12 noon Meeting Starts 1pm Folsom Veterans Hall - 1300 Forrest St., Folsom

COMMANDER'S CORNER



Shipmates This has been a very busy year and we had a lot of exciting events such as first-time participation with the Air Show and had a number of potential new members visiting our display with our float. Now all we have to do is follow up and land them as new members. The annual picnic with the sea cadets was another great event. It tried to rain on us but we still had a great time with the numerous K-9 demonstration.

The guest speakers that centered around the filing of VA disability claims has strengthened the drive of our base members to file. Our base members have followed through with help of the VSO officer and are receiving additional disability compensation because of it.

We scheduled our Holiday Party on December 18 at the McClellan Base officer's club for the second year and are expecting a good group of base members, wives, and guests. We will review the past events of the year and pay tribute to our base members who have received their orders for eternal patrol. We will also present a number of base annual awards at the Holiday dinner. There will be some entertainment along with some other surprises.

I want to wish all our Gold Country Base members and families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!! If you are planning to travel, wishing care and safe travel.

God Bless You All!!

Next Meeting – January 24, 2026

Les Jamison - Base Commander

OFFICER'S COUNTRY

Chaplain



What does the Bible say about Retirement?

Very little. The Levites were to follow the rule in Numbers 8:24-26 for when they served in the Tabernacle. But for almost everybody else it does not give an age to retire. So the appropriate age can be chosen by each person based on his or her individual requirements. Retirement should not dictate our attitude toward other work that may need to be done. The answers surprised me.

Blessings Howard Grover Base Chaplain.



Treasurer



Membership

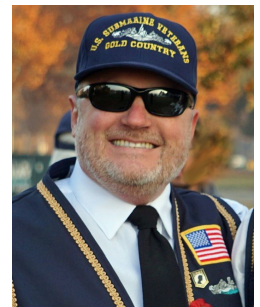
Hello Shipmates!

As we close out December, the Base is working on collecting dues for 2026. We sent the dues notices via PayPal this year and have received many payments via PayPal and Zelle so far. If you were expecting a notice and have not received one please reach out to me directly at treasurer@goldcountrybase.org.

Due to your support this year we were able to meet our goals for collecting donations to fund the Memorial Bricks fund and to fund our annual participation in Veteran's, Memorial, and Independence Day parades. Thank you.

This year we are hoping to continue support for these and other events. The e-board has been working on fund raisers and events to aid in our continued operations. We rely on donations and would appreciate any booster donations you could provide.

Bill Sugnet, Base Treasurer, Membership Chair



Guest Speaker



Shipmates,

Diana and I want to wish you a Merry Christmas and best wishes for a Happy New Year.

Our guest speaker for January USSVI Senior Vice-Commander Tim Carlisle will be speaking and taking questions about Operations of the National organization.

The US Navy Sea Cadets did an excellent job for us at our December 7th memorial. I will keep you posted on their activities as I get them.

**Chad Clay, Guest Speakers Coordinator
Naval Youth Liaison**



OFFICER'S COUNTRY



Fellow Base Members

As we come to the close of 2025 I'd like to say thank you to everyone that assisted in the preparation and for their participation in all the events our base sponsored this year. The month the December 7th Remembrance and Wreath Ceremony was well attended with over 50 Veterans from Gold Country Base, Mare Island Base, and members of the community present. County Supervisor Rosario Rodriguez gave an incredible speech and KRCA3 did an awesome news piece on the event. Here's to a healthy and prosperous New Year to all our Gold Country Base Members, base and Veterans we've yet to meet.



Ed McCarthy, Web Master/Events Coordinator



Shipmates,

I have a collection of pictures taken of various activities, including the Fourth of July parade, base meetings, Folsom Veterans Day parade, the Thanksgiving turkey lunch meeting and the Pearl Harbor Memorial wreath-laying ceremony. Thanks to Bill Sugnet's brother for taking professional pictures for us and Naomi Wentland for adding pictures of some of the events I missed.



Bill Barron, Base Photographer



Shipmates,

Things are slow in this dreary Winter season. The Gold Country Base, Office of the Scouting Program Chairman, reports no activity since publication of the last newsletter.



Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Gil Miller, Eagle Scout, Sea Cadets Awards Coordinator

OFFICER'S COUNTRY



Another year has almost come to an end; they seem to go by quicker now. We are busy planning some new things in 2026. We need to try and raise some funds for new projects. Any Ideas?? Let me know. I hope to see you at the Holiday Party. Have a safe and joyous Holiday.



Penny Jamison, SubVet Support Group Commander



Fellow Vets,

Naomi and I want to wish all Gold Country Base members a blessed safe Christmas and a Happy New Year.

New items in the stores supply 2026 calendars \$12.00 each. Holland club ballcaps \$22.00 each. Silver Dolphin vinyl stickers \$7.00 each. It's been a pleasure for Naomi and I to be involved with the Gold Country Base thanks and stay army strong.



Jerry Wentland, Storekeeper



Shipmates,

Just a quick note to express my sincere appreciation to my Gold Country Base and Western Region shipmates for all the fine works, efforts, and time to share in the fruits of our organization, to share the news of our existence! Your energy and enthusiasm to bring in shipmates from the land of not knowing who we are into the warmth of embrace of bubblehead fellowship; the shared camaraderie to remember and recall sea stories commencing with the factual 'And this is a no sh1tter' are truly inspiring. Debbie and I would like to extend our best wishes for a Healthy & Happy Holidays - Christmas, Hanukkah, or Boxing Day (depending on your proclivities) and combined with the promise of changes as we enter 2026.



Pride Runs Deep!

Pete Juhos, USSVI Western Region Director

OFFICER'S COUNTRY



Shipmates, Another year has passed and, in many ways, they seem to be going faster these days.

This is my 90th edition of our newsletter "Clear the Baffles" since I took over this task in 2015. As the years have gone by many things have changed with the current direction being more emphasis on things and stories that are of interest to us as submariners and may not have ever been well publicized for public



consumption. Through my efforts to find this content I have come across many small instances of courage and bravery from those who are serving today and from those that have come before us. Doctor Joyce Brothers wrote an article about submarines in 1963 which I will publish in its entirety in the next edition, but I will leave you with this quote from the second paragraph of that article. *"One could not mention the Thresher without observing, in the same breath how utterly final and alone the end is when a ship dies at the bottom of the sea.....and what a remarkable specimen of man it must be who accepts such a risk".*

My New Year's wish is that for you and your family's 2026 is filled with good health and happiness.

Barry Wyatt, Newsletter Editor



Gold Country Base Officers



Base Commander
Kaps4Kids Coordinator
Les Jamison

Qualified 1969
USS Greenfish SS 351
Holland Club
(407) 509-7814

basecommander@goldcountrybase.org



Vice Commander
Awards Chairman
SubVet Check-in Chair
Mark Elftmann

Qualified 1975
USS William H Bates SSN 625
(916) 243-9265
mark_elf@me.com



Base Secretary
Diana Clay
Associate Member

(916) 832-0936
dianac5353@gmail.com



Base Treasurer
Membership Chair
Bill Sugnet

Qualified 1989
USS Augusta SSN 710
(916) 934-9277
me@billsugnet.com



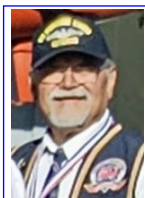
Chief of the Boat (COB)
Gene Ratto

Qualified 1978
Uss Abraham Lincoln
SSBN 602
(279) 600-9400
gene_ratto1@comcast.net



Base Chaplain
Howard Grover

Qualified 1963 USS
Spikefish SS 404
Life Member
Holland Club
(209) 245-4067 hgrover@jps.net



Base Photographer
Bill Barron
Qualified 1970
USS Haddock SSN 621
Holland Club
(530) 863-0987
willy621@yahoo.com



Newsletter Editor/PAO
J. Barry Wyatt

Qualified 1965
USS Henry Clay SSBN 625
Life Member
Holland Club
(916) 600-1425
sacsubvet65@gmail.com



Holland Club
Commander
Base Historian
Lenard Lee

Qualified 1961
USS Salmon SS 573
Life Member—Holland Club
(510) 928-8500 len@trawlers.com



Eagle Scout
Coordinator
Gil Miller
Qualified 1963
USS Becuna SS 319
Life Member Holland Club
(916) 354-1008
beowaweman319@gmail.com



Guest Speakers
Coordinator
Naval Youth Liaison
Chad Clay

Qualified 1965
USS Daniel Boone SSBN 629
Life Member Holland Club
(916) 502-1623 chdclay@gmail.com



Parade Float Manager
John Kelly

Qualified 1976
USS Pogy SSN 647
Life Member
(916) 989-8500
thebark@gmail.com



Storekeeper
Jerry Wentland
U.S. Army

Associate Member
(530) 613-6729
wentlandn2014@gmail.com



SubVet Support
Group Commander
Penny Jamison
Associate Member

(352) 598-9611
pjamison1050@gmail.com



First Call to Morning
Chow Coordinator
Harold Fisher

Qualified 1965
USS Medregal AGSS 480
Life Member Holland Club
(916) 782-5748 navigator@surewest.net



Web Master
Events Coordinator
Ed McCarthy
Qualified 1983 USS

Bergall SSN 667
Life Member
(916) 995-5196
eddie105@yahoo.com



USSVI District 5
Commander
J. Barry Wyatt
Qualified 1965
USS Henry Clay SSBN 625
Life Member Holland Club
(916) 600-1425

sacsubvet65@gmail.com



USSVI Western
Region Director
Pete Juhos

Qualified 1980
USS Bergall SSN 667
Life Member
(916) 208-0667 dsv3.ss@gmail.com

Lost Boats

December

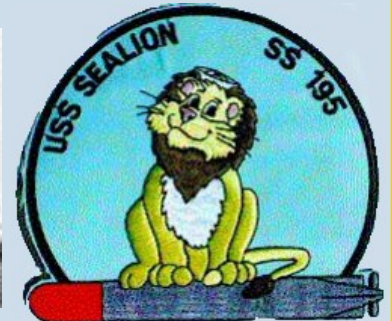
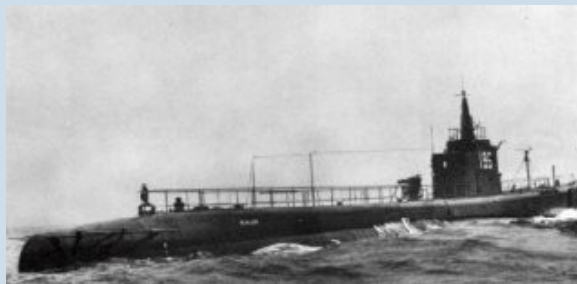
USS Capelin (SS-289)

Lost on Dec 2, 1943 with the loss of 76 men. She was on her 1st war patrol, but her exact location, date and cause of loss remain a mystery. She may have been lost to mines or an operational casualty.



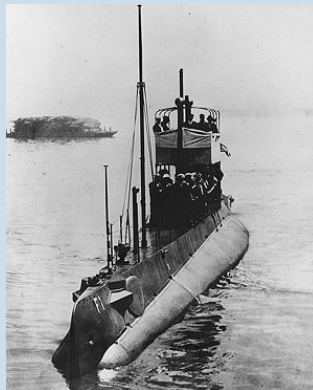
USS Sealion (SS-195)

Lost on Dec 10, 1941 with the loss of 4 men. To prevent her from falling into enemy hands, she was scuttled in Manila Bay after incurring severe bomb damage during the initial Japanese attack. One other Sealion man was later captured and died in POW camp.



USS F-1 / Carp (SS-20)

Lost on December 17, 1917 with the loss of 19 officers and men when it was sunk after collision with the USS F-3 (Pickrel(SS-22)) off San Clemente, CA.



USS S-4 (SS-109)

Lost on December 17, 1927 with the loss of 40 officers and men when it was sunk after being rammed by USCG Paulding. Salvaged in 1928 and re-commissioned.





USSVI-GOLD COUNTRY BASE MINUTES MEETING: November 22, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order @12:05 pm . Commander Les Jamison read the USSVI Creed and Purpose.

INVOCATION: Base Chaplain Howard Grover gave invocation.

TOLLING OF THE BELL: The Lost Boats for the month of June were read by Vice Commander Mark Elftmann, and Chief of the Boat Gene Ratto tolled the bell for each Lost Boat and one additional toll in memory of those shipmates on Eternal Patrol.

MEMBER INTRODUCTION: There were 25 members and 3 guests in attendance.

HOLLAND CLUB: Lenard Lee

Holland Club certificate presented to our new member, Dennis Hill.

GUEST SPEAKER COORDINATOR CHAD CLAY INTRODUCTION OF GUEST SPEAKER:

Guest speaker, none today, turkey dinner.

FORMAL REPORTS:

BASE COMMANDER: Les Jamison

VICE COMMANDER: Mark Elftmann

The newsletter shows some veterans that could be considered for a visit or phone call.

Mark called Larry Williams. He is always happy to hear from us.

SECRETARY: Diana Clay

Sharon Frost is collecting used eyeglasses for the Lion's Club for refurbishing.

CHIEF OF THE BOAT (COB) Gene Ratto -No report

TREASURER: Bill Sugnet

The books are in balance. Any base member can request a report from Base Treasurer via email.

Memorial Brick Fund Balance: \$7,392.49 goal was \$6,500.00 We would like this to be an ongoing fundraiser.

Sea Cadet balance: \$251.48

We are now able to make any payments to the base via Zelle. See the QR Code at the end of the minutes.

MEMBERSHIP: Bill Sugnet We have 90 members. (Confirmed with National Database)

PAO / NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Barry Wyatt

Western Region Roundup in 2026 will be in Las Vegas at Sam's Town, April 15-19. Registration is \$65. Information is in the newsletter. WRR in 2027 will be in Denver. WRR in 2028 will be TBD.

Elected positions for Western Region Roundup officers will be opened in January.

EAGLE SCOUT CHAIR: Gil Miller - No report

CHAPLAIN REPORT / BINNACLE LIST: Howard Grover

Spoke to Larry Williams at the nursing home. He has sold his house and will remain in the facility. He would love visitors. If going east on I80, stop in and see him.

BASE PHOTOGRAPHER: Bill Barron -No report

NAVY YOUTH LIASON: Chad Clay - No report

WEB-MASTER: Ed McCarthy

Ed is working on setting up a way for new recruits to sign up for Gold Country Base on the website.

Once we know when the bricks are laid we will have a ceremony. Ed is working with the particulars in paying for and laying down the bricks.

STOREKEEPER: Jerry Wentland

There are still some calendars @\$12, hats and ties available. Rain jackets are available to order if wanted. (cost about \$55) _If interested in yellow Holland Club caps, contact Jerry for price.

KEEPER OF THE BOAT: John Kelly - No report

(continued on next page)

EVENTS COORDINATOR: Ed McCarthy

December 7 event at Discovery Part starts at 9:00 am, members encouraged to arrive by 7:30 am, there is also the California Marathon on this same date. Guest speaker will be Sacramento County Supervisor Rosario Rodriguez.

Holiday party event, December 18 at 6:00 pm, happy hour at 5:00 with live Christmas music, at McClellan Officers Club. Cost is \$60 per person as the base cannot afford to cover any other expenses this year. You can pay for your dinner via Zelle.

Western Region Roundup will be in Las Vegas at Sam's April 15-19, 2026. Registration is open on the Website. Cost is \$65. Information is in the newsletter.

GUEST SPEAKERS COORDINATOR: Chad Clay

January guest speaker will be USSVI Senior Vice-Commander Tim Carlisle

WESTERN REGION DIRECTOR: Pete Juhos

National convention for 2026 is in Corpus Christie \$142 per night 9/6/2026 -9/15/2026. 2027 is in Reno at Grand Sierra Resort, 8/22-27/2027

New website to be running in first quarter of 2026.

Membership drive. We would like 15,000 members. Currently we have 11,681.

Two awards that can be awarded by the base, longevity pin when you maintain your membership for 5 years. Base or District can present a Rickover award at 25 years Holland club is 50 years.

Payment to National will change to Zelle.

Charitable foundation issued 80 scholarship awards.

Charitable foundation also will help prepare your will at www.mylegacywill.com/ussvi

Good of the Order / Communications:

We are looking to have someone take over the newsletter duties. Barry will assist anyone that will step up.

OLD BUSINESS: _Minutes from October approved.

SUBVET SUPPORT GROUP: Penny Jamison Would like to have a food drive for the Northern California Health organization. Members can bring non-perishable items or cash.

Penny and Ed are working on a separate fundraiser to have a special night at a particular restaurant where the base will receive 10 or 15% of the proceeds that night, not including alcohol. Still working on plans for this and also a pasta feed.

First Call to Morning Chow: 12/14/2025 9:30 am @ Denny's Restaurant, 122 N. Sunrise Ave., Roseville, CA

E-board Zoom meeting: December 20, 2025 9:00 am Next Base Meeting: January 24, 2026 noon for potluck lunch and 1:00 meeting. **No meeting in December.**

50/50 Won by: \$62 Jack Everett

Sea Cadets: \$41

Meeting adjournment:

Base Chaplain Howard Grover gave a closing prayer.

Chief of the Boat surfaced @ 12:40 pm

Submitted by Diana Clay, Base Secretary



zelle®

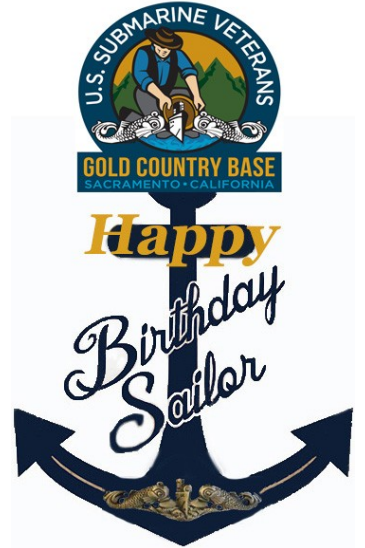
Birthdays

NOVEMBER

Mike Delleney George Miyao Tom Moniz
Jerry Wentland

DECEMBER

Ted Armstrong Charles Betty
Gary English Howard Grover Jim Hudson
John Mannix



On The Lighter Side





Gold Country Base would not be able to continue to operate without the generous contribution from those Members, Wives and Friends who donate to

Gold Country Base Booster's

Bill Barron* Jerry Bowers* Regy Bronner*

Anita Bronner* Dennis Cline* Ken Earls*

Mike Delleney* Mark Elftmann* Bill Hunt*

Frank Elliott* Jack Everett Howard Grover*

Dennis Henderson* Burna Jamieson

Les Jamison* Pete Juhos* John Kelly

Alvin Lehman* Matt Lettau* Mike McCoy

James MacLean* John Mannix*

George Miyao* Tom Moniz* Alan More*

Ed Myers* Hans Nettel Roger Paul*

Gene Ratto* Gary Robinson* Joe Ryan*

Nick Sadowy* William Sugnet*

Barry Wyatt*

**** Multi-Year Donors***



WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs today announced its intent to reorganize the Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors handbook. Download online or pick up a printed copy at your local medical center, regional office or Vet Center for free. As part of our commitment to provide world-class care and benefits to those who have served our nation, VA is pleased to present the “2025 VA Federal Benefits Guide for Veterans, Dependents, Survivors, and Caregivers.”

Have you applied for VA care, benefits and services? Unsure what else you may be eligible for? Don’t miss out on what you’ve earned, check out this handy reference guide to learn more.

The handbook contains a comprehensive listing of VA programs, including phone numbers and websites for easy reference. The annual Federal Benefits Guide hosts a wealth of information on most VA benefits and services, including:

- Compensation.
- Life insurance.
- Pension and fiduciary services.
- Education benefits.
- Economic development.
- Home loan guaranty programs
- Mental health resources.

The handbook will help Veterans, service members and their families understand the full scope of VA resources available to them to help them make the most of life after service. It provides details on eligibility requirements for each benefit, and because VA serves different generations of Veterans, it also outlines the qualification guidelines for distinct periods of service to clarify eligibility for Veterans with service spanning both peace and wartime

Gold Country News & Events



**City of Folsom
Veterans Day
Parade**



**Gold Country
Holland Club
Members look on as
Commander
Lenoard Lee Inducts
Dennis Hill WO4 (SS)**

Gold Country News & Events



Max Schell presents the history of the attack

December 7th Pearl Harbor Memorial and Wreath-Laying Ceremony at Discovery Park



Guest Speaker Sacramento County Supervisor Rosario Rodriguez



Marine Corps League Detachment 940

U.S. Naval Sea Cadets Sacramento Division



Gold Country News & Events

Ed McCarthy joined the Navy in 1981 and qualified on the USS Bergall (SSN-667) in 1983. He was discharged as a Machinist Mate First Class in 1987. He joined USSVI and Gold Country in December of 2021 and became a Life Member in March 2022. Almost immediately after joining our base Ed stepped up to be of service.



Ed McCarthy receives the 2025 Tim Spoon Achievement Award from Base Commander Les Jamison

That began with using his expertise in the field of IT to help Nick with managing our website. He has now taken over full responsibility for continually maintaining and updating that site and his efforts in doing so have created an effective tool to aid us with member communication and in our new member recruitment efforts.

Another area but Ed stepped up to assist and has now taken over full responsibility for is Events Coordinator. This responsibility takes a great deal of effort, most of which is not realized or seen by those of us that participate. Reserving locations, completing the application process, making sure our insurance company has the required information, keeping base members informed with dates, times, locations and more. Over the last several years our participation at The California State fair, Memorial picnic in West Sacramento, parades in Lincoln, Auburn, Folsom, the air show, our Bass Pro Memorial Day events, our annual December 7th and more have all been arranged for through Ed's tireless effort. More recently when the base decided to move forward with the brick project at Mather it was Ed who once again took on the leadership role for that project and continues coordinating it. Several months ago, when it became apparent that our treasury was declining rapidly and there was a need to develop some type of fundraising effort, once again Ed stepped up to lead the discussion and is helping to develop a solution that would make sense for us.

Using his skills to help USSVI has not stopped at the base level. Seeing a need at the regional level Ed is currently managing the website and covering all our IT needs at the at events for the Western Region Roundup.

Ed has and continues to demonstrate his commitment to USSVI and the Gold Country Base. His actions show that he has achieved every aspect of the criteria for the Tim Spoon Achievement Award and clearly Without a doubt meets all the elements of our definition of the word "Shipmate".

Gold Country News & Events



Les Jamison presents
Base Commanders
Commendations to
Bill Sugnet (L) and
Bill Barron (R)



2025 Gold Country Base Christmas Party



December 7th Guest Speaker

This years Guest Speaker for our December 7th Memorial event was Sacramento County Supervisor Rosario Rodriguez . Her talk was clearly impactful and certainly one of the best we have ever had for this event.

Rosario Rodriguez

Thank you, and good morning everyone.

Today, on December 7th, we gather with a profound sense of gratitude and reflection. It was on this date in 1941 that our nation was forever changed by the attack on Pearl Harbor. That day, ordinary Americans, sailors, soldiers, nurses, and civilians woke up to what they thought would be a normal Sunday and instead became part of history.

We remember them today not just as names in a book or faces in a black-and-white photo, but as real people who stood in the gap for our country. They were young. Many were scared. And yet they stepped forward. That spirit of service and sacrifice is exactly why it is so important that we honor our veterans, not only on days of remembrance, but every single day.

Honoring our veterans is not a tradition of convenience; it is a moral obligation.

We honor our veterans because they made a promise...to defend this country, even at the cost of their own lives. They missed holidays, birthdays, graduations. They carried burdens most of us will never fully understand. Some came home with visible injuries; others carry wounds that cannot be seen.

When we say, "Thank you for your service," or "Thank you for our freedom", it should never be a throwaway lines. It is an acknowledgment that the comfort we enjoy, the freedoms we exercise, and the debates we have in our communities all rest on a foundation that veterans helped secure.

To honor veterans means more than ceremonies and speeches, though those matter. It means making real commitments:

- Ensuring they have access to quality healthcare and mental health services.
- Supporting their transition to civilian careers.

Standing by their families, who also served in their own way...waiting, worrying, and holding things together back home.

We cannot change what our veterans faced in the past, but we can absolutely shape how we stand with them in the present.

What's remarkable is that when veterans come home, they don't just fade into the background. They lead In our communities, veterans are:

- Small business owners who create jobs.
- Teachers and coaches who mentor the next generation.
- Law enforcement officers and first responders who continue to protect and serve.

Volunteers, nonprofit leaders, and public servants who show up where there is need.

They bring with them the values they honed in uniform: discipline, courage, teamwork, and a deep understanding that success is never about one person...it's about the whole unit, the whole community.

When a veteran steps into leadership, they bring a mentality of service over self. They know what it means to say, "I've got your back," and mean it.

They are used to working with people from every background, every belief, every corner of this country.

(continued on next page)



That is exactly the kind of leadership our communities need...especially in times when it can feel like we are more divided than united.

So when we talk about honoring veterans, we should also be asking:

How can we better support veterans stepping into public life?

How can we listen to their experience and their ideas?

How can we make sure they have a seat at the table when decisions are being made?

Because veterans are not just part of our history...they are vital to our future.

For me, this is not only a public commitment; it is a deeply personal one.

My late husband proudly served in the United States Coast Guard. His service was a source of great pride in his family. The Coast Guard may not always be the first branch people think of when joining the military, but their role is absolutely essential...guarding our shores, saving lives at sea, protecting our ports, and standing ready in times of war and peace.

Through his stories, I learned about the long nights, the tough calls, and the enormous responsibility of knowing that other people's safety depends on your training and your judgment. His time in the Coast Guard shaped his character:

- His was calm under pressure.
- His sense of duty.

His instinct to jump in and help whenever someone was in need.

Those qualities didn't end when his service ended. They showed up in our home, in our community, and in the way he treated people...always with respect, always with a quiet strength.

Losing him was heartbreaking, but his legacy of service lives on. It lives on in the stories we tell, in the values he passed down, and in the deep respect I feel for every man and woman who has worn a uniform.

When I stand up and speak about veterans, I am not talking about an abstract group. I am talking about people like my husband. I am talking about people like your spouses, your parents, your children, your friends.

On this day, December 7th, we are reminded of the words President Roosevelt used: "a date which will live in infamy." But that phrase is only meaningful if we choose to remember...if we choose to keep history alive.

History is not just about the past. It is a guide for the present and a warning for the future.

When we remember Pearl Harbor, we remember:

- The cost of being unprepared.
- The resilience of a nation that refused to be broken.

The extraordinary courage of those who rushed toward danger instead of away from it.

We remember the ships that burned, the heroes who fought back, and the families who received the worst kind of news. We remember the thousands of lives lost in a single morning...and the millions who would go on to serve in World War II because their country needed them.

Preserving that history is not optional. It is essential.

Every monument, every museum, every story passed down at a kitchen table keeps that history alive. When we bring our children and grandchildren to memorials, when we teach them about Pearl Harbor and all the conflicts before and after, we are not glorifying war. We are honoring sacrifice. We are teaching them the value of peace—and the price that has been paid to defend it.

On days like today, we are called to do three things:

(continued on next page)

1. Remember those who served and those who never came home.
2. Reflect on the freedoms we enjoy and how fragile they truly are.
3. Resolve to live in a way that is worthy of their sacrifice.

The attack on Pearl Harbor pushed an entire generation to step up. Many of them were not much older than the young people we see in our schools and neighborhoods today. They answered the call, often not knowing what they were heading into.

Today, we face different challenges, but we still need that same spirit:

- A willingness to serve something bigger than ourselves.
- A readiness to stand up for what is right, even when it is difficult.

A commitment to unity, even when it is easier to be divided.

Our veterans have modeled that for us.

The question for us is: What do we do with the gift they've given us?

Do we become passive consumers of the freedom they secured, or do we become active stewards of it—engaged in our communities, informed about our history, and committed to building a better future?

When we support a veteran-owned business, when we hire a veteran, when we show up at a ceremony like this, when we teach our kids to stand respectfully during the national anthem—not because anyone forces them to, but because they understand why—it all matters. These are the small acts that add up to a culture of genuine respect.

A Call to Action

So on this December 7th, as we reflect on Pearl Harbor and honor all who served before and after that day, I want to leave you with a few simple invitations:

- First, if you are a veteran here today: thank you. Truly. Your service matters more than we can ever fully express.
- Second, if you know a veteran—reach out. Not just today, but regularly. Ask them about their stories. Listen. You may be surprised by what you learn and how much it means to them to be heard.

Third, support veterans in concrete ways: advocate for strong services, support local organizations that serve them, and create opportunities for them to lead in our communities.

And finally, let us commit to being a community that remembers:

That remembers Pearl Harbor.

That remembers every conflict since.

That remembers the families, the sacrifices, the empty chairs at the table.

Because when we remember, we honor.

When we honor, we learn.

And when we learn, we become a people worthy of the price that has been paid on our behalf.

To all our veterans, to the families who have stood beside them, and to the memory of those like my late husband who carried the spirit of service throughout their lives: we see you, we thank you, and we will not forget.

May we live, lead, and serve in a way that honors you....not just in our words today, but in our actions every day.

Thank you, and God bless our veterans, God bless their families, and God bless the United States of America.

Gold Country Year in Review

2025 has been an active year for the members of Gold Country base. It has been my honor in the past and again tonight to spend some time talking about the many events that we were involved with. I believe it's important to note that our memberships participation throughout the year was outstanding and those who suit-up and show-up on a regular basis have the gratitude of all their shipmates.

We show up to reinforce the purpose for which our organization was founded, to perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties, and to demonstrate our pride in the service we performed for this great nation.

Through our volunteer efforts we have touched many lives in our communities and across the Country as well. At the national level for our organization, when Pete accepted the position of District Commander in 2013 he was the first Gold Country Base member to achieve that responsibility and later in 2022 when he was elected Western District Director, a position of leadership with responsibilities over the 8 districts and 42 bases in the West, Gold Country was recognized and honored again.



Our year began in January with our First Call to Mourning Chow and gift exchange. Then at our first base meeting of the new year. Our Base Commander Les Jameson was sworn in for his second term and our new Base Treasure Bill Sugnet also took the oath of office.



Next, when we discovered that Sacramento was one of the host cities for Navy week and that members of the crew from the USS California SSN 781 would be in town, we went to work to put together a welcome lunch for those shipmates. A few days before the event we were informed that those boat sailors were not going to be unable to make the trip, so we ask If there were any other hungry sailors coming? In the end we got 4 young airdales who were serving as part of the crew of the assault ship USS Tripoli and along with twenty of our members we had a great lunch at the Spaghetti Factory.

(continued on next page)

Gold Country Year in Review

(continued)

After many years of trying and because of Chad's due diligence we finally achieved entry to the California Air Show. This two-day event gave us exposure to 10s of thousands and a great time for all our members who participated.

We held our annual Base barbecue and family picnic at the vet's hall in April and once again we had a huge turnout with great fun and food for everyone.



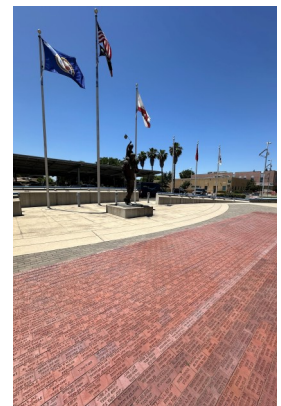
In May we returned to Bass Pro for our annual Memorial Day celebration giving out hot dogs, sodas and cookies we received admiration from many of those shopping at that great store.



Lincoln 4th of July Celebration

In July we went back to the city of Lincoln for their annual 4th of July parade. The reception there from the cheering thousands that line the parade route it's like nothing else that we experience. There is no doubt how strongly this community supports its veterans.

In early August our treasurer Bill announced that we had met our fundraising goal for our Brick Project, an effort he had begun in earnest less than a year before. Once again, our members demonstrated that our efforts to memorialize those shipmates who came before us was not just idle talk.



In the late summer, we saw several of our base members head east to Orlando to attend the USSVI National Convention. At the Saturday night banquet Gold Country was honored when Les was presented with the large base Golden Anchor and the Newsletter of the Year awards.

Gold Country Year in Review

(continued)



In September we opened nominations for the Base Secretary and Vice Commander and held the election in October for those critical positions. Mark And Diana were both reelected.

In November twenty of our members rode our float down the streets of Folsom for that community's Veteran's Day Parade and received the support and the loud cheering from the thousands who attended.



On December 7th, for our 38 straight year we held our memorial and wreath laying ceremony to remember and honor those who lost their lives during the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

It was a great year for the Gold Country Base but not one without the loss of valued shipmates who left us for their eternal patrols. In



April after a long illness our former Base Vice-Commander Reggie Bronner followed by a few weeks later by our former Base Commander Frank Elliott. The contributions to our group made by both of these men live on through our memories of them. In August we lost shipmate Larry Shamus. Fairwinds and following seas all.

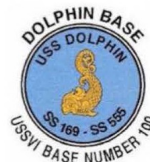


That wraps up the year, but we would be remiss if I didn't emphasize that none of these events would have happened without the leadership provided by Les and Mark, by the dedication to the group provided by the wives under the leadership of Penny and by the many members who are always there. Bravo Zulu All

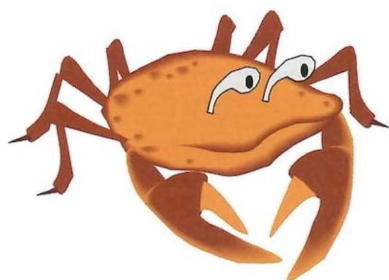
USSVI Regional News & Events



SUBMARINE VETERANS 17TH ANNUAL CRAB FEED



California Lost Boat Memorial



Saturday
January 17, 2026

No-host cocktails 11:00

Lunch 12:00 Noon

Doors open 10:30 AM

\$65.00 / person (Children, Teens, Juniors, Seniors - Everyone!)

Lunch Includes

All you can eat crab
(or ½ slab of Emil Villa's Ribs)
Caesar Salad, Potato Salad, Rolls
No-host bar, Raffle,
50/50 Drawing
(Red and White Wine available upon request at
the kitchen window)

Location

Hayward Veterans Hall
22737 Main Street
Hayward, CA

Pre-sold ticket only!

No tickets sold at the door!

Tickets must be ordered
no later than January 2nd

For tickets, please call

Bill Dornik: 707-644-4746

Jim Garvey: 408-250-4040

Mike O'Brien: 650-743-9894

Checks to: USSVI-Mare Island Base

Please specify Crab or Ribs for ticket order



USSVI Western Region Roundup

A Gathering of Submariners

April 16—19, 2026

Sams Town Hotel & Gambling Hall

Las Vegas, Nevada

Hosted by USSVI Base 51

www.wrroundup.com



Featured Boat

USS *Rasher* (SS/SSR/AGSS/IXSS-269), a *Gato*-class submarine

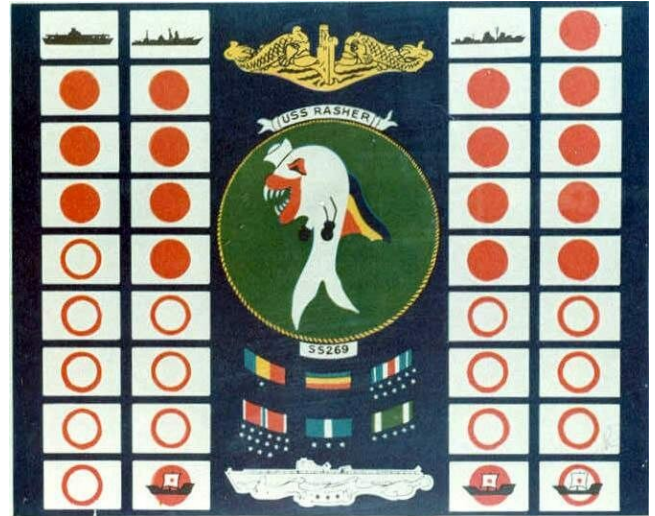


USS *Rasher* made eight war patrols during World War II. During the first five patrols *Rasher* sank more tonnage of enemy shipping than any other submarine in history, except USS *Flasher*. *Rasher* was credited with sinking eighteen ships for a total of 99,901 tons of shipping. She also damaged 62,481 tons of shipping.

Rasher earned seven Battle Stars, four Navy Crosses, twelve Silver Stars, sixteen Bronze Stars, one Legion of Merit, one Navy & Marine Corps Medal, six Com-

mendations, and a Presidential Unit Citation. The value of enemy cargoes and combat loaded troopships which *Rasher* prevented from reaching a destination is impossible to estimate. In terms of Japanese soldiers who never arrived to fight, ammunition which didn't arrive to be fired at U.S. troops and enemy planes which never got in the air, USS *Rasher's* contribution to the war effort was tremendous.

In 1951 *Rasher* was first converted to a radar picket submarine (SSR) and then to an auxiliary submarine (AGSS) in 1961, serving with Pacific Fleet out of San Diego, CA earning two more Battle Stars before being stricken from the Naval Register in 1971.



USS *Rasher* (SS-269) Was the Quaal Boat of Gold Country Base Member Dennis Hill WO4 SS

Submarine Facts Of Interest

2025

The U.S. Submarine Force comprises approximately 7 percent of the Navy's total personnel and more than 25 percent of its ships, yet roughly only 10 percent of the Navy's budget. Our submarines bring incredible value to our country.

There are a total of 71 submarines. The largest numbers, 51, are SSNs, otherwise known as fast attack submarines. They are located in Groton, Conn., Norfolk, Va., San Diego, Hawaii and Guam. There are 14 SSBNs (Submarine Ballistic Missile, Nuclear), and they are located at Kings Bay and Bangor, Wash. There are four SSGNs (Submarine Guided Missile, Nuclear), two at Kings Bay and two at Bangor.

When SSBN/GNs are away from Kings Bay on patrol, they are providing capabilities for Strategic Deterrence, Anti-Submarine and Anti-Surface Warfare, Special Operations Forces, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance war fighting readiness, Counter Drug Operations, Mine Warfare and Strike. The deployed submarines can patrol an area as big as a state, and no one knows where they are.

The inherent stealth and endurance makes them a valuable tool for any fleet commander. They provide a clandestine and non-proactive presence that can give real-time warning to U.S. leadership.

WWII

During World War II, the U.S. Submarine Force was a very small part of the overall U.S. Navy, making up **less than 2%** of its forces, yet it achieved disproportionate results by sinking 200 - 250 Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN) warships, including 8 aircraft carriers & 11 cruisers and crippling over 60% of its merchant marine, causing the most casualties of any U.S. service branch.

Key Facts:

- **Small Percentage:** Submarines comprised less than 2% of the U.S. Navy's total forces but were responsible for over half the tonnage sunk in the Pacific.
- **Massive Impact:** By sinking a huge portion of Japan's navy and severely hampered their ability to supply troops.
- **Critical Role:** By cutting off Japan's resources, they crippled its war effort and starved its people, making them the most effective weapon in the Pacific.
- **High Casualties:** The Submarine Service suffered the highest casualty rate of any U.S. force in the war, losing 52 submarines and over 3,500 men (about 20%).



WWII Submarines

Eugene B. Fluckey Rear Admiral O-8, U.S. Navy

80 years ago, from 19 December 1944 to 15 February 1945, 31-year-old Commander Eugene B. Fluckey was leading the American submarine USS Barb on a perilous war patrol off the coast of China.

On January 8, 1945, he had already sunk a large enemy ammunition ship and damaged multiple other vessels during a fierce two-hour night battle with a Japanese convoy.

In late January, Fluckey's submarine discovered an even bigger target, a concentration of over thirty Japanese ships anchored in Namkwan Harbor along the Chinese coast.

He realized that to strike and escape, USS Barb would have to race at full speed for about an hour through uncharted shallows, thick with enemy mines, rocks, and other hazards.

Fully aware of the extreme danger, Commander Fluckey nevertheless gave the order: "Battle stations, torpedoes!"

Under cover of darkness, the Barb slipped past the harbor's patrol craft and heavy defenses and crept in to point-blank range, navigating in water barely five fathoms (30 feet) deep.

Closing to just 3,000 yards from the unsuspecting enemy fleet, Fluckey unleashed a salvo of the sub's last forward torpedoes.

He then quickly swung the submarine around and fired four more torpedoes from the stern tubes into the clustered ships.

A series of tremendous explosions followed as the torpedoes found their marks, eight direct hits blasting apart at least six enemy ships, including a large ammunition vessel that erupted in a massive fireball, hurling shells and debris high into the night sky.



WWII Submarines

Continued

Pushing his engines to the limit, Fluckey ordered the submarine to run at flank speed (over 23 knots) and led a daring escape on the surface.

For more than an hour, the Barb weaved through the mined, rock-obstructed harbor channels at top speed, dodging enemy escorts and shallow reefs until she finally broke free into open water and safety.

Amazingly, not a single crewman was lost or injured during this operation, and later, on January 29, 1945, Fluckey sank another large Japanese freighter to cap off the submarine's record-setting patrol.



For this extraordinary feat of "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity" above and beyond the call of duty, Commander Eugene B. Fluckey was awarded the Medal of Honor.



He personally received the medal from Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal in a ceremony in Washington, D.C., on March 23, 1945.

Fluckey survived the war and continued his Navy service, eventually retiring as a rear admiral.

He died on June 28, 2007, in Annapolis, Maryland, at the age of 93 from complications of Alzheimer's disease.



The **USS Barb (SS-220)** was a U.S. submarine famous for sinking a Japanese train by planting explosives on the tracks in July 1945, marking the first time a submarine destroyed a train and the first

American "invasion" of Japan's home islands during WWII. A small crew landed ashore, rigged a scuttling charge with a pressure trigger, and the subsequent explosion derailed and destroyed a 16-car supply train, sending wreckage 200 feet into the air.

US Navy Submarine News

Keel laid for Virginia-class attack submarine USS Barb

A legendary name...an awesome capability...the journey begins on the future USS Barb (SSN 804)!

December 10, 2025, HII's Newport News Shipbuilding (NNS) division hosted the keel laying ceremony today for *Virginia*-class attack submarine *Barb* (SSN 804).

SSN 804 will be the third U.S. Navy submarine to carry the name *Barb*. The first, SS 220, was commissioned in 1942. During World War II, the submarine conducted missions under the command of Eugene "Lucky" Fluckey, earning the submarine four Presidential Citations, a Navy Unit Commendation and eight battle stars for outstanding service. The second, SSN 596, was a nuclear-powered submarine commissioned in 1963. It was sponsored by Marjorie Fluckey, the wife of Rear Adm. Fluckey. The submarine took part in special operations during the Vietnam War.

Pamela Bove serves as ship's sponsor for the newest *Barb*. Bove began her analytical career working as a civilian within the submarine division at the Navy Operational Intelligence Center. She later accepted a position with a defense company where she met her husband Thomas "Tom" Bove, grandson of Rear Adm. Fluckey.



During Tuesday's ceremony, NNS welder Andrew Kahler etched Bove's initials onto a metal plate, signifying the keel of SSN 804 as being "truly and fairly laid." The metal plate will remain affixed to the submarine throughout its life.

Barb is the 31st *Virginia*-class fast attack submarine and will be the 15th delivered by NNS.

The advanced capabilities of *Virginia*-class submarines increase firepower, maneuverability and stealth.

Support Gold Country Base Business



TAX SERVICES



*PROACTIVE
PROFESSIONAL
PERSONALIZED*

MARK T. ELFTMANN
ENROLLED AGENT

(916) 243-9265
taxhelp4all@reagan.com

Mad Max and West Coast Specialties

"Maximizing Your Promotions"



Mad Max
Max Schell, CAS, BASI
619.208.6622

An Independent Affiliate of
ipromoteu

MAXIMIZING YOUR PROMOTIONS WITH CREATIVE SOLUTIONS!
www.WestCoastSpecialties.com

Michael D. "Max" Schell, CAS
649 Cadena Dr.
Soledad, CA 93960

Cell: 619.208.6622
Fax: 866.384.0192
Max@WestCoastSpecialties.com



Mike Reynolds

Manager/Agent

DRE #01452692

Realty One Group Complete

Real Estate That Moves You!



mike@mikenlucy.com
email



9162300278



2016



2017



2018



2019



2020



2021



2022



2023



2024



2025

Join Us On Facebook
[USSVI-Gold Country Base](#)



“Clear the Baffles” is the official newsletter of the Gold Country Base of the United States Submarine Veterans Inc. Published semi monthly. Please submit ideas or articles to the publisher Barry Wyatt at sacsub-vet65@gmail.com or contact me by phone at 916-600-1425

November/December 2025