The Lehigh Valley Base News ©

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United States Submarine Veterans, Inc — May 2013

Commanders Corner

New Base and First Phase of Submarine Memorial progress

After a number of years, a new USSVI Base has been successfully started in Williamsport, PA. Bill Reasner, who is a member of our base, is the commander of the new base. On May 9th, I had the privilege of attending the first base meeting. Bill had arranged for the base meetings to be held at a local Masonic Hall. The facility was very nice and appropriate. Several very enthusiastic submarine veterans were in attendance as plank owners. I think the head count was around 15.

The idea for the Williamsport Base started several years ago when as District Commander, Bill asked me how to go about starting a base and he has been working toward that goal since. Bill indicated he intends to have a story announcing the creation of the new base in a local newspaper shortly. He feels sure it will facilitate the process of building membership.

Congratulations Bill!

Our Pennsylvania Submarine Memorial Chairman, George Dolgos was successful in getting a meeting scheduled with the Office of the Mayor of Allentown.

On Friday May 10, 2013, George and I met with Francis X. Dougherty, Managing Director and two others to present our case for having a Memorial constructed in Allentown to honor all of the brave men who have served in the United States Submarine Service from PA.

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Who we are!

We are United States Submarine Sailors! We were, and are, members of the elite fighting force of the United States Navy. We are all

QUALIFIED IN SUBMARINES.

George owns some commercial property in downtown Allentown, so I asked him to give me a sort of tour around the area in order to get my bearings. So, we did that, and I was amazed by the construction taking place in the City and the resulting feeling of being in the midst of a resurgence! It was obvious to me that the City is well on its way to a comeback in a big way. As a result, I was jacked-up by the time we went into the meeting.

We started the meeting at 1:PM and had a very good and constructive conversation. It lasted perhaps an hour and a half or so. They had a retired City Planner in attendance. He was invited because he had served in the Navy on a destroyer and they felt he would make us feel comfortable. He did. Of course I had to remind him; to us he was only a target! Fran Dougherty was very enthusiastic and made that apparent.

If you want to hear more about our meeting with these Allentown officials and the outcome, you'll just have to attend Sunday's Base meeting at which George and I will share everything!

Sometimes, even a blind squirrel finds a nut!

I hope you all are enjoy the advent of Spring....I think!

Vince Flaherty, Base Commander
The Lehigh Valley Base of USSVI

USSVI Creed:

"To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of 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".

Meeting Schedule

Sunday
May19, 2013-2:PM
Sunday
June 9, 2012-2:PM

Meeting Place:

Firehouse
100 Stoke Park Rd
Bethlehem, PA 18017

Birthdays

Richard Smith
May 7th

Theodore Peters, Jr.
May 12th

Alfred Regits
May 14th

Binnacle List

None of whom we are aware

Eternal Patrol

No one

Navy set to deploy rail guns, laser prototypes

Dodbuzz.com, April 29

The U.S. Navy's Science and Technology community is deploying prototypes of electromagnetic rail guns, solid-state laser weapons and underwater unmanned vehicles in operational units with sailors and Marines, senior service leaders said April.

"These prototypes are shifting the game in our favor. We can no longer spend huge dollars on systems - they must be very reliable, very affordable and very effective. It is about developing disruptive technologies that can be hugely effective and hugely affordable," Rear Adm. Matthew L. Klunder, Chief of Naval Research, Office of Naval Research (ONR), said at the National Defense Industrial Association's 14th Annual Science & Engineering Technology Conference/Defense Tech Exposition, National Harbor, Md.

A ship-mounted electromagnetic rail gun is one such prototype being tested on Navy vessels, Klunder said.

The rail gun, which can hit ranges of 100 miles or more, uses electricity stored on the ship to generate a high-speed electromagnetic pulse sufficient to propel a kinetic energy warhead. The result, is an inexpensive, high-impact and long-range offensive weapon, Klunder said.

"Electromagnetics have been around for a long time. How do you harness them and build the rails? We're big fans of learning how to prototype these technologies for military applications," he added. "We've fired this numerous times through testing. This is showing incredible results, so much so that we are very committed to this for the future."

The rail gun's hyper-velocity projectile can also be fired from standard Navy 5-inch guns as well as 155mm Howitzers, Klunder added.

The Navy is also testing several prototypes of a fully-autonomous, long-endurance land launched unmanned undersea vehicle (UUV), the large displacement UUV (LDUUV).

The idea is to deliver persistent undersea sensing capability while exploring technological avenues for increased energy density to prolong the LDUUV's endurance and mission capabilities.

Klunder also highlighted the testing, development and deployment of the Navy's Laser Weapons System (LaWS), a high-energy, solid-state next-generation directed energy or "laser" weapon to go early next year on board the USS Ponce.

The idea is deploy a low-cost, high-energy effective offensive and defensive weapon against a range of potential threats, including drones, fast-attack boats and what is referred to as small boat swarm attacks wherein large numbers of small watercraft attack simultaneously.

"My challenge is we've got to be better at developing great sophisticated systems . Let's develop something that gives us a cost advantage over our adversary," he added.

Base Meeting Minutes: April 2013

Call to order

- Vince Flaherty, CDR, called the March meeting of the USSVI Lehigh Valley Base to order at 1410 on 10MAR13 at the Hanover Township Volunteer Fire Company.
- Chaplain Dale Fenner led the group in prayer.
- Vince Flaherty led the group in the pledge of allegiance to our flag.
- Bill Reightler led the group in reciting the creed, followed by those in attendance reading the Tolling of the Boats.

Members Present

The following members were present. Dale Fenner, Ray Imlay, Walt Taverna Vince Flaherty, Bill Reightler, Homer Shoemaker, George Dolgos

Secretary Report

The March minutes were read and approved as amended. (Dale's name was left off members present last month.)

Treasurer's Report

Read by the base commander and accepted as read.

Old Business

George reported on the progress toward creating a submarine memorial in Allentown.

- He is investigating possibility of the Mack Truck company being able to transport the sail to the memorial site through a contact that he has there.
- He needs to get the tonnage number to them.
- He also talked to a representative of the city, who asked for a more formal presentation.
- Vince is working on updating the base letterhead, and came up with quality photos to present to the city showing what the memorial should look like.

There was a brief discussion of the fact that we would need to do fund-raising to get the memorial built, and that we should take the long view and do it right.

New Business

- Bill reported on three Eagle Scout presentations. One in Cattasaqua, one in Wilson, and one scheduled to occur in May in Center Valley.
- A new prospective member attended the meeting. Rich Harold of 3950 Washington Street, Bethlehem, PA Rich served on the Amberjack and then on the Alexander Hamilton. The base secretary will provide him with an application.
- Homer made a motion that the base purchase Eternal Patrol brochures from National. Ray seconded the motion and donated the $10 required to get the brochures. Motion passed. Base secretary assigned task of getting the brochures.
- Bill volunteered to bring in the Base Flag to display at our next meeting.
- Homer. as the Base Secretary, was appointed the POC and agreed to make that change active on the our National database.
- Vince noted that we have patches and other items for sale that we should get from Roger, who has been having to work on Sundays, so that they are available for members at our meetings. Homer agreed to contact Roger about that.

Binnacle List

- None noted.

Adjournment

- Dale performed the benediction, and Vince adjourned the meeting.

Minutes submitted by;

Homer Shoemaker, Base Secretary

Now This Is No shit!

Sometimes you get caught.....

Flynn staggered home very late after another evening with his drinking buddy, Paddy. He took off his shoes to avoid waking his wife, Mary.

He tiptoed as quietly as he could toward the stairs leading to their upstairs bedroom, but misjudged the bottom step. As he caught himself by grabbing the banister, his body swung around and he landed heavily on his rump. A whiskey bottle in each back pocket broke and made the landing especially painful.

Managing not to yell, Flynn sprung up, pulled down his pants, and looked in the hall mirror to see that his butt cheeks were cut and bleeding. He managed to quietly find a full box of Band-Aids and began putting a Band-Aid as best he could on each place he saw blood.

He then hid the now almost empty Band-Aid box and shuffled and stumbled his way to bed.

In the morning, Flynn woke up with searing pain in both his head and butt and Mary staring at him from across the room.

She said, "You were drunk again last night weren't you?"

Flynn said, "Why would you say such a mean thing?"

"Well," Mary said, "it could be the open front door, it could be the broken glass at the bottom of the stairs, it could be the drops of blood trailing through the house, it could be your bloodshot eyes, but mostly.....it's all those Band-Aids stuck on the hall mirror.

Video & Web Links

Please click on hyperlink

USS Thresher Memorial Service

http://www.dvidshub.net/video/286087/uss-thresher-memorial-service-part-1 - .UWVqwYKNrKI

In the Beginning...God Created the Submariner

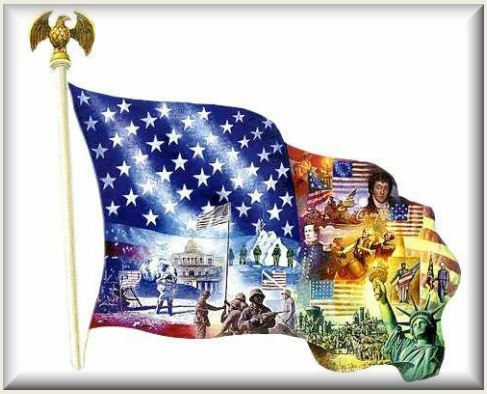
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9Eo6INrPW4&feature=youtu.be

Submarine USS Virginia Documentary

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-JP-ytvCRuk

Our Silent Service - A Tribute to the United States Submarine Force

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csyPBpQFAQM



Deadly Secrets

Strategy Page, Apr 13

April 4, 2013: For more than a decade now Russia has been restoring the heavy security on military matters that characterized the Soviet period (1921-91). But many naval officers are protesting the heavy-handed security, because in the past that has meant that details of naval mishaps were not distributed and that prevented experienced sailors from making suggestions that could prevent the same problem from causing another bad accident. This syndrome was particularly harmful when it came to nuclear submarines.

For a long time the Soviets did not even admit to the public when a nuclear sub was lost. This changed, shortly before the Soviet Union fell apart. The first public announcement of a sub loss was in 1986, when the public was told that the K-219 had sunk in the Atlantic. Earlier losses were not made public until the 1990s when, for a few years, the government granted unprecedented access to many of its archives. It was during this period that the public found out about the 1983 sinking of the submarine K-429 in the Pacific. Many naval officers, after seeing these records for the first time in the 1990s, noted that the lack of openness led to design and operational flaws in the nuclear submarine force being noted in accident reports, but not resulting in many changes (because of secrecy).

Some Russian nuclear subs had so many accidents, often involving the same systems that their crews truly considered them cursed. For example, Russia's first SSBN (ballistic missile submarine), the K-19 was finally sent to a shipyard for decommissioning and dismantling in 2002 after a long, disaster filled, career. Many sailors considered that dismantling long overdue. The K-19's tribulations began on its 1961 maiden voyage and were so horrendous that the details did get out, and a movie was actually made about it. In that movie, one sailor was heard to call the K-19 "cursed." He was right. The K-19 went on to suffer so many mishaps that sailors nicknamed the boat "Hiroshima."

Eight sailors died in the 1961 incident from radiation sickness. In 1969 K-19 collided with an American sub in the Barents Sea. In 1972, an onboard fire killed 28 of the crew. There were also fires in 1978 and 1982, but no one died in those. There were numerous other minor incidents. K-19 was taken out of active service in 1990 and docked at a remote Pacific base for over a decade.

It wasn't until the 1990s, after the Soviet Union fell apart, that the world was told how horrendous the Soviet nuclear submarine program had been. Before the 1990s all most people knew details about was the American nuclear submarine program, which was the best run and safest on the planet. This began back in 1952 with the construction of the first nuclear powered sub, the USS Nautilus. Completed in 1955, the Nautilus served until 1980, at which point it became a museum ship.

Since the Nautilus, over 400 nuclear subs have been built, most of them (over 60 percent) Russian. As was their custom the Russians went for quantity rather than quality. As a result of this, some 80 percent of those Russian boats have since been retired. Not only did Russian subs wear out quickly but they were not able to get to sea as often as their Western counterparts. When they did get to sea they had more problems with radiation and reactor reliability.

The realization of how dangerous (to everyone) Russia's nuclear submarine fleet was led to an international effort to safely decommission over a hundred obsolete, worn out, defective or broken down Russian nuclear subs. This effort has been going on for nearly a decade and was driven by the Russian threat to just sink their older nuclear subs in the Arctic Ocean. That might work with conventional ships but there was an international uproar over what would happen with all those nuclear reactors sitting on the ocean floor forever. Russia generously offered to accept donations to fund a dismantling program that included safe disposal (of the nuclear reactors).

The current Russian fleet of nuclear subs is tiny and the Russians would rather keep them tied up at dock most of the time. The crews can do a lot of training at dockside and only go to sea a few times a year, to check on their state of training. Given the number of accidents their subs have had in the past decade, the training the crews are getting now is not sufficient.

Only the U.S. and Britain were able to build nuclear subs that could stay at sea regularly and for long periods. French nukes were nearly as reliable but the Chinese built nuclear boats have, so far, been of lower

quality than three decade old Russian designs. India is also in the midst of getting its first generation nuclear subs operational and it has been rough going.

While nuclear subs are a much feared weapon, they have gone sixty years with only one instance of combat. That was in 1982, when a British SSN sunk an Argentinian cruiser (the former World War II era USS Phoenix). Nuclear subs have been much more active in espionage work. While not as flashy as sinking other ships, it is dangerous, demanding, and rewarding work. Most of these efforts during the Cold War are still secret.

Robots, Deep-Sea Sensors Help Pentagon Futurists Hunt Subs

Danger room (wired blog), 03 APR 13

A team from DARPA prepares to send its "Submarine Hold at RisK" — yes, SHARK — underwater robot on a mission to hunt submarines. Photo: DARPA/Bluefin Robots

No matter how silent or deep you run, enemy submariners, the Pentagon's mad scientists say they're getting better at finding you.

DARPA announced today that it's successfully tested two bleeding-edge methods of detecting quiet submarines lost under the ocean depths. One relies on distributed sensors at the bottom of the ocean floor to locate the subs. The other sends an aquatic robot to hunt them. They're both part of an effort called Distributed Agile Submarine Hunting, or DASH, and they're not even the sum total of DARPA's anti-submarine warfare programs.

One aspect of DASH is a series of drop-and-forget sonar devices, called the Transformational Reliable Acoustic Path System, or TRAPS. (DARPA likes functional acronyms, and presumably the music of T.I.) Each TRAP is a fixed, passive sonar node, designed to plop on the sea floor and communicate back to a floating "stationary surface node" through a wireless acoustic modem when something that sounds like a sub churns past. The idea is to trade sophistication for a distributed array of sensor packages that, once networked, will set up a vast, er, trap of sound detection.

That is, if the hardware is durable; the modems can handle the depths; and no one hacks or spoofs the TRAPS. There is no tech support under the waves. "This is a gamble," DARPA program manager Andy Coon said in a prepared statement, "but we believe the potential payoff will be high." As Jeezy and Drama put it, TRAP or die.

The second component to DASH is a yellow robotic submarine, shown above, called the Submarine Hold at RisK, or — wait for it — SHARK. Described by DARPA as a "mobile active sonar platform," the SHARK is supposed to track submarines once they're initially detected, presumably by the PATHs. DARPA disclosed today that it took the SHARK to an unspecified depth in February, which Coon likened to "going to another planet."

DARPA's announcement didn't say much more about the SHARK, making the project all the more intriguing. Navy engineers have yet to figure out how to design a long-distance robotic submarine, as the propulsion and fueling systems necessary to get the things to span oceans aren't thought to exist. Current thinking from the Navy holds that robotic submarines will launch from existing subs and surface ships, supplementing the manned platforms through scouting and a wider communications network.

It's unclear how far DARPA actually wants its SHARK to swim, or from what platform it would launch. If DARPA can actually figure out new, cheap and durable ways of propulsion and efficient fueling for long-range travel, it'll usher in not just a new wave of sub-hunting, but a new wave of unmanned subs, period. And it's worth noting that DARPA's SHARK team includes Bluefin Robotics, which is spearheading some of the Navy's most ambitious experiments with robotic submarines.

DASH isn't even the only anti-sub effort DARPA has under way. It's also working on a largely autonomous surface ship called the ACTUV, which DARPA wants to prowl the seas hunting subs with its advanced sonars for up to 90 days at a stretch. There's some reason to suspect the ACTUV may complement the DASH program: defense giant SAIC is building both the sub-hunting robot and the TRAPS. Even if it doesn't, DARPA's fixing to make the sea a much harder place for even the stealthiest boats to hide.

The Tolling of the Boats May

USS Lagarto (SS-371)
Lost on May 3, 1945 with the loss of 88 men near the Gulf of Siam. On her 2nd war patrol, she is believed to have been lost to a radar-equipped minelayer. The minelayer was sunk by the USS Hawkbill 2 weeks later.

USS Scorpion (SSN-589)
was returning to Norfolk, VA from a Mediterranean deployment. On May 22,1968 she reported her position to be about 50 miles south of the Azores. Scorpion was never heard from again. The exact cause of her loss has never been determined.

USS Squalus (SS-192)
suffered a catastrophic valve failure during a test dive off the Isle of Shoals. Partially flooded, the submarine sank to the bottom and came to rest keel down in 240 feet of water. Commander Charles Momsen and Navy divers on the USS Falcon (ASR-2) rescued 33 survivors use the diving bell he invented. 26 men drowned in the after compartments. Later Squalus was raised and recommissioned as the USS Sailfish. In an ironic turn of fate, Sailfish sank the Japanese aircraft carrier carrying surviving crewmembers from Sculpin, which had located Squalus in 1939. Only one of survived after spending the rest of the war as slave laborers in Japan.

USS Stickleback (SS-415)
Lost on May 30, 1958 when it sank off Hawaii while under tow after collision with USS Silverstein (DE-534). The entire crew was taken off prior to sinking

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