

THE CONNING TOWER

The Ozark-Runner Base Newsletter



March 2009
Vol 9 Issue 2

Base Sponsor of the
2011 National Convention

US Submarine Veterans
Ozark Runner Base

Our Creed

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

Down Below Decks

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Sailing Orders

Our next meeting will be on March 21st, 2009 at the American Legion Post #639 2660 South Scenic Ave.

The meeting starts at 2:00pm.

Hope to see everyone there!!



Ozark-Runner Base: The Early Days

By Chuck Shepherd

As the 7th anniversary of our base rapidly approaches in April, it dawned on me that there are many current members that weren't part of our brotherhood during our inception. After attending our last meeting, it would appear that Garth and I are the only two left from the original 6 members. So, on this upcoming occasion of our anniversary, I thought maybe the current members might like an insight to those early days... the failures, triumphs and the lessons learned.

I had just moved back to Missouri, after years of bouncing from one duty station to another, and realized I missed the military life. It kind of gets in your blood after so many years. I had heard of USSVI from friends in Kings Bay, GA and knew there were chapters (bases) all over the United States. After doing some investigation I discovered the man with the plan was Art Randall, who at the time was Central District One Commander. I emailed him inquiring as to the location of USSVI bases in Southwest Missouri. He immediately responded, as Art (the eternal Yeoman) often did, informing me that my choices in my particular location was either TJC Base in Kansas City or Razorback Base in Little Rock. Neither of these choices seemed reasonable for me as it would involve long hours of driving, so I decided USSVI was not for me. I emailed Art, thanked him for his help and told him of my decision. He immediately emailed me back and suggested I could start a base of my own and began explaining how to go about that. He continued to explain that he had already had a few other shipmates interested from my area and asked me to make plans to meet. Anyone who knew Art knows he was a hard man to say no to.

Our first meeting was at Hemmingway's Restaurant at Bass Pro Shops. I arranged for a banquet room in the back and lunch would also be offered. The gentlemen (and one lady) present were Art Randall, Garth Greene, Wayne Davison, Don Remily, John and Linda Callison and myself. Art explained that we needed 6 members to start a base, so he had invited Don Remily along, who was at the time an officer with the TJC Base, just to make sure we had enough people to start a base. With Don's help we did, barely. After some discussion, and yours truly completely forgetting the old "N-A-V-Y Rule," (Never Again Volunteer Yourself) it was decided that I would be the first Commander with Wayne as Vice Commander, Garth as Treasurer and John as Secretary with Don our lone member at large and John's wife Linda was our first associate member.

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Commanders Corner

By Ronald L. Athey, Sr. Base Commander



Shipmates;

There seems to be some confusion regarding our bid for hosting the 2011 National Convention. Hopefully I can clear some of these questions up.

In 2006, my predecessor, Chuck Shepherd proposed that the Ozark-Runner Base submit a bid to host the 2011 National Convention. The Base (by vote) agreed to prepare and submit a bid. Working with the Springfield Convention and Visitors

Bureau (CVB) and the University Plaza Hotel and Convention Center (JQH) a bid was prepared for presentation at the 2006 (Little Rock) Convention. Due to procedural problems our representatives were not allowed to present the bid. The proposal remained on our agenda.

Last year to "clear" this item from our files and to conclude our agreement with the CVB and JQH, I brought the bid to a vote. The members present at that meeting voted by a majority to present the bid at the 2008 Dallas Convention. The bid was updated and presented at the Annual Business Meeting (ABM) at the 2008 National Convention. The bid was accepted "AS PRESENTED" at the ABM. We were required to sign the Hotel/Convention Center contracts as soon as possible. I got a 30 day extension. At our Sept (08) meeting I was voted as Chairman of the Convention Committee and authorized to sign any required contracts. Which I did. Our bid is based on those contracts as submitted at the ABM. This bid was prepared to meet the requirements of the USSVI for a National Convention.

Currently I am looking for volunteers to serve on the convention committee and obtaining information on past conventions. Kermit has been helping with gathering this information and sharing his experiences at past conventions. We are a small Base and we are going to have to work together to do this. At our last meeting the members present voted not to share the hosting of this Convention with other bases nearby. Our next goals are to start advertising at the next two Conventions and in the American Submariner. I'm already working with our hotels and the CVB to cover some of this.

Ronald L. Athey, TMC(SS) USN Ret.

Base Commander

Ozark-Runner Base, USSVI

2011 USSVI National Convention Host Base

Birthday Wishes

Here is a list of Ozark-Runner Base member birthdays for January and February. Be sure to wish them a 'Happy Birthday' the next time you see them. Offer to buy them a drink and see if they remember what year they were born.

March

3-6 George Mason

3-15 Roger Scoggins

3-27 Gary Bockmon

April

4-1 C.O. Tinsley

4-4 Ralph "Buddy" Lee

4-7 Ralph Phillips

4-8 Karl Evans

4-9 Gary Anglehart

4-19 Ron Athey



Vice Commander's Report

By George C. Mason, Vice Commander



Shipmates & Associates:

All hands stand up and applaud yourself if you were in attendance at the last meeting. We seem to be accomplishing more and more at each meeting. With the membership getting involved and offering up ideas, suggestions and personal involvement has moved us closer to achieving our goals.

I want to thank each of you for your input. I would also like to thank Larry Moen for contributing the fresh brown eggs that brought \$\$ into our coffers. Thank you Larry.

Our committee of Wally Gage, Dave Kayser, Chuck Shepherd and Rick Stephens will finally get our much delayed plaque closer to reality. We need a standard letter that we could send out to all fairly local monument companies begging for a donation or at least a good discounted bid. Dave Kayser has designed a letterhead that can be used for official business. Contact any of the aforementioned members for any help you can give them. This needs to be completed by May 1st in time for the Post 639 American Legion celebration that we participate in.

Suggestions and ideas are starting to come in regarding our sponsorship of USSVI national convention. This is a gigantic undertaking that will require every members participation so keep thinking gentleman especially ways to make money during the event.

SEE YOU AT THE MEETING

**George Mason
Vice Commander
USSVI OZARK RUNNER BASE, USVI
2011 USSVI National Convention Host Base**



Submarine Losses for March and April

USS Perch (SS-176)	3 March 1942	59 POWs, 6 men later lost
USS Grampus (SS-207)	5 March 1943	71 men lost
USS H-1 (SS-28)	12 March 1920	4 men lost
USS Triton (SS-201)	15 March 1943	74 men lost
USS Kete (SS-369)	20 March 1945	87 men lost
USS F-4 (SS-23)	25 March 1915	21 men lost
USS Tullibee (SS-284)	26 March 1944	79 men lost
USS Trigger (SS-237)	28 March 1945	89 men lost
USS Pickerel (SS-177)	3 April 1943	74 men lost
USS Snook (SS-279)	8 April 1945	84 men lost
USS Thresher (SSN-593)	10 April 1963	129 men lost
USS Gudgeon (SS-211)	18 April 1944	78 men lost
USS Grenadier (SS-210)	22 April 1943	76 POWs, 4 men later died

Ozark-Runner Base Meeting Minutes for January 17, 2009

By Garth Greene, Secretary

OPENING: The meeting was called to order at 1415 hours with the following members present: Ron Athey, George Mason, Garth Greene, Allen Apperson, Jerry Aldridge, Roger Moen, Chuck Shepherd, Dave Kayser, Kermit Sparks, Wally Gage, Al Sabatino, Rick Stephens and Dave Herrington. The Opening Prayer was given by Garth Greene, and a moment of silence was observed for our departed Shipmates. CDR Athey led in reciting the USSVI Creed.

MINUTES: Minutes of the November 2008 meeting were approved as published in the DEC newsletter.

TREASURER'S REPORT: The Treasurer's report was approved as reported by Allen.

VC REPORT: George reported on nominations for officers for ensuing year. He reported that only one nomination had been received. Blank nomination forms had been sent to each member in the last two newsletters. After considerable discussion, the Secretary read from the section in the Base By-Laws that stated: Officers will be elected for 2 years or until a replacement is elected. Most present accepted this to mean that current officers must serve until replacement is elected.

CORRESPONDENCE: CDR read an E-mail from National VC relating to dues expiring on DEC 31, and that those members that haven't remitted by JAN 31 will at that time be dropped from both National and Base rolls. Garth reported on a letter and donation received from member Karl Evans from Apex, NC.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Kermit reported on the 2011 National Convention and some of the tasks and business that needs to be started now.

Rick reported that the Lapon Memorial Committee wanted to get the soil and rose bushes removed from around the Lapon and replaced with the decorative rock before Armed Forces Day. There was considerable discussion about the Lapon History and specification plaque that needs to be installed, but no definite action was taken.

OLD BUSINESS: Dave Kayser reported some of his ideas to sell classified advertising in the Base Newsletter. He hoped to sell enough to pay for printing and mailing the newsletter and possibly pay the electrical bill for lighting the Lapon War Memorial, as well as some other memorial maintenance. The consensus of the membership was that this is a good idea.

NEW BUSINESS: CDR Athey talked about the upcoming Sea Fox reunion in Branson. There is a possibility the National Holland Club Commander might be in attendance and that he would be asked to induct the O/R Base members that become eligible this year. O/R Base members will be invited to that Reunion.

Our member, Roger Moen, brought 12 dozen fresh eggs from his chicken ranch in Branson to sell to members present. Roger generously donates all the proceeds to the Base Treasury. This is not the first time Roger has done this and we really appreciate members like him. Thank you Roger. The 50/50 raffle was won by Dave Herrington.

CLOSING: Meeting was closed with prayer by Garth Greene

SECRETARY'S NOTE BOOK: It's sad, but true, that we lost some of our members due to non payment of dues for the year 2009. We made an effort to contact all of them several times, but still did not get the renewal dues. We all need to encourage our members and associate members to stay involved and not let dues expire.

We still have two members that were accepted into the Holland Club last year, but haven't yet been inducted. Oliver "Ollie" Shearer Jr. of Clinton, MS and Ronald "Red" Stubbs of Lebanon, MO have met all the requirements and we hope to get this accomplished soon. Holland Club is a special group within USSVI that have been designated qualified in submarines for 50 or more years. There are also other membership requirements. This is a unique group and we congratulate these new members.

All members that pay dues annually should try to make the next meeting and get your 2009 sticker to go on your permanent membership card. See the Base Secretary and he will provide them.

I would suggest that our Base start now to design a patch for the 2011 National Convention here in Springfield. It seems to me that we will need one to go in the packet that is passed out to each attendee. Our member, Rodney C. Wing, who resides in Florida, has this kind of talent. Maybe we will hear some ideas from him in the not too distant future.

I believe we now have an up to date Base Roster as of February 1st 2009. Any one that would like to have a copy should request one by E at gargree@hotmail.com and I will attach the roster and send to you. Also if you have an address change or phone no. change, please let me know so we can maintain an accurate Base roster.

Treasurer Report January 2009

By Allen Apperson, Treasurer

<u>Date</u>	<u>From/To</u>	<u>Expatiation</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Deposit</u>	<u>Check Disbursement</u>	<u>Check Number</u>
11/15/08	K. Sparks	Nov Raffle	\$5.00			
11/15/08	R. Athey	Nov Raffle	\$5.00			
11/15/08	G. Mason	Nov Raffle	\$5.00			
11/15/08	J. Middlemas	Nov Raffle	\$5.00			
11/15/08	D. Meyers	Nov Raffle	\$5.00			
11/15/08	D. Kayser	Nov Raffle	\$5.00			
11/15/08	D. Harrington	Nov Raffle	\$5.00			
11/15/08	A. Clason	Nov Raffle	\$5.00			
11/15/08	F. Lester	Nov Raffle	\$5.00			
11/15/08	P. Rathmell	Nov Raffle	\$5.00			
11/15/08	T. Lee	Nov Raffle	\$5.00			
11/15/08	W. Davidson	Nov Raffle	\$5.00			
11/15/08	K. Sparks	Winner of 50/50	(\$35.00)			
11/15/08	D. Harrington	Base Dues (Lifetime)	\$50.00			
11/15/08	George Mason	2009 Nat and Base Dues	\$30.00			
11/15/08	Keith Meyers	2009 Nat and Base Dues	\$30.00			
11/15/08	Aryl Clason	2009 Nat and Base Dues	\$30.00			
11/15/08	Al Sabatino	2009 Base Dues	\$10.00			
11/15/08	Kermit Sparks	2009 Base Dues	\$10.00			
11/23/08	Karl Evans	Donation	\$15.00			
12/3/08	Rick Stephens	2009 Nat and Base Dues	\$30.00			
12/16/08	Laura Findley	2009 Nat and Base Dues	\$30.00			
12/19/08	Delbert Hooper	2009 Nat and Base Dues	\$30.00			
12/22/08	E. Mullins-Sutton	USS Lapon Comm. Brick	\$50.00			
12/25/08	USSVI	USSVI Nat Dues: Mason, Meyers, Clason, Stephens, Findley			\$100.00	1127
12/26/08	Bill Karr	2009 Nat. and Base Dues	\$30.00			
1/5/09	Larry Day	2009 Nat. and Base Dues	\$30.00			
1/5/09	Larry Day	January Raffle	\$6.00			
1/6/09	CO Tinsley	2009 Nat. and Base Dues	\$30.00			
1/6/09	Ed Hogan	2009 Nat. and Base Dues	\$30.00			
1/7/09	DEPOSIT	Money Collected		\$491.00		
1/7/09	Robert Peterson	2009 National Dues	\$20.00			
1/12/09	Skip Smith	Jan Raffle	\$5.00			
1/13/09	DEPOSIT	Larimore \$10, Smith \$5, Busse \$10, Larimore \$10, Greene \$10, Wilcox \$10		\$70.00		
Totals:				\$561.00	\$100.00	

Balance On Hand In Checking Account 8 Nov 2008: \$6,944.53

Balance On Hand In Checking Account 15 Jan 2009: \$7,405.63

(Checkbook balanced with bank on 1/8/09)

Amount in Account Belonging to Laopn Association: \$1,585.66

Amount In Account Designated For Nathaniel Green Memorial: \$406.00

Mandated Reserve To Be Maintained In Account: \$1,000.00

Current Balance in Account For Base Use: \$4,413.97

50/50 Winner

Congratulations to Wally Gage for winning last months 50/50 drawing for \$30.00. Get your tickets so you can buy a round at the next meeting.

Shipmate Salute—C.O. Tinsley

By Garth Greene

Ozark-Runner Base is honoring one of our senior members in this issue of "Conning Tower." We are saluting CORNICE "C.O." TINSLEY who resides here in Springfield with his wife ANNA. C.O. joined Ozark-Runner Base in July of 2002 and immediately became an active Life member as well as a Holland Club Member. He participated in many Base functions including fund raisers, parades and was a member of the committee that guided the Base to erect the Nathanael Greene Memorial in Nathanael Greene Park. C.O. also offered a lot of suggestions and guidance during the early growing stages of Ozark-Runner Base.

C.O. enlisted in the US Navy on OCT 10, 1935 and took his "boot training" at RTC in San Diego with Co. 3530. After boot he took leave and then reported aboard the Battleship USS Maryland in January 1936. There he served in the deck force and then went to the fire rooms to become a fireman. In January 1937 he arrived at the Sub Base, New London, where he attended Basic Sub School and Submarine Diesel School. After Leave, he went to the San Francisco Receiving Ship and from there caught the USS Colorado to Pearl Harbor where he was assigned to S-24. There he first qualified in submarines and was advanced to Fireman 1/c in 1937. From 1938 to 1942 C.O. served on the USS Pompano SS 181 and the S-22. He made a reconnaissance patrol on the S-22 in the Aleutian Islands area. C.O. was then assigned to the Commissioning Crew of the USS Gurnard SS254 in late 1942 in Groton, CT. After commissioning, C.O. and the Gurnard went through the Panama Canal and headed for the Pacific war. He made 2 war patrols on the Gurnard engaging the enemy and sinking several ships including a Destroyer. C.O. earned the Submarine Combat Insignia on these patrols. In 1943 and 1944 he served on USS Lizardfish SS373 making more patrols. The last submarine C.O. served on was the USS Besugo from 1944 to 1947. Also, between submarine assignments he served in the relief crew aboard the USS Orion AS18 in Perth, Australia. After a tour of shore duty in Buffalo, NY, C O reported to the USS Nereus AS-17 in 1951 and served there until his retirement in 1955. C O retired as an ENDC, Chief Engineman, which was then the highest enlisted rank you could attain. For his WWII service, C O was awarded the Submarine Combat Insignia, American Defense Service Medal, Asiatic Pacific campaign Medal, WWII Victory Medal and European-African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal and of course his submarine qualification patch.

C O and Anna's family consisted of themselves and 5 children, Jimmie, Paul, Patti, Janet and Sue. All are still living except Paul who passed away in 1944 while C O was serving the Navy.

All Ozark-Runner Base members and their families proudly salute C O, Anna and their family and we honor C O as a real submarine hero who served his country in a time of great need. We say to this Submarine Family: Thanks, God Bless, good luck and may fair winds always be at your back. We love you and are proud to call you shipmate.

Your Ozark-Runner shipmates



C.O. and wife Anna November 1940 in St. George Island, MD.
C.O. was a member of SS-22.



C.O. Completed Duty in Manitowoc, WI
February 1945

(Continued from page 1)

Next, a name needed to be chosen and Art asked for input. Being one of the few nuclear sailors in the room, I recommended "Lewis and Clark" after the SSBN now decommissioned. There was also a suggestion of the Snook Base. Garth then produced some pictures and memorabilia from his old command the USS Runner and proceeded to explain that if we adopted the Runner as our name sake he might be able to draft many of his old shipmates to join, both locally and long distance. Realizing the immediate influx of dues would keep us afloat during our growing pains, we agreed. But, we wanted to tie in the local area as well, and that's how the Ozark-Runner name was created.

Our early meetings were sparse with few members attending. This was mainly due to the fact that we had no centralized location for meetings and no set time each month. We met at various locations like the Military Museum on Kearney, an occasional Ryan's and the Fleet Reserve downtown. Our meeting times were dictated by my working schedule. Being the youngest member had its advantages and disadvantages. We quickly realized the only way we were going to find our fellow shipmates in the Ozark area was to get our name in the news. What better way to do that then build a memorial to something military. After some discussion it was decided that we would build a submarine memorial in Nathanael Greene Park and dedicate it to the SSBN of the same name. Upon completion we would have a dedication and invite the local TV stations out. This coverage would hopefully get the word out to all of our undiscovered shipmates. Wow, did this give the desired results. The resulting news coverage brought out more shipmates than we could ever possibly have imagined. Included in these were Rick Stevens who was affiliated with the American Legion Post 639 on S. Scenic. This would turn out to be our greatest partnership, for this lead to regular meeting at a fine facility, financial and physical support from the post in our next project, the USS Lapon Sail and Memorial. Then things just built on itself and we hung on to our new runaway train for a wonderfully scary ride. We were voted 2005 USSVI Base of the Year, hosted two boat reunions (USS Nathanael Greene and USS Lapon) our membership grew leaps and bounds and now we have been selected to host the 2011 USSVI National Convention.



Here's a rare picture of the original members. From left to right. Linda Callison, John Callison, Garth Greene, Wayne Davison, Chuck Shepherd, Don Remily.

Shipmates, good things happen when you set your course, work hard and never let anything stand in the way of your dreams. I invite everyone to get involved with the upcoming convention plans for 2011. If you can't physically get involved then donate money to the effort. As past Base Commander and District Commander, I have seen what a National Convention can do for a base. The influx of money and respect is immeasurable, but we're going to need EVERYONE involved to pull this off. Step up to the plate and let's hit a homerun for the Ozark-Runners.

"This article is dedicated to my friend and mentor, Art Randal, who passed away this past December. Shipmate, rest your oars."

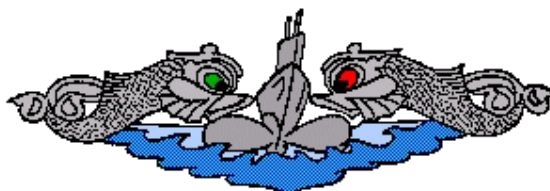
Binacle Report

Please keep the following people in your thoughts and prayers:

Rodney C. Wing

Ron Athey—Cataract Surgery

Penelope Athey



Sub in the Spotlight

USS RUNNER (SS 476)

USS Runner (SS/AGSS-476), a Tench-class submarine, was the second ship of the United States Navy to be named for the runner, an amberfish inhabiting subtropical waters. Her keel was laid down on 10 July 1944 by the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard of Kittery, Maine. She was launched on 17 October 1944 sponsored by Mrs. R.H. Bass, the wife of the prospective commanding officer, and commissioned on 6 February 1945 with Commander R.H. Bass in command.

After shakedown and preliminary training off the Atlantic coast, she departed New London 5 April 1945, and arrived at Pearl Harbor on 21 May 1945, after intensive training at Key West, Florida, and Balboa, Panama. Her first war patrol was off the east coast of Honshū, Japan, where her primary mission was to scout for the presence of defensive minefields guarding the Japanese home islands. On 10 July while on patrol in the Sea of Japan, she intercepted two worthwhile targets, a tanker and a minesweeper. The tanker and her two escorts escaped the spread of torpedoes fired at them, but Japanese minesweeper W-27 was splintered by three of Runner's torpedoes. Before departing station, Runner received 16 downed aviators from Gabilan (SS-252) and Aspro (SS-309) for transfer to Guam, where she arrived on 24 July.

Her second patrol began a week prior to the Japanese capitulation and by the time Runner arrived on station off the east coast of Honshū, peace had come. Runner, with ten other US submarines entered Tokyo Bay on 31 August and represented the US submarine service at the formal surrender ceremonies. Runner and her sister submarines departed Japan on 3 September, arriving Pearl Harbor on 12 September. She continued east until reaching New London, Connecticut, on 6 October. A few weeks later, in company with other vessels of Submarine Squadron 6, Runner proceeded south arriving for duty at Balboa, Panama, on 14 February 1946. For the next three years, Runner was based at Panama and participated in annual fleet exercises in the Caribbean Sea.

Ozark-Runner base members who served onboard:

William Brannan
Howard E. Busse
Philip Ehrhardt
Karl L. Evans
Garth S. Greene
Harry E. Hogan
William Karr
Richard S. Ladd
Oliver Shearer, Jr
Rodney C. Wing



In June 1949, she was reassigned to Norfolk, Virginia, her base for the next seven years. In the autumn of 1957, Runner participated in North Atlantic NATO exercises, visiting ports in France and England. Homeported in San Juan, Puerto Rico, from July 1958 to July 1959, she operated in the Caribbean Sea as a Regulus missile guidance submarine.

Returning to Norfolk, Virginia, in July 1959, Runner operated with the fleet along the Atlantic coast for the next three years. She deployed to the Mediterranean Sea from January to early May 1962, operating with United States and NATO units. The remainder of 1962 was taken up with local ASW exercises and overhaul.

Throughout 1963 and 1964, she engaged in various antisubmarine warfare exercises in the western Atlantic. The summer of 1964 was spent in the Great Lakes, training Naval Reservists. After operating with the fleet in the spring of 1965, she entered Norfolk Naval Shipyard for overhaul. In 1966, operations included services for ASW exercises, type training, and participation in Exercise Springboard in the early spring. Runner deployed to the Mediterranean Sea with the Sixth Fleet from 8 July to 28 October 1966. School services for future submariners occupied most of 1967.

The year 1968 commenced with Runner providing services for Underwater Demolition Team school at Little Creek, Virginia, and ASW training off the East Coast. On 4 April 1968, Runner departed on her last Mediterranean Sea deployment. She returned to Norfolk, Virginia, on 31 July having visited ports in Spain and Portugal, and participating in NATO Exercise Dawn Patrol.

On 25 January 1969, Runner was decommissioned at the Boston Naval Shipyard, and towed to the Great Lakes Naval Training Station, where she was re-designated AGSS-476 and served as a Naval Reserve Training vessel until stricken from the Naval Vessel Register on 15 December 1971.

Runner received one battle star for World War II service.



The USS Runner: A Photo History



As Built: mid 40s



After It's First Conversion: mid 50s



After It's AG Conversion: Early 60s

From Our Regional Commander

By Carl Schmidt



The history of the Diesel Boats Forever Pin might be of interest to the base shipmates. The Navy was changing quickly in the 60's and 70's during my Naval Career. I got to see both the changes to Nuclear power and the phasing out of the smoke boats. I qualified on the USS Triton SSRN 583, made 3 patrols on the SSBN 633G crew and served on 4 smoke boats. I spend 7 years on the USS Tang SS 583. I still wear my DBF pin on my blue vest proudly to symbolize that diesel boat sailors are a proud dying breed of submariners.

Before we know it 2011 will be here and Ozark Runner will be hosting the USSVI National Convention. I remember the fellowship and good times I've had when I visited the Ozark Runner base over the years. The friendly shipmates and good times seeing the USS Lapon Sail The great chili at the FRA club and the great Catfish dinner at the Legion. The Ozark runner can be proud of all its accomplishments. The TJC, USS Razorback and Dallas bases and soon the Ozark Runner base will leave its mark on the Subvets as having another good USSVI convention hosted by a Central Region base.

BZ,

Carl Schmidt
Central Region Director

THE DBF PIN

By Patrick Meagher TMC (SS) USN RET.



Probably none of today's submariners know the origin or the significance of the Diesel Boats Forever (DBF) pin. Most former Diesel boat sailors are also ignorant of its origins even though it is worn with pride on many SubVets vests.

The last diesel attack boat built for the US Navy was commissioned in October 1959. At that time there were five classes of nuke boats along with two "one off" designs in various stages of construction and precommissioning trials along with USS Nautilus SSN-571, and the four Skate class boats in operational status. The diesel boat force made up predominantly of modernized fleet boats (Fleet Snorkels, Guppy 1A's, Guppy 2's, Guppy 2A's, Radar picket, Regulus missile, troop carrier, and hunter-killer conversions), six Tang's plus Darter, Growler, Greyback, the two Salmon's and the three "B" girls had become the source of pre-commissioning crews for the nuke boats. There was a steady stream of 9901's passing through the diesel boat force, spending seven months onboard learning the boat and earning their dolphins before departing for nuke school. A smaller number of career enlisted electricians, machinist mates, enginemen, and electronic technicians also volunteered for the nuke program.

Admiral Hyman Rickover personally interviewed all officers applying for the nuclear power program as well as many of the senior enlisted submariners. Tales of Rickover's interviews consistently reported on his efforts to intimidate and discredit the accomplishments of the officer interviewee's, alienating many who interviewed with him. Disturbing reports from senior enlisted veterans of the nuke boat navy in favorite submarine "watering holes" ashore indicated Rickover's new operating philosophy was at work in the engineering spaces. "Don't trust enlisted engineers." Nuke trained officers consistently checked, double checked, and triple checked the work and system lineups of the enlisted engineers, a major change to the longstanding professional relationship between enlisted and officer submariners. In addition, "front-enders" the non-nukes, were reporting excessive wardroom focus on the engineering plant at the expense of the historic mission of the submarine. They were also describing the "no-touch" rule from the reactor compartment aft. If you were not a nuke, you couldn't touch any part of the engineering plant-period. You could learn it in theory, identify major components, valves and panels, but that was it. Gone was the traditional submarine qualification program that demanded standing all watches under instruction as well as rigging all compartments for all evolutions. Lost on most submariners was the reason Rickover imposed the new operational. Philosophy which is best summarized by Gary E. Weir "The potential for major disaster in the nuclear propulsion program caused him (Rickover) to elevate professional competence, discipline, and responsibility to the rank of absolute virtues required of every naval and private participant...Unfortunately for a great many people, Rickover's personal and professional manner made the lesson difficult to learn."

By early 1967 total nuclear submarine crews numbered in excess of one hundred counting blue and gold SSBN crews with sixty four nuke boats (forty one of which were SSBN's) in commission. The thirty seven Sturgeon class nuke boats would start to commission with the lead ship in March of that year. The Diesel boat fleet in contrast numbered slightly over one hundred in commission with most of the modernized fleet type boats nearing the end of their useful lives. Former SSR's, SSK's, and Fleet Snorkels would start to decommission within eighteen months to be followed shortly by the guppy conversions. More and more Rickover trained officers were appearing on squadron and force staffs bringing with them Rickover's operational philosophy. It was apparent to all that the diesel boat navy were dinosaurs soon to be extinct along with their officer community who were either unwilling to become nukes or passed over by Rickover as unfit to become nuke boat engineers in order to ascend to command of a nuke boat. Diesel boats were still conducting most of the non-deterrent submarine operations including "special missions." Nuke attack boats were "wowing" many with their performance and potential along with occasional contributions such as "a mission of great value to the government of the United States of America." The nukes were not without their teething problems however. It was not uncommon for a nuke boat to be unable to get underway as scheduled due to an "engineering problem." Are fueling every three to four years also required a shipyard stay of from eighteen months to two years again reducing the number of nuke boats available for operations. So it was left to the diesel boats to pick up the slack.

(Continued on Page 11)

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'Dex' Armstrong describes the thinking of the enlisted smoke boat sailor during these years. "We were it. One crew. Nobody took over our boats when we came in. When the old girl went to sea, we were there. The same names, same faces, same officers forward. If someone failed to maintain a system or piece of equipment, the Chief of the Boat knew precisely what butt to put his boot into when ass-kicking time rolled around. Those were great days. Didn't know it then, that came later much later. We knew nuclear boats represented progress but we didn't think much about it. We could see the future of submarining floating in the after nest. The big, fat, black monsters getting all the attention. High speed, deep-diving ugliness rapidly sending our smoke boat fleet up the river to the scrap yard. To us nuke boats were like elephants. They were big as hell, uglier than sin and none of us had any idea what went on inside of the damn things. They were just there." (pg.5) This brings us to the DBF pin. In 1969 USS Barbel SS-580, the lead ship of the last class of diesel boats built for the US Navy was deployed to WesPac. While on a "special mission" in early 1970 the control room gang got into one of those nuke boat vs. diesel boat discussions.

It was pointed out during the discussion that on a number of occasions a diesel boat would have to get underway for a "broke-down" nuke boat again proving the superiority of smoke boats over unreliable nuke boats. Some one suggested there ought to be a pin for smoke boat sailors, something like the new Polaris Deterrent Patrol Pin for "boomer" sailors, for the times you had to take a nuke boat commitment because they were broke-down. A contest was commissioned to design the pin. ETR3 (SS) Leon Figurido's winning design was a broadside view of a guppy boat with SS superimposed on the North Atlantic sail. There were two bare breasted mermaids, one on the bow and one on the stern facing in with arms extended. Completing the design was a ribbon underneath the boat with holes for stars, and centered on the ribbon the letters "DBF". ETR3 (SS) Figurido received appropriate recognition for his winning design along with a prize of some sort, now long forgotten. Upon Barbel's return to Yokosuka the design of the DBF pin was hand carried to a local manufacturer of nautical gewgaws where a batch were cast and brought back to the ship and sold at cost to Barbel crew members that began to wear them ashore. As the DBF pin grew in popularity within the diesel boat community it continued to be cast and sold in shops around Yokosuka eventually making its way to Pearl Harbor, San Diego, and on to the east coast. Most "smokeboat" sailors assumed a gold star would be placed in the ribbon for each diesel boat served on. However, it was confirmed to the author years later by Capt. John Renard, USN RET. Skipper of Barbel at that time, a star was to be placed on the ribbon for each time a diesel boat you served on had to get underway for a broke-down nuke.

The DBF pin continued to gain in popularity among current and former smoke boat sailors who wore them with pride as either a pin or on a belt buckle, all the while collecting the ire of the senior nuke officer community. As the wholesale decommissioning of the fleet type boats occurred during the early 70's scores of career electricians and engine men were forced to "surface" as there was no room for them on Rickover's boats. Their designation was changed by BUPERS from "SS" to "SQ" indicating they were excess to submarine force manning requirements although they were still allowed to wear their dolphins. Soon they too would be gone along with their collective histories. In 1973 Rickover issued an edict that Midshipmen would no longer go on summer cruises on diesel boats. Rumor had it that too many were showing up at his interviews with "bad attitudes" about nuke boats picked up on their summer cruise on the smoke boats. It was reported in favorite submarine hangouts ashore that on more than one occasion nuke boat skippers banned the wearing of DBF pins by their crew members, typically "front enders" the non-nukes, implying that to do so would indicate disloyalty to the nuke submarine force. In the mid 70's the DBF pin went into the display of submarine insignia maintained at the Pacific Submarine Museum then located at the Submarine Base, Pearl Harbor. The caption alluded to an "unofficial" insignia worn by a disappearing breed of submariner nostalgic for the days of diesel boats. In July 1975 the last guppy submarine in US service, USS Tiru SS-416, decommissioned in Charleston SC. A handful of the guppies sailed on in foreign service into the late 90's with two, ex-USS Cutlass SS-478, and ex-USS Tusk SS-426 continuing to serve today in the Republic of China (Taiwan) navy as training boats. The last diesel attack boats in US service were USS Darter SS-576, USS Barbel SS-580, USS Blueback SS-581, and USS Bonefish SS-582. They decommissioned between 1988 and 1990. Two Tang class boats, ex-USS Tang SS-563, and ex-USS Gudgeon SS-567, recently decommissioned in the Turkish Navy with ex-Gudgeon slated to be Turkey's museum submarine. The Turkish skipper of ex-Tang when asked about the difference between the German designed and built replacement boats for their retiring ex-US boats is reported to have said, "American submarines are built for war, German submarines are built for export."

It's ironic that 15 years after decommissioning of USS Blueback SS-581 at the Submarine Base in San Diego, a Swedish Navy Type A-19 Gotland Class Air Independent Diesel Boat is conducting weekly ops there to "familiarize" US Navy ASW forces with the operating characteristics of advanced non-nuclear submarines. When the Swedish crew comes ashore on Friday after a week at sea they still look and smell like the smoke boat sailors of old. Our current crop of submariners avoids them. The DBF pin, originally designed by a USS Barbel SS-580 crewmember as an unofficial insignia to recognize the diesel boats ability to fill-in on very short notice for broke-down nuke boats, now resides with pride on the blue vests of Submarine Veterans who qualified and served on smoke boats. Today the DBF pin is the unique symbol of the professionalism, discipline, and camaraderie of American smoke boat sailors who sailed on, unloved, unwashed, and underpaid as their era was coming to a close. DBF!



New Poll on USSVI Website

When USSVI was established, a decision was made to call our chapters "bases" and our officers by military title. John Carcioppolo reports that Joe Negri said this was done to set the new USSVI apart from the SVWWII.

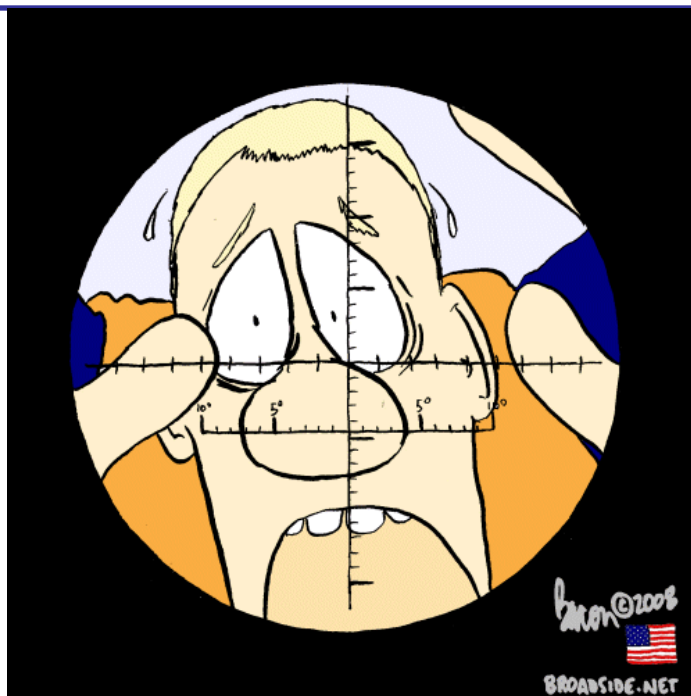
These names and titles certainly did set USSVI apart from SVWWII, but also has added an ongoing confusion from the public and potential members regarding the nature of USSVI, and if these 'military' names ever were helpful, they have outlived their usefulness.

The current names/titles are especially confusing in areas that are in the vicinity of a Submarine or a Naval Base, and it confuses prospective new members as well.

Any prospective change would have to be voted upon by the membership in the next national election.

How do you feel about this suggestion?

DO NOT REPLY TO THIS EMAIL. GO TO THE POLL, PLEASE!
Second button down, left side of the page.



The Blue crew was a little rusty on diving procedures.

From the Ship's Store



**Ozark-Runner
Base Patch
(19 Left)
\$7.00**



**USS Lapon (SSN-671)
Ships Patch
(8 Left)
\$5.00**



**Tomahawk Cruise
Missile
(12 Left)
\$8.00**

**Squadron Eight Patch
(12 Left)
\$8.00**



**See Garth Greene
For purchases**

Base Sponsors



Ozark-Runner Subvets would like to take this opportunity to give a big round of **THANKS** to Dogwood Canyon for their support and loaning us the use of their tram for the Branson Veterans Day Parade. We'd encourage everyone to let them know how much we appreciate what they do for us. Here is their contact information:

2038 West State Hwy 86
Lampe, Missouri 65681

Phone: 417-779-5983
E-mail: info@dogwoodcanyon.org

Thanks for your support of Submariners and our Veterans



**864-6296 • 303 W. Sunshine
Springfield, MO 65807**



Proposed USS Lapon Plaque



USS LAPON

(SSN-661)





Builder: Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry-Dock Co.

Class: 637 (STURGEON Class) Fast Attack

Power Plant: One Nuclear Reactor, Two Geared Turbines, One Shaft.

Length: 292 feet **Beam:** 32 feet **Speed:** 20+ knots

Displacement: 3,640 Tons Surfaced
4,640 Tons Submerged

Weapons: Four (4) 21" Torpedo Tubes Amidships.

Crew: 107 (12 Officers, 95 Enlisted)

Keel Laid: July 26, 1965

Launched: Dec 19, 1966

Commissioned: Dec 14, 1967

Decommissioned: Aug 8, 1992

The USS LAPON (SSN-661) operated with the U.S. Atlantic Fleet, home ported in Norfolk, VA. She had an illustrious career, performing many missions of importance to the security of the United States. One of these missions is highlighted in the book "Blind Man's Bluff".

The USS Lapon (SSN-661)
earned the following awards:

Presidential Unit Citation (1) Navy Unit Citation (1)
Meritorious Unit Citations (6) Arctic Service Medal (1)
Navy Battle "E" (4)

On Aug 8, 1992 the USS LAPON was decommissioned at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton, WA and subsequently scrapped. Her sail was then donated to the Ozark-Runner Base, US Submarine Veterans, Inc. On July 3, 2005 the restored sail was "commissioned" as a war memorial on the grounds of American Legion Post 639 in Springfield, MO.

This is the design of the plaque that will be on display for the USS Lapon (SSN-661). Currently we are in the process of getting bids for plaque and for the cement base.

Ozark-Runner Base USSVI
Dave Kayser
76 Canterbury Dr.
Fordland, MO 65652



Postage

The Conning Tower

March 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.



Ozark-Runner SS476 Base United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.

Application for Membership

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Birth Date: _____ Sponsor's Name: _____ N/A

1st Boat Qualified On: _____ Qual. Date: _____

Rank/Rate Attained: _____

Currently Active Duty: Yes () No () USN or USNR Retired: Yes () No ()

Other Boats Qualified On: (Name, Hull #, Dates) _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

NATIONAL DUES: 1 yr. \$20, 3 yrs. \$55, 5 yrs. \$90
NATIONAL LIFE DUES: Age 76 plus \$100, 66-75 \$200, 56-65 \$300, 46-55 \$400
ANNUAL BASE DUES: \$10 - LIFE BASE DUES: Undetermined until by-laws are evaluated. (National life members must still pay base dues to desired base).

Make checks payable to Ozark-Runner Base, USSVI

Mail to: Allen Apperson
594 Springview Dr.
Highlandville, Mo. 65669