

SMOKY MOUNTAIN BASE, TN USSVI

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.

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

Scheduled Meetings

Monthly meetings are scheduled for the 3rd Thursday of each month at:

GOLDEN CORRAL
6612 CLINTON HIGHWAY,
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE Dinner & Social Hour @ 1800
Meeting @ 1900

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

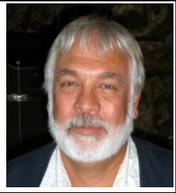
September & October 2017

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Smoky-Mountain-Submarine-Veterans-273222054302

SMOKY MOUNTAIN BASE OFFICERS



**BASE COMMANDER/
HOLLAND CLUB CHAIR**
Marlin E. Helms, Jr.



Qualified MM1(SS)
USS SPADEFISH (SSN-668)
Qualified MM1(SS)
USS HAMMERHEAD (SSN-663)




BASE VICE-COMMANDER
Ryan Smith, LCDR. USN (Ret.)



Qualified EM2(SS)
on
USS PROVIDENCE (SSN-719)
Qualified LT(SS)
USS MARYLAND (SSBN-738)
Qualified LCDR(SS)
USS PITTSBURG (SSN-720)




BASE SECRETARY
Martin Wesley



Qualified QM2(SS)
USS CUBERA(SS-347)
in 1968



No Photo Available

SCOUTING RECOGNITION PROGRAM
Marty Luther



Qualified
USS ()




CHIEF OF THE BOAT
Terry McBride, ETC(SS) (Ret.)



Qualified EM3(SS)
USS WOODROW WILSON (SSBN-624)
Qualified EM1(SS)
USS MARYLAND (SSBN-738)




BASE CHAPLIN
David Pope



David is an Associate
Member of Smoky Mountain
Base




**BASE TREASURER &
STOREKEEPER**
Jim Burkholder



Qualified EM2(SS)
USS CARP (SS-338)




LIBRARIAN
Bill Smith



Qualified ETR3(SS) in 1963
USS TRUMPETFISH (SS-425)
Qualified ETR2(SS) in 1965
USS JOHN C. CALHOUN (SSBN-630)




PROGRAM CHAIRMAN
Andy Armbrust



Qualified MM1(SS)
USS HAMMERHEAD (SSN-663)
in 1975




**NEWSLETTER EDITOR &
BASE PHOTOGRAPHER**
Bruce Eltzroth ET1(SU)
USS Sculpin (SSN-590)

Bruce is an Associate
Member of Smoky Mountain
Base.





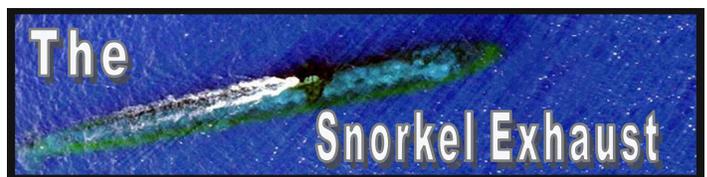
SMOKY MOUNTAIN BASE, USSVI
 Meetings, Greetings, Gatherings & Other Stuff
September & October - 2017

Scheduled Meetings

Monthly meetings are scheduled for the
3rd Thursday of each month at:
Golden Corral
 6612 Clinton Hwy.
 Knoxville, Tennessee 37912



Meetings and Happenings



Published by: Smoky Mountain Base, USSVI
 Editor: Bruce Eltzroth (beracin3@msn.com)
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- September 21- **SMB Meeting** (1800 Hrs)
- October 5 - **Deadline for Newsletter Input**
- October 13 - **U.S. Navy Established - 1775**
- October 19 - **SMB Meeting** (1800 Hrs)
- October 21- **SMB Picnic** (1200 Hrs)
- October 21 - **Navy Ball** - Knoxville (1800 Hrs)

New Members:

Brian Heise

September						
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

October						
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	31				



LOCAL HAPPENINGS

SMOKY MT. BASE FALL PICNIC

Our Fall picnic will be held on Saturday October 21st 2017, at Marlin and Lori Helms' home at 732 Old Hen Valley Road; Oliver Springs, TN. The picnic will begin at 12:00 noon and we will plan to eat at 1:00 PM.

I will prepare pulled pork and bring buns, BBQ sauce, iced tea, lemonade, coffee, paper plates, cups, napkins, and plastic utensils.

Please bring a side dish or dessert to share with others.

For those who have not been to Marlin & Lori's place before, they have a covered outdoor pavilion equipped with a fireplace and a large TV (in case there is a game to watch).

Cost of the picnic is \$5.00/person. Please let me know if you plan to attend and how many you will be bringing so I can ensure that we have enough food and supplies.

Andy Armbrust Subvet Picnic Committee 865-300-3934

NAVY BALL

KNOXVILLE NAVY BALL 2017

HOSTED BY THE NAVY LEAGUE OF KNOXVILLE

The Navy League of Knoxville is proud to present the Knoxville Navy Ball of 2017! Everyone is invited! Come join us in this celebration with our local Sailors and our Community! This event will be held on Saturday, October 21, at the Knoxville Marriott Downtown. Cash Bar/Social Hour/Portraits: 6:00 p.m. Ceremony: 7:00 p.m. We will be celebrating the Anniversary of the Navy's 242nd Year of Heritage and Traditions. Special Guest Speaker: Knox Co Mayor Tim Burchett. DJ & Entertainment: Ron Crivellone and Smoky Mountain Sounds.

TICKET PRICES

(Prices for tickets will go up \$5 if purchased at the door)

Enlisted Sailors:

Sea Cadets \$25.00 each
E1 to E3 \$20.00 each
E4 to E5 \$30.00 each
E6 to E7 \$40.00 each

Senior Enlisted/Officers: E8 to O6 \$50.00 each

Veterans: \$45.00

Civilians: \$50.00

Dress Code: Dinner Dress Blues, Service Dress Blues, or Formal Civilian Attire

Dinner Choice: CHICKEN, PORK, SALMON, EGGPLANT PARMESAN or VEGETARIAN LASAGNA (pasta).

Questions - Bryan Tomforde at Railroadsinger@gmail.com.



VETERAN INFORMATION FOR USSVI BASE MEMBERS

.....Filing a Claim with the VA.

This is a free service provided by DAV (Disabled American Veterans) that will give you 5 1/2 minute videos to:

1. Who should file a VA Claim
2. How to file a VA Claim
3. Seven ways to service-connected Disability
4. What to expect after filing a VA claim
5. What to expect after receiving your VA claim decision

Available at: [facebook.com/DAV/videos](https://www.facebook.com/DAV/videos) and remember you DO NOT have to be a DAV member to use this service.

.....U.S. military installations are no longer allowing visitors to gain base access using official ID cards from five states -- and other installations may soon follow. State-issued driver's licenses and identification cards from **Illinois, New Mexico, Missouri, Washington** and **Minnesota** can no longer be used to obtain a visitor's pass because those cards don't comply with federal standards, officials said. DoD officials did not say whether or not enhanced driver's licenses (EDL) from Minnesota or Washington would still be accepted.

"Effective immediately, residents of these five states can no longer use their driver's license to get a visitor's pass," Tom McCollum, a Fort Bragg spokesman said in an earlier release. "Driver's licenses and identification cards issued by these states cannot be used to access not just Fort Bragg, but all federal facilities, to include other military installations."

VFW Award given to SMB's Jim Irving



Alfred J. (Jim) Irving (MM1-SS) has recently received the "All-American Commander Award" for the State of Tennessee given by the VFW. He was honored in New Orleans as "Having distinguished himself during the 2016-2017 year."



Base Commanders Report Marlin E. Helms, Jr.



The Snorkel Exhaust is back on track, Bravo Zulu Bruce. The newsletter has been challenging for every editor that has had this position. Bruce will need help in making the newsletter a success. Officers and board members need to provide input by the due date of the first Thursday of even numbered months. I encourage all members to provide input that is current and topical to our base and submarines.

We have a number of base activities coming up at the end of 2017. Our picnic will be at my place on the 21st of October in the afternoon before the Navy Ball. The Knoxville Veterans Day parade will be Friday, November 10, 2017, I will provide more information when we get our package from the American Legion. I am talking with the East Tennessee Children's Hospital to do a Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) (K4K) visit during the veterans day week. John Riley the USSVI's National K4K chairman declares Veterans Day week to be USSVI K4K week where he encourages all bases with K4K programs to make visits. The Army Navy game will be December 9, 2017 at 3:00 PM. We will be meeting at Just1More bar and grille to watch it. They have opened early (1:00) to allow us to watch the spirit spots before the game. Navy beat the Air Force Academy this year so they are in line for the presidents commanders cup if they beat Army. Go Navy - Beat Army.

From the Former Newsletter Editor

Bill Smith

Email: Barnacle.Bill.SS@comcast.net

- Thanks for your patience as we evolve the newsletter into a format that is more easily produced and transmitted to all our base membership and other interested parties.
- You might be wondering why there are so many pictures and graphics in the newsletter. Well, being a Nuke ET in the Navy and a computer service technician in civilian life, I've read so much in the last 50 years that I like pictures better! Besides isn't there an old saying, "A picture is worth a 1000 words"!
- Marlin has been forwarding me newsletters from other USSVI bases. That's a big help. I've noticed that some of them are lengthy, some are very brief and quite serious. I'm shooting for somewhere in between.
- Seriously, if you have any suggestions or contributions such as jokes, sea stories, cartoons, etc., send them to me at the email address above.

Just remember..."NO TOXIC WASTE"...there are Women and Children present.

From the Current Newsletter Editor

Bruce Eltzroth

Email: beracin3@msn.com

Bill Smith our former editor wrote the above piece in December 2012 and I just wanted to reiterate that the message he sent still applies. One other thing, we would like for the Base Treasurer/Storekeeper, Secretary, and Program Chairman to provide updates on a regular basis. These include meeting minutes, financial status, events, new members, and any submarine related stories or news. Even though that's all I ask, the USSVI recommends that:

"Officer and Committee Reports and Columns be submitted such as: - Commander's report / column - Vice Commander's report / column - Secretary's Report - Minutes of Last Meeting - Treasurer's Report / column - Chaplain's Report / column - COB's Report / column - Committee Reports - and Storekeeper's Report." We may eventually get to this level, but for now we will start small.

Smoky Mountain Base

of USSVI, Inc.

Meeting Agenda

Date: September 21, 2017 - Time/Location: 1900 hrs, Golden Corral 6612 Clinton Hwy, Knoxville

Members and guests please sign in

Call to Order

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

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 of America and it's constitution."

In addition to perpetuating the memory of departed shipmates, we shall provide a way for all Submariners to gather for mutual benefit and enjoyment. Our common heritage as Submariners shall be strengthened by camaraderie. We support a strong U. S. Submarine force. The organization will engage in various projects and deeds that will bring about the perpetual remembrance of those shipmates who have given the supreme sacrifice. The organization will also endeavor to educate all third parties it comes in contact with about the services our submarine brothers performed and how their sacrifices made possible the freedom and lifestyle we enjoy today."

"Tolling of the Bell".

USS Grayling-SS-209 September 9,1943 - 76 Men Lost. USS Cisco-SS-290 September 28,1943 - 76 Men Lost.

Member Introductions: Member introductions (new and previous) for new members and guests.

Secretary's Report and Meeting Minutes – Wes Wesley

Treasurer's Report – Jim Burkholder

Correspondence –

Committee Reports –

Newsletter– Bruce Eltzroth

Storekeeper – Jim Burkholder

Membership – Marlin Helms

Social Committees – Andy Armbrust

Web Site – Marlin Helms

Library – Bill Smith

New Business /Good of the Order-

Float- Jim Rock

Other –

Old Business-

Next Meeting; 1900 hrs, Thursday, October 19, 2017 at , Golden Corral 6612 Clinton Hwy, Knoxville, TN.

Motion to adjourn



**Secretaries Report / Meeting Minutes
Martin Wesley**

No Report Available



**Treasurer / Storekeepers Report
Jim Burkholder**

No Report Available





Lost Boats of September



LOSS OF USS CISCO (SS-290) - SEPTEMBER 28, 1943



On September 18, 1943, the *Cisco*, captained by Commander James W. Coe, departed Port Darwin for her first and final war patrol. After a return to that base the same day for repairs to her hydraulic system, she got under-

way again on September 20, 1943, and headed for her assigned patrol area in the South China Sea between Luzon Island and the coast of French Indochina. She was never heard from again.

Japanese records reviewed after the war documented an antisubmarine attack made on **September 28, 1943**, at coordinates 9°-47' N, 121°-44' E, slightly north and east of *Cisco's* expected position on that date. The report of the attack stated; "Found a sub tailing oil, commenced bombing...the oil continued to gush out even on tenth of October." The *Cisco* was the only U. S. submarine operating in the area at that time.

The *Capelin* (SS-289) and the

Cisco (SS-290) were consecutive products of the Portsmouth Navy Yard. The *Capelin* had sailed from Darwin on November 17, 1943, and disappeared sometime after December 2, 1943. The next ship off the same production line was the *USS Crevalle* (SS-291). Significant construction problems that could have been fatal were found by one of her officers before she was launched. The problems related to weaknesses in two vent pipes that could have caused the *Crevalle* to sink if she was depth-charged. The crews of other boats from this same shipyard production series began to wonder if construction flaws had played a role in the losses of both the *USS Capelin* and the *USS Cisco*.

Commander Coe is widely remembered as being the author of the famous "Toilet Paper" memo to the Mare Island Supply Depot. It was in 1942 when he was C.O. of the *USS Skipjack*. He submitted the memo as a result of his frustration over the *Skipjack's* inability to obtain a resupply of toilet paper. Capt. Coe felt that dealing with an irrational Navy bureaucracy that seemed to thrive on creating red tape and inordinate delays was hindering the war effort.



LOSS OF USS GRAYLING (SS-209) - Between Aug. 27 and Sept,30, 1943



On July 30, 1943, the *USS Grayling*, captained by Lieutenant Commander Brinker, departed Fremantle for her eighth and final war patrol. On August 19, 1943, Brinker reported

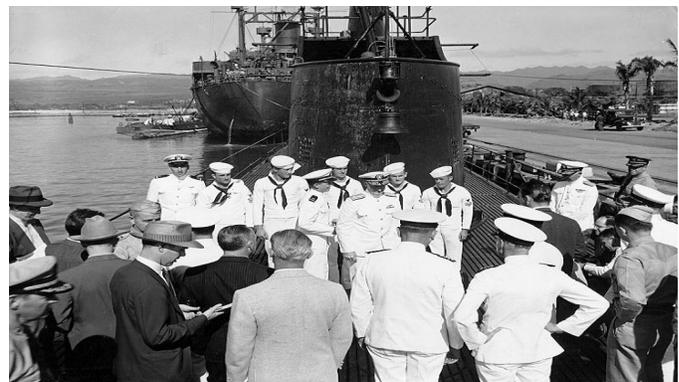
damaging a 6,000-ton freighter near Balikpapan. The next day he reported sinking a small tanker of the *Taki Maru* type in the Sibutu Passage with the *Grayling's* deck gun and taking one prisoner. This was the last report received directly from the *Grayling*. The circumstances of the *Grayling's* loss remain a mystery. All that can be said with certitude is that the *Grayling* disappeared sometime after she sank the *Meizan Maru*, on August 27, 1943.

On September 30, 1943, the *Grayling* was listed as

lost in action with all 76 officers and men. *Grayling* was awarded six battle stars for her service during World War II.

An Interesting Side Note:

Following the devastating attack on Pearl Harbor, **Admiral Chester Nimitz**, was selected as the new Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet. He made the submarine base at Pearl Harbor his temporary headquarters and was sworn in as CINCPAC on the deck of the *USS Grayling*, which he chose as his flagship. The first and only time that a submarine was the "flagship" of the entire Pacific Fleet.



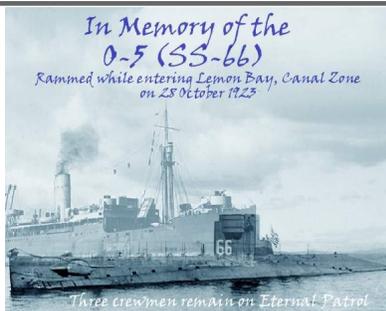


Lost Boats of October



USS O-5 (SS-66)

Lost October 29, 1923 with the loss of 3 men when rammed and sunk by SS Ababgarez off the Panama Canal.



USS S-44 (SS-155)

Lost on **Oct 7, 1943** with the loss of 51 off Paramushiru, Kuriles. S-44 was on attacking a target thought to be a me S-44 found herself in a losing gun battle armed Japanese destroyer. Two men and survived the war.



USS ESCOLAR (SS-294)

Lost on **Oct 17, 1944** with the loss of 82 men. ESCOLAR had her final training for combat at Pearl Harbor, from which she put out for her first war patrol September 18, 1944. After topping off fuel at Midway, she joined CROAKER (SS-246) and PERCH (SS-313) for a coordinated war patrol in the Yellow Sea which she directed. On 30 September, she engaged a small craft in a surface gun action, and reported to her sisters that she was undamaged, without mentioning what her gunfire had done to the enemy ship. Her last communication was with PERCH on October 17th; she was never heard from again.



Since Japanese records consulted after the war show no antisubmarine action at that time in the area where ESCOLAR is believed to have been, it is assumed that she struck a mine and sank with all hands.

USS Darter (SS-227)

Lost on **Oct. 24, 1944**, without the loss of a single crewman. In the early morning of October 23, 1944, both DARTER and DACE contacted and tracked a large enemy force heading north through Palawan Passage en route to engage our forces in the battles for Leyte Gulf. They attacked while the enemy were unable to alter course appreciably and in brilliant pre-dawn submerged attacks, sank the heavy cruisers ATAGO and MAYA, and so severely damaged the heavy cruiser TAKAO, that she was useless for the rest of the war. During daylight, DARTER tried a submerged attack on TAKAO, which had been stopped, but was driven off by screening destroyers. Thus a night coordinated attack plan was drawn up by the two boats.



Since she could not surface to take sights, DARTER was forced to navigate on a 24-hour-old dead reckoning plot. At 2200 TAKAO got underway, and DARTER began a surface attack. Detecting two radars sweeping, she decided to do an end around, and then make an attack at radar depth. At 0005 on October 24, 1944, DARTER grounded on Bombay Shoal, and making 17 knots at the time, rode up to a draft of nine feet forward. Efforts to get off the reef were unsuccessful, and a message was sent to DACE requesting assistance. DACE closed DARTER and, after confidential gear had been smashed and classified matter burned, the men of DARTER were transferred to DACE. This was all done before dawn, and there were no losses of DARTER personnel.

DARTER was awarded the Navy Unit Commendation for her final patrol.

USS Dorado (SS-248)

Lost on **October 12, 1943** with the loss of 78 men when she was sunk in the western Atlantic near Cuba. Newly commissioned, she had departed New London and was enroute to Panama. She did not arrive at Panama nor was she heard from at any time after sailing. She may



have been sunk by a **U.S. patrol plane** that received faulty instructions regarding bombing restriction areas or she may have been attacked by a German U-boat that was known to be in the area.

It was standard practice *in WWII* of imposing bombing restrictions within an "box" measuring *fifteen miles on each side of, fifty miles ahead and one hundred miles astern of the unescorted submarine's course while it was transiting through friendly waters.*

A convoy was so routed as to pass through the bombing and attack restriction area surrounding DORADO on the evening of October 12, 1943. Commandant, NOB, Guantanamo assigned a patrol plane to furnish air coverage for the convoy on the evening of October 12th. It is possible the air crew received *faulty instructions* as to the location of the bombing and attack restriction area surrounding DURADO since at 8:49 PM, local time, the plane delivered a surprise attack of three depth charges on an *unidentified* submarine within DURADO's safety zone. About two hours later, the plane sighted another submarine with which it attempted to exchange recognition signals without success. This submarine fired upon the plane. A

USS TANG (SS-306)

Lost on **Oct 25, 1944** with the **loss of 80 men** in the Formosa Strait. **TANG** was on her 5th war patrol.

She was a 1525-ton Balao class submarine, was built at the Mare Island Navy Yard, California. Commissioned in October 1943, she deployed to Hawaii in December 1943 to begin an intense and eventful combat career under the leadership of

Commander Richard H. O'Kane.

TANG'S first war patrol, conducted in the central Pacific during January and February 1944, removed five ships from Japan's logistics system. A second patrol, into the Palaus, resulted in no direct losses to the enemy, but was very important in another way. In three days of lifeguard duty during U.S. aircraft carrier raids on the Japanese base at Truk, **TANG** rescued 22 downed Navy aviators, a "score" of a positive sort that was unsurpassed until very late in the Pacific War.

In June and July 1944, **TANG** made a very productive patrol into the East China Sea area, sinking ten ships in a series of daring attacks. The next war patrol, her fourth, was in Japanese home waters, where her torpedoes sank at least two more enemy ships during August. Late in September, **TANG** departed Pearl Harbor to begin her fifth patrol. Operating in the vicinity of the Formosa Strait, she struck a convoy on 10-11 October, sinking two ships. Other convoys were the targets of night surface attacks on the 23rd and 24th, producing five more sinkings. However, **TANG'S** last torpedo made a circular run that the submarine could not evade. She was hit aft and quickly sank in relatively shallow water off the China coast. Nine of her crew, including **Commander O'Kane**, survived the accident and were taken prisoner.

TANG was awarded two *Presidential Unit Citations* for her exploits, which included officially recognized sinkings of 24 Japanese ships, totaling nearly 94,000 tons. Among U.S. Pacific War submarines, she thus had the **second highest score** in terms of numbers and the fourth largest based on tonnage calculations.

Commander Richard (Dick) O'Kane and **TANG** are forever linked in the annals of the Silent Service. His skill and daring made him and **TANG** the highest scoring United States submarine in World War II.



USS Shark II (SS-314)

Lost on **Oct 24, 1944** with the loss of **90 men** when she was sunk near Hainan. On September 23, 1944, the **Shark**, captained by Commander Edward N. Blakely, left Pearl Harbor and proceeded to the submarine base at Saipan to rendezvous with the **USS Seadragon (SS-194)** and the **USS Blackfish (SS-221)**. On



October 3, 1944, the three boats left Saipan to form a coordinated attack group under Blakely's command in the Luzon Strait. Their assigned area of operations was along the 20th parallel, covering an area about midway between Hainan Island and the western end of Bashi Channel. This departure marked the beginning of the **Shark's** third and final war patrol. On October 24, 1944, the **Shark** informed the **Seadragon** by radio that she was preparing to attack an old freighter. It was the last word ever received from Blakely. All further attempts to contact the **Shark** by radio failed. On November 27, 1944, she was reported as presumed lost. Japanese records reviewed after the war revealed that the **Shark** was probably lost on **October 24, 1944**, as a result of depth-charge attacks conducted by the IJN destroyers *Take* and *Harukaze* in Shark's vicinity. The attack occurred after Blakely had torpedoed and sunk the 6,886-ton enemy freighter *Arisan Maru*, in the same area. Blakely did not know the freighter was transporting 1,782 American prisoners of war from Manila to Japan. Only nine of the American prisoners survived the sinking. **October 24, 1944** would prove to be a black-letter day for the submarine force; in addition to the **Shark**, the **USS Tang (SS-306)** and the **USS Darter (SS-227)** were also lost on that day.





USS Seawolf (SS-197)

Lost on **Oct 3, 1944** with the loss of **102 officers and men** when she was sunk just north of Morotai by **USS Richard M. Rowell DE-403**, a Destroyer Escort (DE). In this tragic error, the commanding officer of the **Rowell** mistook **Seawolf** for a Japanese submarine that had just sunk another Destroyer.

Seawolf ranks 7th for enemy ships sunk. On June 1944 she departed Pearl Harbor on an intelligence gathering mission to the Palau Islands, which would be invaded by U.S. forces a few months later. She then went



on to Fremantle, from which she made a trip to Tawitawi to recover an agent. **Seawolf** left Brisbane on her fifteenth patrol in September, assigned to take U.S. Army agents and supplies to Samar, in the Philippines. While en route, breakdowns in communications caused U.S. anti-submarine forces to mistake her for Japanese. On 3 October 1944, after being forced to dive by an air attack by a US warplane, **Seawolf** was depth charged and sunk by the **Richard M. Rowell (DE-403)**. **All her crew and passengers, 102 men, were lost with her.**

This grand old lady was at Cavite Submarine Base P.I. when war broke out on Dec 7th (Dec 8th across the international date line). She and her sisters were on the front line from day one of the Pacific war and she did not deserve the tragic fate that fell upon her.

"Friendly Fire?" - "Friends Don't Shoot At Friends!"

Two of the 52 United States Submarines lost in World War II were believed to have been sunk by what is euphemistically called "Friendly Fire". Ironically both losses came during the month of October. The **USS DORADO SS-248** was lost with all hands on October 12, 1943, in the Caribbean and the **USS SEAWOLF SS-197** was lost on October 3, 1944 western Pacific. Both appear to have been the victims of over zealous military personnel who were either ignorant of the precautions put in place to protect United States submarines transiting "friendly waters" or they chose to ignore those precautions. Either way, a boat was lost and submariners died at the hands of their fellow Americans. The circumstances of the loss of the **USS SEAWOLF** are particular in several ways that you might find enlightening. Here's the description of her sinking from the website; http://www.subsowespac.org/world_war_ii_submarines/uss_seawolf_ss_197.shtml

On September 21, 1944, captained by Lieutenant Commander Albert M. Bontier, the **Seawolf** left Brisbane on her fifteenth and final war patrol. She arrived at the Manus Island submarine base on September 29, 1944, where she embarked a seventeen-man army reconnaissance party and ten

tons of supplies. After topping off her fuel, she sailed the same day to land them on Samar Island in the Philippines, north of General Douglas MacArthur's planned invasion site on Leyte Island.

On October 3, 1944, at 0756 hours, the **Seawolf** exchanged recognition signals by radar with the **USS Narwhal (SS-167)**. Both boats were in a safety lane in which American surface forces were prohibited from attacking any submarine unless it was positively identified as an enemy. At 0807 hours, 35 miles east of Morotai Island, the commanding officer of the Japanese submarine RO-41 fired his last four torpedoes at two American escort carriers, the **USS St. Lo (CVE-63)** and the **USS Fanshaw Bay (CVE-70)**. The torpedoes missed both escort carriers. However, the destroyer escort **USS Shelton (DE-407)**, while turning to evade one of the oncoming torpedoes, was hit on the starboard screw by a second torpedo, which caused severe damage and flooding. The destroyer escort **USS Rowell (DE-403)** came alongside and removed the crew, after counterattacking the RO-41 unsuccessfully with depth charges. The **Shelton** was taken under tow, but eventually capsized and sank. Three hours later, one of the **St. Lo's** aircraft sighted a submarine in the safety lane and dropped two bombs and dye marked its position as the boat submerged. The destroyer escort **USS Rowell (DE-403)** got to the scene and detected the submarine on sonar. The sonar operator reported his equipment was receiving signals consisting of long dots and dashes from the submarine. The **Rowell's** commander dismissed these as an attempt to jam his sonar and pressed on with firing Mark 10 "hedgehog" projector mortars. Following a second barrage of twenty-four projectiles, the **Rowell** reported, "Three explosions heard. Two large boils [bubbles] observed off port beam. Debris observed in the boils." Four submarines were in the safety lane at the time of these events. Urgent calls from the surface forces to the submarines to report their positions brought responses from three of them, but there was only silence from the **Seawolf**. At that point it became obvious that the submarine the **Rowell** had sunk was the **Seawolf** and not the RO-41. Note that the **USS Rowell's** sonar operator reported that the submarine that they were attacking was using its sonar to send a Morse Code recognition signal. The Captain of the **USS ROWELL** thought that the sub was "trying to jam his sonar" and pressed the attack!

On **October 5, 1944**, an inquiry into the incident was held at Manus Island. It was found that the **Rowell** had sunk the **Seawolf**. The **Rowell's** captain, **Lieutenant Commander Harry A. Barnard, Jr.**, (USNA Class of 1936), was **censured** for making insufficient efforts to identify his target, for dismissing the sound signals, and for attacking the **Seawolf**.

Here's what Captain Edward L. (Ned) Beach, (of Run Silent, Run Deep fame), had to say about the sinking of **SEAWOLF**; Captain Beach wrote that the **Seawolf** tragedy was due to "...a lack of the rudiments of common sense." He also penned the following poignant visualization of the **Seawolf's** final moments:

*"And so, alone and friendless, unable to defend herself, frantically striving to make her identity known to her attacker, the old **Wolf** came to the end of the trail. Who can know what terror her crew must have tasted, when it became plain to them that the American destroyer escort above them, specially built and trained to sink German submarines, was determined to sink them also? Who can appreciate their desperation when they realized that the genius of their own countrymen had, by a monstrous miscalculation of*

(Continued from page #8)

unutterable bitterness of the final disaster, when, combined with the shock of the frame-smashing depth charges, came the rapier-like punch of the hedgehogs, piercing Seawolf's stout old hull, starting the hydrant flow of black sea water, and ending forever all hopes of seeing sunlight again." To add insult to injury, the Navy awarded the Rowell's skipper with the **Legion of Merit** for his actions but changed the date from Oct. 3rd to Oct. 24th, (ironically the same date that **DARTER**, **SHARK** and **TANG** were lost).

Commander Harry A. Barnard, Jr., Legion of Merit.

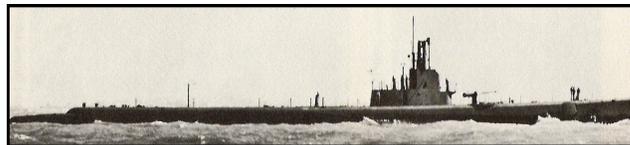


The President of the United States of America takes pleasure in presenting the Legion of Merit to Commander Harry A. Barnard, Jr. (NSN: 0-77124), United States Navy, for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services to the Government of the United States as Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. RICHARD M. ROWELL, in action against an enemy submarine on 24 October 1944 in the Southwestern Pacific Area. While in screening station astern of a formation of carrier escorts his ship gained sonar contact on an enemy submarine, evaluation of which was promptly made under difficult circumstances. By skillful direction Commander Barnard delivered a most effective and destructive anti-submarine attack, resulting in a series of underwater explosions and rumblings. Further evidence of the probable sinking of the enemy was evidenced by air bubbles, oil and debris that later rose to the surface. Commander Barnard's keen judgment and outstanding efficiency were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

Commander Barnard was never disciplined for his actions in the sinking of the **SEAWOLF**. He apparently never acknowledged his error in judgment that October day in 1944. In the picture above, notice that he is wearing his **Legion of Merit** ribbon on his chest. He continued his career in the Navy, advancing to the rank of Captain, and commanded other destroyers and shore facilities until his retirement.



USS WAHOO (SS-238)



Lost on **Oct 11, 1943** with the loss of **79 men** near La Perouse Strait. Under command of one of the great sub skippers of World War II, LCDR "**Mush**" Morton, **Wahoo** was on her 7th war patrol. **WAHOO** had won a *Presidential Unit Citation* and ranks 5th in the number of enemy ships sunk. On 9 September, *Wahoo* again departed Pearl. She topped off with fuel at Midway and left there on 13

September heading for the dangerous but important Japan Sea. Shortly afterwards, **USS SAWFISH (SS-276)** left Midway and also headed for this area. **WAHOO** was to pass through Etorofu Strait, in the Kurile Islands, and La Perouse Strait, between Hokkaido and Karafuto, and enter the Japan Sea about 20 September. She was to head south and remain below 43 degrees north after 23 September, and below 40 degrees north after 26 September. **SAWFISH** was to follow **WAHOO**, entering the Sea of Japan about 23 September and patrolling the area north of **WAHOO**. **WAHOO** was reported missing and presumed lost on 9 November 1943.



Dudley "Mush" Morton (1907-1943), was commander of **USS WAHOO SS-238** during its third through seventh patrols. Morton and **Wahoo** disappeared in 1943 during a patrol near La Perouse Strait. A native of Owensboro, Kentucky, **Morton** graduated from the Naval Academy in 1930. There he received the nickname "Mushmouth", after a character in the cartoon strip

"Moon Mullins" whose large square jaw and prominent mouth resembled Morton's. The nickname was shortened to "**Mush**", by which he was known for much of his life. Promoted to Commander October 15, 1942, Morton took command of **Wahoo** on December 31, 1942, in Brisbane, Australia. Between January 26, 1943 and October 11, he carried out four offensive patrols, during which **Wahoo** was responsible for sinking 19 cargo and transport ships for a combined total of 55,000 tons.

Morton was given the highly dangerous assignment of penetrating the Sea of Japan. Commander Morton and **Wahoo** were reported missing in action in December, when his submarine was presumed lost.

After the war, it was determined from Japanese records that, on October 11, in the time frame in which the *Wahoo* was expected to exit through La Perouse Strait an antisubmarine aircraft found a surfaced submarine and attacked, dropping three depth charges.

Declared deceased on January 7, 1946, Morton had been awarded the [Navy Cross](#), three gold stars in lieu of a second, third, and fourth Navy Cross, and the [Army Distinguished Service Cross](#).





HOLLAND CLUB INDUCTEES

At our August Smoky Mountain Base Submarine Veterans meeting, four members were inducted into the Holland Club signifying their qualifications on submarines for 50 or more years. In the picture below from left to right are: **William (Wally) Cox, Robert (Bob) Childs, Lee Chappell and Alfred (Jim) Irving.**

**CONGRATULATIONS
GENTLEMEN ON A
LIFETIME
ACHIEVEMENT !**



William Wally Cox (CMDM-SS)

Wally served from August 1962 to January 1985, and first qualified in submarines in January 1964 on board USS Halfbeak (SS-352). He transferred to USS Casimir Pulaski (SSBN-633) as PO3 and Plank Owner. He transferred to USS George C Marshall (SSBN-654) as PO1 and Plank Owner. He then transferred to the USS LY Spear (AS-36) Plank Owner and advanced to Chief Petty Officer. He then transferred to the USS Hammerhead (SSN-663) as Chief Auxiliaryman and was advanced to Senior Chief Petty Officer and selected to be the Chief of the Boat for three years. He transferred to Subron 6 making Master Chief Petty Officer and was selected as Command Master Chief for Subron 6. His final transfer was to Naval Station Brig as Master Chief at the Training Center, and retired in January 1985.

Robert (Bob) Childs (MMC-SS)

Bob enlisted in the US Navy July 1964 as a volunteer for submarine duty. He completed Submarine School 21 April 1965. Upon Completion of Naval Nuclear Power School he was assigned to the USS Nautilus (SSN-571) where he qualified in submarines on 30 November 1967. He reported aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt (SSBN-600 Blue Crew) and Qualified on 14 July 1970. He completed his Naval Career serving in the US Naval Reserve with various SIMA units charged with the responsibility of maintenance to submarines.

Lee Chappell (EM1-SS)

Lee served from 1964 until 1971 on the USS Guardfish (SSN-612), USS Sea Devil (SSN-664) and USS Shark (SSN-591). Lee was qualified on all three boats and left the Navy as a EM1(SS).

Alfred (Jim) Irving (MM1-SS)

Jim served in the US Navy from July 1963 to August 1970. He completed MMA school, Nuclear Power School and Prototype. He qualified and served aboard the USS Patrick Henry (SSBN-599) for 8 patrols, leaving the service as an E-6. He became a life member of the USSVI and Smoky Mountain Base in May of 2017.



**HOLLAND CLUB
MEMBERS AT OUR
AUGUST MEETING**



Pictured above are the new and existing members of the Holland Club that were present at our August meeting. They include from left to right: Standing - William (Wally) Cox, Robert (Bob) Childs, Lee Chappell, Alfred (Jim) Irving, William (Bill) Smith, Bobby (Bob) Lawson, and Duie Swicegood. Seated left to right are - James (Jim) Burkholder, Charles (Charlie) Weller and Gary Davis.



The HOLLAND CLUB is named after John P. Holland, designer of the first US Navy submarine. It is an exclusive group within the US Submarine Veterans organization, where the core requirement for eligibility is the designation "qualified in submarines" for a minimum of fifty years. These men represent the living historical memory of our rich submarine heritage. We would not be where we are today in submarines without them. They are the pioneers who led the way and set the standards for excellence for the Sailors in our submarine fleet today. When these men qualified, diesel powered submarines were state of the art. Some earned their dolphins prior to and others during, World War II, and still others during the Cold War period immediately following. Many, and in some cases most, of those they served with have departed on their final and eternal patrol. They saw the war winning diesel submarines go through radical conversions into many specialized and exotic designs. They witnessed and in many cases participated in the development and testing of the highly successful GUPPY snorkel conversions. Some went on to serve later in attack and ballistic missile nuclear submarines. When we meet a Holland Club member, we are in the presence of the institutional memory of the U.S. Submarine Force. They, along with all their 'brothers of the dolphin', are the historical connection and inspiration for the Submariner of the future. There are no ex-submariners. Submarine qualification passes a man into a mystic brotherhood of undersea warriors, and it marks him forever as one of a special breed. Although they no longer sail beneath the seas, they still wear their 'dolphins' with honor and pride. These Shipmates and those who have gone before served our Nation extremely well. They have justly earned the honor and respect we show them today.



BOONDOGGLE OF THE MONTH

SMB Newsletter Editor: Bruce A. Eltzroth (ET1-SU)

USS Blueback (SS-581)



In June of this year, Smoky Mountain Base member John Augustine and I visited the USS Blueback submarine (SS-581). It is permanently moored in the Willamette River at Portland Oregon near the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI). There are numerous exhibits at OMSI, but the best one (obviously) was the USS Blueback. Our wives and John's grandson accompanied us to OMSI where we explored several of the exhibits which included a learning area for children and a cafeteria. There is also a world class planetarium, various brain-powered exhibits, a giant-screen theater, an antique electrical power generator and numerous additional old time electrical/electronic devices.

The tour of the Blueback started with us going through the aft engine room hatch and continued forward into the torpedo room; covering almost all aspects of submarine life. We had a complete tour of the boat, from stern to bow; and I personally found that swinging thru compartment hatches in the boat was like "Old Hat" for me. The tour was well done by the docents who were very knowledgeable about their vessel and provided thorough, but appropriate answers to questions asked by the tourists.

Photo Credits below are by John and Ann Augustine and Bruce Eltzroth.



John Augustine (MM2-SS) and Bruce Eltzroth (ET1-SU)

One of the men who was on the same tour with us, was a member of the USS Pueblo crew that was captured by the North Koreans back in the 70's. John had a nice long conversation with him and I will leave that for John to talk about later.





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 and my sponsor is indicated below.

I certify that I was designated qualified in USN Submarines aboard _____ in _____ (Yr)

(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 _____ (Yr)

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

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

Signature: _____ **Date:** ____/____/____

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

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

Nat'l Dues: 5 Yr term: \$115.00; 3 Yr term: \$70.00; 1 yr term (Jan thru Sep) \$25.00; (Oct thru Dec adds the next yr): \$30.00;

Nat'l Life: 76+ yrs = \$100.00; 66 thru 75 yrs = \$200; 56 thru 65 yrs = \$300.00; 46 thru 55 = \$400.00; Thru 45 yrs = \$ 500.00;

Local Base/chapter dues are separate and additional. Crash Dive Base dues are \$15 annually.

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

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 here if your Military Service falls within these time periods: Dec 7, 1941, thru Dec 31, 1946, or June 27, 1950, thru Jan 31, 1955; Aug 5, 1964, thru May 7,1975; and Aug 2, 1990 to date.

Check here 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#** _____ **From Yr.** ____ **to Yr.** ____

2. _____ **Hull#** _____ **From Yr.** ____ **to Yr.** ____

3. _____ **Hull#** _____ **From Yr.** ____ **to Yr.** ____

4. _____ **Hull#** _____ **From Yr.** ____ **to Yr.** ____

5. _____ **Hull#** _____ **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)

Upon completion, give this form, including your National and Base membership DUES to the appropriate base officer, or mail to:

Crash Dive Membership Chairman Tom Polzin, 12463 Foxtail Ln, Huntley, IL 60142; Cell 847/867-8668 Fax 847/669-2444