



THE DECK LOG

USSVI CENTRAL TEXAS BASE

DECEMBER 2025

VOLUME XIV - ISSUE 12



USSVI Creed

Section 1: To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country that their dedication, deeds, and supreme sacrifice 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.

Camaraderie

Section 2: In addition to perpetuating the memory of departed shipmates, USSVI shall provide a way for all Submariners to gather for our mutual benefit and enjoyment. Our common heritage as Submariners shall be strengthened by camaraderie. The USSVI supports a strong U.S. Submarine Force.

Perpetual Remembrance

Section 3: The organization engages in various projects and deeds that bring about the perpetual remembrance of those shipmates who have given the supreme sacrifice. USSVI also endeavors to educate all third parties it comes in contact with about the services United States submariners performed and how the sacrifices of lost shipmates made possible the freedom and lifestyle American enjoy today



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Points of Contact

USSVI NATIONAL COMMANDER

Jon Jaques 615-893-7800 jjaques@bellsouth.net

USSVI NATIONAL SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER

Tim Carlisle 925-812-4239 timcarlisle00@hotmail.com

USSVI CENTRAL REGION DIRECTOR

Rick Mitchell 512-639-0035 rmitch2@yahoo.com

USSVI CENTRAL DISTRICT 4 COMMANDER

Don Hirschenhofer (817) 505-7250 Donh948@gmail.com

USSVI CENTRAL TEXAS BASE OFFICERS

Base Commander, Curt Webber	317-225-1823	curt.webber@gmail.com
Vice-Commander, Chuck Malone	512-694-5294	cmalone10@austin.rr.com
Yeoman, Dave Clark	816-294-5755	dpclark1951@sbcglobal.net
Chief of the Boat, Rick Mitchell	512-639-0035	rmitch2@yahoo.com
Treasurer, Chris Glover	360-731-2032	c.glover.ussvi@gmail.com

BASE SUPPORT APPOINTMENTS

Chaplain - Bob Steinmann	512-255-5250	bobandgladys@austin.rr.com
Memorial - Gene Hall	512-864-2860	genehall3198@gmail.com
Storekeeper - Virgil Claycamp	512-632-4852	vclaycamp@yahoo.com
Membership - Rick Mitchell	512-639-0035	rmitch2@yahoo.com
Newsletter Editor - Bill Scott	512-826-8876	hscottss242@gmail.com
Webmaster - Rick Mitchell	512-639-0035	rmitch2@yahoo.com
Parades - Tom Sprague	858-755-6071	tmsprague48@gmail.com
Kaps4Kids - Ken Rydolph	512-989-8614	prydolph@aol.com
Historian - Eric Heter	512-731-4139	erik.heter@gmail.com
Holland Club - Don Atkins	512-508-1997	oneoldcrow3134@gmail.com
USSVCF - Frank Espinosa	512-639-0451	fespinosajr@att.net

Editor's Office



The Deck Log is a monthly publication of the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Central Texas Base. It is delivered via email in Microsoft Publisher PDF format to the Base Membership. A printed copy is mailed via USPS to those shipmates requesting a mailed copy.
 Harold W (Bill) Scott II, STSCS (SS) USN Ret.
 Holland Club, Life Member USSVI
 SS-242, SSN-612, SSN-595, SSN-596
hscottss242@gmail.com
 512-826-8876



U.S. Submarine Service Join USSVI

Have you ever worn the proud symbol pictured above? Are you related to, or know someone who is wearing, or has worn, Submarine Dolphins?

Visit our Website at:
<https://ussvicentraltexasbase.org/>

USSVI WEB SITE: <https://ussubvets.org/home.asp>
BASE WEB SITE: <https://ussvicentraltexasbase.org/>
FACEBOOK PAGE: <https://www.facebook.com/ussvicentraltexas/>
INSTAGRAM: [ussvi.centraltexasbase](https://www.instagram.com/ussvi.centraltexasbase)

BASE MEETINGS: Base meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month at M/SGT Ben D Snowden VFW Post 8587, 1000 N College St, Georgetown, TX 78626. We hold a quarterly social in lieu of a Base Meeting in March, June, September and December.

USSVI National Office:

USSVI National Office
 PO Box 1063
 Groton CT 06340-1063
 360-337-2978



2017 Tom Williams



2021 Rick Mitchell
 2021 Bill Scott
 2023 Carl Repp
 2024 Frank Espinosa
 2024 Virgil Claycamp
 2025 Chip Pomeroy



2010, 2014,
 2017, 2020



2020 Base
 2023 Bill Bellinghause
 2024 Base



2018 Rick Mitchell
 2020 Bob Steinmann,
 2020 Hubert Jackson



2023 Bill Brinkman



2012, 2013, 2016,
 2018, 2019, 2020,
 2021, 2022, 2023,
 2025

National Information Sources

A listing of Internet information addresses of the various organizations as places to obtain information on national items of interest. Shipmates, you are invited to add to the list (just let me know via email of any you use), so over time it would become more comprehensive.



<https://www.ussvi.org/>
<https://ussubvets.org/home.asp>



<http://www.csp.navy.mil/>



<https://www.sublant.usff.navy.mil/>



www.navyleague.org



www.moaa.org



[Naval History and Heritage Command](http://www.history.navy.mil/)



<http://www.dfas.mil/>



<http://www.vfw.org/>



<http://www.legion.org/>



<http://www.fra.org/>



<http://www.military.com/>



<https://www.navy.mil/>



<http://www.va.gov/>



<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/>

THE SAILOR'S CREED

I am a United States Sailor.

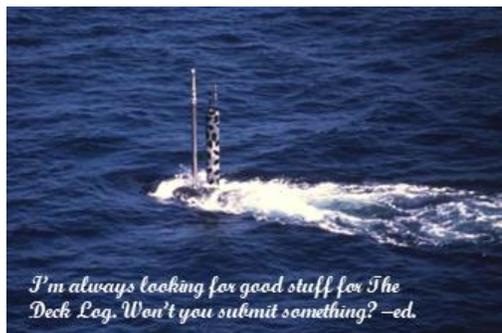
I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America and I will obey the orders of those appointed over me.

I represent the fighting spirit of the Navy and those who have gone before me to defend freedom and democracy around the world.

I proudly serve my country's Navy combat team with Honor, Courage and Commitment.

I am committed to excellence and the fair treatment of all.

[The Sailor's Creed \(navy.mil\)](http://www.navy.mil/)



SILENT RUNNING

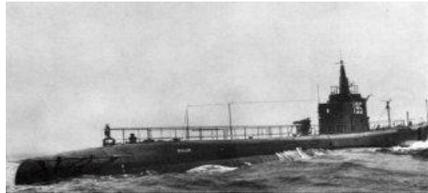
DECEMBER LOST BOATS

"I can assure you that they went down fighting and that their brothers who survived them took a grim toll of our savage enemy to avenge their deaths." Vice Admiral Charles A. Lockwood, USN



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 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 5 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. The destruction of the Navy Yard made repairs impossible, and Sealion was ordered destroyed. All salvagable equipment was taken off, depth charges were placed inside, and the explosives were set off to prevent her from being made useful to the enemy.



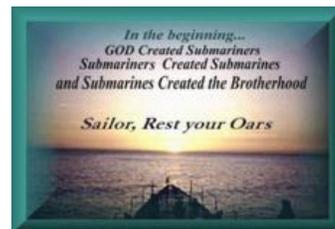
USS F1 / Carp (SS-20)

Lost on December 17, 1917 with the loss of 19 officers and men when it was sunk after collision with the USS F-3 (Pickerel) (SS-22) off San Clemente, CA. While maneuvering in exercises at sea, F-1 and F-3 collided, the former sinking in 10 seconds, her port side torn forward of the engine room. 19 of her men were lost, while 3 others were rescued by the submarines with whom she was operating.



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 CENTRAL TEXAS BASE NEWS

BASE COMMANDER'S REPORT



Happy Holidays Shipmates,

It's hard for me to believe that it has been almost a year since you graced me with the honor of being Base Commander. In addition to that, I have been involved with opening a new VFW Post in Lago Vista, TX assuming the Vice Commander and Trustee's positions over the last year. Both roles have put me back in front of my fellow subvets and vets from other branches of the military. When I got out of the military in 1998, I pretty much checked out from thinking about what the holidays were like while serving, however, after this last year I have been doing some serious remembering, reflecting, rejoicing and regretting.

Occasionally someone would ask me what it was like being deployed during the holidays, but outside of that, those memories got put in a box and stowed away in the little CMS safe in the back of my mind. When I was a kid, the holidays were everything. Big family gatherings, familiar traditions, all the lights and smells—it was magic, plain and simple. Those memories still mean a lot to me, but after 11 years in the military, especially attached to submarines, the holidays don't hit the same way anymore. Underway, the calendar didn't matter. Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's—they just blended into the routine. Sometimes I didn't even know what day it was without checking the broadcast or POD. Holidays were another watch rotation, another meal in the galley, another day surrounded by steel instead of family. And there were years when those family traditions went on without me, when I didn't hear a familiar voice or see a familiar face. We made the best of it, of course. A slightly better meal, some decorations where they wouldn't get in the way, joking around with the crew—it wasn't the same, but you guys became another kind of family for me. Still, being away left a mark. I quickly realized how much I took for granted when we were gone.

Now, as a veteran, the holidays feel different. They're not about the same magic or excitement I felt as a kid, although having grandkids brings a part of that back. They're quieter, heavier, more reflective. I feel gratitude in a way I couldn't before—gratitude that I'm here, that I get to be home, and gratitude for the people I served with, the brothers who stood watch beside me while the rest of the world celebrated on the surface. So, if the holidays don't hit the same for you either, you're not alone. They've changed for a lot of us. The meaning didn't disappear—it just shifted. And honestly, after what we went through, that's its own kind of gift.

V/r, Curt



USSVI Central Texas Base



MEETING MINUTES – 11/19/2025

Location: VFW Post 8587, Georgetown, TX

Meeting Opened: At 1900 by Curt Webber, Base Commander

E-Board Present: All Present

Meeting Minutes: October 2025 Meeting Minutes were approved. Ray Wilgeroth made the motion, Dale Messing seconded the motion and the Base voted unanimously.

Sailing List: 18 Members at VFW, 6 Members on Zoom and 1 Visitor at VFW

Binnacle List: Gene Hall, Garrett Onderdonk, Coy Smith, Chuck Trahan, The Burnet Jackson's

Prayer: Bob Steinmann delivered the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance: Rick Mitchell led the Base.

Tolling of Boats for November

Officer and Committee Reports

Treasurer's Report: Presented by Chris Glover

\$22,803.63 1 October 2025 Balance
\$22,976.39 1 November 2025 Balance
 General Fund: \$19,246.31
 Memorial Fund: \$3,730.08

Storekeeper Report (Virgil Claycamp): Virgil requested anyone needing items to give him a call. Calendars for 2026 are available at \$10 each and 3 for \$25. We have 16 left and they will be available at the Christmas Social along with base challenge coins at \$10 each for members, others \$20 each.

Memorial (Rick Mitchell for Gene Hall): Will work on repainting when weather permits.

Kaps 4 Kids (Ken Rydolph): No Report.

Parade (Tom Sprague): Killeen Veterans Day Parade was a great success. Next parade currently is Red Poppy next April in Georgetown. Ray Wilgeroth relayed a shoutout from his nephew, a Sgt up at Ft. Hood.

Membership (Rick Mitchell): 86 Current Members.

Welcome Aboard: Kevin Hugman, 1984 - USS Lewis and Clark, (SSBN-644) will be transferring from the Dallas Base.

Birthdays October 2025: 11/2 Walt Whittingslow, 11/4 Vern Williams, 11/6 Jake Ferrigan, 11/8 Colin King, 11/11 Chip Pomeroy, 11/19 Dave Clark, 11/19 Tom Sprague, 11/28 Ray Holloway

Unfinished, Ongoing and Old Business

USSVI Charitable Foundation: Frank Espinosa presented information on the Library Fund.

Base Social: The next Base social will be our Christmas Party. It will be held at Stiles Switch BBQ in Austin. We will have a 3-meat selection of Brisket, Sausage and Turkey along with sides and drinks. Cash Bar available. Cost for members is \$25 each and the base will be picking up the remainder.

Holland Club Induction: Jim Pax, 1974 – USS Jack (SSN-605), was inducted into the Holland Club tonight by fellow HC member, Virgil Claycamp and Base Commander, Curt Webber.

2026 USSVI National Convention: Will be held Sept 6-11 in Corpus. Register now! Details at www.subvetconvention.org.

NEW Business:

2026 Fund Raising: Curt led a discussion about our lack of fund raising during 2025 and need to make plans for 2026. We are considering conducting a gun raffle again with various prizes. Anyone interested on providing help or ideas to do this or any other ideas please contact Curt. We plan to have details for at least one fund raiser to present to base at our January meeting.

Wreaths for Vets: Ceremony and wreath laying will be held Saturday November 29th at the Central Texas Veterans Cemetery. This is a very impressive event that everyone is encouraged to consider coming out and bringing your family to see and participate.

Georgetown Caring Place donation: Frank Espinosa made a motion for a donation from the base of \$1000 to go to the caring place as one of our community support efforts. Harry Boyer seconded the motion. There was much discussion about the amount with the 2 biggest concerns being, we did not raise the money we said we would this year and the Caring Place serves the community at large not specifically vets and kids, which we generally try to focus on. After the discussion the motion was amended to add that we would make this donation and no others for 2025 due to lack of fund raising. The motion passed with 1 vote Nay.

Good of the Order:

50/50 Raffle: Tom Sprague won \$36 and the Base won \$35. Additionally, Dale Messing won an autographed copy of Jack Collins book donated by Frank Abernathy

Next Event: Base Christmas Party on December 6, 2025 at Stiles Switch in Austin.

Sailing List Summary:

Total Base Members Present: 24 Members

Local at VFW Post 8587: 16 Members; Frank Abernathy, Doug Binenti, Harry Boyer, Ed Carr, Virgil Claycamp, Frank Espinosa, Chris Glover, Colin King, Chuck Malone, Dale Messing, Rick Mitchell, Jim Pax, Tom Sprague, Bob Steinmann, Harry Ullman, Gene Whitenack, Ray Wilgeroth and Curt Webber.

Remote on Zoom: 6 Members; Jim Andree, David Clark, Chip Pomeroy, Bill Scott II, Derald Vogt, and Vern Williams

Visitors: 1 Visitor; Kevin Hugman

Meeting Adjourned: At 2045 by Base Commander Curt Webber

Minutes Submitted: 21 November by Rick Mitchell



"Angles, Dangles and Slices"

USSVI Central Texas Base

Facebook Post, 11/6/2025

Team "Angles, Dangles and Slices" ! Had a great time at the Georgetown VFW Post 8587 M/SGT Ben D. Snowden golf tournament this week. There were some doubts about our skill set but turns out we all are pretty good at driving..... Golf Carts. There were actually 9 teams worse than us?

In the left picture below, l/r, Rick Mitchell, Gene Whitenack, Colin King, and Dale Messing.





Veteran's Day Parade Killeen, TX

[USSVI Central Texas Base](#) is at [Black Meg 43 Killeen](#).

1435 11/11/25, [Killeen](#) ·

Great Day for a Parade! [Killeen, Texas](#) Veterans Day Parade. Good lunch afterwards too!

[Black Meg 43 Killeen](#) Thank y'all for your service and coming in for lunch today see y'all next year!!

[Rick Mitchell](#)

 Top contributor

Nothing better than dragging a Submarine through an Army town. Happy Veterans Day Shipmates!



Float and 11 shipmates



Dale Messing



Chuck G handing out candy



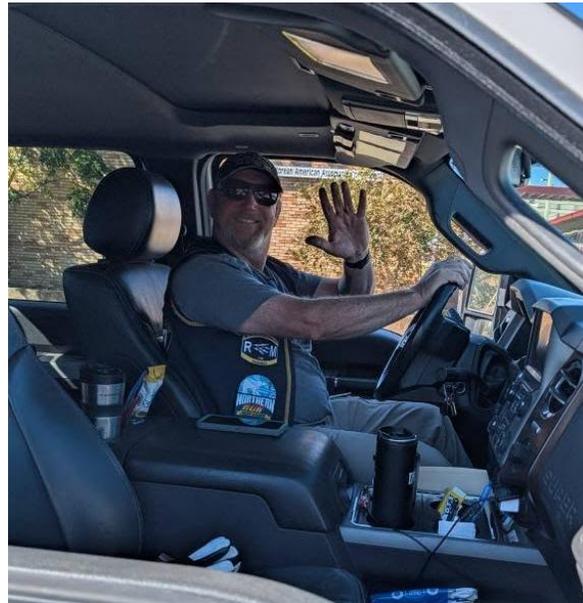
The Float



Riding Along



Riding Along



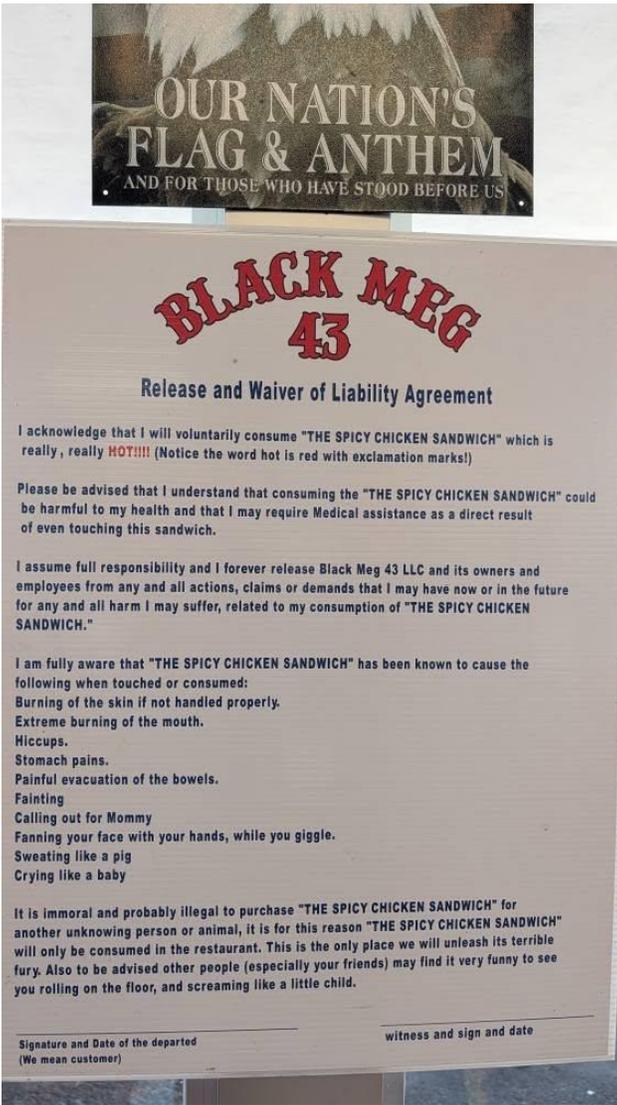
Curt Driving



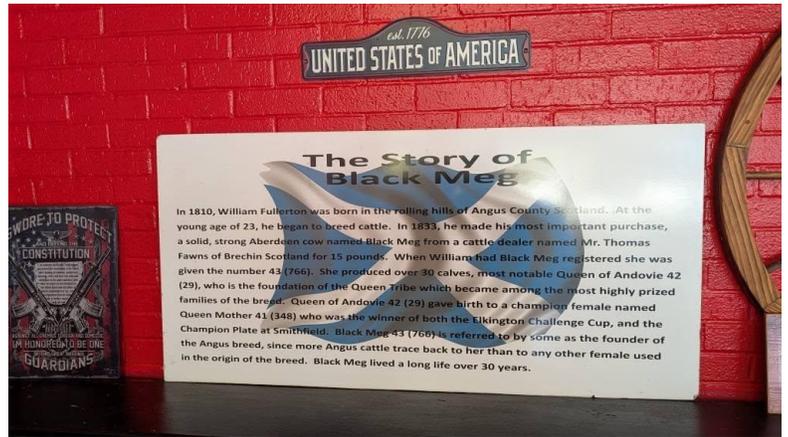
Flag Flying



Candy for the kids too



Liability Release



The Story of Black Meg



Chow Time



Virgil and shipmates



Harry & Dale



Canes hitching a ride

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USSVI Dues Renewal

Shipmates,

It's that time of year again. 2026 and beyond dues are now being collected. I just want to say how much I appreciate everyone's support by choosing to be a member of USSVI and our base and hope you will continue to do so. You have many options for single or multiyear renewals. Different options are all listed below. Please note we reduced our base dues to \$10/yr.

1 Year	\$50	National (\$40) + Base (\$10)
3 Year	\$133	National (\$113) + Base (\$20)
5 Year	\$220	National (\$185) + Base (\$35)
Life 46-55 yrs old	\$925	National (\$625) + Base (\$300)
Life 56-65 yrs old	\$650	National (\$450) + Base (\$200)
Life 66-75 yrs old	\$400	National (\$300) + Base (\$100)
Life 76+ yrs old	\$200	National (\$150) + Base \$50)

You can pay your dues by:

- Venmo (make sure to note CTB dues) to: @rmitch2
- Zelle to Rick
- Credit Card (let us know and we will send invoice using Square)
- Cash or Check at our next meeting on Nov 19
- Check written out to USSVI-Central Texas Base and mailed to:

Rick Mitchell
 1812 Southbend Rd
 Salado, Texas 76571

Let me know any questions you have (phone, text, email are all fine and thank you for your prompt attention to this.

r/,

Rick Mitchell
CTB Membership Chair
512-639-0035
[USSVI Central Texas Base](#)
[Follow us on Facebook](#)

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Holland Club Induction and more @ Base Meeting 11/19/25

[United States Submarine Veterans Inc.](#)

[Rick Mitchell](#) · 4h ·

Always seems like so many things to do, not enough time, tired, worn out and many other reasons not to make our meetings but then I get there and can't imagine not being there.

We recently held our monthly meeting, where we had the distinct pleasure of witnessing Jim Pax's induction into the United States Submarine Veterans Holland Club. This esteemed recognition honors individuals who qualified 50 years ago and whose knowledge and insights have played a crucial role in our current safety and success. Furthermore, we warmly welcomed Kevin Hugman, our newest member, who has transferred from the Dallas Submarine Veterans base. [Jim L Pax](#) [United States Submarine Veterans](#) [Dallas Submarine Veterans](#)





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Central Texas Base Christmas Party



Date: 6 December 2025, Noon, at [Stiles Switch BBQ - Brentwood, Austin, TX](#) / 6610 N. Lamar Blvd / Austin, TX 78752

Cost: \$25 each (Base is picking up the rest), bring your checkbook or cash.

Menu: Brisket, Turkey, Sausage, 2 sides, water and tea, cash bar available. (If you remember 2 years ago the food was fabulous and there was more than we could eat).

We will also have a white elephant gift exchange for those who want to participate. Suggested value somewhere around \$20-25

Come on out and enjoy some Good Food and Fun along with some great company.

**Wreaths For Vets
Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery
Killeen, Tx
11/29/2025**

Rick Mitchell

11/30/2025

USSVI Central Texas Base

A few of us gathered at the [Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery](#) for the annual @Wreaths for Vets ceremony and wreath laying. This year 17,000 wreaths were placed ensuring every marker was covered. Thank You to all those who make this possible every year. Those of you who have been members of the base for a while probably recognize this lady who is placing a wreath on her husband and our shipmate's marker.



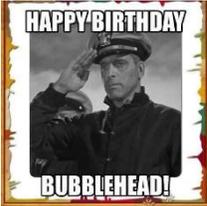




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BIRTHDAYS AND MEMBERSHIP DATA

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS



- Jesse Cook - 2nd
- Bill Brinkman – 3rd
- Harry Boyer - 4th
- Fred Maynard - 5th
- Dick Witte - 9th
- Jack Odom - 11th
- Mark White - 11th
- David Miller - 15th
- James Bowles - 16th

CENTRAL TEXAS BASE MEMBERSHIP

Report presented to Base Commander w/copy to the Yeoman.

Members listed in Central Texas Database	86
Regular Annual Members	24
National Life Members	54
Base Life Members	56
Holland Club Members	42
Associate Members	1
Dual Members	5
Prospective Members:	0
War Veterans	75
Members pending:	0
Submitted: Rick Mitchell, Membership	



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STOREKEEPER CORNER

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The Central Texas Base (CTB) Supply Store is open for business. The Supply Store can obtain most of the items you need for memorabilia, your vest, gifts for others, etc. You can order them from the Storekeeper at a meeting or online at vclaycamp@yahoo.com. CTB can often get items at a lower-than-normal price, so you save money. The SK can search the net to find out-of-the-ordinary items, for all branches of the service. When requesting a ship's patch, tell the SK which coast you served on board, as the patches are often different for each coast. The Base E-board is working on a way to inform you of the SK items in stock and prices and a way for to you purchase them either at the in-person meetings, or via an online email system to the SK for in-stock items.

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BASE TREASURER'S REPORT

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15 November 2025

**Financial Report as published in the October Meeting
Minutes for Period Ending 10/31/2025**

Funds as of - 10/1/2025 - \$22,844.63

RBFCU Checking (Gen Fund) \$19,246.31

RBFCU Savings (Mem Fund) \$3,730.08

Outstanding Checks (National) \$45

Funds as of - 11/15/2025 - \$22,976.39

Submitted: Chris Glover, Treasurer

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BINNACLE LIST

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Our Heavenly Father, we are so helpless. We care so much for our brothers and friends. They are special to all of us. It hurts us to see them suffering. And while we cannot be with them Lord, You be with them please and be with those who attend them. Comfort those who love them and need them, as well as those who must wait. Amen

Prayer for our brothers. Gene Hall, Garrett Onderdonk, Coy Smith, Chuck Trahan, The Burnet Jackson's.

Please keep us informed of any person who should be listed. These are the people that we know about, so please e-mail any E-Board member if you know of any member or his family that might be in crisis. Also please keep the Base Chaplain, Shipmate Bob Steinmann informed as well.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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Unless otherwise promulgated, the Base Monthly meetings will be held in-person and/or a combination of in-person and Zoom meetings.

First Monday, every Month, 0800 hours, Texas Veterans breakfast, Texas Grill, 101 State Hwy 71, Bastrop, TX 78602

6 December 2025, Annual Christmas Party/Social, 1200, Stiles Switch BBQ, 6610 N Lamar Blvd, Austin, TX 78752, see the Base Meeting Minutes above and the RSVP for details.

21 January 2026, Monthly meeting Central Texas Base, VFW Post #8587 and Zoom, 1000 N College St., Georgetown, TX 78626, 1800 Social hour, 1900 meeting.

18 February 2026, Monthly meeting Central Texas Base, VFW Post #8587 and Zoom, 1000 N College St., Georgetown, TX 78626, 1800 Social hour, 1900 meeting.

21 March 2026, Quarterly Social, TBD.

6 September – 11 September 2026, 2026 USSVI National Convention, Corpus Christi, TX. Registration is now open via the web page www.subvetconvention.org

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From your editor: There is no update this month. The turnover from Rick is in the works to Ken Rydolph.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Time Is

Too slow for those who wait.
Too swift for those who fear.
Too long for those who grieve.
Too short for those who rejoice.
But for those who love, time is eternity.

The Mop

My 4 year old son spilled his cola on the rug the other day, and wanted to clean up the mess himself. So, I told him that the mop was just outside the back door. Quickly, he ran to the door, but realized that it had become dark outside. Suddenly scared, he told me what the problem was. Assuring him, I told him that Jesus is everywhere, even in dark places, and that he'll always protect him. This put a smile on his face! So, he opened the door just enough to poke his head outside and called out, "Jesus, if you're out there, could you pass me the mop?"

EDITORS OFFICE

Lots goin' on around our base. Plenty to read and peruse here too. Me? Still keepin' busy juggling "The Deck Log" publication—what else is new?! Stop by my email (hscottss242@gmail.com) and say hello sometime. Or make yourself useful and send me a Sea Story or two, huh? The Editor is often guilty of plagiarizing anything he reads that he likes. Please also feel free to copy anything you like, but if he gets into trouble, so will you.

ETERNAL PATROL

Shipmates, I received the following Eternal Patrol Notice in October, from Shipmate Dick Witte, too late to get it into the November newsletter.

From: Richard Witte

Oct 30, 2025, 6:34 PM

Bill, I thought I had sent this to you, but it looks like I did not. We lost a great submarine sailor, and I am sure we have others who have served with him. We have stayed in touch through 2 boats and too many years. I miss him already. I have his books that were different in that they were dictated. If there is any interest in any of our vets who have interest swapping sea stories let me know. He was a nuke, but he was fascinated with Sonar and as you know Sonar guys like you and I are very lucky when we get one of those special officers. Cheers, Dick Witte STCM (SS)

From: Naval Submarine League PACSW Chapter <nslpacsw@hotmail.com>

Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 3:59 PM

Subject: Eternal Patrol Notice - CAPT (ret) Charlie MacVean, USN

To all NSLPACSW members and friends,

It is with great sadness that I report to you that NSLPACSW past president Captain (ret) Charlie MacVean, USN, passed away on Wednesday, 10 September 2025.

Charles Robert MacVean was born in Paterson, New Jersey in 1937. Following graduation from high school in Ridgewood, New Jersey, he attended Dartmouth College as an NROTC student. He earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree, Summa Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa, majoring in Engineering Physics, and was commissioned in 1959. Ensign MacVean served as Communicator on board the destroyer USS FORREST SHERMAN (DD931) prior to attending Cornell University where he received a Doctor of Philosophy Degree, majoring in Nuclear Science and Engineering.

Lieutenant MacVean then entered the Navy's Nuclear Power and Submarine Curriculum, completing courses in Bainbridge, MD, Windsor Locks, CT, and New London, CT. Lieutenant Commander MacVean was ordered to USS TINOSA (SSN606) in 1965 where he served as the Main Propulsion Assistant and Navigator and qualified in submarines. Following qualification as a Nuclear Propulsion Engineer, he attended the SSBN Navigator course and completed four POLARIS Strategic Deterrent Patrols as Navigator of the USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (SSBN598 (Blue)).



Charlie MacVean and the USS SEAWOLF (SSN-575), which he commanded from 1975 to 1978.

In 1970 he reported to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, where he served on the staff of the Assistant for Atomic Energy. From 1972 until 1975, Commander MacVean served as the Commissioning Executive Officer of the USS PARCHE (SSN683). He then reported for duty as the Commanding Officer of USS SEAWOLF (SSN575) in 1975. During those three years in command, USS SEAWOLF conducted extensive operations in the Pacific.



NATIONAL ALL-HANDS BULLETINS

USSVCF Monthly Newsletter

US Submarine Veterans Charitable Foundation, Inc. newsletter@ussvcf.org

11/19/2025

US Submarine Veterans Charitable Foundation Newsletter for November 2025

Hello Shipmates,

The Holidays remind us of the hardship's others are facing, especially the children. Go to <https://ussvcf.org/kaps-4-kidss-fund/> to learn more about our Kaps4Kid(SS) efforts.

Ed., Synopsis from the National Bulletin. Please read the National Bulletin.

www.ussvcf.org

- **Scholarship**
- **Charity Begins at Your Base**

- My Legacy Wills
- Kudos
- Scam Update

USSVCF Newsletter No 23 Copyright © November 2025 George Palmer Editor

Respectfully,
 George Palmer
 USSVCF Vice-President and Executive Director



USSVI 2026 National Convention

11/14/2025

DID YOU KNOW the USS Lexington is as tall as a 19-story building and as long as three New York City blocks? It's so large, you could play three football games at the same time on its flight deck! Drawing quite the buzz, the USS Lexington Museum caught the attention of Hollywood director Michael Bay, who filmed all aircraft take-offs on the Lexington for his 2001 movie Pearl Harbor, starring Ben Affleck and Alec Baldwin. It also features the F-14 Tomcat used in the 1986 blockbuster Top Gun. Visit the iconic ship while visiting for the 2026 [United States Submarine Veterans](#) National Convention and make sure to take in our very special Tolling Ceremony we will hold on board with a BBQ dinner right afterwards benefitting the USS City of Corpus Christi Sail Project. Registration and hotel reservations can be made here: www.subvetconvention.com

USSVI Central Texas Base

11/14/2025

Looking forward to working with our other bases here in Texas to host all of our [United States Submarine Veterans Inc.](#) shipmates here in Corpus Christi for the [USSVI 2026 National Convention](#).

USSVI Central Texas Base

11/14/2025

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*picture is from www.visitcorpuschristi.com



SUBMARINE NEWS GEDUNK FROM THE NET



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[France updates submarine-launched nuclear missile amid arms race](#)

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[The U.S. Navy Could Finalize the Long-Delayed Purchase of 15 New Nuclear Submarines from HII by the End of the Year](#)

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[Here comes Russia's first serial submarine to carry nuclear-powered giga-torpedoes](#)

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<https://nationalinterest.org/feature/lessons-from-taiwans-submarine-woes>

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Reproduced from the Naval News website. Indonesia conducts first torpedo test from KSOT autonomous submarine - Naval News

<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2025/11/indonesia-conducts-first-torpedo-test-from-ksot-autonomous-submarine/>

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Reproduced from the Zona Militar website. The U.S. Navy moves forward with the induction of the final Virginia-class Block IV nuclear-powered attack submarine

<https://www.zona-militar.com/en/2025/11/02/the-u-s-navy-moves-forward-with-the-induction-of-the-final-virginia-class-block-iv-nuclear-powered-attack-submarine/>

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<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2025/11/hanwha-ocean-presents-kss-iii-pn-submarine-offer-to-philippines-president-marcos/>

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<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/why-russias-new-khabarovsk-submarine-nightmare-for-nato-bw-110725>

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<https://nationalecurityjournal.org/the-navy-isnt-prepared-for-whats-coming/>

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<https://www.armyrecognition.com/news/navy-news/2025/argentina-nears-deal-with-france-for-scorpene-submarines-as-it-rebuilds-sea-control>

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<https://seapowermagazine.org/future-attack-submarine-utah-christened-at-electric-boat/>

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<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2025/11/fincantieri-renews-push-for-u212-nfs-submarine-proposal-to-the-philippines/>

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Reproduced from the Living Landscapes Projects website. Scientists are racing to understand why orca pods are gathering near submarine routes in what could be early signs of strategic tracking behavior

<https://www.livinglandscapesprojects.co.uk/15-11-2025/167021-orca-submarine-tracking/>

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<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2025/11/two-virginia-class-submarines-are-undergoing-sea-trials-simultaneously/>

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Reproduced from the Stars and Stripes website. Navy veterans push for more health coverage, studies on toxins in a submarine's sealed environment | Stars and Stripes

<https://www.stripes.com/veterans/2025-11-13/navy-veterans-submarines-benefits-toxic-exposure-19721405.html>

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Reproduced from the National Security Journal website. Columbia-Class: The U.S. Navy Is Building the Most Complex Submarine In Human History

<https://nationalecurityjournal.org/columbia-class-the-u-s-navy-is-building-the-most-complex-submarine-in-human-history/>

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<https://interestingengineering.com/military/us-navy-columbia-class-nuclear-submarines>

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<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2025/11/navantia-launches-second-s-80-class-submarine/>

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<https://news.usni.org/2025/11/20/bow-section-of-first-columbia-class-sub-heading-to-electric-boat>

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<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2025/11/hii-delivers-virginia-class-submarine-massachusetts-ssn-798-to-u-s-navy/>

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<https://interestingengineering.com/innovation/china-autonomous-drone-hunt-submarines>

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<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2025/11/u-s-navy-seeks-offers-for-new-heavyweight-torpedo/>

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Reproduced from the Interesting Engineering website. 8,000-ton submarine with stealth, key warfare tech delivered to US Navy

<https://interestingengineering.com/military/8000-ton-submarine-delivered-us-navy>

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<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2025/11/sweden-and-saab-selected-for-polands-new-submarines/>

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<https://www.bgr.com/2035661/world-first-5th-gen-submarine-a26-sweden/>

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Reproduced from the Global Defense News website. South Korea plans free transfer of ROKS Jang Bogo submarine to Poland by end of 2025

<https://www.armyrecognition.com/news/navy-news/2025/south-korea-plans-free-transfer-of-roks-jang-bogo-submarine-to-poland-by-end-of-2025>

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<https://www.janes.com/osint-insights/defence-news/c4isr/south-korea-to-upgrade-three-kss-ii-submarines>

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Reproduced from the Reuters website. Poland wants to sign contract on Swedish submarines in Q2 2026 at the latest | Reuters

<https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/poland-wants-sign-contract-swedish-submarines-q2-2026-latest-2025-11-26/>



Naval History and Heritage Command

<https://www.history.navy.mil/today-in-history/december-1.html>

12/1/1939 - U.S. Submarine Division 14, consisting of [Perch \(SS-176\)](#), [Permit \(SS-178\)](#), [Pickrel \(SS-177\)](#), [Pike \(SS-173\)](#), [Porpoise \(SS-172\)](#), and [Tarpon \(SS-175\)](#), arrives on the Asiatic Station to provide the Asiatic Fleet with some degree of offensive firepower in the event of a Pacific war.

12/7/1941 – [World War II](#) came to the United States early Sunday morning with a massive surprise attack by the Imperial Japanese Navy. Japanese carrier attack planes (in both torpedo and high-level bombing roles) and bombers, supported by fighters, numbering 353 aircraft from six aircraft carriers, [attacked the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor](#) in two waves, as well as nearby naval and military airfields and bases. The enemy sank five battleships and damaged three; and sank a gunnery training ship and three destroyers, damaged a heavy cruiser, three light cruisers, two destroyers, two seaplane tenders, two repair ships and a destroyer tender. Navy, Army, and Marine Corps facilities suffered varying degrees of damage, while 188 Navy, Marine Corps, and U.S. Army Air Force aircraft were destroyed. Casualties amounted to: killed or missing: Navy, 2,008; Marine Corps, 109; Army, 218; civilian, 68; and wounded: Navy, 710; Marine Corps, 69; Army, 364; civilian, 35. Japanese losses amounted to fewer than 100 men and 29 aircraft. Sailors, Marines, and soldiers fought back with extraordinary courage, often at the sacrifice of their own lives. Those without weapons to fight took great risk to save wounded comrades and to save their ships. Pilots took off to engage Japanese aircraft despite the overwhelming odds. Countless acts of valor went unrecorded, as many witnesses died in the attack. Fifteen U.S. Navy personnel were awarded the [Medal of Honor](#)—ranging from seaman to rear admiral—for acts of courage above and beyond the call of duty, ten of them posthumously.

12/8/1941 - Calling 7 December 1941 a “date that will live in infamy,” President Franklin D. Roosevelt asks Congress for a declaration of war against Japan. A joint resolution passes the same day.

12/17/1927 - While surfacing off Provincetown, Massachusetts, the submarine [S-4 \(SS-109\)](#) collides with the Coast Guard cutter *Paulding*. S-4 goes down with the loss of all 39 crewmen despite rescue efforts by Navy divers, including Chief Gunner's Mate Thomas Eadie, who receives the [Medal of Honor](#) for rescuing a fellow diver who becomes entangled in an airline. The submarine is later raised and recommissioned, serving until 1933.

12/23/1957 - [Skate \(SSN-578\)](#), the lead boat for the first class of nuclear-powered submarines, is commissioned.

12/26/1944 - The submarine [Swordfish \(SS-193\)](#) departs on its thirteenth and final war patrol. It never returns and is declared missing with the loss of all hands.

12/31/1959 - [George Washington \(SSBN-598\)](#), the Navy's first fleet ballistic missile submarine, is commissioned. The submarine was originally [Scorpion \(SSN-589\)](#), which was modified with the addition of a 130-foot missile section and renamed *George Washington*.

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United States Submarine Veterans Inc.

[David Beck](#) · 11/5/2025

History of the tolling of the bell

Historically, a church bell would be rung on three occasions around the time of a death. The first was the "passing bell" to warn of impending death, followed by the death knell which was the ringing of a bell immediately after the death, and the last was the "lych bell", or "corpse bell" which was rung as the funeral procession approached the church. This is what we know today as the Funeral toll.

The earliest mention of a ship's bell was on the British ship *Grace Dieu* in about 1485. The bell not only serves a functional purpose but also holds symbolic value, representing a ship's or command's legacy and connection to naval tradition. Proper care and handling reflect personnel's respect for their duty station and its heritage.

In all my time on 2 boats, SSBN 622 and SSN 596, I never saw or heard of a bell. Up until this post I would have sworn they didn't exist in our case. Now I know on a submarine the ship's bell is typically kept and maintained by the COB. He is responsible for the general upkeep of the ship's bell along with other traditions aboard. The Quartermasters usually share responsibilities for appearance and ensuring the bell is properly stored or displayed during ceremonies.

Bells in the Navy serve various ceremonial purposes, including:

1. Marking Time: Bells signal the time aboard ships (not on the boats)
2. Celebrating Victories: At the U.S. Naval Academy, bells are rung to celebrate victories over rival teams.
3. Honoring Departures: Bells are rung to announce the arrival or departure of high-ranking officers. The bells are struck in quick groups, followed by an announcement of the officer's name and rank.(on the boats I was on our officers were announced over the MC)

In Specific Ceremonies:

1. Change of Command: Bells are rung as the new commanding officer arrives or departs.
2. Retirement Ceremony: Similar to the change of command, bells are used to honor retiring officers
3. Rendering honors to departed shipmates, brothers and sisters in arms and lost ships, the Funeral Toll. In Navy SEAL training, a bell symbolizes the option to quit. On the boats I was told, but never witnessed, you just had to stand on the pier and refuse to board.
4. In regular USSVI monthly base meetings we toll the Base's Bell for each lost boat with those aboard

In conclusion, understanding the protocols for ringing bells in the Navy is essential for honoring traditions and ceremonies. Each use of the bell carries deep significance, reflecting respect and recognition within the naval community.

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[Military All The Way](#) ·

11/18/2025



The first time three Nuclear Submarines have simultaneously surfaced at the North Pole

Imagine navigating beneath a thick, frozen ceiling, where the water is near-freezing and the compass lines converge into a single, confusing point. Now imagine three highly advanced, nuclear-powered attack submarines, the USS Ray (SSN-653), USS Hawkbill (SSN-666), and USS Archerfish (SSN-678), coordinating a maneuver to break through that ice, all at the same time, at the exact geographic North Pole.

That's exactly what happened in 1986. This achievement marked the very first time in history that three U.S. Navy submarines simultaneously surfaced at the Pole. It wasn't just a publicity stunt; it was a complex operational mission designed to demonstrate navigation precision, tactical coordination, and, most importantly, the endurance and capability of the Silent Service in the most demanding

environment on Earth.

Operating under the Arctic ice demands incredible skill. Unlike open water, the submarine has no easy way to communicate or see the surface, relying solely on highly accurate inertial navigation systems and sonar to map the ice canopy for potential thin spots. Bringing one boat up through the ice is tough enough, requiring the sub to use its buoyancy to punch through the frozen layer. Coordinating three separate boats to converge on the same invisible point on the globe, and break ice within close proximity of each other, is a geometric and navigational challenge of the highest order.

When the three hulls finally cracked through and emerged onto the ice cap, it wasn't just a technical success; it was a powerful statement. The sight of three combat vessels, each capable of independent global operation, sharing the same frozen landmark highlighted the dominance of the U.S. Navy beneath the polar seas. This epic 1986 surfacing remains a hallmark of Arctic submarine operations, a reminder that the crews of the Ray, Hawkbill, and Archerfish truly took their boats to the extreme northern edge of the world.

[#fbllifestyle](#)

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[United States Submarine Veterans Inc.](#)

[Jim Shipp](#) · 11/24/2025

[MilitaryHistoria](#)

[November 22 at 12:28 PM](#) ·



The Japanese Type A midget submarine that was recovered near the entrance to Pearl Harbor in July 1960 is a significant historical find, as it relates to the attack on Pearl Harbor during World War II.

During the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Japan deployed a fleet of midget submarines, with five Type A midget submarines being part of the assault.

These small, stealthy submarines were designed for infiltration of U.S. naval harbors and were equipped with torpedoes to attack larger ships. Each Type A midget submarine was crewed by two to three men and was capable of launching two torpedoes at enemy ships.

The specific Type A midget submarine recovered in July 1960 was one of the few that were not sunk during the attack or subsequently recovered by the U.S. Navy.

This particular submarine, identified as the HA-19, was found by the U.S. Navy during a recovery operation off the coast of Pearl Harbor. The submarine was discovered resting about 1,000 yards from the harbor entrance, near the area known as the "Hickam Field" end of the harbor.

The recovery of the midget submarine was a significant event for historical research, as it provided further insight into the scope of the Japanese assault on Pearl Harbor.

It was revealed that the submarine had been sunk during the attack, as evidenced by the large hole in its hull. It is believed that the submarine, commanded by a Japanese officer named Ensign Kazuo Sakamaki, had been unsuccessful in its mission to launch its torpedoes at ships in the harbor.

The submarine's discovery also added to the understanding of the Japanese strategy and the involvement of midget submarines in the broader plan to attack Pearl Harbor.

Although the submarines did not have as much success as the aerial attack, they marked a new form of naval warfare and were a crucial element of Japan's surprise assault on the United States.

In 1960, after its recovery, the submarine was transferred to the U.S. Navy, where it was studied and later placed on public display. It remains an important artifact from the attack on Pearl Harbor, contributing to the historical record of that pivotal day in World War II.

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Reproduced from the Yarnhub website. How Six Tiny Submarines Crippled Nazi Germany's Beast

[How Six Tiny Submarines Crippled Nazi Germany's Beast | Watch](#)

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Reproduced from the Dark Seas Official website. The Strange Device Found Hidden Inside a Captured Nazi Sub

[The Strange Device Found Hidden Inside a Captured Nazi Sub | Watch](#)

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Reproduced from the Idaho Public Television website. America's Sagebrush Navy

[Idaho Public Television Specials](#)

11/10/2025

In the late 1940's, Captain Hyman G. Rickover oversaw the creation of three prototype reactors in Idaho. Those reactors would be the test bed for the world's first nuclear submarine and aircraft carrier. America's Sagebrush Navy tells the story of the creation of the Nuclear Navy and how it changed America's influence on a world stage.

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Reproduced from the Dark Seas Official website. The French Super Submarine That Vanished Without a Trace

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Reproduced from the Not What you Think website. Crushed at Depth: The US Submarines Lost on Eternal Patrol –

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/travel/article/crushed-at-depth-the-us-submarines-lost-on-eternal-patrol/vi->

December 2025

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History Article of the Month

From Shipmate Erik Heter, Base Historian

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Extraordinary Service – History of the USS Growler

The USS *Growler* (SS-215) was a Gato-class submarine built by the Electric Boat Company in Groton, Connecticut, a shipyard that produced many of the U.S. Navy’s most important undersea vessels during World War II. Her keel was laid on February 10, 1941, and after an accelerated and wartime-focused construction process, she was launched on November 22 of that same year. Commissioned on March 20, 1942, *Growler* entered a rapidly expanding submarine force that would soon play a decisive role in the Pacific theater.

Over the course of the war, *Growler* conducted eleven patrols and earned eight battle stars, reflecting her consistent engagement and effectiveness against Japanese naval and merchant shipping. Her first patrol began on June 24, 1942, when she departed Midway to operate near Dutch Harbor, Alaska. In a dramatic opening to her wartime service, *Growler* encountered three Japanese destroyers only days after arriving on station. She launched a submerged attack, hitting two ships amidships and striking a third in the bow. Although that destroyer managed to fire two torpedoes at *Growler*, both missed, and she returned safely to Pearl Harbor on July 17 without further engagements.

Growler’s second patrol, beginning August 5, 1942, proved the most successful of her wartime career. Patrolling near Taiwan, she made several attacks on merchant vessels and ultimately sank three cargo and supply ships totaling more than 18,000 tons. One 2,205-ton cargo ship was struck by two torpedoes and sank within minutes—a testament to the submarine’s growing proficiency under combat conditions. She completed the patrol and returned to Pearl Harbor on September 30, contributing significantly to the early U.S. submarine campaign against Japanese logistics.

Her third and fourth war patrols were conducted in increasingly dangerous waters. Operating in the Solomon Islands from October to December 1942, *Growler* was unable to engage effectively due to heavy enemy air presence. She subsequently redeployed to Brisbane, Australia, arriving on December 3. Her fourth patrol would become the defining episode in her service history, not for the tonnage sunk but for the extraordinary heroism of her commanding officer, Commander Howard W. Gilmore. On January 16, 1943, *Growler* successfully attacked and later confirmed the sinking of a 5,857-ton passenger-cargo ship. But it was during a night surface engagement on February 7 that fate delivered *Growler* into naval legend.

In that encounter, *Growler* attempted a surface attack on an enemy gunboat that aggressively turned to ram her. Gilmore maneuvered to avoid the collision, but *Growler* still struck the vessel at 17 knots, severely bending her bow. As the gunboat raked the bridge with machine-gun fire, Gilmore—already wounded—ordered the bridge cleared. Unable to get below and realizing his ship was in peril, he gave the now-immortal final command: “**Take her down.**” The executive officer, LCDR Arnold F. Schade, obeyed, diving the submarine with his captain still topside. Gilmore’s sacrifice saved his crew and his ship; he was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, becoming the first U.S. submariner of World War II to receive the distinction. The citation describes his “distinguished gallantry and valor above and beyond the call of duty” during the fourth patrol.

After returning to Brisbane on February 17 for repairs—including the fitting of a new bow—*Growler* continued operations. Her fifth through seventh patrols were comparatively uneventful, with only one confirmed sinking. A combination of heavy enemy air coverage, lack of suitable targets, and mechanical issues limited her ability to conduct successful attacks. After generator and battery problems cut her seventh patrol short, *Growler* steamed to Pearl Harbor and then to Hunter’s Point, California, for a major overhaul that would restore her to top operational condition.

Returning to action, *Growler*’s eighth patrol was hampered by poor weather, preventing meaningful engagements. Her ninth patrol marked a shift in tactics: she operated as part of a coordinated wolfpack alongside USS *Bang* and USS *Seahorse*. Although she achieved firing position only once during the patrol, she made the attack count, sinking a Japanese cargo ship. These combined submarine operations reflected the increasing coordination and offensive capability of the U.S. submarine fleet as the war progressed.

Her tenth patrol, beginning August 11, 1944, placed *Growler* in yet another wolfpack—this time with USS *Sealion* and USS *Pampanito*—operating in the Formosa Strait. In a night surface action on August 31, the pack attacked a Japanese convoy, sowing confusion among the escorts and merchant ships. Later, on September 14, *Growler* scored confirmed hits on a Japanese destroyer, contributing to its sinking. The wolfpack also took part in rescuing more than 150 Allied prisoners of war who had been trapped in the water after their own transport ships were sunk by U.S. submarines—a haunting irony of submarine warfare in the Pacific.

Growler’s eleventh and final patrol began on October 20, 1944, when she departed Fremantle, Australia, in company with USS *Hake* and USS *Hardhead*. On November 8, as the wolfpack closed a Japanese convoy, *Growler*—positioned opposite

her packmates—gave the signal to commence attack. It was the last message ever received from her. *Hake* and *Hardhead* reported hearing explosions—possibly torpedoes or depth charges—on *Growler's* side of the convoy. After three days of searching without success, *Growler* was declared lost, most likely destroyed by an escort in the convoy she had moved to engage. Her entire crew was lost with her, a solemn reminder of the perilous nature of submarine warfare in the Pacific.

Today, the legacy of USS *Growler* endures in the valor of her sailors and the extraordinary sacrifice of Commander Gilmore. The closing words of the presentation—"Sailors of the *Growler*, rest your oars. We have the watch."—capture the enduring respect paid to the submarine and her crew. Their service reflects both the courage and the high cost borne by the silent service in the Pacific War.



THOUGHTS

Things That Make You Think

Facebook post, 11/3/2025

My father, a man who built diesel engines for 40 years at the old mill, now struggles to unmute the local news on TV. My mother, who once hosted chaotic Thanksgiving dinners for thirty people, now gets exhausted just making a pot of coffee.

And I am the thief who stole their time.

I don't mean to be. I live 800 miles away, in a city where "busy" isn't an excuse, it's a status symbol. I have a mortgage that breathes down my neck, two kids in competitive sports, and a laptop that pings with "urgent" demands at 10 PM.

I am a "good son." I call every Sunday. I send expensive fruit baskets for Christmas. I fly them out for graduations.

But I am a thief. Because I give them my scraps. My rushed phone calls in the car. My "just checking in" texts. I've traded presence for presents, and I convinced myself it was a fair deal.

Last month, I had to fly back to Ohio for a work thing. I finished early and had a free 24 hours. I rented a car and drove the two hours to my parents' street, the one with the big oak trees that are probably older than the state itself.

I turned the corner onto their block, and I saw it. It was 3:00 in the afternoon. Broad daylight. The sky was a bright, cloudless blue. And their porch light was on.

That old, brass-caged light. The one that hums. The one caked with tiny, mummified moths. It was glowing, pointlessly, against the afternoon sun.

I used to tease them about it. "Pop, you're paying for electricity you're not even using!" I'd say, full of the know-it-all efficiency of my generation. He'd just grunt. Mom would wave her hand, "Oh, leave it be."

This time, I parked at the curb, but I didn't get out. I just sat. I watched that light.

I'm 52 years old. My father is 89. My mother is 87. Their world has become so very small.

The big drives to Lake Erie are gone. The bowling league trophies are dusty. The VFW hall, where Pop used to drink a beer with men who understood what he'd seen in Korea, is a yoga studio now. Their life has shrunk to the living room, the kitchen, and the front porch.

When I finally went to the door (they didn't hear the car pull up), Mom grabbed my arm like she was afraid I was a mirage. Pop stood up from his recliner—a slow, painful unbending of stiff joints—and just nodded, his eyes suddenly wet. "Well, look who it is," he rasped.

Later that evening, while Mom hummed, making me a sandwich I didn't need, I pointed to the front door. "Mom," I asked, "why was the porch light on at 3 PM today?"

She stopped, looked out the window over the sink, and smiled a small, tired smile.

"Because, honey," she said, "someone might be coming home."

It hit me like a physical blow. She didn't just mean me. She meant anyone.

December 2025

She meant my sister in Arizona. She meant the grandkids who are "too busy" with college. She meant the neighbor who moved away. That light isn't a utility. It's a signal. It's a lighthouse. It's the last, stubborn flicker of a generation that believed in waiting.

A single flick of that switch is a daily, defiant act of hope.

I stayed with them for the next 20 hours. I watched them. I saw how they both glanced up, a micro-second of anticipation, every time a car slowed down on the street. I saw how Pop, who once commanded a team of 50 men at the mill, now looks at his smartphone like it's a piece of alien technology, waiting for a photo of a grandchild to appear. I saw how Mom, who used to be the sharpest card player in the county, now keeps a list on the fridge just to remember her doctor's appointments.

They are not the people who raised me. They are the echoes of them.

And they don't ask for anything. That's the part that kills you. They don't want your money. They don't want a cruise. They don't want you to "fix" their problems.

They just want you. They want to hear your key in the lock. They want to listen to you complain about your job. They want to sit in the same room, in comfortable silence, and watch a game show. They want your time. The undivided, non-multi-tasking, phone-in-your-pocket time.

The truth is, parents never stop being parents. Their bodies may fail, their world may shrink, and their memories may fade, but their job never ends. Their job is to wait. To keep the light on.

Our job is to notice.

So if you're reading this. If you're lucky enough to still have them—the aging, slow, frustratingly analog people who built you—please, just go see them.

Don't wait for a holiday. Don't wait for a birthday. Don't wait for a crisis. Go on a random Tuesday. Show up. Sit on the scratchy old sofa. Eat the stale cookies they offer. Listen to the story you've heard a hundred times.

Hold their hand. Look at their hands, the roadmap of a life that was lived for you.

Because one day, you'll turn the corner onto their street. And the porch light will be off. The house will be dark.

And you will realize that you are no longer a son, or a daughter. You are an orphan. And you will barter with God, the universe, or the empty air, for five more minutes. Just five minutes to sit in that quiet room, under that pointless light, and say "I'm home."

Don't be a thief like me. Go home. The light is on.

[#Family](#) [#Parents](#) [#Aging](#) [#Love](#) [#LifeLessons](#) [#VisitYourParents](#)

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The old adage "don't get down unless you have a plan for getting up. This truth becomes more evident every day!!

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We're all just one accident, one diagnosis, one unexpected phone call away from a completely different life.

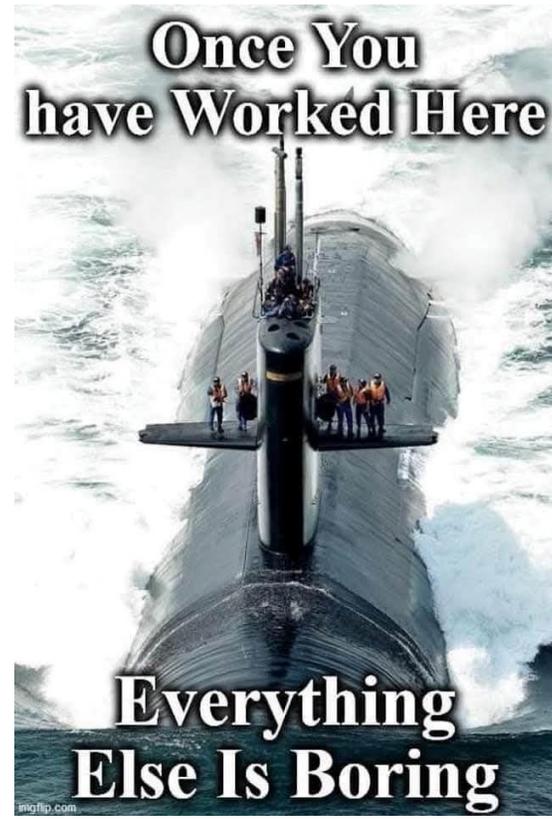
Stay humble and don't take anything for granted.

UNKNOWN / ART OF POETS

Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.

Leo Tolstoy

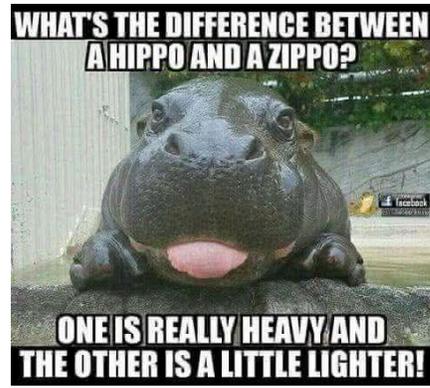
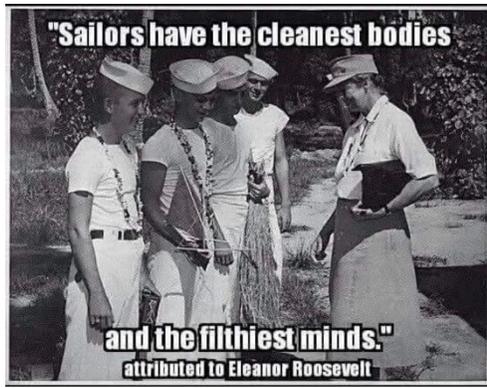
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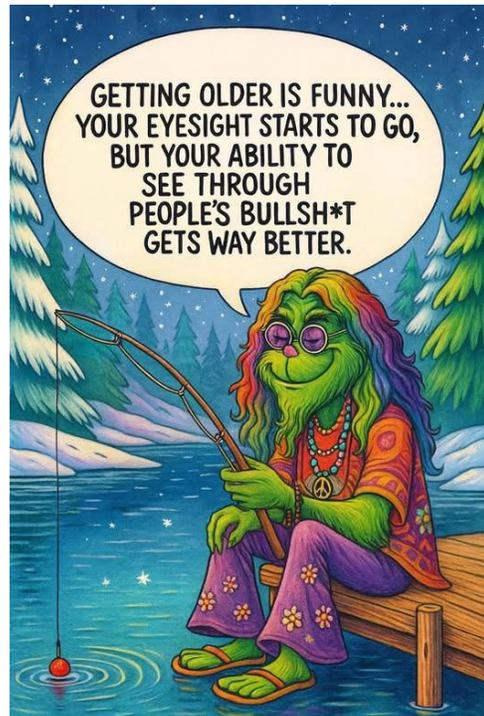
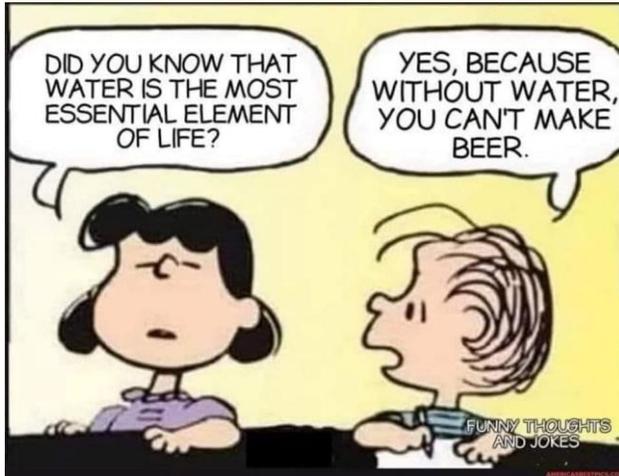
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ONCE UPON A TIME

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Just a reminder this year for Christmas. If your birth year starts with a 19, wrap your presents on a table and not the floor 🤔





December – USSVI Charitable Foundation Refresher Training

Learn more about our USSVI organization – an oft repeated subject, but necessary.

In June, I started a series of the USSVI School of the Boat about the USSVI. I'm continuing the series on the USSVI Charitable Foundation and its various foundation funds. This month is the Library Fund.

USSVCF Library Fund

Question: What is the USSVCF Library Fund, and who is the Fund manager? **Answer:** The Library Fund supports procuring submarine-related books, video, and media and the Fund Chairman is Joseph R. Mathis.

Over the nearly 55 years that USSVI has been in existence, many departed shipmates have left their personal libraries to us. As a result, the library currently has 2,501 books, videos and other literary items in it.

Question: Where can I find the USSVI Library? **Answer:** The library is located at the USS RAZORBACK museum submarine site at the Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum, 120 Riverfront Park Drive, North Little Rock, AR

Question: What is the Library Fund balance? **Answer:** As of 30 September 2025, \$11,806.

Question: Again, is my donation tax deductible? **Answer:** Yes. The USSVCF is a 501(c)3 organization and all donations are fully tax deductible.

Repeat Question/answer: How can I donate to the Library Fund? **Answer:** To donate to the Library Fund, go to the USSVCF website at www.ussvcf.org. Or scan the following QR code.

