

American Submariners Inc.
4370 Twain Ave.
San Diego, CA 92120-3404

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The Silent Sentinel

May 2009



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 towards greater accomplishment and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution.

SUBVETS BREAKFAST

Sunday, 31 May 2009

***Doors at the VFW on Twain open at
8 a.m.***

***Stimulate your wallet with our rock bottom price
and your stomach with our great tasting food!***

U.S. Submarine Veterans San Diego Base

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The Silent Sentinel via Email

To all of my Shipmates and families who currently receive our Great newsletter via the mail who would like it sent via email or continue to receive it via mail, please fill out the form and mail it to the base or myself. We are trying to cut the cost of the newsletter down from \$3700 to about \$1900 a year. By receiving the Silent Sentinel via email will cut down the printing and mailing cost. The other plus to receiving it via email is you can save it on your computer and not have the paper lying around the house.

A subscription to the Silent Sentinel newsletter will be available to surviving family members via internet email, at no charge, upon notification of the Membership Chairman. If a printed hard-copy is preferred, via US Post Office delivery, an annual donation of \$5.00 will be requested to cover costs.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

Would like the SILENT SENTINEL emailed: YES _____ NO _____

Robert Bissonnette
1525 Walbollen St.
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USSVI Base Commander
c/o VFW Post 3787
4370 Twain Ave.
San Diego, CA 92120-3404

DUE TO LOGISTICS CONSTRAINTS, ALL INPUTS FOR THE SILENT SENTINEL MUST BE IN MY HAND NO LATER THAN *ONE WEEK* AFTER THE MONTHLY MEETING. IF I DO NOT RECEIVE IT BY THIS TIME, THE ITEM WILL NOT GET IN. NO EXCEPTIONS! MIKE

May Meeting

Our monthly meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month at VFW Post 3787, 4370 Twain Ave., San Diego. Our March meeting will be on 12 May 2009. The post is located one-half block West of Mission Gorge Road, just north of I-8. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. The E-Board meets one hour earlier at 6 p.m.

Check us out on the World Wide Web

www.ussvisandiego.org

BINNACLE LIST

Richard Fullen (recuperating in Santee)

Mike Hyman (Crohn's Disease)

C J Glassford (recuperating at home)

Bob Coates (doing well at home)

Mike Green's wife received a condolence letter from National. He is fine. Verified!

Dick Fullen, unfortunately is back in the Nursing Home with Pneumonia. Seems to be doing OK, but is no longer recuperating at home. Can be visited/called at: Villa Monte Vista, 12696 Monte Vista, Poway, Ca 92064, 858-487-6242, Room 119. Dick's wife said he'd be pleased to see/hear from any of us.

Tom Warner's wife *Sherry* is finally back home recuperating after being seriously injured in a car accident. Tom and Sherry both thank you for the calls and get well wishes.

Submitted by Mike Hyman and Ron Gorence

Submarine Losses in April

Submitted by C J Glassford



S - 49 (SS 160) - Duty Section on Board :
Battery Explosion, on 20 Apr 1926, at Submarine Base, New London, Connecticut : " 4 MEN LOST "

PICKEREL (SS 177) - 74 Men on Board :
Sunk, on 3 Apr 1943, by Japanese Minelayer and Auxiliary Sub Chaser, Off Northern Honshu, Japan :
" ALL HANDS LOST "

GRENADIER (SS 210) - 80 Men on Board :
 Scuttled, on 22 Apr 1943, after Japanese Seaplane Attacks Damaged the Boat the previous day, off Penang, Malasia :
 " 4 MEN LOST - 76 MEN SURVIVED POW CAMP "

GUDGEON (SS 211) - 78 Men on Board :
 Probably Sunk, on 18 Apr 1944, By Japanese Naval Aircraft, Southwest of Iwo Jima :
 " ALL HANDS LOST "

SNOOK (SS 279) - 84 Men on Board:
 Probably Sunk, on 9 April 1945, by a combination of Japanese Naval Aircraft, Escort Vessel, Coast Defense Vessels,
 and/or Japanese Submarine, In the Nansei Soto Area:
 " ALL HANDS LOST "

THRESHER (SSN 593) - 129 Men on Board:
 Sunk, on 10 April 1963, after a possible Pipeing Failure during
 Deep Submergence Tests, Off the New England Coast
 " ALL HANDS LOST "

BONEFISH (SS 582) - 77 Men on Board:
 Battery Fire and Explosion. on 24 April 1988, While operating off the Florida Coast : " 3 MEN LOST "



Wheelchairs for Veterans

Tom Warner, one of our members and also a member of *Knights of Columbus* wants us to know that as a Knight, he has access to some wheelchairs for veterans. The caveat is that the chairs have to go to veterans who need them for non military reasons (the VA will take care of them if it is military related injury).

If you or any other veteran has a need such as this, please do not hesitate to let Tom know. He may be reached at 619-884-8471.

Commander's Corner

May 2009

Hello All, and it was great to be back in town to enjoy our last meeting. It was great to see so many faces at the meeting. At the next meeting I will have a short presentation of Mike and my adventure in Prudhoe Bay Alaska during APLIS 2009 with the USS HELENA SSN 725 and USS ANNAPOLIS SSN 760. As most of you have seen in the last Silent Sentinel, my picture on St. Patty's Day when it was -40 degrees out. We had several days like that. I want to thank the E-Board (Bill Earl & Jim Bilka) for keeping the show on the road.

I was able to join in on the Tolling of the Boats at the Harbor View on the 17th of April and enjoyed the 109th Submarine Birthday Ball. Yes CJ was there all dressed up and looking good too. He was the oldest/longest Qualified sailor there and cut the cake with the 5 newly qualified enlist sailors and 1 newly qualified officer. It was a great time had by all.

Things that are around the corner... We are hosting a Silent Auction Fund Raiser on the 12 June 2009 at the Holiday Inn Bay Side for the 2009 National Convention. It will start at 5pm and rap-up around 10pm. More info to come. I will take any donations for the auction (silent or live) and store them. The items can be Submarine related or wine baskets or coffee baskets or sports items.

Whatever you think would be good for the auction and thing people would bid on. I'm open for ideas. I will be looking for some help to get things set-up and collect money before, during, and after the auction. Please contact me if you can assist. Thanks!!!!!!

Remember in MAY, we are having Breakfast on the 31st, so come on out with the family and enjoy some Great cooking from our kitchen crew and the smiling face of our shipmates serving the food and hot coffee.

In July we will be hosting the 3rd Annual Picnic on Sub Base with at least 1 tour of a boat (if there is any import), games, BBQ, and door prizes. No date has been picked yet. More to follow.

As you all can see we have a lot on our plate with events going on each month. So please come and bring a friend, and enjoy a good time. One more thing I almost forgot about...

On 25 May, there will be a Memorial Service on Sub Base for Memorial Day followed by a Wreath Laying Ceremony and refreshments To all my shipmates out there, have a Great and Safe Summer!!!

Sincerely,

Your Base Commander, Bob Bissonnette

Checking Account Balance @ 2/27/2009 **\$ 4,032.78**

INCOME for MARCH 2009

40/30/30 Base (2/10 & 3/10)	85.00	
Midrats (2/10 & 3/10) (\$45 - 20 expense)	60.00	
Ship's Store (2/10 & 3/10)	130.50	
 Subtotal		 275.50

Membership 475.00

Scholarship from 40/30/30 (2/10 & 3/10)	84.00
Donation	0.00
Other Scholarship Income	70.00

Scholarship Income for March 154.00

Total Income for March (per Bank Stmt) **\$ 904.50**

EXPENSES for MARCH 2009

Membership	335.00	
Imaging Technologies - S.S. Printing	112.85	
Phil Richeson - 1/2 Embroidery Comp Program	100.00	
Postmaster - Bulk Mailing Fee Renewal	180.00	
		727.85

Total Expenses for March (per Bank Stmt) **\$ 727.85**

Checking Account Balance @ 03/30/2009 **\$ 4,209.43**

ASSETS

Base Checking (03/30/09)		\$ 4,209.43
Scholarship Fund Included in Base Checking	3,069.24	
Base Savings (03/30/09)		9,325.56
Convention Account (03/31/09)		31,775.77

TOTALASSETS **\$45,310.76**

Veterans Saluting

As originally written into Section 595 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009, the new law (Public Law No. 110-181 of the United States Code) reads:

by striking “all persons present” and all that follows through the end of the section and inserting the following: “all persons present in uniform should render the military salute. Members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute. All other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, or if applicable, remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Citizens of other countries present should stand at attention. All such conduct toward the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag passes.”

However, this change in the U.S. Code caused problems, because “saluting the flag” is addressed three times in the U.S. Code, and the legislative change in the law that took place in July 2008 addressed only one— TITLE 4, Chapter 1, Section 9, which is shown above.

It failed to mention Title 4, Chapter 1, Section 4 from the same Chapter 1, which speaks to saluting the flag during the Pledge of Allegiance, and from Title 36—Patriotic and National Observances, Ceremonies, and Organizations, which includes conduct toward the flag during the National Anthem.

Instruction for saluting the the U.S. Flag during the National Anthem is found in a different section of the U.S. Code from where the “Flag Code” is found, and it is sadly, frequently, overlooked. Many readers comment that they were taught to stand at attention during the National Anthem, but not taught to salute.

Senator James Inhofe (R-Oklahoma) sponsored the original legislation in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009, and sponsored the amendment that Congress has now passed which clarifies the legislation and brings all three sections of the U.S. Code together to say the same thing—that veterans are now permitted to render a hand salute when the U.S. flag is raised and lowered, passes in review, during the Pledge of Allegiance, and during the playing of the National Anthem.

The amendment: Sponsor of The Veteran’s Salute Provision included in Section 595 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009, S. 3001:

-Amends Title 36 of the United States Code to allow service members not in uniform to salute the flag during the National Anthem.

-FY08 Authorization Bill modified Section 9 of Title 4, US Code, to allow members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform to render the military salute during hoisting, lowering, or passing of the flag

-While the change made to US Code Title 4 allowed our veterans and service members not in uniform to salute the flag when the flag is raised, lowered, or passing in review, it did not allow them to salute the flag during the National Anthem

With this amendment, all portions of the US Code are now consistent for veterans and military out of uniform, to salute the flag.

Countless veterans have continued to render a military salute to the flag, from the day they first raised their right hand and took an Oath of Allegiance.

This option which allows veterans to salute the flag with a military-style salute is voluntary. Many veterans are pleased by the change in legislation, and many veterans will continue to salute the flag by holding their hands over their heart. I’m glad the U.S. Code now reflects that choice.

Damaged Sub Crossing Ocean, Amphib In Dry Dock

By Andrew Scutro, Navy Times, April 26, 2009

fter being out of action in the Middle East for more than a month, a submarine and amphib that collided just outside the Strait of Hormuz on March 20 have begun the next phase of their repairs.

The week of April 19, the attack submarine Hartford began a surface transit back to the U.S., and amphibious transport dock New Orleans went into dry dock Saturday in Bahrain, said Lt. Nate Christensen, a 5th Fleet spokesman.

Christensen said the mishap and safety investigations are not yet complete.

The collision occurred with Hartford submerged but near the surface as both were entering the Persian Gulf at night. The contact tore a 16-by-18-foot hole in the hull of New Orleans, ripping open a fuel tank and two ballast tanks. There was “substantial” flooding after the accident, Christensen said.

Hartford’s sail was bent and partially torn off the hull. A bowplane was also reported damaged. Both were able to limp into Bahrain. Ship repair teams from Naval Sea Systems Command have been working on the ships since shortly after the accident.

“There were repairs made to Hartford when it was in port,” he said. “They made the ship safe for transit.” By Saturday, Hartford was scheduled to have cleared the Strait of Hormuz. Christensen said he didn’t know Hartford’s final destination, but the ship will likely return to its home port of Groton, Conn., for repairs. Experts have said such a submarine surface transit would require an armed escort.

The Navy relieved Hartford’s commanding officer, Cmdr. Ryan Brookhart, on April 14. Christensen said there have been no other personnel changes on either ship, pending completion of the two inquiries. The ship left San Diego as part of the Boxer Expeditionary Strike Group on Jan. 9. This is New Orleans’ maiden deployment.

USS Annapolis Plays Key Role In Noting Anniversary At North Pole

By Jennifer Grogan, The Day, April 25, 2009

Groton — A Harvard professor and the crew of the USS Annapolis recently helped honor two explorers, one well known and the other largely overlooked by history because of his race.

Matthew A. Henson accompanied polar explorer Rear Adm. Robert E. Peary on a U.S. expedition that arrived at the North Pole on April 6, 1909.

They are known as the first to reach the top of the world, but the contributions that Henson, who was black, made to the expedition were for the most part forgotten while Peary became famous.

S. Allen Counter, who teaches neurology at Harvard Medical School, learned about Henson’s role when he first traveled to Greenland more than 20 years ago and met the two sons Peary and Henson had fathered with Inuit women.

“I was in Sweden studying when I met someone who had gone to Greenland and seen some of the Inuit people,” Counter said. “He encouraged me to go there to get the real story about what happened from the Inuit.”

Counter promised Peary’s son, Kali, and Henson’s son, Anauqaq, who were both elderly then, that he would bring their children to the North Pole on the centennial anniversary of the discovery, April 6, 2009.

He could not keep that promise. Warmer temperatures had weakened the ice, making it unsafe to land a plane there.

So he contacted Navy Vice Adm. Melvin G. “Mel” Williams Jr., commander of the U.S. 2nd Fleet. The two did not know each other, but Counter’s persuasive letter convinced Williams to support the undertaking.

“We should celebrate and honor the exploits of heroes,” Williams said.

Their accomplishment, he said, “typifies the importance of diversity.”

“As we look toward the future, there are no obstacles,” Williams said. “People with different backgrounds can come together to accomplish greatness.”

Counter packed a case of memorabilia from Peary and Henson’s expedition and the Groton-based Annapolis (SSN 760) took it north, breaking through the ice at the pole shortly before the anniversary.

Counter, along with a group of Harvard University professors, alumni and students, came to the Naval Submarine Base on Thursday to retrieve the case from the Annapolis crew and bring it back to Boston, where it will be displayed at the university and used in presentations to students.

Annapolis already was scheduled to be in the Arctic at the time of the anniversary for a training exercise.

The crew was entrusted with a glass case containing an American flag, since the explorers brought a flag with them, a Bible similar to Henson’s Bible, items from the Inuit culture, books by Peary and Henson, and letters. They brought the case out onto the ice at the North Pole for a brief ceremony shortly before the anniversary.

“I wanted to keep my promise,” Counter said, “so in spirit they went with the Annapolis.”

At that ceremony, Cmdr. Michael Brunner, commanding officer of the Annapolis, reflected on how far the country has come in terms of race relations.

While Henson was not credited for his role in the discovery because of the discrimination that existed then, Brunner said, men now are “recognized based on their character and their achievements and not by the color of their skin.”

“Looking out at my crew and seeing the diverse nature of it was just a great moment,” Brunner said Thursday.

Rear Adm. Bruce E. Grooms, commander of Submarine Group Two, said Counter has helped “bring to light the less-known history, the history that includes Matthew Henson.”

Russia To Build 6 Kilo-Class Diesel Submarines For Vietnam

RIA Novosti, April 27, 2009

MOSCOW,- Admiralty Shipyards in St. Petersburg will build six Kilo class diesel-electric submarines for delivery to Vietnam, the Russian business daily Kommersant said on Monday.

The paper quoted company general director Vladimir Aleksandrov as saying that Russia’s state arms exporter Rosoboronexport would soon sign a contract with a foreign state, and that Admiralty Shipyards had been chosen to fulfill this contract.

Sources in Rosoboronexport later confirmed that Russia and Vietnam had been negotiating a \$1.8 billion deal on the delivery of six Kilo-class submarines to the Vietnamese navy for about a year.

Admiralty Shipyards is currently building two Kilo class submarines for Algeria to be delivered in 2009 and 2010.

Kilo class submarines, nicknamed “Black Holes” for their ability to avoid detection, are considered to be among the quietest diesel-electric submarines in the world.

The submarine is designed for anti-submarine warfare and anti-surface-ship warfare, and also for general reconnaissance and patrol missions.

The vessel has a displacement of 2,300 tons, a maximum depth of 350 meters (1,200 feet), a range of 6,000 miles, and a crew of 57. It is equipped with six 533-mm torpedo tubes.

As of November 2006, 16 vessels were believed to be in active service with the Russian Navy and eight submarines were thought to be in reserve. Another 29 vessels have been exported to China, India, Iran, Poland, Romania and Algeria.

USSVI To Celebrate 45th Anniversary in Groton May 7-9

Return to your Submarine Roots!

Submitted by John Carcioppolo, USSVI Groton Base, March 12, 2009

Come back and celebrate the USSVI 45th Anniversary Weekend where it all started. The USSVI Groton Base, “First and Finest” is proud to host the eighth annual Anniversary Weekend. It will be held in the “Submarine Capital of the World”, Groton, Conn., from May 7-9, 2009.

This event is a great opportunity to for all submariners to come back to where we all got started, to see the advances we have made in submarine technology, and to perpetuate the memories of all submariners.

Schedule of Events

- The Scholarship Golf Tournament is scheduled rain or shine. The price includes greens fees, cart, and lunch. Sponsorships are still needed – if you can help, please click this link for a sponsorship letter: http://subvetsgroton.com/anniversary/Shared%20Documents/2009_Corporate_sponsor_letter4JJC.doc; and this link for the sponsorship form: http://subvetsgroton.com/anniversary/Shared%20Documents/Sponsor_Reply_Form_%2709_Corporate.doc
- Return to Submarine School includes a Basic Submarine School graduation ceremony, sub school tours, lunch at the Sub Base galley, and a catered reception back at the clubhouse. The sub school tour is limited to 150 participants, so be sure to register by April 22.
- Submarine Tour is strictly dependent on Sub Base security conditions and submarine availability; it can be cancelled without notice. The number permitted to tour a boat has not been determined at this time, therefore participation will be first come/first served based on date of receipt of the registration forms prior to April 22, 2009. Those wishing to tour a boat must be physically able to climb up and down two decks on vertical ladders.
- The Anniversary Banquet Dinner Dance will be held at the Groton Inn & Suites and will begin with a social period and cash bar, then dinner with a choice of entrees, our guest speaker Rear Adm. William H. Hilarides, PEO Subs, several raffle prizes, and then dancing and live music provided by The POM.

All events are open to all Submariners, and not just members of U.S. Submarine Veterans, Inc.

For more details and a registration package, click this link: <http://subvetsgroton.com/anniversary/default.aspx>. The registration form can be found at this link: http://subvetsgroton.com/anniversary/Shared%20Documents/Anniversary_Registration_2009.doc.

If you have specific questions please contact John Carcioppolo at house@subvetsgroton.org or you can call him at (860) 514-7064 or (860) 464-8770.

Joint WWII Subvets/USSVI Conference to be Held May 20-22

Submitted by Don Bassler, April 16, 2009

A joint WWII Subvets NW Regional/USSVI Western Region District 4 Conference will be held from May 20-22, 2009, at the Silverdale Beach Hotel in Silverdale, Wash. All submarine veterans and their guests are invited to participate.

Although primarily a social event, a business meeting will be conducted. Information about this event maybe viewed at <http://gertrude-check.up-scope.org/PCA.htm>. A conference registration form for may be down loaded from <http://gertrude-check.up-scope.org/REGFORM.pdf>.

Additional updated information may be found at <http://gertrude-check.up-scope.org> or by contacting Don Bassler at downscope@comcast.net, or by calling (360) 509-0250.

Submarine Reunion Notices

USS Sam Rayburn (SSBN 635)

Date: April 26-30, 2009

Location: Fredericksburg Inn and Suites, Fredericksburg, TX

For more info: Please contact the inn at 1-800-446-0202 or 1-830-997-0202, or through their website, www.fredericksburg-inn.com/ for your reservation. One highlight of this reunion will be the dedication of the SSBN 635 Memorial Plaque at the Walk of Honor at The National Museum of the Pacific War, also known as the Nimitz Museum, in Fredericksburg.

Florida Base Submarine Veterans Joint Convention

Dates: April 29 – May 3, 2009

Location: St. Augustine Beach, FL

For more info: For registration forms and lodging information, please visit <http://www.ussfloridabase.com/>.

USS Scamp (SSN 588)

Dates: May 6-9, 2009

Location: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Portland, OR

For more info: Visit www.uss-scamp.com and click on “2009 Reunion Plans.” You may also contact Lou Minor, 2233 E Boones Trail, Sierra Vista, AZ 85650, call at (520) 732-1750, or e-mail lou@uss-scamp.com.

The B-Girls – USS Barbel (SS 580), USS Blueback (SS 581) and USS Bonefish (SS 582)

Dates: May 28-30, 2009

Location: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Portland, OR

For more info: Visit the “B-Girls Forever!” website for more information and a registration form: http://bgirlsforever.com//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=55&Itemid=71.

USS Segundo (SS 398)

Dates: May 31-June 5, 2009

Location: Edgewater Hotel, Laughlin, Nev.

For more info: To make reservations, call the Edgewater Hotel at (800) 477-4837 and specify that you are with the USS Segundo Group. Hotel reservations can be made at any time, but must be made no later than April 31st to guarantee the group rate. Contact Ken Owen at (760) 744-1771 or email kenowen1@cox.net. Details can also be found at www.segundo398.org.

HMS Dreadnaught Reunion

Date: June 6, 2009

Location: Allesley Hotel, in the Village of Allesley Near Coventry (UK)

For more info: Any US Navy submariners who are in UK at this time are invited to attend as our guests. Please contact the group via e-mail – info@hmsdreadnought.co.uk. You can also visit the group’s website at www.hmsdreadnought.co.uk.

Class of 593 Reunion, presented by USS Guardfish (SSN 612)

Dates: June 23-27, 2009 – all vets of Thresher class submarines are invited

Location: Radisson Hotel, New London, CT

For more info: Contact: R. E. “Twig” Armstrong, 15 Duckworth Rd., Hebron, NH 03241. You can also call him at (603) 744-2078 or e-mail uss_guardfish@metrocast.net.

USS James Madison (SSBN 627)

Dates: July 8-12, 2009

Location: Silverdale Beach Hotel, Bremerton, WA

For more info: Contact Fred Huwe at fchuwe@cheqnet.net or visit www.ussjamesmadison627.com. You may also contact the hotel at 1-800-544-9799 (ask for USS James Madison reunion rates)

USS Tullibee (SSN-597) Reunion

Date/Time: July 9-12, 2009

Location: Groton, CT (Best Western Mystic Hotel, Mystic, Ct.)

For more info: Contact Bill Keel at bill_597@yahoo.com or (815) 715-9966.

USS Dace SSN 247 and SSN 607 Reunion

Dates/Time: August 7 through 10, 2009

Location: Best Western Hotel, Groton, CT

For more info: Contact Dick Geiler at Mrgitch@comcast.net (860) 889-2846

or Karl Jens @ Jenskh@hotmail.com (860) 445-0124 or visit <http://ussdace.org/>

USS William H Bates (SSN 680) REGROUPEX 09, hosted by the 82-85 Core Group

Dates: September 4-7, 2009

Location: Town & Country Resort and Convention Center, San Diego, CA

For more info: Visit www.ssn-680.org, or contact Brad Williamson at bradwmson@ssn-680.org or at (269) 405-1083.

U.S. Submarine Veterans, Inc. 2009 National Convention

A joint convention with the International Submariners Association and the Submariners Association of Canada

Dates: Sept 8-12, 2009

Location: Town & Country Resort and Convention Center, San Diego, CA

For more info: Visit <http://www.ussvisandiego.org/Convention2009/index.htm> or contact Mike Hacking at (858) 495-0562 or mrhacking@san.rr.com. More than 35 boat reunions are also scheduled for the San Diego convention.

The Diesel Fast Attack Boats Reunion

USS Tang (SS 563), USS Trigger (SS 564), USS Wahoo (SS 565), USS Trout (SS 566), USS Gudgeon (SS 567), USS Harder (SS 568) and USS Darter (SS 576)

Date: Sept 8-12, 2009 (in conjunction with the annual USSVI Convention listed above)

Location: Best Western Seven Seas, San Diego, CA

For more info: Contact Dan Craw at (941) 761-2234 or e-mail dcrawl1@tampabay.rr.com. Vice Adm. Al Konetzni will be the guest speaker.

USS Carbonero (SS 337)

Date: Sept. 10, 2009 (in conjunction with the annual USSVI Convention listed above)

Location: Town & Country Resort and Convention Center, San Diego, CA

For more info: Look for details in the March newsletter, or contact Dan O'Dwyer, 1108 W. Bloomfield Dr. Inverness, FL 34453, call (352) 341-0316, or e-mail at subvet08@tampabay.rr.com.

USS Sealion (a.k.a. Sea Lion) including SS, SSP, ASSP, APSS & LPSS-315

Date: September 11, 2009 at 1830 (in conjunction with the annual USSVI Convention listed above)

Location: Town & Country Resort, San Diego, CA

For details contact: EMC(SS) John Clear, USN Ret., 180 Robin Lane, Port Ludlow, WA 98365, call (360) 437-1143 or email webmaster@usssealion.com.

USS Charr (SS 328)

Dates: Sept. 17-20, 2009

Location: Crowne Plaza Convention Center, Portland, OR

For more info: Contact Carl Klein, Secretary/Treasurer, 1900 Rollingwood Road, Baltimore, Md., 21228, call at (410) 747-7292, or e-mail at ckleinsr@gmail.com.

USS Lapon (SS 260 & SSN 661)

Dates: Sept. 24-27, 2009

Location: Landmark Resort, Myrtle Beach, SC

For more info: Visit <http://www.ussslapon.com>, or contact reunion coordinator Raymond Zieverink at (803) 324-1414 or lapon.reunion@yahoo.com.

USS Trumpetfish (SS 425)

Dates: Oct. 8-12, 2009

Location: Hyatt Fair Lakes Hotel, Fairfax, VA

For more info: Contact Terry Trump at 843-873-9563 or email: ss425@hotmail.com.

Northrop Could Get Share Of New Sub Program

By Peter Frost, Daily Press, April 24, 2009

Northrop Grumman Corp.'s Newport News shipyard could play a role in building the next generation of ballistic-missile submarines, a prospect that could create thousands of new jobs on the James River waterfront.

In a conference call with Wall Street analysts this week, Northrop CEO Ronald D. Sugar confirmed that the company is in discussions with Groton, Conn.-based General Dynamics Electric Boat about participating in the program, which has not yet been funded by the U.S. Navy.

“We’re already working with General Dynamics, our partner, and the Navy on some advanced planning for that boat,” he said, referring to the Ohio-class submarine replacement. Partnering with the company to build the subs “would be a helpful upside opportunity” for Northrop to grow its shipbuilding sector.

Electric Boat also confirmed it is working with Northrop on studies it is conducting “in support of the Navy’s analysis of alternatives for replacement” of the Ohio class, said Robert A. Hamilton, a company spokesman. Electric Boat, he said, has subcontracted to Northrop for engineering and design services related to the studies.

Hamilton said it would be premature to discuss a building program since the Navy hasn’t yet initiated one.

While the Navy hasn’t officially declared the Ohio-class replacement submarines an official program, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said earlier this month that the Navy will begin a replacement program in 2010.

Also, last December, the Navy awarded Electric Boat with a contract worth up to \$592 million to design a common missile compartment for the Ohio-class replacement subs. About 4 percent of the work on that contract was slated for Northrop’s Newport News shipyard.

Northrop on Thursday sought to downplay Sugar’s comments in a prepared statement.

“As we’ve stated before ... we are frequently in talks with the Navy on subjects related to future programs. However ... as of today, there is no formal Ohio-class replacement program stood up,” said Jennifer Dellapenta, a Northrop spokeswoman.

The Ohio-class boats, also known as “Boomers” and “Tridents” because of the missiles they carry, are the larger cousin of Virginia class submarines, which are built in a partnership between Electric Boat and Northrop.

At 560 feet long and 42 feet across, the nuclear-powered Ohio-class boats are the largest submarines in the naval fleet. From the late 1970s to the late 1990s, Electric Boat built 18 of the subs, which carry nuclear-tipped missiles. The company later converted four to handle non-nuclear Tomahawk missiles.

Each of the boats took between six and seven years to build. At the time the final boat of the class was built, the subs cost about \$2 billion a copy. If construction of the replacement class begins, the subs would probably cost more than \$4 billion each.

Navy and defense industry analysts long have said that a partnership between the two companies to build the Trident replacements would make sense because of the success the team has had building nuclear-powered Virginia-class subs together.

Northrop and Electric boat each build modules of Virginia-class boats and take turn on final assembly and delivery. The two have combined to produce five of the 377-foot fast-attack subs for the Navy. Thirteen more have been ordered.

Through the process, the partners have been able to drive down costs and construction schedules, making the program one of the Navy’s most successful ship building ventures.

Because the Ohio-class replacement is not yet an official Navy program, the service has declined to comment on whether it would consider a partnership between the two shipyards.

Asked about the program in January, the commander of Naval Sea Systems Command, Vice Adm. Kevin M. McCoy, said the service was still in the early stages of planning for the Ohio-class replacement.

“We haven’t come up with an acquisition strategy yet, but we encourage the input and full cooperation of the entire submarine industrial community,” he said at the time. “We absolutely encourage both shipyards to continue to be engaged in the submarine business ... but we don’t want to get out ahead of the acquisition process.”

Ohio-class submarines

Eighteen of the submarines were built by General Dynamics Electric Boat between the late 1970s and late 1990s. The Navy is considering replacing the subs with a new class of boats.

Length: 560 feet

Beam: 42 feet

Weight: 16.8 tons

Propulsion: Nuclear reactor

Crew: 155

Armament: Of the 18 subs, 14 carry 24 Trident missiles with nuclear warheads. The remaining four were retrofitted to carry up to 154 Tomahawk cruise missiles.

Lockheed Martin Views Its Work On ARCIA as Beneficial To Its CANES Bid

By Geoff Fein, Defense Daily, April 24, 2009

Lockheed Martin believes its work on the Navy’s Acoustic Rapid Commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) Technology Insertion (ARCI) effort has it well positioned for the Consolidated Afloat Network Enterprise Services (CANES) competition currently underway to outfit surface ships with a single common network.

When the Program Executive Office for Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence (PEO C4I) issued its draft request for proposals (RFP) for CANES earlier this month, the organization referred to ARCI as the model the CANES program would be based on, Karen Conti, Lockheed Martin vice president for business development in San Diego, told Defense Daily in a recent interview.

That model she pointed out is built on a two-year cycle for software refresh and a four-year cycle for hardware refresh.

ARCI is the program adopted by the submarine force for rapidly inserting new technology into the fleet.

“I think SPAWAR is trying to create its own program now, leveraging all the good work done in the submarine environment,” Conti said. “What we try to focus on is the business model, because that is what’s the enabler to get technology to the fleet faster, cheaper.”

ARCI is optimized for a solution around the submarine forces’ needs and desires, Eric Gruenloh, business development for CANES, told Defense Daily in the same interview.

“What you want to do is pick the model up and optimize it for SPAWAR’s needs and desires, primarily for the surface fleet, which is driving that installation set,” he said. “You would not want to pick it up, carbon copy it and drop it down. You’d want to evaluate it and optimize it for SPAWAR’s’ needs.”

CANES presents a lot of opportunities, some that mimic the way ARCI fostered collaboration, Conti added.

“What we find, this is about a sort of a different environment where there is more of a partnering...more of a collaborative environment. I think we saw that on ARCI, where it was no longer just the Navy or the U.S. government or the Navy program and the prime contractor developing a product for years and years and it completing at the end,” she said. “This is about a spiral development model that brings in a lot of innovation, so it really encourages innovative partnerships beyond the prime and government.”

In the business model there are opportunities on a biannual basis for small business, for academia, even for Navy laboratories, as well as industry primes other than the large defense firms, Conti said.

“Even some of our competitors are more than welcome to come in and play in this game because what it’s about is no longer is the prime doing everything. It’s about the prime integrating the best that industry and academia and the laboratories can offer,” she said.

But there are some underlying tenets that have to occur first, Conti noted. One example is an open systems architecture.

“That is so important because if you want to go to a biannual software update process you have to have known interfaces and software systems so that anybody can understand what the interfaces are and design to them,” she said. “You don’t just have that information on a sheet of paper hidden somewhere. [For] people to bring their best technologies forward, they have to understand the system design, they have to understand the interfaces, so that they can bring their algorithms or technologies forward and know that they will work...that they have the ability to work when applied.”

The CANES effort, Conti said, is really the shifting of the culture to a more trusted environment a more open environment, with open systems, an increased number of competitors, and then a whole peer review process. “So, again, it’s not just a system prime and Navy program office selecting the best. It’s opened up, it’s much more transparent. People feel, I think, more confident in bringing their technologies forward.

“I would say those are the key tenets, those are the things [the Navy is] trying to embed in the CANES approach. They talked about their technology insertion cycles...while they may not just copy the submarine OPTEMPO and process, they are going to leverage them and do what’s right for a wider fleet...more classes...less cookie cutter, and allow a process that will bring technology to the fleet much faster.”

For its part, one of the benefits Lockheed Martin brings is that the company has been the provider of the computing infrastructure to the Navy for more than 50 years, Conti said.

“Today we have almost 7,000 platforms of computing infrastructure across all Navy platforms, submarines and surface [ships],” she said. “Looking forward, the Navy through CANES plans to reduce a lot of the infrastructure. You [heard] that in Vice Adm. [Harry] Harris’ comments recently, that on a submarine we have over 60 networks onboard and we are compressing those through CANES. So understanding what’s out there today, understanding the road map for technology forward and how we can compress these systems onto a common computing infrastructure, and then making it scalable so if you go from a DDG to a carrier you don’t have to do a lot of re-architecting. Those are key tenets to success.”

The Navy issued the CANES RFP on April 2, and responses from industry are due June 3. The plan is to initially have two awards, then downselect to a single bidder. The process will run roughly 14 months, resulting in a downselect sometime in 2010, according to the Navy (Defense Daily, April 8).

The draft solicitation had a very significant emphasis on the use of COTS...the use of small business, Conti said. “There is a 30 percent subcontractor goal for small businesses [in the draft RFP]. I would say from my short experience with PEO C4I, they really do walk the walk in trying to get small business engaged and they have set goals...and industry responds well when that is in your evaluation criteria.”

“I can tell you one of our goals is to have to bring innovation to this program through a large amount of small business involvement, not just with the initial offer team. We have a lot of small business on our team, but through the lifecycle using the ARCI model as it gets tailored through CANES over the life of this contract,” Conti added.

Pentagon Plan Won’t Echo Obama No-Nukes Pledge

By Anne Gearan, Washington Post, April 23, 2009

WASHINGTON – The Pentagon is starting work on a nuclear mission statement that envisions the U.S. maintaining its atomic weapons stockpile for the next five to 10 years, a far more cautious stance than President Barack Obama’s dream of a nuclear-free future.

The “nuclear posture review” due early next year will focus on the practical and nearer-term goal of deterring the use and spread of weapons, Pentagon officials said Thursday. It is not likely to echo Obama’s pledge to work for “global zero,” or total eradication, as an explicit goal.

Civilian and military officials described the forthcoming review, along with a larger master plan for Pentagon policy also due early next year, on condition of anonymity because the policies are still being developed.

The Pentagon nuclear plan envisions possible reductions in the U.S. arsenal while also ensuring that the U.S. maintains a secure deterrent, said a senior defense official involved in the review. Estimates put the U.S. nuclear arsenal at less than 6,000.

The review is part of a realignment of U.S. nuclear policy and international agreements that will include working with Russia on a new treaty to limit the threat from the world’s largest nuclear arsenals.

Outlining some of that policy, Obama told European audiences this month that a nuclear-free world is possible, although perhaps not in his lifetime.

“I state clearly and with conviction America’s commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons,” Obama said in Prague, Czech Republic.

He promised to reduce the U.S. arsenal but said that as long as adversaries have nuclear weapons the United States will have defenses against them.

USA Intends To Pull Russia’s Leg To Have As Many Nukes As It Wants To

Pravada (Russia), April 24, 2009

Russia and the United States will begin their talks about the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) on April 24. Russia has many questions to ask the United States about the execution of the previous treaty, which expires on December 5, 2009. The USA’s violations touched upon the missiles used by submarines, warplanes and ground-based missiles. America can use weak points of the treaty to double the power of its nuclear arms.

The US-Russian talks about the new treaty are to begin in Rome on April 24. The talks will follow the adequate agreement achieved by US and Russian presidents at their recent meeting in London.

START-1 was signed in Moscow on July 31, 1991 and came into force on December 5, 1994 after the break-up of the USSR. In accordance with the document, the Soviet Union (Russia since 1992) and the United States were supposed to cut their nuclear arsenals to 6,000 nukes within seven years. The USSR was allowed to have 6,500 nukes, whereas the USA could enjoy having 8,500.

The document banned the production, testing and the deployment of air-launched ballistic missiles, underwater launch systems for ballistic and cruise missiles, as well as orbital missiles. Russia and the USA said on December 6, 2001 that they had executed their obligations of the START-1 Treaty. However, experts said that Russia had 1,136 carriers and 5,518 nukes, whereas the United States had 1,237 and 5,948 respectively.

The Russian administration – the Foreign Affairs Ministry and the Defense Ministry – made a number of complaints about the US-led execution of the document.

Article 3 of the Treaty regulates the following: the number of nuclear warheads on every intercontinental ballistic missile or submarine-based ballistic missile must not be larger than eight. When the USA tested their Trident-1 and Trident-2 subs after the treaty had come into force, they used a larger quantity of missiles. Ten warheads give the United States an opportunity to mount the additional 288 nukes on 144 missiles.

Russian specialists were not allowed to conduct long-term inspections of US submarines over ‘technical difficulties.’ The Russians can not find out the number of nukes deployed on Trident-2 subs.

America also has a right to continue its cooperation with Britain as far as submarines are concerned. The USA can sell Trident-2 defense systems to Britain, although it is not known which country conducts the subsequent tests of the missiles – either the USA or Great Britain. As a result, many British submarines are equipped with missiles, the ownership of which remains unclear. Nevertheless, British submarines do not come to US ports: Russian experts do not know how and where the missiles are moved from US to British subs.

The submarines, which the United States tests of its range grounds, supposedly belong to Britain. The US administration does not consider it necessary to report anything about those tests. When the START-1 Treaty was being prepared, US officials said they were not going to redesign their B-1 bombers to long-range air-based nuclear cruise missiles. As a matter of fact, they simply kept an opportunity to mount near a thousand warheads on the bombers easily.

It goes without saying that the new treaty to regulate the offensive arms is a matter of global importance. However, Russia should be extremely careful with everything that the USA will have to offer at this point.

U.S. 7th Fleet To Conduct Exercise Malabar 09 With Japan, Indian Navies

Navy News, April 23, 2009

OKINAWA, Japan – Ships, aircraft and submarines from the United States, Japan and India will take part in Exercise Malabar 09 off the coast of Okinawa, Japan, April 26 to May 3.

The Malabar exercise series has historically been a bilateral exercise between the U.S. and Indian navies. This year the Indian Navy also invited the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force to participate.

Exercise Malabar 09 is designed to increase interoperability among the Indian, Japanese and U.S. maritime forces to develop a common understanding and procedures for maritime operations.

“We look forward to this opportunity to work with the very professional maritime forces of India and Japan,” said Vice Adm. John Bird, Commander, U.S. 7th Fleet. “Malabar gives us the chance to build greater interoperability with two of our most important regional partners.”

The at-sea training will include anti-submarine warfare and surface warfare maneuvers; gunnery training; air defense; and visit, board, search and seizure. The participants will also conduct personnel exchanges and professional discussions at sea and ashore.

The United States will be represented by 7th Fleet flagship USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19), guided missile destroyers USS Fitzgerald (DDG 62) and USS Chafee (DDG 90) and fast-attack submarine USS Seawolf (SSN 21), along with various P-3C and SH-60 aircraft. Operating in the Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean, the U.S. 7th Fleet is the largest of the forward-deployed U.S. fleets, covering 48 million square miles and with approximately 60-70 ships, 200-300 aircraft, and 40,000 Sailors and Marines assigned at any time. For more information, visit the U.S. 7th Fleet Web site at c7f.navy.mil.

‘Secret’ Submarines Lead Show Of China’s Naval Might

By Jane Macartney, The Times (UK), April 23, 2009

China showed off its nuclear submarines to the world for the first time today with two previously top-secret vessels leading a naval parade in the East China Sea.

Thousands of white-uniformed soldiers stood to attention on the decks of warships, naval jets screamed overhead and helicopters rattled above streaming red, yellow and blue smoke trails as the People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) celebrated the 60th anniversary of its founding.

President Hu was on board the destroyer Shijiazhuang to witness the display of maritime might — perhaps hoping that this fleet will fare better than the country’s first modern navy, established in 1888 and destroyed a year later by the Japanese.

State media said that 25 submarines, destroyers, frigates and missile boats and 31 aircraft were on show off the eastern port city of Qingdao. It was only the fourth such review since 1949 and the first to include international ships, including a US destroyer.

Addressing the sailors in his capacity as chairman of the Central Military Commission, Mr Hu reiterated what he called China’s commitment to peace and restraint. “China will stick unswervingly to the path of peaceful development, and will never seek hegemony now or in the future, no matter how much the country develops,” he said.

“China will not engage in military expansionism nor an arms race, and will never constitute a military threat to any other nation.”

Military analysts said that the unusual display of openness reflected China’s growing sense of its importance on the international stage. Li Daguang, a weapons expert at the National Defence University in Beijing, said that invitations to foreign naval officers to tour its warships were rare. “The openness comes from the confidence in itself,” he said.

The decision, announced only this week, to place two of its estimated ten nuclear submarines in the public eye for the first time drew widespread attention. China displayed two of its 20-year-old 092-type submarines — the Long March 6 and Long March 3 — to lead the parade, with flags fluttering from their turrets. It kept its more modern 094 submarines out of sight, a move one disappointed analyst described as showing that China’s strategy would remain defensive.

Beijing has always emphasised that its military build-up, watched with a wary eye by the United States, poses no threat to other countries. It sent two ships to the Gulf of Aden this year on an anti-piracy assignment in the navy’s first potential combat mission beyond territorial waters, sending a message that it was ready to play a responsible role on international seas.

Jean-Pierre Cabestan, Professor of Political Science at Hong Kong Baptist University, described the parade as a show of power. “It’s a public relations display with a double message — China as an integrator, showing it is keeping with the rules of the international game, but also showing it is now in the big power arena.”

The Chinese Navy still lags far behind that of the United States, which has 75 nuclear submarines. An editorial in the China Daily noted: “Let us be sensible — the PLAN does not have much muscle to show off.”

It needs a stronger force to protect sea routes along which it imports about 70 per cent of its energy needs, and to ensure its capability in territorial disputes.

Admiral Wu Shengli, the Navy’s commander-in-chief, said this month that China would develop a new generation of warships and aircraft to give it longer-range capabilities. Beijing has also said that it is ready to build an aircraft carrier.

“Now we are a commercial and maritime nation and our ways to survive have changed,” the defence analyst Ni Lexiong told The Times.

China Parades Naval Might

By Marianne Barriaux, Defense News, April 23, 2009

BEIJING – China paraded its warships and nuclear submarines April 23 in an unprecedented display of maritime might attended by 14 other nations to mark the 60th anniversary of its navy.

Fifty-six Chinese subs, destroyers, frigates, missile boats and planes were displayed off the eastern port city of Qingdao just weeks after tensions flared after a naval stand-off with the U.S. in the South China Sea.

The review – only the fourth to take place since 1949 and the first on such a large and international scale – was opened by two of China's nuclear-powered submarines, the first time in history they have been unveiled to the public.

President Hu Jintao boarded the destroyer Shijiazhuang, after having sought to reassure the heads of foreign navy delegations that China's maritime power posed no threat to anyone.

"Both now and in the future, no matter to what extent we develop, China will never seek hegemony," he said, in comments reported by Xinhua.

State television showed Hu standing on the deck of the Shijiazhuang saluting and calling out to the ships that passed before him.

But Jean-Pierre Cabestan, professor of political science at Hong Kong Baptist University, described the event as "a show of force, of power."

"It's a public relations display with a double message – China as an integrator, showing it is keeping with the rules of the international game, but also showing it is now in the big power arena," he said.

Ships from 14 countries, including the U.S., Russia and France, took part in the fleet review, which Chinese officials have said is aimed at promoting understanding about China's military development.

"Suspicions about China being a 'threat' to world security are mostly because of... lack of understanding about China," Ding Yiping, deputy commander of the navy, told the official Xinhua news agency this week.

China has always stressed its military build-up, watched with a wary eye by the U.S. – which accuses the Chinese of a lack of transparency – does not pose a threat to other countries.

A number of recent incidents at sea have heightened tensions.

In March, the U.S. complained that Chinese boats had harassed one of its ships in the South China Sea, forcing it to take action to prevent a collision.

China denied the claim and accused the U.S. vessel of "illegal activities".

Early this month, China's dispatch of civilian patrol vessels to waters around disputed islands in the same sea – the Spratlys – sparked concern in the Philippines, which also claims sovereignty over the archipelago.

China's increasing maritime confidence was also reflected in its decision to send ships to the Gulf of Aden, off the coast of Somalia, for an anti-piracy assignment in the first potential combat mission for its navy beyond its territorial waters.

And the navy's commander-in-chief, Admiral Wu Shengli, said in April China would develop a new generation of warships and aircraft to give it much longer-range capabilities.

But Hong Kong Baptist University's Cabestan said China's navy still lagged behind other countries, with no aircraft carriers despite plans to build some.

"In terms of technology they are still far behind the Americans, the Japanese, or even the Russians, but in tonnage, they have now become the first navy in Asia," he said.

The U.S., which has sent navy chief Admiral Gary Roughead and the destroyer Fitzgerald to the event, would be watching the parade very closely, according to the professor.

"The United States are participating, they are playing the card of integration, of the policy of engagement," he said.

"But they are also watching attentively the progress of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), all the new missions that the Chinese navy do."

Sixty years ago, the PLA's navy was formed when a unit of the Kuomintang's coastal defense fleet defected to the rival communists, bringing with it nine warships and 17 other boats.

Kuomintang nationalist forces had been locked in a civil war with the communists, who eventually won and came to power on Oct. 1, 1949.

USS San Francisco Returns to Fleet

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Michael Story, Navy News, April 22, 2009

SAN DIEGO – USS San Francisco (SSN 711) sailed into San Diego harbor April 17, where it arrived at its new homeport at Naval Submarine Base Point Loma.

This journey comes after a three-year restoration period at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility (PSNS and IMF) in Washington state.

The Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine collided with an uncharted undersea mountain Jan. 8, 2005, and was placed in the dry dock facility for repairs after a 5,600-nautical mile open ocean transit from Apra Harbor, Guam to PSNS and IMF.

After leaving the dry dock facility April 7, the submarine successfully completed sea trials and began her transit toward San Diego.

"Sea trials went well and the San Francisco is in great material condition. We put her through a rigorous, comprehensive set of tests and she performed superbly," said San Francisco Commanding Officer, Cmdr. Nathan Martin.

The change of station to San Diego is a result of the Navy's plan to maintain 60 percent of the submarine force in the U.S. Pacific Fleet, as outlined in the 2006 Quadrennial Review.

“It’s been a lot of hard work up in Washington, but I’m really glad that we’re down here [in San Diego],” said Lt. Paul Carnan, San Francisco’s quality assurance and electrical assistant officer. “A lot of other guys on the boat put a lot of effort forward and I think it shows. We had successful sea trials and we’re all really glad to be down here and to be operational now.”

“The crew had done an outstanding job of preparing themselves, their families, and the ship for San Francisco’s return to service and change of homeport,” Martin said. “They worked very hard to make this process and the ship successful. Their dedication and determination have been awe-inspiring. I couldn’t be more optimistic about the future of San Francisco and her exceptional crew.”

This submarine is the third U.S. Navy ship to carry the name San Francisco.

Commissioned April 24, 1981, San Francisco is crewed by approximately 12 officers and 115 enlisted personnel.

Navy Readies New USS Missouri—The Most Advanced Sub In The World

By Matt Campbell, Beaufort Gazette, April 23, 2009

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – The famous name USS Missouri is headed back to the high seas.

Not the mighty battleship on which the Japanese formally surrendered to end World War II. That vessel now is a museum at Pearl Harbor.

But the name USS Missouri will live on, assigned to a \$2 billion nuclear-powered attack submarine now being welded together in Groton, Conn. When it is christened later this year, the U.S. Navy says, it will be the most advanced submarine in the world.

“All Missourians can take pride that a namesake to the ‘Mighty Mo’ will soon be joining the Navy’s fleet, this time in the silent service,” said U.S. Rep. Ike Skelton, D-Mo.

This will be the fifth vessel to bear the name. One of them was a Confederate side-wheeler in the Civil War.

The new Missouri, which will be longer than a football field, is being assembled from nine cross sections.

It will be the seventh of 30 planned Virginia-class submarines, which were designed to replace the Los Angeles-class subs of the Cold War era. The new subs are a little bit bigger than the Los Angeles-class subs.

The new subs also are more high-tech.

“They have photonics masts, which essentially use high-resolution cameras and video storage,” said Lt. Cmdr. Larry Knock, the executive officer assigned to the new USS Missouri. “So rather than standing behind the barrel of the scope, the commander stands at a flat-panel display.”

That allows the control room to be moved lower in the ship, where there is more space. And the new subs are made to easily accommodate technology upgrades.

The Missouri also will be capable of intelligence missions and coastal maneuvers. It will accommodate a large number of Navy SEALs and even a minisub in its diver exit chamber.

The Missouri will pack a punch, armed with Tomahawk missiles and torpedoes.

“She could be in the Gulf of Mexico and put a cruise missile into a window in Kansas City,” said retired Rear Adm. J. Stanton Thompson of Higginsville, Mo.

The boat will be launched into the water for final construction work in a few months. Then, Becky Gates, the wife of Defense Secretary Robert Gates, will do the traditional breaking of the bottle over its bow during a Dec. 5 ceremony.



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