

TORPEDO ALLEY



Vol. 7, No. 5

May 2011

Newsletter of Charleston Base, United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.

USSVI Creed

“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 Government”



Base Meeting:

May 12, 2011 Social hour 1800, General Meeting 1900

Location:

Fleet Reserve Association Branch 269
Low Country Home
99 Wisteria Rd.
Goose Creek, South Carolina. Phone 843-569-2962

Special Officers		Phone Number
Chief of the Boat	Rick Wise	843-875-5559
Public Affairs	Gary Williams	843-873-9161
Veterans Affairs	Jim Morrison	843-832-9716
Chaplain	John Nichols	843-452-3189
Membership	Carl Chinn	843-875-3098
Holland Club	John Lookabill	843-797-2991
Scholarship	Julian Villegas	843-871-6135
Newsletter	Carl Chinn	843-875-3098
Storekeeper	Don Mook	843-245-2005
Webmaster	Nick Nichols	843-452-3189
Historian	George Scharf	843 873-3318

Base Officers		Phone Number
Commander	Paul Viering	843-797-2623
Vice Commander	Carl Chinn	843-875-3098
Secretary	Ed Stank	843- 569-6012
Treasurer	Terry Trump	843-873-9563

Minutes of the April 2011 meeting

Attendance for the April 14, 2011 meeting was 105

Opening Ceremony: Base Commander called the meeting to order. A Quorum was present and the meeting was commenced at 1900. Paul said tonight's meeting is a non-business meeting and will be conducted to induct eligible members into the Holland Club.

Introductions: New people introduced. Early Vincent, Jay Gibson, Thomas West, Rex Wilson Welcome aboard.

Secretary: Secretary asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from last month. A motion was made and seconded. Minutes approved.

Treasurer: No report

Vice Commander: No report

Storekeeper: No report

Chaplain: Nick Nichols presented the Chaplain's report.

- CAPT Bennie Lyle 'Jim' Fletcher III, who was CO of Lewis and Clark, departed on Eternal Patrol on March 11th in Isle of Palms. He was not a member of Charleston Base. A card was sent to the family.

- Chief Petty Officer Christopher Leo Henriksen departed on Eternal Patrol on March 10th. He rode the LAFAYETTE. He was not a member of Charleston Base. A card was sent to the family.
- SKCM Larry Bohannon departed on Eternal Patrol on March 21th. There was a memorial service on March 27th at the Fleet Reserve. He was not a member of Charleston Base. A card was sent to the family.
- Jack Ilgenfritz's grandson, Jason Taylor, was killed in a car accident on March 17th. He was 18 years old. A card was sent to the family.
- Pauline Stank is getting stronger each day since she has been in rehab in Durham. She is strong enough that she and Ed will meet with the transplant staff and surgeon next week to see if she meets the requirements for the new lungs. Once she meets the requirements, they will find out where she is on the list for the transplant. They are very excited about the meetings. Ed sounded very up beat and said to tell everyone down here he appreciates our prayers and cards. They have meant a lot. Their address in Durham: 115 Glade Crest Way, Durham NC27704.
- Marty Sessler had a total knee replacement today, April 14th. He will be in the hospital for a few days and then move to rehab.
- Don Heinle's wife, Barbara, had some tests today and will receive the results next week.
- Rick Collin's wife, Colleen, had surgery on her hand this morning.
- John Hill had surgery.
- Rodger Gibson's wife Sheila has some heart issues.

Several follow-ups were made on those who've had surgery or illnesses in the last couple of months along with the base sending additional cards.

If you know of shipmates or spouses from other bases who are having a difficult time, had surgery, etc. and would like for USSVI Charleston Base to send them a card please send their name and address to the Chaplain via email or phone call.

After Battery Rep: Buddha requested that members interested in the After Battery see him after the meeting. We have about 30 people who come out each Wednesday night for dinner and some cards. Dick Psnak donated a bell to the After Battery which Al Stoll had engraved with "After Battery". The work was done in Maine. More plaques have been donated to the "After Battery" and space is becoming a premium. We need to get a place in case of the unlikely passing of Buddha.

Public Affairs: No report

Scholarship: No report

Veteran's Affairs: No report

Little David: No report

Holland Club: Presentation of Holland Club inductees.

SUBVETS WWII: No report

Historian: No report

Recreation Committee: No report

District Commander: Ocala Florida is hosting the USSVI South East Regional convention from 28 April to 1 May 2011.

Base Commander: No report

Nuclear Historian: No report

Fleet Reserve: No report

Chief of the Boat: No report

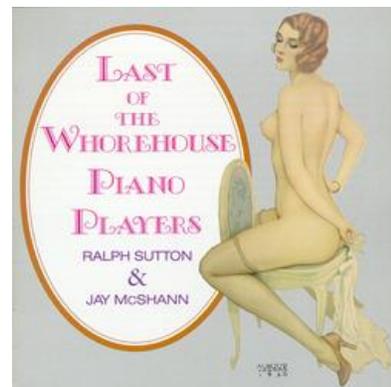
Old Business: None

New Business: None

Good Of The Order: Stacy Power mentioned that Sue Eckels, wife of former member Jim Eckels, is available for tax preparation in case anyone is in need. Chris Hayden is looking to borrow a signal generator. Jim Null, from the Palmetto Base, mentioned that we inducted more members into the Holland Club tonight than Palmetto has in their entire base.

Depth charge drawing winner was P.M. Smith who donated \$90 to the building fund.

Meeting Adjourned: The Base Commander adjourned the meeting.



"Don't tell mom I'm a submariner, she thinks I play piano in a whorehouse."



"It's hard sometimes, but as long as we remember them around the campfire, they will live forever."

May Submarines Lost:

USS Runner	SS 275	May 28, 1943
USS Lagarto	SS 371	May 3, 1945
USS Squalus	SS 192	May 23, 1939
USS Stickleback	SS 415	May 29, 1958

*There is a port of no return, where ships
 May ride at anchor for a little space
 And then, some starless night, the cable slips,
 Leaving an eddy at the mooring place . . .
 Gulls, veer no longer. Sailor, rest your oar.
 No tangled wreckage will be washed ashore.*



May Birthdays!

Bailey, M	Birdwhistell	Caroll	Clarkin
Conrey	Copeland	Fenton	Fuhr
Fuqua	Gallagher, G	Habhegger	Hill
Houston	Kozlowski	Lufkin	McCollem
Mullins	Nichols	O'Meally	Paris
Pickett	Sparks	Steffen	Strickland
Sutton	Taylor	Weaver	Wieda



May 12– Monthly meeting

May 21 – Charleston Base picnic at The After Battery;
 starts at Noon. \$5 each and bring a dish.



Holland Club Induction



The above members were inducted into the Holland Club at our April meeting.

All members inducted:

FTCM(SS)	Alkire	Richard
MMCS(SS)	Birdwhistell	Glen
TMC(SS)	Bonow	David
RMCS(SS)	Britton	Thomas
MMCM(SS)	Campbell	Newell
TMCS(SS)	Emerson	Miguel
MMC(SS)	Feller	Harry
MMCM(SS)	Gallagher	Robert
SD1(SS)	Higgins	James
ET1(SS)	Houston	John
MMCM(SS)	Hutchinson	Clell
ICCS(SS)	Keller	James
TMC(SS)	Koehler	Richard
TMC(SS)	Langley	Robert
MMC(SS)	Larsen	Donald
EMCS(SS)	Lindberg	Thomas
MMCS(SS)	Londergan	Donald
STSC(SS)	Lord	Avery
TM1(SS)	McCollem	Robert
MMCM(SS)	Mills	John
EMC(SS)	Pruitt	William
MM1(SS)	Saari	David
ICC(SS)	Schaffer	Jerome
MMCM(SS)	Semler	Gary
SN(SS)	Silvers	Monty
MMCM(SS)	Stump	Richard
CS1(SS)	Weaver	William
TMC(SS)	Wieda	Thomas
TMCM(SS)	Wilson	Barry
FTCS(SS)	Wilson	Murrell



WWII Sub's Fate Revealed

Area crewmember Elton Brubaker, 17, was killed when USS Flier hit mine.

By Jennifer Edwards, St. Augustine Record, May 2, 2011

Elton Brubaker of Palatka was just 16 when he decided to drop out of high school and join the U.S. Navy during World War II.

His parents had moved to St. Johns County by then but the teenager had been allowed to stay in town to finish high school and continue participating in band, which he loved. But he also wanted to serve his country, sister Charlotte Brubaker Johns recalled during a 2005 ceremony. Brubaker enlisted in the U.S. Navy's submarine service and was assigned to the USS Flier. In 1944 the USS Flier hit a mine and was lost for almost seven decades.

Government secrecy and the watery currents of the South China Sea covered the location of Elton's resting place until a father-and-son dive team located the wreck in 2009 and the Navy confirmed it in 2010. On Sunday the Smithsonian Channel aired a documentary showing the discovery.

"Dive Detectives: Submarine Graveyard" details how the dive team, aided by recordings made by USS Flier survivor Al Jacobsen, found the Flier "In a treacherous stretch of water in the Philippines."

Jacobson passed away before the discovery, but his son helped dive team members locate the sub in 2009. The Navy didn't confirm the find until 2010.

The sub carried 84. All but eight died when the submarine went down. Brubaker, 17, was not one of the survivors. "He always wanted to be in the Navy," Johns said when she talked about the incident in 2005. "Daddy had served in World War I and he understood how he wanted to go fight for his country. Because of his age, Daddy signed the papers so he could enlist. It made it extremely hard on him later."

Johns, who still lives in St. Johns County, declined to be interviewed for this story.

The day the sub went down

The 312-foot long, 1,525-ton USS Flier was only nine months old as it cruised its second patrol Aug. 13, 1944. Its crew was youthful, too -- more than half were under 30; 20 percent were in their teens, said Rebekah Hughes, author of "Surviving the Flier," published by Phoenix Flair Press.

Hughes also works with the Great Lakes Naval Museum and has submitted a proposal for an exhibit about the Flier. The oldest crew member aboard was 40, Hughes said. The youngest was Richard Lambert, 16.

"(Survivors) said there was nothing like that crew for the feeling of inclusiveness, the way they worked together, the way they got along and got things done and ... had fun on R&R," Hughes said.

The day the ship sank, the submarine was passing through the Balabac Strait in the South China Sea, according to the U.S. Navy. They were to intercept a convoy and sink some of the ships.

"If the Philippines looks like a dog howling at Taiwan, then the Balabac Strait is the little toes at the end of the long foreleg," Hughes explained. "It was a known mined strait. In his recollections Jacobsen, one of the survivors, recalled that he was on board around 10 p.m. admiring the scenery when the submarine hit the mine.

There were mountains on three sides, he recalled.

When the ship hit the mine, there was no sound.

"All of a sudden, there was a tremendous gush of air and (the sub) just kind of shoved herself over to one side," Hughes said. "It threw him and another man into the deck guns. Next thing he knew he was under water, trying to pull for the surface. He could feel the propellers churning still, that could shred his body."

Fifteen of the 84 crew members managed to break the ocean's surface, but only eight survived the 17-and-a-half hour swim to unnamed islands to the north.

The men couldn't see any land, horizon-to-horizon, Hughes said, and they had to decide which island to swim toward in order to avoid "a Japanese backyard."

When they reached the unnamed islands about nine miles north, "they were on their own for about five days (until) they ran across Filipino guerillas that had been watching them for a whole day."

The guerillas were an educated group of teachers, college instructors and farmers.

Had the men been Axis soldiers, the group would have killed them, Hughes said. Instead, they helped them -- putting them in touch with American coast watchers who could communicate with the American military.

"They were the only survivors to make it home without a stop in a Japanese POW camp on the way," Hughes said. There are no survivors left other than a crewman who was on medical leave when the ship went down, Jim Alls. A New Zealand soldier smashed Alls' jaw a few days before departure and he was on leave in Freetown. He lives in Independence, Ky., Hughes said.

To watch a trailer:

Go to divedetectives.com

About the sub:

- * USS Flier was a Gato-class boat, "the workhorses of World War II."
- * Electric Boat Company in New London, Conn., built her.
- * Spanned 312 feet
- * Weighed 1,525 tons
- * Sunk four boats on first patrol, an unusually high number that late in the war.
- * Only sunken submarine to have survivors who made it home without capture by the Japanese.

Source: Rebekah Hughes, a contractor with the Great Lakes Naval Museum. Hughes has submitted a proposal for an exhibit about the USS Flier.

For more: Check out www.ussflierproject.com, About the show:

- * "Dive Detectives" is a regular feature on the Smithsonian Channel.

The channel is not offered in the area, but Smithsonian sells episodes of its shows through iTunes.

SECNAV: Women Will Serve On Attack Subs

By Joshua Stewart, Navy Times, April 27, 2011

The Navy's top civilian said that attack submarines are in the future for both enlisted and commissioned women. As the first wave of female officers moves through training to report to ballistic and guided-missile submarines in November, Navy Secretary Ray Mabus said enlisted women should also have the opportunity to serve on submarines. Additionally, both enlisted women and female officers should be allowed to serve onboard attack submarines, not just the guided-missile and ballistic boats open to them today.

The Navy is "doing whatever needs to be done to integrate women into attack submarines as well. That will be a little further down the road. The same thing is true for enlisted, moving forward doing the things we will have to do to integrate them. That effort is well underway and I don't see any insurmountable hurdles to what's happening to women with submarines. I don't think that should be an area that's off-limits to women in the Navy," Mabus said during a breakfast meeting with reporters Wednesday.

He did not mention a timeline or say if there are any studies into allowing women onto all classes of subs.

So far 10 female junior officers have passed through Naval Nuclear Power School and into nuclear prototype training, the second phase of officer nuclear training.

While Mabus said women should be able to hold any job in the Navy, he elaborated on his reluctance to allow women to be SEALs.

"It's my notion that women should have the same opportunities as men in the Navy," Mabus told Navy Times during a March 31 interview. "The only reason I'm being a little hesitant for the SEALs is some of the physical things you've got to go through to be a SEAL."

He detailed a recent trip to Coronado, Calif., where he stopped by a workout room for injured SEALs in training and saw one sailor wearing a weight vest do a series of jumps onto a waist-high platform as well as several upside-down pushups.

"Lord have mercy," Mabus said. "And he was hurt."

The physical demands of the job make him hesitant to open it to women, he said.

"In terms of SEALs themselves, I don't know. . My notion is that the playing field should be exactly the same for men as it is for women. But in terms of SEALs, the playing field isn't even for all men," he said.

He would not comment about whether woman who could do a series of upside-down pushups while wearing a weight vest hypothetically could become a SEAL.

Missing For Decades, World War II Sub's Lost Bell Surfaces

By Kate Wiltrout, The Virginian-Pilot, April 26, 2011

Rhonda Savage was always curious about the brass submarine bell.

Inscribed "U.S.S. Triton," it was the centerpiece of a handmade, glass-topped end table in a relative's home

near Reno, Nev. Visitors weren't supposed to ring it, but sometimes they couldn't help themselves. The shiny artifact beckoned.

Thanks to Savage's curiosity, the 14-inch diameter bell - technically government property, missing for more than four decades - is once again in proper hands.

An Internet search Savage did last month turned up a 2-year-old Virginian-Pilot story about the missing Triton bell and the efforts of former crew members to find it. Within days, Savage, who lives in Bakersfield, Calif., had gotten in touch with Harold Weston in Virginia Beach.

Weston, 79, is a retired master chief petty officer who served as chief of the boat on the second Triton, a nuclear-powered sub that in 1960 became the first submerged vessel to circumnavigate the Earth.

He had been searching for the bell for years. It had special significance because it came from an earlier submarine named Triton that was sunk by the Japanese in the Pacific Ocean in March 1943, with 74 crewmen aboard.

The first Triton didn't have its original bell when it sank. According to lore, the U.S. Navy removed them all after the attack on Pearl Harbor. That lessened the risk of a bell accidentally ringing and giving away the sub's position to enemy ships.

That made the bell a powerful symbol for Weston's Cold War crew. When the nuclear submarine reached the vicinity of the Admiralty Islands, near where the first Triton likely was sunk, the crew fired three water slugs, simulating live torpedoes, in salute. They tolled the original bell, now with the second Triton, to honor the Triton sailors who never came home.

Jeanine Allen, who was 3 years old in 1943 when her father died aboard the Triton, has long wanted to see the bell. She's certain her father, who was a chief torpedoman's mate, touched the bell many times during his service aboard the submarine. She wanted to touch it, too.

Reading about Allen, Savage knew she had to get the bell back to the Navy. She contacted Weston and told him retrieving it might be tricky. Its owner, a former Navy reservist who served aboard a submarine tender in the 1960s, might not be willing to part with it. And she didn't want him to know she was the one who'd revealed the bell's location.

Weston didn't care how the man had come into possession of the bell; he just wanted it back. So he and a retired admiral who'd once served on the Triton drafted a letter to Savage's contact. We know you have the bell, they wrote. It's government property. Please return it so it can be displayed in the Triton barracks at Great Lakes Naval Station in Illinois.

The man agreed to give up the bell. On Saturday, Robert Rawlins, a former Triton commanding officer, drove

from his Northern California home to the outskirts of Reno to retrieve the bell.

He will hold it until next year's Triton reunion, then ensure it's displayed at Great Lakes, where enlisted sailors go through boot camp.

"The opportunity these people will have to actually see the bell for the first time, and to be able to touch a piece of history, is just an amazing thing," Savage said. "You can't really put it into words; there's going to be so much emotion. I'm just glad it's going to be going home, and it's going to be in the right hands."

Weston couldn't be happier. He hopes Savage will attend next year's reunion as an honored guest. And he can't wait to watch Allen finally rest her fingers on the same cold brass that her father touched decades ago.

"My efforts were for her," Weston said.

Silent Service Turns 111

By Sam Fellman, Navy Times, April 21, 2011

It was on April 11, 111 years ago, that the Navy purchased its first fully submersible vessel, Holland VI, from inventor John Holland. The 64-ton sub cost \$150,000 and was christened the SS-1 Holland. Powered by a gasoline engine, it could make roughly 2 knots submerged, had a crew of six and carried torpedoes, according to the book *Submarine: The Ultimate Naval Weapon – Its Past, Present and Future*.

One hundred and eleven years later, subs are still integral to national defense. Ballistic subs bear more than half of the nation's nuclear weapons, keeping potential adversaries at bay. And attack submarines serve in a variety of missions, including shielding carrier battle groups from their spookiest threat: diesel boats.

Meanwhile, sub ops are high. As of Thursday, two-thirds of attack subs were away from the pier and nearly half were on deployment. In operations against the Gadhafi regime, two attack subs and one guided-missile sub fired the lion's share of the cruise missiles. That, too, has a historical precedent.

During World War II, the Barb bombarded Japanese coastal cities with rockets in the first sub-launched strike mission ashore.

Navy Subs To Get Tactical Updates Through Deep Siren

By Henry Kenyon, Defense Systems, April 13, 2011

The Navy has successfully tested an underwater communications system that allows submarines to communicate at speed and depth.

The Deep Siren acoustic communications system permits submarines to relay and share information while under water in a variety of operational environments.

This was recently demonstrated during the Navy's ICEX 2011 exercise, which took place north of the Arctic

Circle, officials of Raytheon, which developed the system, said April 13.

Deep Siren is intended to fill a gap in the Navy's underwater communications capabilities — the ability to receive tactical information while submerged. The system, which has been in development for some time, operates like a texting service to provide submarines with data in a short message format that is sent and received by software-defined acoustic modems located in disposable buoys launched by the submarine.

Raytheon officials noted that the system is a mature technology that has been successfully tested in a wide variety of oceanographic conditions. Deep Siren is part of a broader Navy effort to provide an underwater network for its submarine fleet.

For ICEX, Deep Siren demonstrated that it can communicate with submarines operating under sea ice.

The system was used to help participating submarines meet at a base camp located on the ice sheet 150 nautical miles north of Prudhoe Bay, Alaska. Both submarines were directed to the location via Deep Siren transmissions from the camp.

The system was also used to help evacuate a seaman aboard the submarine USS New Hampshire when he became ill with appendicitis. Deep Siren was used to communicate the emergency and to help report the location of an area of sea ice thin enough to allow the vessel to surface.

Deep Siren has been successfully tested by the British Royal Navy in the Mediterranean, and the system is scheduled to undergo sea trials with the German and French navies later this year. The Canadian navy also is planning its own sea tests. Company officials said that another version of Deep Siren designed for use by U.S. Navy special operations forces has already undergone successful initial tests.

EB: Submarines Can Be "Stretched" To Boost Firepower

By Jennifer McDermott, The Day, April 13, 2011

Electric Boat says it can add more missile tubes to Virginia-class submarines without compromising speed or stealth.

EB has been working on a concept for a "stretch Virginia" to boost firepower. The task was to figure out whether the subs could be lengthened by about 90 feet to accommodate triple the number of Tomahawk missiles they now carry, and to launch the weapons of the future, including unmanned undersea vehicles.

Preliminary estimates say the modification could cost up to \$500 million per ship, adding roughly 20 percent to the cost of an attack submarine.

Two years ago the Navy asked EB to work on the project, which is not an official Navy program at this point.

After completing the initial engineering work the company found that it can be done, according to John Holmänder, the vice president who manages the Virginia-class program. Company officials are discussing the concept at the Navy League's three-day Sea-Air-Space Exposition that began Monday in Maryland.

U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney, D-2nd District, plans to advocate for research and design money for the Navy in the fiscal 2012 budget, some of which could be used to further develop the concept. But fully funding a new program would be an uphill battle, given the federal government's fiscal woes.

The Navy's Submarine Force will lose about 60 percent of its undersea firepower in the late 2020s with the retirement of its four guided-missile subs, capable of carrying up to 154 Tomahawk missiles. This is happening at the same time that the number of attack submarines in the fleet is dropping because of the retiring of the aging members of the Los Angeles-class subs.

The first "stretch" Virginia could be the sub that EB starts building in 2019, which would be commissioned close to the time that the first guided-missile sub retires. On the most recent Virginia-class subs, two large-diameter missile tubes located forward of the sail can launch six Tomahawk cruise missiles each. The subs also carry torpedoes.

Extending the submarine to 471 feet would make room for a module near the middle with four additional tubes capable of launching seven missiles each. That would be a 230 percent jump in the number of Tomahawks that can be launched quickly, from 12 to 40.

These stretched subs would still fit in the docks at EB, which at one time held Ohio-class submarines 560 feet long.

The four new missile tubes would be more than 7 feet in diameter.

"This opens the door to many, many other game-changing applications," Rear Adm. Richard P. Breckenridge, deputy director of the Submarine Warfare Division, said in an interview.

The stretch Virginia ranks third in the Submarine Force's priorities, Breckenridge said. Topping the list is the program to replace the current fleet of Ohio-class, or Trident, submarines, followed by finding ways to mitigate the dip in the number of attack submarines as the aging subs of the Los Angeles class retire.

If the Navy had a more robust budget, it would pay for the capability "without hesitation," he said. The Navy is looking to the Defense Department to see if funds could be available to proceed with the stretch Virginia concept, Breckenridge said.

Peter W. Singer, director of the 21st Century Defense Initiative and a senior fellow in foreign policy at the Brookings Institution, said the stretch Virginia seeks to

answer a key problem that the Navy faces, the crunch in the number of submarines overall and the limits in the number of missiles they can deploy. Both problems look to be worsening in the future, he added.

"The Navy is going to face a series of tough decisions budgetwise. But all things being equal, it's a program we have to give serious consideration towards," Singer said Tuesday.

The USS Florida was one of the three U.S. submarines that launched Tomahawk missiles into Libya last month to support a no-fly zone. One of the fleet's four guided-missile submarines, the Florida launched a majority of its Tomahawk missiles, Breckenridge said. Typically guided-missile submarines deploy with 105 missiles, he added.

"The Navy would've needed eight other attack subs in theater to do what that one ship, Florida, did," he said. While the economy and the budget "will not tolerate" building a new class of guided-missile submarines, Breckenridge said the stretch Virginia solution offers a more affordable way for the Navy to get a "strategically important capability." It gives the Navy flexibility to distribute more missiles on submarines in more locations, rather than concentrating them on the guided-missile submarines, he added.

Courtney said the fact that Congress still plans to pay for two Virginia-class submarines this year instead of one, despite immense pressure for spending cuts, bodes well for the future of the stretch Virginia concept.

"If you're going to make that investment, you obviously want to concentrate the return to the greatest extent possible," he said Tuesday. "And stretching the missile capacity, I think, makes sense."

Admiral Osborne Scholarship Fund

How about helping out the scholarship fund? We are offering a Charleston Base Challenge Coin for sale. ALL proceeds go into the scholarship fund. Coins only cost \$7 each. Available for an additional \$1 is a protective plastic capsule. Buy several for great gifts! To get your coin(s) see Julian Villegas or Carl Chinn. Make sure you have one for "when you get challenged"!



Navy Defends Plans For Just 16 Missile Tubes On Next Boomer

By Emelie Rutherford, Defense Daily, April 7, 2011

A top Navy official stood by the service's decision to outfit the next-generation ballistic-missile submarine with 16 missile tubes, amid reports that US. Strategic Command (STRATCOM) advocated for 20 tubes. Senate Armed Services Strategic Forces subcommittee Ranking Member Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.) questioned Navy Strategic Systems Programs (SSP) Director Rear Adm. Terry Benedict yesterday about news accounts that the sea service and STRATCOM clashed on the missile-carrying capability of the future SSBN(X) submarine. Benedict testified at a budget hearing that SSP provided the technical input that led to the decision to have 16 instead of 20 tubes for Trident D-5 ballistic missiles on the SSBN(X). Congress is keeping a close eye on the nascent program, which is slated to reach initial development in 2019, as senior Pentagon officials have warned could overwhelm the Navy's shipbuilding budget.

Benedict said SSP supported analyses of the Navy, STRATCOM, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense leading up the SSBN(X) program's recent entry into the Milestone A phase. The Pentagon's Defense Acquisition Board permitted SSBN(X) to enter into this technology development phase on Jan. 10.

In addition to SSP's technical input regarding the SSBN(X) missile tubes, Benedict said, "other factors were considered" when determining the number of tubes, and "cost was one of them."

Still, he said he shares a viewpoint with Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead, and STRATCOM Commander Air Force Gen. Robert Kehler: "Given the threats that we see today, given the mission that we see today, given the upload capability of the D-5, and given the environment as they saw today, all three of those leaders were comfortable with the decision to proceed forward with 16 tubes," Benedict said.

SSP, he said, examined "the capability of the (D-5) missile itself" and its range.

"Based on what we understand, the capability of the D-5, today,...as the director of SSP, I am comfortable with that decision."

Meanwhile on Capitol Hill, House Republicans and Senate Democrats continued to spar yesterday over the size of the federal budget for fiscal year 2011, which began last Oct. 1. Temporary government funding--within a continuing resolution (CR) with mainly FY '10 funding levels--is set to expire tomorrow at midnight. The House Rules Committee was slated to meet last night, after press time, to set the parameters of House floor debate for a new one-week CR that includes a complete FY '11 defense appropriations bill. However,

President Barack Obama and some congressional Democrats have balked at that proposal. The White House has insisted lawmakers agree to a full FY '11 budget for all of the agencies, not just the Pentagon.

DFAS myPay System Update 09

The online pay account management system operated by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service for all U.S. military personnel and many federal civilian employees, myPay, will launch enhancements Saturday, 30 APR. The customer suggested enhancements are designed to make the site easier and more convenient. The new upgrade will reduce the number of steps required to login to myPay and make the virtual keyboard, an unusual security feature designed to protect usernames and passwords, optional. myPay will be unavailable from 7 a.m. to noon 30 APR as the upgrades are implemented. Users should plan on accessing their Leave and Earning Statements prior to the upgrade period.

Tricare User Fees Update 65

The National Association of Uniformed Services (NAUS) is not comfortable with the direction we are headed under the recommendations submitted by our Pentagon leadership and now being strongly recommended by several military associations. It is not only the Pentagon that is headed toward higher TRICARE fees. As NAUS has previously testified (March 16) before a Congressional committee, the Pentagon plan to increase TRICARE Prime fees 13%, something it calls—a modest increase on working age retirees, has successfully divided the military/veteran community. And, several associations have made public statements in that regard. As an example of the split in the military community, take a look at the 13 APR statements submitted by several military organizations before the Senate Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee, chaired by Virginia Senator Jim Webb:

- The National Military Family Association (NMFA) statement said: —Our Association approves of DoD's modest increase to TRICARE Prime enrollment fees for working age retirees. The Association for the United States Navy (AUSN) statement said: —AUSN membership believes the President's FY 2012 proposed enrollment fee increase can be accepted as a one time increase of 13 percent. The Reserve Officers Association (ROA) and Reserve Enlisted Association (REA) written statement said: —ROA and REA agree that the proposed \$30 increase for individuals and \$60 for families is a modest proposal, and can accept this as a first step. The Military Officers Association (MOAA) called the new proposal (for a 13 percent increase in TRICARE fees) acceptable as long as Congress

approves a (non-binding) Sense of Congress statement that recognizes —the bulk of what military people pay for their healthcare isn't paid in cash, but is paid upfront through decades of service and sacrifice. In regard to the Pentagon plan to raise TRICARE fees, Senator Webb (D-VA), chairman of the Personnel Subcommittee, former SecNav, and Vietnam combat veteran, who is not running for another term, said 13 APR, —I think most of you know that I start from the presumption that lifetime health care for career military personnel is part of a moral contract between our government and those who step forward to serve... In my view they have earned this benefit through their years of service, and it would be wrong to change that benefit after they've held up their end of a moral contract. I'll keep an open mind about discussion on this and other initiatives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our military healthcare benefits. NAUS also opposes the Pentagon plan and remains encouraged with Chairman Webb's current position to —hold the line. In a recent TRICARE Cost Survey, NAUS members responded with appeals to hold the line on TRICARE fees for retirees and active duty families. More than half (62%) of their members said they were not willing to pay even a —modest TRICARE cost increase, though 25% said they might be willing to pay more. A vast majority of members (84%) agreed that TRICARE is an earned benefit and no fee or cost increases should be expected from those who completed a career in uniform. And practically all members (93%) said keeping costs as they are is a way for the government to honor its promises of lifetime health care, particularly when the country is at War.

Tricare User Fees Update 66

In a 27 APR briefing by Department of Defense official George Taylor, Jr., The American Legion learned the agency is recommending a TRICARE premium increase tied to the National Healthcare Expenditure (NHE) Index. Taylor, DoD's acting principal deputy assistant secretary for health affairs, said the decision was made to use the NHE Index because it was transparent, easy to understand and "fair." DoD plans to recommend that Congress enact a law establishing a permanent rate of increase for TRICARE Prime tied to NHE increases. According to Taylor, the NHE Index was 3.1 percent in 2009; however, over the past quarter-century, the average annual increase has been 6.4 percent. "This DoD plan is unacceptable. Many of our military retirees live on fixed incomes and their COLA (cost-of-living allowance) just doesn't keep up with the National Health Expenditure Index," said Jimmie L. Foster, national commander of The American Legion. While their pay is adjusted for inflation, military retirees have received no COLA increase since 2008. Foster said the federal budget crisis demands sacrifices from everyone and "we

all must be willing to be part of the solution. But using the NHE Index is not an acceptable solution."The American Legion wants any TRICARE fee increase tied to the COLA (cost-of-living allowance) for military retirees. That way, if the government provides no cost-of-living increase, then at least our veterans won't have to pay more for their health insurance. In fact, we have a pending resolution that calls on Congress to pass a bill to that effect," Foster said. The American Legion's National Executive Committee will vote on the resolution next week during its spring meetings in Indianapolis. Currently, annual TRICARE Prime fees are \$230 for individuals and \$460 for families. DoD has recommended a fiscal 2012 increase of \$5 per month for individuals and \$10 per month for military families. The plan to tie future increases to the NHE Index would begin in fiscal 2013. Barry Searle, director of the Legion's National Security/Foreign Relations Division, said the average COLA increase for retirees is 2.8% over the past 25 years. "That's about four percent less than the rise in national health expenditures for the same time period. So that means more out-of-pocket expenses for veterans and their families.

The Ten Most Dangerous Things On A Submarine

10. An A-ganger that can actually read
9. An Engineman with anything electrical
8. The 3" launcher and anything that goes in it
7. The COB (nuff said)
6. Any time a LT says "I was just thinking..."
5. An Ensign who says "Based on my experience..."
4. Any of the unenlightened group known as non-quals
3. A Sonarman who says "trust me, it's biologics"
2. A skinny cook
1. Anybody saying "Hey, watch this s*** !"

The Navy

Before you get all up in my face 'bout what I'm 'bout to ramble on about, lemme first say that I know the human memory tends to heavily discriminate the stuff it stores, cataloguing things the way it wants to and reserving special places for certain select events, sounds, sights, smells, and scenes. And not only does it selectively edit things in and out, but it tends to embellish events with its individualized set of filters, ethics, morals, priorities, and tastes, magnifying some episodes and minimizing others. O.K. That said, I recently came across something that triggered memories of my early experiences in the Navy. 'Smatterafact, lotsa things do that as I get older. My holistic retrospect on my 24 years in the USN is quite

positive, and I often willingly go back to relive what were my most exciting and satisfying times . . . all the way from a raw unranked boot in San Diego to the guy responsible for maintenance and repair of elox comm & crypto equipment for CincPac, SubPac, CinCPacFlt, Com7thFlt, and several other high-powered commands in Hawaii.

Hair all shaved off. Personal effects confiscated.

Clothes that didn't fit. Strangers yelling stuff at me I didn't fully understand. Food that tasted like stewed dirt. Beds that spoke of the hundreds who'd slept in 'em before. Marching in formation with guys wearing exactly the same clothes I had to wear, carrying an out-of-date rifle with which I had to master and demonstrate skills useful in no situation my fertile imagination could conceive.

My entire personality dragged out, ridiculed, abused, and tossed on a scrap heap only to be replaced by one that knee-jerked instantly to commands and single-mindedly carried out lawful orders, even though no one had ever explained to me what exactly an unlawful order might have been. No longer was I a college boy pursuing liberal arts and intellectual growth but a cog in a 72-man machine dedicating every single waking moment to causing no demerits to the company during inspections, drills, skill training, or parades.

Home was a narrow cot in an open-bay barracks featuring gang showers and rows of sinks, urinals, and commodes with no provisions for individuality, much less privacy. Lights out happened when the Company Commander decided we'd absorbed enough humiliation for that day, that our lockers were properly stowed, that our shoes were properly shined, our barrack was properly cleaned, and that we clearly understood that we were still useless raw meat that some unfortunate Chief Petty Officer would one day be burdened with molding into halfway decent sailors.

Reveille was 0500, even before the seagulls which swooped down to pick up the lungers off the grinder were up yet. Formation was 20 minutes later, after shaving and dressing and fixing bunks and being reminded that the coming night would indeed be damned short if we screwed up ANYthing that day.

Breakfast was hard-boiled eggs and beans and soggy toast one day, chipped-something-or-other on soggy toast the next, greasy fried mystery stuff with soggy toast the next, hamburger with tomato sauce on soggy toast the next, and all served with something vaguely white called "reconstituted milk" and a dark, vile, burnt-smelling but otherwise tasteless fluid some would-be comedian labeled "Coffee." One good thing, though . . . you could have as much as you could eat in the 15 minutes you were allowed inside for breakfast. Lunch and supper were always filling and nutritious, even if often unpalatable, indefinable, and unrecognizable.

It was cold all morning out marching around toward no place in particular, and hot in the barracks at night when the giant inventory of our individual and collective miscreancies was recited to us by members of our own group temporarily endowed with positional authority over us.

And I loved it. I'd go back and do it again if they'd let me and I thought my digestive system could survive it. Yes, I loved it, yet I counted the days, the hours, the minutes that I had left to endure in that young-adult Boy Scout camp before I could go see the real Navy and have some fun . . . AND get paid.

Once actually out IN the real Navy, I was astonished at the importance, the almost religious reverence, that people in khakis showered upon two things: control over the free time of non-rated personnel, and rust. To me the sole purpose of Chief Petty Officers was to ensure that anybody in pay grades E-1, E-2, and E-3 get dirty as soon as possible after morning quarters and NEVER have an opportunity to go ashore and act like sailors (i.e., drink beer and bring great discredit upon their beloved United States Navy).

My first assignment after boot camp was on a tanker whose duty was to fuel ships anchored beyond the breakwater, deliver AvGas and MoGas to detachments on islands off the California Coast (San Clemente, Santa Catalina, and others), and defuel ships going into the yards for overhauls or extensive refits.

When not involved in the specific act of transferring fuel in one direction or another, my primary value was in ferreting out and annihilating pockets of rust everywhere on the ship except in the engineering spaces, where my red-striped non-rated peers busied themselves at the same thing, except that their enemy was oil, grease, steam, and water leaks.

Six months later, now a fully-fledged sailor in all respects with three white stripes on my left arm, I got orders to Electronics Technician School at Treasure Island (San Francisco), where my primary duty was to listen to fatally boring lectures on basic electricity and make absolutely certain that my shoes were spitshined at all times.

A giant conspiracy existed amongst the staff, primarily the CPOs, at the school command to do everything in their power to keep those of us who had actually been to sea from contaminating the ones who'd come to school straight from recruit training. The strategy consisted mainly of ensuring that we fail enough quizzes and tests to require our spending all our evenings at night study, thereby keeping us from going into town or to the club to fill our bellies with beer and our eyes with the silicone boobies of Broadway.

Probably what amazed me even more than the fanatical interest that Schools Command CPOs had in ascertaining that everyone's shoes reflected light better than polished onyx was the number of people who

couldn't take the pressure of boot camp or service schools and went to extreme lengths, such as bed wetting, to get out of the Navy and go back home to Mama.

Other than its unnatural interest in shoe shines and haircuts, tho, the Navy's plan was beginning to make sense to me. First you got stripped down nekkid, both inside and out, all your strengths were identified and your weaknesses exposed, you were shown how to do a job, and then you were sent out into the field to see if you could hack it. In front of you at all times were both good examples and bad examples: you saw the carrot side reflected in the gold hashmarks on Chiefs who'd learned how to work within the system and you saw the stick side in the red ones on career E-5s who either couldn't cut it or didn't know how not to get caught. Everybody smoked. Everybody drank beer. Everybody had a disgustingly nasty coffee cup. Everybody cussed, except when the chaplain or some officer's wife was around. You did your job, and if you were good at it, you got pay increases through promotions. You pissed people off and didn't get the message, you stayed in the lower pay grades and got really good at handling brooms, trash cans, and scrub brushes.

The Navy I joined had the old-fashioned Chiefs, those keepers of tradition, guardians of ancient lore, solvers of problems . . . those grouchy, irascible, sarcastic, but indispensable guys who'd been around longer than anybody else on the ship, except maybe the Captain. They knew where everything was, how everything worked, what everything was for, and who was responsible for what.

Becoming a CPO was really a big deal in that Navy, involving a time-honored festival of near-orgiastic silliness designed to close out the years of irresponsible ignorance with one last naked dance through the fires of humiliation and excoriation to emerge reborn as full-grown lion guarding the gates of the repository of all useful knowledge.

Amongst the Chief's primary duties were making sailors out of farm kids and smartalecs and goldbricks and Mama's boys, showing them the skills and qualities required for them to fill his shoes when the time came for him to retire his coffee cup. The Chief nominally reported to a young butterbar whom he had the awesome challenge of transforming into a leader of those other young men he was making sailors of.

Chief reported to the Ensign, but he delivered the real status to the Ensign's boss, usually a seasoned Lieutenant or Lieutenant Commander.

Chief generally had a special relationship with both the XO and CO, both of whom sought his advice and assistance in all sorts of problems and situations. His niche and his positional authority were well established and completely understood by every member of the crew. Any white hat entering the Goat Locker had better

have his hat in his hand and a damned good reason, and Heaven help him if he forgot to knock first.

Today . . . I'm not so sure I'd make it. Chief no longer has that special relationship with CO and XO, and he rarely does business directly with his department head. As soon as he sheds his dungarees and shifts into khakis, he enters a confusing political arena of Senior Chiefs, Master Chiefs, Warrant Officers, and LDOs all doing what the Chief used to do. He's simply gone from technician to supervisor, and his initiation has become as watered down as his authority.

In the Navy of the 50s and 60s, traditions aboard ship were honored, cherished, and observed. Various initiations occurred from time to time, such as making Chief or crossing the equator, during which rookies or newbies were ritually cleansed, humiliated, and physically abused to degrees generally powers of 10 more severe than anything the Gitmo terrorists ever had to endure from their guards.

Such episodes served the purpose of reminding every member of the crew that new experiences, new threats, new life-altering events could bring even the proudest and strongest to his knees. And when the purging was over, the initiates were welcomed as brothers, tougher than before because of what they'd learned they could withstand if necessary.

But it was a good Navy, a Navy that won wars, intimidated dictators, brought relief to victims in faraway lands, had fun, and proudly carried the flag. And I loved it. But I'm not entirely sure that what we have today is the natural child of that generation.

In 1960 if you got drunk on liberty, your shipmates got you back to your rack and woke you up in time for you to make morning quarters. If you found yourself in jail, the Chief or your DivOff would bail you out and work with the local cops to fix whatever you broke, or stole, or lost, or insulted, or forgot to pay for.

Today you get drunk and you wind up in a rehab facility with entries in your service jacket that'll haunt you for years.

Same thing for behavior on the ship. In 1960, you mouth off to the Chief or get caught goldbricking one too many times and you got a blanket party, or extra duty, or both until you got your act together. You also didn't see much of the quarterdeck or the brow, and you could forget that recommendation to take the next rating exam.

Today you act like a jerk and you wind up in a seminar, or a counseling center, or a psych ward and they load you up with a ton of paper that follows you until you abandon ship and go to work for IBM or AT&T or the local sanitation service.

In 1960 you came out with four-letter words and some heat in your voice toward what you saw as petty rules or regs or some would-be politician, and people either

agreed with you or stayed away from you 'til you calmed down.

Today you say "Hell" or "Damn" and you'd better be talking about either the Revelation or furry little aquatic animals with big teeth and flat tails.

In 1960, when they were in schools or on shore duty, sailors lived in barracks and ate in chow halls.

Students in today's Navy or sailors on shore duty live in hotels like the dormitories rich college kids used to have in the 60s. They're called "Unaccompanied Enlisted Personnel Housing Facilities" and look like Ramada Inns. And sailors today eat in "Dining Facilities" like debutantes, and there aren't any grouchy old Navy cooks in the back stirring the pots or grumbling mess cooks scrubbing pans and swabbing decks.

In 1960, sailors leaving the ship or station on liberty wore the uniform of the day, either Dress Blues or Whites. Officers and senior enlisted were often privileged to wear civilian clothes ashore, but not always.

Today's sailors wear cammies most of the time, and it's hard to find a sailor in dress uniform any more.

In 1960, the Navy Exchange was there to provide low-cost uniform and toiletry items for sailors and their families. Selections were limited, but quality was good and savings were considerable on things such as booze, cigarettes, candy, and trinkets.

Today the typical Navy Exchange is a poorly managed, badly stocked, miserably staffed business failure that sees more merchandise go out the back door in a lunch bag than out the front with a sales receipt on it.

You want selection and a good price, go to Wal-Mart. Commissaries aren't much better except for meat and cosmetics.

In 1960 many officers had at least some experience in enlisted ranks or engines or management and were patriotic military men who commanded respect by understanding the jobs their personnel did and staying out of their way while they did them, then sending them on liberty when they got the job done.

Many of today's officers are politicians who are afraid to say what's actually on their minds for fear of offending someone's delicate racial, ethnic, cultural, or religious sensitivities. They're generally much better at leaping to premature cover-my-six conclusions than making well-researched but tough decisions.

In 1960 sailors went to night clubs and titty bars and kept pin-up pictures of girlfriends or movie stars in their lockers.

Today the girls go to sea with the guys and hope they bought the right brand of condom. Any sailor looking at a picture of a girl today is doing it either on his blackberry via e-mail or on a porn site with his laptop.

In 1960 you got medals for doing something extraordinary, such as saving lives or preventing disasters or killing and capturing enemies in battle.

Today many sailors get medals for not being late for work for more than 6 months at a stretch and never coming up positive on a random drug test.

In 1960 many sailors were involved in collecting human and signals intelligence and analyzing it.

Today the MAAs collect urine and civilian contractor labs analyze it.

In 1960 we had clear-cut rules of engagement and unambiguous descriptive names for our enemies. The basic rule of engagement was to wipe out the enemy by whatever means available, and we called them "Red Bastards" or "Commie Sonsabitches" or words our grandmothers wouldn't like to know we used.

Today we call people who want to destroy us, cut our heads off, enslave our women, end our way of life, "Aggressors" or "Combatants" or "Opposing Forces" or "Islamic Warriors" to avoid offending them. Our sailors are no longer allowed to kick ass and take names, only to Mirandize and make comfortable

In 1960, victory meant that the enemy was either completely dead or no longer had the ability to resist, that all his machines and networks were captured or out of commission, that he had surrendered or been locked up, that the fight was over and he accepted defeat.

Today we declare victory when the opposing forces call time out, insist that it was all a big mistake, and that they'll stop resisting if we rebuild their cities, their refineries, their factories, their infrastructure.

The Navy I joined was easy to understand. It was organized and straightforward. The hard workers got the bennies and the shirkers got the brooms, and everybody in between was anonymous and safe so long as his shoes stayed shined and his hair never touched his ears or his collar. Chiefs ran the place and officers did the paperwork until required to put on their zebra shirts and referee bouts between CPOs engaged in pissing contests. Anything a sailor needed to know, the Navy taught him, from tying knots to operating fire-control computers on 16-inch guns. A sailor never had to worry about what he was going to wear; that decision was made for him and published in the Plan of the Day, which was read every morning at quarters, usually by the Chief, the source of continuity, stability, and purpose for everyone in the division.

Today a kid can't even get in the Navy unless he finished high school and has a clean record with law enforcement. He's expected to be keyboard literate from day 1, and he speaks a completely different language from what his Korean- or VietNam-War grandfather spoke, no matter if that was English or what. He doesn't play baseball, or football, or hockey; he plays golf, and tennis . . . more often on a Wii than on a course or court. The modern Navy doesn't keep people around to dump trashcans and scrub galleys and clean heads; that's done by civilian contractors.. And the majority of CPOs

today are expected to either HAVE a degree of some kind or be working toward getting one soon.

Today's successful Navy non-com is a paper-chasing button pusher, not a sweat-stained commie killer.

Today's sailor is in touch with his "significant others" by e-mail or cell fone almost anywhere he's sent. The idea of a 6-month deployment to Southeast Asia with no contact other than snail mail seems cruel and unusual torture to him.

No, it's doubtful I could succeed in today's Navy as I did in yesterday's. I prefer my triggers to be on pistols and rifles, not on joysticks controlling surveillance drones and other bots. My policy as a division officer was never to tell a tech to do something that I couldn't do myself, much less that I didn't understand. Today I'd have to learn a completely new vernacular and become familiar with a strange culture before even TALKing to my troops.

And though it dates me and cements me into a mindset that's fallen out of fashion, I think I liked the Navy that I joined better than the one we have today. Yes, of course the capabilities we have now are wider, more sophisticated, more potentially effective. But they're more fragile, too, and techs can't even FIND the discreet components in a printed circuit board any more, much less actually isolate a bad one and replace it.

I've let technology pass me by, willingly and completely. My skill set is anchored in tubes and resistors and 18-gauge wire and cathode-ray tubes and hand-held multi-meters and bench-mounted o-scopes that weighed 120 lbs. But still, I LIKE those old Chiefs with the pot bellies and the filthy coffee cups and the scarred knuckles and the can-do attitude backed up by years of hands-on experience, both on the job and in the bars all over the world.

I LIKED guys like Harry Truman who weren't afraid to make hard choices and fire egomaniacs and take personal responsibility for their own decisions. It was GOOD to see people standing on a beach or a pier waving when the ship pulled in, knowing there'd be dancing and singing and fistfighting and dangerous liaisons, not snipers with Russian-made rifles and lunatics planting IEDs along the streets.

Yes, we lived with the omnipresent fear of instant nuclear annihilation, mutually assured destruction, uncertainty about tomorrow, and all that.

But it seemed that the government was on our side, that our country did good things throughout the world, that the US was the best place to live on the planet and our presidents didn't feel they had to apologize for a goddam thing to anygoddambody.

It's not so much that I want a do-over; I just want teachers, and senators, and taxi-drivers, and clerks, and college professors, and congressmen, and judges, and doctors, and kids growing up to see my country the way we all saw it in 1960 . . . as a strong, charitable, fun-

loving, loyal, don't-piss-me-off place with no patience for petty tyrants and loonies.

I wonder what my British counterpart might feel about the direction HIS country's taken in the last 60 years or so. Probably much the same as what the native-born Roman Legionnaire of the 4th century felt when he saw what had become of his beloved SPQR.

SEAL Team SIX - The Secret Team That Killed bin Laden

By Marc Ambinder

May 2, 2011 | 9:39 a.m. Updated: May 2, 2011 | 10:40 a.m.

From Ghazi Air Base in Pakistan, the modified MH-60 helicopters made their way to the garrison suburb of Abbottabad, about 30 miles from the center of Islamabad. Aboard were Navy SEALs, flown across the border from Afghanistan, along with tactical signals, intelligence collectors, and navigators using highly classified hyperspectral imagers.

After bursts of fire over 40 minutes, 22 people were killed or captured. One of the dead was Osama bin Laden, done in by a double tap -- boom, boom -- to the left side of his face. His body was aboard the choppers that made the trip back. One had experienced mechanical failure and was destroyed by U.S. forces, military and White House officials tell National Journal.

Were it not for this high-value target, it might have been a routine mission for the specially trained and highly mythologized SEAL Team Six, officially called the Naval Special Warfare Development Group, but known even to the locals at their home base Dam Neck in Virginia as just DevGru.

This HVT was special, and the raids required practice, so they replicated the one-acre compound at Camp Alpha, a segregated section of Bagram Air Base. Trial runs were held in early April.

DevGru belongs to the Joint Special Operations Command, an extraordinary and unusual collection of classified standing task forces and special-missions units. They report to the president and operate worldwide based on the legal (or extra-legal) premises of classified presidential directives. Though the general public knows about the special SEALs and their brothers in Delta Force, most JSOC missions never leak. We only hear about JSOC when something goes bad (a British aid worker is accidentally killed) or when something really big happens (a merchant marine captain is rescued at sea), and even then, the military remains especially sensitive about their existence. Several dozen JSOC operatives have died in Pakistan over the past several years. Their names are released by the Defense Department in the usual manner, but with a cover story - generally, they were killed in training accidents in eastern Afghanistan. That's the code.

How did the helos elude the Pakistani air defense network? Did they spoof transponder codes? Were they painted and tricked out with Pakistan Air Force equipment? If so -- and we may never know -- two other JSOC units, the Technical Application Programs Office and the Aviation Technology Evaluation Group, were responsible. These truly are the silent squirrels -- never getting public credit and not caring one whit. Since 9/11, the JSOC units and their task forces have become the U.S. government's most effective and lethal weapon against terrorists and their networks, drawing plenty of unwanted, and occasionally unflattering, attention to themselves in the process.

JSOC costs the country more than \$1 billion annually. The command has its critics, but it has escaped significant congressional scrutiny and has operated largely with impunity since 9/11. Some of its interrogators and operators were involved in torture and rendition, and the line between its intelligence-gathering activities and the CIA's has been blurred.

But Sunday's operation provides strong evidence that the CIA and JSOC work well together. Sometimes intelligence needs to be developed rapidly, to get inside the enemy's operational loop. And sometimes it needs to be cultivated, grown as if it were delicate bacteria in a petri dish.

In an interview at CIA headquarters two weeks ago, a senior intelligence official said the two proud groups of American secret warriors had been deconflicted and basically integrated -- finally -- 10 years after 9/11. Indeed, according to accounts given to journalists by five senior administration officials Sunday night, the CIA gathered the intelligence that led to bin Laden's location. A memo from CIA Director Leon Panetta sent Sunday night provides some hints of how the information was collected and analyzed. In it, he thanked the National Security Agency and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency for their help. NSA figured out, somehow, that there was no telephone or Internet service in the compound. How it did this without Pakistan's knowledge is a secret. The NGIA makes the military's maps but also develops their pattern recognition software -- no doubt used to help establish, by February of this year, that the CIA could say with high probability that bin Laden and his family were living there.

Recently, JSOC built a new Targeting and Analysis Center in Rosslyn, Va. Where the National Counterterrorism Center tends to focus on threats to the homeland, TAAC, whose existence was first disclosed by the Associated Press, focuses outward, on active kinetic -- or lethal -- counterterrorism missions abroad. Its creation surprised the NCTC's director, Michael Leiter, who was suspicious about its intent until he visited.

That the center could be stood up under the nose of some of the nation's most senior intelligence officials without their full knowledge testifies to the power and reach of JSOC, whose size has tripled since 9/11. The command now includes more than 4,000 soldiers and civilians. It has its own intelligence division, which may or may not have been involved in last night's effort, and has gobbled up a number of free-floating Defense Department entities that allowed it to rapidly acquire, test, and field new technologies.

Under a variety of standing orders, JSOC is involved in more than 50 current operations spanning a dozen countries, and its units, supported by so-called "white," or acknowledged, special operations entities like Rangers, Special Forces battalions, SEAL teams, and Air Force special ops units from the larger Special Operations Command, are responsible for most of the kinetic action in Afghanistan.

Pentagon officials are conscious of the enormous stress that 10 years of war have placed on the command. JSOC resources are heavily taxed by the operational tempo in Afghanistan and Pakistan, officials have said. The current commander, Vice Adm. William McRaven, and Maj. Gen. Joseph Votel, McRaven's nominated replacement, have been pushing to add people and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance technology to areas outside the war theater where al-Qaida and its affiliates continue to thrive.

Earlier this year, it seemed that the elite units would face the same budget pressures that the entire military was experiencing. Not anymore. The military found a way, largely by reducing contracting staff and borrowing others from the Special Operations Command, to add 50 positions to JSOC. And Votel wants to add several squadrons to the Tier One units -- Delta and the SEALs.

When Gen. Stanley McChrystal became JSOC's commanding general in 2004, he and his intelligence chief, Maj. Gen. Michael Flynn, set about transforming the way the subordinate units analyze and act on intelligence. Insurgents in Iraq were exploiting the slow decision loop that coalition commanders used, and enhanced interrogation techniques were frowned upon after the Abu Ghraib scandal. But the hunger for actionable tactical intelligence on insurgents was palpable.

The way JSOC solved this problem remains a carefully guarded secret, but people familiar with the unit suggest that McChrystal and Flynn introduced hardened commandos to basic criminal forensic techniques and then used highly advanced and still-classified technology to transform bits of information into actionable intelligence. One way they did this was to create forward-deployed fusion cells, where JSOC units were paired with intelligence analysts from the NSA and the NGA. Such analysis helped the CIA to establish, with a

high degree of probability, that Osama bin Laden and his family were hiding in that particular compound. These technicians could exploit and analyze data obtained from the battlefield instantly, using their access to the government's various biometric, facial-recognition, and voice-print databases. These cells also used highly advanced surveillance technology and computer-based pattern analysis to layer predictive models of insurgent behavior onto real-time observations.

The military has begun to incorporate these techniques across the services. And Flynn will soon be promoted to a job within the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, where he'll be tasked with transforming the way intelligence is gathered, analyzed, and utilized.

WWII Memorial Registration

The dates are from the 3rd to 5th of November 2011
King's Bay, Georgia

A real woman is a man's best friend.

- She will never stand him up and never let him down
- She will reassure him when he feels insecure and comfort him after a bad day
- She will inspire him to do things he never thought he could do; to live without fear and forget regret
- She will enable him to express his deepest emotions and give in to his most intimate desires
- She will make sure he always feels as though he's the most handsome man in the room and will enable him to be the most confident, sexy, seductive, and invincible

No wait! Sorry... I'm thinking of beer.

That's what beer does...

Never mind!

History

There's an old Hotel/Pub in Marble Arch, London which used to have gallows adjacent. Prisoners were taken to the gallows (after a fair trial of course) to be hanged. The horse drawn dray carting the prisoner was accompanied by an armed guard who would stop the dray outside the pub and ask the prisoner if he would like "ONE LAST DRINK."

If he said YES it was referred to as "one for the road." If he declined, that prisoner was "on the wagon."
So there you go!

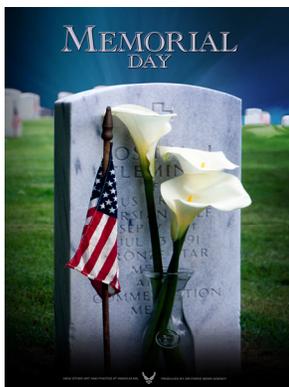
More history

They used to use urine to tan animal skins, so families used to all pee in a pot & then once a day it was taken & sold to the tannery. If you had to do this to survive, you were "Piss Poor".

But worse than that were the really poor folk who couldn't even afford to buy a pot.

They "Didn't have a pot to piss in" & were the lowest of the low.

Remember MOM! Mother's Day is 8 May



An important lesson from which we all can learn...



Sometimes, we try too hard to get to the greener grass.

In the Process, we end up in trouble. When you find yourself in trouble and you're stuck in a situation that you can't get out of, there is one thing you should always remember...

Not everyone who shows up...

Is there to help you!!!!



USS Barb SS 220 original Battle Flag presented to Barb Base, USSVI

The USS Barb original battle flag was presented to USSVI Barb Base at the Tolling of the Boats ceremony on 30 April during the Southeast Regional Conference.

Paul "Swish" Saunders enlisted in the Navy in 1936 and served for 26 years before retiring as GMGC(SS) (Chief Gunners Mate Guns, Submarine Service). Prior to submarines Paul served on the light cruiser USS Raleigh (CL-7) and on destroyers McCook (DD-252) and Sampson (DD-394).

Paul qualified in submarines aboard R-4 (SS-81) in 1940 and subsequently served in Barb (SS-220), Cusk (SS-348), Carbonero (SS-337), and Theodore Roosevelt (SSBN-600).

The only landing of US military forces on the island of Japan during hostilities included Saunders. They destroyed a 16-car train on the coastal railway with an explosive charge, using a microswitch under the rails to trigger the explosion.

Paul was highly regarded as one of the most decorated enlisted men in the Submarine Service, distinguishing himself during WWII while serving onboard the Barb. Paul made all twelve of Barb's war patrols, five in the Atlantic and seven in the Pacific and was Chief of the Boat (COB) for patrols #9-12. He was also COB for the Cusk, Carbonero and Theodore Roosevelt.

Chief Saunders was awarded two Silver Star Medals, one Bronze Star Medal, and a Letter of Commendation with Ribbon in recognition of his heroic actions in combat during WWII. He also received the Submarine Combat pin, Victory Medal, American Theater medal, Philippine Liberation medal. He was further famed in the book Thunder Below by his USS Barb skipper, Admiral Eugene B. Fluckey.

Paul went on Eternal Patrol in 2003.



Small picture is that of the COB, Paul Saunders GMGC(SS)

2011 Southeast Regional Conference, Ocala, FL
Last ones standing

