



# The MidWatch

August 2012  
Volume 18 - Issue 8

## The Monthly Newsletter, Perch Base, USSVI Phoenix, Arizona

[WWW.PERCH-BASE.ORG](http://WWW.PERCH-BASE.ORG)



### Featured Article

### The WWII DIESEL BOAT ERA

by Michael Skurat, member Groton Base & Central CT Chapter of Sub Vets WWII

## USSVI CREED

Our organization's purpose is . . .

"To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution.

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

The organization will engage in various projects and deeds that will bring about the perpetual remembrance of those shipmates who have given the supreme sacrifice. The organization will also endeavor to educate all third parties it comes in contact with about the services our submarine brothers performed and how their sacrifices made possible the freedom and lifestyle we enjoy today."



## 2012 Perch Base Foundation Supporters

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

**Remember, if you contribute by check, it must be made out to the "Perch Base Foundation."**

## These are the 2012 Foundation Donors



JERRY N. ALLSTON  
KENNETH R. ANDERSON  
REYNALDO F ATOS  
STEVEN BALTHAZOR  
KENNETH E. BECKER  
RICHARD BERNIER  
RONALD B. BEYER  
WALTER BLOMGREN  
CHARLES J. BRADY  
EDGAR T. BROOKS  
HERBERT J. COULTER JR.  
ROGER J. COUSIN  
EUGENE V. CRABB  
GEORGE L. CRIDER  
MICHAEL DAHL  
JAMES R. DENZIEN  
WARNER H. DOYLE JR.  
JAMES N. EDWARDS  
HARRY ELLIS  
CHARLES EMMETT  
HOWARD M. ENLOE  
JAMES EVANS  
THOMAS E. FOOSHEE  
JOHN A. GRAVES  
BILLY A. GRIEVES

WILLIAM "KELLY" GRISSOM  
MICHAEL J. HALER  
ELDON L. HARTMAN  
EDWARD J. HAWKINS  
GLENN A. HEROLD  
THEODORE HUNT  
DAVY L. JONES  
L. A. (MIKE) KEATING  
RICHARD F. KUNZE  
DOUGLAS M. LA ROCK  
ROBERT A. LANCENDORFER  
ALBERT LANDECK  
DEWAYNE LOBER  
BURTIS W. LOFTIN  
STEPHEN A. MARCELLINO  
GEORGE MARIONS  
RAYMOND MARSHALL  
TERRY MARTIN  
ANGUS HOWARD MCPHERSON  
ALAN H. MILLER  
PAUL V. MILLER  
ROGER M. MILLER  
ROGER R. MILLER  
TIM MOORE  
DANNY R. MOSS

JAMES F. NEWMAN  
JAMES W. NEWMAN  
ERNE. PLANTZ  
JAMES RATTE  
DANIEL J. REEL  
STANLEY N. REINHOLD  
BRUCE "ROBIE" ROBINSON  
STANLEY I. RUD  
PETE SATTIG  
RICK SIMMONS  
WAYNE KIRK SMITH  
STEVEN K. STANGER  
ADRIAN M. STUKE  
WILLIAM M. TIPPETT  
JOSEPH J. VARESE  
PHILLIP WAGNER  
ROBERT WARNER  
JAMES L. WALL  
FORREST J. WATSON  
RICH WOMACK  
WILLIAM WOOLCOTT  
JOHN G. ZAICHKIN  
RONALD J. ZOMOK




---

## Sailing Orders

---



### NEXT MEETING

Next regular meeting will be AUGUST 11 at noon (social hour at 11 a.m.)

Dillon's Restaurant at Arrowhead

20585 N. 59th Avenue

Glendale, AZ 85308-6821

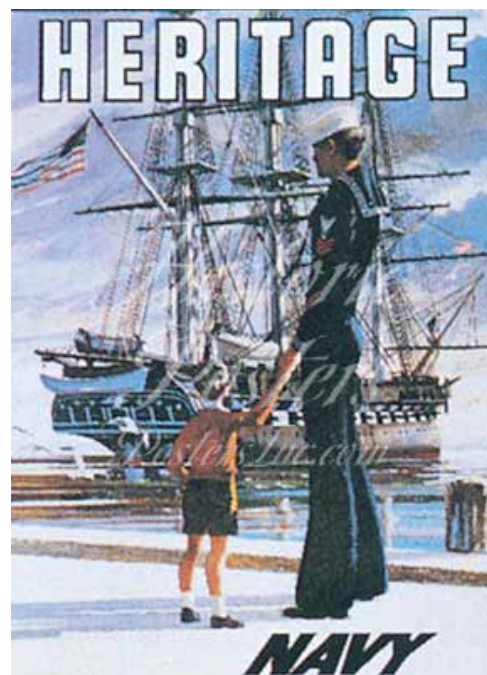
---

Article	Page #
Title Page and USSVI Creed - <i>Our Purpose</i>	1
Perch Base Foundation Supporters	2
Table of Contents/Sailing Orders	3
Lest We Forget, August Boats on "Eternal Patrol"	4
Perch Base Officers	5
Communications Officer Report	6
<i>"That's Odd - #1"</i>	6
From The Wardroom: Base Commander Report	7
Chief of the Boat's Report	7
July Base Meeting Minutes	8
<i>"That's Odd - #2"</i>	9
Photos - Prescott's Rodeo Days Parade	10
Photos - "We Captured the Dolphins"	11
August Base Birthdays	12
Need a Ride to a Base Meeting . . .	12
"Save-Our-Sail" Report	13
Chaplain's Column	13
<i>Final Instructions Page - A tear-out page to leave with your final instructions for the next-of-kin</i>	14
Russia to Test the Bulava Ballistic Missile . . . Again	15
<i>That's Odd #3</i>	15
Lost Boat: USS Bullhead (SS-332)	16
<i>That's Odd #4</i>	17
Shipmate-to-Shipmate: Perks of reaching 60 or being over 70 and heading towards 80	18
The Great Toilet Paper Memo	19
Feature: WWII Diesel Boat Era	21

---

**Enjoy the summer!  
Perch Base has no  
events, other than  
Base Meetings, until  
the Fall.**

---



# LEST WE FORGET THOSE STILL ON PATROL

## AUGUST ETERNAL PATROLS



### USS BULLHEAD (SS-332)

06 Aug 1945 84 Lost

Japanese Air Attack off Bali Coast



### USS FLIER (SS-250)

13 Aug 1944 78 Lost

Japanese Mine in Balabac Strait



### USS BASS (SS-164)

17 Aug 1942 25 Lost

Flooding off Panama Canal, Boat survived



### USS HARDER (SS-257)

24 Aug 1944 79 Lost

Japanese Depth Charge Attack off Luzon, P.I.



### USS COCHINO (SS-345)

26 Aug 1949 1 Lost

Battery Explosion off Norway



### USS TUSK (SS-426)

26 Aug 1949 6 Lost

Assisting USS COCHINO off Norway, Boat survived



# PERCH BASE OFFICERS



**BASE COMMANDER**  
Jim Denzien  
(623) 547-7945  
[commander@perch-base.org](mailto:commander@perch-base.org)



**BASE VICE-COMMANDER**  
Howard Doyle  
(623) 935-3830  
[vice-commander@perch-base.org](mailto:vice-commander@perch-base.org)



**SECRETARY**  
John Schlag  
(623) 872-8224  
[secretary@perch-base.org](mailto:secretary@perch-base.org)



**TREASURER**  
Bob Warner  
(623) 825-7042  
[treasurer@perch-base.org](mailto:treasurer@perch-base.org)



**COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER**  
Chuck Emmett  
(623) 466-9569  
[communications@perch-base.org](mailto:communications@perch-base.org)



**MEMBERSHIP**  
Rick Simmons  
(623) 583-4235  
[membership@perch-base.org](mailto:membership@perch-base.org)



**CHIEF OF THE BOAT**  
Rich Kunze  
(623) 932-3068  
[cob@perch-base.org](mailto:cob@perch-base.org)



**EVENT COORDINATOR**  
Joe "Wanderer" Varese  
(623) 388-6749  
[events@perch-base.org](mailto:events@perch-base.org)



**CHAPLAIN**  
Walt Blomgren  
(602) 309-4407  
[chaplain@perch-base.org](mailto:chaplain@perch-base.org)



**STOREKEEPER**  
De Wayne Lober  
(602) 944-4200  
[storekeeper@perch-base.org](mailto:storekeeper@perch-base.org)



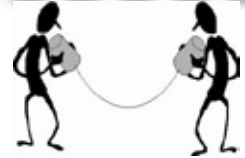
**HISTORIAN**  
Jim Newman  
(602) 840-7788  
[historian@perch-base.org](mailto:historian@perch-base.org)



**PAST-COMMANDER**  
Stan Reinhold  
[past-commander@perch-base.org](mailto:past-commander@perch-base.org)



## COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER'S REPORT



Many of us may be, unintentionally, helping the enemies of our troops in harm's way! If you have ever sent or forwarded an e-mail message or prayer that's supposed to be, "forward to as many as you know," or something like, "send to 10 people," you're helping the enemy in a small way!

How can that be? It's a patriotic message or a prayer for our troops? But think about what you're asking to have happen. You're requesting that internet traffic be increased by a huge factor! One message goes to 10, 10 goes to 100, 100 goes to 1,000, 1,000 goes to 10,000, etc. And that's what happens in just four forwardings!

So we have the potential to really load the internet up. And guess what our troops use in a big way — both for operations and to stay in touch with home. Yep! The internet!

Now, granted, one such message isn't earth-shattering but how many are out there? So don't send such messages to me (and I hope you'll join me) because they'll end right in my computer's recycle bin. Think about it! Sure we want to show support but there are other ways.

I'm trying to keep the webpage up-to-date, primarily with event pictures. It's taking me a while because we've had two major events in July. First was the Prescott parade the beginning of the month and the second was back to Prescott for the Steal the Dolphins at the Gudgeon Base meeting. I should have the pictures all in the appropriate webpage section shortly but in the meantime, some of the pictures are in the current issue of the MidWatch.

Also changed and added is the step-by-step building of the Base float, the USS Phoenix (SSN-702.) You can reach it by a hot link on the Save-our-Sail page.

That's it on communications. Keep the input coming. I'll try and use everything I get.

### That's Odd . . . #1



- *A church in Kyoto, Japan calls its congregation to worship with a bell from a submarine. The bell, from the submarine USS RAY was purchased for the church, and was transported to Yokosuka, Japan by another submarine, the USS RONQUIL.*
- *For entertainment on U.S. submarines movies, television, ice cream machines and stereo music players are available. The USS SEAWOLF also had an electronic organ. There have been instances of boxing matches held onboard, and the crew of one submarine had a kite flying contest from an anchored submarine.*
- *Modern submarines can travel faster submerged than they can on the surface. They can fully submerge in less than a minute.*
- *Robert Fulton, inventor of the steamboat, was an avid submarine enthusiast. He built several submersible warships, one of which was known as the Nautilus.*
- *The rig for dive in a modern submarine requires the crew to conduct more than 225 individual and operational checks.*
- *The submarine was not generally recognized as a legitimate instrument of warfare until the Civil War.*
- *Only the cream of Navy manpower is considered acceptable for submarine service. Volunteer applicants are given exhaustive physical and psychological screening before being accepted for training. Those who make the grade are trained in the Submarine School at New London and aboard operating submarines. After graduation from the Submarine School and actual service in submarines, those who pass all tests may wear the Dolphins, insignia of the submarine service.*
- *Both nuclear and modern diesel powered submarine are now equipped with a breathing device known as a snorkel, which permits the vessel to draw fresh air from the surface while running submerged.*



**From the Wardroom**  
**Base Commander's Message**

**Jim Denzien - Commander**  
*(Who writes and edits this section.)*

Shipmates:

We had an outstanding turnout to "Capture the Dolphins" from Gudgeon Base. We had 13 Perch Base members for the Capture! Besides having a great time with our shipmates in Prescott Valley, we brought back the Plaque. It is being engraved as I write this and will be available for viewing at the next meeting. We all stopped at the Rock Springs Café for breakfast and had a great time there also.

The only other issue I'd like to address is voting in the National Election. As far as I know you don't have to vote for everyone or everything. Go online and fill out your ballot as you see fit. But vote! It truly is in your best interest.

Our next meeting is on the 11<sup>th</sup> of August. Come and see the Traveling Dolphins!

Fraternally,

Jim Denzien, Base Commander



**Chief of the Boat**  
**August 2012 Comments**

**Richard Kunze - COB**  
*(Who writes and edits this section.)*

Those of us that participated in the Prescott parade had an enjoyable time. The crowd along the parade route were very friendly and appreciative of our service and representing The United States Submarine Veterans. Riding in the parade we had had members from Gudgeon (host base), Perch and Tucson Bases. In our estimation this is one of the largest parades in Arizona (possibly bigger than Phoenix's Veterans Day parade). We encourage all members to try to attend these parades and static displays of our float. Start thinking now about attending Veterans Day activities in November that the Base had already been invited to participate in.

The names of the members from the three bases that attended in Prescott are listed below. Hopefully, maybe YOUR name will appear on the next event's muster list.

- |               |                      |                 |
|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Richard Kunze | Rick Simmons         | Dalene Doyle    |
| Bob Warner    | W. H. Doyle Jr.      | Jim Denzien     |
| Ed Brooks     | Jim Dudas            | Mary Denzien    |
| Pat Warner    | Robb Roberts         | Tim Moore       |
| Don DeMonte   | Steven Stanger       | Don Anders      |
| Dirk Waldron  | Carole Blackwell     | Ted Willis      |
| Ken Ensels    | DeWayne Lober        | Tom Warner      |
| Brad Veek     | William Blan Kemerer | Kelly and Hooly |



**Base Meeting Minutes**  
**July 2012 Meeting**

*John Schlag - Secretary*  
*(Who writes and edits this section.)*

The regular monthly meeting of the Arizona Submarine Veterans Perch Base was convened at Dillon’s Restaurant at Arrowhead, in Glendale, AZ at 12:00 hours, 14 July, 2012. The meeting was called to order by Howard Doyle, Base Vice Commander.

The “Call to Order” was followed by a prayer of invocation by Walt Blomgren, Base Chaplain, the Pledge of Allegiance and the Reciting of our Purpose. The tolling ceremony was conducted for all boats lost in the month of July, a moment of silence was observed for our shipmates on eternal patrol, “Sailor’s rest your oars”.

Howard started the meeting by introducing new members and the guests present.

Steve Leon – Will be joining Perch Base.

According to the Sailing List there were 20 members and guest present. The complete sailing list included:

Howard Doyle	Bob Warner	Chuck Emmett	Richard Kunze
Rick Simmons	DeWayne Lober	Walt Blomgren	John Schlag
Richard Bernier	Davy Jones	Douglas M La Rock	Kelly Grissom
Herb Coulter	Steven Stanger	Jerry Pittman	Heather Diaz
Robb Roberts	Paul Miller	Bob Gilmore	Steve Leon

The, minutes from the June, 2012 regular meeting needed to be approved as published in the “Mid Watch”. A motion was made and seconded. The motion was carried by unanimous voice vote.

Bob Warner read the Treasurer’s Report for June, 2012. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer’s Report as read. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**Base Officers and Board of Directors Reports**

**Chief of the Boat** – Richard Kunze mentioned that on August 4<sup>th</sup> that White Mountains Base in Snowflake was having a Charity Golf Tournament. Richard is trying to get information from Steve Day and will put it out as soon as he gets it.

**Chaplain** – Walt Blomgren – had called both Billy Grieves and Davy Jones check on them. He hadn’t had any reply but Davy’s here at the meeting so he is Ok. Walt had received an E-Mail reporting that Adrian Stuke was having some diagnostic work done and had been in the hospital. Howard added that Adrian had moved to Chino Valley so the listed address wasn’t good. Adrian is going to the VA Hospital and has asked for no visitors. Adrian for those that don’t know him is a long time member of Perch Base and we will try to keep members updated on his status.

**Membership Chairman** – Rick Simmons again encouraged everyone to access the National Website, get a password and update their profile. User Name is easy First Letter of first name as Capital letter, First Letter of last name as Capital letter, followed by the rest of last name in lower case i.e. XYzzzzz it is not your E-Mail address. So get in there and help us out. If you don’t have computer access call Rick at home, he will tell you what’s there and he can update for you.

**Communications Officer** – Chuck Emmett reminded everyone that it was up to the waiter or waitress they may add a gratuity to the bill so you need to look at it. Chuck had sent out Flash Traffic on voting in National Election’s. He got some responses and helped them out. If you need assistance let Chuck know he will try to help either on line or by phone. Howard added some comments and said that as of last Wednesday Perch Base with approximately 160 members and 124 eligible to vote only 15 had voted. There was further discussion about voting and discussion about National Convention and the site selection. Send comments to Chuck at Communications @ Perch Base.Com



**Secretary** – John Schlag had nothing to add.

**Base Storekeeper** – De Wayne Lober had Shirts, Turvis Tumbler, and the other items on display. Deal of the day Base Coffee Mugs.

**Treasurer** – Bob Warner had nothing to add.

**Event Coordinator** – Joe Varese was not present at today's meeting.

**Vice Commander** – Howard Doyle stated the only thing he had was the voting discussion and we have already covered that. He had talked with The Base Commander and he was in Wichita Kansas.

### **Old Business**

The COB pulled the Float to Prescott for the Frontier Days Parade June 30<sup>th</sup>. Several members went up on Friday prior and Gudgeon Base sponsored a dinner Friday night. Eight of us went to the Rodeo Friday night, Howard's comment was Stock 29 Cowboys Nothing. We were in the parade the next day. Howard discussed the parade and commented that the reception we receive there is 2<sup>nd</sup> to none.

### **New Business**

We discussed the Traveling Dolphins instituted by Gudgeon Base in Prescott. We'll make a field trip to Prescott to capture the Dolphins. July 21<sup>st</sup> Base Members are invited to attend. Jim would like to meet at the Rock Springs Café for Breakfast before going on to Prescott. Chuck will send a Flash Traffic.

### **Good of the Order**

Steve Stanger described the Blessing of our float and also Tucson's by a member of the Navaho Nation.

**Kap(SS)4Kid(SS)** - Steve also discussed the Kap(SS)4Kid(SS) visit to Children's Hospital Thursday the 21<sup>st</sup> of June at 2:00 PM.

Walt is going to step down as Base Chaplin, so if anyone is interested in that position talk with Walt or see one of the Base Officers.

### **50/50 Drawing**

The 50/50 drawing \$69 / \$35 was won by Bob Gilmore.

### **Benediction**

The benediction was offered by Walt Blomgren.

### **Adjournment**

All outstanding business having been concluded, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote and the meeting was adjourned at 12:55.

John Schlag

Secretary, Perch Base USSVI



- *One of the first women to submerge in a submarine is believed to have been Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross.*
- *Submarines have been invented which have been propelled by cars, sails, treadles, hand operated screws, clockwork, springs, steam stored in tubes, chemical engines, compressed air, stored gases, electric motors, and nuclear power.*
- *In clear water, a submerged submarine can be spotted from the air at depths up to 100 feet.*
- *Per cubic inch, there is more science packed into a submarine than into any other warship. Submariners say 'There is room for everything aboard a submarine except a mistake.'*
- *In 1921, a United States submarine, the R-14, having run out of fuel at sea, rigged sails from blankets, hammocks, curtain rods and the ramrod of a 3-inch gun, and sailed 100 miles to port at a speed of two knots.*

# Prescott's Rodeo Days Parade, July 21, 2012

Here are a few samples of the photographs from one of the best events we attend all year. The Prescott Frontier Days Rodeo parade, which falls on the weekend nearest 4 July, is always a great event that the Base looks forward to it each year. Check our web page for the rest of the photographs, which will be posted shortly.



Now, lots of Base's have submarine floats. But Perch Base has two unique qualities. First, we were the first TRUE-TO-SCALE model and now, we have been officially blessed by a Native American holy woman. Match that other Bases!



# WE CAPTURED THE DOLPHINS!

Well we did it! 13 members of Perch Base traveled to Prescott Valley on Saturday, July 21 to “steal” the traveling dolphins of the Western Region. We met the requirements of the program, to have one elected base officer, at least three members present, and have one person tell a sea story. Five photos of the event are on this page but we will eventually put all the photos we took on the webpage so be sure and check <http://www.perch-base.org> later.

Now the question is, how long will Perch Base keep them?



The gang stops for breakfast at the Rock Springs Cafe, a Base Commander favorite.



Gathering outside Gudgeon's meeting place, the under construction VFW hall in Prescott Valley, AZ.



Both Bases chow down prior to the business meeting.



Jim Denzien, our Commander, “steals” the Traveling Dolphins from Gudgeon Base Commander Dirk “Doc” Waldron.



A requirement of the program is that the “stealing” Base has to tell a sea story. Our Davy Jones wanders through a real doozy.



# August Base Birthdays



RAY LEE GRAYBEAL	1-AUG
ANGUS H. MCPHERSON	1-AUG
HAROLD J. BIDIGARE	3-AUG
THEODOR HUNT	6-AUG
JACK E. MOORE	8-AUG
RAYMOND MARSHALL	8-AUG
ROBERT A. LANCENDORFER	12-AUG
TOM CLONTS	12-AUG
SKIP HICKS	16-AUG
JOHN G. ZAICKIN	18-AUG
WILLIAM K. GRISSOM	19-AUG
DOUGLAS M. LA ROCK	19-AUG
GEORGE LONG	20-AUG
DANIAL E. LUELLIG	21-AUG
DONALD J. WHITEHEAD	23-AUG
JOHN MANNETTI	26-AUG



## Need a Ride to a Base Meeting or Other Function?

Contact Base vice-Commander, [Howard Doyle \(602\) 228-2445](tel:6022282445) or any other Base Officer. All officers are listed near the front of every copy of the MidWatch.



### THE WOMEN OF PERCH BASE

At their October 2009 meeting, Perch Base SubVettes voted to disband. Low Participation and finances made this a logical action. Since then, interested and willing women have been incorporated in Perch Base as Volunteers. They, and other Perch Base Volunteers function as defined in our Policies and Procedures.



## **"SAVE-OUR-SAIL"**

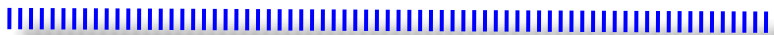
### **Update on Perch Base's Effort to Make the USS Phoenix (SS-702) Sail and Rudder a City Monument**

**Questions on Save-Our-Sail or to find  
out how you can help, contact  
one of our Project Co-Managers by  
clicking on their name:**

**Dan Moss  
Layne Moss**



*(Nothing has been reported by the Project Co-Managers)*



## **CHAPLAIN'S COLUMN**



## **SHIPMATES RUNNING ON LESS THAN A FULL BATTERY CHARGE**

We are sad to report that our shipmate and Base Event Co-ordinator, Joe "Wanderer" Varese has been diagnosed with lung cancer. The type, extent and prognosis aren't known yet. Joe has asked that he be remembered in our thoughts and prayers. Godspeed, Joe, in this one of the cruelest sea changes of life.

**Shipmates, if you have not already done so, print out the page immediately after this one and place it with your final instruction papers (i.e., will, power of attorney, living will, living trust, etc.) for your next of kin. Don't let them languish as to your Final Patrol desires.**

**\*\* IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS \*\***

**Please PRINT THIS PAGE and attach this note to your will or final instructions.**

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

Please ask them to contact my local USSVI chapter, **Perch Base, Phoenix AZ** Chaplain at [chaplain@perch-base.org](mailto:chaplain@perch-base.org) or 602-309-4407 with this information as well.

This information can also be E-Mailed to the National Office at [USSVI@telebyte.net](mailto:USSVI@telebyte.net).

**Other Important Information:**

Veterans Death and Burial Benefits

[http://www1.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits\\_book/benefits\\_chap07.asp](http://www1.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book/benefits_chap07.asp)

Navy Burial at Sea Information

<http://usmilitary.about.com/cs/generalinfo/a/seaburial.htm>

**Please PRINT THIS PAGE and attach this note to your will or final instructions.**

**\*\* IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS \*\***

# RUSSIA TO TEST BULAVA BALLISTIC MISSILE... AGAIN

Twocircles.net, July 26, 2012

Moscow : Russia will test its Bulava intercontinental ballistic missile again, Navy Commander Viktor Chirkov said Thursday.

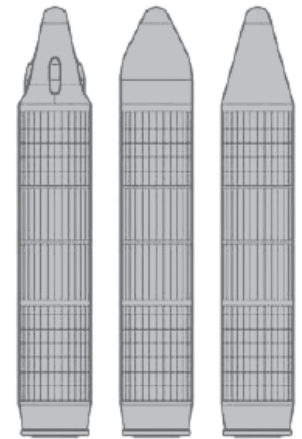
"We are going to launch the Bulava this fall from the Alexander Nevsky nuclear submarine. If the launch fails, we will continue," Xinhua quoted Chirkov as saying.

The Bulava's carrier, the fourth-generation Alexander Nevsky, conducted its maiden exercise in June. The navy had put the Bulava into service following Nevsky's voyage. The 170-metre-long (558 foot) submarine can carry 16 Bulava missiles.

Russian forces tested the missile 18 times prior to the decision to deploy it. Seven out of these tests failed.

The Bulava, Russia's most advanced missile, is expected to be the cornerstone of the country's nuclear arsenal. It is capable of carrying 10 warheads and has a range of 8,000 km (5,000 miles.)

The commander said the navy will put on duty up to 15 new warships and submarines by the end of 2012. He said the navy was acquiring nuclear strategic submarines armed with cruise missiles, diesel-powered submarines, destroyers and other warships.



Bulava-M, Bulava-30, Bulava-47



**The Russian submarine K-550 Alexander Nevskiy is a Russian nuclear ballistic missile submarine of the fourth generation Borei class (Project 955A) shown above. \_\_**



- *More decorations for valor have been awarded, per man, to the submarine service than any other Navy Branch.*
- *Habitability is heavily stressed in the construction of modern submarines. Specially designed color schemes, mechanical conveniences, air conditioning, and the best chow in the Navy are supplied to make the vessels more livable. A full time staff is maintained by Electric Boat Division to work out 'human engineering' problems.*
- *A typical modern submarine may require as many as 2,000 working drawings for the more than 7,000,000 items used in its construction. Blueprints from these drawings if placed end to end would make a strip 250 miles long.*
- *The first periscope used by the United States Navy was not built for a submarine. The ironclad monitor OSAGE utilized a periscope to discover a Confederate cavalry unit taking cover behind the high banks of the Red River in Arkansas.*
- *In World War II the Germans lost 782 submarines, the Japanese lost 130, and the United States lost only 52 submarines. Twenty-three of the Japanese subs lost were victims of the American Submarine Service.*
- *Submarine tenders, or 'mother ships' of the U.S. Navy usually bear the names of characters of mythology, the names of submarine inventors, or the names of persons who have made contributions to the Submarine Service.*
- *A submarine, the TURTLE, was employed by the American revolutionary army to attack the British. It was built by David Bushnell at*

# *Eternal Patrol*

## *August 6, 1945*

Editors Note: Less we forget, each month, one boat on eternal patrol will be highlighted in this newsletter. Sailors, rest your oars.

### The Final Patrol

Lord, this departed shipmate with dolphins on his chest  
Is part of an outfit known as the best.  
Make him welcome and take him by the hand.  
You'll find without a doubt he was the best in all the land.  
So, heavenly Father add his name to the roll  
Of our departed shipmates still on patrol  
Let them know that we who survive  
Will always keep their memories alive.



### USS Bullhead (SS-332) August 6, 1945 84 men lost



#### Balao-class Submarine

##### **Displacement:**

1,550 tons (surf), 2,424 (sub)

**Length:** 311' 10"; **Beam:** 27' 4"; **Draft:** 16' 10"

##### **Propulsion:**

4 × diesel engines driving electrical generators

2 × 126-cell Sargo batteries

4 × high-speed electric motors, two propellers

5,400 shp (surf), 2,740 shp (sub)

**Speed:** 20.25 kn (surf), 8.75 kn (sub)

**Range:** 11,000 nmi (surfaced at 10 kn)

##### **Endurance:**

48 hours at 2 kn (sub), 75 days on patrol

**Test depth:** 400 ft

**Complement:** 10 officers, 70-71 enlisted

##### **Armament:**

10 × 21" torpedo tubes

(six forward, four aft)

24 torpedoes

1 × 5-inch / 25 caliber deck gun

Bofors 40 mm and Oerlikon 20 mm cannon

USS Bullhead (SS-332), a Balao-class submarine, was the very last US Navy ship sunk by enemy action during World War II, probably on the same day that the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. She was the only ship of the United States Navy to be named for the bullhead (any large-headed fish, especially the catfish, miller's thumb, and sculpin). Her keel was laid down by the Electric Boat Company of Groton, Connecticut. She was launched on 16 July 1944 sponsored by Mrs. Howard R. Doyle, and commissioned 4 December 1944 with Commander W. T. Griffith in command.

The war operations of Bullhead extended from 21 March to August 1945 during which time she completed two war patrols. Her area of operations included the Java Sea and South China Sea and the Gulf of Siam.

#### First patrol

During the greater portion of her first war patrol Bullhead performed lifeguard services and on two occasions bombarded Pratas Island, China, damaging enemy radio installations. She also rescued three airmen from a downed B-29 Superfortress following an air strike on the China coast.

#### Second patrol

On her second patrol, in May and June 1945 in the Gulf of Siam and the South China Sea, Bullhead sank two small freighters, a schooner and a sub chaser totaling 1800 tons and damaged two more sub chasers and another small freighter, all in gun actions.

Photo # 80-G-49461 USS Bullhead rescues an Army pilot, circa Spring 1945



Rescue of an Army pilot at sea, during a Pacific war patrol, circa spring 1945. Note the Asian small sailing craft alongside the submarine. This photo was received by the Navy Photo Science Laboratory on 20 June 1945. It was taken by Stephen F. Birch.

*Official U.S. Navy Photograph, now in the collections of the National Archives.*





### Third patrol and sinking

On 31 July 1945 Bullhead left Fremantle to commence her third war patrol. Her orders were to patrol in a "wolfpack" with Capitaine (SS-336) and Puffer (SS-268) in the Java Sea until 5 September and then head for Subic Bay in the Philippines.

Bullhead reported on 6 August that she had passed through Lombok Strait. That was the last word received from Bullhead. On 12 August, Capitaine, planning to arrive on 13 August, ordered Bullhead to take position the following day in a scouting line with Capitaine and Puffer. Receiving no reply, Capitaine reported on 15 August, "Have been unable to contact Bullhead by any means since arriving in area."

Since the British submarines HMS Taciturn and Thorough, were in the same general area as Bullhead, and Cod (SS-224)

and Chub (SS-329) passed through in transit at various times, it is difficult to determine precisely which of the many Japanese anti-submarine attacks was the one that sank Bullhead. However, one occurred on 6 August 1945, when an Imperial Japanese Army Air Force 73Fcs's Mitsubishi Ki-51 attacked with depth charges. It claimed two direct hits, and for ten minutes thereafter, there was a great amount of gushing oil and air bubbles rising in the water. Since the position given is very near the Bali coast, it is presumed that the proximity of mountain peaks shortened Bullhead's radar range and prevented her receiving a warning of the plane's approach.

### Commendations

Bullhead received two battle stars for her World War II service.



Saybrook, Connecticut, just a few miles from the present site of Electric Boat Division of the General Dynamics Corporation, and the U.S. naval Submarine Base.

- George Washington Endorsed the use of the first American submarine, David Bushnell's TURTLE, during the Revolution. Following the vessel's attack on a British man-of-war, he discussed the potential use of submarines in a letter to Thomas Jefferson.
- USS GEORGE WASHINGTON, the world's first ballistic missile nuclear powered submarine, constructed in record time, set a record of its own by remaining submerged 67 days on its initial Polaris missile deterrent patrol in the Atlantic.
- Nautilus has long been a popular name for a submarine. Some of the more famous of these are Robert Fulton's NAUTILUS (1800), Jules Verne's fictional Nautilus, and the NAUTILUS of Sir Hubert Wilkins in which he attempted a voyage to the North Pole under the ice (1931). There have also been three U.S. submarines of that name, including the world's first nuclear powered submarine built by the Electric Boat Division.
- Long considered a versatile and deadly instrument of war, the submarine has broadened her capabilities with the adoption of nuclear power. Today the submarine serves as a ballistic missile platform, early warning station, killer of surface and underwater vessels, scout, coastal raider troop transport, supply ship, mine layer, and seaplane tender.
- The United States submarine USS TRITON was fitted with twin reactors and was considered the longest submarine ever built until the advent of the OHIO class. The TRITON was designed for a surface displacement of 5,900 tons. Large submarines of other countries have been the Japanese I-400 (5,220 tons), and the French SURCOUF (2,880 tons).
- The USS NAUTILUS was the first submarine with a satisfactory single plant that can be used for main propulsion both surfaced and submerged.

# Shipmate



# Shipmate

## Now, This Ain't No SH\*T . . .

We're still looking for stories! All of us have heard the one about the difference between a fairy tale and a sea story. The fairy tale starts, "Once upon a time," and a sea story starts, "Now this ain't no sh\*t!"

Well, that's what we are looking for; sea stories. And they only need to be as true as a sea story ALWAYS is!

So send something in. Here are the rules (or not, whatever):

1. We can use your name or not: your choice just let me know.
2. Grammar and spelling DO NOT COUNT. I will edit and change just enough to make it somewhat readable!
3. Remember, this is from "boat" sailors to "boat" sailors. BUT, since this publication may fall into skimmer hands (or worse, decent civilians!) I may have to substitute punctuation marks in place of letters in certain words, as in the title.
4. There is absolutely no limit on how many you can send in. I will publish AT LEAST one each month as we get them.

So send them to:

Chuck Emmett

[communications@perch-base.org](mailto:communications@perch-base.org)

or

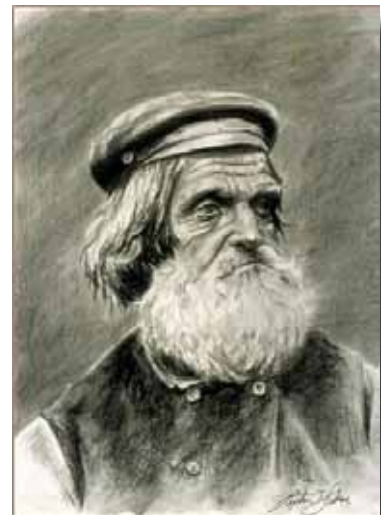
7011 West Risner Road

Glendale, AZ 85308.

---

## Perks of reaching 60 or being over 70 and heading towards 80!

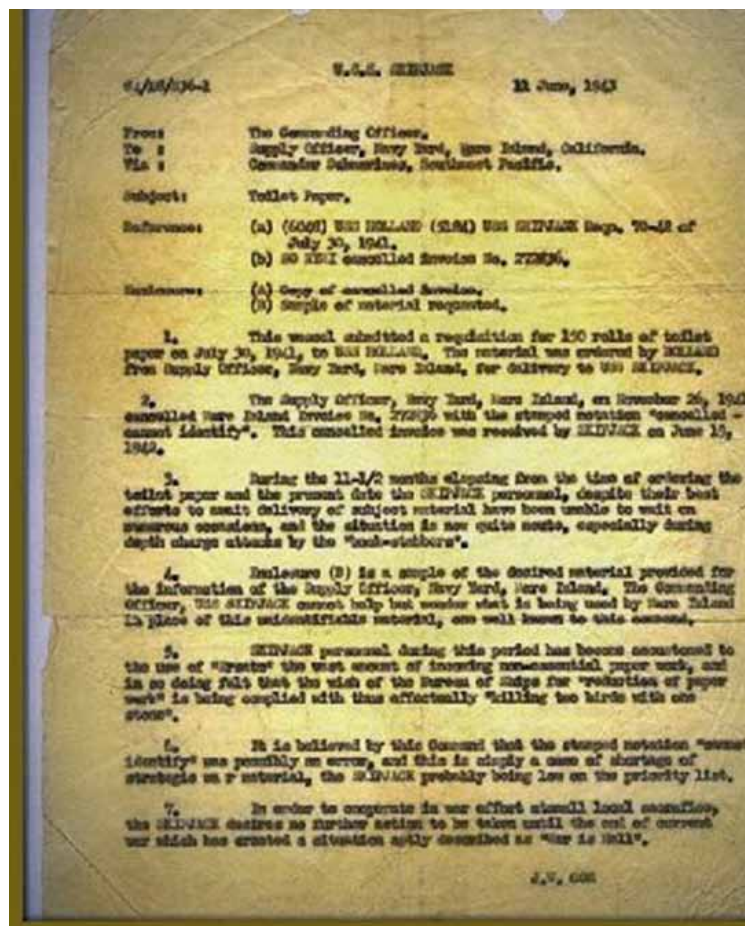
1. Kidnappers are not very interested in you.
2. In a hostage situation you are likely to be released first.
3. No one expects you to run--anywhere.
4. People call at 9 PM and ask, "did I wake you?"
5. People no longer view you as a hypochondriac.
6. There is nothing left to learn the hard way.
7. Things you buy now won't wear out.
8. You can eat supper at 5 PM.
9. You can live without sex but not your glasses.
10. You get into heated arguments about pension plans.
11. You no longer think of speed limits as a challenge.
12. You quit trying to hold your stomach in no matter who walks into the room.
13. You sing along with elevator music.
14. Your eyes won't get much worse.



15. Your investment in health insurance is finally beginning to pay off.
16. Your joints are more accurate meteorologists than the national weather service.
17. Your secrets are safe with your friends because they can't remember them either.
18. Your supply of brain cells is finally down to manageable size.
19. You can't remember who sent you this list.
20. And you notice these are all in Big Print for your convenience.



## The Great Toilet Paper Memo



On 11 June 1942, the captain of the USS Skipjack, James W. Coe sent his now famous letter up the chain of command. This letter which addressed the problem of obtaining toilet paper by his ship had an example of the desired material attached. This is the original memo.

**(This is the text of the memo in the photograph on the previous page.)**

U.S.S. SKIPJACK

11 June, 1942

From: Commanding Officer

To: Supply Officer, Navy Yard, Mare Island, California

Via: Commander Submarines, Southwest Pacific

Subject: Toilet Paper

Reference: (a) USS HOLLAND (5148) USS SKIPJACK Req. 70-42 of July 30, 1941.

(b) SO NYMI Canceled invoice No. 272836

Enclosure: (1) Copy of cancelled Invoice

(2) Sample of material requested.

1. This vessel submitted a requisition for 150 rolls of toilet paper on July 30, 1941, to USS HOLLAND. The material was ordered by HOLLAND from the Supply Officer, Navy Yard, Mare Island, for delivery to USS SKIPJACK.
2. The Supply Officer, Navy Yard, Mare Island, on November 26, 1941, cancelled Mare Island Invoice No. 272836 with the stamped notation "Cancelled---cannot identify." This cancelled invoice was received by SKIPJACK on June 10, 1942.
3. During the 11-1/2 months elapsing from the time of ordering the toilet paper and the present date the SKIPJACK personnel, despite their best efforts to await delivery of subject material, have been unable to wait on numerous occasions, and the situation is now quite acute, especially during depth charge attack by the "back-stabbers."
4. Enclosure (2) is a sample of the desired material provided for the information of the Supply Officer, Navy Yard, Mare Island. The Commanding Officer, USS SKIPJACK cannot help but wonder what is being used in Mare Island in place of this unidentifiable material, once well known to this command.
5. SKIPJACK personnel during this period have become accustomed to use of "ersatz," the vast amount of incoming non-essential paper work, and in so doing felt that the wish of the Bureau of Ships for the "reduction of paper work" is being complied with thus effectively "killing two birds with one stone".
6. It is believed by this Command that the stamped notation "cannot identify" was possible an error, and that this is simply a case of shortage of strategic war material, the SKIPJACK probably being low on the priority list.
7. In order to cooperate in war effort at small local sacrifice, the SKIPJACK desires no further action be taken until the end of the current war which has created a situation aptly described as "war is hell."

J.W. Coe

**(and the story continues. See the next page.)**

Here is the rest of the story:

The letter was given to the Yeoman, telling him to type it up. Once typed and upon reflection, the Yeoman went looking for help in the form of the XO. The XO shared it with the OD and they proceeded to the CO's cabin and asked if he really wanted it sent. His reply, "I wrote it, didn't I?"

As a side note, twelve days later, on June 22, 1942 J.W. Coe was awarded the Navy Cross for his actions on the S-39.

The "toilet paper" letter reached Mare Island Supply Depot. A member of that office remembers that all officers in the Supply Department "had to stand at attention for three days because of that letter." By then, the letter had been copied and was spreading throughout the fleet and even to the President's son who was aboard the USS Wasp.

As the boat came in from her next patrol, Jim and crew saw toilet-paper streamers blowing from the lights along the pier and pyramids of toilet paper stacked seven feet high on the dock. Two men were carrying a long dowel with toilet paper rolls on it with yards of paper streaming behind them as a band played coming up after the roll holders. Band members wore toilet paper neckties in place of their Navy neckerchiefs. The wind-section had toilet paper pushed up inside their instruments and when they blew, white streamers unfurled from trumpets and horns.

As was the custom for returning boats to be greeted at the pier with cases of fresh fruit/veggies and ice cream, the Skipjack was first greeted thereafter with her own distinctive tribute-cartons and cartons of toilet paper.

This letter became famous in submarine history books and found its way to the movie ("Operation Petticoat"), and eventually coming to rest (copy) at the Navy Supply School at Pensacola, Florida. There, it still hangs on the wall under a banner that reads, "Don't let this happen to you!" Even John Roosevelt insured his father got a copy of the letter.

The original is at Bowfin Museum in Hawaii.



## WWII DIESEL BOAT ERA

by Michael Skurat [mskurat01@snet.net](mailto:mskurat01@snet.net) Member Groton Base USSVI & Central CT Chapter of Sub Vets WWII

-----  
There have been many major changes in the U.S. Navy Submarine Service since the WWII Diesel Boat Era. It might be interesting historically to note some of them.

Initially there were only seven pay grades (actually eight). They ran from one to seven with Apprentice Seaman (AS) as one, Seaman Second Class (S2/c) as two, Seaman First Class (S1/c) as three, Petty Officer Third Class (e.g. MM3c) as four and Petty Officers Second and First Class as five and six. Chief Petty Officers were initially promoted to "seven A" for one year (Acting Appointment) and then to Chief Petty Officer as pay grade seven. There was no Master or Command Chief, etc. The "C" for Chief Petty Officers preceded the rate designation, for example CMM not MMC as today. For all of the seaman ratings there was a comparable Fireman (F)

The Officer's rank structure has remained consistent with minor exceptions. During WWII a five star Fleet Admiral rank was added and bestowed on Nimitz and King. No one promoted to that rank since WWII. Another thing there was no Commodore rank utilized. Officers were promoted from Captain to Rear Admiral (lower half) and hence to Rear Admiral (upper half). The Rear Admiral (Lower Half) replaced the Commodore rank. As it is custom to call any Commanding Officer Captain it also was custom to call a Submarine Squadron Commander Commodore.

Before WWII an Apprentice Seaman's pay was \$21.00 per month. Pays increased in WWII with Apprentice Seaman to \$50.00 per month and to around \$120.00 per month for a Chief. All personnel on Submarines got 50% submarine money and 20% sea duty pay. When added together added up to about 80% extra pay.

If you were married and/or had dependents your pay was reduced by \$28.00 per month the U.S. Navy supplemented another \$22.00 and your dependent was sent a monthly check for \$50.00. Consequently, an Apprentice Seaman would get \$22.00 per month. However, enlisted personnel below pay grade four could not marry without the permission of their Commanding Officer. This breached more often than observed and obviously many entered the service married.

At one time the Navy Paymasters would pay personnel with \$2.00 bills so that when spent it would indicate to the local economy the impact of the service. Also when being paid by the Paymaster on board a tender you would line up with your "pay chit" to draw your pay. When you reached the pay desk you would salute the Paymaster, put your fingerprint on the "pay chit" and draw your money. There was a posted pay list indicating what you had on the "books" and you could draw all or whatever amount you desired

Submarine and sea pay were a real boon especially when sea store cigarettes were at six cents a pack and a bottle of beer on Bank St. was twenty-five cents. Later when you came in off patrol you would have that back pay and be really flush.

Due to rapid expansion of every aspect of the U.S. Navy, if you could cut the mustard, promotions were forthcoming. Many a serving enlisted person commissioned (called mustangs) or advanced in rating because of the enormous need to fill billets in new construction and replace casualties. Classes at the U.S. Naval Academy graduated early. Personnel with special qualifications were coming into the service rated and/or commissioned. You could see a Chief Petty Officer with no hash marks. These ratings were derided and called "slick arms" (no hash marks) and/or "Tajo" ratings by the old-timers. Some enlisted personnel commissioned as regular line officers, Warrant Officers and Limited Duty Officers (LDOs) in specific areas. Such commissions initially were considered temporary with reversion back to their permanent grades at the conclusion of hostilities.

They created many specialty ratings. In their "Crow" specialty designator was a diamond with a letter inside, e.g., the letter "A" would be for a coach or professional athlete who would conduct physical conditioning, etc. Most, if not all, of these ratings ceased to exist with the end of the war. Some referred to these as "square knot" rates.

There were right and left arm rates. Right arm rates were considered "Sea Going Rates" (BM, QM, GM, SM, FC, TM, etc.) and the "Crow" was worn on the right arm. Left arm rates were ancillary and were MM, Y, EM, RM, MOMM, ET, etc. Right arm rates were senior to left arm ratings. There was no Boatswain Mate Third Class they were called Coxswains.

Seamen and Firemen wore a "watch stripe" round the right shoulder - white for seamen red for firemen. There were other colors of "Watch Stripes" for aviation, CBs, etc. Indication of rate was on uniform cuffs; one white/red stripe for AS/FA, two for S2c/F2/c and three for S1/c and F1/c. The present diagonal 1, 2, or 3 stripe(s), in color was originally for WAVE uniforms and after WWII were adopted for the present enlisted uniform and the watch stripe was eliminated.

The "T-Shirt" a part of the enlisted uniform initially served two purposes. (1) It was to be worn without the Jumper on work details, especially in tropical locations. (2) It was meant to have the high white neckline to show in the "V" of the Jumper. Some personnel, to enhance the appearance would cut the tab off and wore the "T-shirt" backward for a better appearance especially if with age and washings it seemed to sag. The popularity of the T-Shirt expanded into wide public acceptance after WWII and is now utilized, not only as an undergarment but as outerwear with various designs, logos, etc.

There were no Silver Metal Dolphins for enlisted personnel. Dolphins for enlisted personnel consisted of embroidered "patches" (white for blues and blue for whites) sewn on the right forearm. Silver Metal Dolphins for enlisted personnel was authorized after WWII.

All enlisted personnel wore embroidered "patches" as distinguishing marks e.g., if you were a designated striker you could wear the insignia for that specialty on the left upper sleeve.

Other distinguishing marks for enlisted personnel were "patches" on uniforms, e.g., an Expert Lookout "patch" binoculars, a diver a divers helmet (M for Master. with degree of qualification indicated on the chest section of the helmet. These worn on the right upper sleeve and there were many of them. One "perk" that has persisted is the wearing of gold rating insignia and hash marks for those with 12 years of good conduct.

Chief Petty Officers merely pinned their fouled anchor hat insignia to the front top of their hat covers. The black band and background for the insignia was initiated after WWII.

Officers did wear Gold Metal Dolphins as they do today.

Unknown today was also the fact that there was a dress white uniform for enlisted personnel. The collar and cuffs were blue and were adorned with piping. What is worn today are "undress whites". Pictures of them are in old "Blue-jacket Manuals."

Officers wore swords for ceremonial occasions as they do today but back before WWII Chief Petty Officers had a cutlass for ceremonial dress occasions.

Another uniform item that is now passé is the flat hat. Once the ribbon had the name of your ship but this discontinued for security reasons and all flat hats merely had U.S. Navy in gold on the ribbon. In boot camp all of your uniform items were stenciled with your name and service number. There were no doors on lockers and each item had a prescribed method of folding and stowing. It was even prescribed as to how you would pack your seabag.

Originally, the entire submarine base was literally below the railroad tracks. Later as the base expanded it was called "lower base". Most of the upper base buildings, i.e., Morton Hall, Dealey Center, etc., were constructed for WWII. The road from the present main gate past the golf course was the Groton-Norwich road. About half way up the road was an overhead railroad bridge. The entrance to the base was under the bridge and the Marine guard stationed there in a guard shack. The base commander's office was housed in a small brick building about half way between the training tower and the Torpedo Shop.

Submarine School - six weeks enlisted and three months for officers.

Of some 250,000 men who applied for submarine duty less than 10% made it to Sub School and many of those washed out. Submarine School was the sole tyrannical domain of one Chief Torpedoman Charles Spritz. Submarine School was called "Spritz's Navy". He ruled with an iron hand and was feared by instructors and students alike. He had little regard for rate whether you were a Seaman First Class or a Petty Officer First Class. To call him eccentric was a gross understatement. He did not smoke, did not drink and was single. It is open to debate as to if he ever even pulled a liberty. His total devotion was to the Submarine School. It was universally conceded that he had gone "asiatic", not 100% stable and perhaps as a youngster he might have been dropped on his head.

He insisted that personnel, at all times, be properly and neatly attired in the regulation "Uniform of the Day" without exception. No tailor made, proper rolled neckerchief down to the "V" in the Jumper with immaculate white T-Shirt showing, shoes well shined, etc. He did not permit smoking nor any type of horseplay. He demanded that all personnel move at a fast pace.

Chief Spritz had the uncanny ability to be everywhere at all times and pity the poor individual who crossed his path. His discipline was swift and sure. He felt it was his personal mission to ascertain that anyone leaving sub school for submarine duty was in every respect ready. He had many axioms but his favorite was "There is room for anything on a submarine except a mistake". Sub school students were not "boots", many, if not most, had time in the U.S. Navy and were rated.

There is an article in POLARIS issue of August, 2000 (Submarine Saga segment) which delves into more detail relative to Chief Spritz and is briefly incorporated here as it is a definite part of the Diesel Boat Era.

Sub Vets of WWII in recognition of respect, and a fealty obligation to this once feudal lord and master, wear a "Spritz's Navy" patch on their vests.

It would seem that the screening at Sub School served us well. Friction between members of the crew was unbecoming and unacceptable. If an individual demonstrated an inability to "get along" he could be transferred to another boat. If the same conduct prevailed there he would be transferred out of submarines.

The training tower caused many a wash out for both physical and mental reasons. If a person could not "pop" his ears it could cause pain and even bleeding from the ears. Your voice changed dramatically to a high pitch under pressure. All personnel had to qualify from the 100' lock with the Mommson Lung. Right after the war it was noted that some German submariners had made emergency escapes using free ascents. A number of crews from boats went to the tower and made free ascents.

We had less pomp insofar as the ceremony observed when a member of the crew qualified than is apparent today. The individual, thrown over the side then sewed dolphins on his uniforms and wore them with pride. They have always been, and always will be, a badge of honor regardless of manner in which bestowed.

There was less reverence on some other occasions also. When a "Good Conduct Medal" was awarded to a member of the crew it would be given by the Captain (or perhaps the Exec) at quarters amid "hoots and hollers" with cries of "Undiscovered Crime". There was also a bonus system for awards ranging from \$1.00 per month for the Good Conduct Medal to \$5.00 per month for the Congressional Medal of Honor.

"Tailor Made" dress blues were the uniform of the day for liberty. The jumper was skin tight with a zipper in the side so that it could be taken off. Accentuated bell bottoms were mandated. The inside of the cuffs were decorated with embroidered color decorations, usually dragons, etc., and were only visible when the cuffs were turned up.

When you made Chief you initially bought the cheapest hat you could find since it was also considered appropriate and properly respectful to have all of the crew urinate in your first hat.

Sad to note in this day and enlightened age all of the military services of the United States were segregated during our era. The practice abolished by President Truman over 50 years ago. Stewards, at that time, recruited from America territories and from American minorities. Even in such a tight knit group as American Submarines two racks in the Forward Torpedo Room hung off the overhead beneath The Torpedo Loading Hatch were reserved for the Stewards. Rated Stewards wore uniforms similar to Chiefs.

The submarine sailor was a very irreverent individual with an avid distaste for regulations, etc. The average life span of a submarine sailor was four patrols (about a year). Despite bravado, that thought prevailed to varying degrees depending upon the individual. That premise however, was unsaid but used as an excuse for hell-raising. Rarely mentioned in tales of WWII submarine lore was the fact that going through minefields was as apprehensive as being depth charged.

Submarine Officers and crews were very young - anyone past thirty was a very old man. Admiral Charles Lockwood (Uncle Charley) Com Sub Pac was most forgiving, as were Skippers and Execs, of transgressions of both Officers and men. Returning from patrol crews were treated extremely well.

Another "perk" of the submarine force was that any record of "minor" disciplinary action that a member of the crew suffered would be entered into the "page 9" of his service record. Virtually all disciplinary action was handled internally on the boat. However, both the original and carbon copy (BuPers Copy) retained in his jacket. When transferred, the original and copy, removed by the Yeoman to be deep sixed. Unless there was a serious offence personnel transferred with a clean record.

Many friendships were formed in sub school, plus other training and schools and transfers were not uncommon due to the needs of new construction, promotions, etc. Consequently, the force became even more closely knit. It was the rare boat that did not have personnel whom you knew.

Submariners were very independent and resourceful, both individually and as a group. Needs (and desires) of the boat as prescribed by the U.S. Navy, did not always coincide with what was considered neither proper nor adequate. Therefore, a system of "midnight requisitioning" and "midnight small stores" developed to enhance efficiency. This avenue of acquisition considered a solemn duty in promoting the war effort. Those proficient and innovative in this endeavor were greatly admired. It was an art as well as a science executed individually or as a group cooperative effort. Some of these escapades took great ingenuity as well as "brass balls". As a term of affection they were called "scroungers" and/or "dog robbers". If a Skipper or Exec made an "innocent" passing remark that some particular thing might be "nice" it would appear mysteriously in due time.

On board an informal, but professional, attitude prevailed. Although we had an evaporator to make fresh water, battery watering was primary. In the design and scheme of things, personal hygiene or washing of clothes did not seem to be considered. One Engineering Petty Officer, called the "Water King" ran the evaporators. Personal hygiene or washing of clothing was an afterthought. The use of after-shave lotions, deodorants and especially talcum powders prevailed. Large cans of "Lilac" were the norm, purchased inexpensively and sprinkled liberally.

To the unacquainted it could appear that the rapport between Officers and men was quite informal and to a degree it was but it in no way detracted from efficiency, military courtesy, tradition or discipline. There was a strong mutual respect. Aye-Aye Sir, Very Well and Well Done were accorded as appropriate. The vast majority of the crew was rated and competent in their skills. Obviously so were our officers. There was no such thing as stenciled ratings on dungaree shirts so a person coming aboard a submarine at sea would have a difficult time determining any individual's rate. Also there was an axiom that in submarines "you left your rate on the dock". Ability was the hallmark.

When conditions approached that of a Chinese garbage scow junk with an over flowing head and the crew in dire need of fumigation, the Skipper might decide to allow showers piecemeal by sections. You lined up to enter the shower, the Chief of the Boat turned on the water for 2 seconds and shut it down while you soaped down. You were then allowed a correspondingly brief rinse.

Each member of the crew was allotted one locker which measured about 12" high, 18" wide and about 18" deep. You kept your uniforms under your mattress. Your rack had a plastic zip around cover. Your mattress was encased in a "mattress cover" which was akin to an oversized pillow case. Able to be turned over once and some even turned them inside out and got two more uses. Less the uninitiated be stunned by that you must be cognizant of lack of water for regular laundry.

Internal communications on board were conducted by the 1MC and 7MC phone and speaker systems.



To reenter a submarine after handling lines etc. when returning to port was a shocking revelation. It was impossible to believe that you had survived that malodorous environment. Politely put the atmosphere was conducive to a shanty town house of ill repute that also was inundated by a backup of its sewer system. Pity the poor relief crew that had to come on board and make the boat shipshape again.

You could immediately identify an Electrician on a submarine. He was the individual with the most shredded moth eaten dungarees.

Ribald humor was the tenor of the day. No topic or human frailty was off limits. Nothing was sacred. Horseplay and trickery were the order of the day. The antics and demeanor of the crew, both at sea and ashore, would not be socially acceptable or politically correct nowadays. I fear that the late Admiral Rickover would have been aghast.

One real advantage was food, especially when you first went out. Although they were ridden without mercy the cooks did an excellent job of feeding the crew. We ate family style off china plates. Our officers ate exactly what the enlisted personnel did. The stewards would come back to the After Battery Galley and fill their serving plates and bring it to the Forward Battery for the Wardroom. When leaving port rations were stored in every conceivable space (including the shower since it wouldn't be needed). However, as supplies diminished the cooks were hard pressed to come up with varied favorable menus. All boats had "open icebox" so you could prepare and cook anything you wanted at any time as long as you cleaned up after yourself. The After Battery "Mess" was for chow, off duty recreation, meeting space and a hang-out.

This is a collective attempt at recollection after the passing of a half-century so any errors or omissions hopefully forgiven as "senior frailties". Much of this is collective memory and is a compilation of boats in general. There is no pride of authorship so any comments, additions, corrections and/or deletions are welcome and appreciated. This is merely a historical comparison as best one can do and is in no way a negative reflection between "then and now".

GOD BLESS ALL SUBMARINERS - Past, Present and Future

Michael Skurat

Central Connecticut Chapter U.S. Submarine Veterans World War II.



**Return To:**

U. S. Submarine Veterans, Perch Base  
7011 West Risner Road  
Glendale, AZ 85308  
E-Mail: [communications@perch-base.org](mailto:communications@perch-base.org)

<http://www.perch-base.org>

**Next Meeting**  
**Saturday, August 11, 2012**  
12 noon, 11 a.m. (no host bar)  
Dillon's at Arrowhead  
59th Ave just north of Loop 101

