



The Snorkel Exhaust

SMOKY MOUNTAIN BASE, TN



UNITED STATES SUBMARINE SERVICE VETERANS, INC.

The USSVI Submariners Purpose and Creed:
 "To honor those who serve, past, present and future."

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.

We pledge loyalty and patriotism to the **United States of America and its Constitution.**



OUR ORGANIZATION

OUR FOUNDERS

OUR BROTHERHOOD



Our Mission

The organization will engage in various projects 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 lifestyles we enjoy today.

SNORKEL EXHAUST INDEX

MARCH 2026

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Scheduled Meetings

Base meetings are scheduled on the **3rd** **Thursday** of each month at:
MIMI'S CAFÉ,
10945 PARKSIDE DRIVE
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE
Dinner & Social Hour @ 1800
Meeting @ 1900
 (Guests are Invited)



Follow us on Facebook at:

Smoky-Mountain-Submarine-Veterans-273222054302

SMOKY MOUNTAIN BASE OFFICERS



BASE COMMANDER
Marlin E. Helms, Jr.
 Holland Club Chairman



MM1(SS) USS Spadefish SSN-668 '74



BASE VICE COMMANDER
Robert (Bob) Childs



MMC(SS) USS Nautilus SSN-571 '67



BASE SECRETARY
Ernie Ball



MMC(SS) USS LaFayette (SSBN-616) '75



BASE TREASURER
Jim Rock



MM1(SS) USS Andrew Jackson SSBN-619 '76

Smoky Mountain Base Committee Chairmen



BASE CHIEF OF THE BOAT
Terry McBride



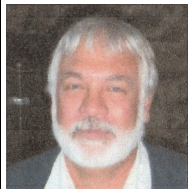
MMC(SS) USS Woodrow Wilson (SSBN-624) '93



BASE PROGRAMS
Andy Armbrust



MM1(SS) USS Hammerhead (SSN-663) '75



BASE STOREKEEPER
Marlin E. Helms, Jr.



MM1(SS) USS Spadefish SSN-668 '74



MEMBERSHIP / RECRUITER
Marlin E. Helms, Jr.



MM1(SS) USS Spadefish SSN-668 '74



WEBMASTER
Marlin E. Helms, Jr.



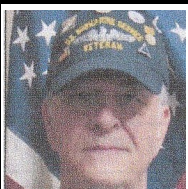
MM1(SS) USS Spadefish SSN-668 '74



BASE NEWSLETTER
Max Gildner



ET1(SS) USS Tullibee (SSN-597) '71



BASE PHOTOGRAPHER
Bruce Eltzroth
 Associate Member

ET1(SU) USS Sculpin (SSN-590)



BASE CHAPLIN
David Pope, EAWS
 Associate Member

OMSUBGRU-9, FP DET. 2



SMOKY MOUNTAIN BASE, USSVI
Meetings, Greetings, Gatherings & Calendar

MARCH - 2026

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Scheduled Meetings:

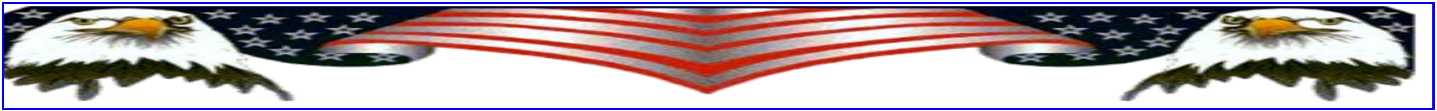
Base meetings are
on the 3rd Thursday of each month
at
MIMI'S CAFÉ, 10945 PARKSIDE DRIVE
located in **Turkey Creek,**
Knoxville, TN



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<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Smoky-Mountain-Submarine-Veterans/273222054302>

04/03—Good Friday 04/05—Easter 04/11—US Submarine Service Birthday
04/15—Federal Income Tax 04/16—SMB Meeting

APRIL 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		



VETERANS ASSISTANCE & RESOURCES



Operation Vet Rescue

Rescuing & Rebuilding Lives of Homeless Veterans



(865) 284-3188

info@ovrtn.org

P.O. Box 23, Greenback, N 37742

VA Regional Office Benefits Assistance on every 4th Friday at 1557 Downtown West Blvd. Units 20-21 Knoxville, TN 0900-1400 Hours

East TN Military Assistance Council Calendar of Events web site: www.etmac.org/calendar

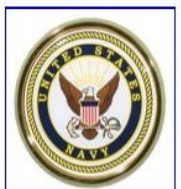
U.S. Military Veterans Discounts

Tennessee State Discounted Fees and Taxes

- \$10 one-time fee for hunting and fishing license for eligible disabled veterans.
- Distinctive motorcycle and vehicle license plates; no fee for currently enlisted personnel.
- Exemption from motor vehicle privilege tax for eligible permanently and totally disabled veteran or former POW.
- Reduced fee state park lodging, camping, and golf.
- Veterans Designation on drivers license.



The Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 1078 meets at **The Redemption Church** located at **3550 Pleasant Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN** on the **2nd Tuesday** of



The Honor and Remember Flag has been designated as the official TN state symbol of remembrance to honor fallen military service members for their service.

For information on obtaining one refer to: <http://www.honorandremember.org/the-flag/flag-presentation>.

VETERAN'S HOTLINE

988#1

OR

(844) 647-1354



(SS) CHALLENGE COINS LLC
www.SSChallengeCoins.com

31889 Marshall Rd
Jacksonville, Missouri
65260-2011
816.261.7784



Shelly Saxton
CEO/Owner
SubmarineCoins@gmail.com

SUBVEST

Serving those Who Already Have.

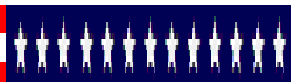
The only place to get **CUSTOM SEWN**

Submarine Vests, Hats, Jackets, Shirts & MORE!

A Base Storekeepers Dream...
Discounts & No Stock to order
Call to set up an account!

www.SUBVEST.com

Jenny Dugan - Sewing Wench
757-318-0138 B4 8pm





Base Commander's Report Marlin E. Helms, Jr. - MM1(SS)



Seven members and wives drove out to Kingsport to attend the funeral of Lee Chappell. The pastor who had not been familiar with the submarine service did some research and spoke with the family. He started by explaining Eternal Patrol. He made references to submarines throughout the service. In the end he read the submariners' version of the Navy hymn. It was one of the best services for a submariner I have ever attended.



BASE VICE-COMMANDER'S REPORT

Robert (Bob) Childs, EMC(SS)



No report submitted.



SMB Treasurer's Report - Jim Rock MM1(SS)



March 19th, we had a balance of **\$4,206.56**



Program Chairman's Report - Andy Armbrust MM1(SS)



No picnic is currently scheduled. We hope to have a picnic in the spring subject to the Concord Yacht Club availability.



Newsletter Editor's Report Max Gildner ET1(SS) & Bruce Eltzroth ET1(SU)



Please let us know if there are any suggestions for improvements to the newsletter form or contents. Photos of base activities are always appreciated.



Storekeepers Report Marlin E. Helms, Jr. - MM1(SS)



We currently have the following items on hand for sale:

The 2026 USSVI Calendars - \$8.00 at the meeting, but if mailed postage will be added. Baseball caps w/SMB patch (White or Blue) - \$14.00. SMB Iron on Patches - \$7.00. SMB Logo Magnetic Car Plates - \$12.00. SMB Window Stickers - \$3.00. Smoky Mountain Base battery quartz wall Clocks - \$15.00. The "Nuke, I am your father" coins are here.—\$20.00 or 6 for \$100.00

Remember, all purchases go to support your Smoky Mountain Base



Smoky Mountain Base
of USSVI, Inc.
Meeting Minutes

Date: March 19, 2026

Presiding: Marlin Helms Base Commander

Meeting called to Order at 1902 hours. Dove the boat!

The Base Chaplain presented the Invocation.

The Base Commander led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and Vice Commander read the USSVI Creed.

COB and Vice Cmdr. led the Tolling of the Boats.

COB hosted member/guest introductions. Number of Attendees: 12 members, 8 guest/wife's

Guest speaker: Mohlon Downard - Electrician's Mate on The USS Archerfish during Operation Sea Scan

February minutes read and approved

Base Treasurer reported - \$4206.66 in the account.

Correspondence/Discussion - None

Committees -

- Newsletter – Man Gildner- need officer inputs
- Library – Marlin Helms -
- Storekeeper – Marlin Helms
- Membership –Marlin Helms stable
- Scouting – Marlin Helms- still no contacts
- Media Manager – Marlin Helms- nothing new
- Social Committee - Andy Armbrust – need new volunteer Andy has cancer

Old business –

Marlin Helms- Nominating Committee

New Business –

Will sell Darth Rickover coins at 6 for \$100

Will open sale of Darth Rickover coins to other bases, more to come.

Good of the Order

- 50/50 - \$135.00

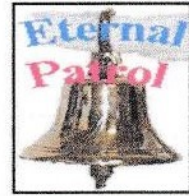
Next Meeting: 1900 hrs. Thursday, Apr 16, 2026, at **MiMi's Café, 10945 Parkside Dr., Knoxville, TN 37934.**

Meeting Adjourned at 1932 hrs. Boat surfaced!

Lorie Helms for Ernie Ball
Secretary



Lost Boats of March



Pre WW-II Lost Boats

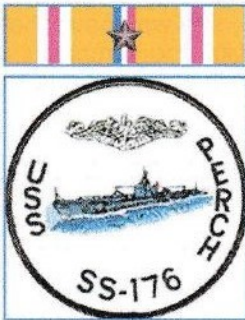
USS H1 (SS-28) (Bell) - 12 March 1920 - 4 Men Lost - Ran aground while in transit near Santa Margarita Island, Baja, Mexico.

USS F4 (SS-23) (Skate I) - 21 March 1915 - 19 Men Lost - Failure of lead lined battery compartment. Her hulk was raised and reburied off Sierra 13 north of Submarine Base, Pearl Harbor.

WW-II Lost Boats

USS PERCH I (SS-176) - 3 MAR. 1942

SS-176 Battle Stars

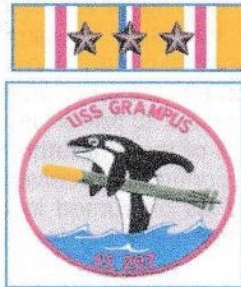


8 MEN LOST (as POW's)

On March 1, 1942, while on patrol in the Java Sea, the *Perch* was depth charged and heavily damaged by the Japanese destroyers *Amatsukaze* and *Hatsukaze*, at 6-30S, 113-50E. The *Perch* was attacked again on the following day with thirty depth charges by the Japanese destroyer *Ushio*, thus incurring additional heavy damage. On **March 3, 1942**, the *Perch* was caught while surfaced by the Japanese destroyers *Ushio* and *Sazanami* and was pounded with battery gunfire from both vessels. Facing a hopeless situation, the *Perch's* captain, Lieutenant Commander David A. Hurt, ordered the boat scuttled to prevent any usage by the enemy. The entire crew was picked up by the Japanese and sent to Prisoner of War camps for the duration of the war. *Perch* received one battle star for her World War II service.

USS GRAMPUS I (SS-207) - 5 Mar. 1943

SS-207 Battle Stars



71 MEN LOST

On **February 18, 1943**, the *Grampus* damaged the Japanese transport and aircraft ferry *Keiyo Maru* off New Britain. The submarine closed the damaged ship and torpedoed her again the following day at 04°-55'S, 152°-26'E. The attacks by the *Grampus* provoked an aggressive enemy response and the next day Japanese naval aircraft of the 958th Air Group reported bombing and sinking a submarine southeast of New Britain at 05°-40'S, 152°-18'E. They reported one direct hit on the conning tower and a large amount of oil on the surface after the attack. It is possible that this submarine was the *Grampus*. *Grampus* received three battle stars for her World War II service.

USS TRITON I (SS-201) - 15 Mar. 1943

SS-201 Battle Stars



74 MEN LOST

On February 16, 1943, the *Triton*, captained by Lieutenant Commander George K. MacKenzie, Jr., left Brisbane for her sixth and final war patrol. Her orders were to search for and destroy enemy shipping in the area between the Shortland Islands and Rabaul. On March 6, 1943, the *Triton* reported a battle with a Japanese convoy of five ships escorted by a destroyer during which she sank the 3,057-ton freighter *Kiriha Maru*. During this encounter one of her torpedoes made a circular run that had forced her to go deep to evade it. Two days later she reported she had fired eight torpedoes at another convoy and that an escorting destroyer had forced her to go deep, so she had not been able to observe the results. She also reported damaging another freighter. The *Triton's* last message reached Brisbane on **March 11, 1943**, and it said, "Two groups of smoke, 5 or more ships each, plus escorts.....Am chasing." She was never heard from again. The *Triton* received five battle stars for her World War II service.



Lost Boats of March



USS KETE (SS-369) - 20 Mar. 1945

SS-369 Battle Stars

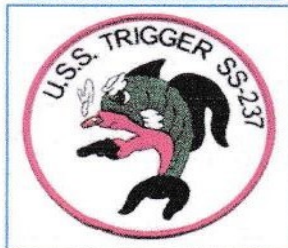


87 MEN LOST

The *Kete*, captained by Lieutenant Commander Edward Ackerman, left the submarine base at Guam on March 1, 1945, for her second and final war patrol. Her orders were to patrol in the waters surrounding the Nansei Shoto (Ryukyu Islands). While patrolling west of the Tokara Retto islands on the night of March 9-10, 1945, the *Kete* reported she had torpedoed and sank three enemy cargo ships. During the night of March 14th, she reported making an unsuccessful attack on a cable-laying vessel. On March 19th, the *Kete* acknowledged orders to depart the area on March 20th, refuel at Midway Island, and proceed to Pearl Harbor for refit. On March 20th, she sent a weather report from a position south of Tokara Kaiko (Colnett Strait). This was the last transmission ever received from the *Kete*. Scheduled to arrive at Midway Island by March 31, 1945, she was never heard from again. The *Kete* earned the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal with one campaign star for participation in the operation involving the assault and occupation of Okinawa from March 6-16, 1945.

USS TRIGGER (SS-237) - 26 Mar. 1945

SS-237 Battle Stars



89 MEN LOST

On March 11, 1945, the USS *Trigger*, captained by Commander David R. Connole, left the submarine base at Apra Harbor on Guam on her twelfth and final war patrol. Commander Connole's operation order for the *Trigger's* twelfth patrol instructed him to hunt for enemy shipping in the Nansei Shoto Archipelago (Ryukyu Islands) area and to serve as a lifeguard during a scheduled carrier air strike on Okinawa. On March 18, 1945, the *Trigger* reported she had made a seven-hour end-around attack on a convoy and had sunk a cargo ship. On March 20th, the *Trigger* replied she had been held under by antisubmarine vessels for three hours after attacking the convoy and when she re-surfaced had been unable to regain contact on the escapees. Four days later, ComSubPac directed her to patrol west of the Nansei Shoto chain, to avoid restricted areas, and to stay outside of the 100-fathom curve. On March 26th she sent a weather report that day, but never confirmed receiving the March 26th message. On May 1, 1945, the *Trigger* was reported as presumed lost. The *Trigger* received eleven battle stars for her World War II service and the Presidential Unit Citation for her fifth, sixth, and seventh war patrols.

USS TULLIBEE I (SS-284) - 26 Mar. 1944

SS-284 Battle Stars



79 MEN LOST

On March 5, 1944, the *Tullibee* left Pearl Harbor for her fourth and final war patrol with Commander Charles F. Brindupke at the helm. After fueling at Midway Island on March 9, 1944, she headed for the Palau Islands to join other Pearl Harbor and Brisbane submarines assigned to Operation Desecrate One. She was never seen or heard from again. The *Tullibee* was expected to return to Majuro for a refit around May 4, 1944. When she failed to arrive by May 15, 1944, she was presumed lost. The *Tullibee* received three battle stars for her World War II service.



SMOKY MOUNTAIN BASE MEMBERS ON ETERNAL PATROL

James Stinnett — March 28, 2022

Lee Chappel — March 21, 2026





SINKING OF THE IRIS DENA

Extracted from Wikipedia and other Official and Unofficial sources

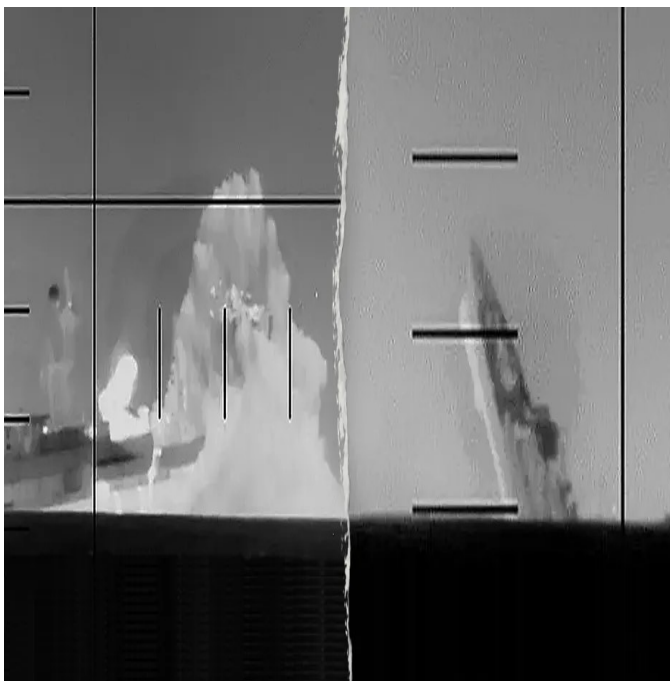
The *IRIS Dena* was a *Moudge* - Class frigate commissioned into the Iran Navy Southern Fleet in 2021 and considered to be the Pride of the Iran Navy. She had recently taken part in the International Fleet Review (MILAN 2026) naval exercise hosted by India at Visakhapatnam and was returning home.

As part of Operation Epic Fury, on March 4th, a US fast attack submarine (unofficially the Los Angeles-class submarine *USS Charlotte* SSN-766) torpedoed the *IRIS Dena* in international waters 22 miles south of Galle, Sri Lanka. It is reported that one of *Dena's* sailors called his family shortly before being attacked that the submarine had issued two warnings to abandon their ship, but her Captain refused let the men abandon ship.

The submarine fired a Mark 48 Advanced Capability wire-guided torpedo detonating under the ship's engine room. The explosion broke the keel of the *IRIS Dena* and resulted in her breaking apart and sinking within 2-3 minutes. It is estimated that her crew numbered 180 officers, seamen, and Navy band.

A rescue mission involving ships and planes was launched after the Sri Lankan Navy received a distress call following the explosion. Sri Lankan Navy spokesman Commander Buddhika Sampath said there was no sign of the ship "only some oil patches and life rafts" when they arrived on scene. Thirty-two people were rescued and taken to hospital in the town of Galle on Sri Lanka's southern coast for treatment of their injuries. Reports indicate that at least 87 bodies were recovered and are being held in the hospital's cold room. It is assumed that at least 61 remain missing and presumably went down with the ship.

This was the first instance of a nuclear-powered submarine sinking an enemy surface vessel since the sinking of *ARA General Belgrano* by the Royal Navy nuclear submarine *HMS Conqueror* during the Falklands War. It was the first such naval action by a US Navy submarine since WW2 in the Pacific.





USS ARCHERFISH (SS/AGSS-311)
“OPERATION SEA SCAN”

At our March 19th meeting we got to hear from Mr. Mohion Downard, an Electrician’s Mate on the *USS Archerfish* (SS/AGSS-311) during “Operation Sea Scan” activities during the 1960s.

The *USS Archerfish* was a Balao-Class boat built at Portsmouth Navy Yard and commissioned on September 4, 1943. She served in the Pacific Fleet homeported out of Pearl Harbor. During her first two patrols, she scored no sinkings. During her third patrol, she was assigned to life-guard duty during the attack on Iwo Jima and rescued a downed aviator. On her fourth patrol around the Island of Honshu, she once again saw no action.

On her fifth patrol, she was once again assigned life-guard duty for the first B-29 raids on Tokyo. On November 28th she received notification that there were no raids scheduled, giving her freedom to roam the waters near Tokyo Bay. That evening, lookouts spotted what looked like a tanker leaving the bay. Later it was discovered to be a large aircraft carrier. They tracked the carrier for six hours then submerged and fired six torpedoes, four of which found their mark. The torpedoes were set to run shallow to avoid heavier armor lower on the hull. After the war it was learned that the carrier was the *Shinano*, a 72,000-ton supercarrier, the biggest aircraft carrier ever built at the time. The *Archerfish* was one of 12 submarines that sailed into Tokyo Bay on August 31, 1945, prior to the formal surrender of Japan on September 2, 1945.

Archerfish was decommissioned on June 12, 1946. On August 1, 1957, Archerfish was recommissioned and home ported out of Key West, FL. She operated under the technical supervision of the Navy Hydrographic Office. During this period, she also portrayed the *USS Sea Tiger* in the 1959 movie “Operation Petticoat” for the underwater and distance scenes and shots.

In early 1960, Archerfish was chosen to be part of Operation Sea Scan. She was specially equipped for this new mission at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard and re-designated as an auxiliary submarine, AGSS-311. On May 18th she took on a team of civilian scientists to study marine weather conditions, water composition, ocean depths, and temperature ranges

Phase one of the mission explored the North Atlantic. Phase two explored the south-western pacific. Phase three explored the north-eastern pacific. Phase four re-explored selected areas of the entire pacific. Due to extended duration of the mission, every one of the crew and scientists were bachelors. The liberty ports were chosen by votes of the crew and scientists. She was often seen in port flying a Skull and Crossbones flag with a Playboy Bunny in one corner.

Archerfish completed her explorations in early 1968 and was struck from the Naval Vessel Registry on May 1, 1968. She ended her long service off San Diego, CA on October 17, 1968, as a target being sunk by a torpedo from the *USS Snook* (SSN-592).





USSVI APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Regular Life Associate

OUR 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 of America & its Constitution."

With my signature below I affirm that I subscribe to the Creed of the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., and agree to abide by the Constitution, all Bylaws, Regulations and Procedures governing the U.S. Submarine Veterans, Inc., so long as they do not conflict with my military or civil obligations. I will furnish proof of my eligibility for Regular membership, including my discharge under honorable conditions, and proof of my U.S. Navy (SS) Designation, if required by the Base or the national Membership Chairman. If I am not discharged, the discharge requirement is waived. If I am not U.S.N. submarine qualified, I am applying as an Associate member and my sponsor is indicated below.

- I certify that I was designated qualified in USN Submarines aboard _____ in _____ (Year)
(Honorary designations regardless of source do not apply under any circumstances.)
- I certify that I received a discharge under Honorable Conditions (if not currently in military service) in _____ (Year)

Name: (Print /Type) _____ **Address:** _____

City: _____ **State:** ____ **Zip Code:** _____ - _____ **Tel:** (____) _____ - _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Your E-Mail Address _____ **Base/Chapter Desired:** Smoky Mountain Base

Nat'l Member Dues year runs from Jan 1st thru Dec 31st. Please indicate your term preference: _____

Nat'l Dues: 5 Year term: \$ 140.00; 3 Year term: \$ 85.00; 1 year term (Jan thru Sep) \$ 30.00;

(Oct thru Dec adds the next year): \$ 35.00

National Life: 76+ yrs = \$120.00; 66 thru 75 yrs = \$240; 56 thru 65 yrs = \$ 360.00; 46 thru 55 = \$500.00; Thru 45 yrs = \$ 600.00

Smoky Mountain Base dues are \$ 15.00 (\$ 10.00 after Aug. 1st)

How did you find USSVI? Friend, Boat Assn, Local Event/News, Internet, Other (_____)

Who is your sponsoring USSVI Regular Member?: (Mandatory for Assoc Members.) _____

Associate Applicant is: Veteran Spouse of Veteran Other (specify) _____

YOUR U.S. NAVY BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Date Of Birth (MM/DD/YY) -- ____ / ____ / ____ **If other military service, What Branch?** _____

Highest Rate & Rank Attained: _____ **Mil Retired (Y/N):** ____ **On Active Duty? (Y/N):** ____

YR entered Mil Service: ____ **YR left Mil Service** ____ (Active/Inactive reserve time also counts.)

- Check if your Military Service falls within any of these time periods: Dec 7, 1941, thru Dec 31, 1946; June 27, 1950, thru Jan 31, 1955; Aug 5, 1964, thru May 7, 1975; and from August 2, 1990 to date.
- Check if you have been awarded an Expeditionary Medal.

Submarines and ships served aboard as ship's company (Use back if you need more space.)

1. _____ Hull# _____ Rank/Rate _____ From Yr. ____ to Yr. ____
2. _____ Hull# _____ Rank/Rate _____ From Yr. ____ to Yr. ____
3. _____ Hull# _____ Rank/Rate _____ From Yr. ____ to Yr. ____
4. _____ Hull# _____ Rank/Rate _____ From Yr. ____ to Yr. ____
5. _____ Hull# _____ Rank/Rate _____ From Yr. ____ to Yr. ____

Next of Kin: Name: _____ **Relationship:** _____ (Spouse, Partner, Son, Daughter, Parent, Other)

Address: _____ **City:** _____ **State:** ____ **Zip:** _____ **Tel:** _____

(Leave this address line blank if the same as your home address)

home address.

Upon completion, please deliver to: Marlin Helms at the monthly meeting (on the third Thursday of each month) or, Applicants on active duty are requested to provide a permanent mail to:

Marlin Helms Smoky Mountain Base Commander, 732 Old Hen Valley Road Oliver Springs TN 37840 (865) 387-5625