

BLOW NEGATIVE

The Official Newsletter of South Lake Florida Subvets



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

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C. Martinez, Ed. Lashbrook, T. Blevins, S. Goodwin, R. Mock, S. Newman

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VA Update

The latest issue of the annual Agent Orange Newsletter is now available online at <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/publications/agent-orange/agent-orange-2025/index.asp>. This newsletter provides information for Vietnam Veterans and their families.

In this issue, read about:

- Update your mailing address with VA
- Join the Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water Notification Database
- How to File a VA Disability Claim
- Vietnam Veterans - Exposures, Health Issues, and Benefits
- Managing Chronic Pain
- The Herbicide Agent Blue
- Housing and Care Resources for Senior Veterans
- Veterans who served at Edgewood Arsenal Base between 1955-1975



USS Flier (SS-250)

On 2 August 1944 Flier set out to conduct her second war patrol. Her area was east of Saigon, French Indo-China, and she was to pass through Lombok Strait, Makassar Strait, the Celebes Sea, Sibutu Passage and the Sulu Sea in proceeding to her station. By evening of 13 August she had come through the Sulu Sea and was transiting Balabac Strait, south of Palawan, P.I. when, at 2200, disaster struck. Suddenly a terrific explosion, estimated to have been forward on the starboard side, shook the ship.



There was a strong smell of fuel, a terrific venting of air through the conning tower hatch, and the sounds of flooding and of screaming men below. Lt. Liddell, the Executive Officer, had stepped below the hatch to speak to Cdr. Crowley; he was blown through it, and men poured out behind him. Within 20 or 30 seconds FLIER sank while still making 15 knots through the water. The Commanding Officer's opinion is that the

explosion was caused by contact with a mine.

The possibility of falling into Japanese hands was considered by Cdr. Crowley and he decided to strike out for the coral reefs to the northwestward. The sky was overcast, and it was difficult to always swim toward the objective and occasional flashes of lightning helped to keep the swimmers oriented. After moonrise, at 0300 on 14 August, the ability to maintain proper direction became easier.

At 1330 five of the group, Cdr. Crowley, Lt. Liddell, Ens. Jacobson, Howell and Baumgart reached a floating palm tree and used this to aid themselves in remaining afloat and pushing toward land.

This group came ashore on Mantangule Island at 1530 and were met there by



Russo, who had swum the entire distance. At 1700 Tremaine was found on the eastern end of the island by Lt. Liddell. A lean-to was constructed and the night was spent on the beach.

The survivors from FLIER embarked in two small boats, and, having made their way safely to a U.S. Army Coast Watcher Unit on Palawan. They were picked up by USS REDFIN early in the morning of 31 August.

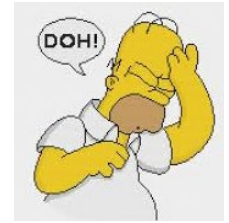


Do you have a story or article you would share? Perhaps a deployment story? Something from your past, perhaps boot camp or submarine school? Maybe a liberty event that can be told to wives? Email me the details.

blevinst@gmail.com

This newsletter is published and edited by Timothy D Blevins, MM1(SS).

Membership dues are due.



Five Famous Laws

1. Dunning-Kruger Law: Stupid people think they are smart. Smart people doubt themselves. The less you know, the more confident you are.¹
2. Parkinson's Law: Work expands to fill the time available, so longer deadlines often lead to slower completion.²
3. Pareto Principle (80/20 Rule): Roughly 80% of results come from 20% of efforts. Focus on the few things that matter.³
4. Hanlon's Razor: People aren't trying to hurt you, they're just being careless. That person who didn't text you back? They forgot, they're not ignoring you.⁴
5. Peter's Law (the Peter Principle): Good workers become bad managers. Being great at something doesn't mean you'll be great at the next level.⁵



All references are attributed to Wikipedia.

¹ The Dunning-Kruger effect is sometimes misunderstood as claiming that people with low intelligence are generally overconfident, instead of describing the specific overconfidence of people unskilled at particular areas.

² number of workers within public administration, bureaucracy, or officialdom tends to grow, regardless of the amount of work to be done, attributable mainly to two factors: officials want subordinates, not rivals, and officials make work for each other.

³ In 1906, Vilfredo Pareto showed that approximately 80% of the land in the Kingdom of Italy was owned by 20% of the population.

⁴ The principle holds: "Never attribute to malice that which is adequately explained by stupidity."

⁵ Holds that people in a hierarchy tend to rise to "a level of respective incompetence": employees are promoted based on their success in previous jobs until they reach a level at which they are no longer competent, as skills in one job do not necessarily translate to another.

Honoring a Submarine Legacy: A Proud Tradition Passed Down



Frank was filled with pride as his son, Jerry, had just completed his graduation from enlisted submarine school. Frank himself had dedicated eight years to the submarine force, accumulating many cherished memories during his service. He was always eager to share a sea story with anyone who expressed interest, recounting his experiences in the submarine force.

Throughout Jerry's years in elementary and high school, Frank was frequently invited to speak to student classes or assemblies, sharing insights into his time on submarines. Now, with Jerry embarking on his own journey in the submarine service, he would be able to build his own collection of stories, shaped by his personal experiences.

Reunions and Lasting Connections

Frank made it a point to attend every boat reunion, where he would reconnect with crew members he had served alongside. At these gatherings, he also met submariners from different generations, both younger and older. Their conversations would spark old memories, with comments from others often helping Frank recall details he had forgotten. Every interaction with a fellow shipmate presented an opportunity to keep the spirit of his service alive.

Building a Lasting Legacy

The experiences that have shaped Frank's character are now influencing Jerry as he forms his own outlook on life. Frank sometimes wondered if he had done everything the right way or if the conversations at reunions added another thread to the fabric of his submarine service. Such soul-searching questions are ones that every member of the USSVI contemplates at some point.

With this in mind, Frank decided to explore investing in the USSVCF Legacy Fund. He understood that a legacy is not just about financial contributions; it is also about passing down core values, family traditions, and important life lessons. By compiling a family history, writing a memoir, or sharing personal stories, individuals can help future generations understand their heritage and connect with their identity. Participation in the USSVCF Legacy Fund ensures that the experiences of members like Frank are preserved for years to come.

The USSVCF represents veterans of the United States Submarine Force from WWII to the present. For more than 75 years, USSVCF has focused on the support, health, and welfare of our Submarine Veterans and their families.

How to Support the Legacy Fund

Take a moment to speak with your Base Ambassador about the Legacy Fund. You may choose to make a one-time donation or opt for smaller, monthly contributions—such as \$25.00 to \$100.00. You can also defer taxes and be guaranteed a lifetime income. Regardless of the amount, your donation will help preserve everything embodied in The Creed and ensure these stories and values endure for future generations. Contact your base ambassador for more information.

Submarine Legacy Action Checklist

- Take time to share stories and experiences with interested individuals.
- Recall times when you volunteered to speak at local schools or assemblies about submarine service.
- Remember the boat reunions where you reconnect with former crew members and preserve memories.
- You have shared your family history or memoir to pass down traditions and values.
- Decide on an option for donating to the USSVCF Legacy Fund (one-time or monthly).
- Consult your Base Ambassador for more information about the Legacy Fund.
- Focus on passing down core values, family traditions, and life lessons.
- Encourage other USSVI members to participate in the Legacy Fund.

ETERNAL PATROL



February 1942 between 02/04 and 02/07 (date unknown). **USS Shark (SS-174)**. Shark was ordered to take station as part of a submarine group reconnoitering a major enemy move south through Molukka passage. On 29 January, because another move toward Ambon was indicated, Shark was ordered to cover the passage to the east of Lifoematola. The next day this area was enlarged to include the Bangka Passage. On 2 February *Shark* reported to Surabaya that she had been charged 10 miles off Tifore Island. On 7 March, Shark was presumed lost. 54 crew lost.



February 1945 – **USS Barbel (SS-316)**. On 3 February, *Barbel* was sent a message reporting that she had been attacked three times by enemy aircraft dropping depth charges and would transmit further information on the following night. *Barbel* was never heard from again. 81 crew lost.



13 February 1943 – **USS Amberjack (SS-219)**. On 13 February *Amberjack* was assigned to the entire Rabaul-Buka-Shortland Sea area and told to hunt for traffic. The last radio transmission received from *Amberjack* was made on 14 February 1943. She related having been forced down the night before by two destroyers, and that she had recovered from the water and taken prisoner an enemy aviator on 13 February. She was ordered north of Latitude 6°-30'S and told to keep hunting for Rabaul traffic. No reply was received, and she was reported as presumed lost on 22 March 1943. 60 crew lost.



7 February 1944 -**USS Trout (SS-202)**. A Japanese troop ship was attacked by a submarine on 29 February 1944 in the patrol area assigned to *Trout*. The Japanese ship *Asashimo* detected the submarine and dropped 19 depth charges. Oil and debris came to the surface and the destroyer dropped a final depth charge on that spot, at the position [22°40'N 131°45'E](#), East China Sea. 81 crew lost.



26 February 1944 – **USS Grayback (SS-208)**. On 26 February 1944, USS Grayback (SS-208) suffered damage when land-based Japanese naval aircraft attacked her in the East China Sea. According to Japanese reports the submarine "exploded and sank immediately," but antisubmarine craft were called in to depth-charge the area, clearly marked by a trail of air bubbles, until at last a heavy oil slick swelled to the surface. Grayback had ended her last patrol. 60 crew lost.



2026 Meeting dates

Membership meetings are held at Minneola Town Hall, convening at 1800hrs.

February 19

March 19

April 16

May 21

June 18

July 16

August 20

September 17

October 15

November 19

December - Annual Social Event



Board of Directors Meetings at KeKe's following breakfast

March 9

May 13

July 8

September 9

November 11



The Plan

Build and maintain a nuclear fast-attack presence on the western coast of Australia. It is a DOD initiative meant to further deter Soviet influence in the Indian Ocean while strengthening the presence of allied defenses which would be needed if there was foreign aggression in the arena (China?).

The Players

Australia would seem to be the primary player however the plan does not gain traction without the United States supplying hard metal and technology. With the US supplying four Virginia-class SSNs, Australian jump starts its nuclear capabilities. The United States plans on building three to five new Virginia-class submarines to replace those transferred to Australia. The UK will participate by eventually assisting in the design of an Australian class submarine.

Current Status

The Navy has been procuring Virginia (SSN-774) class nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs) since FY1998, and a total of 41 have been procured through FY2025. From FY2011 through FY2024, they were procured at a rate of two per year. A single Virginia-class boat was procured in FY2025. When procured at a rate of two per year, they have an estimated procurement cost under the Navy's FY2026 budget submission of about \$5.0 billion each. The Navy's FY2026 budget submission requested the procurement of two more Virginia-class boats.

Although they have been procured since FY2011 at a rate of generally two boats per year, the actual Virginia-class production rate has never reached 2.0 boats per year, and since 2022 has been limited to about 1.1 to 1.2 boats per year, resulting in a growing backlog of boats procured but not yet built.

In September 2021, the Australian, UK, and U.S. governments announced a significant new security partnership, called AUKUS. The AUKUS partnership has two main areas of effort, or pillars. Pillar 1 is a project to (1) rotationally deploy four U.S. SSNs and one UK SSN out of a port in Western Australia; (2) more significantly, sell three to five Virginia-class SSNs to Australia and subsequently build three to five replacement SSNs for the U.S. Navy; and (3) have the United States and UK provide assistance to Australia for an Australian effort to build additional three to five SSNs of a new UK-Australian SSN design

