

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

That's our CREED above, but it's not who we are:

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

SOUTH SOUND BASE KLAXON

Class III 2009 USSVI Newsletter of the Year Award Winner

VOLUME 3 Issue 12 - December 2010

Base Home Page: southsoundbase.org

National Home Page at: ussvi.org

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Thanksgiving

SSB members deliver food to Spanaway Elementary School on 11-22-10

Thanks Shipmates !

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USSVI South Sound Base

David Richards, Commander
3510 E. McKinley Ave.
Tacoma, WA 98404



Commander's Corner!

December 11, 2010

Dave Richards, Commander SSB. USSVI

The December meeting of South Sound Base USSVI was held on 12/9/2010. A small group assembled, but I think we had a productive meeting. Base elections were held and the only change will be John Mansfield will take over as base Secretary.

I would like to thank all of the board members for their support in this last year and I look forward to working with them the coming year.

A special thanks to Ken Board for many years of service as secretary. He will be stepping down. The membership voted to provide \$100 for a family in need this holiday season. Time is short, but I think we can rely on the local VFW post to help us locate a family in need at this time of year. We are glad to see that John Cox was able to get the Klaxon updated on our base site.

Please all have a MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

Sincerely, DAVE RICHARDS, COMMANDER, SOUTH SOUND BASE USSVI.

Here is the URL of a nice Raiders web site: <http://www.doolittleraider.com/>

<http://www.doolittleraider.com/survivors.htm> This page lists the 6 living Raiders





USSVI South Sound Base

Dave Richards, Commander

3510 E. McKinley Ave. Tacoma, WA 98404

Minutes of Meeting, November 9, 2010

The USSVI South Sound Base meeting was called to order by Commander David Richards at 1900 Hrs. There were 9 members present. Dave led the Pledge of Allegiance; Don Mansfield gave the opening prayer.

Commander Dave read the USSVI Creed: "To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States Of America."

Tolling of the Boats lost in December was conducted by Dave Richards and Greg Lee

USS Capelin (SS289) 1943, USS Sealion (SS195) 1941, F-1 (SS20) 1917, S-4 (SS109) 1927.

A Moment of Silence was observed to honor shipmates on Eternal Patrol.

Sailors Rest Your Oars.

Introduction of VIP's: Western District 4 Commander acknowledged.

All members introduced themselves, giving names, 'qual boats' and cities of residence.

Treasurer's Report: \$2,196.74 in the General Fund and \$726.77 in the Storekeeper Fund.

Membership Chairman Mike Ellis reported the base has 43 members, three of which are Associates. It is time to send in 2011 Annual National and Base Dues. Annual Members please send \$30 to Mike Ellis; he will forward \$20 to National. There are programs available for multi year memberships. Remember, under the new By Laws recently passed at the National Convention in Cincinnati, future Holland Club Members will pay Annual dues unless they are Life Members with the National Office and their local Base.

Base Newsletter Report: Don Smith, Klaxon editor had jury duty and could not be present.

Binnacle List: Jan "Bear" Stiffey - Flu, Elaine Mansfield, health issues.

We wish them a speedy recovery.

Assistant Storekeeper: John Mansfield, reported "The store is open." Sales at tonight's meeting were two patches, one book and two 2011 USSVI Calendars. He turned in funds from a Cowboy hat sale to Fred Green, a member of Bremerton Base.

Western District Commander: John Mansfield reported on the Eagle Scout program, now in full swing, with all information on the USSVI website.

Old Business

Vice Commander, Greg Lee, reported selling the rest of his University of Washington 'plush' bears to Huskies fans on the bus to last Saturday's game. The Huskies (6-6) are headed to the Holiday Bowl in San Diego to play the Nebraska Cornhuskers. Go Dawgs.

Commander Dave reported on delivery by three Base members, John Mansfield, Ken Board and himself, of 13 food baskets to Spanaway Elementary School's food bank. We presented 13 Food Baskets, each containing a 3 lb frozen turkey breast, 4 lb Black Forest ham, 5 lb sack of potatoes, tin of biscuits, pkg of gravy mix and a can of vegetables.

(minutes continued on the next page)

Minutes from November 9th meeting continued

New Business

Commander Dave conducted Election of Officers for 2011. Commander: Dave Richards, Vice Commander, Greg Lee, Secretary, John Mansfield, Treasurer, Mike Ellis. Installation of officers will take place at the January 13, 2011 meeting.

The Commander also spoke on the new "Soup Down" program. Our first gathering will be on **January 28th** at the "**Homestead Restaurant**", 7837 South Tacoma Way, Tacoma, Washington at **2:00 P.M.** This is an informal gathering in which all Base members and their Spouses / Guests are encouraged to attend. We will meet once a month to share sea stories and discuss topics of interest to everyone. It is also Vice Commander Greg Lee's Birthday, so come on out and have some fun.

Good of the Order

Sea stories were told by most members present which brought many laughs. Now we just have to figure out if they were true or not.

John reported contacting Richard out at the Old Soldiers Home in Orting. At present there are no submarine veterans residing there, but he will keep us posted should one arrive.

Eric G. Sandstrom VFW Post 969 Commander Steve Reynolds stopped by, introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the post. He did not have much time to chat because he and another post member were on their way to help a needy veteran and his family who are without a home, food and transportation. This started a lengthy discussion about future Base donations to community service projects.

When all was said and done, a motion was made, seconded and passed to authorize the Executive Board expenditures up to \$100.00 to a veteran and/or his family for needed items before Christmas. It was also decided to discontinue the automatic donation of \$400 per year to Spanaway Elementary School's food bank. It was apparent to some who have delivered food baskets in the past, that their food bank program is being supported adequately already, and that we will focus on donations to "those in need" especially veterans. The Base will also contribute to Post 969's existing veterans support programs.

Mike Robb donated 40 'handmade' balsawood and embroidered Christmas cards for delivery to troops overseas. John will find out contact information for a 'Military Unit' that the cards will be sent to and amount for postage.

John spoke again on the desire to have a Base Memorial Team. Any members wishing to participate, please let him know. So far, John and Lance Nowland have expressed interest. The team will attend memorial services for submarine veterans in our area, regardless of whether or not they belong to our organization. Families and friends always appreciate seeing representation by fellow submariners at services for their loved ones.

Don Mansfield gave the closing prayer and meeting adjourned at 1830.

Next meeting is January 13, 2011 at VFW Post 969

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all Base Members and families. Thank you all for your service. We pray for the safety of all service men and women defending our freedoms.

Respectfully Submitted:

John Mansfield, Acting SSB Secretary



I received this from three different e-mails, so that is good enough for me to print it here. donmac

T'was the Night Before Christmas-Submarine Style

By Sean Keck

T'was the night before Christmas, and what
no-one could see,
The men with the dolphins were under the sea.
Most of the crew was flat on their backs,
Snoring and dreaming all snug in their racks.

Those men on watch were making their rounds,
Some manning the planes or listening for sounds.
Back in maneuvering or down in the room,
They all hoped the oncoming watch would come soon.

I'd finished some PM's whose time was now due,
And hoped for some sleep, even an hour or two.
Against better judgment I took a short stroll,
And found myself wandering into control.

The Nav had the Conn, the COW was in place,
The COB had the Dive and a scowl on his face.
The helm and the planes were relaxed but aware,
The QM and ET were discussing a dare.

To comply with the orders the Nav told the Dive,
To bring the boat up with minimum rise.
The orders were given and soon they were there,
At periscope depth with a scope in the air.

The QM confirmed our position with care,
The broadcast was copied, we brought in some air.
The Nav on the scope let out a small cry,
He shook his head twice and rubbed at his eyes.

He looked once again to find what it was,
That interrupted his sweep and caused him to pause.
Try as he might there was nothing to see,
So down went the scope and us to the deep.

I asked what it was that caused his dismay,
He sheepishly said, "I'm embarrassed to say."
It could have been Northern Lights or a cloud,
Or a meteorite he wondered aloud.

But to tell you the truth I guess I must say,
Whatever it was it looked like a sleigh.
And though it passed quickly and never was clear,
I almost believe it was pulled by reindeer.

We laughed and teased him and I got up to go,
When our moment was broken by "Conn, Radio."
They told us a message was just coming in,
We looked at the depth gauge and started to grin.

"Radio, Conn, I feel safe to say,
Your attempt at a joke is too long delayed.
If it had been sooner it might have been neat,
But I doubt we're receiving at four-hundred feet."

"Conn, Radio, you can come down and see,
We're not playing games to any degree."
I headed aft with nothing better to do,
Surprised by the fact it was still coming through.

It stopped and was sent to control to be read,
The Nav read it slowly and scratched at his head.
Then again he began but this time aloud,
To those that now waited, a curious crowd.

"To you Denizens of the Deep and men of the sea,
Who risk your life daily so others stay free.
I rarely have seen you on this, my big night,
For far too often you are hidden from sight.

But purely by luck I saw you tonight,
As your scope coaxed the plankton to glow in the
night.
And lucky for me I've finally won,
The chance to say thanks for all you have done.

I know that you miss your families at home,
And sometimes you feel as if you're alone.
But trust what I say and I'll do what's right,
I'll take something special to your families tonight.

Along with the gifts I'll take to your kin,
I'll visit their dreams and leave word within.
They'll hear of your love, and how you miss them,
I'll tell them that soon you'll be home again.

It might not be much I know that is true,
To thank you for all the things that you do.
But I'll do what I can, while you do what's right,
Merry Christmas to all, and to all a goodnight."



[Navy Hard-Pressed To Meet Sub Numbers](#)

By Paul McLeary, Aviation Week, 8 December 2010

Despite flat defense funding and the assertion by Defense Secretary Robert Gates that the U.S. Navy's shipbuilding budget will not rise significantly in future years, the service continues to insist that its fleet of 256 ships must eventually increase to 313 in coming decades.

While the story lines that surround the tortured acquisition history of programs like the Littoral Combat Ship have drawn criticism from the press and Washington think tanks, there has been something going on under the sea that is just as important to the Navy's future fighting prowess. According to its 30-year shipbuilding plan released earlier this year, the submarine fleet is slated to overtake surface combatants as the service's largest resource drain over the next three decades, as aging Los Angeles-class attack submarines are retired and new—and expensive—hulls are put in the water. Most of this expense will come from the Virginia-class program, which now costs about \$2.5 billion per hull, and will eventually number 25 hulls at a build cost of \$63 billion.

The big build starts in 2011 when the Navy doubles the production rate to two submarines per year, with work being done by General Dynamics Electric Boat and Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding.

The Navy operates 53 attack submarines, 44 of which are Los Angeles-class boats, with another 14 Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) and four Ohio-class guided missile submarines (SSGNs). Beginning in 2015, the service is embarking on a massive retirement plan, with remaining Los Angeles-class subs mothballed and replaced by Virginia-class attack vessels.

The Ohio-class SSBN's will reach the end of their service life in 2027. Plans call for replacing 14 Ohio SSBNs with 12 new SSBNs starting in 2019. The Navy doesn't plan on replacing the four SSGNs, converted from SSBNs after the Cold War, when they retire in the late 2020s.

And here is where the budgeting problems start.

When it comes to replacing SSBNs, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated earlier this year that "the

lead ship of the Ohio replacement class in 2019 will cost \$13 billion," with each successive ship coming in at about the \$6-7-billion range, bringing the cost of the 12-ship replacement to about \$99 billion. "That may leave scant room in the Navy's stretched shipbuilding budgets to afford other vessels [on its] wish list," the CBO stated. That \$6-7-billion price tag comes to about half of the Navy's annual \$15-billion shipbuilding budget, which means that during the 15-year period (Fiscal 2019-33) when the Navy plans on building these ships, its ability to build other vessels would be severely restricted.

Under the Navy's 2011 30-year Shipbuilding Plan, the service says it requires 48 attack submarines and four SSGNs "to sustain our capabilities in these areas." Still, the service's current plan puts it on course to purchase 44 attack submarines through 2040, which would not reach its desired number. According to CBO estimates, the number of attack submarines would sink to a low of 39 in 2030 before rising to 45 in the last five years of the plan. The number is expected to drop so dramatically due to the retirement of the Los Angeles-class submarines, while the Virginia class will not be built fast enough to replace them.

Craig Hooper, a San Francisco-based national security expert who has written widely on naval and Pacific Basin security issues, is skeptical about the Navy's submarine plans. "With no viable means for our submarine builders to compete and drive down costs," he says, "I expect the SSBN(X) build schedule to slide right, go over-budget and ultimately shrink to maybe a 10-boat buy." Given the current budget situation, and the fact that instead of growing, budgets might in fact contract slightly, Hooper says that the Navy should start looking for ways to allow Virginia-class subs to serve different roles. "It would be a very interesting world if Virginia-class SSNs had the flexibility to serve in either the conventional SSN, SSGN or strategic SSBN roles. That would be a massive force multiplier and a boon for the bottom line," he says.

"[The] strategic deterrent is also changing," Hooper adds. "As conventional weapons get increasingly accurate, America might be able to really reduce the number of submarines slated to serve in the traditional nuclear deterrent role."

Last Of Foxtrot Submarines To Retire

The submarine is the last of the Foxtrot class of submarines that were built in the erstwhile USSR
Tehelka.com, 6 December 2010

The Foxtrot class of submarines, the first to have joined the Indian naval fleet, will bid adieu to the elite services after 36 years in service.

The last of the Indian Navy's Soviet-built Foxtrot submarines, with which the navy's submarine arm came into being, will retire on December 9, bringing an era to an end. With the decommissioning, the already dwindling submarine strength of the force would dip further.

INS Vagli, the oldest operational submarine of the Indian Navy, undertook its last dive on July 21 and is presently berthed at Visakhapatnam. The submarine will be decommissioned on Thursday, a day after the Indian Navy marks its Submarine Day.

The submarine, presently commanded by Commander AA Kapre, is the last of the Foxtrot class of submarines that were built in the erstwhile USSR. It was commissioned on August 10, 1974, at Riga and has since operated extensively off both coasts of the country.

The Russian Navy had retired its last Foxtrots between 1995 and 2001. Earlier this year, the Indian Navy had retired INS Vela, commissioned in 1973.

The Foxtrot class was the NATO's reporting name of a class of diesel-electric patrol submarines that were built in the Soviet Union. The first of the submarines was launched in 1957 and commissioned in 1958. By the time the last submarine was completed in 1983, the Foxtrot class had become obsolete.

The latest development is an eye-opener for the navy, which has not inducted a submarine in the last 17 years.

According to Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), the navy's submarine fleet is ageing and by 2012, 63 per cent of the vessels would have completed their operational life. Due to "serious slippages" in the induction plan, the CAG report said: "In what could seriously impact on the operational preparedness of the Indian Navy, more than 50 per cent of its submarines have completed 75 per cent of their operational life and some have already outlived their maximum service life."

If the construction plan for new submarines is not expedited, the CAG said that "63 per cent of the existing fleet would complete their prescribed life by 2012 when the first new submarine will be inducted as per the present schedule." The Indian Navy, operating just 16 submarines, has a submarine strength much below the envisaged force level and a large number of submarines in the existing fleet will become due for decommissioning in the immediate future, leading to a sharp decline in the fleet.

The construction of six Scorpene submarines at Mazagon Dock Ltd has been suffering chronic delays due to technology transfer issues. The indigenously-built nuclear submarine INS Arihant, which was launched in mid-2009, will be commissioned by 2012 end.

Taking note of the situation, the government has sanctioned the construction of six more conventional submarines, but the first of the submarines would be ready for commissioning only by 2015.

Dodd High On Future For EB, Submarine Base

Departing senator, unions salute each other in final visit

By Jennifer McDermott, The Day, 7 December 2010

Groton - In his last planned stop in southeastern Connecticut as a U.S. senator, Chris Dodd spoke optimistically on Monday about the future of the submarine industry and the base.

Plans to build two submarines a year instead of one are on track for 2011, which will protect and possibly increase employment at Electric Boat, Dodd said. And the Naval Submarine Base is in a "far stronger position" because of investments in infrastructure there, should the Pentagon try to close it again, he added.

The synergy between the two facilities, Dodd said, is "absolutely integral" to the vitality of both.

"I always said that if we lost the base or we lost a major contract and stopped building submarines, than all of this would disappear," Dodd said Monday after he met with leaders and members of the unions for Electric Boat employees at the Boilermakers Union Hall. "So it was always keeping both alive. And for 37 years, I spent a substantial amount of my time keeping both alive. Now it's up to Dick Blumenthal, Joe Lieberman and Joe Courtney."

Dodd, D-Conn., is leaving office as the longest-serving senator from Connecticut in history. Attorney General Richard Blumenthal will replace him in the Senate.

Dodd said he wanted to thank the EB unions since their support was key to helping him win his first race for Congress in 1974 and the others that came after it. He also visited the base and toured the USS Annapolis (SSN 760) Monday.

Kenneth DelaCruz, president of the Metal Trades Council, said if Dodd had run again, "We would have backed him 110 percent."

"Nothing, nothing, nothing I can say can describe all that this man has done, not only for labor but for working people and for people struggling at the bottom of this economic ladder," DelaCruz said.

Dodd's connection with the shipyard started in childhood when his father took him to the christening for the country's first nuclear submarine, USS Nautilus (SSN 571), in 1954. His mother was the ship sponsor for the USS Henry L. Stimson (SSBN 655), a ballistic-missile submarine built by Electric Boat and commissioned in 1966.

In 1980, then a congressman and candidate for the Senate, Dodd helped end a seven-month strike by the draftsmen at EB. In the early 1990s, he lobbied his colleagues in the Senate to support the construction of the Seawolf class of submarines, a program the administration planned to terminate. EB built three of the submarines.

It is "always a battle" to keep other members of Congress from cutting the budget for submarine construction, Dodd said, since the Submarine Force is the "silent service in more than just one sense."

"I say this respectfully to the people who choose this branch of the Navy: This is not the cocktail circuit crowd," Dodd said. "They don't hang around at the Pentagon and curry favor politically. They are a silent service. And they're the most talented but they're not the types to necessarily advocate as well."

And there is always a temptation in Congress to trim the budget of expensive technologies, he added.

Congress authorized the Defense Base Closure and Realignment process in 1988, 1991, 1993, 1995 and 2005. Dodd fought to keep the base open and then to fund improvements there to make the facility what he calls "BRAC proof."

He said Monday that there will be another BRAC, and the state can now convincingly "make the case of the value of that base being there."

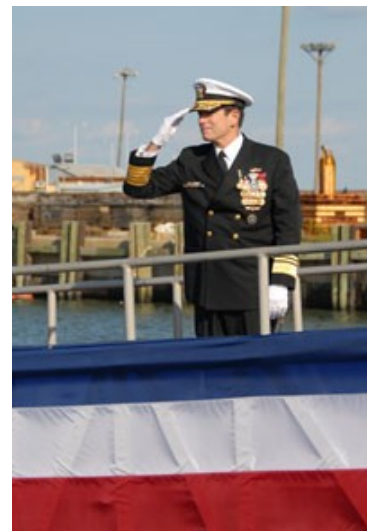
Defense issues in the region, Dodd said, have occupied more of his time than anything else. He has secured billions for the state's defense industry. He asked the union leaders to keep him up to date on the happenings at the shipyard, and joked that he thinks he will like "being in the bleachers" and "complaining about the people in politics."

Many of the union leaders said they were sad to see Dodd go, given their common interests and the senator's sway because of his seniority. Michael Smith, president of the Machinists Union, said Dodd has done a "hell of a job" fighting for the submarine contracts that have kept EB in business.

From this page: <http://www.subforce.navy.mil/>

Commander, Submarine Forces Changes Leadership

NORFOLK, Va. (November 5, 2010) – Vice Adm. John J. Donnelly renders honors as he exits USS Montpelier (SSN 765). He is piped ashore after being relieved as Commander, Submarine Force Atlantic/Allied Submarine Command by Vice Adm. John M. Richardson during a change of command ceremony held November 5, 2001 at Naval Station Norfolk. Donnelly also announced his retirement from active duty during the ceremony held on-board the Los Angeles-class attack submarine USS Montpelier (SSN 765). (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Todd A. Schaffer / Released)



Commander, Submarine Forces Changes Leadership

By Kevin Copeland, Commander, Submarine Force Atlantic Public Affairs

NORFOLK, Va. – Vice Adm. John M. Richardson relieved Vice Adm. John J. Donnelly today as Commander, Submarine Forces/Submarine Force Atlantic/Allied Submarine Command during a change of command and retirement ceremony held onboard the Los Angeles-class attack submarine USS Montpelier (SSN 765) at Naval Station Norfolk.

During the ceremony, Donnelly, a second-generation submarine officer from Groton, Conn., retired from active duty after 35 years of Naval service as a commissioned officer.

As Commander, Submarine Forces since February 2007, Donnelly led the Undersea Enterprise and was responsible for establishing force wide strategies on core submarine issues such as force structure, budgetary requirements, and manpower. As Commander, Submarine Force Atlantic he was responsible for all Atlantic-based U.S. submarines, their crews, and supporting shore activities. As Commander, Allied Submarine Command, he was the principal advisor to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on submarine plans, operations, and doctrine. Addressing an audience of more than 700 attendees, Donnelly reflected on his tenure as the submarine force commander, while thanking his career mentors, peers, staff leaders, and the many people who supported the mission of the submarine force.

“When I took command as COMSUBFOR, I established three focus areas to align our efforts and improve our submarine force,” said Donnelly. “They were titled operational excellence, the professional development of our people, and the modernization and recapitalization of our force. We’ve made significant progress in each area. I’ll probably best be known as the guy who introduced women to the submarine force and banned smoking but my folks have accomplished much more than that in the past four years.

“I’m not going to bore you with a long summary of all those accomplishments. Instead, I’d like to speak about the submarine force today and how proud I am of the men and women who work so hard to make it the finest in the world. Our ballistic-missile submarine (SSBN) force command structure is better aligned today and that unity of command has brought more leadership focus on the all-important strategic deterrent mission. We split up Submarine Group Trident and reconstituted separate Submarine Group Commands, with Commander, Submarine Group 9 in Bangor, Wash., and Commander, Submarine Group 10 in Kings Bay, Ga. Each is led by a remarkably talented and energetic flag officer.

“We then realigned each of the operational SSBNs into Submarine Squadron 17 in Bangor and Squadron 20 in Kings Bay. Those two squadron commanders and their staffs are singularly focused on ensuring operational excellence in the strategic deterrent mission. The mission those crews perform is every bit as important today as it ever was, so I’m proud of the level of readiness of our SSBNs.”

Donnelly then explained the concept of the inception of the cruise-missile submarines (SSGN). “When I was a young captain working in the Pentagon, I remember briefing the concept of the SSGN and the incredible capability that could be packaged onto that large platform. These are the four converted SSBNs that were no longer needed for the strategic deterrent mission. The concept quickly gained traction and rather than scrapping those fine submarines at their mid-life point, the nation spent roughly a billion dollars on each one for refueling, overhaul and conversion. All four have become operational during my tenure, and our SSGN crews are providing unprecedented cruise missile strike and special operations capabilities to the combatant commanders. This year all four of the submarines – USS Ohio, USS Florida, USS Michigan and USS Georgia – were all fully deployed simultaneously. (continued next page)

“There are thousands of people responsible for bringing our SSGNs to fruition including the design engineers at Electric Boat, Program Managers at Naval Sea Systems Command, artisans at our Naval Shipyards who did the conversion, and ultimately the well-trained SSGN crew members who take the ships to sea and perform so marvelously.”

However, he emphasized that the backbone of the submarine force still remains the fast-attack submarines (SSN).

“The services for our SSNs are in great demand,” said Donnelly. “Some pundits view these submarines as cold war relics but I would say nothing is further from the truth when it comes to warfighting, stealth, endurance, persistence, and mobility. Our SSNs go where others can’t, and because of that our force is only meeting about half of the combatant commanders’ demand for them.

“Our SSNs observe potential adversaries while they train and operate. Because our presence is not known, we see them as they really are. We gather the truth about their readiness and vulnerabilities that is so important for our combatant commanders to understand. Wherever the action is, our SSNs are already in position capable of immediate response if necessary.

“When I started my assignment as commander of the submarine force, we had just commissioned USS Texas which was our second Virginia-class SSN. Today, we have seven commissioned and the next ship in the class, California, will be christened tomorrow. Four more are under construction and this year we will double the construction rate to two per year. Earlier this year, USS Virginia completed the first six-month deployment for the class supporting both the Central Command and European Command while operating from the equator to the Arctic.”

Adm. Jonathan W. Greenert, Vice Chief of Naval Operations, was the featured speaker.

“Vice Adm. Donnelly, you took leadership skills to new heights as COMSUBFOR,” said Greenert. “Your legacy is that you have made every command better, and led the submarine force into the future. You have been a leader who knew how to take care of Sailors, so take great pride in your accomplishments. You are a brilliant officer who has served with distinction and honor. Your legacy will endure long after retirement.”

Greenert then presented Donnelly with the Distinguished Service Medal award recognizing him for his exceptional meritorious service to the government of the United States while superbly directing every aspect of submarine force operations and for his significant lasting contributions to the nation’s defense.

Greenert also presented Mrs. Mimi Donnelly the Department of the Navy Distinguished Public Service Award recognizing her for her astute leadership and distinctive legacy while serving as the President and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Dolphin Scholarship Foundation and as a Submarine Officer Spouse Association senior advisor, and for her boundless energy as spouse of the Submarine Force Commander.

Donnelly is a distinguished 1975 graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy with a degree in physics. In addition, he received a Master of Science degree in engineering acoustics from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif., and attended Massachusetts Institute of Technology Seminar XXI on Foreign Politics, International Relations, and National Interest.

His sea assignments have been as division officer on the Sturgeon-class submarine USS Tautog (SSN 639), home ported in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; as engineer officer on the Los Angeles-class attack submarine USS Memphis (SSN 691), home ported in Groton, Conn.; as executive officer on the ballistic submarine USS Simon Bolivar (SSBN 641), home ported in Charleston, S.C.; as commanding officer on the Los Angeles-class attack submarine USS Hyman G. Rickover (SSN 709), home ported in Norfolk, Va.; and as commanding officer on the submarine tender USS McKee (AS 41), home ported in San Diego, Calif.

His shore assignments have included the U.S. Naval Academy as a physics instructor; assistant for Undersea Warfare and Strategic Issues for the Chief of Naval Operations executive panel staff in Washington, D.C.; assistant for Plans and Liaison for the Deputy Chief Of Naval Operations for Submarine Warfare Requirements in Washington, D.C.; and Chief of Staff for Commander, U.S. Seventh Fleet in Yokosuka, Japan. While on the staff at Seventh Fleet he was selected for flag rank.

Donnelly’s assignments following his selection to admiral include Director of Combat Plans and Deputy Director for Operations and Logistics at U.S. Strategic Command in Offutt, Neb.; Commander, Submarine Group Seven in Yokosuka, Japan; and Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff, U.S. Pacific Fleet in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

“Now if this were only a change of command ceremony, I’d read my orders and take my seat,” said Donnelly. “But this ceremony is also my retirement, and if you’ll bear with me for a few more minutes, I’d like to reflect briefly on the part of my career before I came to COMSUBFOR. I never expected to stay in the Navy this long or progress this far in my naval career. It’s been a tremendous honor to wear this uniform and serve alongside some of the finest people this nation produces.

(continued next page)

"Every naval leader I've met says that our people are our greatest resource. It is absolutely true. I joined the submarine force because of the exceptional people and that is why I've stayed. I've learned from some inspirational leaders. Several are here today. Along the way, I've made some great life-long friends. It began with my Naval Academy classmates and has extended to shipmates from six afloat commands and staff members from my shore assignments.

"It's been an incredible 35-year adventure. I've completely circumnavigated the globe. I've visited 38 countries. I've been fortunate to serve in command four times – that's exactly three more than my initial stretch goal. I'll never forget the feeling I had as CO standing atop the sail of my submarine heading for deep water so we could dive and disappear. Only a submariner can fully appreciate the close camaraderie of a submarine crew or tolerate the practical jokes we played on each other. I'll always remember the joy of watching subordinates achieve successes they never thought possible. I smile every time I see a homecoming and recall the joy of reuniting with family after a six-month deployment."

Donnelly stated that his journey would have been empty without a family to share it with.

"But none of those adventures would have been very meaningful had I not been able to share them with my family. The real secret of my success has been my loving wife, Mimi. We were married just before I started nuclear prototype training. There was no honeymoon – a fact she reminds me of often. That was the first of our 21 moves together. Sweetheart, I could not have done this without and I wouldn't have wanted to. Thank you!

"We've been blessed with three wonderful children who make us proud beyond words. All are in the family business. Michael and his wife Megan are both P-3 Orion pilots and stationed in Corpus Christi, Texas as flight instructors. Christopher and his new bride Renee are in the process of moving from Groton, Conn. to Hawaii where he will be the Supply Officer on the guided-missile cruiser USS Port Royal. Sara is stationed in Lemoore, Calif., with Fighter Attack Squadron 41 where she flies in the back seat of the F/A-18 Super Hornet. Kids, you have each made a lot of sacrifices for me as we've pulled you out of schools and separated you from childhood friends but you turned out OK. I am truly a lucky man!

"My mom is here today, as are my two brothers with their families. My dad was a diesel boat submarine officer, and he retired from the Navy the same day I took the oath of office on induction day at the Naval Academy. Together we've had an unbroken string of Donnelly naval service since he began in the Yale ROTC program in 1947. I'm wearing his sword as I do for all such ceremonies. He's no longer with us but I'm sure he's here in spirit today. He is the reason I wanted to join the Navy and become a submarine officer."

While losing the leader of the submarine force to retirement, Greenert is confident the force's newest leader is ready for the challenge.

"There is no better man to relieve Vice Adm. Donnelly than Vice Adm. Richardson," said Greenert. "He has impeccable submarine credentials, and has demonstrated the highest courage and skill. He is easy to trust, and possesses a strong joint experience. He and his wife are exactly the right couple to maintain momentum of the force, and I am confident the legacy of success in the submarine force will continue."

Before assuming command of the submarine forces, Richardson's last assignment was in the U.S. Sixth Fleet area of responsibility where he served as the Chief of Staff, Director, U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa, Operations and Intelligence; Deputy Commander, U.S. Sixth Fleet; Commander Submarines, Allied Naval Forces South; and Commander, Submarine Group Eight.

"As I was preparing these remarks and trying different approaches, it became clear that the only thing I really wanted to express was how deeply honored and grateful my wife, Dana, and I for this opportunity," said Richardson. "This is a gift - to be allowed to continue to serve our Navy and submarine force. It would have never happened without the help of a lot of friends and mentors. Any success we've had so far, and will have, is because of your support and guidance. I express our thanks, because many of you have taken the time to travel long distances to join us here today.

"Vice Adm. Donnelly and Mimi, we would like to thank you both very much. You both had a magnificent tour as COMSUBFOR, and I want to add our personal thanks for a very gracious and thorough turnover. You both ensured our return from Italy went as smooth as possible and that we learned as much as possible about the force as you have over the past three years.

"The submarine force is in super shape, manned by a team that has no match. There are plenty of challenges ahead, and we're anxious to get started."

A young man learns what's most important in life from the guy next door.

It had been some time since Jack had seen the old man. College, girls, career, and life itself got in the way. In fact, Jack moved clear across the country in pursuit of his dreams. There, in the rush of his busy life, Jack had little time to think about the past and often no time to spend with his wife and son. He was working on his future, and nothing could stop him.

Over the phone, his mother told him, "Mr. Belser died last night. The funeral is Wednesday."

Memories flashed through his mind like an old newsreel as he sat quietly remembering his childhood days. "Jack, did you hear me?"

"Oh, sorry, Mom. Yes, I heard you. It's been so long since I thought of him. I'm sorry, but I honestly thought he died years ago," Jack said.

"Well, he didn't forget you. Every time I saw him he'd ask how you were doing. He'd reminisce about the many days you spent over 'his side of the fence' as he put it," Mom told him.

"I loved that old house he lived in," Jack said. "You know, Jack, after your father died, Mr. Belser stepped in to make sure you had a man's influence in your life," she said. "He's the one who taught me carpentry," he said. "I wouldn't be in this business if it weren't for him.

He spent a lot of time teaching me things he thought were important...Mom, I'll be there for the funeral," Jack said..

As busy as he was, he kept his word. Jack caught the next flight to his hometown. Mr. Belser's funeral was small and uneventful. He had no children of his own, and most of his relatives had passed away.

The night before he had to return home, Jack and his Mom stopped by to see the old house next door one more time. Standing in the doorway, Jack paused for a moment. It was like crossing over into another dimension, a leap through space and time. The house was exactly as he remembered. Every step held memories. Every picture, every piece of furniture....Jack stopped suddenly.

"What's wrong, Jack?" his Mom asked..

"The box is gone," he said.

"What box?" Mom asked.

"There was a small gold box that he kept locked on top of his desk. I must have asked him a thousand times what was inside.. All he'd ever tell me was 'the thing I value most,'" Jack said. It was gone. Everything about the house was exactly how Jack remembered it, except for the box. He figured someone from the Belser family had taken it. "Now I'll never know what was so valuable to him," Jack said. "I better get some sleep. I have an early flight home, Mom."

It had been about two weeks since Mr. Belser died. Returning home from work one day Jack discovered a note in his mailbox. "Signature required on a package. No one at home. Please stop by the main post office within the next three days," the note read.

Early the next day Jack retrieved the package. The small box was old and looked like it had been mailed a hundred years ago. The handwriting was difficult to read, but the return address caught his attention. "Mr. Harold Belser" it read. Jack took the box out to his car and ripped open the package. There inside was the gold box and an envelope. Jack's hands shook as he read the note inside.

"Upon my death, please forward this box and its contents to Jack Bennett. It's the thing I valued most in my life." A small key was taped to the letter. His heart racing, as tears filling his eyes, Jack carefully unlocked the box. There inside he found a beautiful gold pocket watch. Running his fingers slowly over the finely etched casing, he unlatched the cover. Inside he found these words engraved:

"Jack, Thanks for your time! - Harold Belser."

"The thing he valued most was...my time"

Jack held the watch for a few minutes, then called his office and cleared his appointments for the next two days. "Why?" Janet, his assistant asked. "I need some time to spend with my son," he said.

"Oh, by the way, Janet, thanks for your time!"

If you know any woman currently undergoing chemotherapy, please pass the word to her that there is a cleaning service that provides FREE housecleaning - once per month for 4 months while she is in treatment. All she has to do is sign up and have her doctor fax a note confirming the treatment. **Cleaning for a Reason** will have a participating maid service in her zip code area arrange for the service. This organization serves the entire USA and currently has 547 partners to help these women. It's our job to pass the word and let them know that there are people out there that care. Be a blessing to someone and pass this information along.

<http://www.cleaningforareason.org/> You may not know someone going through chemo, but someone on your e-mail list might. Please forward!

Fun Stuff

MY TEEN-AGE son got a job bagging groceries at the Fort McCoy Commissary, where he worked for tips only. Hoping to improve his tipping percentage, he often engaged customers in conversation.

One man was telling my son that he had had his ID card since World War II.

"No-o!" my son said. "You don't look a day over Vietnam!" He got a good tip.

SFC Linda C. Cobb

No Wonder English is So Hard to Learn

We polish the Polish furniture.
He could lead if he would get the lead out.
A farm can produce produce.
The dump was so full it had to refuse refuse.
The soldier decided to desert in the desert.
The present is a good time to present the present.
At the Army base, a bass was painted on the head of a bass drum.
The dove dove into the bushes.
I did not object to the object.
The insurance for the invalid was invalid.
The bandage was wound around the wound.
There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row.
They were too close to the door to close it.
The buck does funny things when the does are present.
They sent a sewer down to stitch the tear in the sewer line.
To help with planting, the farmer taught his sow to sow.
The wind was too strong to wind the sail.
After a number of Novocain injections, my jaw got number.
I shed a tear when I saw the tear in my clothes.
I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.
How can I intimate this to my most intimate friend?
I spent last evening evening out a pile of dirt

If at anytime you need more of the above humor, there is more almost every day posted on BBS. Just go to Internet address and enjoy: http://www.messdeck.com/forum/forum_topics.asp?FID=9

That's all folks
until next year if I am
reappointed as editor.....

What is Celibacy?

Celibacy can be a choice in life, or a condition imposed by circumstances.

While attending a Marriage Weekend, Frank and his wife Ann listened to the instructor declare, "It is essential that husbands and wives know the things that are important to each other."

He then addressed the men. "Can you name and describe your wife's favorite flower?"

Frank leaned over, touched Ann's arm gently, and whispered, "Gold Medal-All-Purpose, isn't it?"

And thus began Frank's life of celibacy.

A RETIRED Navy admiral, my father began a second career working in a bank. One morning, while he prepared his desk for the day, he was approached by a young officer from the nearby Naval base. "Sorry, but this department isn't open yet," Dad said.

"But it's nine o'clock!" protested the officer.

My father didn't look at his watch. Instead, he surveyed his customer's uniform. "Ensign," he snapped, "I'll decide when it's nine o'clock!"

MY FATHER, a Marine, was stationed in Guantanamo Bay. His Navy co-workers noticed during one particularly rainy week that the rain seemed to stop whenever Dad, in full uniform, stepped out of his car to enter a building. My father explained the phenomenon to the perplexed Naval officers by saying, "God wouldn't let it rain on a Marine."

A few days later Dad exited his car clad in civilian clothes, and he got soaked to the bone.

His Navy buddies, ready to tease him, were squelched by his explanation:

"God didn't recognize me out of uniform."

