



# Sculpin Base POD

## USSVI Class 4

### Newsletter of the Year-2021

1st Quarter 2026

*The Sculpin Base POD is a quarterly publication of the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. (USSVI) Sculpin Base.*

### USSVI CREED AND PURPOSE

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

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

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

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[USSVI Website](#)

[Sculpin Base Website](#)

## Lost Submarines—First Quarter

### January

#### USS Scorpion (SS-278)

Lost sometime after January 5, 1944 with the loss of 76 men while on her 4th war patrol in the Yellow Sea off China due to unknown causes. It is assumed she was sunk by a mine.



#### USS Argonaut (SS-166)

Lost on January 10, 1943 with the loss of 102 men while on her 3rd war patrol southwest of New Britain. While attacking a convoy, she torpedoed a Japanese destroyer who along with two other destroyers depth charged her. As she tried to surface, the destroyers sunk her by gun fire.



#### USS Swordfish (SS-193)

Lost on January 12, 1945 with the loss of 89 men while on her 13th war patrol by a possible Japanese surface attack or mine somewhere near Okinawa.



#### USS S-36 (SS-141)

Lost on January 20, 1942 while on her 2nd war patrol when she ran aground on the Taka Bakang Reef in the Makassar Strait, east of Borneo and radioed for help. The entire crew was rescued by a Dutch launch boat after she was scuttled.



#### USS S-26 (SS-131)

Lost on January 24, 1942



with the loss of 46 men while on her 2nd war patrol in the Gulf of Panama, 14 miles west of San Jose Light. She was rammed by the USS Sturdy (PC-460) and sunk within seconds. The CO, XO and one lookout on the bridge were the only survivors.

### February

#### USS Barbel (SS-316)

Lost on February 4, 1945 with the loss of 81 men while on her 4th war patrol during a Japanese air attack near the southern entrance to the Palawan Passage.



#### USS Shark I (SS-174)

Lost on February 11, 1942 with the loss of 59 men on her 1st war patrol after receiving orders to proceed to Makassar Strait via the north coast of Celebes. Shark was the 1st US submarine sunk by enemy surface craft in the Pacific.



#### USS Amberjack (SS-219)

Lost on February 16, 1943 with the loss of 72 men while on her 3rd war patrol when she was attacked by a Japanese patrol plane and surface craft off Rabaul in the Solomon Sea.



#### USS Grayback (SS-208)

Lost on February 26, 1944 with the loss of 80 men while on her 10th war patrol when she was attacked by Japanese air and surface craft off Okinawa.



## USS Trout (SS-202)

Lost on February 29, 1944 with the loss of 81 men on her 11th war patrol during a Japanese surface attack southeast of Okinawa in the Philippine Sea.



## March

## USS Perch (SS-176)

Lost on March 3, 1942 with no immediate loss of life while on her 1st war patrol. After two severe depth chargings in less than 200 feet of water by three Japanese destroyers, the crew abandoned ship and scuttled her. Of the 59 men taken prisoner, 6 men died as POWs, and 53 survived the war. Her wreckage has been located off the coast of Java.



## USS Grampus (SS-207)

Lost on March 5, 1943 with the loss of 71 men while on her 6th war patrol. She was lost after engaging two Japanese Destroyers in Vella Gulf near the Solomon Islands.



## USS H-1 (SS-28)

Lost on March 12, 1920 with the loss of 4 men as they tried to swim to shore after grounding on a shoal off Santa Margarita Island, off the coast of Baja California, Mexico. Vestal (AR-4) pulled her off the rocks on the morning of March 24th, only to have her sink 45 minutes later in some 50 feet of water.



## USS Triton (SS-201)

Lost on March 15, 1943 with



the loss of 74 men while on her 6th war patrol when she was sunk during a fight with three Japanese destroyers north of the Admiralty Islands, which are north of New Guinea.

## USS Kete (SS-369)

Lost on March 20, 1945 with the loss of 87 men at the end of her 2nd war patrol between Okinawa and Midway, cause unknown. May have been sunk by a Japanese submarine that was subsequently lost.



## USS F-4 (SS-23)

Lost on March 25, 1915 with the loss of 21 men after she foundered 1.5 miles off of Honolulu. Acid corrosion in the battery tank let seawater into the battery compartment, causing loss of control. F-4 was the first commissioned U.S. submarine to be lost at sea. She was raised in August 1915.



## USS Tullibee (SS-284)

Lost on March 26, 1944 with the loss of 79 men while on her 4th war patrol. It's believed she was a victim of a circular run by one of her own torpedoes north of Palau. The lookout was the only survivor and he survived the war as a Japanese prisoner.



## USS Trigger (SS-237)

Lost on March 28, 1945 with the loss of 89 men while on her 12th war patrol. She was lost during a combined attack by Japanese antisubmarine vessels and aircraft in the East China Sea.



Hello once again Sculpin Base,

Just another friendly reminder of our next meeting which be held this coming Saturday, 02-28 at the Combat Air Museum at Forbes Field in Topeka, Kansas. Lunch will be at 1100 followed by the meeting at 1200 and a tour of the museum at 1430.

Thus far, I have heard from 13 out of 23 members on whether or not they will be attending. **If you have not yet sent me an RSVP, PLEASE RSVP whether you will be in attendance or unable to attend at your earliest opportunity.** This helps tremendously in planning for lunch. Thank you.

An agenda will be sent out prior to the meeting.

Meeting Information:

**SCULPIN BASE MEETING:**

**February 28, 2026 - Lunch at 1100, Meeting at 1200, Museum Tour at 1430**

**Combat Air Museum (Dole Educational Conference Room)**

**7016 SE Forbes Avenue, Topeka, Kansas 66619**

Many thanks, **Bret Cortright 913-710-7860**  
**rm3ss584@yahoo.com**

## The “POD” Piping Tab:

Lost Boats for the first quarter	<a href="#">2</a>
Commander’s page	<a href="#">5</a>
Vice Commander Keith Jeffers	<a href="#">6</a>
Secretary Ellis “Moe” Moses	<a href="#">7</a>
American Dolphin Raffle	<a href="#">7</a>
Chief of the Boat Dennis Mosebey	<a href="#">8</a>
Sea Story—Steve Alfrey	<a href="#">9</a>
Base Chaplain Monte Schmidt	<a href="#">10</a>
Crew Questions	11
Scuttlebutt from the Crew	<a href="#">12</a>
Columbia Class Submarine	<a href="#">13</a>
Submarine Graphics	<a href="#">15</a>
Funnies	16
GEDUNK from the Net	17
Eternal Patrol Notices	<a href="#">22</a>

Other BS scattered about like gear adrift



**February 28th Meeting**

Will be held in Topeka at the **Combat Air Museum** (Dole Educational Conference Room)  
7016 SE Forbes Avenue  
Topeka, KS 66619

**Lunch at 1100**  
**Meeting starts at 12 noon**  
**Museum Tour at 1430**

Bring a new member  
**Spouses welcome**  
(and encouraged to keep us in line)

**The “Sculpin Base POD” is the Quarterly Newsletter of the Sculpin Base - United States Submarine Veterans.**

**Newsletter Editor:**  
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Your Sea Stories and Input are always **WELCOME!!**

**Next Deadline is 10 May 2026**



## Commander— Bret Cortright, Sr.

### Greetings Sculpin Base Members!

It appears as if we are starting to see some movement in garnering support on the acquisition of the Sail and Rudder of the USS Topeka.

In a joint meeting between members of the Sculpin Base and members of the Board of Directors of the Combat Air Museum, we may finally have obtained the alliance needed to achieve our goal of bringing the Sail and the Rudder of the USS Topeka to the City of Topeka for a permanent Memorial.

While very preliminary, by working with the Combat Air Museum, we potentially now have the answers to numerous questions such as, where will it go? How will it get there? How will the site be designed? And many more.

I will be giving a more detailed update at the meeting which is now scheduled for February 28<sup>th</sup>.

Speaking of the meeting, due to numerous scheduling conflicts within the membership, the meeting was rescheduled from the original date of February 21<sup>st</sup> to one week later on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Please see the email I sent out regarding the meeting with times, location, etc...

As I sit at my desk writing this column, I look out the window at the snow blanketing my yard. I do not deny that I am not a fan of snow, it is cold, wet and messy. It keeps me from activities that I enjoy which are best done outdoors. As I wish for Spring to arrive, I cannot help but think that Summer will be right on its tail and with that, we, as a base will begin our parade season.

There are a few parades that we have become regular attendees. My question to each of you, do you know of any others around Kansas that perhaps we can get in? I myself am looking for others, hopefully some that have an event attached.

By event I mean, a town celebration, a fair, carnival, craft booths and that sort of stuff. Reason is, as a base, we need to do more than

just parades. Parades are fun and have their place but, we can go beyond that. This has been briefly discussed at previous base meetings. I think we should create static displays of the Submarine Service. Things we can set up and actually talk to people instead of simply waving at them.

In these static displays, we can present what life was like onboard a submarine. Using photographs, posters, models and the testimony from someone who has actually been there. Based on comments I have heard yelled from parade crowds, I cannot help but think we will attract people who want to know more. It may also be an excellent opportunity to gain public support of our efforts with the USS Topeka.

Finally, I would like to plant a seed in everyone's mind. We are about to have our February meeting, that will quickly be followed by our meeting in May. At our May meeting, as Base Commander I will be establishing a Nominating Committee to develop a slate of candidates for the all base elected positions. Per our bylaws, our base election will be held at the August meeting with new officer installation performed at the November meeting.

The seed I want to plant is this; run for an office. **Get involved with YOUR base.** Be an active participant in something special. Being a Submariner is special, I still feel it every time someone comes up to me pointing at my cap saying "You a submariner? That's cool." Give it some thought, it's really not that difficult of a job, I have done harder. And remember, the office of Secretary and Treasurer can be held by Auxiliary members. So, if you are an Auxiliary member, there is a job for you.

I am looking forward to seeing each of you at **the Combat Air Museum on February 28th**, until then, stay safe and take care.

Bret





## Vice Commander Keith Jeffers

Hello Shipmates!

Well, we have had a winter full of ups and downs weather wise and lots of strange news events around the country. For this POD, I have included some news about submarines and nuclear happenings, so both fore and aft crews can be informed of what is occurring in our underwater world.

That pesky groundrat predicted 6 more weeks of winter, big surprise. We have been having false spring days, but rest assured that winter is not done with us yet. Just thank heavens that we have not experienced the “Bomb Cyclones” that the east coast is going through. Everyone stay safe and as we were on the boats, be ready for anything.

I have been busy planning and preparing our regional responders for the upcoming 2026 World Cup games that we will be hosting at the Arrowhead Stadium in June and July. At this time of printing, the planning group is estimating between 2 and 4 million foreign national visitors to the Kansas City area. There will be 4 national teams home-based in the KC area—with Algeria at Lawrence, Argentina at KC-KS (Legends), England at KC-MO and Netherlands at Riverfront Park, MO for the 6 weeks of the World Cup. Add to the confusion of several major highways being closed for maintenance projects, thousands of non-English speaking drivers, and every hotel and camping area being booked, its also going to be a weird summer.

Commander Bret and Secretary Moe and I with a few of the other Sculpin Base members have been working on ideas for membership and also on the new trailer that Moe has been working on. We can use YOUR HELP with all of these projects.

If you have an idea for a membership drive, a fundraising program or have some skills to share on the newest Sculpin Base Float, please share you insights

and talents. Moe will have some information about the new Float at the next meeting.

Moe has been hosting Zoom meetings with the other USSVI Base officers in our region, and has suggested to also hold some virtual meetings for the Sculpin Base in between the regular quarterly meetings. I think this would be a great program to let us stay in contact while staying home. Look for an invite soon to get everyone together outside of the in-person meetings.

Please reach out to any submarine veterans that you know and share a copy of the newsletter with them, and invite them to the meetings. Its great to get together and share our stories about the common and uncommon events we all experienced. I have asked for sea stories, and our first few are included in this POD. Enjoy!

I hope to see you all at the meeting February 28th at the Combat Air Museum in Topeka.

Keith Jeffers [kjeffers46@yahoo.com](mailto:kjeffers46@yahoo.com)



Now what? ... Oh God, Ernie! Navy ants!



## Base Secretary Ellis Dale "Moe" Moses

Membership renewals have been sent out.

Membership status expires on the 31st of December for both the National and Base levels. Once you receive your specific membership status letter, please submit any dues to me with checks made out to SCULPIN BASE and I will then submit to National.

Storekeeper Items:

Sculpin Base Caps.....\$20.00

Sculpin Base Patch.....\$5.00

USSVI 2023 calendars.....\$8.00

If there is any sub related items that you may be interested in, please let me know and I will see about getting it.

P.S. We have some I-335 Submarine Memorial Hwy patches provided by our Sister Base,

Topeka-Jefferson City. Just come to a parade or meeting.

### ZOOM Meetings

Moe is coordinating a series of Zoom Meetings for the Sculpin Base members to be done in-between our regular meetings. The information to log in will be sent a few weeks before each session. This will allow us to visit with each other from the comfort from our homes and have everyone participate easier.

*Look for the Zoom Meeting information in your emails soon.*

### USA—DOLPHINS ART RAFFLE

Here's a chance to own a one-of-a-kind piece of metal art. Value is approximately \$600-700. It is a 36" wide by 22" tall 3D piece of metal art. It is pictured below and here's a link to a Video [Here](#).

<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1AjJReztpk/>

1 Chance for \$10, 2 for \$20, 3 for \$30 so on. To enter for a chance to win just make a donation to the USSVI National convention at the link below: [2026 USSVI National Convention - Veterans Event - USSVCF](#) Drawing to be held Feb 27th.

<https://ussvcf.org/2026-ussvi-national-convention/>

This is a really nice piece, why not take a chance and help us out while at it? 100% of every penny donated will go to support you and your shipmates at the 2026 convention in corpus Christi. Prize will be hand delivered or shipped (depending on location) within 1 week of the contest finish on Feb 28th!

On behalf of our team,

**Rick Mitchell**  
**USSVI National Convention 2026**  
**512-639-0035**



**Chief of the Boat  
Dennis Mosebey**



**COB Corner**

Hello shipmates. Well, we made it through 2025. May you all have a good 2026. There is not much to write about. I do want to thank Keith Jeffers for his keeping us up to date on storm conditions last week. Pays to have an Emergency Plan guy in our group. I also want to thank Dale Moses for his work on getting a trailer for Little Skate and for his diligence in doing it without spending a lot of money.

The President is authorizing battleship construction! Why? I have no idea. They were proven obsolete in WW II. I do not know what yards he will build them in. We have the Virginia Class falling behind and we need those boats to replace the Los Angeles Class, plus we are building the new Boomer, Columbia class, and of course we have boats in service needing maintenance too. Anyhow, in my opinion this is a waste of money. I do not care how well he arms them; they are obsolete. Consider the Bismarck, state of the art German battleship with first use of radar-controlled guns. She sank the HMS Hood but then was sunk herself. Then there was Tirpitz, which spent most of the war in a fjord in Norway. Interestingly the Norwegians took some of her armor plate and used it to repair roads! So, in Norway if you are in the right place, you can actually drive over part of Tirpitz, Oh well? Just more fodder for Chinese or Russian torpedoes.

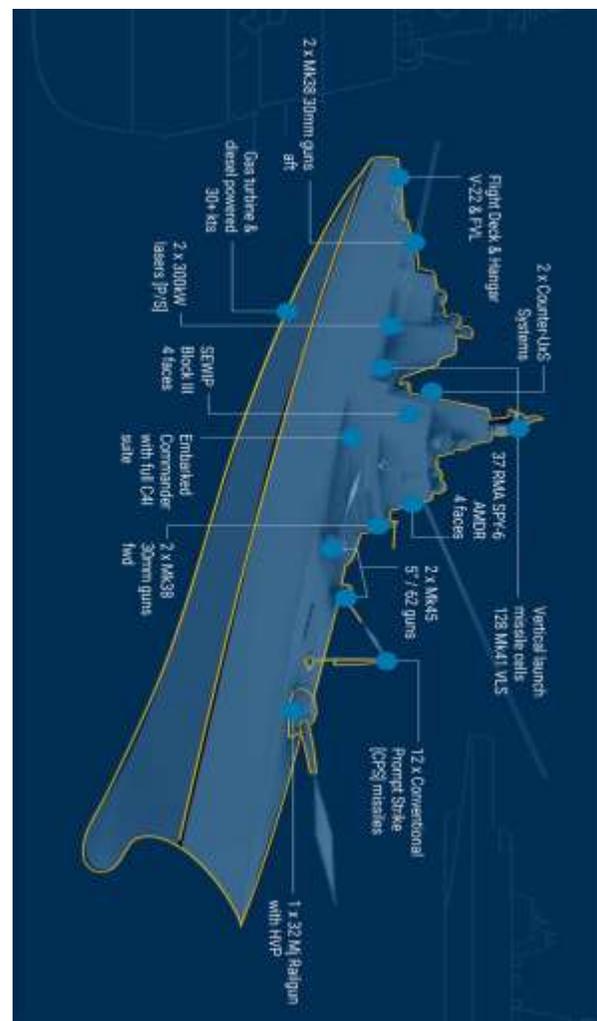
AI is showing up more these days making websites even more questionable. I have used it a couple of times to get details on subjects and it made sense, but to an old guy like me it seems about as trustworthy as bitcoin! I hope to see more of you at

the February 28 meeting at Combat Air Museum in Topeka. We cannot have an active group without more attendance so please come if you can.

Happy New Year!

COB Dennis Mosebey

**Trump Class Battleship—USS Defiant**





### No Shower Challenge

On the eve of my longest underwater voyage, 54 days in the Vietnam War zone of the Tonkin Gulf, about 15 or so of the USS Sargo's crew and I were enjoying a few beers at the EM club Subic Bay, Phillipines.

The Sargo had just completed the first leg of my initial West Pac cruise. As the alcohol was doing it's work one of the guys suggested that we start a pool to help keep one of the submarine's most important resources, fresh water, fully replenished and give the stills a much needed rest. The rules: \$20 participation fee, NO showers, NO GI baths, NO nothing (only teeth brushing), winner take all. When the pot got over \$300 I said, "I'm in!" When we embarked on our patrol the pot money was given to the Chief of the Boat who was called the "COB-DOC" (he was a Hospital Corpsman hence the nickname) for safe keeping, I think around \$340 which was a good sum of money for a young sailor in 1971. After about one week of non bathing the weak started to drop out. Eleven days in I was laying in my rack holding my arms as close to my body as I could to keep the stench emanating from my armpits from reaching my nasal area. My plan didn't work. I couldn't get to sleep and I needed to be alert on my next watch. I gave up. There were still about 10 guys holding out for the big prize. As the days passed there about 3 "losers" a week that were dropping out. At the end of 30 days there were only 2 hardcore participants left, "Snowflake" and "Crazy Willy." We had 2 Willys on the boat, one Willy worked in the engine room and was called "Nuke Willy." "Crazy Willy" was a Torpedoman. To this day I think "Snowflake," who was a very intelligent Sonarman who looked at you with a stare and half smile when talking and "Crazy Willy" who loved to fight and participated in Smokers (boxing) when in port, were both from the Appalachian Mountain area of West Virginia and had some kind of an inside track to non bathing! Anyway, after 33 days "Crazy Willy" dropped out and "Snowflake" collected the prize. There's a weird ending to the No Shower Challenge. The Champion, "Snowflake," continued to not shower! When he walked around the boat it was like he had an invisible bubble around him. NOBODY would get within 6 feet of "Snowflake" because of the odor. Finally the COB-DOC convinced him to take a shower. The crew could then sit down for dinner in the crew's mess without worrying "Snowflake" would show up. Never underestimate those guys from West Virginia.

RM2(SS) Steve Alfrey



**Base Chaplain  
Lamont "Monte" Schimdt**



**The Submariner's Prayer**

Almighty, Everlasting God, the Protector of all those who put their trust in Thee: hear our prayers in behalf of Thy servants who sail their vessels beneath

the seas.

We beseech Thee to keep in Thy sustaining care all who are in submarines, that they may be delivered from the hidden dangers of the deep.

Grant them courage, and a devotion to fulfill their duties, that they may better serve Thee and their native land.

Though acquainted with the depths of the ocean, deliver them from the depths of despair and the dark hours of the absence of friendliness and grant them a good ship's spirit.

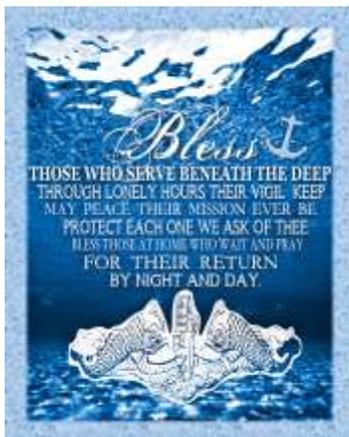
Bless all their kindred and loved ones from whom they are separated.

When they surface their ships, may they praise Thee for Thou art there as well as in the deep.

Fill them with Thy Spirit that they may be sure in their reckonings, unwavering in duty, high in purpose, and upholding the honor of their nation.

Amen

Author unknown



**Excuses not to be a USSVI member or not to renew your membership**

- 1) "I don't like to go to meetings"
- 2) "You guys don't do anything, you just meet."
- 3) "It's too far to travel"
- 4) "Place your excuse here"

Meetings are chance were we exchange ideas and are only as good as what YOU put into them. We need your opinions, and ideas.

Yes, some meetings may be just meetings, especially for new Bases just getting started. But soon ideas and opinions are exchanged that working together to achieve a common goal starts us moving ahead. It may be parades, educating our youth and public, or fund-raising for our future Base projects. We start working together and we get that feeling of accomplishment. And the sea-stories we tell which honors our shipmates and those who have gone before us. Meetings are what YOU put into them.

Too far to drive? How about carpooling with another member? Again, the sea-stories while travelling with a shipmate strengthens our Base and can inspire you both.

Only YOU can make YOUR Base better.

Ellis Dale "Moe" Moses, Secretary

**Can you host a meeting in your area? Our area is large and to be fair to all members we agreed to have a "travelling base". This means that we move our meeting to different cities and towns in our membership area. Unlike other Veterans groups that might own a building, the USSVI does not own property (w/e of Groton). We meet at restaurants, VFW's, American Legions, etc.. Membership is encouraged in these organizations. Can you host a meeting in your area? If so, let one of the Officers know.**

## Sculpin Base Crew Stories

**Dr. Harold A. Laurence, IV**  
(TAD)

### Qual Boat USS Seahorse SSN-669

**Question # 1:** What are the Nicknames that you had on your Boats? Something for yourself or those strange ones from your shipmates that you remember - please give us a story of how those names were made to those guys.

**TAD:** On the boat I used to do Bible verse memorization. One week I was memorizing 1 Corinthians 15:55, "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" One of my shipmates saw that I had that verse posted above my stateroom desk to help me remember to work on memorization. He asked me about the verse and I told him what it meant. From then on my nickname in the wardroom was, "The man who's not afraid to die."

**Question # 2:** When you qualified - what were the systems that you had the most fun learning about, or what was your Qualification walk-through and / or Qual Board experience like?

Most of the time an officer's final checkout with the Squadron is done by the Squadron Engineer. When my turn came around the Squadron Commander decided he wanted to do the final checkout on the next officer who was ready. Sadly, that was me so I reported aboard the tender and went to see Commadore Fiori. He was an affable man but his questions tended to be related to what the regulations said boats should do, versus what is actually done on the pier. Let's just say there were some differences. Not being one to tell lies, I spent the first day putting the Squadron Engineer and my fellow squadron submarines on report. I went back to my boat in the afternoon and was immediately directed to see the CO. He was in a fine mood after being quizzed by the squadron on his failures to follow Squadron regulations, and informed me the other CO's on the pier weren't too happy either. So we had a disagreement about honesty and I went back for a second day with lookups for Commadore Fiori and a new round of questions. It was only slightly better than day one, and I was not making a lot of friends down in the Squadron Engineer's office! Day three of the interview ended with my lookups from day two and I was off the hook with my integrity intact and a just a few less friends.

**Question # 3:** Tell us a story about something you did, either at sea or in port - that is not a classified event. Keep it clean about the in-port visits, please.

**TAD:** Recently, I was reminded of an incident at sea. It was a situation that occurred during a wardroom meal. I generally did not enjoy the food on USS SEAHORSE. Not throwing stones at the cooks, they did well, but the materials and recipes were not appetizing. I mostly lived on fresh baked yeast rolls and canned vegetables on deployments. One day I broke open a yeast roll and found a dead bug in the middle of my roll! I looked down the table at the Chop and asked him if there were bugs in the flour because I have one in this roll. He never flinched, and just said pass that to me. I passed the roll down the table, whence he immediately squished it down to as small a pellet as he could make it, and threw it in the trash can. Then he said, "Get another roll." He never had any expression on his face, he just kept eating his meal! Maybe this is not as funny a story if you weren't there, but it was done with such alacrity, and so curtly, that I began to wonder if they taught Chops how to do that in Supply Officer school! :)



.....And please don't give up on your Base either.

Right now you may be asking; "What am I getting out of being a member?" We all want to belong to a organization that we can share in the pride of belonging. Be patient. We are just gathering new ideas and learning about each other. This takes time...and remember what Mom and Dad said; "You get out of it, what you put into it." Get involved, be proud. We are moving forward, so "Damn the torpedoes". We are picking up speed. CONN—MANUEVERING—CAVITATE!



## Scuttlebutt from the Crew

The POD is a quarterly newsletter, and you may submit sea-stories, submarine related news, and jokes at any time. We will try to get the POD out a week to ten days prior to our meetings date. Articles should be received no later than two weeks prior to the meeting. The deadline for our next issue will be 9 May 2026. Feedback is always welcome at [kjeffers46@yahoo.com](mailto:kjeffers46@yahoo.com)

### Navy Jargon

A **sound-powered telephone** is a communication device that allows users to talk to each other with the use of a handset, similar to a conventional telephone, but without the use of external power. This technology has been used since at least 1944[1] for both routine and emergency communication on ships to allow communication between key locations on a vessel if power is unavailable.[2] A sound-powered phone circuit can have two or more stations on the same circuit. The circuit is always live, thus a user begins speaking rather than dialing another station. Sound-powered telephones are not normally connected to a telephone exchange.

The microphone transducer converts sound pressure from a user's voice into an electric current, which is then converted back to sound by a transducer at the receiver nodes. The most significant distinction between ordinary telephones and sound-powered telephones is in the operation of the microphone. Since the microphones used in most telephones are designed to modulate a supplied electric current they cannot be used in sound-powered transducers. Most sound-powered telephones use a dynamic microphone. A common approach to transducer design is the balanced armature design because of its efficiency. The number of simultaneous listeners is limited because there is no amplification of the signal.

A sound-powered telephone circuit can be as simple as two handsets connected together with a pair of wires, which is defined as the "talk" portion of the circuit. Talk circuits can be realized over a pair of wires that are 50 km (30 miles) long. More complex circuits include magnetos, selector switches and bells to allow one user to select and call another, which is defined as the "calling" portion of the circuit. The voice communication ("talk") circuit is completely separate from the "call" circuit, allowing communication to take place without external power. - *source Wikipedia*  
*They got me and another un-named shipmate in trouble when the Engineer was monitoring from his stateroom...*

**Steinke hood**, named for its inventor, Lieutenant Harris Steinke, is a device designed to aid escape from a sunken submarine. In essence, it is an inflatable life jacket with a hood that completely encloses the wearer's head, trapping a bubble of breathable air. It is designed



to assist buoyant ascent. An advancement over its predecessor, the Momsen lung, Steinke first invented and tested it in 1961 by escaping from the USS

Balao at a depth of 318 ft (97 m); it became standard equipment in all submarines of the United States Navy throughout the Cold War period. The U.S. Navy replaced Steinke hoods on U.S. submarines with escape suits called Submarine Escape Immersion Equipment in the late 2000s.



### The Navy's \$348 Billion Columbia-Class Nuclear Missile Submarine Might Be the Most Stealth Sub Ever

**Summary and Key Points:** The U.S. Navy's Columbia-class ballistic missile submarine program, identified as the Pentagon's top acquisition priority, is reportedly 60% complete and on track for delivery in 2030.

-However, with the entire program coming in at a whopping \$348 Billion and delays mounting, questions about this sub keep surfacing, no pun intended.

-Designed to replace the aging Ohio-class fleet, the Columbia features a revolutionary electric drive propulsion system that promises to make it the stealthiest submarine ever built.

-Additional innovations include an X-shaped stern for better maneuverability, "fly-by-wire" navigation adapted from the Virginia-class, and a "life-of-core" nuclear reactor that eliminates the need for mid-life refueling.

-These advancements allow the Navy to maintain strategic deterrence with just 12 Columbia boats replacing the current 14 Ohio vessels.

#### **The Stealthiest Submarine Ever? Inside the Navy's Columbia-Class**

Lurking secretly in dark waters around the world and holding potential adversaries at risk of nuclear destruction from unknown locations, the U.S. Navy's nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarines offer the backbone of U.S. strategic deterrence.

Undersea strategic deterrence essentially guarantees second-strike retaliatory catastrophic destruction of any adversary who attacks the U.S. with nuclear weapons, thus preventing war by ensuring the complete annihilation of any country that attacks with nuclear weapons.

The promise of total destruction, somewhat paradoxically, one might say, keeps the peace.

This conceptual premise is why, for many years now, the Pentagon has identified the now emerging Columbia-class nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarines as a number one DoD acquisition priority. After years of science and technology, prototyping, and advanced design specs, the U.S. Navy is now building its first Columbia-class submarine, slated to arrive at the end of the decade.

#### **Production Delays**

Despite numerous public reports raising questions about the timing of the Columbia class and the possibility of delivery delays, the first Columbia-class subma-

rine is reported by USNI to now be 60% complete and on track for delivery in 2030.

#### **Stealthiest Submarine Ever?**

Designed to replace the aging fleet of Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines, which have performed admirably for decades, well beyond their expected service life, the Columbias will introduce a wide sphere of new technological leaps forward in the realm of the undersea.

Columbia-class innovations

The innovations woven into the Columbia-class submarines are numerous. Perhaps the most significant of these innovations is the new, ultra-quiet electric drive propulsion system, replacing legacy hydraulic systems.

Among other things, this new drive propulsion system means that Columbia-class submarines will be much harder to detect than existing Ohio-class submarines and therefore better positioned for clandestine strategic deterrence missions.

An electric drive has other advantages as well, enabling more onboard electrical power sufficient to sustain onboard command and control, navigational systems, and the energy required by many of its technologies.

Navy engineers explain that in today's Ohio-class submarines, a reactor plant generates heat, which creates steam.

The steam then turns turbines, which produce electricity and propel the ship forward through "reduction gears," which translate the high-speed energy from the turbines into the shaft RPMs needed to move the boat's propeller.

#### **Longer Missions**

Columbias are also being built with a new X-shaped stern intended to improve both maneuverability and quieting for the submarine. Columbias are also built with a "life-of-core" nuclear reactor, which does not require dry-docking for lengthy mid-life refueling procedures.

This massively improves operational tempo, deployability, and mission resilience. It is the reason why the Navy plans to build only 12 Columbia-class boats to replace the current fleet of 14 Ohio-class submarines.

Yet another interesting element of the Columbia-class is that it is being engineered with a handful of innovations now integrated into the U.S. Navy's Block III Virginia-class attack submarines.

These include the integration of a fiber-optic cable linking periscope sights to command-and-control centers on board, eliminating the need for submariners to stand directly below a periscope. Depending upon how the cable is configured, Commanders can view periscope images from anywhere within the submarine.



## Columbia Class Submarine (cont)

An equally, if not more, impactful Virginia-class Block III innovation is the “fly-by-wire” navigational system also built into the Columbias.

Instead of relying on hydraulic or mechanical navigation, fly-by-wire uses computer automation to regulate speed, depth, and other critical navigational variables while ensuring human decision-makers operate in a command-and-control capacity.

This expedites the application of critical, potentially time-sensitive navigational adjustments.

### About the Author: Kris Osborn

*Kris Osborn is the President of Warrior Maven – Center for Military Modernization. Osborn previously served at the Pentagon as a highly qualified expert in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army—Acquisition, Logistics & Technology. Osborn has also worked as an anchor and on-air military specialist at national TV networks. He has appeared as a guest military expert on Fox News, MSNBC, The Military Channel, and The History Channel. He also has a Masters Degree in Comparative Literature from Columbia University*

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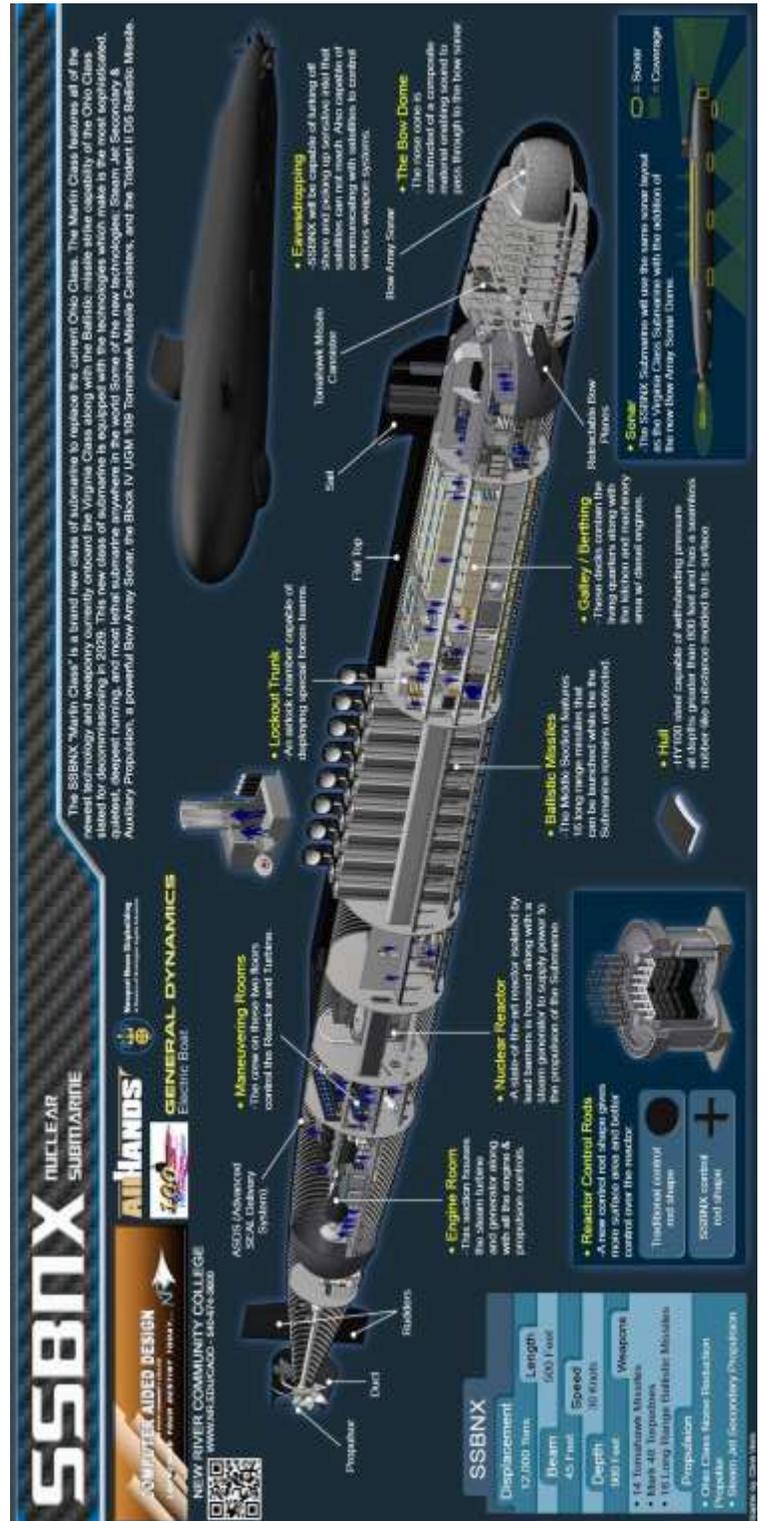
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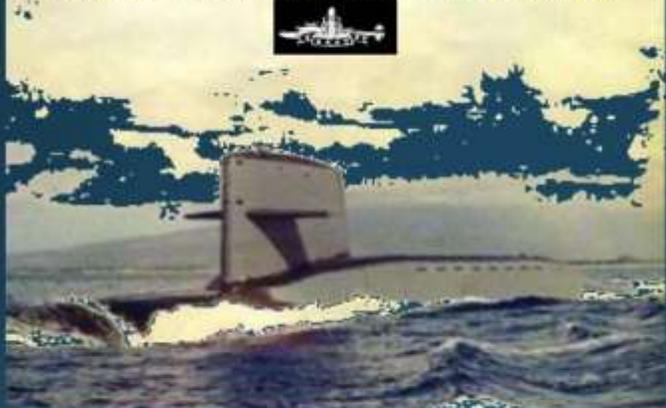


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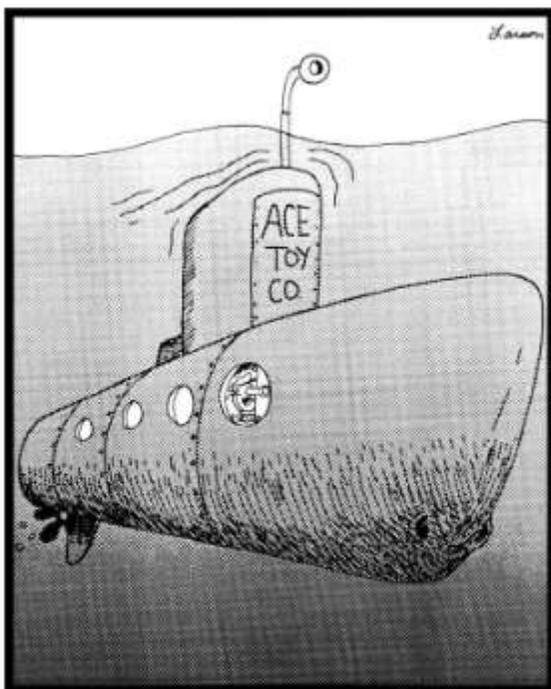
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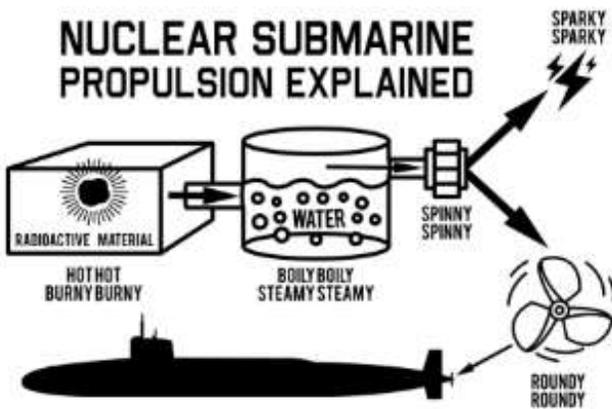
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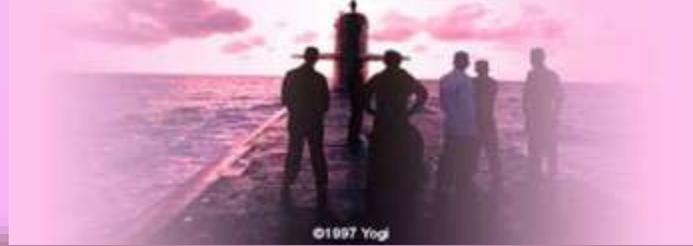
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Got Links or pictures you want to share with the Sculpin Base? Send us some.



*On Eternal Patrol  
...Sailor, rest your oar*



Lastly, this newsletter will honor those members and non-members who wore Dolphins by listing those who went on Eternal Patrol. We learned much of what we know of submarines from those who were ahead of us and guided us. We did the same. The Silent Service is a proud service. We know the sacrifices that we made and those made by our past shipmates, those we taught, and those they taught.

If you have a friend or shipmate that has passed, even if they are not a USSVI member, please submit a short obituary and comments. We will list them here..

