

Steel Valley Dolphins

June 2015



The official newsletter of the
USS Requin Base of the USSVI
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

USSVI Creed:

"To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of 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."



Meetings held on the second Saturday of the month normally in Leetsdale at the VFW Post and quarterly meetings held around our membership area.

- **Make a difference, get to a meeting!**

----- Pride Runs Deep -----

Next meeting: Saturday July 11 at the Columbiana American Legion Post 290. 44403 State Route 14, Columbiana Ohio. Coming from PA 60 At Chippewa PA Turn west on PA Rt 51 to Ohio line road turns into Ohio Rt 14. About 14 miles you will come to Rt 7 intersection with Rt 14. The Legion is on the left about a half mile west of 7/14 intersection.

From Ohio Turnpike, take the second exit and go south on Rt 7 to 7/14 intersection, turn right about a half mile on the left.

2015 USS Requin Base Officers

Base Commander	Hubert C. Dietrich	412-486-2635	hueyfromglenshaw@aol.com
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2nd Vice Commander	Ron Goron	724-626-1209	patron@zoominternet.net
Secretary	Jeff Simon	724-502-4505	jeffsimon@zoominternet.net
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Storekeeper	Joe Campisi	412-322-3201	jcampisi1@comcast.net
Chaplain	Carl Stigers	412-995-8028	carstenstigers@verizon.net
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Newsletter Editor	Jack Sutherin	330-482-4175	jack.sutherin@comcast.net
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COB/Historian -	Clyde Porter, jr.	740-635-3179	candsporter@comcast.net



July

USS GRUNION (SS 216) J
 USS S 28 (SS 133)
 USS ROBALO (SS 273)

July 30, 1942
 July 4, 1944
 July 26, 1944

Binnacle List



David H. "Red" Padgett Sr.

Groton - David H. Padgett Sr., retired Navy Master Chief David H. "Red" Padgett Sr., 75, of 235 Lestertown Road, Groton, passed away Sunday morning, June 21, 2015, at his residence.

He was born in Maumee, Ohio, on May 8, 1940, the son of Harry and Mary (Wood) Padgett.

Dave was married to Therese Brennan on Sept. 1, 1963, in Ramona, Calif. Therese passed away on Sept. 2, 2013.

Red served 30 years in the submarine service retiring as a master chief torpedoman. His tours of sea command were on the USS Sabalo, USS Baya, USS Redfish, USS Gato, USS Grenadier, USS Cavalla, USS Archerfish, where he was the COB for two tours and the USS Florida Commissioning COB of the Blue Crew. His shore commands were N.A.D. Earle, NJ (MK 48 shop), Navy Sub School instructor, Groton, Com Sub Dev Ron 12(CMC), Groton, and U.S. MEPS(CMC), Cleveland, Ohio.

He then worked at Electric Boat Co., drove an oil truck for Anderson Oil Co. for 10 years, and finally drove a school bus for the Groton Board of Education.

Red was a member of the Fleet Reserve, the Mystic Post [VFW](#), life member of the Sub Vets and Holland Club, 4th Degree Nina Assembly Knights of Columbus and 3rd degree Father Murphy Council K of C.

He is survived by his sons, David H. Padgett Jr. and Kimberly Banks of Mystic, Kevin Close of Long Beach, Calif., Charles and Nancy Close of Norcross, Ga.; his daughters, Terry Padgett of Groton, Roselle and Jim Santacroce of Ledyard, and Roxanne Locklear and Kevin Fusconi of Groton; a brother, Mel Browning of Toledo, Ohio; sisters, Marian Farley of Colorado and Priscilla and Bob Slack of Florida; nine grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 27, at Sacred Heart Church, 56 Sacred Heart Drive, Groton. Interment with military honors will be in Smith Lake Cemetery, Groton. Visiting hours will be from 9 to 10:30 a.m. on Saturday at Byles-Groton Memorial Home, 310 Thames St.



USSVI 2015 NATIONAL CONVENTION

September 7 – September 12, 2015

The Westin Convention Center Pittsburgh
1000 Penn Ave, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222

www.ussviconventionsteelcity2015.org

2015 Convention Registration Form



Name (To be used on name badge, include SVWWII/USSVI Officer Title): _____

Spouse/Guest: _____

Address: _____

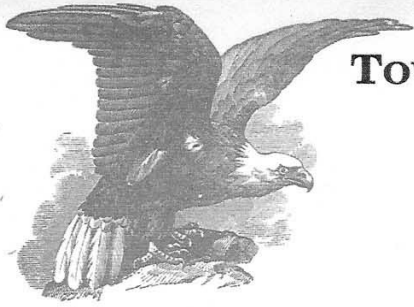
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: _____

Qual Boat: _____ Hull Number: _____ Qual Year: _____ Base: _____

Date	Event	Cost	Qty	Total
	(visit our website www.ussviconventionsteelcity2015.org for event details)			
	2015 Convention Registration (per person) (add \$10.00 per person after July 1, 2015) NOTE: Registration fees will not be refunded for any reason after August 1, 2015 NOTE: Attendance at any USSVI sponsored activity requires paid 2015 Convention Registration	\$30.00		
	Major Sports Event	TBD		
Tue. 9/8/15	Golf Outing	\$50.00		
	Shanksville-Ligoneer bus tour/luncheon/American heroes production	\$88.00		
	Welcome Aboard Party, Fleet Night	\$30.00		
Wed. 9/9/15	WWII Vet & Holland Club Breakfast Buffet	\$25.00		
	Incline and Aviary Tour	\$40.00		
	Strip District Walking Food Tour	\$30.00		
	Brewery Tour	\$35.00		
Thurs.9/10/15	Men's Luncheon	\$30.00		
	Women's Luncheon	\$30.00		
	Gateway Clipper Dinner Cruise	\$69.00		
Fri. 9/11/15	Carnegie Science Center	\$10.00		
	Memorial and Tolling Of The Boats, Carnegie Science Center	NC		
	Strip District Walking Food Tour	\$30.00		
	Brewery Tour	\$35.00		
	USS Requin Tour	NC		
Sat. 9/12/15	Film Festival	\$10.00		
	USSVI National Awards Banquet	\$55.00		
	Top Sirloin _____ Chicken Marsala _____ English Style Cod _____ Wild Mushroom Ravioli with Alfredo Sauce _____			
RAFFLE	Win one of two 6 night stays at The Westin Convention Center Pittsburgh for use during USSVI 2015 National Convention (9/7/15 thru 9/12/15) Prize: Standard Room (approx \$700 value) Drawing July 1, 2015 Winner to be notified by July 15, 2015	\$5.00 each OR 6 for \$25.00		
Payment by check or money order made payable to: 2015 USSVI CONVENTION PO Box 352 Gibsonia, PA 15044		TOTAL DUE:		



TOWNSHIP OF SHALER POLICE DEPARTMENT

300 WETZEL ROAD • GLENSHAW, PA 15116-2288

Phone: (412) 492-2222

Fax: (412) 492-2085

Bryan B. Kelly
Chief of Police

Kevin P. Boyle
Deputy Chief

June 15, 2015

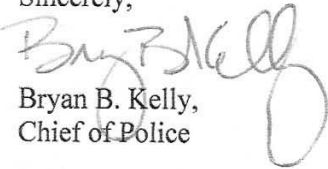
Hubert C. Dietrich – Commander
USS Requin Base
213 Andrews Drive
Glenshaw, PA 15116

Dear Huey,

I want to personally thank you and all of the members of the Requin Base for the honor bestowed upon the officers of the Shaler Township Police Department. This program has deep meaning coming from the men and women who have served our great nation in peace and war. You are deserving of, and have the utmost respect of this department for your service. In the current atmosphere toward law enforcement, there are very few positive opportunities to socialize as we did on Sunday. The luncheon was excellent and we were humbled by your very kind contribution from the 50 / 50 raffle, especially being awarded the entire amount. We have a bicycle rodeo each year and will purchase new bicycles to award some deserving youngsters. I have instructed the Lieutenant in charge to proudly display the Requin Base as having donated these prizes.

Again, thank you and the entire "crew" for the continued support of the law enforcement mission.

Sincerely,


Bryan B. Kelly,
Chief of Police

COMMANDERS COLUMN:

Our June base meeting was held in Shaler Township at the VFW Post 9199. A heartfelt thank-you to the post commander - John Stack, post adjunct Jennifer Rothwell and post steward Tim Rothwell. The VFW Post 9199 partnered with the Requin Base to honor the policeman of Shaler Township. They went above and beyond to extend to the Requin base, a hearty welcome and went above our expectations to make our meeting a great success. KUDOS to all the officers of VFW Post 9199.

In attendance from Shaler Township to honor our heroes from the Shaler Township Police Department, was a representative from the State Senate, Randy Vulakovich. Randy served as a police officer himself. A proclamation declaring Sunday, June 14, 2015 as the official Shaler Township Policeman's Day was read.

In addition, there were three township commissioners, Boyle, Duss and Mizgorski in attendance, to honor their policemen with a proclamation of their own. Many thanks to the commissioners for their help and assistance. Because of them, this day would not have happened.

Chief Kelly, his lieutenants, and officers were grateful for the appreciation shown to them for all they do for us. We have received a thank-you letter from the Chief, thanking us as veterans, for honoring his policemen.

Our base members and their spouses were very impressed with the hospitality of the VFW and the overall body of work of the meeting. We had a 50-50 raffle to help the police officers with their charity to buy bicycles for needy children of the township. My first mate, Edie was the winner and donated her winnings to the officers. They now have \$190.00 towards their next project. The Requin Base will be acknowledged for our donation.

NEW MEMBERS

Jeffery Sammel qualified on the USS GRAMPUS SS523 in 1963 as a TM3(SS). He left the navy in 1991 as a MNC(SS). Jeff lives in McKee's Rocks, Pa with his wife Carol. Please e-mail Jeff and welcome him aboard - cjsammel @comcast.net

Patricia Everly is the Curator of Historical Exhibits and is in charge of the USS REQUIN SS481 which is berthed at the Carnegie Science Center. Patty has been working closely with the base and has extended many courtesies to the crew of the Requin Base and to the REGULAR shipmates of the REQUIN, who sailed on her.

Maria Renzelli, COB, is in charge of everyday activities on board the USS REQUIN SS481 which is berthed at the Carnegie Science Center. She has teamed with Patty and have recruited our shipmates to conduct special tours on board the Requin.

BIRTHDAYS

Members:

Campisi, Joey 6/29/49
Cochenour, David 6/25/75
DeNicola, Anthony 6/22/35
Hollingsworth, Herb 6/15/24
Lukaski, John 6/18/46
Nicotra, Frank 6/01/47
Sipes, John 6/23/59
Stoner, Charles 6/11/31
Wiehagen, James 6/14/68
Yoder, Edward 6/09/31

Spouses

Burdin, Shiela 6/4
Crarlin, Katherine 6/11
Ellis, Sandy 6/17
Heron, Mary 6/24
Hoag, Adriana 6/13
Hollingsworth, E. 6/1
Tolbert, Sherian 6/4
Yoder, Carolyn 6/21

ANNIVERSARIES

Bates, Thomas & Tammy 6/4
Bouts, Clari & Nancy 6/1
Goron, Ron & Nancy 6/14
Grosswiler, J & Y 6/17/06
Greenlee, Bill & Donna 6/16
Iden, Larry & Helga 6-30
Mack, John & Vivian 6/1
Mann & Steve & Tonya 6/14
Schmidt, Robert & Kathy 6/14
Schwebel, Ed & Eliz 6/11
Shook, Ron & Alice 6/25
Sipes, John, Holly 6/12
Welts, Robert & Joanne 6/17
Wise, Herb & Adele 6/10

Any corrections or additions, please let me know.

NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting in July will be held at the Columbiana American Legion Post 290. The address is 44403 State Road 14, Columbiana, Ohio. Coming from Pa 60, at Chippewa, Pa, turn west on Pa. Rt 51 to the Ohio Line. The road turns into Ohio Rt. 14. About 14 miles you will come to Ohio Rt 7 intersection with Rt 14. The Legion is on the left about a half mile west of Rt 7/14 intersection. Coming from the Ohio Turnpike, take the second exit and go south on Rt 7 to Rt 7/14 intersection and turn west about a half mile

and the post sits on the left.

We will be honoring the policemen from Columbiana. Please make every attempt to be in attendance so we can have another outstanding ceremony.

Last week, shipmates Rick Elster, Joe Campisi and myself went to a luncheon in Oakland. The keynote speaker was Admiral Jonathan Greenert, the Chief of Naval Operations. The admiral is from Butler, Pa. and will be retiring by September 18. We had the pleasure of meeting and shaking his hand. We exchanged challenge coins. We gave him our Requin Base Coin and in return, all three of us received his CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS COIN - WOW, what a thrill.

We were informed by his aid that it may be impossible for him to attend our convention because it is so close to his retirement. Anyway, it was awesome meeting the Admiral.

K-429 (often incorrectly referred to as K-329) was a Project 670-A Ckar (Skat, meaning "ray"; also known by its NATO reporting name of "Charlie-I" class) nuclear submarine of the Soviet Navy. Her keel was laid down on 26 January 1971 at Krasnoye Sormovo in Gorky. She was launched on 22 April 1972, and was commissioned on 31 October 1972 into the Soviet Pacific Fleet.

In the spring of 1983, K-429 returned to base needing overhaul after a long patrol. After turning their boat over to the shipyard, crew departed on leave. However, her nuclear weapons remained aboard.

That June, Captain First Rank Nikolay Suvorov was ordered by Rear Admiral Oleg Yerofeyev, commander of the Pacific Fleet, to reassume command of K-429 and to take part in an exercise. Suvorov questioned the order: the exercises had been planned for autumn, the boat was being repaired, the crew was on leave, and Suvorov expected a transfer to St. Petersburg. Yerofeyev explained that Suvorov's Communist Party membership would be revoked and he would have to face a tribunal if he asked such questions. (Without Communist Party membership, Suvorov would not be allowed to command a warship.)

Suvorov recalled his crew and returned to K-429. Much of the crew could not be contacted, and their places were filled by sailors from the naval base and from five other boats that were in port at the time. Nearly one-third of the 120 crewmen had never been on K-429 before, and none of them received any training on K-429. On 23 June 1983, K-429 was ordered to proceed immediately to the torpedo firing range. Suvorov refused that order, replying that standard operating procedures required him to perform a test dive first.

In the late evening on 23 June, K-429 arrived at her testing area in Sarannaya Bay, just south of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, and Suvorov gave the order to dive to periscope depth. However, he had not given the preliminary command to set the diving watch — the crew neither aligned the boat's systems for sea, nor were they at their stations to control the boat during the dive.

Because the boat had not been prepared to dive, instrumentation valves were not aligned properly, and even though the main ballast tanks were filling, their indicators read empty. Confused, Suvorov ordered auxiliary ballast tanks filled. Over-ballasted to about 60 tons negative buoyancy, the boat dove very quickly.

While K-429 was in the shipyard, her ventilation system had been opened to the maximum extent possible, so as to exhaust fumes from welding. Various interlocks that would automatically shut ventilation valves were disabled. This lineup was not corrected before the boat dove.

The open ventilation system caused immediate catastrophic flooding of the forward compartments. Suvorov ordered an emergency ballast blow, but the operator became confused and shut the flood valves on the bottoms of the tanks, while opening the vents on the tops of the tanks. About half of the boat's supply of high-pressure air was wasted through the vents without displacing any water. The forward compartments took on about 420 cubic meters (420 tons) of water before the ventilation system could be secured, killing 14 men immediately. At about midnight, the boat hit bottom, about 39 meters down. Although Suvorov had made mistakes that contributed to the sinking, his insistence on a test dive had saved the remaining men: the torpedo firing range was around 2000 meters deep. If Suvorov had proceeded there directly, K-429 would have been lost.

The boat's emergency buoys and escape capsules had been welded to the hull to prevent losing them at sea, so escape would require the crew to make a free ascent in Arctic waters. Suvorov assumed that his report that he would make a test dive had been received, and that the duty officer would give the alarm in about an hour

when he failed to report re-surfacing. He ordered his crew to remain at their stations and await rescue, even though the boat's battery had begun releasing hydrogen.

Several hours later, during the morning of 25 June, Suvorov called for volunteers. Two of his original crew donned escape gear, locked out of the torpedo room escape trunk, and successfully ascended to the surface. They saw no ships in the area, so they swam to shore, where they were arrested by military police.

Their report reached Admiral Yerofeyev at about noon. By 19:15 that evening, the boat had been located, and the first sailor ascended to the waiting rescue ships at 22:36. During the rescue, two more seamen were lost during their ascent. The last seaman reached the surface at 23:00.

On 6 August K-429 was raised and towed into shallow water, and salvage began. It transpired that the reactor had shut down automatically, but that its control rods had jammed before reaching their full stroke and the reactor had been operating at about 0.5% power since the disaster. No radiation or contamination leakage was found. On 8 August, K-429 was raised into dry dock.

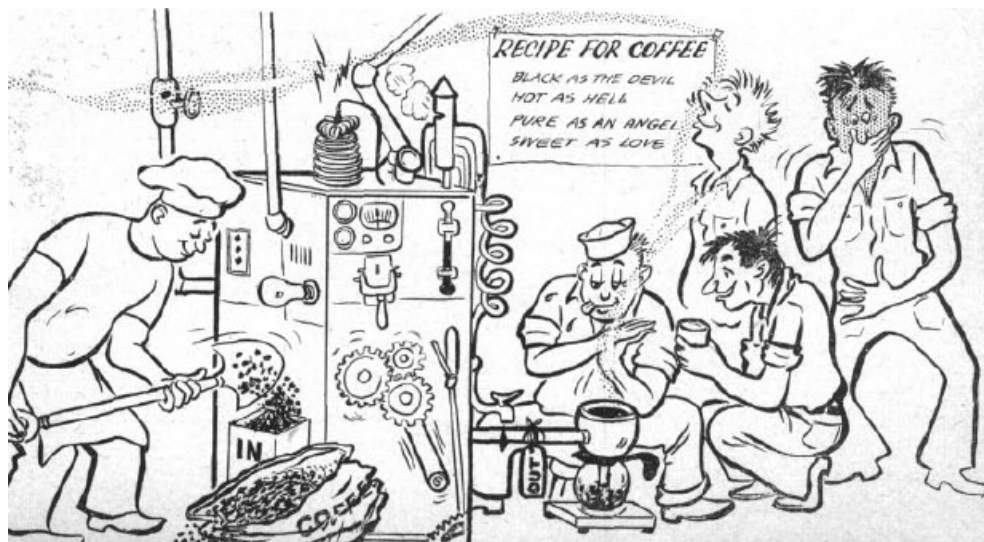
Suvorov was sentenced to ten years in prison. Likhovozov, chief of the fifth compartment, was sentenced for eight years. They were arrested in the barracks where the court took place, without letting them to say goodbye to their wives. Suvorov told an interviewer, "I am not fully innocent. But a fair analysis should have been made to avoid such accidents in the future. I told the judges in my concluding statement: if you do not tell the truth, others do not learn from bad experiences — more accidents will happen, more people will die."

Admiral Yerofeyev was promoted to Commander-in-Chief of the Northern Fleet.

On 13 September 1985, K-429 sank at her moorings. She was again raised and decommissioned.

Don't Wash That Coffee Mug!

Posted on [November 25, 2013](#) by [Admin](#)



The obsession began over seven years ago. In 2006, I began at the Hampton Roads Naval Museum as a wide-eyed intern, ready to take on the new and fascinating world of naval history. I thought the coffee mess at work was reserved for staff and volunteers only. I did not feel comfortable partaking in the delicious brew until somebody told me I could. When I finally got the green light, I happily brought my coffee mug in the next day, eager to drink from the well all working class souls go to each morning.

This was my first experience with "Navy coffee." It was hot and strong. Very strong. The thickness of it closely resembled crude oil. It tasted both wonderful and terrible at the same time. Your mind can trick you into believing anything. When a supreme pot of joe is brewed, many of the volunteers would call it "Signal Bridge Coffee," recalling the nostalgia of long nights and many cups consumed.

After that first morning of coffee, I went to the break room to wash my cup and let it dry for the next day's angry fix. As I washed out my cup, I felt the sting of glaring eyes from behind my back. I'm sure whoever it was, they could sense my hesitation. I turned around to see GMC Dana Martin, the museum's active duty

OIC. He had a puzzled, concerned look on his face. Chief Martin was grizzled and salty. He was by far one of the saltiest sailors I have ever met. He grabbed my arm washing the cup. My hesitation grew to fear. He leaned in close and told me to “never wash it again,” staring back down at my cup and back to me. I looked at him, puzzled with fascination and disbelief. Although I drink my coffee black, my mind struggled to find reason in the practice.

“I don’t understand,” I told him. “I need to clean my cup.” I was merely doing what I was taught. Bills should be paid on time. Five minutes early is five minutes late. Coffee mugs should be washed out after use. Simple, right? Wrong. I held my breath and found out just how wrong I really was.

He leaned in again, this time more relaxed (and less confrontational). “I know you are just starting out here, but I want to let you in on a little secret.” He was almost whispering. “If you intend to stay here at the museum, you can impress the Navy guys with your mug.” He went on to explain to me the significance of an unwashed or “seasoned” coffee mug, particularly in the Navy Chief community. “And keep it as tarry black as possible,” he added. “Sometimes it’s the only way you can drink this swill. But you will grow to love it and depend on the taste.” I would never think I would believe him. Boy, was I wrong.

Old coffee in a cup signifies seniority and stature in the military, particularly on deployment. As one blogger noted, “You may not be able to embrace your loved ones while you are gone, but at least you can still taste the same coffee you drank the day you left.”

To many in the military, this is nothing new. Ask anybody who served or is currently serving in the military, and they will likely give you a story about an experience involving the practice of “seasoning” their cup. Navy Chiefs, however, are considered by many to be the most Spartan of stalwarts to the unwashed coffee mug. I spoke to some retired CPOs who counted four or five deployments on a single unwashed cup. The August 1949 edition of *All Hands Magazine* declared that coffee was the “Lifeblood of the U.S. Navy.” The article goes on to discuss why many sailors take their coffee so seriously. The article opens with this paragraph:

SAILORS can nonchalantly polish their fingernails on their lapels – if they had lapels – when the conversation turns to coffee brewing. Sensitive-palate coffee quaffers admit that when it comes to preparing the delicious beverage, U. S. Navy men have no peers.

The 1945 [*Cookbook of the United States Navy*](#) lists several reasons why a clean mug and pot of coffee is essential to a flavorful experience. All parts of the coffee mess had to be “scrupulously clean,” according to the cook book. Sailors today might read those guidelines and laugh at the rules and regulations.



Several⁸ recent articles about the practice surfaced on the :

internet on message boards and military news blogs. One blogger from the Military Times ([Broadside Blog](#)) wrote about it this past August. “There are only a few things you need to know about Navy coffee, and most of it involves the cup,” the blogger writes. “You do not wash a Navy coffee cup. Ever.” I took Chief Martin’s advice, but not at first. For the first few weeks following our confrontation, I washed my cup out after he left for the day. But I got lazy after a while. I starting noticing dark brown rings inside my cup. My mug started to look like the inside of a tree, and I started to like it. The mug was white, so it was easy to measure my progress. The rings grew larger and darker until the entire inside was jet black. Although I was never in the military, I felt a swelling of pride at my Frankenstein creation. Unfortunately, that mug did not survive. My latest and greatest creation came about in 2009. It has not been washed or cleaned since its purchase. I don’t know if my peers understand it. My wife surely doesn’t. I have a similar mug at home that she avoids looking at, and, on rare occasions, will clean when I am not looking. Here is my (meager) contribution to this fine naval tradition. I warn you, if you are unfamiliar with the practice, you might be shocked. Behold: My four year “seasoned” mug

Cold War Medal Update 05 ► H.R.2067 | Recognition Overdue

As Americans, we have a long and storied tradition of honoring the millions of men and women who have served our country throughout generations of armed conflict. We have built memorials and museums, issued medals, and designated national holidays to commemorate our veterans’ service and ensure that their legacy will live on for generations to come. There also lie heroes that time has forgotten - whose names and actions are not written in the text of history books or etched into the walls of memorials. Millions of brave service members whose commitment to our nation ended the Cold War, after more than forty years. They worked quietly, or behind the scenes but prevented the world from dovetailing into nuclear war.

While the world was focused on wars raging in places like Korea and Vietnam, these men and women worked tirelessly to ensure that the tens of thousands of nuclear missiles the United States and the Soviet Union had aimed at each other’s shores were never launched. They served on remote B-52 bomber bases, maintained missile silos, defended checkpoints and gathered intelligence in order to save our nation, and the world, from the devastating consequences of a nuclear catastrophe. The Cold War ended on December 26, 1991, but our heroes received no parades, celebrations or even so much as a public thank you. Although there were no major battles or combat over the forty-four year span of the Cold War, it is what these men and women prevented from happening that deserves our highest honor and appreciation.

It is long past time that our Cold War veterans receive the proper recognition that they deserve. While Democrats and Republicans rarely agree on much in Washington these days, honoring our veterans is an issue that transcends party lines. That is why Reps. Steve Israel (D-NY) and David Jolly (R-FL) reached across the aisle to introduce legislation that will award a military service medal to members of the Armed Forces who served honorably during the Cold War. The Cold War Service Medal Act of 2015 (H.R. 2067) authorizes the Secretary of Defense to issue medals to members of the U.S. Armed Forces who were honorably discharged after having served on active duty for at least 24 consecutive months during the Cold War, deployed outside the continental United States for at least 30 days during those years, or performed other Cold War service as the Secretary of Defense may prescribe.

The bill’s sponsors are urging their colleagues to bring this legislation to the floor of the House for a vote. They owe it to Cold War veterans and their families to show them the respect and appreciation for their valor and the silent sacrifices they made to protect our country and our freedom. It is never too late to right a wrong, and presenting these men and women with the medal they have earned is the least we can do to honor their courage and their sacrifice. Without them, the war that never was, could have been the war to end all wars. [Source: The Hill | Reps. Steve Israel and David Jolly | May 25, 2015 ++]





By Jennifer McDermott, The Day, Aug 14, 2010

Groton - Thirty years ago, Thomas Fargo and Dmitry Zubkov traveled in some of the same waters on ballistic-missile submarines tasked with Cold War missions.

"I wouldn't talk specifics," a smiling Fargo said Friday, "but if you look at the Soviet Union and the United States and draw range arcs, you can figure out where you have to be, to be in range."

Fargo was referring to the range of the nuclear missiles that the submarine he was assigned to, the USS George Washington Carver (SSN-583), carried on board. Early versions had a range of about 1,500 nautical miles, with later replacement missiles extending the range by up to 1,000 nautical miles.

Zubkov also had a set of nuclear missiles aboard the submarine he commanded, the Soviet Navy's K-475, Delta-I type.

These two submarine officers were on opposite sides during the Cold War, but they met at a reunion of the Carver's crew this week in Groton to share sea stories from that era.

A retired captain, Zubkov said he was positive he had never met Fargo before - even under the ocean's surface.

"Never," he said. "I am sure we were undetected and I wasn't tracked. I know it for sure."

The Carver served as a deterrent force, as did Zubkov's submarine. Political leaders on both sides knew that if they were the first to strike, their adversary's ballistic-missile submarines was close enough to hit back.

"We have no doubt to push button and all missiles in several seconds could be near to the United States territory," Zubkov said in broken English.

"You had these weapons available - in a heartbeat," said Fargo, snapping his fingers.

But neither submarine was ever given that order - something both men are thankful for today.

"It's the last thing anyone in the world wanted to happen," Fargo said. "But the essence of deterrence is knowing that the capability is ready, sent and ready."

Fargo made five patrols on the Carver from 1979 to 1982 as the engineer. He went on to command the USS Salt Lake City (SSN 716) and the U.S. Pacific Fleet and the U.S. Pacific Command before retiring as an admiral in 2005.

Zubkov commanded the K-475 from 1972 to 1980 and retired from the Navy in 1992 with 17 submarine patrols to his credit. He said his years in command during the Cold War were the best years of his life, since it was a time to "realize yourself as a man."

A common opinion here, he said, is that the United States won the Cold War.

"We commanding officers in Russia say we didn't lose it," Zubkov said. "It would be shameful to me to think we lost the Cold War. The conflict at any moment could finish in a hot war. That would be a disaster for all mankind."

Zubkov is right in most respects, Fargo said, since one of the principal goals was to ensure that the conflict did not escalate into a nuclear war.

"And it didn't," he said. "I'm sure his comments reflect the pride and professionalism they view in their operations. But I do believe the success of our military during that period of time, as represented foremost by the Submarine Force, and the ability to operate in the Atlantic and the Pacific, was one of the key factors in the fall of the Berlin Wall and the essential demise of the Soviet Union."

Both men said they had the utmost respect for the submariners on the other side.

"They are professionals, as we are," Zubkov said.

"We knew if we didn't perform at our best, they might have the upper hand," Fargo said, adding that both groups believed "very properly" they were performing a mission that was absolutely essential to the security of their nation."

Fargo said he would love to talk about his past experiences with Soviet submarines.

"But I'm not going to," he said with a laugh.