



September 2021

Published Monthly

STEEL VALLEY DOLPHINS
USSVI REQIUN BASE NEWSLETTER



The USSVI Requin Base supports the National 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.”

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Meeting Information

Meetings are held on the second Saturday of the month, normally at the Baden PA American Legion. Quarterly meetings are held around our membership area.

Our next meeting will be

October 16, 2021 @ 1230 hours
At Golden Corral in Hermitage PA
1025 N Hermitage Rd, Hermitage, PA 16148

Base Location



American Legion Post 641
271 State St
Baden PA 15005

From the Editor

Please send ideas for articles or copies of articles, with full credit information to me for consideration of submission in the SVD.

We are a SUBMARINE group. As such, the articles should be SUBMARINE or NAVY related.

Lou Hamill - itgeek8088@gmail.com

MAKE A DIFFERENCE, ATTEND A MEETING!

Our Website

For additional information about what is happening at **YOUR** base, go to

<https://www.requinbase.org/>



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USS Requin Base Officers

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Eagle Scout Chair	Vince Metz	412-613-5554	vincemetz007@hotmail.com
Awards Chair	Dick Geyer	724-637-2995	dqdiving@gmail.com
Master at Arms	Bat Masterson	724-869-1938	mastersoncf@aol.com
Public Affairs Chair	Ed Derr	724-854-0781	redde@gmail.com



Binnacle List

Carl Stigers
Ed Derr
Judy Elster

Eternal Patrol

All hands present and
accounted for.



In Remembrance

Donald Miller
Marion Irons
Don Lennox
Monty Silvers.

Boats Lost



Tolling of the Boats for September

USS S-5 (SS-110)

Lost on September 1, 1920 when a practice dive went wrong and she sank bow-first, with her stern showing above the water. In a dramatic adventure, her exhausted crew was rescued during the next few days. Salvage attempts were unsuccessful, S-5 settled to the bottom and was abandoned.

USS Grayling (SS-209)

Lost on Sept 9, 1943 with the loss of 76 men near the Tablas Strait. Grayling was on her 8th war patrol and sank two ships before being lost.

USS Pompano (SS-181)

Pompano was sunk (between Sept 17 and Oct 5) with the loss of 77 men while on her 7th war patrol. Possibly lost on Sept 17, 1943. Japanese records show that a submarine was sunk in her patrol area on 17September by air & depth charge attack off the Aomori Prefecture near Shiriya Zaki. Before being lost, she sank two enemy cargo ships. The exact cause of her loss remains unknown, but she probably was sunk by the air/sea attack above or fell victim to a mine on or after 9/25/1943. This boat's last recorded ship (Taiko Maru) sunk happened on Sept 25th, so she probably hit a mine on or after that date but before Oct 5th, when she was scheduled back at Midway.

USS S-51 (SS-162)

Lost on Sept 25, 1925 with the loss of 33 men when it was sunk after collision with SS City of Rome off Block Island.

USS Cisco (SS-290)

Lost on Sept 28, 1943 on her first war patrol with the loss of 76 men in the Sulu Sea west of Mindinao.

Birthdays

Anniversaries

Member

Spouse

Member	Birthdays	Spouse	Anniversaries
Eric Bookmiller	10/02	Kathy Schmidt	19-Oct
Carl Humes	10/02	Lisa Thompson	19-Oct
John Ewald	10/03		
Jon Bruce	10/04		
Paul McKenzie	10/06		
Carsten Stigers	10/11		
Rick Flaugh	10/18		
Ronnie Horton	10/22		
Jeffrey Biel	10/26		
Charles Loskoch	10/29		
Shawn McGinty	10/30		
Jason Deichler	10/31		
Edward Perlowitz	10/31		
			Lisa & Jeffrey Thompson
			Mary Ann & James Kontir
			Linda & Gerald Gaylor
			Judy & Richard Elster
			Danielle & Eric Greenwald
			Jean & Robert Moore
			Beth Klebache & Kyle Lacey
			Karen & Allen McGee
			Barbara & Larry Boutelle
			Mary Beth & Rick Flaugh
			Janice & James Johnston
			Marianne & James Phelan
			Sheila & Thomas Burdin
			Cathy & Thomas Clark Jr
			Michelle & James Mears
			Jennifer & Thomas Weible
			Peggy & Christopher M. Gibson





SPECIAL NEWS: Just a short note – Chaplin Carl Stigers has been in the hospital for the last few weeks. He was diagnosed with a very serious disease. He is having a rough time. Chad and I visited him and we lifted his spirits. Lou visited a few days later. We were in attendance when the doctor was talking to him and he will be having a procedure done to help him to eat whole foods.

I informed the National Commander that Carl has resigned as the National Chaplin! It would be appreciated if everyone would send Carl a card wishing him well.

Carl Stigers
Requin Base Chaplin
1111 Peermont Ave.
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15216-2213

PLEASE keep Carl in your prayers.

Hi Swabs – Shipmates, Dietrich, Campisi, Metz, Hamill, Bookmiller and Underkoffler attended a great get together with the commander of the VFW Post 9199, Dan Bonnet. Dan traveled to Seattle, Washington to visit his brother David, who is a member of the Base. While out in Seattle, Dan and his brother visited the “HORSE & COW”! He saw all our names on the USS PITTSBURGH’s Banner, which we signed while attending the decommissioning ceremony.

He brought back a present from his brother David. It was a bottle of NUCLEAR WASTE. We could not believe it. Everyone enjoyed the taste and it really brought back good memories! Kudos to both BONNET’s and VFW 9199.

The Requin base traveled to Coraopolis, for their stand down parade – The following members participated – Dietrich, Booky, Simon, Hamill, Lindsey, Held, Allen, Bat, Geyer, Bouts, Underkoffler, Brown, Campisi, Bookmiller, Flaugh, Pete & Nancy Loskoch and Bob & Jude Myers.

It was a wonderful event that we all enjoyed! We ran into three Submarine navy recruiters and we handed them applications – hopefully they will join!

After the parade we traveled back to the Baden’s American Legion. They invited us to participate in a memorial service, honoring the 13 heroes of Afghanistan. Afterwards they had a great brunch for us and honored us by announcing that we be first in the chow line. While enjoying the meal, Evelyn, the bartender announced that the club would cover our first beverages. Then another young member bought the 2nd round. They are truly a great veteran organization.

The Smart Ass is up to it again and has been sending out e-mails under my name asking for various types of help. Under no circumstances, respond to this idiot! They didn’t have my correct e-mail address. I had Lou check out my computer and found no issues on being hacked.



Meeting Minutes

September 11, 2021
Baden, PA

Base Commander Huey Dietrich called the abbreviated meeting to order.
Attendance was not taken

Boats Lost:

USS S-5 (SS 110)	September 1, 1920
USS GRAYLING (SS 209)	September 9, 1943
USS S-51 (SS 162)	September 25, 1925
USS CISCO (SS 290)	September 28, 1943

We wish to remember our shipmates of the Requin Base who went on Eternal Patrol in the month of September: Donald Miller, Marion Irons, Don Lennox, and Monty Silvers.

Memorial and Ceremonies

Navy Ball is being held on October 8th. Base members are encouraged to attend since we are co-sponsoring this event.

Columbus Day parade in Bloomfield on October 9th

Possible attendance in Veterans Day in Pittsburgh parade date to be determined

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

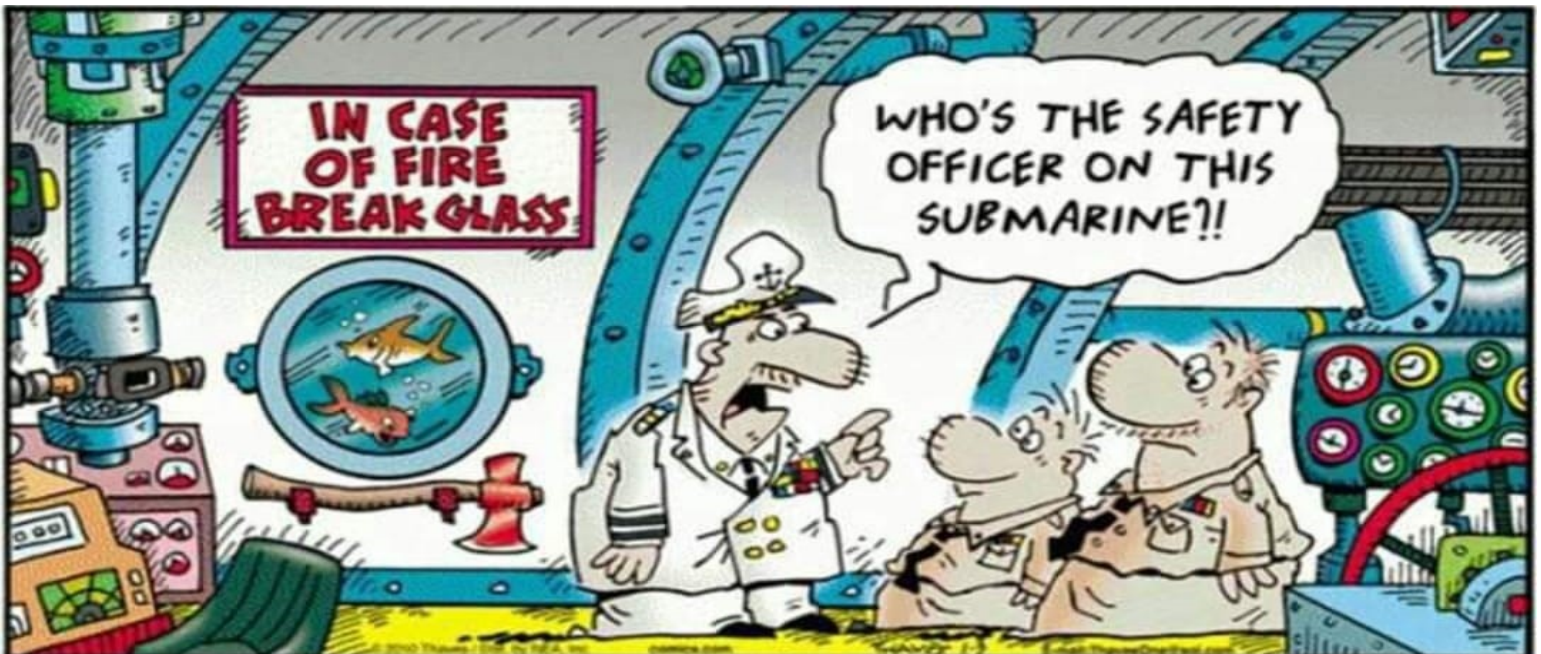
Base meeting for next month changed to October 16th due to parade on October 9th. Location will be at the Golden Corral in Hermitage, PA

Good of The Order:

None

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned.

Next meeting: Golden Corral Restaurant, 1025 N. Hermitage Rd., Hermitage, PA at 1230 hours on Octo-





Carl,

**“YOU ARE LOVED.
YOU ARE THOUGHT OF.
YOU ARE PRAYED FOR.”**

Let us all pray for Carl and his family.

“God, thank you for being with Carl. We confess that we don't understand why things happen the way they do. We don't understand why illness comes into our lives, but we do know that you walk every path of life with us. Remind Carl that you are walking with him right now. Remind Carl that you love him, no matter what he is going through. I also pray for Carl's family. Give them your strength as they care for Carl. God, we thank you that you never leave us, that you never forsake us, but you love us. We trust you, and pray this in your name.

Amen.”



Store Keepers Report

Please visit our online store at

<https://requinbase.org/shop/>

You can have your items shipped to you at home via USPS [for a small fee], or pick them up at the next USSVI meeting.



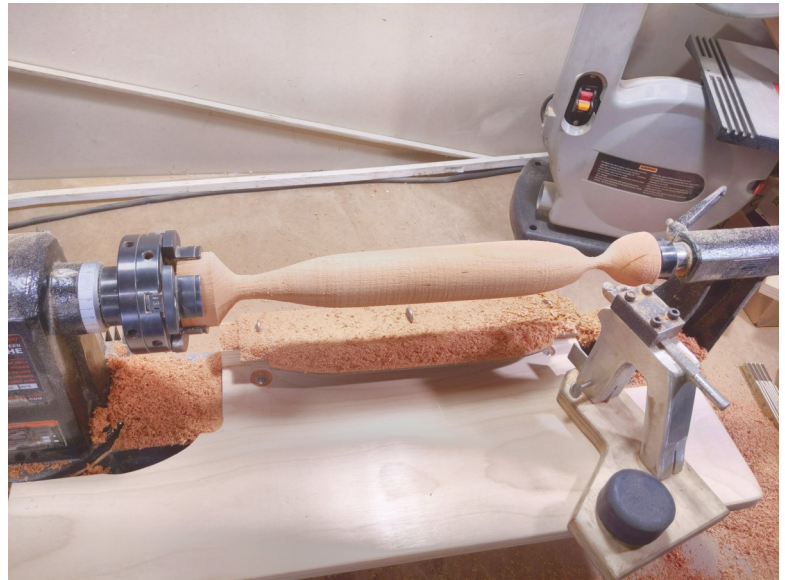


Bravo Zulu



Chad Underkoffler and Chad McGill
Lead Machinist of Royal Hydraulics.

Thank you to Chad Squared for the great work retooling the lathe duplicator cutting tool. The cutting tool is what is used to shape the beer tap handles.



Month in Review



St Patricks Day Parade
9/18/2021

Coraopolis Parade
9/11/2021

All photos can be viewed in the event photo library
which can be found on the base website.

<https://requinbase.org/basephotos/>





Upcoming Events

Events

- Oct 8th – Navy Ball
- Oct 9th – Columbus Day Parade – Bloomfield (Liberty Ave)
- Nov 11th – Veterans Day Parade – Downtown

Meetings

- Oct 16th - Hermitage PA, Golden Corral
- Nov 13th - Baden, American Legion
- Dec 11th - Baden, American Legion



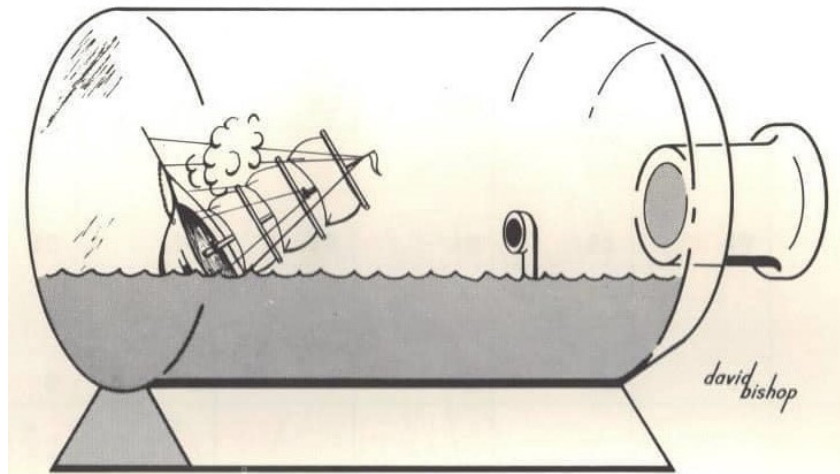
Membership

Regular Members	181	Holland Club	89	USSVI Life Members	75
Associate Members	13	WWII	5	Base Life Members	50
Total Members	197				



New Members

No new members to report



Eagle Scouts

Please direct all Eagle Court of Honor requests to <https://requinbase.org/eagle-coh>

Congratulations to:

- Michael Brendan Walsh - Troop 215
- Jeremy Ethan Blocklin - Troop 215
- Carson Allen Hellerman - Troop 215
- Brandon Kerper Smith - Troop 215





SSN 799
USS IDAHO
 COMMISSIONING COMMITTEE
<https://ussidahocommittee.org/>



<https://www.facebook.com/SSN799>

USS Idaho Support Fundraiser

Sep 11, 2021

Thank You, to everyone who has helped us reach our initial goal of \$10,000.
 Our fundraising efforts are going so well that we decided to increase the goal to 15,000.
 We are Submariners and by nature, we are over achievers.
 Keep it up. The crew and their families appreciate the support.



Houston PA American Legion 902

If you would like to order a challenge coin holder or a Submarine Beer Tap Handle [with or without the stand] contact [Huey Dietrich](#)



**The Navy League, Pittsburgh Council
The USNA Alumni Association, Pittsburgh Chapter
The US Submarine Veterans, Requin Base, and
The Chief Petty Officers Association of McKeesport-Pittsburgh**

**request the pleasure of your company at the
Navy Birthday Ball celebrating the 246th Birthday of the U.S. Navy**

**Friday, October 8th, 2021
Edgewood Country Club
100 Churchill Rd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15235**

Reception:	6:30 PM	Military: Dinner Dress Blue
Dinner:	7:30 PM	Optional: Service Dress Blue or equivalent with Miniature Ribbons
Dancing:	8:30 PM	Civilian: Business Attire Optional: Black Tie

R.S.V.P.: September 27, 2021

Ticket Prices per person: \$65 – for O5 and above/Guests and Civilians
\$50 – E-7 and above, O-1 through O-4 /Guests
\$40 –Midshipman/ E-1-E-6/Guests

Please confirm your registration by telephone or e-mail

Tom Clark: tclark_usna66@comcast.net (412) 373-7746 / (412) 551-5725 Or
Katherine Kersten: kjkersten2@verizon.net (412) 367-4725

Please send your check (made out to Navy League, Pittsburgh Council) to:

Tom Clark, 1032 Harvard Rd. Monroeville, PA 15146.

Please note: Whether or not you plan on attending, if you would like to make a donation to assist with supporting the attendance of our junior Sailors and Midshipmen, please send checks (made out to Navy League, Pittsburgh Council) to: Tom Clark, 1032 Harvard Rd. Monroeville, PA 15146. Please identify in memo section as a donation to the Navy Ball.



Featured Boat



Name	USS <i>Vermont</i>
Namesake	State of <u>Vermont</u>
Ordered	28 April 2014 ^[1]
Builder	General Dynamics Electric Boat, Groton, Connecticut
Laid down	February 2017 ^[1]
Launched	20 October 2018 ^[1]
Christened	20 October 2018 ^[3]
Acquired	17 April 2020
Commissioned	18 April 2020 ^[2]
Homeport	Groton, Connecticut
Identification	Hull symbol:SSN-792
Status	In active service ^[1]

General characteristics

Class and type	<u>Virginia-class submarine</u>
Displacement	7,800 <u>tons</u>
Length	377 ft (115 m) ^[4]
Beam	34 ft (10.4 m) ^[4]
Draft	32 ft (9.8 m) ^[4]
Propulsion	<u>S9G reactor</u> , auxiliary diesel engine
Speed	25 knots (46 km/h)
Endurance	can remain submerged indefinitely dependent on food stores and maintenance requirements.
Test depth	greater than 800 ft (244 m)
Complement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 officers 120 enlisted men and women
Armament	12 VLS tubes, four 21 inch (530 mm) torpedo tubes for <u>Mk-48 torpedoes</u> <u>BGM-109 Tomahawk</u>



09/02/1944

USS Finback (SS 230) rescues Lt. j.g. George H.W. Bush, who is shot down while attacking Chi Chi Jima. During this time, Lt. j.g. Bush serves with Torpedo Squadron Fifty One (VT 51) based on board USS San Jacinto (CVL 30). Lt. j.g. Bush later becomes the 41st President of the United States.

09/06/1997

USS Louisiana (SSBN 743) is commissioned at its homeport of Submarine Base Kings Bay, Ga. The boat is the last of the Navys 18 Ohio-class nuclear-powered fleet ballistic missile submarines.

09/07/2013

USS Minnesota (SSN 783) is commissioned at Naval Station Norfolk is the 10th of the Virginia-class submarines and the third Navy vessel to be named after the state of Minnesota.

09/08/1944

On a daring night attack, USS Spadefish (SS 411) attacks a Japanese convoy off Sakishima Gunto and sinks four Japanese vessels.

09/09/1944

USS Bang (SS 385) attacks a Japanese convoy 3905, en route from Tokyo Bay to Chichi Jima, and sinks transport Tokiwasan Maru, and freighter Shoryu Maru.

09/09/1989

USS Pennsylvania (SSBN 735) is commissioned at New London, Conn. The fourth Navy vessel to be named after the Keystone State, the Ohio-class nuclear-powered.

09/09/2006

USS Texas (SSN 775) is commissioned at Newport News, Va. The second Virginia-class attack submarine is the first named for the Lone Star State. Previous ships named Texas have included two battleships and a cruiser.

09/11/1942

Pharmacists Mate First Class Wheeler B. Lipes performs an emergency appendectomy on Seaman 1st Class Darrell D. Rector on board USS Seadragon (SS 194) on patrol in the South China Sea.

09/11/1944

USS Albacore (SS 218) torpedoes and sinks the Japanese auxiliary submarine chaser (Cha 165) off Kyushu, Japan, while USS Finback (SS 230) sinks Japanese army cargo ship, Hassho Maru, and merchant cargo ship, No. 2, Hakuun Maru, north of Chichi Jima. Also on this date, USS Pargo (SS 264) sinks Japanese auxiliary netlayer, Hinoki Maru, in Java Sea.

09/11/1982

USS Michigan (SSGN 727) is commissioned at Groton, Conn. The second Ohio-class nuclear-powered guided missile submarine, it is the third Navy vessel to honor the State of Michigan.

09/12/1944

USS Growler (SS 215) torpedoes and sinks the Japanese destroyer Shikinami 240 miles south of Hong Kong, and escort vessel Hirado 250 miles east of Hainan Island.

09/12/1987

USS Key West (SSN 722) is commissioned at her homeport of Naval Station Norfolk, Va. Following the ceremony, the 35th Los Angeles-class attack submarine made a trip down to its name-sake city at Key West, Fla. The boat is the third US Navy vessel to be named after the nations southern-most city.

09/13/1996

USS Cheyenne (SSN 773) is commissioned at Naval Station Norfolk. The 62nd and last of the Los Angeles-class attack submarines, USS Cheyenne is the third to be named after Wyoming's capital city.

09/15/1944

USS Pampanito (SS 383) and USS Sealion (SS 315) rescue 73 British and 54 Australian POWs who survive the loss of Japanese freighter, Rakuyo Maru, after she is sunk by Sealion on Sept. 12, about 300 miles west of Cape Bojeador, Luzon. There had been 1,300 men on board Rakuyo Maru when she is torpedoed.

09/16/1944

USS Barb (SS 220) sinks the Japanese 11,700-ton tanker, Azusa, and the 20,000-ton escort carrier, Unyo, 200 miles southeast of Hong Kong. Additionally, while off Yokosuka, Japan, USS Sea Devil (SS 400) sinks the Japanese submarine I-364.

19/16/1958

USS Grayback (SSG 574) fires the first operational launch of a Regulus II surface-to-surface guided missile, while off the coast of California.

09/16/1994

USS Charlotte (SSN 766) is commissioned at Naval Station Norfolk. The 16th of the Los Angeles-class (improved) attack submarines, the boat is the fourth Navy ship to be named for the North Carolina city.

09/19/1944

USS Shad (SS 235) torpedoes and sinks Japanese coast defense ship, Ioshima. (ex-Chinese cruiser, Ning Hai) 85 miles off Hachij, Jima.

09/19/1957

Bathyscaphe Trieste, in a dive sponsored by the Office of Naval Research in the Mediterranean, reaches a record depth of two miles. Three years later, Trieste would set a new record of seven miles on Jan. 23, 1960.

09/20/1943

USS S-28 (SS 133) sinks Japanese gunboat No. 2 Katsura Maru, 165 miles southwest of Paramushir, Kuril Islands.

09/21/1944

USS Haddo (SS 255) torpedoes and sinks the Japanese survey ship, Katsuriki, off Manila, Philippines.

09/21/2017

The Navy awards a \$5.1 billion contract to General Dynamics Electric Boat for Integrated Product and Process Development (IPPD) of the Columbia-class Fleet Ballistic Missile Submarine (SSBN). The IPPD contract award includes design, completion, component and technology development and prototyping work.

09/22/1959

USS Patrick Henry (SSBN 599) is launched. In 1982, her ballistic missile tubes are disabled, and she is reclassified as an attack submarine.

09/24/1943

USS Cabrilla (SS 288) attacks three Japanese ships, a carrier, escort carrier and destroyer, northwest of Chichi Jima.

09/25/1925

USS S-51 sinks after being rammed by SS City of Rome off Block Island, R.I., killing 33 of her crew.

09/25/1944

USS Searaven (SS 196) is attacked by a Japanese small craft off southwest tip of Etorofu, Kurils. USS Barbel (SS 316) sinks Japanese merchant cargo ship, Bushu Maru, off Togara Gunto. Additionally, USS Guardfish (SS 217) sinks Japanese merchant cargo ship, No.2, Miyakawa Maru, in the Yellow Sea off Chinnampo. Also, on this day, USS Thresher (SS 200) sinks Japanese merchant cargo ship, Nissei Maru, in the Yellow Sea.

09/25/1982

USS Houston (SSN 713) is commissioned at Naval Station Norfolk. For two months in 1989, the boat participated in the filming of The Hunt for Red October off the coasts of Washington and California.

09/26/1944

USS Pargo (SS 264) sinks the Japanese minelayer, Aotaka, off Borneo. Also on this date, USS McCoy Reynolds (DE 440) sinks Japanese submarine I-175 northeast of Palau.

09/27/1944

USS Apogon (SS-308) sinks the Japanese cargo ship Hachirogata Maru in the Sea of Okhotsk off Shimushir Island. Also on this date, USS Plaice (SS-390) sinks Japanese Coast Defense Vessel No.10, 100 miles north-northwest of Amami-O-Shima.

09/27/1986

USS Chicago (SSN 721) is commissioned at Norfolk, VA. The Los Angeles-class nuclear attack submarine is the fourth U.S. Navy ship to be named after the Windy City of Illinois, and is ideally suited for covert surveillance, intelligence gathering and special forces missions.

09/28/1964

The first deployment of a Polaris A-3 missile takes place on board USS Daniel Webster (SSBN 626) from Charleston, S.C.

09/28/1991

USS Asheville (SSN 758) is commissioned during a ceremony at Newport News, Va. The Los Angeles-class nuclear-powered submarine is the fourth ship in the Navy to be named after the city in North Carolina, and is ideally suited for covert surveillance, intelligence gathering and special forces missions.

09/29/1944

USS Narwhal (SS 167) evacuates 81 allied prisoners of war from Lanboyan Point, Sindangan Bay, Mindanao, Philippines. They had survived the Sept. 7 sinking of Japanese POW transport Shinyo Maru.

09/30/1943

USS Bowfin (SS 287) delivers supplies and evacuates people from Siquijor Island, Philippines and sinks Japanese cargo ship, Mitake Maru. Also on this date, USS Harder (SS 257) sinks Japanese auxiliary submarine chaser No.3 Shosei Maru, while USS Pogy (SS 266) sinks Japanese army transport, Maebashi Maru, 300 miles east of Palau.

09/30/1944

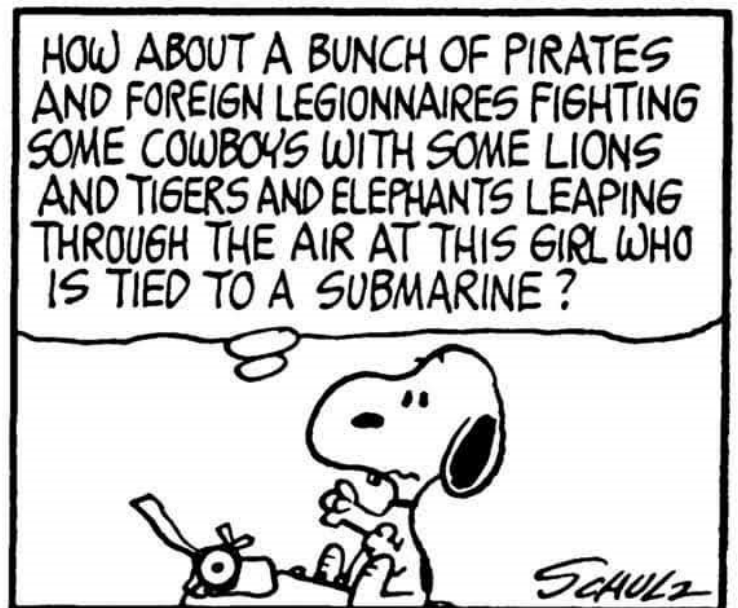
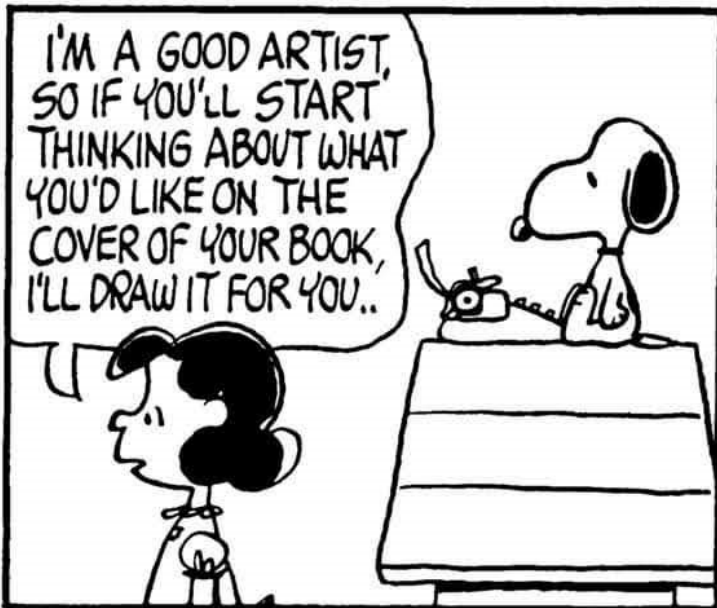
USS Nautilus (SS 168) lands 95 tons of supplies, 70 drums of gasoline, and four drums of oil at designated spot on Panay, Philippine Islands and embarks 47 evacuees (seven servicemen, 10 women, five civilian males, and 25 children).

09/30/1954

The world's first nuclear-powered submarine, USS Nautilus (SSN 571), is commissioned at Groton, Conn. On Aug. 3, 1958, she is the first U.S. vessel to transit across the geographic North Pole. Nautilus now serves as the historic ship at the Submarine Force Museum at Groton.

09/30/1981

USS La Jolla (SSN 701) is commissioned at Naval Submarine Base New London, Groton, Conn., before transferring to its new homeport of Naval Submarine Base Point Loma in San Diego, Calif. The Los Angeles-class attack submarine is ideally suited for covert surveillance, intelligence gathering and Special Forces missions.





The Navy Once Had a Spy Sub With a Secret: Tiny Ski Legs

BY **KYLE MIZOKAMI** AUG 13, 2021

<https://www.popularmechanics.com/military/navy-ships/a37260563/uss-parche-tiny-ski-legs/>

USS Parche was designed to not only glide over the ocean’s floor, but also sit on it.



USS *Parche* was a Cold War era attack submarine modified to conduct spy missions underwater. *Parche* featured a number of unique modifications, including ski legs that allowed it to rest on the seabed. Today the USS *Jimmy Carter* conducts similar missions, though without the tiny submarine legs.

One of the most unusual submarines ever produced for the U.S. Navy was USS *Parche*. Originally built as a nuclear powered attack submarine, *Parche* was heavily modified over the course of her career to conduct underwater espionage missions. The missions included top secret efforts to tap undersea communications cables, allowing U.S. intelligence to monitor traffic to and from Soviet naval bases.

The U.S. Navy’s corps of submariners is often known as the “Silent Service,” and for more ways than one. While a submarine’s mission is to run silent in wartime, submarine crew are notoriously tight-lipped even in peacetime. Still, despite the secrecy details of some of the most unusual ships and missions of the Cold War have leaked out into the public domain—including USS *Parche*.

Parche was commissioned in 1973 as a *Sturgeon*-class nuclear powered attack submarine. By the time she was decommissioned in 2004, she was the most highly decorated U.S. Navy submarine of all time.



USS Parche cutaway

Even as late as 1994 the Navy stuck to a cover story that *Parche* was testing “ocean engineering equipment” and supporting “the development of enhanced submarine warfare capabilities in shallow waters.”

In reality the sub was a spy,



A National Archives photo of USS *Parche* underway off San Diego, 1991. The National Archives describes the photo as showing a Deep Sea Rescue Vehicle—actually a diver's chamber.

one meant to conduct a particular series of missions. In the early 1970s, the U.S. intelligence community discovered the Soviet military had laid undersea communications cables in the Sea of Okhotsk in the Pacific Ocean and the White Sea in the Atlantic. Many of these cables linked Soviet naval bases—some home to submarines armed with nuclear-tipped missiles—to the mainland. The intelligence community concluded that if it could somehow tap these cables, reading the traffic passed back and forth, the data could prove invaluable.

Undersea authority H.I. Sutton, author of the [Covert Shores blog](#), has written a new article describing the extensive modifications done to USS *Parche* that allowed it to become the Navy's James

Bond sub. *Parche* was fitted with “skegs,” or retractable ski legs that allowed the submarine to come to rest directly over the undersea cables.

The sub, Sutton and his illustrations reveal, was also fitted with a “moon pool” diver's hatch, allowing divers to exit to and from the interior of the submarine. A late career refit saw the sub cut in half and grow by 100 feet, as additional room was added to carry even more covert mission equipment and berthing spaces for mission specialists. Most of *Parche*'s modifications were hidden underneath the waterline. One mod the Navy couldn't hide was a diver's chamber behind the sub's sail. Any time *Parche* surfaced, the chamber would be visible, so it was designed to look like a Deep Sea Rescue Vehicle, or DSRV. The fake DSRV, designed to rescue submariners from stricken submarines, was a red herring that belied the boat's true mission.



The Seawolf-class fast-attack submarine USS *Jimmy Carter* (SSN 23) transits the Hood Canal as the boat returns home to Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor, September 2017.

Parche was decommissioned in 2004, her role taken over by the [USS *Jimmy Carter*](#). Like *Parche*, *Jimmy Carter* was originally built off a regular attack submarine hull but lengthened by approximately 100 feet to accommodate specialized equipment. The submarine's extension likely includes room for unmanned underwater vehicles, remotely operated vehicles, and perhaps small crewed submersibles. Sutton speculates the ship may perform many of the same tasks as her predecessors, including cable tapping such countries as China, Russia, and North Korea, with today's cables also carrying Internet traffic.

USS *Parche* earned nine Presidential Unit Citations, ten Navy Unit Commendations and thirteen Navy Expeditionary Medals. *Parche* earned more Presidential Unit Citations than any other U.S. warship in history. The Navy defines the PCU as awarded for “outstanding performance in action”. It's important to keep in mind that *Parche* never actually saw combat and fired a shot in anger, which makes its awards even more remarkable.

Check Out This Los Angeles Class Nuclear Submarine Transformed Into A Floating Schoolhouse

BY JOSEPH TREVITHICK AUGUST 23, 2021

<https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/42113/check-out-this-los-angeles-class-nuclear-submarine-transformed-into-a-floating-schoolhouse>



The USS San Francisco was already cut up once after impacting a seamount. The submarine was chopped up again to make it into a floating schoolhouse.

Last week, the U.S. Navy towed a curious-looking *Los Angeles class* nuclear attack submarine, with a new boxy, building-like sail that looks like it belongs to a submarine-themed amusement park attraction, to its new home in Charleston, South Carolina. This submarine, the *USS San Francisco*, is actually now not much of a submarine at all, and is now set to be used as a moored training ship, or MTS, for sailors learning how to operate and maintain nuclear reactors.

What will eventually be formally redesignated as the MTS *San Francisco*, with its hull number subsequently changing to MTS-711, arrived in Charleston on Aug. 16, 2021. The training vessel will be assigned to Nuclear Power Training Unit (NPTU) Charleston, which already has another MTS converted from a decommissioned *Los Angeles class* boat, the former *USS La Jolla*, which was delivered back in 2019.



What is set to become the MTS San Francisco, a moored training ship to help teach sailors how to operate and maintain nuclear reactors.

"This project has definitely been a marathon rather than a sprint, but the project team has kept up its endurance as we near the finish line," Charles Brock, the superintendent of the conversion project, which was carried out at [Norfolk Naval Shipyard \(NNSY\)](#) in Virginia, said in a statement. "Given the extensive work required, it's taken a lot of effort and teaming not only within every department in the shipyard but with all nuclear-capable shipyards, both public and private, and all naval nuclear laboratories to get the ship tested and ready for tow. We were excited to see the future MTS 711 head down the river to finish the last of its testing and ultimately fulfill its new mission."

San Francisco spent 34 months in dry dock as part of the conversion into an MTS. Beyond the new sail and the installation of another boxy structure over the boat's stern, the process involved cutting the submarine into three parts and installing three new hull sections in between.



Another view of the future MTS *San Francisco* with its new boxy superstructure over the stern is also visible.

"The new hull sections arrived from General Dynamics Electric Boat via barge," according to the Navy. "NNSY craned hull sections, averaging 700 tons, into the dock and attached them to *San Francisco*."

At least one of those new sections arrived fully equipped and ready to be installed, which the Navy said saved more than 10,000 man-days worth of work. This was a lesson learned from [the conversion of *La Jolla*](#) into an MTS.

La Jolla after its conversion into a moored training ship in 2019.



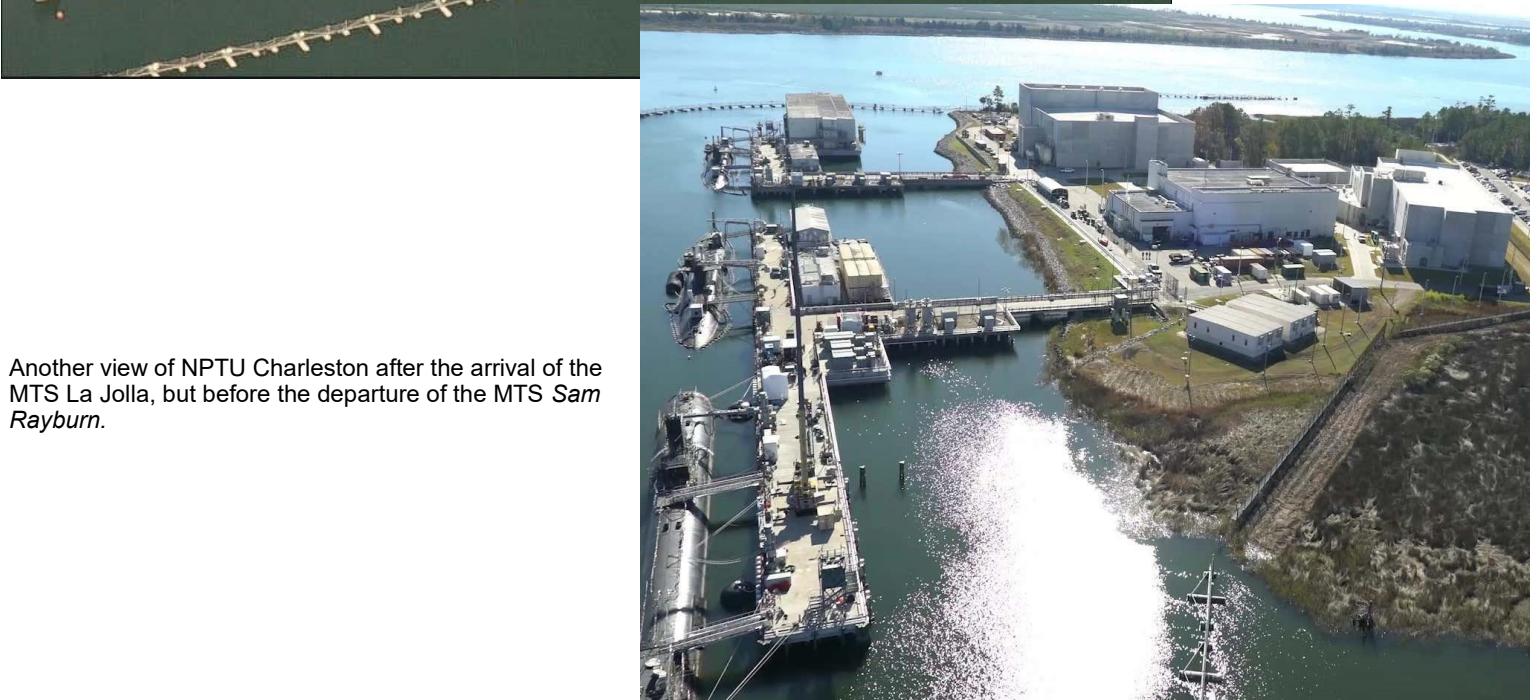
"Throughout the conversion, the project team leveraged lessons learned from *La Jolla* on a variety of jobs ranging from piping installation to component outfitting to tank restoration," the Navy explained. Other "innovations supporting the project team included implementing a cold cut hull cutting process, installing several hatch enclosures to improve submarine access for both personnel and equipment, pre-testing of the diesel generators using temporary systems to expedite final testing, and deploying a new scaffolding system to improve worker safety during the vessel's 34 months in dry dock. This scaffolding system has since become widely used at NNSY."

The Navy did not detail the exact nature of the conversion work. However, since the submarine will no longer need to sail, dive, or otherwise conduct regular operations, there is certainly a significant amount of equipment that could be removed to both free up room for new training spaces and to simplify the logistics of sustaining the MTS.

In the case of *La Jolla*'s conversion, the Navy did say that the reactor plant had been upgraded to reflect more modern designs, which would be important for its new training role. *La Jolla* and *San Francisco* have both been described as "next-generation training ships," as well. They are set to replace NPTU Charleston's two existing MTSs, which have been in use since the 1990s. The *Lafayette* class nuclear ballistic missile submarine USS *Daniel Webster* and the *James Madison* class nuclear ballistic missile submarine USS *Sam Rayburn* were converted to serve in this role. In April, *Sam Rayburn* was towed to NNSY, where it is now waiting to begin the defueling and dismantling process.



The MTS *Daniel Webster* and MTS *Sam Rayburn* at NPTU Charleston.



Another view of NPTU Charleston after the arrival of the MTS *La Jolla*, but before the departure of the MTS *Sam Rayburn*.

NPTU Charleston "is a technical school operated by the U.S. Navy in Goose Creek, South Carolina to train enlisted sailors, officers, Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory (KAPL) civilians and Bettis Atomic Power Laboratory (Bettis) civilians for shipboard nuclear power plant operation and maintenance of surface ships and submarines in the U.S. nuclear navy," [according to the unit's website](#). At present, submarines make up the vast majority of nuclear-powered vessels in Navy service, with others being its *Nimitz* and *Ford* class supercarriers.

NPTU Charleston work training civilians from KAPL and Bettis, both of which are Department of Energy (DOE) facilities, also highlights the unique nature of the [Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program \(NNPP\)](#). NNPP, more commonly known as Naval Reactors, is a [joint Navy-DOE enterprise](#).

Whatever the MTS conversion work on either *La Jolla* or *San Francisco* entailed exactly, having an actual reactor plant inside a converted submarine can only be extremely valuable for new sailors training to become what are commonly referred to as "nukes." You can read more about what those individuals, and the various other members of a submarine's crew, do [here](#).

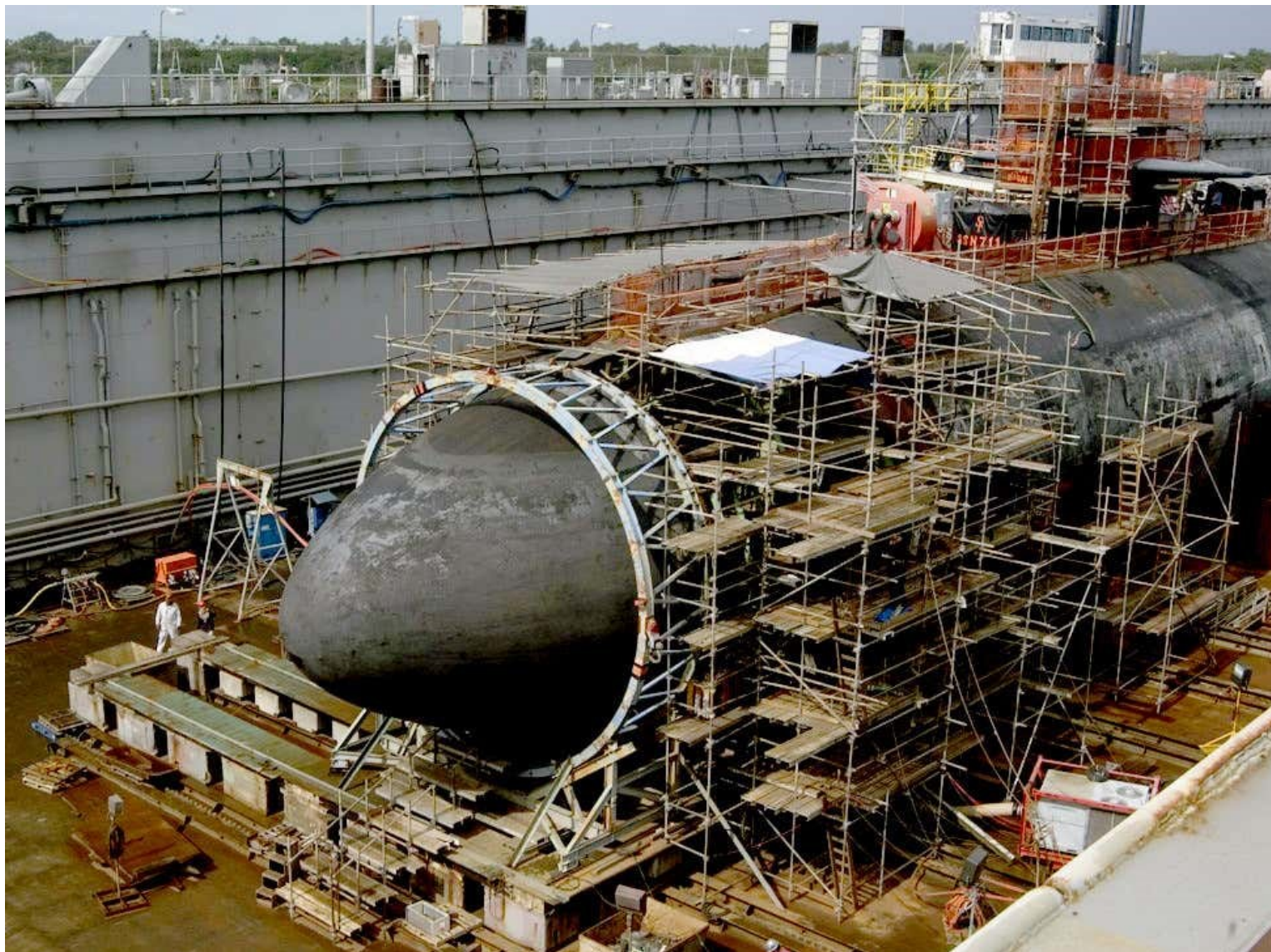
It's interesting to note that is actually not the first time that *San Francisco*, a first-generation *Los Angeles* class submarine that was commissioned in 1981, has been cut up. The boat was initially homeported at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii and conducted numerous cruises in the Western Pacific before being moved to Arpa Harbor in Guam in December 2002. Just over two years after it started conducting operations from Guam, the boat [hit an undersea mountain](#) while sailing approximately 364 nautical miles southwest of that island at a depth of 525 feet.

Impressively, while the submarine suffered extensive damage, its hull remained unbreached and it was able to limp back to Arpa Harbor. The Navy [subsequently determined](#) that *San Francisco's* crew had not followed "several critical navigational and voyage planning procedures" and relieved the boat's commanding officer, Commander Kevin Mooney. Six other crew members received non-judicial punishments. Twenty other officers and sailors received commendations for their actions during the accident, in which 98 members of the crew were injured. Machinist's Mate Second Class Joseph Allen Ashley died the day after the incident from a head injury he had sustained.



The damage to USS *San Francisco* after its underwater collision.

Since the submarine's nuclear reactor had only been recently refueled prior to the accident, a costly and complex process that had extended its expected service life out until 2017, the Navy subsequently decided to repair the boat. Temporary repairs were made to the submarine Guam, which subsequently sailed under its own power to the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard (PSNS) in Bremerton, Washington, making one stop along the way in Pearl Harbor.



A picture showing temporary repairs made to the USS San Francisco to allow it to sail to PSNS.

San Francisco ultimately received an entire new bow section, which had been taken from another *Los Angeles* class submarine, the USS *Honolulu*. The Navy said the repairs to *San Francisco* cost \$79 million, but that it would have taken \$170 million to refuel *Honolulu's* reactor.

Honolulu was decommissioned as a result of the Navy's decision and *San Francisco* returned to the fleet in 2009. The latter submarine completed its final operational cruise in 2016 and the Navy announced the following year that it would be turned into an MTS.

The USS *San Francisco* certainly had a unique operational career. Now, in its highly modified form, it will continue to serve the Navy for years to come, helping to train new sailors to operate nuclear reactors on other submarines.



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