



# The MidWatch

October 2012  
Volume 18 - Issue 10

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



Visit our world-class web site at:  
[www.perch-base.org](http://www.perch-base.org)

## LEST WE FORGET THOSE STILL ON PATROL

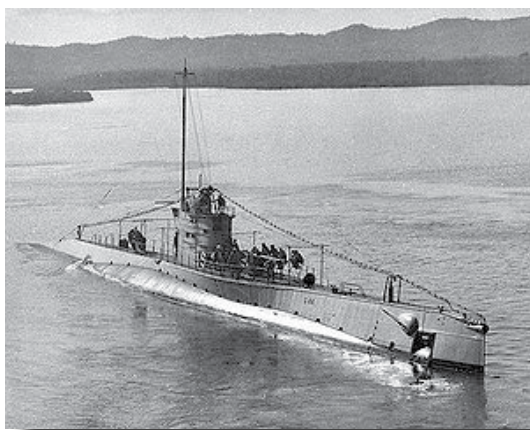
### OCTOBER ETERNAL PATROLS



**Oct. 3, 1944**  
**USS Seawolf (SS-197)**  
**100 men lost (including 17 Army Personnel)**

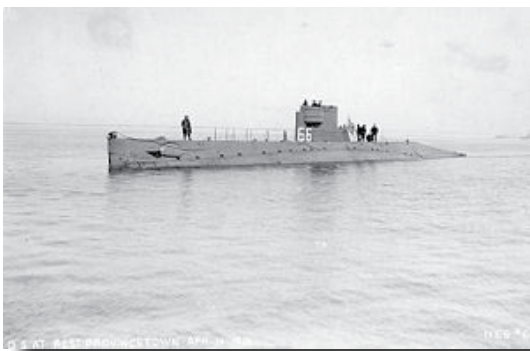
In October 1944, The US Seventh Fleet task group was attacked. The four friendly submarines in the vicinity were twice ordered to give their positions, but Seawolf did not respond. A US carrier plane then sighted a submarine diving; it dropped two bombs, although in a safety zone for American submarines. An escort sped to the area to initiate sound contact, but received only unrecognizable dot and dash signals. The escort attacked with hedgehogs, setting off underwater explosions, which caused floating debris to surface. The USS Seawolf was never seen or heard from again. After the war, examination of Japanese data showed no record of an attack at that time and in that location. It is therefore presumed that Seawolf was sunk, but no identification was ever found.

**continued on next page**



**Oct. 7, 1943**  
**USS S-44 (SS-149)**  
**56 men lost**

On the night of 7 October, radar contact was made with a "small merchantman" and closed in for a surface attack. Several hundred yards from the target, her deck gun fired and was answered by a salvo. The "small merchantman" was the Shimushu-class escort Ishigaki. A crash dive was ordered, but S-44 failed to submerge. S-44 was ordered abandoned. A pillow case was put up from the forward battery room hatch as a flag of surrender, but the shelling continued. Only two men escape as she went down.



**Oct. 10, 1923**  
**USS O-5 (SS-66)**  
**3 men lost**

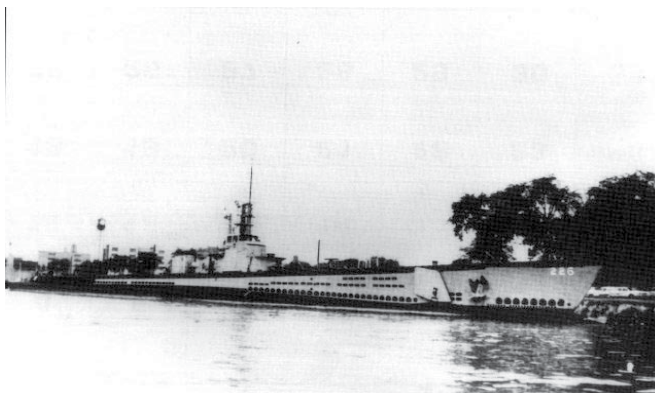
Rammed by steamer Abangarez near Panama Canal. Sank in less than a minute.



**Oct. 11, 1943**  
**USS Wahoo (SS-328)**  
**80 men lost**

*(continued)*

Postwar reckoning by Japanese records reported, that on 11 October, the date Wahoo was due to exit through La Perouse Strait, an anti-submarine aircraft sighted a wake and an apparent oil slick from a submerged submarine. The Japanese initiated a combined air and sea attack with numerous depth charges throughout the day. Another submarine had been depth-charged by a patrol boat while transiting the strait two days before, and the enemy's antisubmarine forces were on the alert; their attacks apparently fatally holed Wahoo, and she sank with all hands. (Note: vessel was found in 2006.)



**Oct. 12, 1943**  
**USS Dorado (SS-248)**  
**77 men lost**

After sea trials, Dorado sailed from New London, Connecticut, on 6 October 1943 for the Panama Canal Zone. She did not arrive. Probable cause was a sinking by friendly aircraft thinking her German U-boat.



**Oct. 24, 1944**  
**USS Darter (SS-227)**  
**no loss of life**

Darter grounded on Bombay Shoal Oct. 24. With the tide receding, all of Darter's efforts to get off failed. All confidential papers and equipment were destroyed, and the entire crew taken off to Dace (standing by.) When the demolition charges planted in Darter failed to destroy her, Dace fired torpedoes which exploded on the reef due to the shallow water. All further efforts to sink her failed but she was declared useless to the enemy and Dace left. After reaching Freemantle, in order to retain their high esprit d'corps, the entire Darter crew was ordered to take over Menhaden, then building at Manitowoc, Wisconsin.



**Oct. 24, 1944  
USS Shark (SS-314)  
87 men lost**

SHARK was lost during her third war patrol, probably in the vicinity of Luzon Strait. On 24 October, SEADRAGON received a message from SHARK stating that she had made radar contact with a single freighter, and that she was going to attack. This was the last message received from the submarine, and all subsequent attempts to contact SHARK failed. She was reported as presumed lost on 27 November. According to Japanese records examined after the war, on 24 October 1944, in Luzon Strait, a destroyer made contact with a submerged submarine and dropped depth charges. After losing and regaining the contact, the destroyer dropped another 17 depth charges which resulted in "bubbles, heavy oil, clothes and cork" coming to the surface.

## **USSVI CREED**

**Our organization's purpose is . . .**

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

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

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






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## Sailing Orders



### Next Base Meeting

Next meeting of Perch Base is:

Saturday, October 13

Dillon's Restaurant,

59th Ave just north of the Loop 101,

Glendale, AZ

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We have no activities scheduled for October but stand by. November is our busiest month.

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Scan for the Perch Base Web Site

# PERCH BASE OFFICERS



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



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

(ACTING SECRETARY IS THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER)

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



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



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



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



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



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



**CHAPLAIN**  
Steve Leon  
(602) 540-2945  
[chaplain@perch-base.org](mailto:chaplain@perch-base.org)



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



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



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

## 2012 Perch Base Foundation Supporters

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

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

## These are the 2012 Foundation Donors



JERRY N. ALLSTON  
KENNETH R. ANDERSON  
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ROBERT WARNER  
JAMES L. WALL  
FORREST J. WATSON  
ED WOLF  
RICH WOMACK  
WILLIAM WOOLCOTT  
JOHN G. ZAICHKIN  
RONALD J. ZOMOK

# Designing Drones To Hunt Diesel Subs

## DARPA awards \$58M contract, plans at-sea testing in 2015

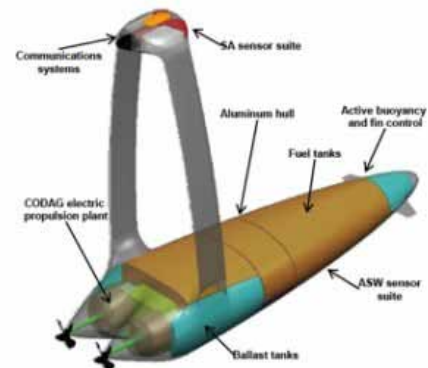
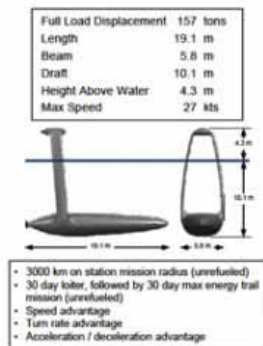
*Navy Times, Sept. 17*

The Navy has moved one step closer to designing the next generation of submarine chasers: roving drone ships capable of scanning the seas for the quietest diesel subs.

The vision for these trimarans, a project funded by the Defense Department's advanced research arm, is to detect and trail foreign subs across thousands of kilometers for months at a time — all largely without human intervention.

While tracking the sub via sonar, the drone ships would be able to safely navigate, avoiding shoals and other ships.

After proving this core concept was feasible, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency awarded \$58 million Aug. 16 to military contractor SAIC to design, build and test these autonomous sub hunters. But the unmanned vessels will require years of development and testing to consistently accomplish feats challenging for the best human crews.



This is a potential DARPA Design

The biggest engineering challenge will be proving a design that can autonomously drive itself through the ocean and avoid other ships while simultaneously tracking very quiet subs for periods up to three months, an ability one engineer called “intelligent autonomy.” “Building a boat is rather easy,” said retired Capt. Rick Simon, director of Spatial Integrated Systems, a contractor working with DARPA to help these vessels navigate through high sea states. “But make that thing smart enough to go out there for 90 days and not have to call home to Mama and ask for help — that’s the hard part.” If these many technological hurdles are scaled, the Navy could have a relatively cheap way to neutralize the diesel subs, which are used by regimes such as North Korea, China and Iran and represent one of its foremost threats.

“Our goal is to transition an operational game changer to the Navy,” said Scott Littlefield, a program manager at DARPA, in an Aug. 16 news release. “This should create an asymmetry to our advantage, negating a challenging submarine threat at one-tenth their cost of building subs.” The next three years will be busy as SAIC and subcontractors design and construct an integrated, autonomous boat capable of detecting diesel subs.

### From Plans To Reality

DARPA expects vessel prototypes to start at-sea tests in 2015. Building such complex, autonomous vessels will likely lead to technological breakthroughs that affect other parts of the Navy.

But as this system transitions from concept to fleet reality, the Navy will have to resolve larger issues about how to make a gee-whiz design relevant in wartime, one former submarine captain said.

“Is this a peacetime or a wartime capability?” said the retired officer, who asked to remain anonymous to speak candidly about a defense contract. He highlighted the vessels’ vulnerability in wartime, such as against the Chinese navy.

“If this thing is out there, banging away on top of a submarine with active [sonar],” he said, “why wouldn’t the Chinese just kill it?”



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

*Jim Denzien - Commander*



Shipmates:

We are approaching the real busy time of the year: all of the activities that surround Veterans Day. Be alert for information concerning these events through our Flash Traffic.

We have had the good fortune to have a volunteer to relieve Walt Blomgren as the Chaplain. Our new Chaplain is Steve Leon. Thanks for stepping up, Steve.

The secretary's duties have been assumed by Chuck Emmett on a temporary basis. We really need a shipmate to step up and become the Secretary. Help your base and step up!!

Our voting participation in the National election was very good. I am sure we are above the fleet average. Thank you, shipmates, for taking the time to participate in our organization.

Our next meeting is October 13. Hope to see you there.

Fraternally,

Jim Denzien, Base Commander

**From the XO  
vice-Commander's Message**

*Howard Doyle - vice-Commander*



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

Contact me, the Base vice-Commander **Howard Doyle (602) 228-2445** or any other Base Officer. All officers are listed near the front of every copy of the MidWatch.

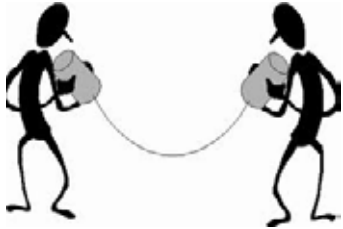
If there's anything that makes the submarine veteran stand out it's the blue vest that we wear. Most of us have one but I've noticed a few Members that don't have one. There are several ways you can order a vest. The easiest way to purchase one is through the Perch Base website. On the main page ([www.perch-base.org](http://www.perch-base.org)) move your cursor down to the lower left-hand corner, click on the storekeeper icon (crossed keys) and use the simple order form to have a vest custom made by Perch Base's "official seamstress," Holly.

A vest shows that you belong, identify you as a Perch Base member, and can be a real travel-log of the boats and stations where you served.

November is our busiest month for events. I encourage all Members to attend as many activities as possible to support the Base.

March is when we have Base elections for Commander and vice-Commander, our two elected officers. A reminder, prior experience or previous Base officer service is NOT a requirement of office. When March comes, please participate in nominations and the election.





**"Soundings"**  
**Communications Officer's Message**

**Chuck Emmett - Comm. Officer**

*(I edit the whole newsletter. But, it's just my thoughts in this section.)*

The MidWatch won first-place runner up again in the National newsletter competition and announced at the National Convention. Again the MidWatch has reached that not quite good enough "almost ran" level.

In both previous competitions, the winning newsletters were both quarterly editions (issued every three months) and newsletters that cover a regional group of Bases rather than a single Base. These newsletters are good. Very good.

In fact, their layout and graphic mix are beyond my capability using the current software I am using and my hat goes off to them.

But we'll keep plugging along and make minor changes to our overall communications plan (web page, newsletter and **Flash Traffics**) as needed and suggested by you, the Base Members.

We didn't win, but I think we have the best newsletter for the best base in USSVI. OK, enough said.

This month, we welcome our new Chaplain, Steve Leon, and his addition to the comments in the MidWatch. A first class addition to a first class publication.

HURT FEELINGS REPORT			
For use of this form, see FM 22-102; the proponent agency is TRADOC			
DATA REQUIRED BY THE PRIVACY ACT OF 1974			
<b>AUTHORITY:</b>		5 USC 301, Departmental Regulations; 10 USC 3013, Secretary of the Navy and E.O. 9397 (SSN)	
<b>PRINCIPAL PURPOSE:</b>		To assist whiners in documenting hurt feelings, and to provide leaders with a list of soldiers who require additional counseling, NCO leadership, and extra duty.	
<b>ROUTINE USE:</b>		For subordinate leader development IAW FM 22-102. Leaders & whiners should use this form as necessary.	
<b>DISCLOSURE:</b>		Disclosure is voluntary, but repeated disclosure may result in a DA Form 778-1A, Report of Wall To Wall Counseling	
PART I -- ADMINISTRATIVE DATA			
A. WHINER'S NAME (Last, First, MI)	B. RANK/GRADE	C. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER	D. DATE OF REPORT
E. ORGANIZATION		F. NAME & TITLE OF THE PERSON FILLING OUT THIS FORM	
PART II -- INCIDENT REPORT			
A. DATE FEELINGS WERE HURT	B. TIME OF HURTFULNESS	C. LOCATION OF HURTFUL INCIDENT	D. NCO OR OFFICER SYMPATHETIC TO WHINER
E. NAME OF REAL MAN/WOMAN WHO HURT YOUR SENSITIVE FEELINGS		F. RANK/GRADE	G. ORGANIZATION (if different from 1e above)
E. INJURY (Mark all that apply)			
1. WHICH EAR WERE THE WORDS OF HURTFULNESS SPOKEN INTO? <input type="checkbox"/> LEFT <input type="checkbox"/> RIGHT <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH		2. IS THERE PERMANENT FEELING DAMAGE? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE	
3. DID YOU REQUIRE A "TISSUE" FOR TEARS? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE _____		4. HAS THIS RESULTED IN A TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE	
F. REASON FOR FILING THIS REPORT (Mark all that apply)			
<input type="checkbox"/> I am thin skinned	<input type="checkbox"/> The Navy needs to fix my problems.	<input type="checkbox"/> Two beers is not enough	
<input type="checkbox"/> I am a wimp	<input type="checkbox"/> My feelings are easily hurt	<input type="checkbox"/> My hands should be in my pockets	
<input type="checkbox"/> I have woman/man-like hormones	<input type="checkbox"/> I didn't sign up for this	<input type="checkbox"/> I was not offered a post brief	
<input type="checkbox"/> I am a crybaby	<input type="checkbox"/> I was told that I am not a hero	<input type="checkbox"/> Someone requested a post brief	
<input type="checkbox"/> I want my mommy	<input type="checkbox"/> The weather is to cold	<input type="checkbox"/> All of the above and more	
G. NARRATIVE (Tell us in your own sissy words how your feelings were hurt.)			
<div style="color: red; font-size: 2em; transform: rotate(-15deg); opacity: 0.5;">             I'll fill this out later - Chuck           </div>			
PART III - AUTHENTICATION			
a. PRINTED NAME OF REAL MAN/WOMAN	b. SIGNATURE	c. PRINTED NAME OF WHINER	d. SIGNATURE
We, as the Navy, take hurt feelings seriously. If you don't have someone who can give you a hug and make things all better, please let us know and we will promptly dispatch a "hugger" to you ASAP. In the event we are unable to find a "hugger" we will notify the fire department and request that they send fire personnel to your location. If you are in need of supplemental support, upon written request, we will make every reasonable effort to provide you with a "blankey", a "binky" and/or a bottle if you so desire.			
DA FORM IMT WF1, APRIL 2009		EDITION OF APRIL 1989 IS OBSOLETE	

We're glad to hear from you, Mrs. Atos, and we hope you'll continue your support. I'll try and find more articles on activity in the Philippines.

-Editor

Sept. 5, 2012

Dear Mr. Simmons,

It is always with great pleasure and anticipation when we receive a paper copy of your Perch Base Submarine newsletter. More so because when you feature articles and photos of submarine ships during World War II in the Philippines (islands of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao).

Most recently you showed photographs of lost ships USS Grayling, USS Cisco. I learn more about the history of the war, than when I was in school in the Philippines. I have met several neighbors, sadly some of them died already, who told me of their experiences in Pangasinan, Leyte and Manila. It is also sad that United States no longer has a base in the Philippines and that made me and Reynaldo not even think of visiting the Philippines because of its poor economic conditions.

Sincerely,  
Genie Q. Atos



**"Member Mogul"**  
Membership Chairman's Message

*Rick Simmons - Membership*

Shipmates,

In accordance with our standard practices, 2013 USSVI and/or Perch Base membership dues renewal letters will be in the mail to you by the end of the first week in October. Please remember to make your dues payment check out to "Perch Base". Only one (1) check is needed to cover all dues owed.

I am trying to get the letters out even sooner to allow as much time as possible for everyone to get their payments back before October 31st. Everyone who gets their dues payment to me by the end of October will be included in the "Early Bird" drawing at the awards dinner in January. The winner of that drawing will not owe Perch Base dues in 2014.

The dues renewal letters and letters to those of you who do not owe dues for 2013 ask that you consider making a donation to the Arizona Submarine Veterans Perch Base Foundation. Letters to those not owing dues may be sent a little later in the month. Please remember that donations need to be made using a separate check made out to "Arizona Submarine Veterans Perch Base Foundation".

As always, we ask that you make any contact information corrections/additions/updates on the back of the dues/donation return slip.

If you have any questions, please let me know.



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

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



The SOS Committee and the City of Phoenix (Parks and Recreation) are tentatively scheduled to meet in mid-October to discuss the final draft of our Memo of Understanding (MOU) regarding placement of the sail at Steele Indian School Park. The U.S.S. Phoenix sail is currently scheduled to be available in early 2015, assuming there are no more delays.

Thanks, Dan





## CHAPLAIN'S COLUMN



*Base Chaplain - Steve Leon*

### Greetings

I would like to introduce myself as your new Base Chaplain. Additionally, I want to thank outgoing Chaplain Walt Blomgren for his service to the crew and the superb turnover provided for me.

As a new member of the Base, I have much work to do in terms of getting to know you all. This will come in time, and I hope the experience will be mutually rewarding.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with helpful information on your needs and those of our shipmates who are unable to communicate them.

In closing, I wish you all encouragement with the expressed words of the theologian Martin Luther, "Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree."

*Steve Leon*

### Binnacle List

No one has embarked on eternal patrol. Please keep the following crew members in your thought and prayers:

- Joe "Wanderer" Varese- recovering from surgery and awaiting chemotherapy treatment next month
- Adrian Stuke- last word indicated he was receiving treatment at Barrows Nuerological Institute; however, unable to confirm his status.

### Inspirational Thoughts

The following words were written on the tomb of an Anglican bishop in the crypts of Westminster Abbey:

"When I was young and free and my imagination had no limits, I dreamed of changing the world. As I grew older and wiser, I discovered the world would not change, so I shortened my sights somewhat and decided to change only my country. But it too seemed immovable. As I grew into my twilight years, in one last desperate attempt, I settled for changing only family, those closest to me, but alas, they would have none of it. And now as I lay on my deathbed, I suddenly realize: If I had only changed myself first, then by example I would have changed my family.

From their inspiration and encouragement, I would then have been able to better my country and, who knows, I may have even changed the world."

*~Anonymous~*

from *Chicken Soup for the Soul*

Copyright 1996 by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen & Patty Hansen

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Other Important Information:**

Veterans Death and Burial Benefits

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

Navy Burial at Sea Information

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

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

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

## Base Meeting Minutes September 2012

*Chuck Emmett  
Acting Secretary*

A regular Perch Base USSVI meeting was called to order at 12 noon on Saturday September 8, 2012 by the base commander, Jim Denzien. The meeting was held at its usual location, Dillon's restaurant at 59th Ave. and the 101. The invocation was given by the base chaplain, Walt Blomgren, followed by the pledge of allegiance. The Tolling for the Boats ceremony was conducted for those ships lost during the month of September. This was followed by a special, single bell strike for the shipmates recently departed on Eternal Patrol, George Marions and Bob May.

The following is the list of members and guests in attendance:

Howard Doyle	Rick Simmons	Walter Blomgren	Doug LaRock
Jim Denzien	DeWayne Lober	Herb Coulter	Don DeMarte
Don Unser	Thomas Farley	Stephen Marcellino	Steve Leon
Steve Stanger	Layne Moss	Dan Moss	Davy Jones
Ted Hunt	John Schlag	Richard Bernier	George Crider
Tom Clonts	Chuck Emmett	Gary Bartlett	Kathy Bartlett – Visitor
Robert Warner			

Introduction of Tucson Base Commander (also Perch Base member) Gary Bartlett and his wife was made. Gary encouraged Perch Base to join in with Tucson in active support of in-service USS Tucson crew as well as closer inter Base activities between Perch and Tucson

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the August Perch Base meeting as published in the MidWatch. Motion was approved by voice vote.

Treasurer Bob Warner read the Treasurers' Report for September. A motion was made and seconded to approve the report as read. Motion was approved by voice vote.

### **Base Commander's Board of Directors (BOD) Report**

The Commander (Jim) mentioned that for the first time, a member, Bob Warner, had joined the meeting via telecommunications video and audio ("Skype") with good success. The Board considers this form of a "presence" as "attendance" for purposes of a quorum.

Jim discussed the Glendale parade and static display the Base would be attending Oct. 6 (EDITOR: This has since been canceled and notifications given via *Flash Traffic* 09-06.)

Other future events planned were also discussed. Late breaking information and details will be informed via *Flash Traffic* messages. Of the events, the Awards Dinner has been locked into Jan. 26.

There is a need for new Board members. Walt Blomgren has resigned (position to be filled by Steve Leon) and John Schlag is departing as Secretary. Temporarily, Chuck Emmett will assume the additional duties of Secretary while a replacement is sought.

The painting, and prerequisites for the job, of George Crider's trailer was briefly discussed.

Additional discussions: Pearl Harbor Day remembrances - we will attend; members might want to block out the week around Veterans Day for events.

Departed Shipmate Bob May's family has asked for any sea stories involving Bob to be sent to them. Chuck Emmett will act as the point of contact if you have such stories.

Chuck then demonstrated to the Members the new vinyl "parade" sign covers for the float's four metal signs that were only useful during static displays. He demonstrated their placement. Jim called for, and Members responded with, a Bravo Zulu.

### **Reports of Board Members**

**Membership Chairman** – Rick Simmons encouraged all members to verify their address and phone numbers. He also stated that Perch Base's national voting exceeded the national average. Jim interjected with an explanation of

the problems with the National database and how it impacted voting.

**Communications Officer** – Chuck explained how easy and user-friendly and comprehensive the Perch Base web page. He restated the communications philosophy. The web page is the constant source and repository for Base information. The newsletter (MidWatch) is the monthly update for information. **Flash Traffic** for instant information updates. He also asked for any suggestions.

**Base vice-Commander** – No Base information to discuss.

**Chaplain** – Walt Blomgren gave an update on Members on the Binnacle List. His comments were supplemented by some information on Joe Varese by the Base Commander.

**Treasurer** – Nothing to report.

**Storekeeper** – De Wayne Lober announced that he now has 2013 calendars for sale. He also mentioned other items available and for sale.

**Chief of the Boat** – Jim remarked that the COB had attended the National Convention to represent the Base.

**Secretary** – John Schlag had nothing to add. (It had previously been agreed to by the BOD that John would cease to be Secretary at the adjournment of this meeting and the Communications Officer would temporarily assume these duties until a permanent Secretary can be found.)

### **(General Comments)**

Jim made an appeal for “new” Board members instead of the appearance of “rotating” the same core group. He also encouraged everyone to go into the National database and flesh out your information.

### **50-50 Drawing**

The 50-50 drawing was won by Ted Hunt.

### **Adjournment**

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn, the benediction was given by the Chaplain, and the meeting adjourned at 12:49 p.m.

## ***Flash Traffics*** **. . . for September 2012.**

*This is a new feature. Unlike other Bases, which wait and include USSVI notices and other breaking news in their newsletter, we inform our Members almost immediately via electronic e-mails called **Flash Traffic**. Each month we will list those that were issued during the current month. The documents themselves are not publicly archived but they are available. Please contact me, the [Base Communications Officer](#) if you wish a copy.*

**Flash Traffic** #09-01\_2012: Andrian Stuke Update

**Flash Traffic** #09-02\_2012: Eternal Patrol: Shipmate Bob May/Joe Varese Out of Hospital

**Flash Traffic** #09-03\_2012: Membership Reminder

**Flash Traffic** #09-04\_2012: National Election Results (from the Convention)

**Flash Traffic** #09-05\_2012: Further Voting Results

**Flash Traffic** #09-06\_2012: Glendale Parade and Static Display Canceled

**Flash Traffic** #09-07\_2012: Steve Leon is New Base Chaplain

**Flash Traffic** #09-08\_2012: USSVI National News #2012-084

**Flash Traffic** #09-09\_2012: Arizona Memorial State Project Update

**Flash Traffic** #09-10\_2012: WWII Submarine Veterans Disband



# *Eternal Patrol*

## *October 30, 1944*

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

### The Final Patrol

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



### USS Seawolf (SS-194) October 30, 1944 99 men lost



#### SARGO-CLASS DIESEL-ELECTRIC SUBMARINE

**Displacement:** 1,450 tons (surf), 2,350 tons (sub)  
**Length:** 310' 6", **Beam:** 26' 10", **Draft:** 16' 7½"  
**Propulsion:** 4 × GM Model 16-248 V16 diesel engines  
2 × 126-cell batteries, 4 × GE elect. motors two shafts  
5,500 shp (surf), 2,740 shp (sub)  
**Speed:** 21 knots (surf), 8.75 knots (sub)  
**Range:** 11,000 nautical miles at 10 knots  
**Endurance:** 48 hours at 2 knots (sub); **Test depth:** 250'  
**Complement:** 5 officers, 54 enlisted  
**Armament:** 8 × 21" torpedo tubes  
(four forward, four aft), 24 torpedoes  
1 × 3"/50 caliber deck gun, four machine guns

### USS Seawolf (SS-197)

*From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*

USS Seawolf (SS-197), a Sargo-class submarine, was the second submarine of the United States Navy named for the seawolf.

Her keel was laid down on 27 September 1938 by the Portsmouth Navy Yard in Kittery, Maine. She was launched on 15 August 1939 sponsored by Mrs. Edward C. Kalbfus and commissioned on 1 December 1939, Lieutenant Frederick B. Warder (Class of 1925) in command.

#### Inter-War Period

After fitting out, Seawolf departed Portsmouth, New Hampshire on 12 April 1940 for her shakedown cruise, which lasted until 21 June and took her as far south as the Panama Canal Zone. Seawolf was next assigned to the Pacific Fleet, home ported at San Diego, California. In the autumn of 1940, she proceeded to Manila Bay and operated from the Cavite Navy Yard.

#### World War II

When war with Japan began, the submarine readied for sea and was on her first war patrol from 8–26 December 1941.

Seawolf hunted Japanese shipping off San Bernardino Strait. On 14 December, she fired a spread of torpedoes at Sanyo Maru in Port San Vicente. One torpedo hit, but did not explode. She promptly underwent her first depth charge attack but suffered no damage.

Seawolf departed Manila on 31 December 1941 for Australia and arrived at Darwin on 9 January 1942. She loaded 30–40 tons of .50-caliber (12.7 mm) antiaircraft



ammunition for use by American forces on Corregidor and sailed for Manila Bay on 16 January. The submarine sighted seven Japanese freighters accompanied by four destroyers and a cruiser on 21 January, but had no opportunity to fire any of the eight torpedoes that she had aboard. The ammunition was unloaded on 28–29 January at Corregidor. Seawolf then loaded torpedoes and passengers, and headed for Surabaya, Java.

Seawolf sailed out of Surabaya on 15 February and began patrolling in the Java Sea-Lombok Strait area. On 19 February, she fired four torpedoes at two Japanese freighter-transports in the Badung Strait. Damage to one was not ascertained, but the other was reported last seen down by the stern and listing to starboard. (However, Sagami Maru had been damaged by USAAF air attack, not by Seawolf's torpedo.)

A week later, she fired her stern tubes at a freighter and watched one hit forward of the bridge before going deep to evade depth charges from an escorting destroyer at which she had also fired. In March, Seawolf was hunting between Java and Christmas Island. On 1 April, she stealthily approached the anchorage at Christmas Island where the Japanese invasion force lay at anchor. Seawolf fired a spread at Naka. Though Seawolf was credited with a sinking at the time, only one torpedo hit, causing significant damage to the ship, although it didn't harm any of the crew. Naka was forced to return to Japan for repairs and was out of the war for almost a year. Unaware she had hit her target, Seawolf then underwent 7½ hours of depth charge attacks. On 1 April, she attacked two cruisers. A violent explosion was heard, but no flames were seen. Seawolf ended her patrol on 7 April at Fremantle and received the

Navy Unit Commendation.

On her fifth patrol, from 12 May until 2 July (a total of 51 days at sea), Seawolf patrolled the Philippine Islands area. She attacked freighters on 20 May, 23 May, 12 June, 13 June, 15 June, and 28 June. On 13 June, she fired at two ships and her crew heard four explosions, but no sinkings were confirmed. Seawolf returned to Fremantle for three weeks before beginning her sixth war patrol.

Seawolf prowled the Sulu Sea and Celebes Sea from 25 July-15 September. She attacked a tanker on 3 August, sank Hachigen Maru on 14 August and Showa Maru 11 days later. She returned to Fremantle to refit and then hunted in the Davao Gulf area from 7 October-1 December. Seawolf sank Gifu Maru on 2 November, Sagami Maru the next day, and Keiko Maru on 8 November. She ended her patrol at Pearl Harbor en route to the West Coast.

Seawolf arrived at Mare Island on 10 December 1942 and underwent an overhaul that lasted until 24 February

1943. She returned to Pearl Harbor on 13 March, and on 3 April stood out for another patrol. She ended this patrol early, on 3 May, because she had expended all torpedoes on enemy shipping near the Bonin Islands. On 15 April, she torpedoed Kaihei Maru, sank an old destroyer now known as Patrol Boat Number 39 on 23 April; and sank two 75-ton sampans with her 3-in (76mm) gun.

Seawolf returned to Midway Island for refitting and departed that island on 17 May and headed for the East China Sea. She ran into several large convoys as she prowled from Formosa to Nagasaki. The submarine tracked a convoy of 11 ships and fired a spread of torpedoes at a large freighter on 6 June. One torpedo hit the target but proved to be a dud, and another passed under the freighter and hit an escort. Two weeks later, she fired a spread at four ships. One was hit in the stern and sank in approximately nine minutes. This was Shojin Maru loaded with troops. Seawolf returned to Midway Island on 8 July and, four days later, steamed into Pearl Harbor.

Her next patrol was from 14 August-15 September. This patrol, in the East China Sea, was also ended prematurely due to firing all torpedoes. She sank 12,996 tons of enemy shipping, excluding two 75-ton sampans sunk by shell-fire. Seawolf made contact with a six-ship convoy on her third day in the patrol area. She attacked day and night for three days before finally surfacing to sink Fusei Maru with her deck gun.

On Seawolf's 11th patrol, in the South China Sea from 5 October-27 November, she sank Wuhu Maru, Kaifuku Maru, and damaged a 10,000-ton cargo ship. The submarine refitted at Pearl Harbor, and on 22 December 1943, headed



Periscope photograph of a sinking Japanese ship, torpedoed by Seawolf during a war patrol in the Philippines-East Indies area in the fall of 1942. This ship is possibly Gifu Maru, sunk on 2 November 1942 in Davao Gulf, Mindanao

for the East China Sea on what was to be her most lucrative patrol. She attacked a seven-ship convoy on the night of 10–11 January 1944 and sank three ships totaling 19,710 tons.

On 14 January, Seawolf fired her last four torpedoes at two merchant ships in a convoy, damaging one and sinking



Yamatsuru Maru. She continued tracking the convoy while radioing its position to Whale. Whale arrived on 16 January and promptly attacked, damaging one ship and sinking Denmark Maru. The next morning, Whale damaged another before action was broken off.

Seawolf (Commander Albert Marion Bontier) returned to Pearl Harbor on 27 January and sailed for San Francisco, California two days later. After undergoing a major overhaul at Hunters Point, the submarine headed west on 16 May. When she reached Pearl Harbor, she was assigned the task of photographing Peleliu Island in the Palau Islands, in preparation for the forthcoming attack on that stronghold. She carried out this mission despite constant enemy air patrols from 4 June-7 July.

The submarine headed to Majuro for voyage repairs and was rerouted to Darwin. There, she received orders sending her on a special mission to Tawitawi, in the Sulu Archipelago. The submarine approached to within 700 yards (640 m) of the beach, picked up a Captain Young and took him to Brisbane.

Seawolf stood out of Brisbane on 21 September to begin her 15th war patrol under the command of Lieutenant Commander A.M. Bontier. She reached Manus Island on 29 September, refueled, and sailed the same day carrying stores and Army personnel to the east coast of Samar.

Seawolf and Narwhal exchanged radar recognition signals at 0756 on 3 October in the Morotai area. Shortly thereafter, a 7th Fleet task group was attacked by Ro-41. Shelton was torpedoed and sunk, and Richard M. Rowell began to search for the enemy.

Since there were four friendly submarines in the vicinity of this attack, they were directed to give their positions and the other three did, but Seawolf was not heard from. On 4 October, Seawolf again was directed to report her position, and again she failed to do so. One of two planes from Midway sighted a submarine submerging and dropped two bombs on it even though it was in a safety zone for American submarines. The site was marked by dye. Rowell's commanding officer knew he was in a safety lane, but, having failed to get word Seawolf was behind schedule, believed there was no U.S. submarine nearby and chose to attack. Rowell established sonar contact on the submarine, which then sent a series of dashes and dots which Rowell stated bore no resemblance to the existing recognition signals. Believing this an attempt to jam her sonar, Rowell attacked with Hedgehog. The second attack was followed by underwater explosions, and debris rose to the surface.

Post-war examination of Japanese records shows no attack listed that could account for the loss of Seawolf. While it is possible Seawolf was lost to an operational casualty or as a result of an unrecorded enemy attack, it is more likely she was sunk by friendly fire. 62 officers and men as well as 17 Army passengers were lost. She was the thirty-fourth U.S. submarine lost in the Pacific War, the second (after Dorado in the Caribbean) to friendly fire.

On 28 December 1944, Seawolf was declared overdue from patrol and presumed lost. She was stricken from the Naval Vessel Register on 20 January 1945.



## CNO: Women Aboard Attack Subs Next Year

Navy Times, Aug. 22

After years of anticipation, a date for assigning women to attack submarines has been set: next year.

Attack boats represent the next phase of the Navy's gradual integration of the submarine force, which began last year when female officers joined ballistic- and guided-missile subs. Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jon Greenert told sailors recently that this new phase would begin as soon as next year, when female officers are assigned to Virginia-class subs.



"I think next year we're going to bring some officers into the Virginia class," Greenert said Aug. 22 at an all-hands call in New London, Conn.

So far, the fleet's first female submariners have fit well into billets on Ohio-class boomers and guided-missile boats. But with two dozen female officers entering submarines each year, officials are looking for more hulls and more opportunities. That's why they're moving to integrate the Virginia class, the Navy's latest class of attack boats. Recruiters are seeking talented female midshipmen for sub duty, but the number of volunteers has been lower than officials anticipated.

"They're not quite as high as we thought they'd be, frankly, in the officer ranks," said Greenert, who explained the integration effort will continue gradually, hewing to lessons from the earlier integration of ships and aviation squadrons, such as putting female officers onboard first and providing them with female mentors. But he hinted the Navy may soon start looking for female enlisted volunteers, too.



"What about the enlisted?" he asked. "We need chiefs and first class females that would be willing and ready to go into submarines." The CNO did not say when enlisted women may join the sub force, but his comments signaled it likely would be part of a later phase of the integration.

While attracting a lot of press coverage, women remain a very rare presence in the sub force. There were only 24 women assigned to boats as of Aug. 30, counting both female submarine officers and Supply Corps lieutenants serving as their mentors. They serve aboard the blue and gold crews of the ballistic-

missile subs Wyoming and Maine and the guided-missile sub Ohio, as well as the gold crew of the guided-missile sub Georgia.

Five more crews are planned to be integrated in January: Georgia's blue crew, and blue and gold crews on the guided-missile sub Florida and ballistic-missile sub Louisiana. Sub leaders haven't selected which Virginia-class subs will be integrated or planned specifically for when the first female crew members will report aboard them, a Submarine Forces spokeswoman said.

The next wave of 24 female submariners is now in the officer training pipeline, with 18 more waiting to enter after them, said Cmdr. Monica Rousselow.



# Subs Sexy?

Norfolk, VA – Having an unknown contact appear off the stern can be a frightening scenario for many submariners, but it's even worse when that sonar blip is searching for a mate.

The close shadowing of numerous submarines by whales was recently revealed by Admiral William Wysocki, Director of Submarine Services for the Atlantic Fleet.

"We never like to see a contact following us, and for quite a few subs out there, it's been a frightening ordeal," said Wysocki.

One sub that dealt with a strange tail was the USS Baltimore.

"We were traveling submerged approximately 25 miles off the Virginia coast when Chief Robinson confirmed contact with an unidentified object following less than 500 yards behind," said Captain Steven Horowitz. "I took evasive action, but we just couldn't shake him."

In what is considered a remarkable, but non-traditional decision, Captain Horowitz called on Senior Chief James 'Fins' Oslow of SEAL Team 3 to investigate.

The Chief selected three from his SEAL team that happened to be awake, not occupied in the can, or flirting with one of the female Lieutenants, to assist with the mission. The SEALs exited the sub using the number 4 torpedo tube, and waited for the 'shadow' to appear.

"When I saw it, I just about shit my pants," said CT2(SEAL) Jason Bingham. "It was a whale, and he had a fucking erection. He was headed straight for the ass-end of the sub."

Thinking quickly, Bingham decided to strike the whale first.

"I pulled a chemlight out and poked him on the nose as hard as I could, which caused the whale to go flaccid and abort his attack."

When the SEALs reported back to the sub, Captain Horowitz told the Team to cut the shit and tell the damn truth. After realizing they weren't exaggerating, he then reported the incident to Atlantic Fleet.

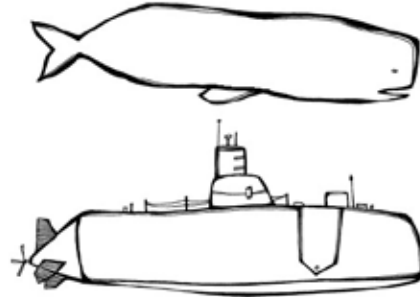
Admiral Wysocki assured him that this wasn't an isolated incident. Tracking similar stories, the Admiral had postulated that the damage, and/or disappearance, of at least four subs in the past year "could be attributed to horny whales."

A committee has been appointed to determine the best method to avoid future whale attacks on submarines. One member recommended towing a chemlight armed SEAL behind every submarine, but was voted down due to the concern of losing the SEAL to shark attacks.

"We don't train these boys to be shark chum," said Admiral Wysocki.

Another suggestion of towing one of the female officers behind the sub as a decoy was tossed out due to concerns of sexual harassment accusations.

While the committee has so far failed to develop a viable plan, they did recommend that Petty Officer Bingham be given some type of award for saving the Baltimore from impending whale rape. This recommendation means another committee has been established to design an appropriate "Cock Block" ribbon.



By HikingArtist.com

# The San Francisco Grounding in the Pacific

## The Final Account of USS San Francisco [SSN 711]

*This is a pretty chilling account of the San Francisco grounding in the Pacific. Adrift 500 Feet under the Sea, A Minute Was An Eternity -*

by Christopher Drew  
APRA HARBOR, Guam -

Blood was everywhere. Sailors lay sprawled across the floor, several of them unconscious, others simply dazed. Even the captain was asking, 'What just happened?' All anyone knew for sure was that the nuclear-powered attack submarine had slammed head-on into something solid and very large, and that it had to get to the surface fast. In the control room, a senior enlisted man shoved the 'chicken switches,' blowing high-pressure air through the ballast tanks to force the vessel upward. Usually, the submarine would respond at once. But as the captain, Cmdr. Kevin G. Mooney, and top officers stared at the depth gauge, the needle refused to budge.

Moments before, they had been slipping quiet and fast through the Pacific. Now, they were stuck, more than 500 feet down. Ten seconds passed. Then 20, 30. 'I thought I was going to die,' Commander Mooney recalled. It would be close to a minute, but an excruciatingly long minute, before the submarine's mangled nose began to rise, before the entire control room exhaled in relief, before the diving officer, Chief Petty Officer Danny R. Hager, began to read out a succession of shallower depths.

"I don't know how long it was," Chief Hager said, "but it seemed like forever." Last week, Navy investigators reported that a series of mistakes at sea and onshore caused the 6,900-ton submarine, the San Francisco, to run into an undersea mountain not on its navigational charts. One crewman was killed, 98 others were injured, and the captain and three other officers were relieved of their duties as a result of the Jan. 8 crash, one of the worst on an American submarine since the 1960's.

But what is becoming clear only now, from the first interviews with Commander Mooney and 15 other officers and enlisted men, as well as a review of Navy reports, is how much worse it nearly was, and how close the San Francisco came to being lost.

The submarine crashed at top speed - 33 knots, or roughly 38 miles an hour - about 360 miles southeast of Guam. The impact punched huge holes in the forward ballast tanks, so the air being blown into them was no match for the ocean pouring in. The throttles shut, and the vessel briefly lost propulsion. As the emergency blow caught hold, mainly in the rear tanks, the sub was just drifting in the deep, its bow pointing down.

Luckily, the thick inner hull protecting the nuclear reactor and the crew's quarters held. But within was pandemonium - bodies pinballing, heads striking steel in the warren of lethally sharp surfaces in impossibly tight spaces. There was so much blood on the instruments and on the control-room floor that the place, Chief Hager said, 'looked like a slaughterhouse.'

Then chaos gave way to improvised heroism and a perilous, and finally futile, effort to rescue the most grievously injured sailor. The merely battered ministered to the badly hurt, turning the mess hall and the officers' wardroom into instant clinics, ripping off shirts to use as tourniquets and creating splints from cleaning brushes. When they realized that the only hope for the dying man - a young machinist's mate named Joseph A. Ashley - was to get to a hospital, sailors cut off railings and fixtures to thread his stretcher through narrow areas. They then rigged pulleys in an effort to hoist him through the sail, at the top of the submarine, and onto a helicopter hovering just above.

To avoid detection, submarines travel silent and largely blind, relying heavily on charts, and their interpreters, to navigate the undersea landscape. The meeting of this submarine and that mountain beneath the Pacific was in many ways a stroke of hauntingly rare bad luck: everyone relied on the one chart, from panoply of them that lacked even a hint of the looming danger. But the submarine's fate was also the result of a confluence of simple shipboard errors.

The Navy has placed the blame on the captain and the crew, and Commander Mooney says, 'I accept full responsibility.' He acknowledges several critical mistakes, including going too fast, taking insufficient depth soundings and failing to cross-check the route with other charts. Yet the fact that those errors happened on a boat with a highly rated commander suggests a more nuanced calculus of responsibility, raising questions about the relatively primitive state of undersea charting and the training and support of submariners.

Petty Officer Ashley's father, Daniel L. Ashley, a Navy veteran, refuses to let the Navy off the hook. Sitting in his home outside Akron, Ohio, one recent morning, with a memorial of flags and photographs on the family organ,

Mr. Ashley said he had forgiven Commander Mooney and the crew. "I know what these men have to live with for the rest of their lives," he said. "I feel the same pain." But if the Navy's systems for supporting submarines had not also broken down, he said, "this would not have happened, and my son would be alive today."

A Normal Saturday as the San Francisco prepared to shove off in early January, spirits were high. Since taking over in December 2003, Commander Mooney had pushed his 136 sailors through four months of repairs and two intelligence missions. The San Francisco, previously known as a troubled boat, was winning praise in the Navy as a "Cinderella story."

Now the submarine was headed for Brisbane, Australia, and its first liberty stop under the 40-year-old captain, a graduate of Duke University and a submarine officer for 19 years. One thing, though, was bothering him, he recalled: the basic routing instructions seemed to be late. So he told his navigators to call the Seventh Fleet in Japan and hurry them along.

The goal of the routings was to ensure that no other Navy ship would cross the submarine's path, and they laid out a wide track to follow. But some officers had come to view these navigational guides as suggesting a measure of safety. And as the San Francisco left here on Friday, Jan. 7, the team plotting the precise route within that track focused on a single set of charts that, Navy officials agree, usually gave the most detailed view of the seabed.

Since submarines generally do not use active sonar, with its telltale pings, a good picture can be critical in avoiding mountain ranges rising from the seabed. Relying on charts, though, has always been somewhat hit or miss. Only 10 percent of the oceans have been charted by Navy survey ships. Many charts only include obstacles spotted by warships, commercial vessels or even 18th-century explorers like Captain Cook. One poorly charted area was south of Guam, where the Navy started basing subs in 2002. So by Saturday morning, when the San Francisco entered the Caroline Islands mountain chain, there had been talk of special precautions among some of the men. But to the plotting team, the winding route down to Australia looked wide open.

To the rest of the crew, it was just a normal Saturday, which meant cleaning the boat. Lunch began at 11 a. m. - hamburgers, French fries, baked beans - and at 11:25 Commander Mooney went to the wardroom, where the officers ate. The crew's work shift changed five minutes later, and when a line formed outside the mess, several men, including Petty Officer Ashley, decided to have a smoke first in the vessel's tail. Sailors said this was typical of Petty Officer Ashley, 24, an unabashed country boy who loved motorcycles, Jeeps and the boat's diesel engine, which he cared for. His nickname was Cooter, after a mechanic on the old television show 'Dukes of Hazzard.' He was also known for his wicked Michael Jackson imitation, which one sailor called 'moon walking in cowboy boots.'

That afternoon, the plan was to slow down for drills, so with everything humming along, Lt. Cmdr. Bruce L. Carlton, the navigation officer driving the submarine, decided to get ahead of schedule by bumping up to full speed and going deeper. A sounding taken at 11:30 a. m. confirmed what was on the charts - the ocean was 6,000 feet deep there - and the submarine began to glide down to 500 feet from 400 feet. At 11:38, a decision was made to go to 525 feet, and a junior officer recommended another sounding. But Commander Carlton did not think that was necessary, the Navy reports indicate, and none was made.

Blood and Chos: Chief Hager, wry and wiry at 39, unbuckled his seat belt and hopped up to jot a note on a card taped to the jet-black control panel. Suddenly - it was just after 11:42 - he felt his grip on a drawer handle tighten as the submarine shuddered. Then 'came the real deal,' he said, a thunderous blast and what felt like a warp-speed gale whipping through the submarine as it froze in its tracks. The force spun his body around - like Spider-man twisting against a wall, he said - and his hand punched through a Plexiglas gauge cover. His seat ripped out of its runners and crushed his leg. Then one of the quartermasters, who had been monitoring the charts 15 feet away, came catapulting into view. He ended up knocked out on the floor, blood pouring from his forehead.

A few feet away, three more men were unconscious. One - the junior officer who had just suggested the extra sounding - was bleeding from his head and leg, and could hardly breathe. Commander Carlton, who was still in charge, had been thrown into a passageway, and blood streamed from the right side of his face as he scrambled back to the command center. In the wardroom, Commander Mooney had been pinned into his seat, while a cook came over his shoulder and crashed into a television screen 10 feet away, cracking it in two places. Within seconds, the captain was rushing up a ladder to the control room, where the effort to blow the submarine to the surface had just begun.

Hundreds of papers that had popped out of binders were streaking dark red on the floor, and the microphones were crackling with injury reports. By 11:44, the submarine had finally broken the surface, with the captain scanning through a periscope. No ships. No wreckage. Nothing. 'I realized at that point that we had survived a collision with the bottom that was just unbelievable,' Commander Mooney said. But, he said, he 'literally had no idea'

what it was doing there. And no time to figure it out: there were also serious injuries in the crew's mess, the engine rooms and the smoking room - the other relatively open areas where men had gone flying. From the bridge atop the sail, Commander Carlton could see that the bow was damaged, raising fears of flooding.

'We were in shock,' Commander Mooney said. But everyone was running on instinct and training. Damage-control parties quickly reported that the inner hull was intact, the torpedoes and cruise missiles unscathed. The captain radioed for help and turned the boat back toward Guam. In the stern, men began bringing the injured forward, toward the wardroom and the mess.

In the smoking room, Petty Officer Ashley had been thrown about 20 feet, fracturing his skull against either metal equipment or a bulkhead doorjamb. Two sailors crouched over him. 'I didn't know what to do,' said one of them, Bryan Barnes, a 22-year-old electrician's mate. 'So I just held his hand and talked to him until doc came back.' When 'doc,' the ship's medic, James H. Akin, arrived, he knew instantly that they had to get Petty Officer Ashley off the boat.

Racing to Save a Life - A submarine at sea is a self-contained world in a steel bubble. One thing it does not have, though, is a doctor; the medic, an enlisted man with basic medical training, handles the run of everyday illness and injury. Now, in a full-out emergency, the medic's first job was to get Petty Officer Ashley immobilized on a stretcher so he could be carried to the crew's mess. There, the chief of the boat, William Cramer, the senior enlisted man, was commanding the cleanup. His men unfurled large rolls of terry cloth to sop up the slippery goo of blood and capsized lunch, and shoved the broken plates and glasses into the galley. In the wardroom, Lt. Craig E. Litty, himself a former medic, quickly set up a triage center, where he helped bandage most of the injured men.

Corpsman Akin, at 6 foot 4 and 280 pounds the largest man onboard, set up his medical supplies on the salad bar in the mess. He stitched up the men with the worst lacerations. And he tried to keep Petty Officer Ashley alive. The medic says he knew he was probably nursing a dying man. Still, Petty Officer Ashley held on. For 21 hours, Corpsman Akin monitored his vital signs, kept his air passages clear, and gave him oxygen and morphine. Sailors took turns holding his hand. At one point, someone brought in a CD player and put on some Hank Williams Jr.

The first rescue ship, the Coast Guard cutter Galveston Island, arrived at 4:30 a. m. on Sunday. But by then, squalls had moved in, and it seemed too dangerous to try to shuttle Petty Officer Ashley over in a small boat. The alternative seemed hardly less daring: using a helicopter to lift the wounded man and his stretcher out of a hatch on the top of the submarine's sail.

By now, a second ship, the Stockham, had arrived. It carried more doctors and two helicopters. Around 9 a. m., as one of the helicopters hovered 10 to 15 feet above the submarine, it dangled a doctor and a corpsman into the submarine to help prepare Petty Officer Ashley for the move. The pilots had to rely on a spotter in back to keep the copter clear of the pitching submarine.

'He was giving drift calls, saying 'Cut left,' 'Come right,' 'You're getting too close,' said one of the pilots, Ricke Harris. Inside the submarine, Chief Cramer ordered a path cleared for the stretcher. Several men unbolted or cut off ladder railings and lockers. By late morning, men were stationed in doorways and stairwells to pass the stretcher along; one even crawled underneath and supported the stretcher on his back through the narrowest spots.

They climbed up one level and under the sail, and then another group took over, heaving on a rope and pulley to lift the stretcher up the 25-foot sail. The first effort failed when Petty Officer Ashley's breathing tube came loose. With his condition deteriorating, a second try made it to the top. That was when the men had an awful realization: the hatch atop the sail did not quite open the full 90 degrees. No matter how much they tried, angling this way and that, the stretcher would not slip through. A surgeon, Chris Cook, was then lowered by cable from the copter. But Petty Officer Ashley's heart stopped, and the men began CPR. Half an hour later, at 1:11 p. m., Dr. Cook pronounced him dead. Still, one of the sailors kept pounding. 'I looked at him and said, 'we're sorry,' Dr. Cook recalled. "There's nothing more we can do."

Hard Lessons - When the San Francisco pulled into Guam on Jan. 10, its bow slinking low in the water, the flags on other submarines were at half-mast, their crews lining the decks in tribute.

Looking at a picture of that moment, Commander Mooney speaks with pride of the way his crew brought the boat home. But an image discovered on the voyage back also remains seared in his mind, he says, one that helped seal his dismissal and spark broader questions about the Navy's navigational training and support.

That image is a small, light-blue circle on a white background. It signifies a potential hazard two to three miles from where the San Francisco crashed - close enough, Commander Mooney says, that if he had known about it, he would have tried to skirt the area or asked for a new routing. Charting experts now believe that hazard was the mountain, and that its location was imprecisely reported in the days before satellites made navigational fixes more



precise.

Commander Mooney said he first heard about the hazard from his boss onshore a few hours after the grounding. It is, in fact, on every chart of the area except for the one that the boat was using - the one that usually provided the most detailed picture of the seabed contours. That revelation has been embarrassing to the Navy and the Pentagon office that prepares the charts. Moreover, investigators have found that the officer who gave the submarine its basic routing also relied only on that one chart.

Under Navy rules, the captain and his crew are solely responsible for the safety of their ship. After all, in wartime, submarines must operate without help from shore. The captain acknowledged that he and his crew should have cross-checked the charts. But some of his officers say it was common to grab what seemed the best chart and run down the center of the basic track, as the San Francisco did. They also said they were not alone in believing that the routings were based on more substantial navigation checks. 'I look at it as just a lot of really bad luck,' said Lt. Cmdr. Rick Boneau, the San Francisco's executive officer.

Commander Boneau, Commander Carlton and an assistant navigator were relieved of their duties, and three enlisted men were reprimanded. Commander Carlton did not respond to requests for comment. But Navy reports have found that the sea charts are not updated frequently enough and that the routings are often delivered late, limiting the time for onboard navigation checks. The accident has also stirred concerns - dating back to the advent of nuclear submarines under the legendary Admiral Hyman G. Rickover - that Navy training places more emphasis on engineering than on skills like navigation.

The approach to keeping the reactor safe is to build in redundant checks and test sailors constantly. But even though inspections had found some navigation deficiencies on the San Francisco in 2004, the reports said, squadron officials in Guam did nothing to make sure the problems had been fixed.

Since the accident, the Navy has briefed hundreds of officers on the lessons to be drawn. Capt. Matt Brown, the spokesman for the Pacific Fleet, said the Navy is also looking at other changes to improve safety. Some of the younger sailors said they had not realized how close they had come to dying until they saw the San Francisco's mutilated bow at the dry dock here.

'Your jaw just kind of dropped open, and you wondered why you were still alive,' said Mr. Barnes, the electrician's mate who held Joseph Ashley's hand right after the collision. As many as 10 sailors have asked not to return to submarine duty.

Commander Mooney is working a desk job until he can retire next year. Last month he visited Petty Officer Ashley's grave in a family plot on a hillside in West Virginia. The captain and the sailor's father said a prayer together as they placed a Navy marker by the grave. They embraced. Then, the captain left one final offering - his command star, buried in the dirt.



**Return To:**

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

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

**Next Meeting**  
**Saturday, October 13, 2012**  
12 noon, (1 a.m. no host bar)  
Dillon's at Arrowhead  
59th Ave just north of Loop 101

