

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."

Volume 5 Issue 3

www.southlakesubvets.org

March 2026



Board of Directors

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

Elected Officers

Commander: Carlos Martinez
Vice- Commander: Ed Lashbrook
Secretary: Timothy Blevins
Treasurer: Sam Goodwin

Storekeeper: Bill Bish

1 February 1902

USS Plunger (SS-2)¹, the lead ship of the Plunger-class submarine, launches. She was commissioned Sept. 19, 1903, at the Holland Company yard at New Suffolk, Long Island, N.Y.

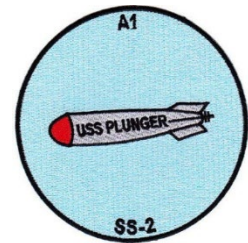
Plunger was originally laid down on 21 May 1901 at Elizabethport, New Jersey, at Lewis Nixon's Crescent Shipyard. Arthur Leopold Busch supervised the construction of the A-Class submarines built there. The prototype Fulton experimental craft was laid down at Isaac Rice's Electric Boat Company prior to these first A-class submarines.

Ensign Chester W. Nimitz is the submarines' final commander when Plunger is decommissioned Nov. 6, 1909, the Charleston Navy Shipyard.

Photo: Plunger on her way out of the New York Navy Yard, sometime before October 1909. At that time, she was assigned to the First Submarine Flotilla, based at the New York Navy Yard, joining sister-ships Porpoise (SS-7), and Shark (SS-8).



Among the ships in the background is the then decommissioned battleship Massachusetts (BB-2). The Massachusetts had her cage mast installed sometime in 1909.



¹ <http://www.navsource.org/archives/08/08002.htm>

USS Parche (SSN-683)

USS Parche (SSN-683), a Sturgeon-class submarine, was the second ship of the United States Navy to be named for the parche, a small, coral reef butterfly fish. Parche was launched on 13 January 1973, sponsored by Natalie Beshany, the wife of Vice Admiral Philip A. Beshany, and commissioned on 17 August 1974.

Parche served as a unit of the United States Atlantic Fleet Submarine Force from 1974 until 1976, before transferring to the United States Pacific Fleet in October 1976. Once arriving at her new home port at Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo, California, Parche received ocean engineering modifications. Parche deployed on a shakedown training cruise in August and September 1978.

In the book *Blind Man's Bluff*, it is claimed that Parche successfully tapped into Soviet underwater military communication cables in the Sea of Okhotsk as part of Operation Ivy Bells.

During her career, Parche was ostensibly involved in recovering Soviet missile fragments from the seabed following test launches. While missile fragments were indeed collected in large numbers, Parche's primary missions typically revolved around the setting and retrieving wire

taps placed on Soviet underwater communication cables. Much of her operational history was spent undertaking clandestine missions, and as of late 2009, a vast majority of the missions undertaken remain classified.

From 1987 to 1991, Parche underwent an extended refueling overhaul



at Mare Island Naval Shipyard during which she was modified for research and development work. An extension measuring 100 feet was added to her hull just forward of her sail. The added section was flat-topped (looking somewhat like the missile deck of a ballistic missile submarine) and provided the space required to support a larger crew and additional equipment. These additions included an extensive array of signals-intelligence-collecting antennas, electronic gear, and other navigational and ocean engineering equipment. The overhaul also added many auxiliary navigational and maneuvering features,

including both upward and forward-facing short-range sonars, and a suite of armored spotlights and closed-circuit television cameras for under-ice operations.

Upon completion of her modifications in 1991, Parche began a new mission as part of Submarine Development Squadron 5. She resumed operations in the Pacific Fleet in 1992.

Parche was transferred to a new home port, Naval Base Kitsap at Bangor, Washington, in November 1994.

Parche may have recovered Chinese missile fragments.

During the Third Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1995 and 1996, the People's Republic of China launched DF-21 and DF-15 ballistic missiles into the sea surrounding Taiwan to deter Taiwan from moving toward independence; Robert Karniol writes: "I suspect that 'the Parche might have gone after these Chinese missile fragments', and 'I suspect that Beijing gave away some useful missile secrets.'"

On 19 October 2004, a decommissioning ceremony took place at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard at Bremerton, Washington; she was officially decommissioned on 18 July 2005 and stricken from the Naval Vessel Register the

same day. The wardroom of the oldest submarine in the fleet carries Richard O'Kane's personal cribbage board, and upon Parche's decommissioning the board was transferred to the next oldest boat: USS Los Angeles (SSN-688). Her scrapping at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard via the Ship and Submarine Recycling Program was completed on 30 November 2006.

Parche's research and development duties were assumed by Jimmy Carter, a Seawolf-class submarine whose construction period was extended to include modifications that will allow her to carry out the same types of research and development.

As of 2007, Parche was said to be "the most highly decorated vessel in U.S. history", receiving a total of nine Presidential Unit

Citations and ten Navy Unit Commendations. The submarine also received thirteen Navy Expeditionary Medals and thirteen awards of the Battle Efficiency Award during her thirty years of service.

Parche's sail was preserved. It was moved from Puget Sound Naval Shipyard to the maritime park near Puget Sound Navy Museum in downtown Bremerton.

We Are On The Move

The Submarine Fund was established to support the maintenance and growth of the St. Marys Submarine Museum where preparation are underway to house the USSVI museum. The transfer of the USSVI collection from North Little Rock, AR, will ensure the collection of former submariners will be protected and available for future users.



The St. Mary's Submarine Museum is located in historic St. Mary's, Georgia. It is the largest museum of its kind in the south, and the fifth largest in the country with nearly 5,000 square feet of space "jammed" with exhibits and displays on two floors. The museum is a great place to learn about the "silent service". We are dedicated to educating, preserving and sharing the rich history and legacy of the submarine force and all the men and women who have served and are currently serving our nation.

More than 99% of all WW II submarine combat war patrol reports are housed here, and files on nearly every submarine the United States has or has had in service as part of the collection. This is where history comes alive with a wide variety of pictures, paintings, models, artifacts and rare historical documents, some of which have not been made available to the general public.

While you are visiting the museum, and taking in the voluminous number of exhibits, you can operate a real



submarine Type 2 periscope (shown below) to view the beautiful St. Mary's waterfront and beyond.

While you move through this website (<http://www.stmaryssubmuseum.com>), you will want to read the bios of many who contributed their time and efforts to establish the museum and read the story how one man's personal collection of submarine paraphernalia, documentation, and artifacts came to St. Mary's.



Individual and base donations will assist in making the transfer and cataloging of the 3,100 volume USSVI collection. St Marys will soon physically move to a new local location. Donations sent to the Museum Fund through your base will be dedicated to the project. Contact your Base Ambassador for more details.

St. Mary's Submarine Museum
102 St. Mary's Street West
St. Marys, GA 31558
(Located on the Waterfront)
Phone: (912) 882-ASUB (2782)
Email:

<mailto:ExecutiveDirector@stmaryssubmuseum.com>

Postal Address
P.O. Box 5640
St. Marys, GA 31558-5640

Scholarships and SLF

Most of our members have grown children and some have grown grandchildren. There are a few late bloomers who may have grandchildren either still in high school or currently attending college. It is time to get scholarship applications completed and submitted. USSVCF and SLF have monies available to award, in the form of scholarship, to the children and grandchildren of submarine veterans. And, in 2026-2027, SLF has made scholarships available to nephews and nieces of SLF members. Applicants can complete the application process by visiting <http://www.usscf.org> and/or www.southlakesubvets.org. Due to fewer than expected applications for the scholarship, success rates for receiving a scholarship are quite high.

These scholarships are available to students that have been accepted at college or institution of higher education, where the institution is "brick-and-mortar" or online. But the scholarships are not restricted to just academic institutions. A student wishing to enter a trade can also be the recipient of a scholarship. The wannabe automotive mechanic, cosmetologist, future plumber, computer technician, or other trade will receive the same consideration for a scholarship. Members are encouraged to encourage identified descendants to complete the application process.

To borrow a line from the Florida lottery, "You can't win if you don't play." The applicant must be accepted to their choice of college or trade school, obtain the acceptance letter from that school, and complete the application. SLF members should make available to the applicant a copy of their DD214.

Eternal Patrol

USS Perch (SS-176), fate caught up to the submarine as after the fall of the Dutch East Indies, *Perch* attempted to intercept the Java Sea invasion convoy, only to be crippled by the destroyers *Amatsukaze* and *Hatsukaze*, then finished off by the destroyers *Ushio* and *Sazanami*. All 59 of her crew survived the sinking; 54 of which survived to the end of the war.

Earlier

Perch made a patrol to Kendari, Celebes (now Sulawesi), where she scouted the harbor and made several attempts to get through the narrow entrance to an attack position. After a week of close contact with the Japanese while obtaining information, *Perch* headed south, searching for targets. In a night attack on a large merchant ship off the eastern coast of Celebes, *Perch* was hit in the superstructure, forward of the pressure hull of the conning tower, by a high-explosive round which blew away the bridge deck, punctured the antenna trunk and temporarily put her radio out of commission. Her crew made repairs on deck at night in waters heavily patrolled by the Japanese, and *Perch* headed for the Java Sea.

Fatal Action

On the evening of 1 March 1942, *Perch* surfaced 30 nautical miles (56 km; 35 mi) northwest of Surabaya, Java, and started in for an attack on a Japanese convoy landing troops to the west of Surabaya. However, before this could be done, *Perch* just so happened to run into a pair of Japanese destroyers, the *Amatsukaze* and *Hatsukaze*. Spotters on *Amatsukaze* located the submarine and fired off 32 5-inch (127 mm) shells, forcing *Perch* to crash dive, and seemed to do so successfully, swerving into firing range for a potential kill, observing the enemy destroyers waiting for the right time to unleash the torpedoes, but upon a final inspection through the periscope, the destroyers were preparing a depth charge attack. Hoping to score a kill before the reverse happened, *Perch* climbed to around 90 feet deep, but it was too late, *Amatsukaze* and *Hatsukaze* were right on top of her and together dropped 12 depth charges.

The first patterned missed their mark, but a second pattern of four depth charges gouged *Perch* and inflicted considerable damage. The entire pressure hull and a section of the conning tower were dented up to 2 feet (61 cm) inwards, likely damaging her hull beyond repair, and several ventilation valves were jammed shut, major leaking occurred through the ship's doors and gaskets, and around 90% of the ship's instruments and gauges were broken or destroyed. *Amatsukaze* and *Hatsukaze* assumed their target had perished and continued on, but *Perch* had enough integrity to remain under water, surfacing after 2 hours in the early morning of the 2nd and began sailing for repairs. Upon surfacing, the crew discovered practically every window was shattered, both periscope tubes were flooded, and only half the main engines were operable. *Perch* has survived her encounter, but still suffered critical damage, yet still continued in hopes of attacking Japanese ships.

Because of this, two hours later just before sunrise, *Perch* was spotted yet again by the Japanese destroyers *Ushio* and *Sazanami*, prompting the submarine to immediately dive to 200 feet, but it was too late. *Ushio* and *Sazanami* dropped a depth charge attack, and the damage inflicted to *Perch* went from bad to worse. *Perch* attempted to maneuver away, but her crew discovered the propulsion system to be completely inoperable as *Ushio* and *Sazanami* further depth charged their enemy. *Perch* lay motionless underwater, and when sunrise broke, *Ushio* and *Sazanami* launched a final depth charge attack which caused the most critical damage of all before leaving the area, concluding they had sunk their target. Japanese destroyer *Ushio*, the deliverer of *Perch*'s final moments



Perch was forced to surface, and if *Amatsukaze* and *Hatsukaze* had mortally wounded her, *Ushio* and *Sazanami* had left her bordering on the line of sinking. Upon resurfacing, seawater flooded the pressure hull, leaked in heat and humidity made the ship's interior unbearable, and the ship was completely dead in the water. Damage control efforts eventually got just one of her four engines up and running, limiting *Perch* to just 5 knots. An attempt to dive was made, but it almost sank the ship then and there, and meaning the crew found out the hard way *Perch* was completely incapable of underwater travel and resurfaced for the last time.



By the evening of the 3rd, the idea to simply scuttle *Perch* was brought up, but her crew held off the order as the crippled submarine desperately limped to repairs. While the crew was attempting to repair the watertight hatches on the deck, However, the *Ushio* and *Sazanami* were still on patrol duty and happened to run into the submarine yet again. *Sazanami* chose not to attack, but *Ushio* fired her main battery, and as soon as the first shell hit the conning tower, several hull valves were opened in an attempt to scuttle the boat followed by her crew members jumping into the water one by one. *Perch* made her last dive as she slipped beneath the waves, followed by the destroyer ceasing fire. *Perch's* entire crew of 59 men escaped the ship

and were struggling in the water when *Ushio* came to their rescue. All of the men were rescued by *Ushio*, which transported them to prison camps in the freshly captured Dutch East Indies. Besides 5 that died from malnutrition, all of them returned to their families on V-J Day.



The record for the most miles driven in the Daytona Beach's Classic Daytona 500 is held by Richard Petty. Petty has completed 4,860 laps on the track or 12,150 miles. He has also led 780 laps in his career, more than any other Daytona 500 driver.

2026 Meeting dates

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

April 16

May 21

June 18

July 16

August 20

September 17

October 15

November 19

December - Annual Social



Event

The 2025 USSVI award submissions are due <mailto:http://ussubvets.org>

Board of Directors Meetings at KeKe's following breakfast

March 11

May 13

July 8

September 9

November 11



Sleep in Heavenly Peace

We are looking to re-establish our chapter with this wonderful program. Volunteers gather to cut dimensional lumber, assemble bed frames, and deliver bunk beds to qualified families. Then delivery comes complete with all the basic bedding. In the past, this process takes about one-half a day. It would be convenient for our members if this activity could be scheduled here in the Clermont area and Paul Kenard is looking into this.

Quarterly Get Togethers

Our Vice-Commander Ed Lashbrook is researching possible venues for our members and their spouses to grab a bite to eat and enjoy a relaxed atmosphere. Ed would probably appreciate any recommendations from chapter members.

From the Desk of George Palmer, E-VP of USSVCF



How can Navy "airedales" support Submariners? Easy, they can purchase the classic '42 Jeep restored and donated by shipmate John Martin (MMCM SS Ret,) to the USSVCF. Meet Marc and Faith Frattasio who bought the Jeep at auction. They wanted to drive it in the Memorial Day Parade in Pembroke Mass, but it is still at Jeep's-R-Us having seat belts installed. There's always next year! They send their regards even though their careers were spent in Anti-Submarine Warfare. Mark and Faith (back in the day) Mark and Faith (more recently).



Next vehicle auction will be a 1935 Hudson Terraplane;. Here is one model included for illustrative purposes only. When I get more information on the timeline and how a bid may be entered, I will send that info out to all.



Kap4Kids

Our chapter has supplies for Kap4Kids. I have contacted South Lake Hospital, but they do not admit patients younger than 18 years of age. I have tried to contact Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children, but I have been unsuccessful in reaching the administration. Is there a volunteer among our membership that may want to take on this project?

The Third Basic Law of Stupidity – A stupid person is a person who causes losses to another person or a group of persons while himself deriving no gain and even possibly incurring losses.

You're invited to a

Portillo's®



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Eat Portillo's. Support a Cause. Receive 20% of the

Present this flyer in-restaurant or use the online code for online/app orders, and 20% of the proceeds will be donated to:

SOUTH LAKE FLORIDA SUBVET SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

At the Portillo's located at:

1251 East Highway 50
Clermont, FL

When:

March 26, 2026
5:00 PM – 8:00 PM

ONLINE CODE: PORTILLOS83

Learn more about Portillo's Fundraisers at **portillos.com/good**.

For online/app orders to qualify for the fundraiser, orders must be placed for pickup only, from the participating restaurant, on the fundraiser date and during the listed fundraiser hours. Gift card purchases, delivery orders, and orders placed on third party websites are excluded from the fundraiser. Online ordering is subject to availability. \$200 minimum fundraising sales required for the organization to receive donations. Cannot be combined with other codes.

SOUTH LAKE FLORIDA BASE MEETING

Minutes

Membership Meeting at the Minneola Town Hall
Thursday, February 19, 2026



Call the meeting to order CDR. [Martinez](#)

Invocation by [Kenard](#)

Pledge of Allegiance (VCDR).

USSVI Creed [Bish](#)

Moment of Silence and Tolling the Boats CDR and [Kenard](#)

Determine if a quorum to conduct business is present [14 members](#)

Attendees sign muster. [Blevins](#).

Approval of January meeting Minutes as summarized by [Blevins](#)

Treasurer's Report & Storekeeper's Report (SK) Status: [Goodwin & Bish. Approved.](#)

Foundation Report: [Blevins. Approved.](#)

Business/Administrative Items

-Vote to approve 2026 Business Plan & Budget [Approved](#)

-Members delinquent on their base dues cannot vote. [Martinez](#).

-Status of Treasurer submitting 2025 Financial Report to USSVI [Goodwin not yet sent.](#)

Clermont REC Dept to take over Memorial & Veterans Days Planning < [CDR part of committee](#)

- Car Show Planned for Memorial Day Event
- Involvement of Chamber of Commerce
- Travelling Wall Planned < fund raising to help defray cost
- Potential involvement of local Active duty military personnel

-Status of Financial Audit [Tim] [Blevins: Bush and Lashbrook to meet with Goodwin](#)

-Paul Kenard provide status of SHP kit event being held in Clermont [Paul to attempt contact](#)

• New Discussion Items

-Tricare for Life Rx are now thru Express Scripts or visit to Patrick Pharmacy. [Martinez](#)

-Recognize Tim & Bill representing SLF@ MLK parade. [Martinez](#)

-Ed/Fred to working on float repair < volunteers welcomed

- Vote to keep float & support maintenance of: [Keep trailer and work on submarine image.](#)
- Reimburse Ed \$225 for protective tarp or adjust membership to LIFETIME \$289,00 [approved](#)
- Social Event planning > Ed brief members [Portillos end of March. W9 provided. Need date.](#)

-From BOD mtg > marketplace participation will be scheduled as needed as volunteers for monthly participation has failed. Fee may be incurred.. [Martinez](#)

-USSVI Awards submissions due by April 1st. [see manual on USSVI website for info] [Martinez](#)

-USSVI Convention in Corpus Christi > 9/6 to 9/11: registration open. [Martinez](#)

- SLF to submit magazine ad??? (Full page \$350/half \$175/Qtr \$100) [no vote](#)
- Costs p/p: Reg \$32, Reception \$37, M&W Luncheon \$47, HC Brkfst \$47, Banquet \$63 or \$78
- Omni Hotel 1brn rate \$142
- Parking \$7/day

-USSVCF recognition/award [Blevins](#)

-Sponsor of American Submariner – [Newman/Blevins](#)

Good of the order (VCDR) [Lashbrook](#)

1. Weekly Breakfasts continue at Keke's on Wednesday at 0730..
2. Birthdays: Ed Lashbrook,
3. Next Meeting: Thursday, March 19th, 1800hrs., at Minneola Town Hall.
4. 50/50 raffle. [Mock \\$28.00](#)
5. Adjourn [1910](#)
6. Benediction by [Kenard](#)

[Additional notes](#)

[Goodwin](#) to obtain Insurance certificates.

[Sponsored three boats \(NJ, Iowa, & Rickover\) American Submariner.](#)

Submitted 02/20/2026 by Blevins.

Approved by Martinez