



January/February 2026
VOL MMXXVI Issue 01

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.

Gold Country Base Spaghetti Fundraiser

May 2, 2026, Gold Country Base will be hosting its first Fundraiser Spaghetti Dinner at the Hagen Community Center 2197 Chase Drive Rancho Cordova, right next to Cordova High School. The Cordova High School Culinary Arts Program will be fully catering the event. Starting with a nicely plated Salad, Pasta and Meatballs, Garlic Bread and all the trimmings. Dessert will be a choice of chef prepared Cheesecakes.



Tickets or Information: Ed McCarthy 916.995.5196 or Penny Jamison 352.598.9611

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Life is Simple

...either you're qualified or you're not!

 ***Now Hear This!***

eBoard Meeting (On Zoom) February 21, 2026
0900 Meeting ID: 902 151 4965 Passcode: SubVet

Next Meeting—February 28, 2026 Potluck @ 12 noon Meeting Starts 1pm Folsom Veterans Hall - 1300 Forrest St., Folsom

First Call to Morning Chow March 10, 2026 0930
Dennys Restaurant 1000 N. Sunrise, Roseville

COMMANDER'S CORNER



Shipmates The new year is off and running. We have begun to plan our events. Below is a list of our events that are currently on the calendar:

Annual BBQ Picnic – April 25

Spaghetti Fund Raising Dinner – May 2nd – 4 – 8pm

Bass Pro Day – Sunday May 24 – 9am to 2 pm

Brick Laying Memorial Ceremony – Monday May 25 – Time to be determined

4th of July Parade in Lincoln – Saturday 4th of July

This is the beginning list of our scheduled events for 2026. Bring your ideas and suggestions to the E-Board meeting on Saturday February 21 on the 9am Zoom meeting (All members are invited) and share your thoughts or suggestions at the base meeting on Saturday February 28th.

During the January meeting we reviewed the yearly financial performance and it was reported that year over year our book balance declined. We have established a fundraising committee and have begun with the May 2 – Spaghetti Fundraiser dinner. Please support this fundraising effort by buying and selling tickets to this Base Support event. Any donation of raffle prizes will be greatly appreciated and please let Penny Jamison know about your raffle donation.

We have had good attendance at the last meeting and again at this week's breakfast. At the base meeting, I will be discussing the need to have more members shoulder a little more of the event planning. We need to have back-up roles on some of our leadership roles. I just want to thank all of our members for the support that I have.

God Bless You All!!

Next Meeting – February 28, 2026

Les Jamison - Base Commander

Vice-COMMANDER

Shipmates, We've had an outstanding few months, and when I say "outstanding," I'm talking about the incredible support and participation from our base community.

Our December 7 Ceremony was exceptionally well attended, and it was meaningful to see so many of you there. The Holiday Party was another highlight—McClellan Officers' Club proved to be a wonderful venue, and the atmosphere was truly enjoyable. I also had the opportunity to attend the Mare Island gathering. It was a lunchtime event with an impressive turnout, and it reminded me we may want to revisit our dinner-versus-lunch format to determine what best serves our members.



Attendance at First Call to Morning Chow has been strong as well. It feels like we're finally returning to our pre-COVID numbers, and that's encouraging. This event remains one of my personal favorites. Everyone brings a story, a perspective, or a memory worth hearing, and those conversations are what make our community special. If you haven't joined us recently, I encourage you to come out for breakfast when you can.

Thank you all for your continued support and engagement. It's been a great season, and I'm looking forward to keeping that momentum going.

Mark Elftmann , Vice Commander

SUBVET CHECK-IN PROGRAM



I've been working through our base membership roster to get a clearer picture of which shipmates we should be reaching out to. By the way, the new website looks pretty sharp. As I reviewed the list, I recognized several names from our original call. What really stood out is how many of those folks are now active members again. It's great to see them back in the mix.

One name that jumped out at me was Gene. I remember calling him years ago—he mentioned a word I didn't recognize at the time: "work." Gene is retired now, and we see him regularly. He's made a real impact on the base, and I'm grateful he's part of our crew.

Western Region Director

Shipmates, Welcome to 2026! As we embark on another year together, let's seize the opportunity to grow our Gold Country Base and strengthen our crew by focusing on making the Gold Country Base a place where submarine qualified shipmates naturally want to belong. Our strength lies in the camaraderie, shared stories, and experiences, and support we offer each other. Those are features that draw new members to join our crew. Additionally, the Membership Incentive Program, developed by National Junior Vice Commander Tom Williams and National Senior Vice Commander Tim Carlisle, rewards Bases that attract more than 10% of their Primary (Regular) membership—\$30 for each new member, including those that hit the 10% threshold.



At the close of this past year and the 2025 USSVI Membership Drive, only WD3's Inland Empire in Kennewick, WA proved what's possible. Starting January 1, 2025, they had 55 members. Through their efforts, they created an environment where shipmates wanted to join. Inland Empire's Primary membership grew by netting 12 new submarine-qualified shipmates which garnered them USSVI's top monetary incentive prize of \$360! They also added Associate Members which further boosted their level of momentum but did not contribute towards the overall incentive. At the start of 2025, Gold Country Base had 95 Primary Members. We needed just 9 more to reach the 10% mark and a few beyond to secure the incentive—potentially \$300 or more for our Base. Unfortunately, we lost five shipmates, but together we can turn this trend around.

Let's work as a team to attract new members. Let's focus on sharing what makes Gold Country Base special. When you meet a fellow submariner—maybe someone who notices your ball cap and swaps sea stories—invite them to experience our community. Bring them to a meeting, introduce them to our shipmates, and let them see firsthand the sense of belonging, fun, and purpose we offer. Welcoming new members and helping them find their place is key to our success. When people feel valued and included, they're eager to contribute.

It's only February, and there's plenty of time left in 2026 to promote our Base, connect with submarine-qualified shipmates in our communities, and welcome them aboard. If you're looking for ideas and strategies, visit our USSVI National website, www.ussubvets.org. Click on 'Documents' then 'Manuals' then to page 4 for valuable resources, including the "USSVI_Public_Relations_Media_and_Recruiting_Guide_2024.pdf." Download it, read it, and put those tips to work.

Attracting new members and growing our Base is an All-Hands effort. Here's my challenge: If Gold Country Base nets the top USSVI Membership Incentive prize for 2026, I will personally match that amount as a Base Booster donation. Let's aim high, work together, and make Gold Country Base the leading example in USSVI recruiting. The upcoming 2026 Western Region Roundup held in Las Vegas, NV April 16-19, is an excellent venue to promote what we do and learn how to improve our Base operations and recruiting efforts. For registration, hotel reservations, and see who's coming, please visit www.wroundup.com Let's get to work!

Your Shipmate,

Pete Juhos

Past Base Commander, Gold Country Base

Western Region Director

OFFICER'S COUNTRY



AVOIDANCE

Proverbs 14:16 *"The wise are cautious and **avoid** danger; fools plunge ahead with reckless confidence."* Proverbs 3:6-7 *"Seek His will in all you do, and He will show which path to take. Don't be impressed with your own wisdom, instead, fear the Lord and turn away from evil."*

Does that sound familiar?

We should avoid gossiping, complaining, quarreling, or anything perverse or hurtful towards others. That sounds difficult but let Him guide you. The more you practice the more easy it becomes.

Blessings Howard Grover Base Chaplain.

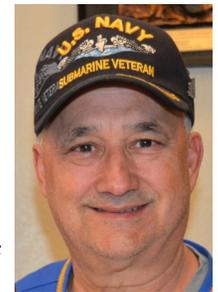


Greetings Shipmates,

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and your start to the New Year's is going well. It's crazy how it goes so fast and that we're already into the first quarter of the year.

I have had a busy year so far with family and friends. First of all, my wife and I just found out that we're going to be Grandparents for the first time, our daughter Tori who is 28 will be due in September. We also have twin boys who are 26 and one of them, Adam, is getting married come June. Wedding plans are already being planned and underway and to finish up the trifecta it is our 30th wedding anniversary, so I can't mess this one up and need to start planning that! It's in August so it's right in the middle of everything else....YIKES. Well, I hope everyone is doing well and I look forward to another wonderful SubVets year of fun and activities. See you all at our next meeting! Stay safe and healthy.

Gene Ratto, Chief of the Boat (COB)



Shipmates,

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

Guest speaker for March will be Karrie Anderson of "Blue Birds Fly." BBF is a veteran's aid program.

The Sea Cadets will be having an "Outstanding Cadets Awards Ceremony" Sunday, March 22, at 2:00pm They would like as many of us as possible to be in attendance. They will have a separate seating area for us so Cadets and parents will be able to see who we are and show their appreciation. So, if you wish to attend, please let me know so I will be able to province them with a head count.

Chad Clay, Guest Speakers Coordinator / Naval Youth Liaison



OFFICER'S COUNTRY



Welcome fellow base members to quiet before the storm. The web site is web citing along and I am working on creating two new pages for www.goldcountrybase.org One page will be a landing spot as well as information on how to become a member of Gold Country Base, the other will be a information about the May 2nd fundraiser.



The immediate events on the horizon are an Awards Event with the Sea Cadets (March) and the Western Region Roundup (April) as we wait for the Memorial Bricks to be delivered to the Mather VA site. I've been very busy working with the committee on the May 2nd Spaghetti Base Fundraiser, which is coming along nicely. We are hoping to have event fliers and begin ticket sales at the February Base Meeting on 2/21/2026.

Finally, just a note of appreciation for all those who took part in awarding me the 2025 Tim Spoon Award. It is an honor to be recognized, Thank You. We are all so fortunate to have the Gold Country Base, it is a thriving and top-notch Veterans organization.

Ed McCarthy, Web Master/Events Coordinator



Hi Y'all

They tell me that Spring is just around the corner, I'm not so sure.

We are planning a spaghetti dinner fund raiser. We will have a dinner of salad, spaghetti, meatballs, rolls and cheesecake for dessert. It will be served family style.

There will be raffle prizes. The tickets for the raffle will be sold separately. The cost for the dinner is \$40. We need everyone's help with the sale of tickets.

We are hoping and praying to sell 150 tickets to make this event successful.

It is a family event so please consider participating. If anyone would like to donate a raffle prize, please let me know. It would be greatly appreciated.

Date: May 2 Time: 4 to 8 pm.

Place: Hagen Community Center

2197 Chase Drive Rancho Cordova, CA. 95670

Penny Jamison, SubVet Support Group Commander



OFFICER'S COUNTRY



Shipmates, Another issue of our newsletter is now completed. I always wait till the very end to write my column so that I can review some of the content. I know a few months ago I began the call for a replacement, but I really do enjoy the research and the time to bring all this work together. In this month's newsletter, among other things I hope you take the time to read the whole article written



by Doctor Joyce Brothers and enjoy the heritage story of the O'Kane cribbage board. As always, the final product is made better by the members you take the time to make a contribution to it. This month your shipmate Jack Everett gave me a folder full of articles, many of which I will begin publishing in the next issue. If you have stories or pictures that you think would be of interest to your shipmates please get them to me so that they can be shared.

Barry Wyatt, PAO/Newsletter Editor

TO FIND US
TO CATCH US
TO BEAT US

YOU MUST BE GOOD
YOU MUST BE FAST
YOU MUST BE KIDDING!

U.S. NAVY SUBMARINES

A recruitment poster for the U.S. Navy Submarines. It features three panels. The first panel shows two crew members in a control room, with the text "TO FIND US" above and "YOU MUST BE GOOD" below. The second panel shows a submarine on the surface of the water, with the text "TO CATCH US" above and "YOU MUST BE FAST" below. The third panel shows a sailor in a white cap saluting, with an American flag in the background, and the text "TO BEAT US" above and "YOU MUST BE KIDDING!" below. At the bottom, the text "U.S. NAVY SUBMARINES" is written in large, bold letters, flanked by two American flags.

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 Eftmann
Qualified 1975

USS William H Bates SSN 625
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Base Secretary
Diana Clay
Associate Member

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Base Treasurer
Membership Chair
Bill Sugnet
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Chief of the Boat (COB)
Gene Ratto

Qualified 1978
USS Abraham Lincoln
SSBN 602

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Base Chaplain
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Qualified 1963 USS
Spikefish SS 404
Life Member
Holland Club

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Qualified 1970
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Newsletter Editor/PAO
J. Barry Wyatt

Qualified 1965
USS Henry Clay SSBN 625
Life Member
Holland Club

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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

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beowaweman319@gmail.com



Guest Speakers
Coordinator
Naval Youth Liaison
Chad Clay

Qualified 1965

USS Daniel Boone SSBN 629
Life Member Holland Club
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Parade Float Manager

John Kelly

Qualified 1976
USS Pogy SSN 647
Life Member

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Storekeeper
Jerry Wentland
U.S. Army

Associate Member

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SubVet Support
Group Commander
Penny Jamison

Associate Member

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First Call to Morning
Chow Coordinator

Harold Fisher

Qualified 1965

USS Medregal AGSS 480
Life Member Holland Club
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Web Master
Events Coordinator
Ed McCarthy
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Life Member

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USSVI District 5
Commander
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Qualified 1965

USS Henry Clay SSBN 625
Life Member Holland Club
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USSVI Western
Region Director

Pete Juhos

Qualified 1980
USS Bergall SSN 667
Life Member

(916) 208-0667 dsv3.ss@gmail.com

Lost Boats

February

USS Barbel (SS-316)

Lost on Feb 4, 1945 with the loss of 81 officers and men on her 4th war patrol. Based on Japanese records, she was bombed near the southern entrance to the Palawan Passage. The day before, she reported she survived 3 depth charge attacks.



USS Shark I (SS-174)

Lost on Feb 11, 1942 with the loss of 59 officers and men on her 1st war patrol. Shark was the 1st US submarine sunk by enemy surface craft in the Pacific. She was most likely sunk by depth charges.



USS Amberjack (SS-219)

Lost on Feb 16, 1943 with the loss of 72 officers and men on her 3rd war patrol. Off Rabaul, she was attacked by a Japanese patrol plane, attacked by a torpedo boat and then depth charged by a subchaser.



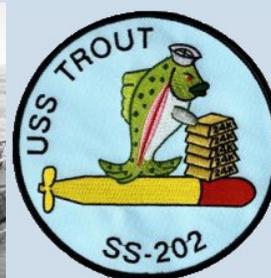
USS Grayback (SS-208)

Lost on Feb 26, 1944 with the loss of 80 officers and men on her 10th war patrol. She appears to have been caught on the surface in the East China Sea by a Japanese carrier plane whose bombs made a direct hit. During this patrol she sank 4 ships totaling 21,594 tons and was tied for 11th in the number of ships sunk.



USS Trout (SS-202)

Lost on Feb 29, 1944 with the loss of 81 officers & men on her 11th war patrol. She was sunk by escorts in the middle of the Philippines Basin after sinking a passenger-cargoman & damaging another in a convoy. She carried out several notable special missions, including carrying over two tons of gold bullion out of Corregidor in February 1942.





USSVI-GOLD COUNTRY BASE MINUTES MEETING: January 24,2026

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order@1:10 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 temporary Chief of the Boat Ed McCarthy 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 2 guests in attendance.

GUEST SPEAKER COORDINATOR CHAD CLAY INTRODUCTION OF GUEST SPEAKER:

Guest speaker from Vitalant, Christine Chavez, discussed mobile blood drives.

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 eye glasses 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 the Base Treasurer via email.)

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.

Positions for Western Region 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

HISTORIAN: Lenard Lee

He is working on the history of the boat launch and finalizing the article.

Lenard Lee will take over the duties as Historian.

Thank you, Roger, for all you do and have done for the base.

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, hats and ties available. New calendars are in @ \$12

Rain jackets are available to order if wanted. (cost about \$55)

If interested in yellow base cap, contact Jerry for price.

KEEPER OF THE BOAT: John Kelly - No report

EVENTS COORDINATOR: Ed McCarthy

Lost Boats Memorial, TBD

Annual picnic in April meeting, moved and passed.

(continued on next page)

EVENTS COORDINATOR: Ed McCarthy (continued)

Memorial Day, we will see if we can go to Bass Pro on Sunday or Monday instead.

State Fair, proposed and passed to skip our attendance this year.

Air Show, proposed and passed to attend the airshow in October 2026.

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.

Proposed for a pasta feed on May 2, 2026, moved and passed. Needs \$1,000 seed money for down payment and additional moneys that may be needed. There is room for 150 people at Hagan Park next to Cordova High School culinary class. We would like to charge \$40 per ticket. Proposed \$40 per ticket moved and passed. Hall is \$104 per hour, minimum 4 hours. \$75 for the kitchen, plus the food. Food will be prepared at the high school by the culinary department of the high school. We need to try to sell all 150 tickets which will be available at the next meeting.

GUEST SPEAKERS COORDINATOR: Chad Clay

February guest speaker will be Tim Carlisle from Mare Island base.

WESTERN REGION DIRECTOR: Pete Juhos

National convention for 2026 is in Corpus Christie \$142 per night 9/6/2026 -9/15/2026.

National convention for 2027 is in Reno at Grand Sierra Resort, 8/22-27/2027 .

National convention for 2028 is in Grand Rapids, MI.

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:

The brick fund is delayed because of the bureaucracy of paying for the bricks and contracting the brick laying. Barry and Ed are involved with this project.

OLD BUSINESS:

Minutes from November 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: 2/10/2026 9:30 am @ Denny's Restaurant, 122 N. Sunrise Ave., Roseville, CA

E-board Zoom meeting: February 21, 2026 at 9:00 am

Next Base Meeting: February 28, 2026 noon for potluck lunch and 1:00 meeting.

50/50 Won by: \$59 won by Bill Barron and donated back to base

Sea Cadets: \$69

Meeting adjournment:

Base Chaplain Howard Grover gave a closing prayer.

Chief of the Boat surfaced @2:41 pm

Submitted by Diana Clay, Base Secretary

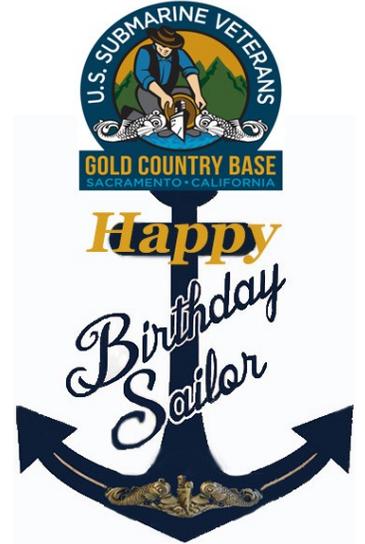
Birthdays

JANUARY

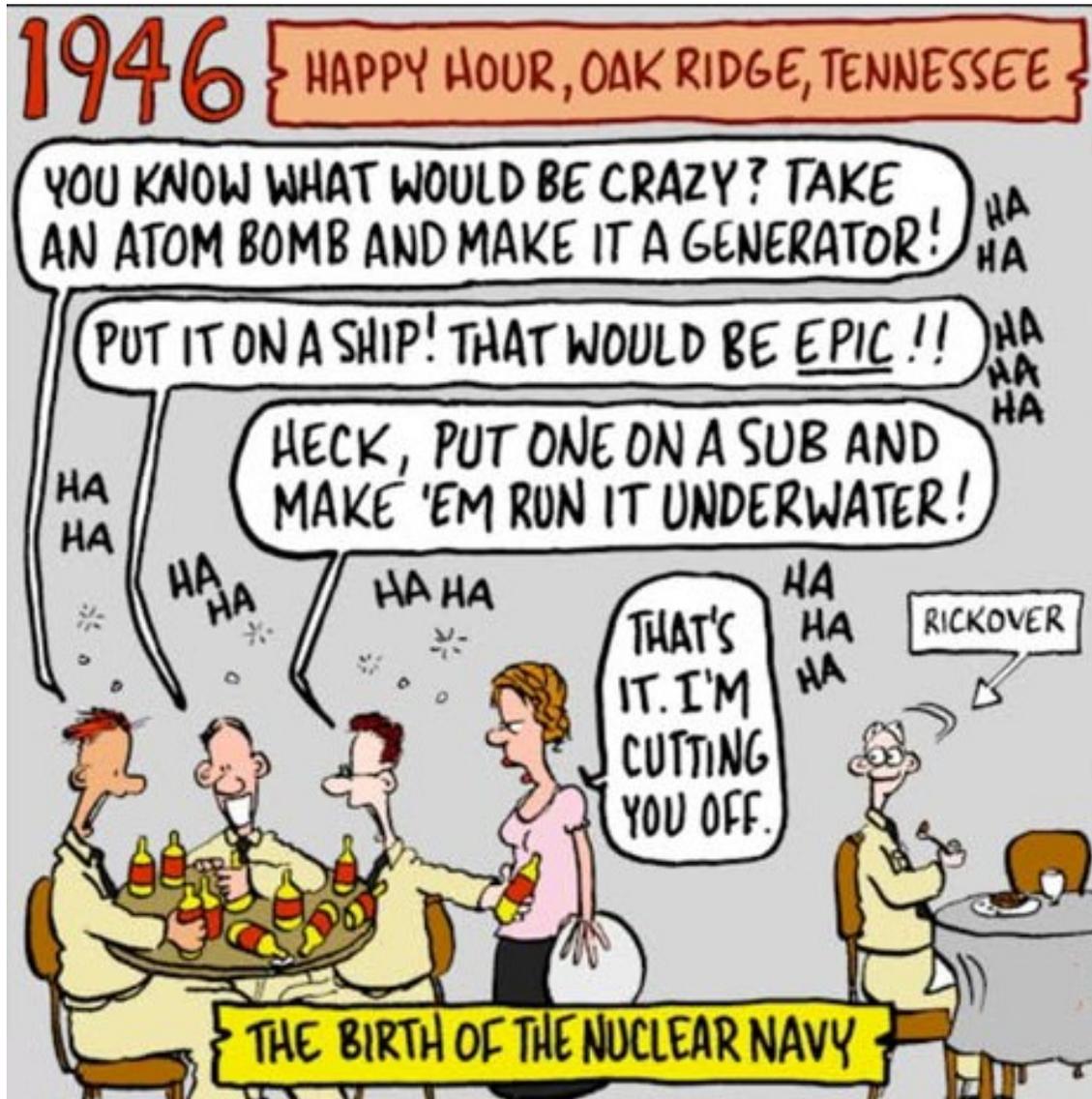
Tony Jacobs Lenard Lee Patricia Everett
Alan More Sharon Frost Debbie Juhos

FEBRUARY

Grant Riddle Randall Woolley Dennis Cline
Hans Nettel Ed Myers



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 Alonzo Brewster Ken Earls**

Mark Elftmann Harold Fisher**

*Burna Jamieson * Les Jamison**

Penny Jamison Pete Juhos Lenard Lee*

Alvin Lehman Matt Lettau* James MacLean**

John Mannix Tom Moniz* Harry Pagett*

Joe Ryan Nick Sadowy* William Sugnet**

Barry Wyatt Multi-Year Donors*

Booster Fund Support Needed

Gold Country Base has always taken pride in honoring our heritage, supporting our shipmates, and keeping our traditions alive. To continue doing that, we need your help.

Over the past several years, our operating costs have steadily increased. Routine expenses such as maintenance for our submarine float, rental of tables and chairs for our December 7th ceremony, and supplies for our annual base picnic have all gone up. In 2024, we also took on a new recurring cost — \$1,200 per year to rent our meeting facility — an expense we absorbed to ensure we have a reliable, comfortable space to gather.

At the same time, donations to our Booster Fund have declined. The Booster Fund is what keeps our base running. It fills the gap between rising costs and our limited annual income. Without it, we simply cannot sustain the events, traditions, and community presence that define Gold Country Base.

If you are able, please consider making a Booster Fund contribution. Every donation — large or small — directly supports our mission and helps ensure we can continue honoring the legacy of the submarine service.



VANEWS

WASHINGTON —The U.S. Department of

Veterans Affairs today announced a new regulation that will lead to faster decisions and quicker payments for certain types of survivors' claims.

Previously, VA was required to address claims for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation and Survivors Pension separately, resulting in a longer claims process, as a formal decision was required for both benefits.

With this change, effective Feb. 23, VA will pay the higher of the two benefits, which is generally DIC — without delaying the process to develop the lesser benefit.

“This commonsense change streamlines the survivors claims process, reduces administrative burdens, and delivers quicker decisions to beneficiaries during challenging times,” DIC is a tax-free monthly monetary benefit paid to eligible surviving spouses, children and parents of a service member who died in the line of duty or Veterans who died from service-connected injuries or illnesses. Survivors Pension offers tax-free monthly payments to qualified surviving spouses and unmarried dependent children of wartime Veterans who meet certain income and net worth limits set by Congress.

In most instances, DIC provides a greater economic benefit than Survivors Pension. This is not the case if all the following conditions are met:

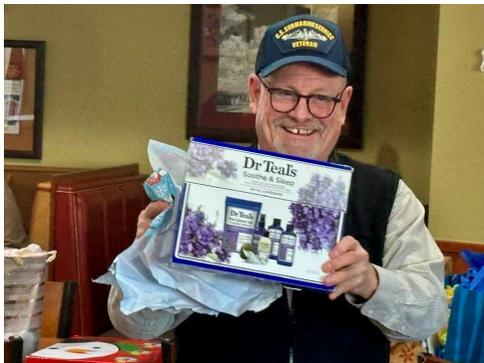
- The claimant is the Veteran's surviving spouse,
- Has no dependents,
- Is residing in a nursing home,
- Has applied for or is currently receiving Medicaid.

If all these criteria are met, Survivors Pension — rather than DIC — will be awarded, and the DIC claim will not be further developed.

For more information, contact the VA benefits hotline on 800-827-1000.

Gold Country News & Events

Great Turnout for our Holiday Gift Exchange



Gold Country Events



US Naval Sea Cadet Sacramento Division Award Ceremony

Sunday March 22 2:00pm

3205 Hurley Way, Sacramento, CA 95864

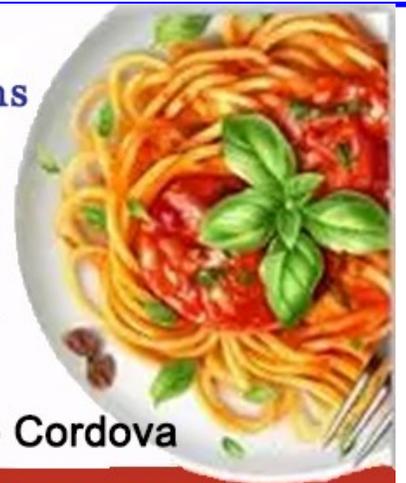
Reserved Seating Contact Chad if you are planning to attend.

Chad Clay chdclay@gmail.com (916) 502-1623



Gold Country Base
United States Submarine Veterans

SPAGHETTI
dinner fundraiser



Hagan Community Center 2197 Chase Dr. Rancho Cordova

Saturday May 2
4:00pm to 8:00pm

Tickets: Ed McCarthy 916.995.5196
Penny Jamison 352.598.9611

We've rented the hall and the event team is working diligently to plan the evening's schedule and entertainment. Also, we are seeking donated items for raffle prizes. Tickets will be \$40 and sales will begin at the February Base Meeting. All tickets must be purchased ahead of the event as no tickets will be sold at the door. This is our first fundraiser raiser; we will need Base Members to Help make it a success.

USSVI National & Regional Events

USSVI 2026 NATIONAL CONVENTION

CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS
OMNI HOTEL
SEPTEMBER 6-11, 2026

COME JOIN YOUR SHIPMATES
FROM AROUND THE WORLD IN
THIS ANNUAL EVENT!



<https://subvetconvention.org/>



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.wroundup.com



Story of Interest

Shortly after the loss of the THRESHER, Dr. Joyce Brothers wrote this piece on submariners.

RISK IS AN INSPIRATION IN SUBMARINE SERVICE

The tragic loss of the submarine Thresher and 129 men had a special kind of impact on the nation.....a special kind of sadness, mixed with universal admiration for the men who chose this kind of work.

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.

Most of us might be moved to conclude, too, that a tragedy of this kind would have a damaging effect on the moral of the other men in the submarine service and tend to discourage future enlistments. Actually, there is no evidence that this is so.

What is it, then, that lures men to careers in which they spend so much of their time in cramped quarters, under great psychological stress, with danger lurking all about them?

Bond Among Them

Togetherness is an overworked term, but in no other branch of our military service is it given such full meaning as in the so-called "silent service."

In an under sea craft, each man is totally dependent upon the skill of every other man in the crew, not only for top performance but for actual survival. Each knows that his very life depends on the others and because this is so, there is a bond among them that both challenges and comforts them.

All of this gives the submariner a special feeling of pride, because he is indeed a member of an elite corps. The risks, then, are an inspiration, rather than a deterrent.

The challenge of masculinity is another factor, which attracts men to serve on submarines. It certainly is a test of man's prowess and power to know he can qualify for this highly selective service. However, it should be emphasized that this desire to prove masculinity is not pathological, as it might be in certain daredevil pursuits, such as driving a motorcycle through a flaming hoop.

Emotionally Healthy

There is nothing daredevilish about the motivations of the man who decides to dedicate his life to the submarine service. He does, indeed, take pride in demonstrating that he is quite a man, but he does not do so to practice a form of foolhardy brinkmanship, to see how close he can get to failure and still snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. On the contrary, the aim in the submarine service is to battle the danger, to minimize the risk, to take every measure to make certain that safety rather than danger, is maintained at all times.

Are the men in submarines braver than those in other pursuits where the possibility of sudden tragedy is not constant? The glib answer would be that they are. It is much more accurate, from a psychological point of view, to say they are not necessarily braver, but that they have a little more insight into themselves and their capabilities.

Joyce Diane Bauer Brothers (October 20, 1927 – May 13, 2013) was an American psychologist, television personality, advice columnist, and writer.



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Story of Interest

Dr. Joyce Brothers continued

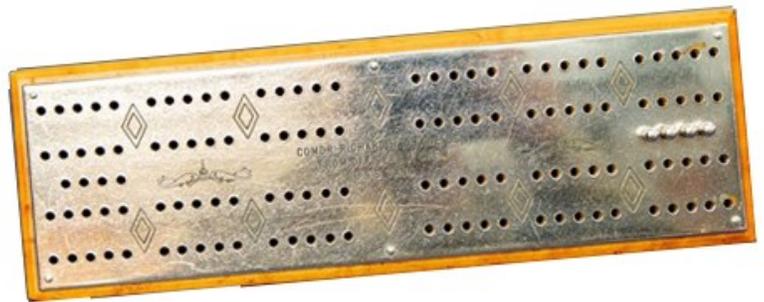
They know themselves a little better than the next man. This has to be so with men who have a healthy reason to volunteer for a risk. They are generally a cut healthier emotionally than others of similar age and background because of their willingness to push themselves a little bit farther and not settle for an easier kind of existence.

We all have tremendous capabilities but are rarely straining at the upper level of what we can do; these men are.

The country can be proud and grateful that so many of its sound, young, eager men care enough about their own status in life—and the welfare of their country—to pool their skills and match them collectively against the power of the sea.

The O'Kane Cribbage board

The O'Kane Cribbage board has a storied history that dates back to World War II, during Kane's service aboard the USS *Wahoo*, under the command of Lt Cmdr. Morton. In 1943, as the submarine headed to the Yellow Sea, Morton and O'Kane took out a cribbage board to calm tensions onboard. Morton dealt O'Kane a perfect 29, and that night, the *Wahoo* sank two Japanese freighters. A few days later, Morton dealt O'Kane a 28-point hand, and in the next two days, the *Wahoo* sank three freighters. When O'Kane became commander of the USS *Tang*, it subsequently broke the record for most ships sunk in a patrol. So began the lore of the lucky O'Kane Cribbage board. The original cribbage board was lost when the USS *Tang* was sunk in 1944. In 1957, the "O'Kane Cribbage Board" was given to Admiral O'Kane by his crew from USS *Tang* (SS-563) to replace the lost board.



Since 1994, after the death of O'Kane, the wardroom of the oldest fast-attack submarine in the United States Pacific fleet carries O'Kane's personal cribbage board, and upon decommissioning, the board is transferred to the next oldest boat. The cribbage game set passed between the following boats:

USS *Scranton* (SSN-756), as of March 28, 2025, USS *Key West* (SSN-722), as of 25 July 2023

USS *Chicago* (SSN-721), as of 29 October 2019, USS *Olympia* (SSN-717), as of 21 May 2018

USS *Bremerton* (SSN-698), as of 4 February 2011, USS *Los Angeles* (SSN-688), as of 19 October 2004, USS *Parche* (SSN-683), as of 2 April 2002

USS *Kamehameha* (SSBN-642), as of 1994 after the passing of Admiral O'Kane

Sea Story

JUMP START IN PUERTO RICO

In October 1961, **USS Thresher (SSN-593)**, first in class, headed south on a three-week test and training cruise to San Juan, Puerto Rico arriving 2 November. Her reactor was shut down in accordance with standard procedure while in port. No shore power connection was available in San Juan, so the ship's backup diesel generator was used to carry the "hotel" electrical loads. Several hours later, the backup generator broke down and the electrical load was transferred to the ship's battery.

Most of the battery power was needed to keep vital systems operating and to restart the reactor, so lighting and air conditioning were shut down. Without air conditioning, temperature and humidity in the submarine rose, reaching 140 °F after about 10 hours. The crew attempted to repair the diesel generator (four men received Navy commendation medals for their work that night).



It became apparent that the generator could not be fixed before the battery was depleted, so the crew tried to restart the reactor, but the remaining battery charge was insufficient. The captain returned to the ship from a shore function just after the battery ran down.

The **USS Cavalla (SS-244)**, a decorated WW2 veteran having sunk one Japanese aircraft carrier, a destroyer and 2 net tenders, was ordered to Puerto Rico to provide electrical power via umbilical connection to **Thresher**. Upon arrival in San Juan, it was discovered that neither ship had the necessary cables.



The **Thresher's** crew eventually borrowed cables from another

ship in the harbor and connected them to the now adjacent **Cavalla**, which started her diesels and provided enough power to allow **Thresher** to restart her reactor

Featured Boat

USS *Plunger* (SSN-595), a *Permit*-class submarine, was the third ship of the United States Navy to be named "plunger", meaning a diver or a daring gambler.

The contract to build her as a guided-missile submarine (SSGN) was awarded to Mare Island Naval Shipyard on 23 March 1959, but by the time her keel was laid down on 2 March 1960 she had been redesigned as an attack submarine (SSN). She was launched on 9 December 1961 (sponsored by Mrs. Clinton P. Anderson) and commissioned on 21 November 1962.

Service history

Following a trip to Puget Sound on 27 November to test torpedo tubes and sound gear, *Plunger* departed Mare Island on 5 January 1963 for shakedown to Pearl Harbor. *Plunger* next was homeported at Mare Island and operated to test the performance of sonar and the fire control system. In April she changed homeport to Pearl Harbor, where she became flagship of ComSubDiv 71, on 1 April.

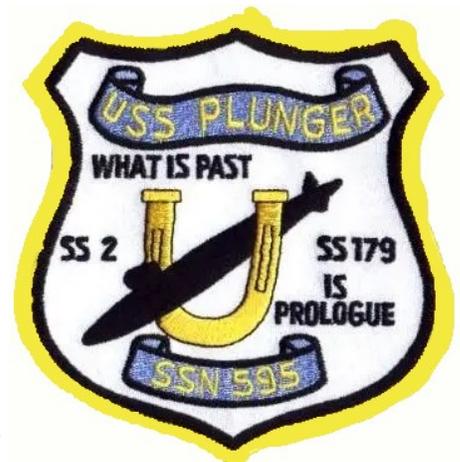
Continuing in a testing capacity, *Plunger* evaluated the most advanced class of nuclear attack submarines. Operating off the U.S. West Coast during the spring and summer, she proceeded to Wake Island on 15 September 1964 for SubRon Operational Evaluation missile firing.

At Pearl Harbor with SubRon 7 in 1967, *Plunger* operated to improve the ASW readiness of the Pacific fleet; from 6 March to 22 March, she participated in ASW exercises and later continued in advanced type-training work. During import periods at Pearl Harbor, *Plunger* provided services to Fleet Training Program Pearl Harbor. Homeporting at Puget Sound the last six months of 1967, *Plunger* returned to Pearl Harbor on 1 February 1968.

In the latter part of 1968, while on a WestPac (Western Pacific) deployment, "Plunger" was the first nuclear ship to visit Japan at Yokosuka. Many Japanese protested the arrival of the submarine due to the power plant and fear of nuclear contamination of their waters. In January 1969, a two-month "special operations" patrol was conducted, and again in mid 1969 a "Pearl to Pearl" special operations patrol completed. It is on that patrol that the ship garnered a Navy Unit Citation for operations in the North Pacific under the command of Cdr. Nils Thunman. While on the 1968-1970 WestPac deployment ports of call were made at Yokosuka, Japan (twice); Guam, USA; Sasebo, Japan; Okinawa, Japan; Subic Bay, Philippines; Pusan, South Korea; and Hong Kong. "Plunger" was also the successful test bed for a new torpedo tube launched rocket called the "SubRoc" which was used in anti-submarine operations at a distance of up to twenty-five miles.

Commander Alvin L. Wilderman, the submarine's skipper, was washed overboard from the bridge in a typhoon near San Francisco on 30 November 1973. An extensive search produced no results and the Commander was lost at sea. The officer of the deck and lookout were not lost.

From 1970 to 1973 she was deployed to WestPac and Vietnam. In the fall of 1973 she was conducting sea trials of the coast of California. Subsequent to those trials she returned to WestPac where she remained until 1980.



Continued on next page

Featured Boat

(continued)

USS Plunger underwent a refit in Bremerton from 1980 to 1982 receiving several modernizations including the BQQ-5 Sonar System. She returned to San Diego after sea trials in 1983. She deployed to Westpac from January - June 1984 participating in two long operations during the deployment. She was involved in a collision with a freighter off Southern California while coming to periscope depth in early 1985 which damaged portions of her bow and sonar dome. These repairs required an unscheduled drydock during the spring of 1985.

In 1986 *Plunger* won the Marjorie Sterrett Battleship Fund Award, becoming the first warship to win both the Sterrett and the Arleigh Burke Awards. In this year, too, *Plunger* made yet another deployment to the Western Pacific, making port calls in Yokosuka, Japan and Subic Bay in the Philippines as well as visiting Hong Kong as a liberty port.

The next few years saw a number of other accomplishments - *Plunger* was recognized for excellence in virtually every major inspection and won the Battle Efficiency (the coveted "Battle E") award for overall combat readiness. Although aging, *Plunger* maintained a grueling operational schedule, spending over 60% of her time at sea and never missing a scheduled underway period - a record that many much newer submarines were unable to match.

Plunger made her final WestPac deployment in 1988, visiting Japan and the Philippines as well as Guam and Chin-Hae, South Korea (and making port calls in Okinawa and Hong Kong) and



conducting another two-month "special operation" that garnered her a Navy Unit Commendation. This WestPac was followed by another fairly intense period of routine operations out of San Diego and, in December 1988, departure for her final "special operation" - this time keeping her crew at sea over Christmas, New Year's Day, and (to the disappointment of the crew) Super Bowl Sunday. This special operation ended with *Plunger* completing its final Operational Reactor Safeguards Examination (which it passed with flying colors) and giving its crew some well-earned R&R in Pearl Harbor Hawaii.

Returning to home port, *Plunger* was deactivated (while under the command of William Large), in commission, on 10 February 1989, decommissioned on 3 January 1990 and stricken from the Navy Register the following 2 February. *Ex-Plunger* entered the Nuclear-Powered Ship and Submarine Recycling Program in Bremerton, Washington, on 5 January 1995 and on 8 March 1996 ceased to exist.

At the time of decommissioning *Plunger* was noted by the San Diego Tribune as being the most-decorated submarine in the Pacific Fleet and it was the most-decorated warship in San Diego. Throughout its history, *Plunger* was awarded four Navy Unit Commendations as well as multiple Meritorious Unit Commendations, Battle Efficiency, and other awards. And as of its retirement *Plunger* was the only submarine to win the Arleigh Burke Award (in 1969 under Commanding Officer Nils Thurman).



Uss Plunger SSN-595 Was the Quaal Boat of Gold Country Base Member Steve Thomas EM2 (SS)

Submarine Story Of Interest

Women Serving on Submarines

On 3 June 1999, when Secretary of the Navy Richard Danzig raised the prospect of women in submarines at the Naval Submarine League Symposium. A silent, unbelieving gasp seemed to hang on the announcement. Subsequent fallout in the press was spirited. In September, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Jay Johnson and Director of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Admiral Frank Bowman both spoke out against the idea. On 20 September 1999, a policy statement was released: "The Navy's policy of not assigning women to submarines remains unchanged."

In 1995, Scientific Applications International Corporation (SAIC) prepared a report for the Navy about women in submarines. The SAIC report was comprehensive, and laid out many reasons why having women in submarines would not work. A key concern was that complications raised by women on board would undermine the operational effectiveness of the crew. Nevertheless, DACOWITS voted unanimously for a resolution recommending that plans for future submarines should make provisions for women.

First, during the past 25 years our attack submarines have been designed without enough bunks. Hot bunking is required on the *Los Angeles* (SSN-688)-class and the *Seawolf* (SSN-21)-class submarines, and even though hot bunking is not required on the *Ohio* (SSBN-726)-class ballistic missile submarines, temporary bunks are provided in the missile compartment for some non-rated men. Even the forthcoming *Virginia* (SSN-774)-class has 113 bunks for a crew of 134. The SAIC study concluded that providing privacy for women might not be possible without lengthening the ship. By crowding within the existing hull, some hardware required for combat operations would have to be removed. This could aggravate already substantial space and morale problems for the men.



Second, for the last 100 years our submarine force has been a close-knit community. Close contact between male and female crew members in confined spaces on board a submarine could have consequences that would degrade morale and readiness. Individual patrols can last as long as 70 days, and deployments can last six months. Civilian and military leaders must support policies that enhance morale and readiness. Placing women on submarines would be a terrible mistake and could destroy our submarine force.

We must lead by example and not let this happen. I have contacted colleagues in France, Germany, Great Britain, and Italy, and confirmed that women are not allowed to serve in submarines in their navies. Women do serve in submarines in Sweden and Norway—in boats that rarely spend more than two weeks at a time at sea.

It would be unfair to burden a submarine's commanding officer with the unusual responsibilities and distractions that could hurt morale, combat effectiveness, and retention—especially if complications could result in abandoning a mission critical to national security. DACOWITS apparently has ignored the SAIC report and the views of senior Navy officers. I support Admiral Johnson's statement of 3 September 1999: "The submarine force has been looked at many times . . . **[All-male crews are] the right thing for us.**"

Submarine Story Of Interest

Women Serving on Submarines (continued)

Fourteen years after the Navy began integrating women into submarine crews, the population of enlisted women and officers in subs continues to grow steadily year-over-year — and the service projects it will name the first female submarine commanding officer by 2028.

As of late 2024, approximately **712 women** are assigned to United States Navy submarines, comprising just under 5% of a total sub force of more than 15,000. This includes both officers and enlisted sailors serving on 18 nuclear-powered ballistic-missile/guided-missile submarines and 14 attack boats, with integration increasing annually. Fiscal 2024 also represented the largest jump in female enlisted accessions since integration began, rising from 271 the previous year.

While representation remains modest, enlisted women are remaining in the sub community at higher rates than their male counterparts, Parrish's data showed. From fiscal year 2017 to 2024, enlisted women submariners re-enlisted at a rate of 74.9%, 1.1% higher than enlisted men.



Chief Culinary Specialist Dominique Saavedra, becomes the first woman to earn the Navy's "silver dolphins," signaling an enlisted sailor qualified to serve aboard a submarine. Assigned to USS Michigan she is pinned August 2, 2016 during a ceremony at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard

While retention rates for officers have fluctuated widely in recent years, female officers in year groups 2010 to 2016 show a department head retention rate of 29%, 1.5% higher than their male peers



The first sub designed with berthing for both men and women, the Virginia-class submarine USS New Jersey, was delivered to the Navy April 25, 2024. Though the Virginia class is running up to 36 months past its contracted delivery dates, a second sub in the class, the USS Iowa, is expected to join the Navy in December of 2024.

WWII Submarines

USS Tang SS-306 was a *Balao*-class submarine of World War II, the first ship of the United States Navy to bear the name Tang. She was built and launched in 1943, serving until being sunk by her own torpedo off China in the Taiwan Strait on 25 October 1944.

The loss of the *Tang* is one of the most tragic stories in American naval history, where a highly decorated vessel was lost due to a fatal, self-inflicted flaw.

In her short career in the Pacific War, *Tang* sank 33 ships across five patrols, totaling 116,454 tons making it the highest-scoring US submarine in WWII. Commander Richard O'Kane received the Medal of Honor for her last two engagements (23 and 24 October 1944).

USS Tang, was sunk during the last engagement by her own malfunctioning Mark 18 torpedo, going down in 180 ft (55 m) of water in the Taiwan Strait; 78 men were lost, and the 9 survivors were picked up by a Japanese frigate and taken as prisoners of war. This was the only known time that a Momsen lung was used to escape a sunken submarine.



The Momsen Lung was a primitive underwater rebreather used before and during World War II by American submariners as emergency escape gear. It was invented by Charles Momsen, who worked on it from 1929 to 1932. Submariners trained with this apparatus in an 80 ft (24 m) deep Escape Training Tank at New London, Mare Island, or Pearl Harbor. It was introduced as standard equipment on *Porpoise* (P)-class and *Salmon*-class boats.

The device recycled the breathing gas by using a counter lung containing soda lime to remove the carbon dioxide. The lung was initially filled with oxygen and connected to a mouthpiece by twin hoses containing one-way valves, one for breathing in and the other for breathing out.

The only known emergency use of the Momsen lung was during the escape from USS *Tang* on October 25, 1944. Thirteen men (of thirty survivors) left the forward escape trunk: five were picked up by the Japanese; three more reached the surface "but were unable to hang on or breathe and floated off and drowned"; the fate of the other five is unknown. Not all the escapees from the trunk used the Momsen lung. An officer had his mouthpiece knocked out shortly after leaving the submarine. One of the trunk ascents was made without a Momsen lung. Many were unable to leave the trunk or did not attempt to escape after being discouraged by the difficulties faced by those who attempted to escape before them. Most of the crew perished.



Richard Hetherington O'Kane (February 2, 1911 – February 16, 1994) was a United States Navy submarine commander in World War II, who was awarded the Medal of Honor for commanding USS *Tang* in the Pacific War against Japan to the most successful record of any United States submarine ever. He also received three Navy Crosses and three Silver Stars, for a total of seven awards of the United States military's three highest decorations for valor in combat. Before commanding *Tang*, O'Kane served in the highly successful USS *Wahoo* as executive officer and approach officer under noted Commander Dudley "Mush" Morton. In his ten combat patrols, five in *Wahoo* and five commanding *Tang*, O'Kane participated in more successful attacks on Japanese shipping than any other submarine officer during the war.

O'Kane qualified for submarines aboard the *Argonaut* in 1938 and remained aboard until her overhaul at Mare Island, California in 1942.

World War II

In early 1942, Lieutenant O'Kane joined the pre-commissioning crew of the new submarine USS *Wahoo* and served as its executive officer on five war patrols during World War II, first under Lieutenant Commander Marvin G. "Pinky" Kennedy and later under the legendary Lieutenant Commander Dudley "Mush" Morton. Under Morton's tutelage, O'Kane developed the skills that enabled him to become the single most accomplished American submarine commander in history.

In July 1943, following his fifth patrol in *Wahoo*, O'Kane was detached, promoted to lieutenant commander, and made commanding officer of USS *Tang*, which was then under construction. He placed her in commission on the 15th of October 1943 and commanded her for her entire career. Unbeknownst to O'Kane, only four days prior, the USS *Wahoo* would be sunk in the La Perouse Strait by Japanese forces, killing all 79 crew members, including Lieutenant Commander Dudley "Mush" Morton.

Tang's third patrol, into the Yellow Sea, sank more Japanese ships than any other submarine patrol of the war. O'Kane claimed eight ships sunk; post-war analysis increased this to 10 ships. During one attack, he fired six torpedoes at two large ships. Japanese records showed the torpedoes actually hit four ships. This number of sinkings surpassed the next highest patrol, *Wahoo's* (with O'Kane as executive officer) in the same area the year before.

O'Kane was captured by the Japanese when *Tang* was sunk in the Formosa Strait. O'Kane was at first secretly held captive at the Ōfuna navy detention center, then later moved to the regular army Omori POW camp. Following his release, O'Kane received the Medal of Honor for "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity" during his submarine's final operations against Japanese shipping.



O'Kane (left) speaks with his commanding officer, Dudley Morton, on the bridge of the Wahoo February 1943



Commander O'Kane being awarded the Medal of Honor by President Harry S. Truman

US Navy Submarine News

Rota, Spain US Naval Station was established in 1953, following the signing of an agreement



for facilities use between the United States and Kingdom of Spain. The agreement required two years of surveys, negotiations and planning which led to groundbreaking on the base in 1955.

Submarine Squadron 16 (SUBRON 16) was deployed at Rota in January 1964. In the late 1970s, the United States made preparations to withdraw its operational base in

Rota. Chief of Naval Operations Admiral James Holloway III ordered studies to locate a new site on the East Coast of the United States.

Kings Bay, Georgia, was announced as the new Submarine Support Base location in 1978, selected from more than 60 sites considered along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts. Two years later, Kings Bay was officially designated as the



East Coast base for Trident submarines. **Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay** received its first Trident submarine, USS Tennessee (SSBN 734) in January 1989.

Today, Kings Bay is home to six Trident submarines, and two Ohio-class guided missile submarines.



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