

# Steel Valley Dolphins

Monthly Newsletter



## USS Blueback SS-581



## 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**

Sept 14, 2024 @ 1230 hours

At Baden American Legion Post 641

### 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](mailto: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/>



## USSVI National Officers

Office	Officer	Phone	eMail
National Commander	William Andrea		<a href="mailto:wcandrea@bellsouth.net">wcandrea@bellsouth.net</a>
Senior Vice Commander	Jon Jaques	615-893-7800	<a href="mailto:jjaques@bellsouth.net">jjaques@bellsouth.net</a>
Junior Vice Commander	Steven Bell	704-824-3510	<a href="mailto:usnret82@carolina.rr.com">usnret82@carolina.rr.com</a>
Secretary	Raymond Wewers	479-967-5541	<a href="mailto:raywewers@gmail.com">raywewers@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Paul Hiser	910-691-5650	<a href="mailto:paulhiser664@gmail.com">paulhiser664@gmail.com</a>
Past Commander	Wayne Standerfer	972-298-8139	<a href="mailto:lwaynes@charter.net">lwaynes@charter.net</a>
Chaplain	James Sandman	615-975-4792	<a href="mailto:Jsandman85@gmail.com">Jsandman85@gmail.com</a>
Region Director Northeast	Leslie Altschuler	917-748-2275	<a href="mailto:CdrNJNorthBase@hotmail.com">CdrNJNorthBase@hotmail.com</a>
District Commander EN3	Thomas Denton	301-845-0049	<a href="mailto:gcmfish@verizon.net">gcmfish@verizon.net</a>
National Office	Dennis Nardone	360-337-2978	<a href="mailto:ussvi@telebyte.net">ussvi@telebyte.net</a>



## USS Requin Base Officers

Office	Officer	Phone	eMail
Base Commander	Hubert C. Dietrich	412-486-2635	<a href="mailto:hueyfromglenshaw@aol.com">hueyfromglenshaw@aol.com</a>
1st Vice Commander	Joe Campisi	412-322-3201	<a href="mailto:jcampisi654@comcast.net">jcampisi654@comcast.net</a>
2nd Vice Commander	Chuck "Bat" Masterson	724-869-1938	<a href="mailto:mastersoncf@aol.com">mastersoncf@aol.com</a>
Secretary	Jeff Simon	920-217-8633	<a href="mailto:jeffsimon@zoominternet.net">jeffsimon@zoominternet.net</a>
Treasurer	Lee M. Bookwalter	412-795-8337	<a href="mailto:booky143@verizon.net">booky143@verizon.net</a>
Storekeeper	Frank Nicotra	412-835-6540	<a href="mailto:nicotrafrank@gmail.com">nicotrafrank@gmail.com</a>
Chaplain	Eric Bookmiller	724-485-2341	<a href="mailto:ebookmiller@comcast.net">ebookmiller@comcast.net</a>
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Photographer	Rick Flaugh	412-779-0497	<a href="mailto:flaughre@comcast.net">flaughre@comcast.net</a>
Holland Club Chairman	Joe Campisi	412-322-3201	<a href="mailto:jcampisi654@comcast.net">jcampisi654@comcast.net</a>
Asst. Holland Club	Dick Geyer	724-822-0401	<a href="mailto:dgdiving@gmail.com">dgdiving@gmail.com</a>
Technology Chair	Lou Hamill	412-445-3998	<a href="mailto:itgeek8088@gmail.com">itgeek8088@gmail.com</a>
Eagle Scout Chair	John Held	724-331-2479	<a href="mailto:petecompost@aol.com">petecompost@aol.com</a>
Awards Chair	Dick Geyer	724-822-0401	<a href="mailto:dgdiving@gmail.com">dgdiving@gmail.com</a>
Master at Arms	Chuck "Bat" Masterson	724-869-1938	<a href="mailto:mastersoncf@aol.com">mastersoncf@aol.com</a>
Public Affairs Chair	Ed Derr	724-854-0781	<a href="mailto:rredde@gmail.com">rredde@gmail.com</a>



## Tolling of the Boats for August

### USS Bullhead (SS-332)

Lost on August 6, 1945 with the loss of 84 crew members in the Lombok Strait while on her 3rd war patrol when sunk by a depth charge dropped by a Japanese Army plane. Bullhead was the last submarine lost during WWII.

### USS Flier (SS-250)

Lost on August 13, 1944, with the loss of 78 crew members while on her 2nd war patrol. Flier was transiting on the surface when she was rocked by a massive explosion (probably a mine) and sank within less than a minute. 13 survivors, some injured, made it into the water and swam to shore. 8 survived and 6 days later friendly natives guided them to a Coast Watcher and they were evacuated by the USS Redfin (SS-272).

### USS S-39 (SS-144)

Lost on August 13, 1942 after grounding on a reef south of Rossel Island while on her 3rd war patrol. The entire crew was able to get off and rescued by the HMAS Katoomba.

### USS Harder (SS-257)

Lost on August 24, 1944 with the loss of 79 crew members from a depth charge attack by a minesweeper near Bataan while on her 6th war patrol. Harder had won a Presidential Unit Citation for her first 5 war patrols and CDR Dealey was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor posthumously. Harder is tied for 9th in the number of enemy ships sunk.

### USS Cochino (SS-345)

Lost on August 26, 1949 after being jolted by a violent polar gale off Norway caused an electrical fire and battery explosion that generated hydrogen and chlorine gasses. In extremely bad weather, men of Cochino and Tusk (SS-426) fought to save the submarine for 14 hours. After a 2nd battery explosion, Abandon Ship was ordered and Cochino sank. Tusk' screw rescued all of Cochino's men except for one civilian engineer. Six sailors from Tusk were lost during the rescue.

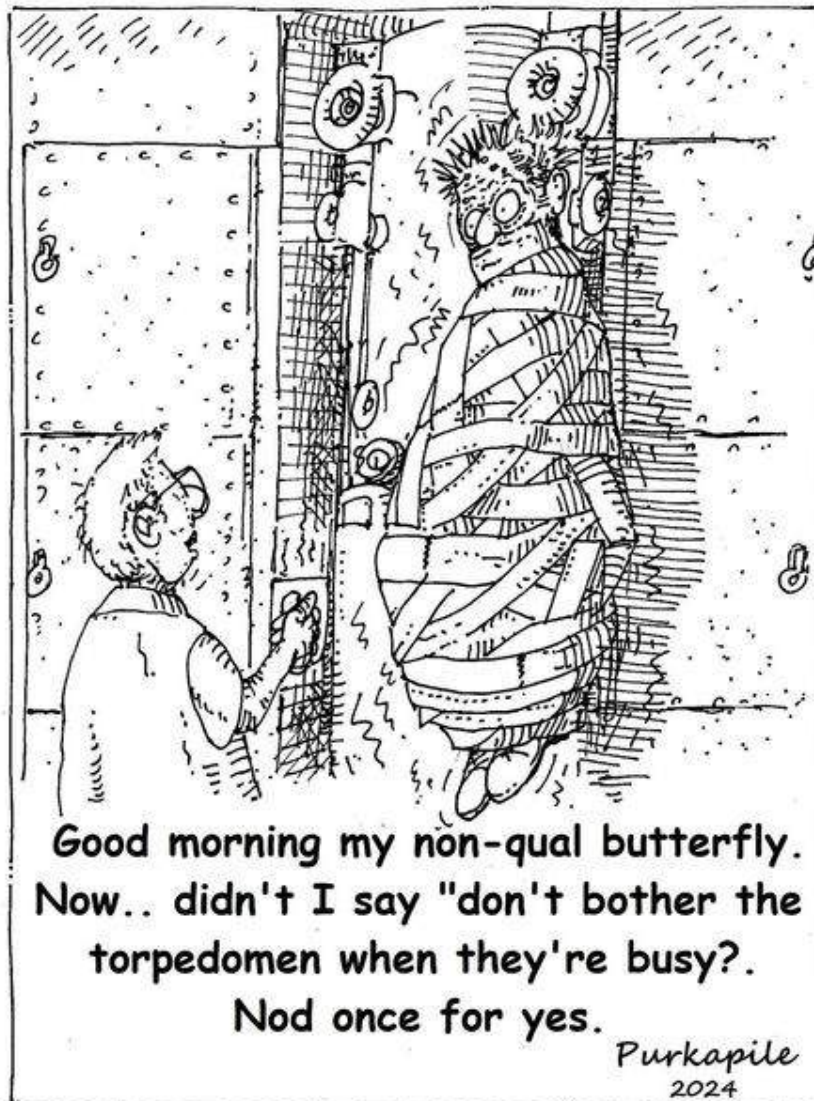


## Submarines commissioned during the month of August

F-3 SS-22	8/5/1912	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
K-5 SS-36	8/22/1914	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
L-8 SS-48	8/30/1917	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
L-9 SS-49	8/4/1916	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
L-10 SS-50	8/2/1916	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
L-11 SS-51	8/15/1916	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
O-10 SS-71	8/17/1918	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
O-15 SS-76	8/27/1918	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
O-16 SS-77	8/1/1918	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
R-10 SS-87	8/20/1919	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
R-16 SS-93	8/5/1918	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
R-17 SS-94	8/17/1918	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
R-22 SS-99	8/1/1919	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
S-19 SS-124	8/24/1921	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
S-21 SS-126	8/24/1921	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
S-24 SS-129	8/24/1923	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
S-35 SS-140	8/17/1922	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Porpoise SS-172	8/15/1935	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Thresher SS-200	8/27/1940	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Triton SS-201	8/15/1940	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	<a href="#">Eternal Patrol</a>
Marlin SS-205	8/1/1941	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Corvina SS-226	8/6/1943	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	<a href="#">Eternal Patrol</a>
Dorado SS-248	8/28/1943	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	<a href="#">Eternal Patrol</a>
Gunnel SS-253	8/20/1942	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Redfin SS-272	8/31/1943	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Sawfish SS-276	8/26/1942	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Batfish SS-310	8/21/1943	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Blower SS-325	8/10/1944	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Blueback SS-326	8/28/1944	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Cobbler SS-344	8/8/1945	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Cochino SS-345	8/25/1945	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	<a href="#">Eternal Patrol</a>
Mero SS-378	8/17/1945	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Sea Robin SS-407	8/7/1944	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Sennet SS-408	8/22/1944	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Piper SS-409	8/23/1944	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Threadfin SS-410	8/30/1944	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Spot SS-413	8/3/1944	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Sirago SS-485	8/13/1945	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Dolphin AGSS-555	8/17/1968	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Harder SS-568	8/19/1952	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Salmon SSR-573	8/25/1956	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Growler SSG-577	8/30/1958	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	
Thresher SSN-593	8/3/1961	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>	<a href="#">Eternal Patrol</a>

Barb SSN-596	8/24/1963	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>
Ethan Allen SSBN-608	8/8/1961	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>
Casimir Pulaski SSBN-633	8/14/1964	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>
Stonewall Jackson SSBN-634	8/26/1964	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>
Tautog SSN-639	8/17/1968	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>
Puffer SSN-652	8/9/1969	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>
Henry L. Stimson SSBN-655	8/20/1966	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>
Spadefish SSN-668	8/14/1969	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>
Trepang SSN-674	8/14/1970	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>
Parche SSN-683	8/17/1974	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>
Richard B. Russell SSN-687	8/16/1975	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>
Nevada SSBN-733	8/16/1986	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>
San Juan SSN-751	8/6/1988	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>
Tucson SSN-770	8/18/1995	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>
John Warner SSN-785	8/1/2015	<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	<a href="#">NavSource</a>

### The Missing E.B. Green tape





### Binnacle List

### Eternal Patrol

### In Remembrance

Huey Dietrich  
 Rick Elster  
 Eric Bookmiller  
 Robert Fleck  
 Mike Pellegrino  
 Jeff Simon

All Hands Present  
 And  
 Accounted For

Edward W. Yoder	RM2(SS)	8/3/2015
Frank S. Gogul	MOMM1(SS)	8/7/2002
Samuel J. McGrew	LT	8/15/2013
Francis Neal Sever	SM2(SS)	8/27/2012
John W. Irons Jr.	EM1(SS)	8/27/2009
Louis E. Kleinlein	SOC(SS)	8/29/1998
Robert A. Campbell	EM3(SS)	8/31/2014

### Birthdays

#### Member

#### Spouse

#### Anniversaries

Keith Small	9/2	Pamela Lucas	9/1	Judith & Chad Underkoffler	9/5
Andrew Wolbrueck	9/3	Jude Meyers	9/1	Mary Jane & Edwin Derr	9/7
Phillip Elias	9/4	Kelly Alters	9/2	Dolly & Paris vonRabenau	9/8
Nathaniel Bellavance	9/6	Beverly Bence	9/4	Carol & Pete Poninsky	9/12
Brian Powers	9/7	Eileen Klemz	9/6	Barbara & George Harrah	9/17
George Harrah, Jr	9/8	Carolyn Sills	9/6	Jacqueline & Robert Hall	9/20
Michael Gasparovic	9/15	Carol Cochenour	9/8	Adriana & Mark Hoag	9/20
Earl Riley	9/17	Jill Campisi	9/11	Patricia & Frederick Koppenhaver	9/23
Hubert Dietrich	9/19	Barbara Boutelle	9/13	Karen & James Lewis	9/27
Edward Mason, Jr	9/19	Janice Johnston	9/15	Sandra & Edward Morgan	9/28
Harry Sills	9/19	Christine Ladrie	9/19	Rosemarie & Earl Riley	9/28
Bradley Davis	9/22	Mary Ann Fleck	9/20	Eva Mathews & Scott Holzwarth	9/29
Sandra Carman	9/23	Flo Hemming	9/23	Joan & James Hughes	9/30
David Howton	9/25	Patricia Cantwell	9/24		
Daniel Klemz	9/25	Barbara Harrah, Jr	9/25		
Blaine Kuhn	9/25	Valerie Wendell	9/25		
David Sawin	9/25	Connie Small	9/29		
John Swords	9/26	Yvonne McKenzie	9/30		
Richard McCarthy	9/27				
Thomas Burdin	9/29				





### Shipmates:

What a wonderful meeting we had at the American Legion in Monroeville, Pa. It was great to see our shipmates that live in the area that can't make it to Baden. Times like this really make for comradery. It is with great appreciation and respect to thank shipmate Pellegrino. He has been on the binnacle list and still stood tall, arranging meeting and a wonderful lunch. This past week, he had his toes removed on one foot. He still participated and brought us lots of joy seeing him! And to our surprise, he not only set the meeting up at the legion, he also PAID for everyone's lunch – what a wonderful shipmate. There were over 30 members and spouses and we all enjoyed his hospitality!

### KUDOS SHIPMATE!

We had some interesting stories from various shipmates who traveled up to Groton and Maine! We went up to Maine for Captain Deichler change of command. What an experience! Since the captain is from Pittsburgh, we presented him with three cases of IRON CITY! I can imagine all the happy faces who will be tasting them. He had such a great ceremony and everyone enjoyed themselves. A group of swabs also went to Groton to take a tour of the base and club house. They enjoyed the tour that was very educational.

Tom Clark, base member and president of the navy league has invited us to the next navy ball on Oct 11. We have been ask to help sponsor the event with a special guest – ROCKY BLEIR of the Pittsburgh Steelers.

We have ordered 32 submarine squadron two challenge coins. Frank, our storekeeper has 10 of them in stock – reach out to Frank.

Clair Bouts has a beautiful cross-stitched plaque of a submarine with the name on it. His daughter offered to make them for the members of the base, with only the cost of materials. A lovely gift for a subvet to treasure.

Special thanks to Tim Boyle who extended an invitation to his cook out down in Beaver Falls, Pa. Tim, stores our parade floats in his barn. We really appreciate's his thoughtfulness and hospitality – KUDOS Tim!

We received gifts from the Idaho Commissioning Committee – shirts with Idaho on them, license plate holders and lapel pins + a red shirt from the fish rodeo that we sponsor. We pulled tickets and everyone had a chance to win.

Dan Bonnett, who visited his brother in Seattle, who is a member of our base, brought back a bottle of NUCULER WASTE! He has invited any one who wants to have a short one at the VFW in Shaler with him. Please let me know so Dan can make arrangements.

### USSVI 2025 CALENDARS:

We will be ordering the 2025 Sub Calendars. Please let me know if you do not want one. If you chose not to reply back, we will take that as a Positive and we THANK YOU!





## Meeting Minutes

**These are the minutes as recorded at the base meeting and are not edited or moderated by the newsletter editor. You can address any issues or concerns in the minutes with the base secretary.**

August 10, 2024  
American Legion Post 820 Monroeville PA

**Base Commander Huey Dietrich** called the meeting to order.

**Attendees:** Eric Bookmiller, Lee & Patsy Bookwalter, Clair & Nancy Bouts, Don Bright, Joe Campisi, Tom Clark, Huey & Edie Dietrich, Rick Elster, Dick & Beverly Geyer, David Halliday, Lou Hamill, John Held, Mark Hoag, Bill & Sandy Lindsey, Pete & Nancy Loskoch, Vince Metz, Bob & Jude Myers, Frank Nicotra, Mike Pellegrino, Ed Pope, Andy Sorbie, Thomas Scott, Keith Small, Chad Underkoffler, Don Wood.

**Base Commander Huey Dietrich:** Quotes of the day: "The main tool to learn was probably too old to learn."

**Requin History:** August 24, 1944 keel laid at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. August 14, 1945 two weeks after her arrival and three days before starting her first war patrol, WWII ended and the Requin was recalled and ordered back to the Atlantic. August 1, 1952 Requin was back in European waters, during September she visited the United Kingdom, then in October the submarine transited the Straits Of Gibraltar for regular 6th Fleet duty. August 15, 1959 upon her conversion to fleet snorkel configuration, the Requin was given hull classification SS 481 and rejoined Subron 6 in Norfolk VA for operations as a normal attack submarine, a role she retained until her decommissioning. August 7, 1990 Requin left International Ship Repair in Tampa FL under tow to Baton Rouge LA. August 11, 1990 Requin was lifted onto barges and began her ride up the Mississippi River and Ohio River to Pittsburgh PA.

**Base Commander Huey Dietrich:** Let us at this time, with a moment of silent prayer, remember our Shipmates who made the supreme sacrifice that we may gather here in Peace. We dedicate this meeting to our Shipmates on Eternal Patrol, to perpetuate their memories in our lives and to honor our Shipmates on active duty in the service of the first line of defense of our Nation.

### **Boats Lost:**

USS BULLHEAD (SS 332) August 6, 1945  
USS FLIER (SS 250) August 13, 1944  
USS S 39 (SS 144) August 16, 1942  
USS HARDER (SS 257) August 24, 1944  
USS COCHINO (SS 345) August 26, 1949  
USS POMPANO (SS 181) August 29, 1943

**Chaplain Eric Bookmiller** gave the Invocation.

**COB Chad Underkoffler** lead the base in the Pledge Of Allegiance  
Members introduced themselves and the boats they qualified on.

**Treasurer Lee Bookwalter** reported that Minutes of the previous base meeting were published in the SVD. With no objections, the report was approved.

**Treasurer Lee Bookwalter:** No report given as this is an away meeting.

**Other Reports:**

Binnacle List: Bookmiller, Elster, Fleck, Pellegrino, Simon.

Eternal Patrol: None

Base membership stands at 203.

**Storekeeper Frank Nicotra** reported on available small stores items.

**Vice Commander Joe Campisi** reported on PA license plate program.

**Shipmate John Held** reported on Eagle Scouts presentations.

**Old Business:**

Members traveled to New Hampshire/Maine, report given, challenge coins are available see Lou Hamill.  
Report given on Tim Boyle's (float storage) picnic.

**New Business:**

Tom Clark reported on the Navy Ball being held on October 11 at Edgewood Country Club.  
September meeting will be at American Legion Post 641, Baden PA on Saturday September 14.

**Good of The Order:**

Upcoming activities:

August 19-24 National Convention in Cleveland OH

October 11 – Navy Ball, Edgewood Country Club

October 12 – Columbus Day Parade and Base meeting. Meeting day may be changed.

November 11 – Veterans Day Parade

A second bubble machine has been purchased for use during parades.

Gifts from USS Idaho and Fish Rodeo were raffled off.

A timelier means to distribute our dues campaign calendars was discussed.

Shaler VFW Post 9199 is offering bottles of "Nuclear Waste".

**Chaplain Eric Bookmiller** gave the Benediction and blessing of today's meal.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned.

**Next meeting:** American Legion Post 641, Baden PA at 1230 hours on September 14, 2024





LT Holsbo SOAC Class 24030 Mush Morton Combat Award recipient:

Lieutenant Benjamin Mark Holsbo was born in Norwich, Connecticut. He graduated from the Milwaukee School of Engineering with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering in 2016 and was commissioned into the United States Navy via Marquette University's NROTC program.

LT Holsbo served as the Main Propulsion Assistant, Chemistry and Radiological Assistant, and Assistant Engineer onboard the USS OLYMPIA (SSN 717), homeported in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and later Bremerton, Washington. During this tour, he completed one deployment circumnavigating the globe and participated in the submarine's decommissioning.

Following sea duty, he served as a Special Programs Advisor at Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet. During his time ashore, he earned a Master of Science in Aeronautics and Astronautics Engineering from Purdue University.

LT Holsbo is slated to relieve as the Weapons Officer on the USS NEVADA (SSBN 733) Gold crew, homeported in Bangor, Washington. He is a dedicated father and husband who enjoys spending time outdoors hiking, free diving, and training his dog in the sport of Schutzhund.





# SSN 799 USS IDAHO COMMISSIONING COMMITTEE

<https://ussidahocommittee.org/>



<https://www.sublant.usff.navy.mil/SSN799/>



## Shipwright Shop

Here is the link to the customer photos.  
<https://requinbase.org/customer-photos/>



If you would like any of these items, contact Huey Dietrich or Frank Nicotra.  
You may also place your order for these and other items at a base meeting.



# Chaplain's Column

Greetings to all my fellow Requin Base shipmates, spouses, and associate members.

As always, I would like to ask everyone to keep those on the binnacle list in our thoughts and prayers this month.

Remember we are only as good as the information we get. If we don't know of a member passing, we cannot provide the appropriate honors for a fallen shipmate. If you know anyone who is sick or goes on eternal patrol, please give me a call at 724-485-2341 or email at [ebookmiller@comcast.net](mailto:ebookmiller@comcast.net). If you call and I don't answer, please leave a message. This is a land line phone so do not text this number.

If you wish to be placed on the binnacle list but do not want to disclose the specifics, I will maintain your confidentiality.

Eric Bookmiller



## 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.



## Eagle Scouts

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





## Say What???

**Make a hole! or make a hole, working Navy!** – used to get people to clear a path in a cramped area.

**“Mind Your Bubble”** - The indication of the ship's angle fore and aft. The Diving Officer of the Watch (DOOW - pronounced "Dive") controls the angle on the ship by various means. If the angle becomes too large he will be ordered to "Mind your bubble." In rough weather near the surface, maintaining the angle on the ship can be very difficult. When the Dive can no longer control the angle on the ship by the means at



## Upcoming Events

### Meeting

Sept 14, 2024  
1230 hours

American Legion Post 641  
271 State St  
Baden PA 15005

### Base activities

August 19-24 National Convention in Cleveland OH



## Membership

Primary Members	171	Holland Club	87	USSVI Life Members	84
Secondary Members	13	WWII	1	Base Life Members	67
Associate Members	19	Eternal Patrol	82	Joined Last Year	7
Total Members	203			Joined This Year	1



### New Members





**History**

<b>Namesake</b>	<u>Blueback</u>
<b>Awarded</b>	29 June 1956
<b>Builder</b>	<u>Ingalls Shipbuilding, Pascagoula, Mississippi</u> <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Laid down</b>	15 April 1957 <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Launched</b>	16 May 1959 <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Sponsored by</b>	Mrs. Kenmore McManes, wife of Rear Admiral McManes
<b>Commissioned</b>	15 October 1959 <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Decommissioned</b>	1 October 1990
<b>Stricken</b>	30 October 1990 <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Status</b>	Donated to the <u>Oregon Museum of Science and Industry</u>

**General characteristics**

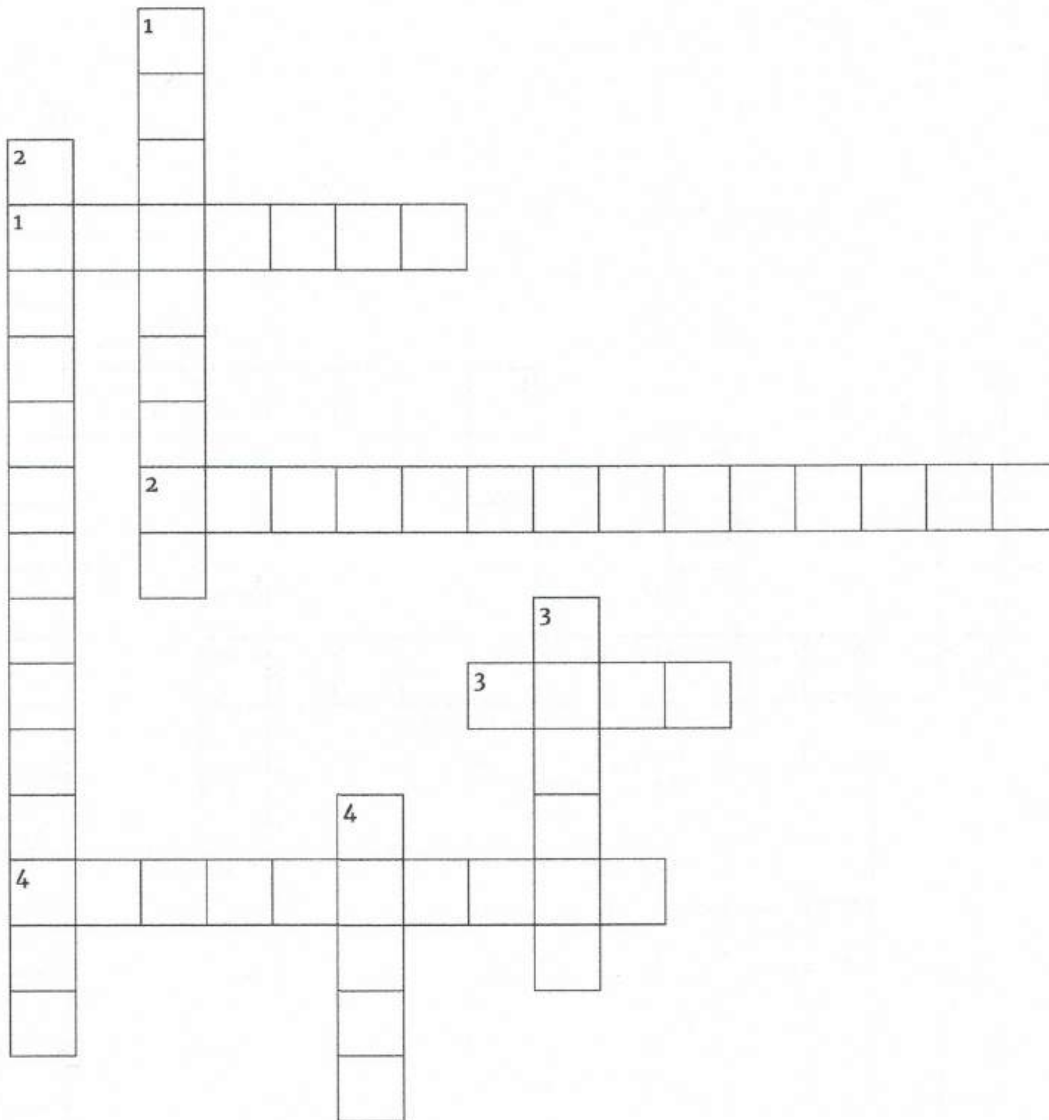
<b>Class and type</b>	<u>Barbel-class diesel-electric submarine</u>
<b>Displacement</b>	1,744 long tons (1,772 t) light 2,146 long tons (2,180 t) full 2,637 long tons (2,679 t) submerged 402 long tons (408 t) dead
<b>Length</b>	219 ft 6 in (66.90 m) overall
<b>Beam</b>	29 ft (8.8 m)
<b>Draft</b>	25 ft (7.6 m) max
<b>Propulsion</b>	3 × <u>Fairbanks-Morse 38 8-1/8 diesel engines</u> , total 3,150 bhp (2,350 kW) 2 × <u>General Electric electric motors</u> , total 4,800 bhp (3,600 kW) one screw <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Speed</b>	12 knots (22 km/h; 14 mph) surfaced 25 knots (46 km/h; 29 mph) submerged
<b>Endurance</b>	30 minutes at full speed 102 hours at 3 knots (6 km/h; 3 mph)
<b>Test depth</b>	712 ft (217 m) operating 1,050 ft (320 m) collapse
<b>Complement</b>	8 officers, 69 men
<b>Armament</b>	6 × <u>21 in (533 mm) bow torpedo tubes</u> , 18 torpedoes

Oregon Museum of Science and Industry





# US Navy Crossword Puzzle 8



### ACROSS

1. What Month And Day Is Considered To Be The CPO'S Birthday?
2. Secretary Of The Navy
3. What Is I Wish To Communicate With You?
4. Blue And Gold

### DOWN

1. The Nautical Term For Right
2. What Is The Main Mission Of The Blue Angels?
3. What Is The Conducting Flag Hoist Drill?
4. Makeup 20% Of All Navy Personnel



# SHIP

I	J	T	A	Z	J	F	S	X	Y	M	B	H	U	T
D	J	Y	T	S	P	R	O	C	A	P	T	A	I	N
C	W	U	K	K	K	W	Q	R	I	W	W	N	H	Z
J	W	A	L	G	E	Z	H	T	R	N	W	D	Y	Y
A	Z	N	T	E	S	W	U	Z	Q	E	K	G	H	M
N	R	F	K	G	I	Q	T	A	V	V	V	U	K	R
W	E	V	K	L	A	R	M	E	V	Y	H	K	L	U
M	A	K	T	N	E	M	E	C	A	L	P	M	E	Y
B	V	R	I	F	Q	M	N	T	A	K	C	A	P	C
B	O	D	S	L	D	G	T	P	A	T	R	O	L	O
G	C	A	C	H	R	S	K	M	J	M	I	L	A	B
S	P	X	J	F	I	A	I	C	C	V	S	T	R	G
N	L	Y	Y	P	Y	P	W	F	T	I	Y	W	I	R
I	V	S	T	H	F	U	S	O	V	Q	X	M	K	V
Z	Y	J	W	F	O	M	K	O	K	M	U	S	O	X

CAPTAIN  
CORPS  
EMPLACEMENT  
HUTMENT

MATERIEL  
MILAB  
PATROL  
WARLIKE

WARSHIPS

**08/01/1944**

USS Puffer (SS 268) damages Japanese oiler, Sunosaki, northeast of Borneo.

**08/03/1958**

USS Nautilus (SSN 571) becomes the first submarine to cross the "top" of the world during Operation Sunshine when the boat passes under an arctic ice cap at the North Pole. "For the world, our country, and the Navy - the North Pole," declared the boat's commanding officer, Cmdr. William R. Anderson. The mission had been personally authorized by President Eisenhower as a response to the USSR's Sputnik program.

**08/04/1943**

USS Finback (SS 230) sinks Japanese cargo ship Kaisho Maru in the Java Sea off the north coast of Java while USS Seadragon (SS 194) damages Japanese transport Kembu Maru east of Ponape.

**0/05/1944**

USS Barbel (SS 316) sinks Japanese merchant passenger-cargo ship, Miyako Maru, off Tokuno Jima while USS Cero (SS 225) attacks a Japanese convoy off Minanao and sinks oiler, Tsurumi, in Davao Gulf.

**08/06/1988**

USS San Juan (SSN 751) is commissioned at New London, Conn. The Los Angeles-class nuclear-powered fast attack submarine is the third to be named after San Juan, Puerto Rico. The boat is assigned to Submarine Group Two

**08/08/1942**

USS Narwhal (SS 167) sinks Japanese crab boat, Bifuku Maru, southeast of Shiriya Saki while USS S-38 (SS 143) sinks Japanese transport, Meiyo Maru, at the southern entrance of St. George Channel, between New Britain and New Ireland. Also on this date, USS Silversides (SS 236) attacks a Japanese convoy emerging from Kobe Harbor and sinks freighter Nikkei Maru in Kii Strait.

**08/10/1942**

Off Kavieng, New Ireland, USS S-44 (SS 155) torpedoes and sinks the Japanese cruiser, Kako, as she retires from the Battle of Savo Island.

**08/12/1944**

USS Pompon (SS 267) and USS Puffer (SS 268) attack Japanese convoys and damage and sink Japanese destroyers.

**08/13/1945**

USS Atule (SS 403) sinks Japanese Coast Defense Vessel No.6 and damages Coast Defense Vessel No.16 off Hokkaido. Also on this date, USS Torsk (SS 423) sinks Japanese merchant cargo ship, Kaiho Maru.

**08/14/1945**

USS Spikefish (SS 404) sink the Japanese submarine (I 373), in the Sea of Japan. Also on this date, USS Torsk (SS 423) sinks Coast Defense Vessel (No.13), and Coast Defense Vessel No.47.

**08/16/1944**

USS Croaker (SS 246) sinks Japanese auxiliary minesweeper, Taito Maru.

**08/16/1958**

USS Seadragon (SSN 584) launches at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. USS Seadragon decommissions in 1984.

**08/16/1986**

USS Nevada (SSBN 733) is commissioned at Groton, Conn. The Ohio-class ballistic-missile submarine is the fourth named after the Silver State.

**08/17/1942**

The submarines USS Nautilus (SS 168) and USS Argonaut (SM 1) land more than 200 Marines on Makin Island, Gilbert Islands, in the first amphibious attack made from submarines.

**08/19/1943**

USS Finback (SS 230) sinks the Japanese auxiliary submarine chaser (No.109) off the eastern Celebes.

**08/22/1944**

Submarines Haddo (SS 255) and Harder (SS 257) encounter three Japanese escort vessels off the mouth of Manila Bay. Haddo sinks Sado 35 miles west of Manila; Harder sinks Matsuwa and Hiburi about 50 miles west-southwest of Manila.

**08/23/1944**

USS Haddo (SS 255) torpedoes Japanese destroyer Asakaze as the enemy warship is escorting tanker, Niyo Maru, 20 miles southwest of Cape Bolinao, Luzon, Philippine Islands. Asakaze later sinks near Dasol Bay after attempts at salvage fail. Also on this date, USS Tang (SS 306) attacks a Japanese convoy off Honshu, sinking cargo ship, Tsukushi Maru off Hamamatsu.

**08/24/2020**

USS Idaho SSN-799 Keel is laid.

**08/25/1944**

USS Picuda (SS 382), in attack on Japanese convoy at the western entrance to the Babuyan Channel, sinks destroyer Yunagi 20 miles north-northeast of Cape Bojeador, Philippines and merchant tanker Kotoku Maru.

**08/26/1949**

While operating in stormy seas off northern Norway, USS Cochino (SS 345) suffers a series of serious battery explosions that result in her loss. Though Cochino's crew is successfully rescued by USS Tusk (SS 426), the submarine loses seven of her own men during this difficult effort.

**08/27/1944**

USS Stingray (SS 186), after being depth charged and lightly worked over while reconnoitering the designated spot lands a party of one Filipino officer, 14 men and 60 percent of the supplies earmarked for delivery to guerilla forces at Saddle Rock, Mayaira Point, on northwest shore of Luzon. Heavy Japanese shipping in the vicinity compels Stingrays departure before all stores land.

**08/29/1915**

After pontoons are brought to Hawaii from the west coast, and following extensive additional diving work, the submarine USS F-4 is raised from the bottom and taken into Honolulu Harbor for dry docking. Previously, in March 1915, during a routine dive a few miles off Honolulu, F-4 sinks in 51 fathoms of water, with the loss of her 21 crewmembers.

**08/29/1944**

USS Jack (SS 259) attacks Japanese convoy H3 and sinks minesweeper W28 and army cargo ship, Mexico Maru, northwest of Menado, Celebes.

**08/30/1929**

At New London, Conn., 26 men test the Momsen lung to exit an intentionally-bottomed submarine. The device was created by Lt. C.B. Momsen following the failure to save surviving crew members trapped in USS S-4 (SS 109) that sank after a collision with Coast Guard cutter USS Paulding in 1927.



## General Dynamics Electric Boat Launches Attack Boat Idaho

Sam LaGrone August 13, 2024 7:39 PM - Updated: August 14, 2024 12:02 AM

<https://news.usni.org/2024/08/13/general-dynamics-electric-boat-launches-attack-boat-idaho>



General Dynamics Electric Boat launched the latest attack submarine last week, Naval Sea Systems Command announced.

The future USS *Idaho* (SSN-799) was launched from the Connecticut shipyard into the Thames River on Aug. 6, according to the release. The attack boat will now be pier side for final outfitting ahead of delivery to the Navy.

“The submarine began construction in 2017 and will be the 26th Virginia-class fast attack submarine to deliver to the fleet and the fifth U.S. Navy ship named for the state. The last ship named *Idaho* was battleship BB 42, commissioned in 1919,” reads a statement from NAVSEA.

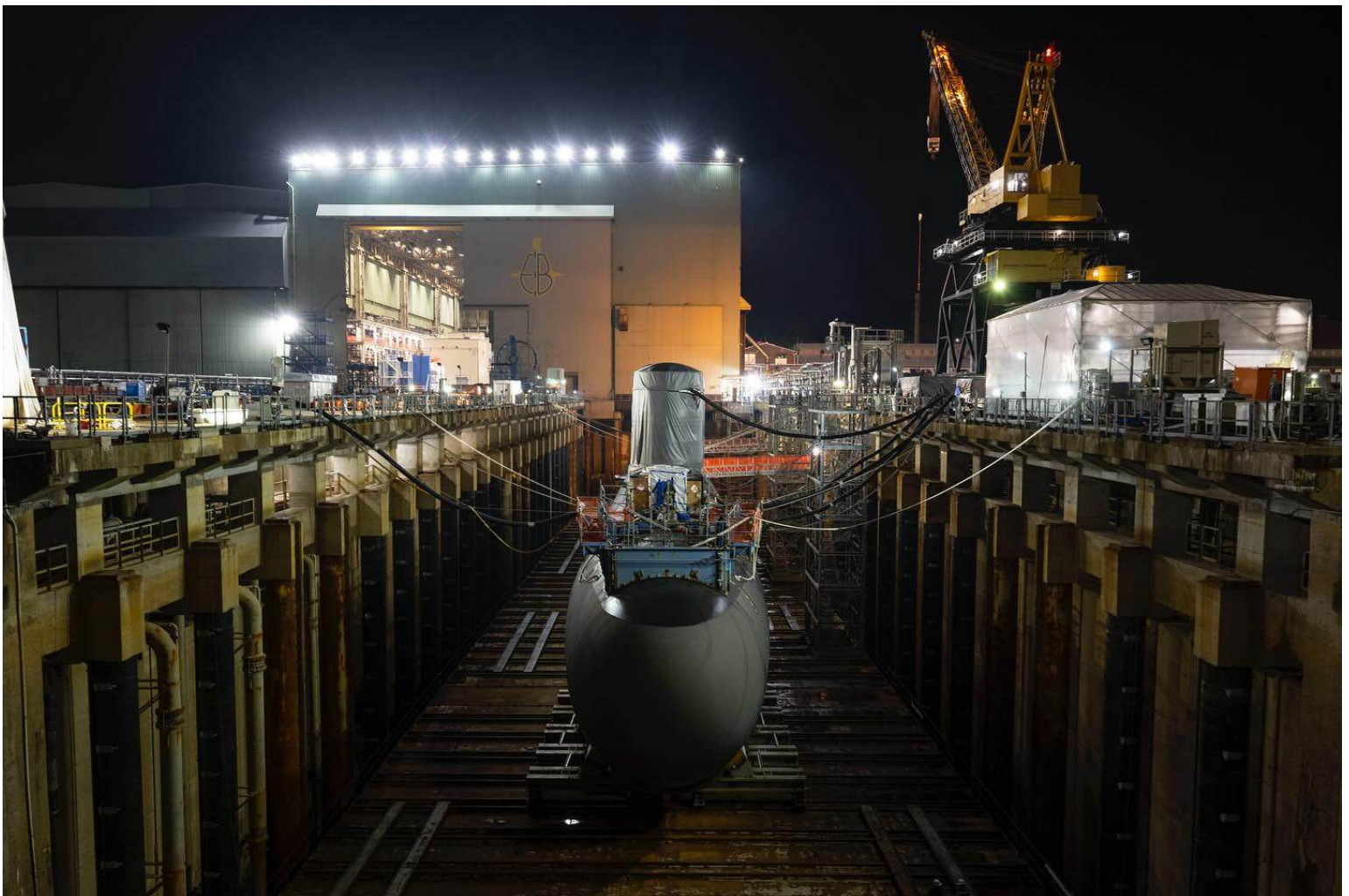
*Idaho* is the eighth Block IV Virginia that was awarded as part of a [\\$17.8 billion 2014 multi-year contract awarded to EB.](#)

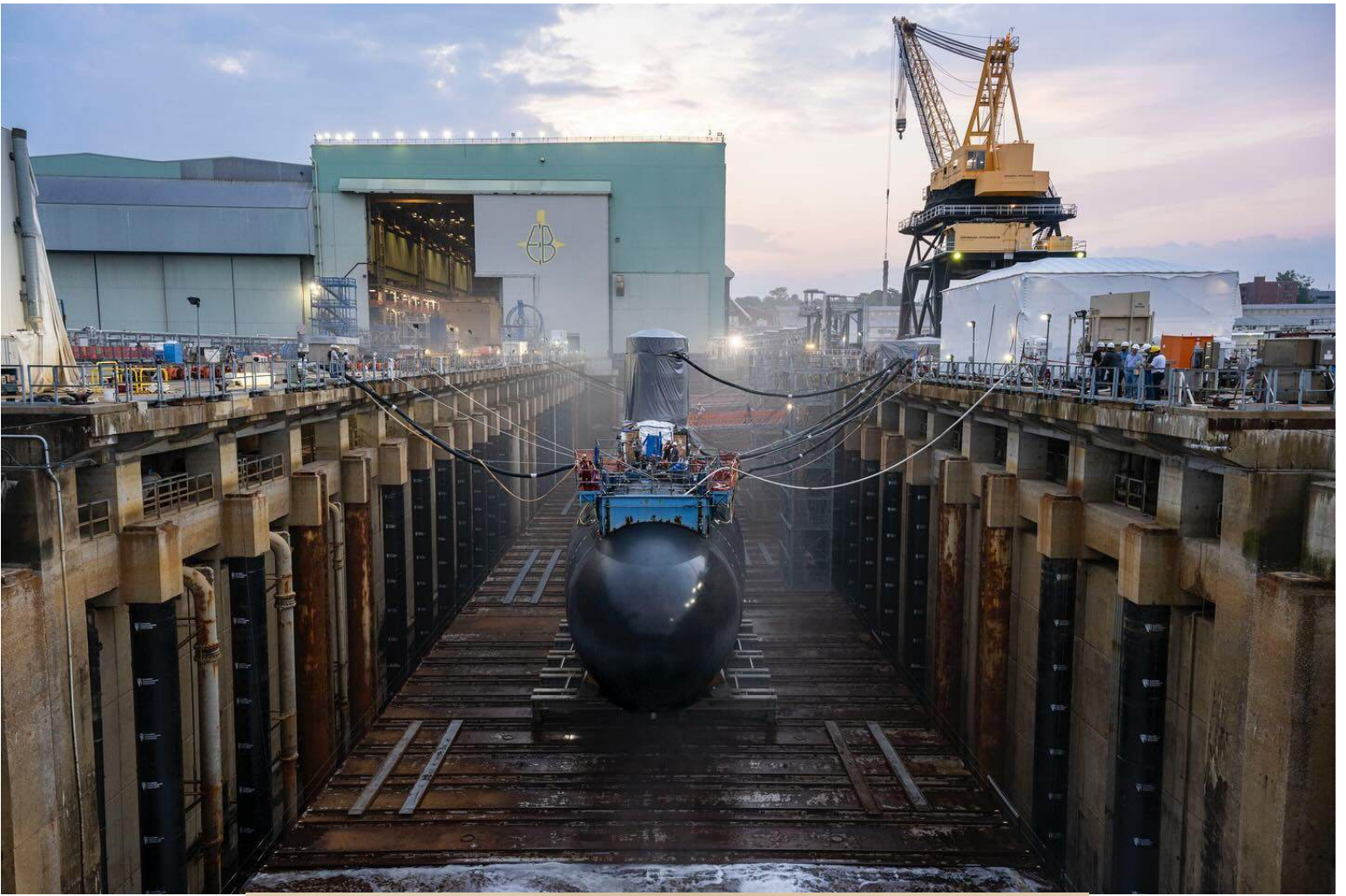
Each Virginia block features a technology improvement over the last as part of the development of the platform. Block IV Virginias are built to have one less major maintenance availability than the previous attack submarines. The upcoming Block Vs will include the Virginia Payload Module that adds additional missile tubes to the hull.

Construction of Idaho was delayed because of workforce and material issues brought on in part by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Navy is currently delivering Virginia-class submarines at about 1.4 boats a year between EB and HII's Newport News Shipbuilding. Newport News builds the bow and stern sections of each boat, while EB builds the mid-section of each submarine to include the reactor compartments. The yards need to reach a production rate of 2.3 boats a year to meet the needs of the U.S. Navy and the Virginias planned for the Royal Australian Navy under the AUKUS program. The yards are set to hit their two a year goal by 2028, [USNI News previously reported](#).

Meanwhile, EB announced earlier this month that the company's current vice president and chief operating officer Mark Rayna will succeed to current yard president Kevin Graney on Dec. 1.

"Kevin has served General Dynamics with distinction for nearly 30 years, including tenures as president of both NASSCO and Electric Boat. His shipbuilding expertise and strong leadership have been instrumental to the performance and continuous improvement of both NASSCO and Electric Boat," Phebe Novakovic, chairman and chief executive officer said in a statement earlier this month. "Mark is a 35-year veteran of General Dynamics and is a proven and capable leader. His experience as CFO and COO of Electric Boat will ensure that we continue to grow to support our nation's need for submarines."





# Report to Congress on U.S. Navy Force Structure, Shipbuilding

U.S. Naval Institute Staff August 14, 2024 9:51 AM

<https://news.usni.org/2024/08/14/report-to-congress-on-u-s-navy-force-structure-shipbuilding-2>

The following is the Aug. 6, 2024, Congressional Research Service report, Navy Force Structure and Shipbuilding Plans: Background and Issues for Congress.

## From the report

The current and future size and composition of the Navy, the annual rate of Navy ship procurement, the prospective affordability of the Navy's shipbuilding plans, the capacity of the U.S. shipbuilding industry to execute the Navy's shipbuilding plans, and Navy proposals for retiring existing ships have been oversight matters for the congressional defense committees for many years. Congressional focus on these matters has been heightened over the past decade by the increasing size and capabilities of China's navy, and by the capacity of China's shipbuilding industry compared with the capacity of the U.S. shipbuilding industry.

The Navy fell below 300 battle force ships (the types of ships that count toward the quoted size of the Navy) in August 2003 and has generally remained between 270 and 300 battle force ships since then. As of May 28, 2024, the Navy included 296 battle force ships.

In December 2016, the Navy released a force-structure goal that called for achieving and maintaining a fleet of 355 ships of certain types and numbers. The 355-ship goal was made U.S. policy by Section 1025 of the FY2018 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 2810/P.L. 115-91 of December 12, 2017). The 355-ship goal predated the Trump and Biden Administrations' national defense strategies and did not reflect the new, more distributed fleet architecture (i.e., new mix of ships) that the Navy wants to shift toward in coming years.

In June 2023, the Navy sent its preferred new force-level goal to the congressional defense committees. In March 2024, as part of its FY2025 30-year (FY2025-FY2054) shipbuilding plan, the Navy released the details of this new goal, which calls for achieving and maintaining a fleet of 381 manned ships of certain types and numbers, plus 134 large unmanned surface and underwater vehicles. The Biden Administration to date has not explicitly endorsed, as an Administration objective and funding priority, either the 381-ship goal, the earlier 355-ship goal, or any other force-structure goal for the Navy.

The Navy's proposed FY2025 budget requests \$32.4 billion in shipbuilding funding for, among other things, the procurement of six new ships—a figure that is one less than the seven ships that the Navy's FY2024 budget submission had projected for FY2025, and less than the long-term average of 10 or 11 new manned ships per year that would be need to be achieved over a period of about 35 years to achieve and maintain a fleet of about 355 or 381 manned ships.

The Navy projects that 10 new ships will be delivered to the fleet in FY2025. The Navy's FY2025 budget proposes retiring 19 existing ships in FY2025, including 10 ships that would be retired before reaching the ends of their expected service lives. As a result, the Navy projects that, under the Navy's proposed FY2025 budget, the total number of ships in the Navy would decline by a net 9 ships during FY2025, from 296 ships at the start of FY2025 to 287 ships at the end of FY2025. The Navy's budget submission projects that during the period FY2025-FY2029 (i.e., the years of the FY2025 Future Years Defense Plan [FYDP]), the Navy would include 287, 283, 280, 286, and 291 ships, respectively. Under the Navy's FY2025 30-year (FY2025-FY2054) shipbuilding plan, the fleet would grow to more than 300 ships in FY2032 and reach a

total of more than 381 ships in FY2042.

Oversight issues for Congress for FY2025 include whether to amend U.S. law to make the Navy's preferred new 381-ship goal U.S. policy; the Biden Administration's position on a force-level goal for the Navy; significant projected delays in deliveries of several types of Navy ships; industrial base capacity constraints for building Navy ships; inflation in Navy shipbuilding costs; the Navy's request to procure one Virginia-class submarine rather than two in FY2025; the Navy's proposal for retiring 19 ships in FY2025; and the estimated procurement costs of certain ships included in the Navy's FY2025 five-year (FY2025-FY2029) shipbuilding plan.

[Full Report Here](#)





## USS Georgia operates with Force Reconnaissance Marines and Special Operations Forces

By U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs | 2nd Marine Division | August 12, 2024

<https://www.2ndmardiv.marines.mil/DesktopModules/ArticleCS/Print.aspx?PortalId=47&ModuleId=140688&Article=3869695>



NAPLES, Italy – The Ohio-class guided-missile submarine USS Georgia (SSGN 729), assigned to Commander, Task Force 69, concluded a series of interoperability training events with Force Reconnaissance Marines from the 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion and special operations forces (SOF) in the Mediterranean Sea, August 5, 2024.

The series of events between joint partners and allied countries demonstrates the ability of Task Force 69 to seamlessly integrate amphibious and special warfare into existing Navy missions in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations.

“As our submarine force continues to develop its diverse mission sets, we strengthen our ability to deter threats and ensure global access, security, and stability in the maritime domain,” said Capt. Benjamin Selph, Commander, Task Force 69. “Integration with joint and allied partners enhances our lethality as apex predators against hard targets in the U.S. Sixth Fleet area of operations.”

The purpose of the training was to improve U.S. Marine Corps and SOF integration with conventional naval forces in order to develop and improve tactics, techniques and procedures. Early in the series, Marines from the 2nd Force Reconnaissance Company launched and recovered small craft aboard USS Georgia in order to develop capabilities to execute combined arms attacks, advanced personnel recovery, and expedi-

tionary theater undersea warfare deployments.

“Several of our Marines worked alongside Sailors aboard USS Georgia to facilitate joint operational planning at a level not executed before between the U.S. Marine Corps and the submarine force,” said Major W. Connor Smithson, 2nd Force Reconnaissance Company commander. “Collaboration at this level only acts as a force multiplier to bring out the best of both forces’ capabilities.”

Later in the series, East Coast-based U.S. Naval Special Warfare Operators conducted Submarine-Special Operations Forces interoperability training with USS Georgia, which can host up to 66 SOF personnel, and included participation from the Royal Navy’s Special Boat Service, Norwegian Marinejegerkommandoen, and Italian Gruppo Operativo Incursori.

The training iterations with SOF sought to expand and reinforce SOF interoperability with combined partners and provided a valuable opportunity to build combined SUBSOF communication and control architecture while also conducting critical undersea training and qualifications.

“The scale and importance of the accomplishments made by the teams onboard USS Georgia cannot be over-stated.” said Capt. Selph. “Integration with joint and allied SOF enhances our undersea forces’ ability to respond to any threat with increased speed and lethality.”

USS Georgia is homeported in Kings Bay, Georgia, and is on a routine deployment to the U.S. Sixth Fleet area of operations. While in U.S. Sixth Fleet, Commander, Task Force 69 is responsible for submarine warfare operations in Europe and Africa.

Headquartered in Naples, Italy, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa (NAVEUR-NAVAF) operates U.S. naval forces in the U.S. European Command and U.S. Africa Command areas of responsibility. U.S. Sixth Fleet is permanently assigned to NAVEUR-NAVAF, and employs maritime forces through the full spectrum of joint and naval operations.





## Under Pressure: Making History with the H.L. Hunley

September 23, 2021

[https://acwm.org/blog/under-pressure-making-history-with-the-h-l-hunley/?gad\\_source=1](https://acwm.org/blog/under-pressure-making-history-with-the-h-l-hunley/?gad_source=1)



On the night of February 17, 1864, a Confederate submarine called the H.L. Hunley made world history when it destroyed the USS Housatonic in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina. It was the first ever submarine to sink an enemy vessel.

But the Hunley was missing, along with its eight-person crew. The submarine remained lost until over a century later, when it was discovered in 1995. Observers around the world thought they'd found the key to knowing what had happened to the Hunley and its crew. But what researchers found inside raised more questions than it answered.

Dr. Rachel Lance, a biomedical engineer at Duke University and author of ["In The Waves: My Quest to Solve the Mystery of a Civil War Submarine,"](#) helps tell this story of a Civil War legend turned modern-day mystery.

Music:

"Black Cosmo Ring": [Podington Bear](#)

"Dark Matter": [Podington Bear](#)

"Saver": [Podington Bear](#)

"Transient": [Podington Bear](#)

Carolyn Scott Photography

[Rachel Lance](#) is the author of ["In The Waves: My Quest to Solve the Mystery of a Civil War Submarine."](#) She is Assistant Consulting Professor at Duke University, where she conducts research out of their Hyperbaric Medicine facility.

Transcript

Gabriel Hunter-Chang, Host:

On the night of February 17, 1864, a U.S. warship called the USS Housatonic sat guarding the port of Charleston, South Carolina. The Confederate city was under siege. Its deep harbor was moonlit and calm. Somewhere beneath the waves, eight Confederate sailors were crammed inside the H.L. Hunley. The crew

of this submarine sat shoulder to shoulder in front of a massive crankshaft that ran the length of their narrow iron tube. At a signal from the captain, Lieutenant George Dixon, they began to crank in unison.

Gears sprang to life, and the propeller of the Confederate submarine plowed slowly through the freezing Atlantic toward the USS Housatonic. A long iron spar protruded from the front of the vessel. On its tip was a bomb packed with 90 pounds of gunpowder.

At 8:45 pm, the USS Housatonic was struck by an explosion. By 9:00, the stern of the U.S. warship had disappeared into the Charleston harbor. The H.L. Hunley had just made world history by becoming the first submarine to sink an enemy vessel. But it was nowhere to be found.

Weeks went by. Where was the Hunley? What had become of its eight man crew? The people of Charleston gradually accepted that something had gone terribly wrong on the night of the explosion. The war ended in 1865. But the disappearance of the Hunley would haunt the American imagination for decades and decades to come.

Then, in 1995, the Hunley was discovered and resurfaced. It was remarkably intact. Observers around the world anticipated the resolution of a legendary mystery. But what they found inside raised more questions than it answered.

Rachel Lance:

Normally, when you have bones, when you have human remains, there's some kind of story you can glean from at least the way they're positioned or the way they've been damaged, that tells you a bit about what those people went through in the final moments of their lives. But in the case of the Hunley, the more they investigated this recovered artifact, the more that mystery deepened.

Hunter-Chang: That's Dr. Rachel Lance, a biomedical engineer who specializes in injury biomechanics. She is especially interested in the types of trauma that occur after explosions.

In her book, "In the Waves," Rachel Lance takes on the Civil War mystery of what happened to the crew of the Hunley. She answers it using 21st century science...

Lance: One of the theories that was really plausible was that the blast that the crew set off that night of February 17th damaged the hull of the Hunley itself, and the Hunley was sort of sunk by her own explosion. But when they bring this up, they can, they're easily able to prove very quickly that that's just not true. And even further, as they start examining the layers of sediment inside the submarine, they start noticing that the sediment indicates that not only was the hull intact when the submarine went down, but it didn't even start immediately filling with sediment until sometime later.

And then as they start chipping their way down to the bottom of the boat itself, they finally find the remains of the crew. Now it's been about 150 years in ocean water. So obviously there's not a lot of soft tissue left, but the bones were still there. And not only were the bones completely undamaged, but each member of the crew was also seated at his battle station with limited evidence of any attempts to escape.

So you have the bones of the crew sitting where they last were. Nobody's tried to even unlock the rear conning tower hatch and climb out of there. And nobody is trying to cluster at the exits or claw their way through the doorways in what people had always kind of imagined was the dramatic, last moments. They all just seem to have slumped over and died.

Hunter-Chang: So we have an undamaged Confederate vessel, containing the remains of a crew that apparently did not even try to save themselves. It is quite the detective case.

But to start solving this case, first we have to address a more fundamental question. What on earth was the Confederacy doing with a hand-cranked submarine anyway?

Since the Civil War began in 1861, Charleston had been under siege. The city's port was blockaded, along with the rest of the Southern coastline, as part of a U.S. strategy to isolate the Confederacy and strangle its new economy.

And besides the occasional blockade-runner bearing luxury goods for wealthy Southerners, this plan was working. By February 1864, the people of Charleston were ready to try just about anything to break the blockade. Here's Rachel Lance again...

Lance: So by February, 1864, people are in a really bad situation. Especially in Charleston, they've been bombarded routinely, they are out of food. They're still under blockade. And Dixon writes about all of that in his letters. He writes about how he's starving. Like he personally is starving. And there are other people who break leave records of the fact that they haven't been out of the range of explosions in at least two months, which is just a mentally jarring experience I can't even imagine.

But Dixon wrote about the amount of pressure he was getting from the people in Charleston to, to somehow single-handedly and of course with his crew, but he was – the bulk of the burden was placed on his shoulders as the leader, but to somehow use this submarine to break the blockade.

So I personally think that's really informative of the fact that these people were just being bombed with a frequency we can't really imagine. And they were experiencing food shortages that we can't really imagine. And I think that led them into a situation where they were just willing to take extreme measures to try and stop it.

Hunter-Chang: Using a submarine to break the blockade was certainly extreme. This was a brand new, untested technology! But there's another factor that made this daredevil stunt even more risky for the crew.

You see, before the mission that sank the Housatonic, the Hunley had already sunk twice, taking with it two earlier crews. And these poor sailors were not sitting peacefully when they were discovered.

Lance: So one of those crews sank when the submarine was already submerged and they think with the submarine already fully sealed, obviously. So it was underwater and they dove into the bottom of the ocean. They were not able to free the boat and send it to the surface in time before their gas supply ran out. And with that crew, we have Horace Hunley himself dying in the boat.

He was curled up inside this hatch, trying to push his way through this conning tower hatch, which is physically impossible for any realistic human being who's not Bruce Banner and he's trying to claw his way out. And as are the remaining seven people in the crew who died with him. They are curled up in the fetal position. They are trying to release the keel weights. They're making these very clear signs of desperate efforts to get out of that boat and get out of there so that they have time to survive.

Whereas the other crew that was inside the boat it's swamped and it sank while they were underway. So so the boat starts going down very rapidly while it's open and unsealed. Three of the crew managed to come out and they, we have their escape stories. Like they left behind records of what this was like, and the doors slamming on their legs as they're trying to swim, and it settles on the ocean floor. And that's when they finally managed to get out. And they're having this clawing, swimming ascent for the surface. And the other five die inside.

And I think that's the most common question that everybody including myself still has about the Hunley, is why were they willing to do this? Why did they know that two crews had already died and still climb inside themselves? I've thought about it a lot. And when I finish my time machine, it will be one of the first places I go to ask them. But unfortunately, most of them didn't really leave behind any clear record.

Hunter-Chang: As Rachel implies here, we still don't know why the last crew of the Hunley did what they

did. George Dixon writes about the blockade, bombardment and starvation. But that's just George Dixon, and it's only one source.

Using DNA samples, scientists have been able to determine that four members of the crew were born in Europe. What were they doing in the Civil War at all, much less in a Confederate submarine? We can't know that either.

But although history, and even science, can't tell us how these men lived, Rachel Lance can tell us how they died.

So, what happened when the H.L. Hunley's bomb went off? Let's take our time machine back to that night in February 1864.

The bomb-laden Confederate submarine is plowing slowly through the freezing Atlantic...

Lance: So the Hunley cranks up to the side of the Housatonic. These men know they're about to collide directly with the Housatonic. The entire bomb goes off within milliseconds. We're talking thousandths of a second.

This whole thing essentially converts this beer keg sized chunk of black powder immediately into highly pressurized gas. So when that gas expands, that's what we think of as the explosion itself. So now you have this massive ball of superheated, highly pressurized gas, and it's immediately below the hull of a wooden ship in the water. So this gas bubble starts pulsating. It expands outward. It very quickly blows off the stern side of the Housatonic, the stern starboard side, and it creates a massive plume of water.

So this pressure waveform, the way that it impacted the Hunley and the way that it impacted the crew inside, these injuries can be extremely rapid. We have a lot of case reports from World War II, of people being blasted, especially like during the blitz and things like that, or during bombings where they're found in the exact position where they were in the moments before their death.

Within the Hunley itself, I think it's highly likely that most of them would not have even realized their success.

Hunter-Chang: In her book, Rachel Lance takes us through her process of scientific conjecture and historic discovery. She describes the physics of this fatal pressure wave, and goes into detail about how it caused the deaths of the crew. It's a fascinating story, and you should definitely check it out.

But first, there's one more twist to the mystery of the Hunley. According to Rachel, some new details have emerged about the final moments of one of the crew.

Lance: The person at the first crank handle inside the Hunley, they've never released the positions of his bones. But if you kind of piece together the imagery from the videos that they've allowed like National Geographic and Discovery to have, you can do some like little internet sleuth work, and you can see how this guy was positioned. And it's not conclusive, but it looks a little bit as if he's trying to crawl for the exit. So his bones are a little bit more stretched out. He's kind of come to the side, whereas everyone has just dropped down.

This guy might've survived for a minute or two. That's also very consistent with blast trauma. It tends to kill some and spare others right next to them. That's a very normal experience that we hear back from veterans all the time. So for this one person, there's a chance that he survived those last few moments after the blast, but his lungs were so full of blood that he wasn't able to save himself despite the fact that his compatriots had all just died around him. So that's the one I think about.

Hunter-Chang: The Civil War killed over three quarters of a million people. It left countless more injured, in mourning, or displaced. After the war, and still to this day, people tried to find ways to create meaning out

of this catastrophe.

So it makes sense that the story of the H.L. Hunley was, and is, so popular. When it was lost, and again when it was found, the Hunley became a perfect vessel for Americans to interpret and create meaning from the war. It became a myth. But mythmaking can obscure the real historical people it deals with.

We don't know a whole lot about this last crew member. We do know that his name was Arnold Becker. By studying his skeletal remains, we know he was about 20 years old, and that he was one of the four crew members who were born in Europe.

We'll never know what Arnold Becker thought about in these last moments, if he did in fact survive. But it's wild to imagine. In a way, what we understand about the past is a lot like blast trauma: some details are lost, while others are spared right next to them.



<https://www.oddthingsiveseen.com/2013/02/the-hunt-for-gray-october-hl-hunley.html>



## Escaping a Sunken Sub: The Dramatic Story of the USS Tang

April 13, 2022 by [Jenny Ashcraft](#)

<https://blog.fold3.com/escaping-a-sunken-sub-the-dramatic-story-of-the-uss-tang/>

On October 24, 1944, the USS Tang (SS-306) sank off the coast of China during WWII, trapping 29 sailors in 180 feet of water. The Balao-class submarine was destroyed when her own torpedo boomeranged back and slammed into the ship's port side during an attack on a Japanese convoy. Out of the 87 men aboard, just nine survived.



*USS Tang*

The USS *Tang* launched in August 1943. During her 14-month career, she sank 33 ships with an aggregate total of 227,793 tons. She rescued 22 Naval aviators, received two Presidential Unit Citations, and conducted five highly successful war patrols. During her fifth and final patrol, *Tang's* distinguished service came to an end.

Early in the evening of October 24, 1944, while on patrol in the Taiwan Strait, the USS *Tang* made radar contact with an enemy convoy of large ships. The convoy hugged the China coast between Foochow (Fuzhou) and Amoy (Xiamen). The *Tang* shadowed the convoy as the Japanese ships fired randomly in their direction. Meanwhile, since it was dark, Commanding Officer Richard H. O'Kane decided to attack from the surface. The *Tang* sank two freighters, and a tanker, and damaged a transport. When the *Tang* launched the final torpedo, it began to arc and circle back towards the sub.

O'Kane desperately tried to maneuver the *Tang* out of harm's way, but the ship moved too slow. The torpedo slammed into the sub, causing a violent explosion that sent crew members smashing into bulkheads. Almost half the sailors died instantly. O'Kane and several crew members were blown off the bridge by the explosion and tossed into the water, where they clawed their way to the surface. As water flooded three compartments, the *Tang* began to sink.



*Crew of the USS Tang*

Personnel in the control room succeeded in closing the conning tower hatch, but it had been damaged in the explosion. A quick-thinking sailor leveled the sinking sub by flooding two ballast tanks. The *Tang* sank 180 feet and settled on the ocean floor. Many of the survivors were injured, so the able-bodied carried them to the forward torpedo room where the escape trunk was located. Twenty-nine men were now in an escape position, but some were too injured to try. On the surface, the Japanese patrols dropped depth charges, making it almost impossible for the rest to attempt an escape. As they waited, the crew destroyed sensitive and confidential documents. A growing electrical fire in the forward battery of the sub sent smoke seeping into the torpedo room, creating a sense of urgency.



*The Momsen Lung*

With time running out to attempt an improbable escape, the first four men entered the escape trunk. They let it fill with water to equalize the pressure and opened the outside hatch. They used [Momsen Lungs](#), a device that recycles exhaled air allowing an escapee to breathe, to ascend from the depths. Eventually, thirteen men [escaped the sub](#), but only eight made it to the surface. Of those eight, five managed to swim until they were rescued. Meanwhile down below, the pressure was building outside the torpedo room door. Suddenly, [the gasket failed](#) and the door blew open. All the remaining sailors were asphyxiated.

The nine survivors, [including Commander O’Kane](#), were plucked from the water and taken to [Japanese POW camps](#), where they languished until the [war ended](#). Following the war, O’Kane was awarded the [Medal of Honor](#). If you would like to learn [more about the USS Tang](#), search [Fold3®](#) today. Also, our friends at [Stories Behind the Stars](#) have written profiles for each of the sailors who died aboard the *Tang*. See those profiles [here](#).

## For those enjoying the Olympics



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The task of perpetuating the memory of our lost shipmates is forever and cannot be done alone. This task takes time, money, dedication and patriotism from all walks of life, both veteran and civilian. USS Requin Base would like to recognize all those that help us fulfill the task of remembering and honoring those we have lost to secure the freedoms we enjoy today. <https://requinbase.org/customer-photos/>



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