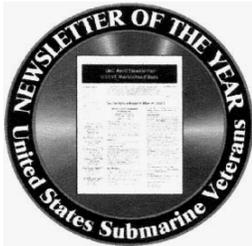


American Submariners Inc.
4370 Twain Ave.
San Diego, CA 92120-3404



The Silent Sentinel November 2013



Our 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.

Google Street View Can Now Take You On A Tour Inside A Naval Submarine [Naval? Is there any other kind? Mike H.]

by Matt Brian, engadget.com, Nov 4

Ever wonder what it's like to wander the narrow corridors of a 50-year-old Oberon-class British submarine? Well, you can now embark on a digital tour of the HMS Ocelot via Street View, which has become the first submersible to be fully documented by Google. Even without its backpack-worn trekker units, the company has mapped-out the Ocelot's complex control room, restricted sleeping quarters and even its six torpedo tubes, which have thankfully been out of service for more than 20 years. It also lets you take a tour of the dockyard from which the submarine was launched. Hit up Google Street View to begin your personal guided tour, just be sure to mind your head when navigating those hatches.

<http://www.engadget.com/2013/11/04/google-hms-ocelot-street-view/>

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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: _____

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Would like the SILENT SENTINEL emailed: YES _____ NO _____

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*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*

November Meeting

Our monthly meeting is held on the second Tuesday of the month at VFW Post 3787, 4370 Twain Ave., San Diego. Our next meeting will be on November 12, 2013. 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

Al Strunk

ETERNAL PATROL

Charlie Marin

Submarine Losses in October

Originally Compiled by C J Glassford



“SUBMARINE FORCE LOSSES “ “OCTOBER “

- S – 37 (SS 142) - 43 Men on Board:
Battery Explosion, on 10 Oct 1923, in the San Pedro Harbor, California : “3 MEN LOST “
- O – 5 (SS 66) - 33 Men on Board:
Rammed and Sunk, on 20 Oct 1923, by the United Fruit Steamer, “ABANGAREZ”, in Limon Bay, Canal Zone:
“3 MEN LOST “
- S – 44 (SS 155) - 56 Men on Board:
Sunk, on 7 Oct 1943, by a Japanese Destroyer, Northeast
of Araitō Island, off Amchitka :
“FIFTY FOUR MEN LOST - TWO SURVIVORS “

- WAHOO (SS 238) - 80 Men on Board:
Sunk, on 11 Oct 1943, by Japanese Naval Aircraft, Submarine Chasers, and Minesweeper, In La Perouse Straits, off Japan :
“ ALL HANDS LOST “
- DORADO (SS 248) - 76 Men on Board:
Sunk, on 13 October 1943, Cause Unknown, Either Accidentally Bombed and Sunk by Friendly Fire of Guantanamo Based Flying Boat, or Sunk by German Submarine Mine, in the West Indies :
“ ALL HANDS LOST “
- SEAWOLF (SS 197) - 99 Men on Board, Plus 17 Army Personnel: Accidentally Sunk, on 3 Oct 1944, by US Naval Aircraft from the USS MIDWAY (CV 63), and USS ROWELL (DE 403), off Morotai Island: “ ALL HANDS LOST “
- ESCOLAR [Bell] (SS 294) - 82 Men on Board:
Possibly Sunk, on 17 Oct 1944, by a Japanese Mine in the Yellow Sea:
“ ALL HANDS LOST “
- SHARK #2 [Bell] (SS 314) - 87 Men on Board:
Sunk, on 24 Oct 1944, by Japanese Depth Charges, in South China Sea, West of Luzon :
“ ALL HANDS LOST “
- DARTER (SS 227) - 71 Men on Board;
Ran Aground, on 24 Oct 1944, on Bombay Shoal, in Palawan Passage. Crew Rescued by USS DACE (SS 247), Later Scuttled by USS NAUTILUS (SS 168), and USS DACE (SS 247) :
“ NO LOSS OF LIFE “
- TANG (SS 306) - 78 Men on Board:
Accidentally Sunk, on 24 Oct 1944, by Circular Run of It's own Torpedo, in Formosa Strait :
“ 9 POW'S, SURVIVED “



Minutes for Submarine Veterans San Diego 8 October 2013

1900 – Meeting of the Submarine Veterans Inc., San Diego Base was called to order by Base Commander Bob Bissonnette.

Conducted Opening Exercises:

Reading of Our Creed:

Pledge of Allegiance: Lead by Bill Earl

Chaplain Jack Lester lead us in prayer

Conducted Tolling of the boats for October

Observed a moment of Silent Prayer

Base Commander Bissonnette recognized past E-Board members and Past Officers. National Commander Michael Bircumshaw, Rocky Rockers and Roy Bannack were present.

Secretary Ferguson announced 37 members were present.

Treasurer Report: Treasurer not present so reports will be updated next month.

Call for Committee Reports:

Binnacle List: Al Strunk, Tommy Cox, Frank Walker and the family of Charlie Marin.

Past National President and San Diego Base Commander Charlie Marin is on eternal patrol. He will be missed by Submarine Veterans nationwide. Bob Coates funeral services are 16 October 1PM at Ft. Rosecrans.

Parade Committee: Joel Eikam - Borrego 26 October 0800 assembly 1000 parade. Veterans Parade downtown San Diego November 11th.

Membership: Ray Ferbrache reported 300 members. The National data base is up and running. 31 December is cut-off for dues and 31 January 2014 non-renewals will be removed from roster.

Scholarship: Members should start preparing their applications with deadline 15 March 2014.

Storekeeper Report: 2014 calendars are available for \$8.

Breakfast Committee: Fred Fomby stated that the 29th December breakfast will be his last as Chair.

Volunteer is needed to take over this task which is vital to our budget and enjoyed by many members. Also need a new cook volunteer.

Float Committee: No report.

1933 Base Commander called a break.

1945 Base Commander called meeting back to order.

National Commander Michael Bircumshaw reported on the recent National Convention in Rochester, Minnesota and in his opinion it was the best Convention since Ft. Worth. He also reviewed the National vetting system for determining future Convention sites and assistance in administration of the Conventions.

Unfinished Business:

Base Commander discussed his attendance at the National Convention and remarked on new E-Board at Groton Base, enjoyment at the Memorial Park, Retention and Dues, and Kaps for Kids.

Chula Vista Veterans Walk is on 2 November and the 12 October team rally has been canceled.

Christmas Party 21 December 1:30 to 5PM with dinner at 2PM \$20 per person includes food and door prizes.

Old Float – still stored at RV Park and will give first right of refusal to Frank Walker and then likely scrap it..

New Business:

E-Board discussed upgrading Mike Hymans computer to allow more capacity.

National President presented a plaque to Base Commander Bissonnette for our support of Sailor of the Year. He also encouraged the members to bring in one new member each year to help keep National membership rolls high, and to use “Good Search” for donations.

A motion was made and approved by the members present to name our scholarship program the “Charlie Marin Memorial Scholarship Fund”.

Donations were made by our National President and others.

Good of the Order:

Bob Bannach discussed the Food Fest Saturday from 3-6PM in Vista American Legion Post for \$10, and the Bonefish Base “Field of Honor” November 9-16.

Rocky – Doug Smay Base breakfast 27 October, and their involvement in a major event to be held on the Midway Museum in November 2014 for the Wounded Warrior.

David mentioned birthdays in October for Dave Lemly and Fred Fomby.

Jack Lester related info about International Veterans get together he was attending in Mazatlan in November.

Bill Earl discussed the International Submariners Convention in Australia, his visit to Manitowac, Wisconsin and fresh water submarines.

Leroy stated the address for the food fest in Vista at 1234 S. Sante Fe.

Ed Farley mentioned his Tusk reunion being held the 17th here in San Diego was being affected by the government shutdown in that his Commanding Officer speaker had to cancel out.

Fred reminded us to clean up before we left the meeting.

Submarine History articles are on the back table.

Base Commander Bissonnette adjourned the meeting at 2058.

Jack Ferguson, Secretary

Sailing List for 8 October 2013

Fred Fomby	Manny Burciaga	Jack Lester
Phill Richeson	Phillip Richeson	Jack Kane
Jack L. Addington	Bob Farrell	Joel Eikam
Larry Dore	Robert Chapman	Bert Weltzien
Nihil D. Smith	Richard A. Smith	Bill Earl
Bob Bissonnette	Rocky Rockers	Ed Farley
David Kauppinen	ack Ferguson	Joe Sasser
Chris Stafford	Bud Rollison	Roy Bannach
James Pope	Dennis Mortensen	Ron Gorence
Ray Ferbache	Russ Mohedano	Dennis McCreight
Steven Lamprides	Peter Lary	Glenn Gerbrand
Don Mathiowetz	Dave Lemly	Allen Simmons
Warren Branges		

Current News

“Plataginet, I will; and like thee, Nero,
Play on the lute, beholding the towns burn” (*Henry VI*, Shakespeare)

**The Day A German Submarine Was Sighted In The Bahamas
Eric Wiberg, Tribune242.com, Nov 5**

THE morning of Saturday, August 7, 1943, began clear and calm, with good visibility from the bluff on which the town of Clarence Town, Long Island, Bahamas is perched. During the summer, when school was not in session, young Ancil Rudolph Pratt was able to take his father’s horses out to pasture the morning. He and his friends - Wellington Smith, Kipling Simms,

Jeffrey Strachan and Isaac Taylor - liked to take the horses to the coast southeast of Clarence Town and enjoy playing on the seashore while the horses ate fresh grass.

Pratt remembers that it was a clear sunny day and the boys had made it to the bluffs around midday when they all saw something so unusual that they remembered it to their dying days, and confirmed it by looking at photos later. They were several miles southeast of town on the bluffs. A boat of some sort emerged from the water about two miles out to sea. They could clearly see the "sail" or conning tower, but not any people on deck or on board. The craft was moving slowly and leaving a wake behind it. The boys could clearly see machinery on deck.

Judging from the comparative distance between telephone poles strung along the coast, which are spaced roughly 200 feet apart, he judged the length of the vessel to be about 200 feet. After ten to fifteen minutes the submarine submerged, though a kind of radio mast was still visible. The sun was over their heads at midday, the submarine headed from left to right away from land, towards the southeast. The boys' backs were to the high bushes and trees. They watched the mast cutting through the water and heading away.

Asked whether he had witnessed a submarine in Bahamian waters during World War Two, Mr Pratt, a former insurance salesman in Nassau for 25 years who runs a shop in Clarence Town and is a well-respected member of the community, he replied "it couldn't be nothing else". It also could not have been any other day – Sunday the boys would have been in Church and in weekdays engaged in either school or church. "This is not no story," he says, "I'm telling you I saw it with my own eyes."

The channel off Long Island was used by eight German and Italian submarines in World War Two: the Italian submarine Finzi and the German U-boats U-84, U-108, U-129, U-185, U-508, U-732, and U-751. U-84 had transited the Crooked Island Channel east of Long Island on 10th July 1942, and the British Admiralty reported a submarine spotted on the 22nd of July, which might also have been U-129 under Hans-Ludwig Witt, however the sub was described heading southeast (same direction as U-84) and Witt was heading back to Europe.

Neither can be verified with certainty, though possibly the sighting of U-84 was made on an earlier date by fisherman and reported on the 22nd when they returned. The source of the sighting was "Hardbargain South Side Long Island course South East." Hard Bargain was a largely abandoned salt harvesting community, also just south of Clarence Town Long Island.

Given the certainty of it being a Saturday in early August 1943, it was much easier to verify the sighting by young Pratt and his friends.

On Saturday, August 7, 1943, Oberleutnant zur See Claus-Peter Carlsen, aged 23, was conning his submarine, U-732 back to Brest, France. He was on the 58th day of an 83-day patrol during which he attacked Allied ships three times and was counter-attacked more often, first by two US Kingfisher reconnaissance airplanes, and another time driven away from a convoy by two American destroyers. On the afternoon of Friday, July 6, U-732 put the north coast of Cuba astern and passed west of Great Inagua in the southern Bahamas. At 10pm local time on the 6th, Carlsen noted his intention in the sub's log book, or KTB, that he intended to take a winding course through Crooked Island Passage as part of his return voyage.

By 2am on Saturday, U-732 was able to take a visual bearing on Castle Island Light at the southern tip of Acklins Island. He noted that the light was "shining peacefully and is very good for position-fixing". At 5:30am, the submarine submerged, having ventilated and charged its batteries on the surface. By submerging, it made itself less vulnerable to detection and attack by enemy aircraft and ships, however their transit of the winding passage was only about halfway completed. They would need to verify their position before they were through. At 10am, they were southeast of the coast of Long Island, and by early afternoon were only seven or eight miles from land. If the submarine was on the surface it would have been visible from an elevation ashore with 12-mile visibility on a clear day.

During the hours between 2pm (it might have been noon depending on the time difference between Germany and the Bahamas), and 4pm, when the sub was next reported east of Clarence Town, Carlsen did not record anything, whether he surfaced or not was not noted. Certainly if it was surfaced the sub could achieve four times its submerged speed of about three knots, allowing it to cover substantially more ground. It is also possible that before crossing the wide Atlantic Carlsen wanted to visually verify his position, particularly to line up a safe passage between Samana Cay to the south and Rum Cay and San Salvador to the north. In particular there are two large, Spanish-colonial-style churches on the bluffs east of Clarence Town which would have served as reliable beacons enabling a captain to confirm his exact position.

Whether Carlsen took the calculated risk of surfacing southeast of and out of sight of Clarence Town proper will not be known with certitude. He demonstrated in writing a propensity to approach landmarks and verify his position as recently as passing Castle Island Light some 12 hours before.

The evidence suggests that five pairs of eyes witnessed the submarine indeed surfacing for a short time before heading east to break free of the shallow Bahamas and head back for Europe, where U-732 arrived on the last day of the same month. If so it would be the only verifiable incidence of a living witness having seen a German submarine patrolling in the region – one Saturday morning out of some 1,500 other patrol days where the enemy prowled the watery region around the islands over the course of more than two and a half years.

State TV: Iran Launches Its First Submarine For Tourists In Persian Gulf Waters **The Associated Press, Nov 4**

TEHRAN, Iran - Iran has launched its first submarine for tourists in the Persian Gulf waters, an all-Iranian-made undersea vehicle.

State TV says the sub has been dubbed Morvarid, or Pearl in Farsi, and has the capacity to carry four people per voyage. It says the vessel is four meters long and three meters in both width and height.

Friday's report says the submarine will serve tourists in Kish Island, Iran's prime tourist spot in the Gulf.

Morvarid has been entirely designed and manufactured by Iranian experts. The TV also says it has a speed of up to 12 knots, has a diesel generator but can be electrically-powered for up to six to 10 hours.

Iran's Navy has several Russian-made and smaller Iranian-built submarines in service.

Colombian Authorities Destroy High-Tech 39-Foot Narco Submarine **Hispanically Speaking News, Nov 6**

Colombian police on the Pacific coast destroyed a submarine outfitted with modern technology and with the capacity to transport up to eight tons of cocaine.

The vessel, 12 meters (39.4 feet) long and 3.5 meters (11.5 feet) wide, could accommodate up to four crewmembers, was constructed of steel and fiberglass and had a powerful diesel motor, police said Tuesday in a communique.

According to the information provided by the authorities, the sub was equipped with an electric generator and a ventilation and oxygenation system, GPS, a gyroscope, sonar and six oxygen tanks.

The sub, which was ready to be dispatched to Central America carrying drugs, was in a rural part of the port in the city of Tumaco in the custody of FARC rebels, police said.

Police also said that participating in the seizure and destruction of the vessel were members of the Colombian military in coordination with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

The sub had been built in an improvised shipyard in a remote mangrove swamp.

Upon disembarking from their aircraft in the zone, police faced bursts of automatic weapons fire, which led to a brief exchange of gunfire after which the people tasked with guarding the area fled.

But Why? Saudi Arabia Ready To Splurge Billions on German Submarines **albawaba.com, Nov 6**

For decades Germany declined to sell heavy weapons to Saudi Arabia because of concerns over human rights and fears for Israel's security.

Saudi Arabia wants to buy five German submarines for around 2.5 billion euros (\$3.4 billion) and more than two dozen more in the future, a newspaper reported Sunday.

Citing unidentified government sources, Sunday's Bild newspaper said Riyadh had its eye initially on buying the five Type 209 submarines, followed long-term by up to 25 submarines in a 12-billion-euro deal.

It said the chancellery had, in a letter to Saudi Arabia in the summer, indicated a swift and sympathetic examination of Riyadh's weapons plans as soon as the new German government was established following September elections.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives are currently locked in negotiations with the centre-left Social Democrats on forming a grand coalition.

A German government spokeswoman, contacted by AFP, declined to comment and would not confirm or deny the reported letter.

In Riyadh, officials do not usually publicly comment on such deals.

Germany's heavy industry giant ThyssenKrupp which, the paper said, would produce the submarines was quoted by Bild as saying there was "no project on submarines for Saudi Arabia".

German arms sales to Saudi Arabia have in the past been criticised by opposition politicians, especially in light of pro-democracy uprisings throughout the Middle East.

For decades Germany declined to sell heavy weapons to Saudi Arabia because of concerns over human rights and fears for Israel's security.

Technological Marvel

The Day, Nov 5

The age-old tradition of a ship christening provides the opportunity to take pause and consider the expert craftsmanship, engineering prowess and technological skill that are necessary to build submarines in the 21st century.

Around these parts, perhaps it is too easy to take these undersea warships for granted because they have so long been part of the southeastern Connecticut community. Many of our neighbors build these ships and serve on or have served on them. They are a common sight quietly navigating in the Thames River, to and from the Naval Shipyard in Groton.

The submarine christenings, however, provide the chance for a different perspective, with visitors admiring something the locals have grown used to seeing. Such was the case again this past Saturday when 4,200 people gathered at the graving dock at Electric Boat in Groton to celebrate the constructing of the North Dakota (SSN 784).

Built by EB in conjunction with Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia, the North Dakota is a Virginia-class, attack submarine powered by a nuclear reactor. These submarines are capable of both deep-ocean submarine warfare and stealth missions in relatively shallow water.

Sailors use a joystick to control the steering and diving of these 377-foot submarines. High-resolution cameras, infrared sensors and laser rangefinders provide a precise visual display and accompanying data that replace and revolutionize the traditional periscope.

Vertical missile launch tubes can unleash 16 Tomahawk cruise missiles in a single, devastating salvo. Alternatively, a Virginia-class submarine can dispatch a mini-submarine to deliver Navy SEALs or Marine special-services units for covert operations.

The construction cost is staggering at \$2.6 billion each, but EB and Newport have been delivering these submarines on time and within budget. Design and construction innovations are lowering per-ship costs.

Difficult to locate or track, these submarines act as a deterrent to anyone who would consider challenging U.S. naval superiority.

They are a marvel, a great feat for those who design, engineer and build them. An achievement the region and nation should never take for granted.

Disruption Of Regular Appropriations Threatens DOD Projects

Megan Scully, Roll Call, Nov 5

The Navy has grand plans for its next-generation ballistic missile submarine, pushing it deeper into the research-and-development phase in fiscal 2014 — and one step closer to production — with a healthy \$1.1 billion investment that amounts to roughly double what the service spent on the program last year.

The new submarine is expensive by any measure, with the total price tag for developing and purchasing the 12 ships estimated at a staggering \$93 billion. Lawmakers and Navy officials, however, believe that the cost of modernizing a critical leg of the three-pronged nuclear deterrent is well worth its price.

But the Navy's plans to replace its venerable Ohio-class submarines may be slowed at a critical time for the program, thanks to a stopgap continuing resolution (PL 113-46) that forces the Defense Department and other federal agencies to spend at fiscal 2013 levels.

The current continuing resolution expires Jan. 15, but there is growing concern both within the Pentagon and on Capitol Hill that the political stalemate over spending may ultimately force another extension of that stopgap spending bill, perhaps for the rest of fiscal 2014.

The Defense Department, unlike most other federal agencies, has never operated under a yearlong continuing resolution in the modern budgeting era, which began in the mid-1970s. But Democrats on Capitol Hill are already signaling that the military's spending bill will not receive the preferential treatment it has in years past.

Appropriations Chairwoman Barbara A. Mikulski, D-Md., and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada insist the defense bill is just one among the 12 appropriations measures, a senior congressional Democratic aide said last week.

Meanwhile, Mikulski and House Appropriations Chairman Harold Rogers, R-Ky., have both made clear they want to see all 12 of those measures ultimately enacted, a steep climb in a Congress that has become increasingly reliant on CRs for most agencies.

Defense Department officials seem to be getting the message.

Less than a month into the fiscal year, they are already warning about the long-term consequences of operating under a lengthy continuing resolution, arguing that it creates a mismatch between funding and priorities while also forcing the Pentagon to abandon new programs.

Funding Defense

Despite the partisan gridlock, many observers believe Congress will ultimately agree to a bill to fund the Pentagon, which consumes about half of all federal discretionary spending. The stakes of abdicating that responsibility are simply too high.

“Congress goes out of its way to make sure it marks up \$500 billion,” said Russell Rumbaugh, an analyst at the nonpartisan Stimson Center. “National defense is important and Congress takes time to do it.”

China Unveils Nuclear Submarines That Could Reportedly Reach U.S. **Liz Klimas, The Blaze, Nov 1**

Earlier this week China unveiled its first-generation nuclear submarine, which it was decommissioning after more than 40 years. But later iterations of warhead-equipped submarines operated by the country’s People’s Liberation Army were also revealed to have the capability to strike the United States, according to some reports.

Want China Times, the English news website of the Taiwan-based China Times News Group, pointed out that the photos released of the country’s submarine fleet by the state-run news agency focused more on the older Xia-class nuclear submarines than the newer Type 094 Jin-class ballistic missile submarine.

Global Times, a paper published by the country’s Communist party, noted military expert Du Wenglong saying that the release of the photos served to show the world that China is capable of launching ballistic missiles like other world powers.

Although not mentioned in the Global Times article, Want China Times reported that a JL-2 submarine-launched ballistic missile could reach the western United States if fired from the Bohai Sea. In a separate article, the same publication elaborated that the range of a JL-2 missile is 8,000 kilometers, making them a “considerable threat to U.S. national security.”

The Washington Times gave even more details about attacks on the U.S. from Chinese submarines, sourcing a Global Times article that inexplicably did not appear available on the site:

In 2010, a new class of missile sub, the Type 094 Jin class, entered the service. It is capable of launching 12 to 16 JL-2 missiles with a range of about 8,700 miles, covering much of the continental U.S. with single or multiple, independently targetable re-entry vehicle warheads.

Chinese calculations for nuclear attacks on the U.S. are chillingly macabre.

“Because the Midwest states of the U.S. are sparsely populated, in order to increase the lethality, [our] nuclear attacks should mainly target the key cities on the West Coast of the United States, such as Seattle, Los Angeles, San Francisco and San Diego,” the Global Times said.

“The 12 JL-2 nuclear warheads carried by one single Type 094 SSBN can kill and wound 5 million to 12 million Americans,” the Global Times reported.

Navy Selects Virginia Payload Module Design Concept **USNI News, Nov 4**

The Navy has selected a design concept to replace its nuclear guided missile submarines (SSGNs), NAVSEA officials told USNI News in an interview last week.

Late last month NAVSEA and the Navy settled on a design concept for the Virginia Payload Module, a \$743 million design change in the Virginia-class nuclear attack submarines (SSN-774) that will eventually replace the current Ohio-class SSGNs as part of the Block V iteration of the attack boat.

The design will extend the hull by approximately 70 feet to include four so-called Virginia Payload Tubes (VPT) each containing seven Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAMs). Combined with two six-round VPTs in the bow, the total number of TLAMs per boat increases to 40, Capt. David Goggins, NAVSEA program manager for the Virginia-class, told USNI News on Oct. 31.

The design is the lowest cost option to include the four new VPTs to the Virginia, Goggins said.

“This work started in 2009 to really evaluate ways to mitigate the Tomahawk shortfall when the [SSGNs] retire between 2026 and 2028,” he said.

In 2003 the Navy began to convert the first four Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines to carry conventional weapons — mostly TLAMs. Since the first deployment in 2007, the Navy has had a high degree of success with the four submarines — each capable of fielding 154 TLAMs. USS Florida (SSGN- 728) was a centerpiece of the 2011 Operation Odyssey Dawn strike mission off of Libya.

The Navy thinks it needs at least 20 boats equipped with VPMs to makeup for the retirement of the four SSGNs.

In 2012 NAVSEA initially started with a VPM baseline with a longer hull insert that would have added an additional 97 feet to the submarine. In order to keep a clean line on the hull, the service had a plan to build a pressure hull that would go from the standard 34 feet to 26, Goggins said. The additional room between the pressure hull and the outer hull of the submarine would have contained the mechanics for the VPT doors.

Instead the Navy adopted a design that would add a faring on the dorsal side of the submarine to contain machinery for the VPT hatches.

“That’s easier to design and easier to build,” he said.

“From a construction perspective you don’t have this complicated work where you have to build this change in diameter for the pressure hull.”

The Block V boats will suffer a small acoustic penalty with the inclusion of the fairing but it will have less impact on speed and maneuverability of the submarine than the larger 97 foot baseline plan, Goggins said.

Plumbing The Depths Of Surveillance With Submersible Drones **Matt Burke, Stars and Stripes, Nov 2**

Think of them as sleeper cells that go dormant for years, waiting for the signal that will send them into action.

This is the high-tech version: unmanned drones that the government plans to plant on the ocean floor, ready to speed to the surface – and beyond – for surveillance, search-and-rescue and other operational support.

The latest developmental program to start making the transition from science fiction to the drawing board is so new that while the uses seem to be limited only by imagination, there are new ethical and policy issues to consider, from rules for implementation to the potential for launching an underwater arms race.

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency is funding the construction of deep-sea capsules containing dormant aerial drones. DARPA documents say the agency is also willing to consider other types of unmanned vehicles that travel on the water but accomplish the same mission, though there are no current plans to arm any of them, according to a DARPA statement. The call for proposals made public earlier this year offers scant details, relying on the imagination of interested inventors.

“Today, cost and complexity limit the Navy to fewer weapons systems and platforms, so resources are strained to operate over vast maritime areas,” a DARPA statement said in January after the program was announced. “Unmanned systems and sensors are commonly envisioned to fill coverage gaps and deliver action at a distance.

“However, for all of the advances in sensing, autonomy, and unmanned platforms in recent years, the usefulness of such technology becomes academic when faced with the question, ‘How do you get the systems there?’”

DARPA officials declined to comment on the program but did acknowledge awarding 13 Phase 1 contracts to corporations and entities like Lockheed Martin Corporation and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution at the end of fiscal year 2013. Initial awards were anticipated to be between \$1.25 and \$1.75 million, increasing drastically to \$27 million-\$30 million for phases two and three. DARPA expects to support at least one major sea test in the Western Pacific in fiscal year 2017.

The systems will lie on the deep ocean floor in special containers “for years at a time,” the statement said. Their capabilities could include networking, surveillance, disruption, deception, rescue, “or any other mission that benefits from being pre-distributed and hidden.”

The research agency is seeking technology in three key areas: communications, deep ocean risers to contain the drones and the actual drones themselves, the statement said.

The documents state that nearly half of the world’s oceans are deeper than four kilometers, which provides for cheap stealth and storage. Retrieval costs of the drones and their containers would be prohibitive to others and the risk of losing a drone would be low because they would be unarmed and therefore less volatile.

“To make this work, we need to address technical challenges like extended survival of nodes under extreme ocean pressure, communications to wake-up the nodes after years of sleep, and efficient launch of payloads to the surface,” DARPA program manager Andy Coon said in the statement. “We are simply offering an alternative path to realize these missions without requiring legacy ships and aircraft to launch the technology, and without growing the reach and complexity of unmanned platforms.”

Maritime experts, academics and human rights advocates were divided on the merits of such a program but all agreed that a wider discussion on the use of drones was warranted.

“‘Autonomous systems,’ whether they’re weapons systems or systems designed to provide surveillance, or simply systems designed for any number of commercial applications, will be developed,” said Coast Guard Capt. Peter Troedsson, a military fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. “It’s far more important that we accept this as a reality and develop accompanying policy guidelines.”

Troedsson believes that enhanced capabilities in maritime domain awareness would combat illegal activity and contribute significantly to the national security of the United States if they can help with search-and-rescue response, fisheries enforcement and the fight against human and narcotics trafficking. Mark Gubrud, a researcher from Princeton University’s Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, cited concerns about degradation, tampering, usefulness in regard to their short life after being launched and how launches could be viewed as a provocation leading to a pre-emptive strike.

“Pre-deploying large amounts of warfighting hardware, including ‘non-lethal’ autonomous weapons and possibly lethal ones as well, over broad areas of the Western Pacific, or any other waters well outside the recognized boundaries of U.S. territorial waters, is potentially provocative and offensive to China and other nations,” Gubrud said. “How would we react if China placed similar systems on the seabed offshore of the United States, or around various geographic locations where it is thought that American and Chinese forces might clash?”

“China is potentially capable of advanced robotics and deep-sea operations against systems of this kind. If we challenge China to a high-tech arms race on the ocean floor, it is not clear who will prevail.”

Whether tensions arise over the deployment of the drones depends on where they are placed, according to Coast Guard Capt. Andrew Norris, a maritime law scholar who has taught at both the National Defense University and Naval War College.

Norris said there doesn't seem to be anything in international maritime law that would prohibit them on the sea floor over 200 miles off a country's coast. Within 12 miles of shore would violate national sovereignty; 12-200 miles is part of a country's exclusive economic zone – a somewhat gray area – where a nation has rights to natural resources and jurisdiction over artificial islands, platforms and marine scientific research.

Norris said other issues include whether drone pods adhere to previous maritime agreements. Will they be classified as ships or aircraft? Will they hinder navigation? What will they be doing? Will they eventually be armed?

There are also navigational issues once the drones reach the surface, Norris said. Different rules apply to watercraft and aircraft.

Norris said intelligence gathering technology in the ocean is nothing new. He likened the drone pods to Soviet-laid devices – called Auxiliary Gatherers of Intelligence – he saw just outside U.S. territorial waters off Norfolk, Va., while he was in the Navy in the 1980s. He said devices also were laid in the depths to detect submarines.

Human rights advocates said that while drones are better than weapons that kill indiscriminately like land mines, there are obvious concerns with the U.S. government's secrecy and the potential for improper use.

“The good thing about drones is they have the potential to be used with more precision to target enemies; the bad thing is that, particularly when used covertly, they may make it too easy for the government that has them to use lethal force when it's unlawful or strategically unwise,” said Daphne Eviatar, senior council of law and security for Human Rights First, a non-partisan, non-profit human rights organization. “Certainly the clandestine operation of drones, whether by air or by sea, threatens to involve the U.S. in wars it should not be fighting and is a form of ‘mission creep’ that might be considered world policing.”

Sarah Holewinski, executive director of the Center for Civilians in Conflict, an independent, non-governmental research and advocacy organization that has studied drones, said rules need to be written now.

“It's only a matter of time before actors that the U.S. disagrees with, or is actively combatting, has access to drones – surveillance or weaponized,” she said. “Anti-drone technology is being developed as we speak for just such a day. But the United States should also make sure that, no matter who has drones, it can claim the moral high ground for their use.”

Other DARPA programs indicate an intense focus on this sort of autonomous drone technology. DARPA's Tactical Technology Office launched the Hydra program in July, according to the call for proposals. This program seeks to develop a delivery system that would separate from manned military assets like Navy ships, submarines or even airplanes and then launch unmanned underwater, surface or aerial drones specializing in intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and mine counter-measure operations.

The drones would plug into the delivery system, which could potentially be a submersible like a submarine, and operate for “weeks or months” autonomously, according to a DARPA statement. These unmanned delivery systems will be designed to navigate in “shallow international waters near shorelines.”

Nook & Cranny Tours Offer Intimate Look Inside USS Cobia Submarine **Meg Jones, Journal Sentinel, Nov 3**

Manitowoc — Standing inside the submarine's conning tower, John Wood looked up at the narrow hatch and was transported back in time half a century.

“The captain would be the last down, and he'd pull this cord and lean into it” as another sailor twirled the wheel to make the hatch airtight, Wood said.

Everybody on the bridge, all the officers and lookouts, had to fit through the hatch and down into the conning tower within 10 seconds and the submarine needed to submerge within 30 seconds.

With more than two years of submarine duty under Wood's deck shoes, you'd think the last thing he'd want to do is spend his Sunday afternoon crawling around another sub. Actually, that's exactly what Wood, 73, a veteran of the USS Blenny in the early '60s, wanted — to revisit a submarine similar to the ship that took him to exotic destinations.

Seventy years ago this month, the USS Cobia was launched in Connecticut and quickly splashed into the first of six war patrols, eventually sinking 13 Japanese vessels.

The Wisconsin Maritime Museum in Manitowoc began offering Nook & Cranny Tours of the nation's most completely restored World War II sub two years ago during the fall and winter. The tours, which are offered occasionally on Saturdays and non-Packers Sundays, give visitors a chance to see areas not shown on the regular 45-minute tours, including the conning tower, pump room and lower engine room.

“Some people think 45 minutes isn't enough,” said Karen Duvall, submarine curator. The more extensive tour “gives them a chance to crawl around in areas they don't normally see.”

Nook & Cranny tours are limited to a dozen visitors and cost \$19 per person, which includes museum admission. They last two to three hours depending on the number of questions asked by visitors. The tours are popular among former submariners who sign up to spend time on a sub again, Duvalle said.

Guide Tim Abendroth asks all submarine veterans on his tours to sign an autograph book; Wood's signature and the USS Blenny were added on Sunday afternoon.

A handful of Cobia sailors are still alive. Charlie Stewart, 88, who publishes the group's monthly newsletter "The Clarion" still has 13 Cobia veterans on his mailing list.

Stewart bunked in the aft torpedo room right next to the torpedo tubes. It was his job to fire torpedoes in Tubes 8 and 10, which he did by pushing a red button.

"I did that on several occasions. On one occasion we had only one torpedo left. With one shot we sank a Japanese tanker," Stewart said in a phone interview from his Oklahoma home. "They let me come to the conning tower and look through the periscope and see the orange ball of fire on the horizon."

In July 1944 the Cobia attacked an enemy convoy bound for Iwo Jima, sinking a troop transport carrying a Japanese tank battalion. The Marines who survived the brutal fighting on the island, known for the famous photo of the flag-raising, credited the Cobia's sinking of the transport as critical to their success.

The Cobia has been on display in Manitowoc since 1970 in honor of the 28 submarines built in this Lake Michigan city during World War II. Four of the Manitowoc-built submarines were lost at sea, and the others were sold to foreign governments or mothballed after the war. All have since been scrapped.

Even though the Cobia has been moored in Manitowoc for decades and thousands of visitors have traipsed through, the ship is still giving up its secrets. Recently a leather sailor's bag was found stuffed in an out-of-the-way spot in the ceiling of the aft torpedo room. Inside was a stamp with a sailor's name on it, a book of cocktail recipes and "two filthy sailor poems," Duvalle said.

Museum officials tracked the sailor — who has since passed away — to North Carolina; he didn't remember the bag or the possessions, which will be displayed when the museum arranges a new Cobia exhibit.

"It was kind of an oddball thing. We had been through most of the boat," Duvalle said. "It wasn't in an obvious spot. Unless you're laying on a bunk and reaching way up there, it's hard to see."

Stewart sometimes gives tours of the Cobia, though he hasn't visited since 2011. He's happy to stand in the spot where he spent so many days at war and talk to anyone who cares to listen. Stewart tells them the three reasons for joining the submarine service — the best chow and best pay in the Navy and the informality. Sailors could grow beards and didn't have to salute officers.

He describes in vivid detail the eight-hour depth charge attack by a Japanese minesweeper, which pushed the submarine 27 feet into the muddy bottom of the Gulf of Siam on Mother's Day 1945 and the heroic efforts of the Cobia captain, who freed them from what would have been their deaths. The captain moved his men fore and aft as he painstakingly ordered ballast blown to rock the Cobia free.

Stewart admits he never suffered from seasickness or claustrophobia.

"I was a very lucky dude. I stood lookout watch when I wasn't at my battle station. I was always on the bridge for sunrise and sunset, got a lot of fresh air, (and) heard the conversations of officers," said Stewart, whose memoir of the Cobia, "Blind Fight," is sold in the museum gift shop.

Wood, who drove up from Sycamore, Ill. with his son-in-law on Sunday, had a chance to linger in the radio room, where he spent much of his time, and lie in a bunk and take photos. Wood turned down a transfer to the USS Thresher shortly before the sub was lost with all hands while undergoing deep diving tests.

As Wood and others on Sunday's Nook & Cranny Tour dropped down hatches to see the galley freezer and battery storage compartment and climbed into the conning tower, Abendroth pointed out a surprising fact.

"Something to think about as you go through — everything here was built in four months," Abendroth said.

The long tour

The next Nook & Cranny Tours of the USS Cobia are Nov. 16 and Dec. 14 at 9 a.m. Tours are also scheduled in January, February and March. For more information, see www.wisconsinmaritime.org.

