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<http://perch-base.org>

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USSVI CONVENTION SCHEDULE
 DULUTH – 2002 Sept. 17 – 22
 RENO – 2003 - August 31 - Sept. 7
 Two bases bidding for 2004, no decision yet
 Kansas City MO – 2005 - Aug 30 - Sept. 4



Lest We Forget Those Still On Patrol

JULY ETERNAL PATROL DAYS:

USS S-28	SS33	July 04, 1944	52 men lost
USS ROBALO	SS273	July 26, 1944	81 men lost

Meeting July 13th 2002

American Legion Post 62, 11001 North 99th Ave. – Start Time 1200 Hours

NOTICE!! Meeting For August 10th in COOL Prescott NOTICE!!

From the Wardroom:

Well Shipmates we have had another interesting meeting and as you will notice in the minutes our Vice Commander made the work party of the Torsk Bandits. During this weekend following the tolling ceremony he made a special presentation to Bob "Dex" Armstrong of a set of hand carved dolphins by our own master carver **Ed Brooks**. This project has been in the works for some time and after 9/11/02 we were disappointed to find that we would not be able to get Dex to one of our meetings, so plan B was put in place. From the e-mails we have received it went very well and was really appreciated. During this past meeting we got to hear from the incoming Post 62 Commander Bill Lang. We have found ourselves a home and with it come some responsibilities. In return for allowing us to have a room in the new post to use for our meetings and to display some memorabilia Post 62 is asking us to provide a work party of six SubVets to assist with their Sunday Morning breakfasts. This is one of their moneymaking projects that are helping to fund the new post building project. This is going to be the second Sunday of the month, which will follow our normal monthly meeting. This is an event where our wives could be involved also in taking orders and serving the meals. If we share this load a little we can spread the work load and not require a burden on a few of the members. This past month Commander **Dave Hamish**, Vice Commander **Glen Herold**, **Ray Samson**, **Mike Keating** and his granddaughter Brandi assisted with the breakfast and we actually had a good time doing it. Brandi was not allowed in the bar area, but she was the perfect waitress and after she took the orders Mike would relay them to the kitchen staff. It was amazing how many comments you could hear about what a great job she did and also complimentary comments from post 62 members about the submarine veterans helping with the breakfast. We really need to continue this program as a way of paying our rent for lack of a better way to put it. Please look at your calendar and see when you could join on a Sunday as part of the Perch Mess Cooks. There are no dishes to do only helping with cooking the sausage and bacon and making biscuits, orange juice coffee and toast. Also tables need to be cleared and set up and the serving of the meals. During the next few months Kay and I will be making a boat reunion as well as the national convention in Duluth, Minn. During our travels Vice Commander **Glen Herold** will chair the meetings. The July meeting will be at Post 62 and the August meeting will be at the American Legion Post in Prescott. Thanks to **Ed Brooks** we will have a lunch served as in the past for a fee of \$10.00. This is a great time to bring the wife to the meeting/lunch and then do some sightseeing in the cooler country. There will be no meeting in September because of the national convention and it would be great to see as many of

our members that can make it to Duluth. Looking forward to seeing all in October.
Fratemally, *Dave Hamish*, Commander

Minutes from June's Meeting:

The regular monthly meeting of the members of the Arizona Submarine Veterans - Perch Base was convened at the American Legion Post #62; Peoria, AZ at 1300 hours, 8 June 2002. The meeting was called to order by the Base Commander - **Dave Hamish**. The members were led in the "pledge of allegiance"; followed by the dedication, moment of silence for our departed shipmates, "tolling of the boats" and the invocation by Base Chaplain, **Howard Doyle**. There were 23 members and 4 guests attending the meeting according to the sailing list. The guests included; Harold Avent, Milan Moncilivich, Brandi Hershey and Susan Day. The membership welcomed new member **Chuck Chapman**. Chuck qualified on the USS Batfish in 1948, and joined Perch Base last March. It was moved and the motion seconded that the minutes from the last meeting be approved as published in the Base Newsletter; "The MidWatch". The motion carried by voice vote of the members present. Treasurer (**Robert May**) reported the Base's financial status as the of the first day of June, 2002. A motion was made and seconded that the Treasurer's Report be approved as read. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote of the members.

REPORTS BY OFFICERS & CHAIRMEN

Dave Hamish reported to members that **Doug LaRock** has been appointed to the position of Base Chief of the Boat. Doug received a congratulatory round of applause from the members. **Ray Samson** asked that anyone interested in editing and publishing the base newsletter contact him. He would like to transfer that responsibility to another member of the Base. **Dave Hamish** announced that Perch Base was awarded first place in the adult marching groups. The base has also been invited to participate in the parade again in 2003. **Glen Herold** took the floor and updated the members on the effort to store and protect the Base Parade Float. A storage location has been found and a protective cover is being manufactured to protect the float while in storage and in transit. The cost for the cover (\$1,300) has been born by contributions from the members and the Pigboaters Chapter of the USSV-WWII. **Glen Herold** updated the members on his trip to Baltimore to work on the restoration of the USS Torsk in the Maritime Museum there. Glenn carried a set of hand carved dolphins to present to Dex (Robert) Armstrong as a gift from the Perch Base in appreciation for his chronicling the life of the diesel submarine sailor. Glenn read an email from Dex thanking Perch Base for the gift. **Dave Hamish** introduced Bill Lang, Commander American Legion Post 62, to the members. Bill welcomed Perch Base to Post 62 and assured the members that the Base

was always welcome to hold meetings and participate at the Post's facilities (present and future). The members showed their appreciation with a warm and hardy round of applause for Bill's comments. No other reports were offered from the floor.

OLD BUSINESS

Dave Harnish reminded the members of a need to show support for the American Legion Post 62 by becoming a member of the Post and by pitching in at some of their events. The Post holds a pancake breakfast for its members on Sundays. This is one event where Perch Base can help out. Dave asked for 4 to 6 volunteers to help serve at the breakfast on Sunday the 9th of June. A sufficient number of members volunteered for the event. **Dave Harnish** reported that the calendar project that was undertaken in conjunction with the USSVI national organization was disappointing and had barely broke even financially. Dave also read a letter, from the Submarine Library/Museum, thanking Perch Base for the \$200 donation to the fund to restore and preserve the submarine battle flags.

NEW BUSINESS

Dave Harnish asked the members to vote in the election for USSVI District 8 Commander. All 23 members present cast their vote for Dave Harnish to serve as District 8 Commander. **Dave** announced that Arizona Public Service (APS) has asked Perch Base to participate with them in the 2002 Phoenix Veteran's Day Parade. APS requested that the Base let them know as soon as possible so they can make arrangements for use of a picnic area and other details. The members voted by acclamation to accept APS's offer and participate fully in the Phoenix Veteran's Day Parade.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Ray Samson received a notice and personal prayer to mark the recent passing of Shipmate **John Michaud**. Ray read the prayer aloud and asked the members to remember John in their thoughts and prayers. **Roger Cousin** asked to address the procedures used in the Tolling of the Boats ceremony, suggesting that it is common practice to indicate the boat name, hull number, date lost and number of lives lost before striking the bell. A discussion ensued among the members where the difference between the larger memorial service version of the tolling ceremony and the abbreviated ceremony held at the start of each monthly Base meeting. It was decided that the Perch Base Policy and Procedures Manual will spell out the standard procedure for the abbreviated Tolling of the Boats ceremony held at each formal meeting of the Base members. **Dave Harnish** asked Shipmate **Tom Tilley** to come forward and face the members. Dave then read a short presentation to Tom and gave him a hand carved set of dolphins with a tug boat in place of the submarine (since Tom was a U.S. Army tugboat skipper and not a submariner). Tom was the designer and creator of the Perch Base Parade Float featuring the scale model superstructure of USS

Bang. The presentation cited Tom for his service to our country and his work in producing the magnificent display of the USS Bang. Tom as an associate member of the USSVI is a valued member of Perch Base.

50/50 DRAWING

The 50/50 raffle was conducted and **Doug LaRock** was the winner.

ADJOURNMENT

All the outstanding business being concluded, it was moved and seconded that the meeting of the Arizona Submarine Veterans - Perch Base be adjourned. The motion carried by voice vote. The Base Chaplain; **Howard Doyle** led the membership in the benediction and closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 1343 hours.

Meeting and Events:

Our July 13th meeting will be held at American Legion Post 62, located at 11001 North 99th Avenue. Meeting Starts at 1200 Hours. Post 62, is North of West Peoria Avenue, in the city of Peoria, West of Hwy 101. Off HWY 101 take the Peoria exit and proceed West to 99th Ave., than right (North) to Post 62, which is on the East side of the street. We would hope to see a good turn-out as the members of this post have welcomed us with open arms. A lunch will be provided at a cost of \$3.00. A heck of a deal, at twice the price. Meeting for August 10th will be in Prescott, at the American Legion Post #6. Ladies auxiliary, will be providing lunch at \$10.00 per. person. Take I-17 Borth out of Phoenix, for approximately 50 miles. Exit at AZ-69 North exit, number 262 towards Cordes Jct Rd/Prescott. Merge onto AZ-69 and go West for approximately 34 Miles. Take the US-69 South ramp for approximately 1/2 Mile, then merge onto East Gurley Street and travel 0.6 Mile to South Pleasant Street. South on Pleasant to Number, 202. A printable map is on the Perch web site. Lets have a grand turnout for this meeting, and bring the wives, they will love it.



Perch Base Booster Club 2002:

Thank You for your "Above & Beyond" assistance:

Jerry N. Allston, Ken Anderson, Bob Bailey, Kenneth E. Becker, Jerry Becker, Joseph A. Bernard, Richard Bernier, Harold J. Bidigare, Wayne A. Braastad, Michael J. Breitner, Edgar Brooks, James F. Clewett, Roger J. Cousin, Earl Crowley, Stephen F. Day, Warner Doyle Jr., Jeff Duncan, Ronald D. Eddy, Tom Fooshee, Ray Lee Graybeal, Charles Greene, Billy A. Grieves, Warren A. Grossetta, Michael J. Haler, Robert Hanson, Dave Harnish, John T. Hellem, Glenn Herold, Lester R Hillman, Stephen F. Hough, Mike Keating, Ron Kloch, Larry L. Krieger, Paul Lake, Robert A. Lancendorfer, Doug La Rock, George

Marions, Dale Martin, Robert E. May, Bill Mc Nay, Roger M Miller, Roger R Miller, Joseph R. Mullins, Jim A. Nelson. James W. Newman Sr., Joe Otreba, Thomas B. Patterson, Raymond A. Perron, Royce E Pettit, Scott Prothero, Larry M. Rankin, Dan Reel, Frank W. Rumbaugh, Ramon Samson, Dick Schiltneck, Douglas F. Schultz, Tyler Smith, Wayne Smith, Robert G. Sothern, Adrian M. Stuke, James Wall, Kenny Wayne, Richard Weber, Don Wannamaker, Donald Whitehead, Ed Wolf, George Woods, Jerry D. Yowell.

Small Stores:

Our Storekeeper, Garry L. Shumann, has a comprehensive array of USSVI Small Stores, consisting of hats, shirts, sweat shirts, belt buckles, beer mugs, cocktail glasses, coffee mugs, and a slew of other memorabilia. Give him a call or better yet, come to a meeting and see everything first hand! If you want, you can order from the web site at <http://perch-base.org> Garry's address and phone number on front cover.

Membership Chairman Apologizes:

This apology is in store particularly to David Carpenter and Ron Young, and in general to all members of Perch Base. In my efforts to have a membership database that is accurate in every respect, I constantly go over the reports given to me by our treasurer Bob May. In one of these documents, it showed that David Carpenter and Ron Youn had up-graded to life membership. When I questioned USSVI National office as to why I hadn't received their life numbers, they immediately sent cards to Dave and Ron. Dave then sent an email to National wanting to know whom his benefactor was, as he hadn't sent money for life. National questioned me about this and of course I admitted to making an error. David Carpenter and Ron Young are not Life Members, and I can only say to them ... I'm deeply sorry for my mistake, or any inconvenience I may have caused them. Since this screw-up, Ron has returned his card to me. Thanks Ron.

Ramon Samson ... Membership Chairman.

Regulus Submarines:

Article from the L.A. Times. Ventura County; Submarines Secret History Surfaces; Navy: Some of the most important U.S. weapons of the Cold War were developed at Point Mugu, but the stories of the crews and systems remain largely untold. It was 1963 and the U.S. submarine Growler lay silent and deep beneath the black waters of the North Pacific, trying desperately to remain invisible as a Soviet sub prowled nearby. No one made a sound in the cramped confines of the American vessel. An errant rattle or ping could tip off the Soviets, who could send the Growler, its 100 crew members and four nuclear missiles to the bottom of the sea. Khrushchev had vowed to sink us if he found us,²

recalled Robert Hamuth of Oxnard, who was aboard the Growler, one of America's first nuclear-armed submarines. The sub tracked us for 30 minutes, but we don't think he knew what he had on his hands. The Growler, which was just 500 miles off the Kamchatka Peninsula on the far eastern coast of the Soviet Union, dove deep, went under the Soviet sub and escaped. It was pretty hairy, we put our lives on the line every day said Hamuth, 66. It's been overlooked for years because everyone was so hush-hush about the program. The history of America's first nuclear-armed submarines and the missiles they carried remains largely untold. The weapons, tested and developed chiefly at Point Mugu in Ventura County, were among the most secret projects of the Cold War. Using World War II German missile technology, more than a dozen ex-Nazi scientists and a small army of dedicated pilots and submariners, the military devised a primitive but effective sea-based nuclear deterrent that kept the Soviets off balance for years. Black-and-white pictures of the German scientists still adorn the office wall of Max White, former pilot and base historian at Point Mugu. There is Theodor Stern, Wilfried Hell and Herbert Wagner. The latter designed a missile that sunk an American ship during World War II, killing 2,000 soldiers. Wagner was actually a very sweet man,² said White, 86. My wife was his secretary. There were accidents and close calls. Missiles exploded on launch pads, planes crashed at test sites on the Channel Islands and submarines cruising close to the Soviet coast were chased by enemy ships or entangled in fishing nets. Almost everything we did was classified, how everything worked was classified, said 68-year-old Al Thayer of Camarillo, a former fighter pilot assigned to the Regulus program in 1955. I went at it tooth and nail for seven years. Our tests were trying to prove a submarine could control nuclear weapons to their target and stay submerged. Unlike the underwater-launched Polaris missiles that would follow, the Regulus was a subsonic nuclear cruise missile. It was fired from the decks of ships and submarines, then steered by remote control. The first successful flight was in 1951. Their limited range meant submarines had to be within 500 miles of the target. Many submariners doubted they would survive long after the first launch because of their exposure on the surface for the 15 minutes it took to fire the missile. We didn't like to think about it, but we knew we were toast, Hamuth said. It would have only taken minutes for them to be on top of us. The prospective targets were coastal Soviet navy and submarine bases. Though lacking pinpoint accuracy, the missiles' nuclear payload meant they could vaporize installations even if they were a few miles off course. There were people in the Navy who realized that if you put an atomic weapon on a submarine, you would have the Cold War's ultimate weapon. If you could do that, your opponent would fear making a first strike against you,² said Nick

Spark, who recently finished a documentary entitled *Regulus: The First Nuclear Missile Submarines*. Spark said the five Regulus submarine crews have been almost totally forgotten. From 1958 to 1964, these subs patrolled off the coast of the Soviet Union, he said. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, they sat off the Soviet coast on full alert. He said talking to Regulus alumni was like uncorking a champagne bottle. Many said they couldn't wait to get the film in the mail so they could finally tell their kids what they had done, he said. Before Regulus there was the Loon, an updated copy of the German V-1 rocket lobbed at England during World War II. The first Loon was fired in 1946 from a beach at Point Mugu and crashed just a mile offshore. In the time I was there, we discovered a new guidance system based on radar, said Pat Murphy, 82, a former sub commander from Santa Barbara who helped direct the Loon project. Then the Regulus came along, which was a pilotless aircraft that flew at 30,000 feet with a range of 400 or so miles. To minimize expenses, the 33-foot Regulus missile could be landed and reused. Pilots flying beside it would land it via remote control on San Nicolas Island or Edwards Air Force Base. We had to keep visual contact at all times, even in the clouds, Thayer said. It was extremely difficult, but when it was operating correctly it was the smoothest thing going. It would go from zero to 240 mph in two seconds. While Thayer flew overhead, life in the submarines below was claustrophobic, hot and dirty. Harmuth, who wrote a book about life on the Regulus submarines, said it wasn't uncommon to go seven weeks without a shower. Patrols, often in rough seas, lasted up to four months and the crew couldn't even see the missiles take off. You couldn't watch a launch from the submarine because the boosters would suck all the air out of the area and you would suffocate, Harmuth said. You'd hear this giant swoosh it was like being in a hot sauna, you'd be drenched in sweat. The Regulus patrols ended in 1964, replaced by subs that carried 16 Polaris missiles with multiple nuclear warheads. It was a quantum leap in technology, solid-state electronics trumping vacuum tubes. David Stumpf, author of *Regulus: The Forgotten Weapon*, said the missile laid the groundwork for today's Tomahawk cruise missiles and modern submarines. I am so glad these guys were alive and could do what they did, he said. I would like to think I had that kind of right stuff. Everyone I talked to was extremely proud of what they did and I have no doubt they would have taken a missile to the target if ordered to do so. Credit: Sent to Perch Base from Mare Island Base.

Lost Boats and Crews for July:

USS S-28 (SS 133) July 4, 1944 - 52 Men Lost

On June 20, 1944, LCDR J.G. Campbell assumed command of S-28, his first command. The ship had finished a normal upkeep period on June 12 and continued on her assigned duty of training enlisted

personnel and engaging in sonar exercises with ships under control of COMDESPAC. On July 3, S-28, in accordance with orders from COMDESPAC, got underway from the Submarine Base, Pearl Harbor, to conduct a week's normal operations. During the day on July 3, S-28 acted as a target for anti-submarine warfare vessels until about 1700 local time. At that time she made two practice torpedo approaches on the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter USS Reliance. On July 4 S-28 again carried out sonar exercises as on the previous day, and at 1730 again undertook a practice approach on Reliance. At 1730 S-28 dived about four miles distant from Reliance. At about 1805 Reliance made sound contact with S-28 at a range of 1700 yards. The range decreased to about 1500 yards and then steadily increased, as the bearing drifted aft. Although sound contact was temporarily lost by Reliance at 3,000 yards, she picked up the submarine again at 3,300 yards. At 1820, with range 4,700 yards, Reliance permanently lost sound contact with S-28. At no time during the approach or the ensuing sound search were distress signals from S-28 seen or heard, nor was any sound heard which indicated an explosion in S-28. When by 1830, S-28 had not surfaced or sent any signals, RELIANCE retraced her course and tried to establish communication with her. Although previous tests had showed that no difficulty would be experienced in exchanging messages by sound gear at ranges up to 2,000 yards, Reliance was unable to contact S-28. The Coast Guard vessel called in other vessels from Pearl Harbor at 2000, and a thorough search of the area was instituted, lasting until the afternoon of July 6, 1944. A slick, which was unmistakably made by diesel oil, was the only sign of S-28. The Court of Inquiry which investigated the sinking determined that S-28 sank shortly after 1820 on July 4, 1944 in 1400 fathoms of water. Because of the depth of the water, salvage operations were impossible. The Court recorded its opinion that S-28 lost depth control "from either a material casualty or an operating error of personnel, or both, and that depth control was never regained. The exact cause of the loss of S-28 cannot be determined." The Court found, further, that, "the material condition of S-28 was as good or better than that of other ships of her class performing similar duty," and that "the officers and crew on board S-28 at the time of her loss were competent to operate the ship submerged in the performance of her assigned duties." It was stated that the loss of S-28 was not caused by negligence or inefficiency of any person or persons.

USS ROBALO (SS 273) July 26, 1944 - 81 Men Lost

ROBALO under Cmdr. M.M. Kimmel, departed Fremantle on June 22, 1944 to conduct her third war patrol

in the South China Sea in the vicinity of the Natuna Islands. After traversing Makassar and Balabac Straits, she was to arrive on station about July 6th

and stay there until dark on August 2, 1944. On July 2nd a contact report stated **ROBALO** had sighted a Fuso-class battle ship with air cover and two destroyers for escort, just east of Borneo. No other messages were received from **ROBALO** and when she did not return from patrol, she was reported as presumed lost. The following information was received via the Philippine guerrillas and an U.S. Navy enlisted man who was a prisoner of war at Puerto Princesa Prison Camp, Palawan, P.I. On August 2, 1944, a note dropped from the window of the prison cell in which survivors from **ROBALO** were held was picked up by an American soldier in a work detail and given to H.D. Hough, Y2c, USN, another prisoner. On 4 August, Hough contacted Mrs. Trinidad Mendosa, wife of guerrilla leader Dr. Mendosa, who furnished further information on the survivors. From these sources, he put together the following facts. **ROBALO** was sunk July 26, 1944, two miles off the western coast of Palawan Island as a result of an explosion of her after battery. Four men swam ashore, an officer and three enlisted men: Samuel L. Tucker, Ens.; Floyd G. Laughlin, QM1c; Wallace K. Martin, SM3c, and Mason C. Poston, EM2c. They made their way through the jungles to a small barrio northwest of the Puerto Princesa camp. They were captured there by Japanese Military Police, and confined in the jail. They were held for guerrilla activities rather than as prisoners of war, it is said. On August 15, 1944, a Japanese destroyer evacuated them, and nothing further is known of their destination or whereabouts. The Japanese may have executed them or the destroyer may have been sunk. At any rate, they were never recovered and their note stated that there were no other survivors. It is doubted that a battery explosion could be sufficiently violent to cause the sinking of the ship; more likely **ROBALO** struck an enemy mine. In her first patrol, in the area west of the Philippines, **ROBALO** damaged a large enemy freighter. Her second patrol was in the South China Sea near Indo-China where she sank a 7,500-ton tanker.

Dex Armstrong Says Thanks:

For those that don't know, Dex Armstrong and **Adrian Stuke** served together on the **USS Requin SS481**. This is how the idea of having Ed Brooks, carve yet another set of Dolphins. As told to this editor by Glenn Herold: Hoot Gibson told me that Dex was talking about getting some dolphins for his Den wall. But that he did not want the heavy, brass kind that you see made in the ship yard, and on the tenders. Hoot had spent the night with Dex and his wife when he flew in last May, 2001 at the work week end. When he told me about it, I got the idea that we might lure Dex to town to visit Adrian and his wife, and in around about way get him to a meeting, and make a presentation of the dolphins to him. This was suppose to happen around Christmas or New

Years time. But the 9/11 bombing, changed everyones timing. Dex is the Deputy Director of the General Services Administration He oversees both the Pentagon and the White House. Therefore he could not get away. When the idea was brought up to Ed Brooks last year, he thought it was a great idea, he proceeded to make Dex's dolphins, I had hoped that, **Adrian Stuke**, **Ramon Samson**, and I, could make the presentation collectively as Perch Base, but as it turned out only myself was able to make it. That is how this came about. The following is Dex's email to **Glenn Herold**. Glenn ... Didn't realize that the first word of your email address was "duke"....I kept getting back my message as "undeliverable" . I tried to call Stookeyman but no answer....I told Solveig...Man, I must look like the most ungrateful bastard on the planet.....Thanks for your E-mail. Glenn, the generosity of Perch Base has to have set a major world record in generosity. I was...and continue to be totally and absolutely overwhelmed. I am prone to exaggeration but I have never been more sincere in saying that Perch Base gave me a day that has to rank with best days of my life...a memory that you tuck in your pocket to retrieve on a tough day...one that I will carry up to the time God issues me my pine peacoat. No one in this world appreciates hand workmanship more than I do....and your gift amazes me. That someone would take that kind of time on my behalf....WOW, as I say, I wish I could find the words to express the depth of my gratitude.....Never in my wildest dreams did I ever expect to find anything like this in my search for a set of Dolphins for my wall....To be honest, I didn't know anything this nice existed....I don't even think Shakespeare could find words to fashion into a proper expression of appreciation for such a wonderful gift. I had hoped to locate a pair of those polymer cast jobbies that they made for cumshaw swapping on the tender...that was the top of the totem pole in the world of a raggedy E-3...Only Admirals...Electric Boat Company executives....Folks on the Armed Services Appropriations Committee....Tom Clancy...and the PERCH BASE even know these things exist. One thing for sure, you take one look at those Dolphins and you immediately hook your smoke alarm up to a DELCO 1 volt truck battery. Glenn...How does one thank the PERCH BASE for such an overwhelming gift? I mean I was already deeply in debt to them for their kind acceptance of my blood brother and lifelong running mate...The E-3 Superhero that I rode shotgun for...I was the Tonto to his Lone Ranger....The guy who let me cover the front door while he was cleaning out the safe...The fellow who always said.."Oh no...After you" when it came to tip toeing through minefields. PERCH BASE adopting that good-fer-nuthin rascalion was the finest gift they could have given me...but then Saturday morning, you bought my soul...I can't get over it. I want to sit down and write to the Perch Base folks and thank them properly,

once I figure out how to do it.....How to formulate the words that will match the feelings in my heart. Would you please convey my deepest appreciation.....No man was ever given the joy I have been given...Volunteering for submarines and marrying my little blue eyed Norwegian were the best choices I ever made.....and Glenn, if you are ever in the D.C. area you've got a place to stay and a great dinner on us. Again, please thank everyone who had a hand in that fantastic surprise and tell Stuke to keep his fly zipped and not to light anything that has a fuse shorter than six inches. And if you see Janie Stuke...please tell her that for living with and putting up with Adrian, Saint Peter will put her in the speed line at check-out time and give her a cloud with a hot tub. Thank you shipmates...Thank you very much. Oh yes....The Norwegian wants to plan a trip out to visit Adrian and Janie.....Janie has promised to wear her two-piece and tuck a rose behind her ear and Adrian has promised to wear a paper bag over his head.....and to get me to a Perch Base meeting. God Bless You All DEX

NASA looks to Submarines:

By Robert A. Hamilton - 06/14/2002 New London Day. Alexandria, Va. — The head of the nation's space agency said Thursday that he has called upon the Navy's submariners to help develop space vehicles that can reach even the most distant planets in the solar system. It would take 15 years for a conventional spacecraft to reach Pluto, too long to consider sending a human being because of the dangers of radiation and loss of muscle and bone mass, and too long for the people who developed the project to still be working on it when it ended, said NASA Administrator Sean O'Keefe. What the space program needs is a compact source of bountiful energy, O'Keefe said, if space travel and exploration is to be feasible. So one of the first people he called after assuming his NASA post was Adm. Frank L. "Skip" Bowman, head of the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program and a career submariner. "We're learning a lot from this community," O'Keefe said at the Naval Submarine League Symposium that opened Wednesday at the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center. "This issue is really worth pursuing." Within a day of their meeting, Bowman got back to O'Keefe with a list of names of possible candidates to lead the effort, and O'Keefe has hired one of them to be NASA's chief engineer, effective next month. There are other areas where NASA and the submarine force could share technology, O'Keefe said, including robotics and the use of unmanned vehicles. He predicted increasingly closer ties between NASA and the Navy's submarine force. Bowman, in an interview after O'Keefe's speech, acknowledged the possibility that the Navy could be given the task of developing nuclear propulsion for spacecraft. He noted that there is precedent for the Navy's playing such a role — in the

1950s his office was charged with developing the first commercial nuclear power plant in Shippingport, Pa. Bowman said designing a spacecraft propulsion system would require some new technology, but he was confident the engineers could accomplish it. "I'm not campaigning for it — I already have plenty of work to keep me busy," Bowman said. "But if the country asks Naval Reactors to develop this reactor for space, we're ready," O'Keefe, a former North Stonington resident who graduated from Wheeler High School, has a number of connections to the Navy. He served as the Navy secretary for a time in the 1990s, his wife and mother are sponsors of nuclear submarines, and his father was a nuclear submarine officer. He said he recognized how nuclear power revolutionized submarines by providing a vast source of power that enables boats to operate for longer periods of time and at much greater speeds than with conventional fuel. He said a similar revolution is needed in space travel. The rocket ships of today can carry enough fuel to go very fast for 8.5 minutes, enough to get them into orbit. "But beyond that," he said, "We might as well be in a covered wagon." The most mature technology that provides the kind of power that space exploration requires is nuclear power, he said, and the Navy has learned how to exploit it better than anyone else. O'Keefe admitted there likely will be criticism of any decision to pursue nuclear power for space uses, as there was when NASA launched the space probe with a simple nuclear engine four years ago. "As the Navy nuclear community knows very well, this is largely an emotional argument, not grounded in technology," O'Keefe said. "One of the things I've done is to cite the incredible record of safety that the group has had." The Navy operates almost as half as many nuclear power plants as the commercial power industry, he noted, but it has never had a nuclear mishap. That was why he hired Theron Bradley, who has worked for Naval Reactors for almost 33 years, as NASA's new chief engineer, O'Keefe said. Bradley was hired by Adm. Hyman G. Rickover in July 1969 and worked as a reactor engineer and in other specialties before he was hired as the lead fluid systems engineer for the Trident submarine program at Electric Boat in Groton, said Thomas H. Beckett, deputy director of Naval Reactors. In 1982, Bradley was picked to head the Idaho office of Naval Reactors, where he was in charge of four prototypes — essentially, working models of submarine propulsion plants. In the 1990s, the Navy phased out training in Idaho, and Bradley concentrated on research and development. In addition, Beckett said, Bradley earned a law degree during the 1980s. His background, with a heavy concentration in physics and engineering, as well as public policy and law, made him an ideal candidate for the NASA post. In addition, Bowman noted, two of his other top staff have been asked to work with the National Nuclear Security

Administration at the Department of Energy to help them understand the safety and security concepts that have allowed the nuclear Navy to operate a half-century without a serious reactor problem.

"We're slicing off pieces of my right arm," Bowman said about the loss of such key people. "But it's for the good of the country."

Torpedo blamed for Kursk disaster:

From BBC Page Wednesday, 19 June, 2002. As Russia prepares to issue its final verdict on what caused the Kursk to sink nearly two years ago, a top official has blamed a faulty torpedo on board the nuclear submarine. Ilya Klebanov, heading the inquiry, acknowledged that the submarine had not collided with a foreign vessel or with a stray mine, as Russian officials suggested shortly after the disaster in August 2000. He was speaking after salvage ships raised parts of the vessel's nose - considered key evidence - from the bottom of the Barents Sea. Russia and Nato agreed on Wednesday to begin work on an international sea-rescue service as a direct result of the Kursk disaster, in which all 118 men on board were killed. A preliminary report by the Russian Navy had already concluded that the submarine sank when one or more of its own torpedoes exploded, but Mr Klebanov's statement brings the government nearer to a final announcement. "The commission has discounted a collision and a mine," the trade, science and technology minister said. "There remains only one version - a torpedo blast." Mr Klebanov said the commission on the Kursk would probably only meet once more and a final verdict is due on 29 June. The minister did not however give any indication of what might have caused the torpedo - a standard Russian weapon fueled by hydrogen peroxide - to explode, detonating other weapons on board. It also remains unclear whether the blast occurred during an operation to lift the torpedo into its firing chamber, or whether it was lying still. Peroxide fuel has been a staple of the Russian Navy in the post Soviet-era because it is so cheap, but other countries have abandoned its use because it is thought too unstable. Britain returned to other fuels after an accident on board HMS Sidon in 1955, when the craft was using peroxide fuel. Thirteen sailors died in the incident. The Russian Navy ordered peroxide-fuelled torpedoes to be removed from service after the Kursk disaster. Joint rescue work Russian and Nato admirals ended two days of talks in St Petersburg by signing a protocol on setting up an international sea-rescue service. Some of the personnel aboard the Kursk had survived the initial explosions only to die a slow death, trapped inside the submarine. Experts are due to draft a programme of co-operation on submarine rescue by the end of the year. "The tragedy of the Kursk nuclear submarine was at the centre of our discussions," said Russian Admiral Anatoly

Komaritsyn. US Vice Admiral Malcolm Fages said the St Petersburg initiative followed on from the creation of the Nato-Russia Council in May. "At the Rome summit last month, the heads of state and government from Nato and from Russia mentioned specifically a desire to see closer co-operation in the field of... search and rescue," he said.

Ghost Boat Part 2:

Admiral Murray told his wife he was going to stay up and read something so she went to bed. He was old enough and salty enough to know that this log, apparently written by dying men, would be tough for an old submariner to read. So, he got a big glass of Bushmills and sat down with a yellow pad at his side. When he finished he wrote a letter and made some notes in the pad and retired. He got very little sleep that night. He got up very early and went to the office. Commander Vandergrif, like most aides, got to work very early so as to be there before their boss, but also to catch up on the workload during the quiet hours. He was a bit shocked to walk into the office and see the Admiral already there. The Admiral waved him in,

"Wally, I read that log last night. I couldn't sleep the rest of the night it was so disturbing. I realized that the author is the father of an old friend who taught me at Sub School. He retired a Captain a few years ago. I have kept in touch with him from time to time. Here is what I want to do on this." Admiral Murray handed over a list: #1 - Get the attached letter typed up for me. #2 - Have the Chief make a real good copy of the log for us to keep. I'm going to give the original to Captain Pierce. #3 - Prepare the paper work for a Purple Heart and Bronze Star for Butch Pierce the COB - he is the man who wrote this. #4 - Prepare the paperwork for the PUC (Presidential Unit Citation) for Cutterfish #5 - There were two others in that compartment who I want the same thing for; (Get their full names) Shorty Freeman and Tex Bullock #6 - Call Captain Pierce and set up an appointment for me to go to his house. I'd like Chief Reader to drive me out there. #7 - Try and locate the kin of the other two men. I want them to know about the awards. Whenever the Admiral was driven by Senior Chief Reader, he sat in the front passenger seat. He was actually friends with the chief and he felt sort of pompous sitting in the back. Reader always felt honored by this and would chuckle to himself at the reactions of the Marines at the Main Gate every time he and the Admiral left the base in the gray sedan they were assigned. The trip out to the Pierce home was fairly short as were the introduction among Dan and Joanie Pierce and the Admiral and the Senior Chief. They didn't even sit down. "Dan, we can only stay a minute. I wanted to personally drop the log and a letter for you. I thought you would probably want to read the log privately." He handed over two medal boxes, the logbook and his letter. "I need to get back for a meeting so we'll

shove off. It was nice meeting your daughter. Bye Dan, let me know if I can do anything for you." They all shook hands and suddenly Dan Pierce and his daughter Joanie were alone. He decided to read the letter first From: Commander Submarine Forces Atlantic, Naval Base Norfolk, Norfolk, VA 32205. To: Dan Pierce, Captain U.S. Navy (retired) 2103 Farragut Drive Norfolk, VA 32201. Dear Captain Pierce, Sometime around the third week of June 1942 U.S.S. *Cutterfish* was operating off the Virginia coast when she engaged a German U-boat on the surface. German WWII records indicate that they lost U-136 at the same time and in the same area where *Cutterfish* was recently discovered. Evidence from witnesses aboard the U-boat's target, a merchant ship, suggests that both submarines launched torpedoes and both boats sank. Because of the courageous and aggressive conduct of the captain and crew of *Cutterfish*, I am recommending the submarine for the Presidential Unit Citation (PUC). Additionally, each member of the crew (see attached) is awarded the Purple Heart. Only because of the extraordinary discovery of the log written by Chief of the Boat Butch Pierce, do we know about the circumstances of the survival of *Cutterfish's* Forward Torpedo room and the conduct of the three crewmembers left alive following the sinking. Because of the manner in which they conducted themselves under extremely difficult conditions, TM-2(SS) Willard 'Tex' Bullock, TM-2(SS) William 'Shorty' Freeman and Chief Petty Officer Butch Pierce are awarded the Bronze Star. I am compelled to add to this commendation a comment prompted by the extraordinary discovery of Chief Pierce's log. During WWII the Submarine Service lost 52 boats and suffered the highest death rate among all branches of the US Forces. I proudly add that despite the fact that our submarine force amounted to less than 2% of the Navy, it's efforts accounted for the destruction of more than 50% of Japan's combined naval and merchant fleets. This extraordinary feat was even more effective since the war in the Pacific was maritime in nature. In nearly every case, the 52 boats sank with all hands, so we have no evidence of the final hours of the lives of all those gallant men. Personally, as a submariner, I have always known in my heart that those thousands of submariners conducted themselves admirably in their final moments. Because of the log your father kept we now have evidence confirming my feelings. This letter accompanies the original logbook written by your father which I feel you and your family should have. With the Greatest Respect, Captain Dan Pierce sat and looked at the logbook on the coffee table in front of him. Finally he picked it up, opened it and read the first five words. "My name is Butch Pierce..." Even though he knew that it was the *Cutterfish* log, he was completely unprepared for this. He felt as if a bus had hit him. A great audible sob erupted within him and he sucked in deep gulps of air over and over. It was instant human grief. He

could neither control it, nor explain it. His father had died 51 years ago. After all this time, why was this happening? His wife died when their daughter Joanie was six. He could still see the doctor in his scrubs coming through the door at the New London Base Hospital to tell him his wife had died trying to bear their second child. He had been grief stricken then, but this was something different - not so much worse than different. Joanie got up from her chair across from her father, not speaking for fear of coming undone herself, and put her arms around him as he sobbed. When his wife had died he had Joanie to care for, funeral arrangements to make and his job as a student at Nuclear Power School. He could not afford the luxury of the grief he was now experiencing. Maybe this was grief for both his dad and his wife - he could not tell, but it was overwhelming. Now, at this moment, except for Joanie, all the people he loved were gone. He had no responsibilities for his Dad's burial; the sea had taken care of that. And his daughter was now in her thirties. He was completely free to grieve now, and he fervently hoped that this would be his last. Joanie did not know how long she had held her father when he stopped sobbing and backed away from her, "I'm sorry Joanie. God, I don't know what came over me. That's never happened to me before...ever." "I'm glad Dad, that needed to happen. It needed to come out. You had to go through this. You know, I was just thinking that when Grandma and you were told about your Dad, it was sort of gradual really. First it was, 'The boat's over due but they could have a broken radio, or be maintaining radio silence.' Then, after awhile it was, 'Presumed lost', but you were never sure and always hopeful. You two never had closure like most people have when loved ones die. I think that this is the good part of this - the healthy part. I'm no shrink, but I believe this Dad. I'm making some coffee Joanie - I need to move around a bit. Want anything? "You have a bottle of water?" She was an athlete and didn't pick up any bad habits at Stanford, partly because of her roommate's wholesome policy of not eating anything 'nasty'. She would never knowingly eat stuff with ingredients ending in 'ase', 'ate' or 'ite'. Joanie got up, went to his liquor cabinet, got out a bottle of Jameson's Irish Whiskey and put it on the coffee table next to the log and hoped he'd have some of it. When he came back out of the kitchen he poured some in his coffee, took a sip to make more room for more Jameson's and sat there looking at the log. His daughter sensed his apprehension and volunteered to read the log to him. She opened the logbook and began to read, USS CUTTERFISH My name is Butch Pierce. Tex Bullock had the topside watch and was a little irritated about it. He was a Second Class Torpedoman and he thought a TM2 ought to have more important things to do than stand a watch he didn't even think was necessary on a submarine. He figured if there had to be a watch at all, at least give

it to some new guy. He understood the watch was needed on the bigger ships, like cruisers and even destroyers, since they had stuff going on constantly. People coming and going all the time, visitors galore and all sorts of ceremony, like bells, boatswain's pipes, flag hoists - stuff like that. He thought, 'Hell, some of them have over a thousand people.' But on a fleet boat, with fewer than 80 crew and officers, nothing much went on. Guys went on liberty; the married guys went home for dinner and to be with their families. But apart from loading torpedoes, which they did only once in awhile, or loading stores occasionally, topside was mighty quiet on the boats. Naturally, they did need to keep track of where everyone was all the time. And, of course, security - after all it was 1942 and we were at war. He thought that he may want to re-think this topic completely, 'Hell, maybe it makes sense...Christ I don't know.' There was one extenuating consideration. On Cutterfish for the last several days and nights, all the enginemen and auxiliaries had been doing major repairs, which could not be done at sea. Therefore all their junior seamen were not available for topside watches. All this at a time when the torpedomen had virtually nothing to do. Tex already felt better about COB's decision to put all the torpedomen on the topside watch roster. Tex looked at the topside log resting on the wooden lectern, which the carpenter shop made for them in exchange for a bunch of luncheon meats, and noted that it was June 11, 1942. He thought time did indeed fly. He recalled joining the Navy seven years earlier, and was pleased with himself that he had made TM2 so fast. But, this war had speeded everything up, including advancement. He figured the Navy had probably grown twice as large as it had been in 1935 when he joined - maybe even more than that. Just then he noticed the skipper, at his usual fast pace, coming down the pier about a hundred yards away, so he flipped his cigarette over the side and scrambled up the ladder to the bridge, keyed the IMC, and announced, "Cutterfish arriving. Cutterfish arriving." This particular custom of announcement of the captain's arrival was one he totally agreed with. Letting the duty officer and the duty section know the captain was coming back aboard made sense in an otherwise relaxed shipboard routine. At least things were relaxed while tied up to some pier - they never were relaxed at sea. Tex thought, 'Too damn many things to go wrong and kill you at sea.' There was a bar in Norfolk he frequented which catered almost exclusively to submariners, which had a plaque with a quote by some long dead author he'd never heard of, which said, "To be at sea is to face the enemy." Tex liked that because it was particularly applicable to the boats. Subs were dangerous, 'Lots of ways to get killed on a sub.' He said it again as he met the skipper at the brow with a hand salute, mumbling it to himself, 'Lots of ways to get killed on a submarine.' Chief Petty Officer and Cutterfish's

Chief of the Boat (COB) Butch Pierce, was at that moment, having a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and a glass of milk at the little base housing apartment he shared with his wife Lynn and his boy Danny. One thing about being the COB was that nobody ever questioned where you were. The Captain or the officers might need to talk to him and so they'd say, "Get hold of the COB, I need to talk to him, quick as he can get here." But nobody would ask him to account for his time since it was assumed that wherever he was, it was important for the boat. The COB was the leading enlisted man aboard a sub and the liaison between the skipper and the crew. The man given that position always took it very, very seriously. Pierce was very proud of it as well. His Dad had been well off and had sent him off to college as a young man, but he got caught in the stock market crash of 1929, lost everything, had a heart attack and died. Pierce had just finished up his sophomore year and did not wish to burden his family further. He also had developed a hatred and mistrust of business in general and the Navy seemed to be a perfect option for him. Butch Pierce knew that nothing requiring his attention was going on aboard Cutterfish so he took the time for a quick lunch at home. He had this ominous feeling that he'd damn well better enjoy the little windows of time he had with his family while he could. This war, while it had been pretty quiet for the Atlantic Fleet so far, was going to heat up and he'd wish he had seen more of his family. Plus, he was only 15 minutes away from the boat and everyone knew how to track him down. He had his mouth full when the phone rang, so Lynn answered knowing it would be for him. She knew almost no one in Norfolk except the wives of a few of the married crew and her immediate neighbors. "Hello? Yes sir, he is right here." She put her palm over the phone and said, "It's the XO." Butch quickly washed down the latest bite and took the receiver. "Yes sir, Pierce" "COB, we need you at a meeting in the Ward Room as soon as you can get here." "Be there in fifteen sir." He kissed and hugged his wife thinking how really good she felt, and how great their sex was. Danny was at his last day of school, and thought to himself how nice it would be to just stay home and make love that afternoon. He headed for the door thinking that easily more than half the times he felt like this, some higher priority, usually the boat, took control. He stepped from the pier, stopped for an imperceptibly short instant in the middle of the brow, faced aft, saluted the ensign on the short pole at the very end of the after deck and headed for the escape trunk door just beneath the main deck. He stepped down the first two rungs, and dropped the rest of the way onto the Torpedo Room deck plates. Tex had been relieved from the "8 to 12" topside watch and was standing talking to his buddy and fellow torpedoman, Shorty when they heard Pierce hit the deck plates. "Hey, COB, home for a matinee again? You married puked got it made

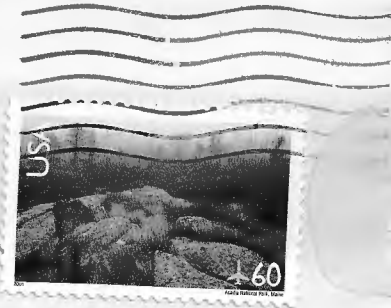
you know that? Ain't that right Shorty?...married guys get it as regular as clockwork." By this time Pierce had one leg through the watertight door into the next compartment when he stopped and sat on the steel combing. "The thing about you right arm rates is that you are always thinking about sex. Who would marry a couple of ugly deck apes like you two, with your knuckles dragging the deck? I'm gonna' ask the Captain if he'll let the two of you out of the Navy, so you can go to work in Hollywood in one of those Lon Chaney horror movies. He'll probably give me a medal for gettin' rid of you." The Ward Room curtain was tied back and Pierce slid into the banco, which circled the table in a U shape. The seating couldn't hold more than maybe six or seven officers. Pierce fit right into the picture in his pressed khakis. His uniform was identical to the officers' except for the collar devices. He poured a cup of coffee from the ever-present urn and, like the others, waited for the Captain. They heard, "That will be all." from the passageway as Captain Keiffer dismissed the steward and entered the tiny room. "Good afternoon everyone. Hi, COB, everything all right at home?" "Family is fine Captain, thanks for asking." "Glad you could join us. I just got back from Squadron and have some orders. Those German U-boats are really raising hell along the Virginia and North Carolina coasts. They said the average was one merchant ship every eight hours over the last three months, which sounds a little high to me. But, as you well know, I am just a simple submariner, trying to do his job." They all smiled at the irony since he was anything but a 'simple submariner'. The one with the widest grin was the Captain. "We've sent out a couple destroyers and some of those commandeered rich people's yachts with results you might expect. So, nothing is happening while our fellow Americans sit on the beach at night on the hoods of their cars, and watch the tankers burn off shore. Evidentially, Admiral King's strategy is to hold us back for more important things in the Pacific with the Japs. I don't understand that, and neither do the boys at Squadron. Squadron has come to the conclusion that we could use some 'on the job training', and I've got orders to get underway and "train" off the Virginia and North Carolina coasts for a few weeks. Are you getting the picture? "Bill, are your torpedoes and ordinance ready?" "Yes sir, we got the two Mk14's back from the Torpedo Shop last week, and we pretty much stay current on shells for the deck

gun and small arms. We're OK." "How about you Paul? Are we stored up for, say, three weeks? Crew's all in town?" He was looking at his executive officer (XO), Lt.Cdr. John Thomas Walter, and thinking how lucky he was to have this man. If he had a fault, it was that he seemed a bit stiff - almost too serious. He was one of the best ship handlers he'd run across and he was great under pressure. 'Under pressure' - he smiled to himself at his little submarine joke. "I'll just need 24 hours on that Captain. COB and I will talk to Foster and see what fresh stuff he'd want for three weeks and we're topped off on diesel fuel. 'Doc' Hosea is the only one out of town. He went to DC for a refresher course on independent medical duty, and is due back on the boat this evening actually." "COB you have anything to add? Any hold ups from your end?" "All set as far as I can see Captain. When can I tell the crew?" "Tell them now if you like. Give them a little time to retrieve their laundry and go to the exchange." "Aye, Captain." "OK, gentlemen we'll sail at 0800 on the 12th. Lets get cracking." Pierce headed forward through the very narrow passageway and stepped into the forward room. Tex Bullock was drinking a mug of coffee and leaning against the port mine table when he saw Pierce coming, "Hey COB, any new skinny from the Ward Room?" "Yeah, we're sailing in about 20 hours, so the two of you better get your gear together and maybe go ashore if you don't have the duty. And go ahead and spread the word so the crew has a bit more time to prepare." The uniform of the day in Norfolk was still dress blues, even though it was a little warm for the wool. There was a temperature range window for all sailors when it was too hot for blues and too cool for whites. Tex and Shorty climbed the ladder in their blues and came out on deck just in front of Jim Dresser, a Quartermaster 3rd class, who had the topside watch. Shorty feigned some sympathy for a shipmate, who was not going on liberty his second to last night in port and said with a chuckle, "Real sorry you got the duty Dresser - too bad. Gimme' ten bucks and me and Tex will get laid for you - it's as close as your gonna' get." Tex and Shorty thought this was hilarious and were laughing as they crossed the brow, throwing a hand salute in the general direction of the flag. Dresser had his chin sticking out, and responded in the usual unmilitary fashion of submariners, "Yeah? Well f**k you Freeman and the horse you rode in on. I hope you get the clap!"

!!! REMEMBER !!!

August meeting in Prescott.

Directions in Meeting and Events section. Printable map on web page
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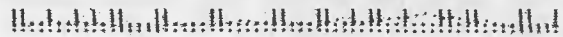


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