

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 8

www.southlakesubvets.org -----August 2026

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Latest Social Event and Fundraiser

The recent social/fundraiser event occurred on June 25, 2026, at the Texas Roadhouse. The event was planned and attended by Ed Lashbrook. Bill Bish, Paul Hernandez, and Tim Blevine accompanied Ed as greeters. It was hot with the temperature near 94°. Sea stories and life experiences were exchanged among the four as they distributed flyers and pens to the customers arriving at Texas Roadhouse. Patrons of the restaurant donated \$103.00, a 52 dollar was among the donations. Texas Roadhouse presented a check for \$100.00.

Pretzels

- 1) Bakers in Austria have their own coat of arms: two lions holding a pretzel.
- 2) In 2015, archaeologists found a 250-year-old pretzel in Batavia, perhaps the oldest ever discovered in Europe.
- 3) The average American eats about two pounds of pretzels annually. Philadelphians eat about six times that amount. Got a beer?

- 4) The world's largest pretzel was baked in El Salvador in 2015. It measured 29 feet 3 inches long by 13 feet 3 inches wide. It weighed 1,728 pounds. Same bakers as those in Batavia?



¹ Not accredited VSOs.

AUGUST

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

SEPTEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			
12: Sleep In Heavenly Peace						

USS Bullhead (SS-332)



USS Bullhead (SS-332), a *Balao*-class submarine, was the last United States Navy ship sunk by enemy action during World War II, probably on the same day that an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima.

Prior to setting out on its first war patrol, Commander Griffith, CO of the Bullhead, was introduced to Martin Sheridan, a reporter for the Boston Globe. Admiral Lockwood authorized Sheridan to accompany Bullhead on this maiden war patrol.

To sink and swim

USS Flier (SS-250)



USS FLIER was a Gato-class fleet submarine commissioned in October 1943. Flier sailed to Pearl Harbor via the Panama Canal and, en route, dodged a friendly merchant ship that fired 13 shells at her. She departed Hawaii on January 12, 1944, for her first war patrol. Arriving at Midway to top off her fuel tanks, she ran aground while negotiating a treacherous channel and fighting an 8-knot crosscurrent. The submarine was hard aground and damaged. FLIER was later hauled off, towed to Hawaii, and then proceeded back to Mare Island for permanent repairs.

The repaired Flier departed from Pearl Harbor for a patrol in Iwo Jima and Philippine waters, and between June 4, 1944, and June 23, 1944, she attacked six ships in three different convoys. These attacks sank at least the 10,000-ton naval transport HAKUSAN MARU and the 5,838-ton cargo ship BELGIUM MARU. Flier then proceeded to Fremantle, Australia, and Commander Crowley was awarded the Navy Cross for the first patrol. Flier departed from Fremantle, Australia on August 2, 1944.

Bullhead made a total of three war patrols since she had been recently commissioned on 4 December 1944. Bullhead was credited with enemy tonnage of 31,000 sunk, and she performed the critical act of rescuing downed pilots. Ten Javanese conscripts from a coastal freighter that had sunk were also rescued. Bullhead narrowly avoided two depth charge attacks from friendly aircraft.



Bullhead set out on its third war patrol on 31 July 1945. After reporting her position in early August, Bullhead was never heard from again. Bullhead had the distinction of being the only submarine to have a civilian reporter aboard, and she was the last US submarine sunk in WWI.

The surfaced World War II submarine Flier picked her way through Balabac Strait in the Philippine Islands on the dark, moonless night of August 13, 1944, using a combination of SJ radar ranges and visual fixes on Comiran and Balabac Islands. The crew on the bridge anticipated an upcoming engagement with a Japanese convoy, but this was not to be. Off Comiran Island, at approximately 2200, Flier struck a mine somewhere forward on the starboard side. Diesel fuel, water, and debris rained down on the bridge while yells and screams came from below. Air rushed out of the conning tower hatch (propelling some crewmen through it), and within 20-30 seconds, with Flier still making 15 knots, she sank in water approximately 180 to 600 feet deep. At least 15 of her 86-man crew now found themselves in the water without life jackets, far from land, and facing a swim for their lives. Only 8 men survived the 12-mile swim to Byan Island (most of them in 17-1/2 hours), some with the assistance of a floating palm tree, currents, and moonrise.



The survivors were taken to Australia, where they eventually recuperated from their ordeal and went on to other assignments. An investigation was held on the loss of ROBALO and FLIER, and the Balabac Strait was declared to be off limits to future U.S. submarines during the war due to the danger of mines.

Civility in email

You have become addicted to email, you avoid telephone calls, but you manage to stay in touch with your contacts.



There are those moments when the email exchange becomes tense. Disagreements arise. Here are some suggested responses to disarm a potential problem and keep a friend.

1. I understand your perspective; however, I see the situation differently.
2. Thank you for sharing your thoughts. I'd like to offer an alternative viewpoint.
3. While I appreciate your concerns, I believe another approach may be more effective.
4. I respectfully disagree and would like to explain my reasoning.
5. I see your point, but there are additional factors we may need to consider.
6. Although we may not fully agree, I value the discussion and your input.
7. Perhaps we can explore an option that addresses both viewpoints.
8. Our perspectives differ, but I believe we share the same objective.



**NO BIRTHDAYS
THIS MONTH**

**BAKE A CAKE AND
ENJOY.**

A penny found is a penny earned.

Forgotten Currency

About \$1.87 trillion in physical currency remains in circulation, most of it in \$1, \$5, \$20, \$50, and \$100 notes. These weren't always the most common denominations, as America has produced many now-rare forms of currency throughout its financial history.

The half-cent coin had 5 designs of Liberty herself. A fraction is referred to as a mill, a now-obscure unit that lives in accounting.

The \$2 bill is ordered from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing only every two or four years. People think the bills are uncommon, so they are treated as if they were rare and handled differently.

The \$500 bill hasn't been in circulation since 1969, but it is still legal tender. Now a collector's item, it featured Chief Justice John Marshall, President William McKinley, and other figures.



Originally created to help fund the Revolutionary War, the \$5,000 bill didn't come into official government use until 1868. It featured portraits of President James Madison, President William McKinley, and other figures.

Originally created to help fund the Revolutionary War, the \$5000 bill was not used until 1868. It featured a portrait of President James Madison and was recalled by the Nixon administration to prevent its use by money launderers.



Printed in 1934 as a gold certificate, it featured a portrait of Woodrow Wilson and was used exclusively for Federal Reserve transactions. Private possession is illegal; institutions like the Smithsonian exhibit it.



A different kind of support

Wartime underwear support and restrictions during WW2²

Wartime Support

This post is actually about the kind of support given to the female figure in the 1940's! This carried on in wartime but was subject to rationing, the Utility Scheme and the austerity regulations made under it. Corsets and brassieres required three coupons apiece when the overall allowance for a woman was 66 coupons per year, later reducing to 48. Specific restrictions on corset manufacturers forbade trimmings, fancy stitching and lace.

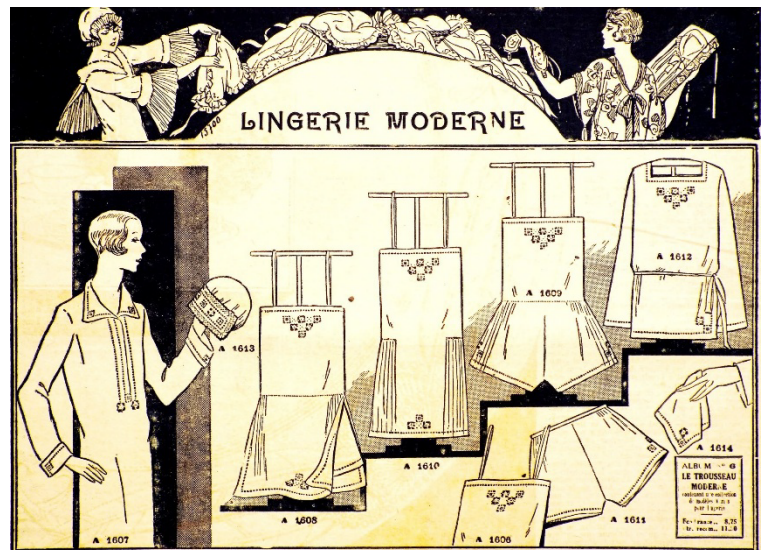
Suspenders were still provided, but with shortages of stockings (2 coupons), women were resorting to cosmetics on their legs instead. All the images show Utility items, some of them unworn, together with some of the Scheme's CC41 markings.



The advert for do-it-yourself underwear from Economy Designs includes a basic bra and is aimed at minimizing the use of material. The ad from Twilfit dates from 1945 and is anticipating the war's end, pointing out that whilst

your favorite model may be unobtainable, the Twilfit range of Utility wear is available meanwhile.

Not only bread, butter, and petrol were subject to rationing. A brassiere required 3 coupons, suspenders were 2 coupons, and corsets were all in short supply. Women were given 66 coupons at the beginning of the war, but that ration amount was later reduced to 48 coupons.



² Facebook Yesterday's Fashions

VA Benefit Thieves

Massachusetts Man Indicted for Impersonating a Veteran for 30 Years to Fraudulently Obtain Benefits



7/6/2026

James D. Sommers, of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, was indicted with one count each of healthcare fraud, false statements, and aggravated identity theft. According to the charging documents, beginning as early as 1994, Sommers has falsely impersonated a US Army veteran. It is alleged that Sommers used the victim's stolen identity to obtain thousands of dollars in Social Security benefits and nearly \$30,000 in medical care and medications from VA medical centers. This case was investigated by the VA OIG.

West Virginia Woman Pleads Guilty to Theft of Government Benefits

7/8/2026

Barbara Ferrell of Seth, West Virginia, pleaded guilty to theft of government funds. Ferrell admitted to stealing approximately \$160,000 in VA and Social Security benefits by abusing her position as a fiduciary for a family member. This case was investigated by the VA OIG and the Social Security Administration OIG.

Hit'em Harder

USS Harder (SS-257)

Harder was commissioned on 2 December 1942. While crossing the Caribbean Sea on the surface in a designated safety lane on 2 May 1943, she sighted an approaching U.S. Navy PBY Catalina flying boat at a range of 5,000 yards (4,600 m). She flashed that day's recognition signal at the PBY, which responded by opening machine-gun fire along Harder's starboard side. As Harder crash-dived and made a hard turn to port, the PBY dropped two bombs, the first of which shook Harder. Harder was able to continue her voyage to Pearl Harbor.



Harder's first two war patrols presented her with several targets. She sank six of them, including three cargo ships, and ended her patrol by shooting up two armed trawlers. Harder's third war patrol had her on station in the Mariana Islands, accompanied by USS Snook and USS Pargo, to form a wolf pack. On 12 November, after sinking a trawler escort, Harder soon found three more Japanese merchant ships. Harder expended all her torpedoes while sinking all three ships. At the end of the month, Harder returned to Mare Island Naval

Shipyard. War patrol number four was in the vicinity of the Caroline Islands, where Harder performed lifeguard duty. A downed airman was awaiting rescue from a small island west of Woleai. Harder perched nose-first on a reef, and, with Japanese snipers, boiling seas, and her precarious position, Harder succeeded in the rescue.

Harder would later encounter the Japanese destroyer Ikazuchi, fire a spread of four torpedoes, and reported: "Expended four torpedoes and one Jap



destroyer.” Harder went on to sink another Japanese merchant and heavily damaged the destroyer escort. Before returning to Fremantle, Harder bombarded Woleai with gunfire.

Success continued on the fifth patrol with the sinking of the Japanese destroyer Minazuki. The next morning brought yet another destroyer, the Hayanami, into Harder’s sight. The destroyer was soon on the bottom. Returning to her assigned station, Harder evacuated six Australian Coastwatchers. On the evening of 8 June, Harder fired four torpedoes at two destroyers. The Tanikaza exploded and sank while the other destroyer, suffering from a debilitating attack from Harder, disappeared.

As the war neared its end, Harder passed along reconnaissance reports that helped secure the stunning defeat of the Japanese in the Battle of the Philippine Sea. Harder was awarded six battle stars and a Presidential Unit Citation. Commander Samuel D. Dealey (1906–1944), "a submariner's submariner", was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, as well as four Navy Crosses during his lifetime.

Story telling³.

Every person has a story or two they will share at an appropriate moment; over dinner, at a restaurant, during a meeting, at a club meeting, etc. Those stories are told for a variety of reasons: to impress, to explain, for humor, or, sometimes, in sympathy or remembrance. There are those times when the story is told to encourage the listening audience to participate. To those present when the story is told, please respect the unspoken reason for the story. There is a reason the storyteller is sharing, and they may be seeking audience participation. If the listener is cued to add or supplement the story, they should do so. However, be mindful of the nature of the original story. Too many “Me too”s added to the story may take the edge off the original reason for the story.



The Most Decorated Enlisted Sailor in U.S. Naval History

AWARDS

Medal of Honor
Navy Cross
Silver Star(2)
Legion of Merit
Navy and Marine Corps Medal(2)
Bronze Star Medal(3)
Purple Heart(3)
Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal(2)

James Elliott Williams (June 13, 1930 – October 13, 1999) was an American law enforcement officer and honorary United States Navy chief boatswain's mate who was

³ Charles Nelson, Storytelling, the storyteller.

awarded the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War. Boatswain's Mate First Class Williams was one of 32 Native Americans to receive the medal and is considered to be the most decorated enlisted man in the history of the United States Navy. Williams completed his career as the United States Marshal for South Carolina.

Williams enlisted in the United States Navy on August 8, 1947, at the age of 17, and completed basic training at Naval Training Center San Diego. He served for almost twenty years, retiring on April 26, 1967, as a boatswain's mate first class. During those years, he served in both the Korean War and Vietnam War. On May 14, 1968, Williams was presented the Medal of Honor by President Lyndon B. Johnson during the dedication ceremony of the "Hall of Heroes" in the Pentagon. In 1977, he received the honorary title of chief boatswain's mate.

In April 1966, with the enlisted rank of petty officer first class and the rating of boatswain's mate 1st class (BM1), Williams was assigned in May to the River Patrol Force, River Squadron Five, in command of River Patrol Boat 105 (PBR-105). The force's mission was to intercept Viet Cong and People's Army of Vietnam arms shipments, supplies, and personnel on the waterways of South Vietnam's Mekong Delta and to keep innocent boat traffic on the river and canals safe.

On October 31, 1966, Williams was commanding PBR 105 alongside another PBR searching for Viet Cong guerrillas operating in an isolated area of the Mekong Delta. Suddenly, Viet Cong manning two sampans opened fire on the Americans. While Williams and his men neutralized one sampan, the other one escaped into a nearby canal. The PBRs gave chase and soon found themselves in a beehive of enemy activity as the VC opened fire on them with rocket-propelled grenades and small arms from fortified riverbank positions.

Williams repeatedly led the PBRs against concentrations of enemy junks and sampans. He also called for support from two heavily armed UH-1B Huey helicopters of HA(L)-3. When that help arrived, he kicked off another attack in the failing light. As a result of the three-hour battle, the U.S. naval force killed 1,000 Viet Cong guerrillas, destroyed over fifty vessels, and disrupted a major enemy logistic operation. For his actions, he was awarded the Medal of Honor.⁴ **Rest Your Oars Sailor, We Have The Watch.**

Left wheels behind

USS S-39 (SS-144)

USS S-39 (SS-144) was a United States Navy S-class submarine that saw combat in the Pacific. She was commissioned on 14 September 1923.

Just prior to the entry of the United States into World War II, S-39 (under the command of James W. Coe, Class of 1930^[4]) patrolled off southern Luzon. After 8 December,



she moved into the San Bernardino

Strait to impede Japanese mining activities. The escorts screening the minelayers, however, kept the submarine at bay with persistent depth charging. On 11 December, S-39 endured a day-long pounding. She then turned to cutting into the Japanese supply line. On 13 December, she sighted and attacked an enemy freighter, but escorts intervened, preventing her crew from confirming a sinking. She continued her patrol.

She then sailed for Australia via the Sunda Strait, where, on 4 March, she found the 6,500-long-ton (6,604 t) tanker (credited as 5,000 long tons (5,080 t) during the war) *Erimo*. S-39 fired four Mark 10 torpedoes, scoring three contact hits. This made S-39, like her



"Sugar" boat sisters, S-37 and S-38, well known in the news. Two weeks later, she arrived at Fremantle, Australia.

On the night of 13/14 August 1943, she grounded on submerged rocks off Rossel Island and took on a 35° port list. S-39 immediately blew ballast tanks dry and jettisoned fuel

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_E._Williams

to lighten the ship, then backed emergency, to no avail. Heavy seas pounded her, pushing her farther up onto the rocks.

Efforts were begun to rescue the crew. Lieutenant C.N.G. Hendrix and Chief Petty Officer W. L. Schoenrock swam ashore, secured mooring lines to a torpedo which

had lodged in the reef for use as riding lines, and assisted other crew members to safety. By noon, 32 men had reached shore. Shortly thereafter, *Katoomba* arrived and, the next day, had taken all of the crew of S-39 on board. S-39 was left on the rocks rather than destroyed by gunfire, as her commander was satisfied that she

would continue breaking up. Her crew was taken to Townsville and reassigned to other submarines. The commanding officer almost faced court-martial (grounding in peacetime is considered negligence) but was saved by Admiral Ralph W. Christie.

Sea Cadet Battalion

Welcome back, Troy Edwards. Troy served the cadets as second-in-command with Gary Shindele a few years back. Try has returned as the Commanding Officer of the Clermont Sea Cadet Battalion. We met (re-met) Troy at our Keke breakfast, and it is obvious he brings a new direction to the battalion. The Sea Cadets meet once a month at Windy Hill Middle School for two days, Saturday and Sunday. We have an open invitation to attend their meetings, and a meeting calendar is included here. Let's welcome Troy back to the community by attending a meeting or two.



Sleep in Heavenly Peace

The local SHP administrator has a bed build scheduled for 12 September. Details have not been made public, and as more information becomes available, it will be shared. What we do know is that the build will take place at the Reedy Creek Fire Department at WDW. No parking at the station. A bus will transport builders from a parking lot to the station. The bus transfer requires a 4-hour build time. Best guess: 0800-1200.



X + Y = 188. X & Y are 34 numbers apart. What are the numbers?

Down the throat

USS Pompano (SS-181)



Pompano was commissioned on 12 June 1937. Pompano began life with a bad heart. She spent three years at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard undergoing repairs and engine replacements. Following the 7 December 1941 Japanese attack, Pompano sped to Pearl Harbor and on 18 December began her lustrous career by scoring 10 enemy ship sinkings. Pompano would undergo two overhauls during her career, which included the sinking of more than one Japanese trawler-type surface vessel

Notably, on 17 January 1942, Pompano engaged four patrol boats. Pompano worked her way between them and the channel. She fired two torpedoes, both of which exploded prematurely (a persistent problem with the Mark 6 exploder), foiling her first

attack. Then, with the enemy charging directly for her, the submarine waited until her target was 1,000 yards (910 m) away before firing two more torpedoes "down the throat," the first attack of its kind by a United States submarine. The torpedoes missed, and the destroyer delivered ineffective depth charges.

Pompano continued her effective submarine duties. In September 1943, Pompano sank the Akama Maru and the Taiko Maru. Pompano was not heard from again and is presumed to be the victim of an enemy mine.



Ambassador item

We have changed how USSVCF-managed scholarship funds will be handled going forward.

A Legacy Fund has been established at USSVCF titled SOUTH LAKE FLORIDA CHARITABLE FOUNDATION. Donations in this fund are kept separate from other USSVCF funds, and the funds can be accessed for any charitable activity. Donations to the fund can be made by credit card, check, or ACH transfer. The SLF Legacy Fund is a 501(c)(3) entity, and because it is maintained by USSVCF, we avoid all annual filings with the state or the IRS. To use funds for a charitable event, we will need to identify the payee, the amount, and the contact info. Once the funds have been paid to the payees, the USSVCF treasurer will need a receipt/invoice.



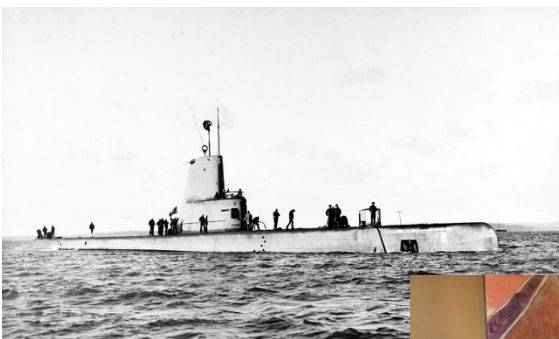
A request for a disbursement should be made to treasurer@ussvcf.org (Randy Stein). I encourage base members to make periodic donations to the fund by credit card <https://ussvcf.org/donations/south-lake-florida-base-charitable-fund/>. In addition to strengthening scholarship awards, a donation to the SLF Legacy Fund helps preserve the submarine service legacy, supports future generations, strengthens the Foundation, and honors lifelong service. Your donated dollars are never spent; they generate earnings that are used across the many funds



Short circuit

I just read a good book about Helium. I couldn't put it down.

USS Cochino (SS-345)



snorkel so violently and jolted severely that the pounding electrical fire and battery followed by the release of deadly hydrogen gas. In Cochino and Tusk fought to battery explosion on 26

USS Cochino (SS-345) was a Balao-class submarine in service with the United States Navy from 1945 to 1949. She sank after a battery explosion off Norway, on 26 August 1949. She provided coastal patrols along the eastern seaboard of North and South America before her deployment to Europe. On 25 August 1949, Cochino ran into a violent polar storm off Norway. The huge



Someone is missing in this photo. Is it you?

waves slammed the submarine's the boat so caused an explosion,



wretched weather conditions, men of save the submarine for 14 hours. A second August prompted an "Abandon Ship" order,

and after the crew made a dangerous rope transfer to Tusk, the abandoned Cochino sank at 71°35'N 23°35'E. Cochino's only fatality was a civilian from the Bureau of Ships, technician Robert W. Philo, swept overboard by an icy wave. Tusk lost six of her own men in the same manner.

Heroic Cold War Rescue!

USS Barb (SSN-596) and USS Gurnard (SSN-662)

5

In July 1972, the USS Barb (SSN-596) and USS Gurnard (SSN-662), executed a daring and dramatic rescue of a B-52 bomber crew after their aircraft crashed into the Pacific Ocean near Guam during a violent typhoon.

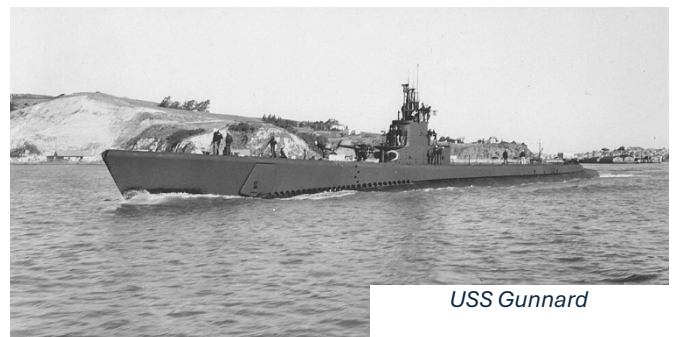


In the early hours of July 8, 1972, three B-52G Stratofortress bombers assigned to Andersen Air Force Base had just taken off to support Operation Linebacker in Vietnam. Shortly after takeoff, one of the aircraft began to lose power and ended up crashing into the sea approximately 300 miles southwest of Guam. Luckily, the seven crew members managed to eject, but landed in the middle of Typhoon Rita, a massive storm with wind gusts exceeding 100 knots. As the day progressed, aircraft patrolling the area could see the rafts and crew, but ships in the area, including a Russian trawler, could not navigate the heavy winds and seas to attempt a rescue.



The USS Barb, commanded by CDR John Juergens, was finishing repairs in Guam and getting underway on July 8th. USS Barb was ordered to proceed at best speed and attempt a rescue. Hours later, she left Apra Harbor and slipped beneath the waves. USS Gurnard, commanded by CDR Clyde Bell, was en route to Guam at the time and received the same orders. Barb arrived on the scene that evening, but the high waves and darkness prevented any rescue attempts; the plan was to return after dawn.

The next morning, July 9th, Barb's crew, who had manned the bridge, were greeted with 40-foot waves and winds near 70 knots. The aircraft had vectored them to the area where three crewmen had gathered in a larger life raft that had been dropped to them earlier. A line-throwing gun was used to try to send a line out, but the wind prevented any accurate shot. Chief Torpedoman Hentz told the CO he could swim out to the raft. He had an old manila line that was taken from the torpedo room's tackle gear. CDR Juergens agreed, and Hentz waited for the right swell and dove in.



Miraculously, Hentz made it to the raft, tied off the line, and headed back to the sub. He was able to retrieve a heavier line sent from Barb's bridge and secure the raft. While swimming in the massive waves, he saw

⁵ Pacific Fleet Submarine Museum . bowfin.org

Barb's screw come up out of the water and even the forward ballast tank flood grates on the bottom of the hull as the submarine rolled and pitched on the surface. One by one, life jackets were sent down the line. Using impressive seamanship to keep the raft downwind, Barb's crew pulled the exhausted and injured airmen up over the sail and into the bridge cockpit. Barb rescued four of the crewmen that morning while Gurnard rescued a fifth. Unfortunately, the aircraft has spotted the six crewmen floating face down near their raft. His body was recovered almost a month later on the island of Yap.

As Barb proceeded back to Apra Harbor, it had one more task. One of the rescued crew members was Lt. Kent Dodson, and his birthday was July 9th. After some rest in a rack with an enlisted man stationed nearby to ensure they didn't roll out, Lt. Dodson discovered the Barb's galley team had made him a chocolate cake to celebrate his birthday and a dramatic rescue after being tossed around the Pacific for 28 hours. The crew also manufactured a new pennant that night, a white bedsheet was used to create a small flag with four blue crosses, representing the four Air Force guests who were spending the night,

The Barb's actions were hailed as heroic. Operating in some of the worst possible conditions for a submarine to be on the surface, her crew demonstrated extraordinary seamanship, courage, and initiative. The rescue showed the versatility of submarines in peacetime and wartime roles

This dramatic story was relatively unknown until Popular Mechanics put the story on their cover in December 1977. The story was also in May 1975 edition of Reader's Digest and captured in a well-known oil painting by Tom Freeman

Contribution from USSVCF E-VP George Palmer

Itchy Ears

It was the spring of '75 when my ship, USS John Marshall, was pulled "off the line" and assigned to conduct the Op & Tech eval of the new AN/BQR-21 digital sonar system planned for backfit on all the Boomers. Field engineers and technicians from Honeywell, the developer, had installed the new system during a drydocking at Weapons Station Charleston. The system included a new cylindrical array and a heap of digital processing and display equipment located in the Torpedo Room, the E&E

— not just in combat, but also in humanitarian missions.

USS Barb rescued Lt. William Neely III (copilot), Lt. Kent Dodson (navigator), Maj. Ronald Dvorak (electronics warfare officer), and Airman Daniel Johansen (gunner). USS Gurnard (SSN-662) rescued Capt. Leroy Johnson (B-52 pilot). Lt. Col. J. L. Vaughn (radar navigator) did not survive.



The Pacific Fleet Submarine Museum was proud to talk to retired Master Chief Jon Hertz last week and congratulate him once again, 53 years later, for his courage. He told us that he learned to swim in the rough surf while spear fishing in the waters off Newport, R.I., where he had been stationed before serving on USS Barb. Interestingly, swimming out to the raft was not in the original plan discussed in the crew's mess the night before; it was just a contingency plan he and the CO had talked about in the moment while on the bridge after seeing the line-throwing gun wasn't going to work in the high winds.

We also spoke to Kent Dodson and William Neely, both retired now from the Air Force. One of the prominent memories they both spoke of was how well the Barb crew had treated them during their short time on board.

space, Sonar, and the Conn. We were due to undock in the morning, and our operations for the next two months were riding on everything working.

All our sonarmen had been treated to a week of familiarization at the Honeywell plant in Sunnyvale, CA. To hear them talk about it, this was the absolute Rolls-Royce of digital sonars, and we'd all be in Acoustical Heaven as soon as we were waterborne. The only glitch we'd seen, so far, was with the displays in the sonar shack. As soon as it was lit off, the fancy new displays showed an avalanche of random noise.

I could tell by the looks on the faces of the Honeywell team leader and his engineers that the new "Rolls" of sonars wasn't working like they expected. They tried everything they could think of, but whatever they tried seemed to make it worse. Nothing helped. With very few hours until undocking, the team leader's look of concern became graver - and his technical team became more frantic.



That night I was the Duty Officer. During my midnight tour of the boat I stepped into the Torpedo Room. There I found two of the fretting contractors mumbling about the problem by the receiver/processor cabinet just to the left of the Torpedo Room door. As I walked forward TM2 Douglas Smith, my Torpedo Room LPO, leaned out of his bunk. "Mr. P. can you can get those f^%\$'n contractors to shut the f^%k up?"

I nodded and said I'd try. They were actually pretty good about it and as I shooed them out I turned off the lights so Doug could get some sleep. Immediately the Dial-X rang. I picked it up and the guy in Sonar yelled. "Whatever you guys just did down there fixed everything!" It only took a moment for the contractors to flip the cooling vent louver at the top of the cabinet from up (towards the fluorescent light) to down.

I put Doug in for a medal because his request had prompted me to turn off the lights. If that hadn't happened, we'd probably still be there, and Honeywell would still be getting paid. Thanks to Doug we all got to live in Acoustical Heaven.

Used Daily

You may have used the phrase when you left home to attend a meeting. Or following a dinner with friends. It is a phrase used more regularly than "Have a good day" or "How are you?" It simply rolls off the tongue. But did you know the phrase "Good-Bye" began with a humble beginning. The origin of the phrase dates back more than five hundred years, and it was originally "God be with you." The original was shortened over time based as much on dialect as on any overt reason to eliminate the mention of God, but the meaning still rings true today.⁶

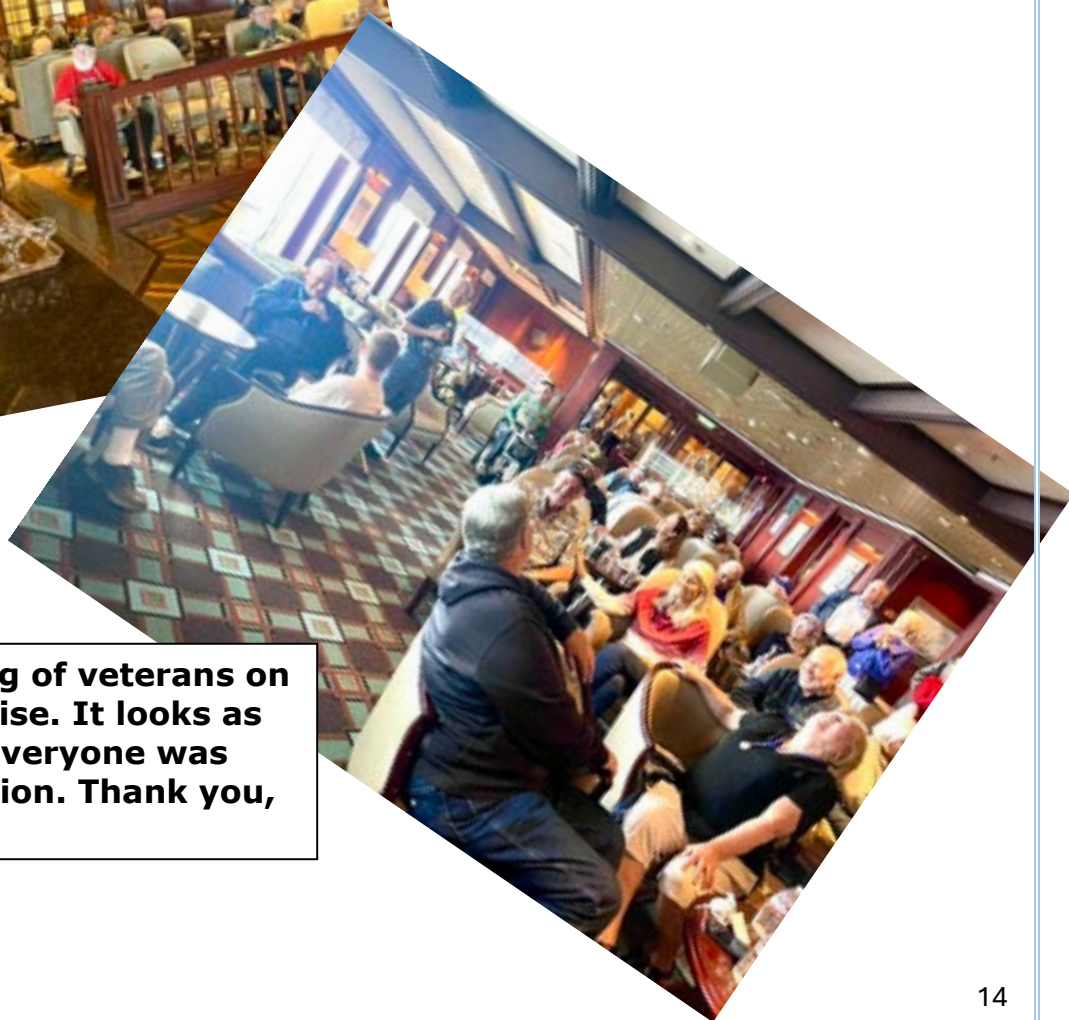
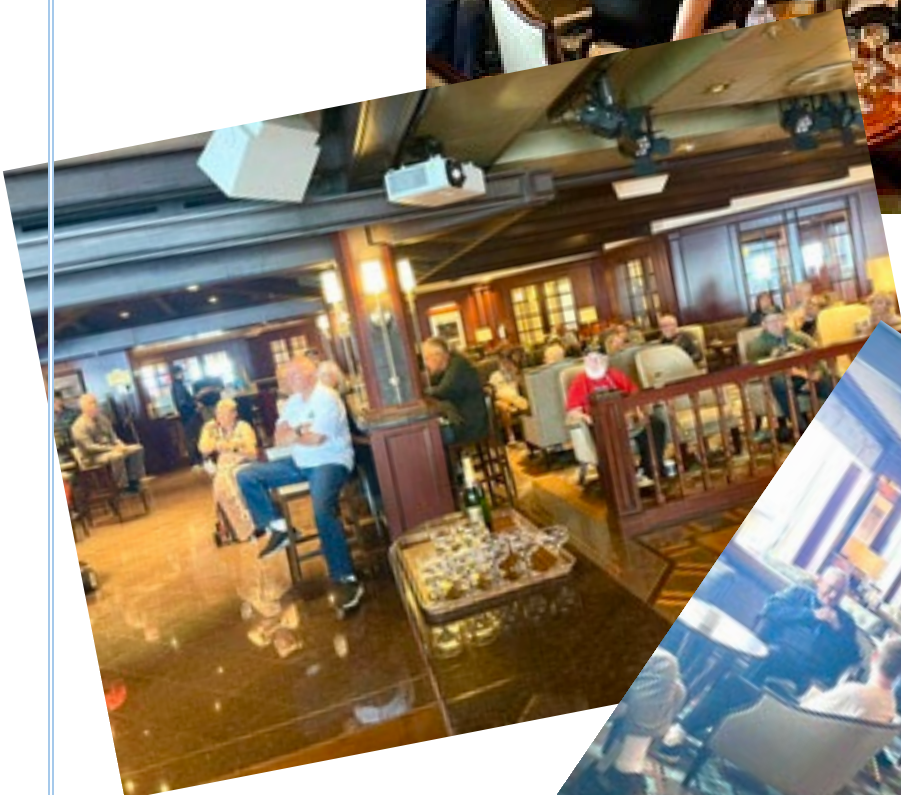
Qual Question

Each boat had a small sonar device (an AN-BQN) at the diving stand. It used a printed card on a rotating drum which imprinted a Sound Velocity Profile (SVP) trace on the paper as the ship changed depth. What was the purpose of the SVP trace? (The editor doesn't know the answer.)

- A. The OOD used it to compute ranges.
- B. The Diving Officer used it to calculate trim changes as the boat went deeper.
- C. Sonar used it to set up their search plans.
- D. All the above.
- E. None of the above.



⁶ Oxford English Dictionary and Historical Thesaurus.



Bobby Mock's gathering of veterans on his recent Princess cruise. It looks as if the bar is busy and everyone was enjoying the presentation. Thank you, Bobby.

SOUTH LAKE FLORIDA
MEETING MINUTES
July 16, 2026
Minneola Town Center



1800 Meeting was called to order by Carlos Martinez.

Invocation by Paul Kenard.

Pledge of Allegiance by Commander.

USSVI creed read by Robert Mock.

Moment of Silence

Tolling of the Boats presented by the Commander and Ed Lashbrook.

The Secretary announced that a quorum was present. Carlos, Ed Lashbrook, Tim Blevins, Bill Bish, Paul Ernandez, Rollin Patrick, Lewis Otto, Shawn Newman, Fred Walter, Robert Mock, Paul Kenard, Tom Barber, Patrick Dempsey.

The June meeting notes were distributed. Motion made and seconded to approve. Approved.

Treasurer's report. A motion to table the Treasurer's report until the Treasurer was available was made and seconded. The report will be reviewed at the August meeting.

Storekeeper's Report reported an on-hand balance of \$298.00 [\$55.00 in Kitty & \$243.00 in Petty Cash]. \$199.00 was turned over to the Treasury. Approved.

The Foundation Treasurer reported a balance of \$3,336.68. Approved. A \$500.00 scholarship award is still outstanding.

Business/Administrative Items

Membership dues. Seven members have not paid the annual dues of \$25.00. Two names were removed from the master; they can no longer vote on chapter issues, and they have lost their longevity standing. Commander noted that the paid chapter membership is 27 members. Members are encouraged to recruit new members.

The issue with the **Annual Financial Audit** was discussed. Carlos stated that his name had been removed from the Navy Credit Union account and that he was working to get it updated. The 2025 financial audit is not complete. A more comprehensive review of finances would have to occur in 2027, detailing 2026 finances.

Tim and Ed reported that a scheduled **SHP build** is scheduled for 12 September at Disney. Details are incomplete, but it was reported that the September build would involve arriving at a Disney parking lot for transport to the Reedy Creek FD. The build will last for four hours.

The **2026 USSVI convention** in Corpus Christi is still open for registration. Tim and Bobby will attend.

Carlos provided an update on the **Veterans' Memorial** project.

- A. Bobby Mock previously reported depositing \$2,000.00, and his daughter's friends have raised \$1,985.73 through the GoFundMe account.
- B. Bobby said the individual projects in the memorial have not yet been identified for funding. Bronze statues will cost ~\$70,000.00 each.
- C. Service stones (6' tall) would cost about \$70,000.00 each.
- D. There have been no identified project updates made by First Responders.
- E. Fundraising strategies have yet to be determined.
- F. The project will issue an RFP, and consideration of responses will probably take place in October at the Clermont City meeting. Construction may begin in 2027.
- G. Bobby stated he would be at the lakefront on Saturday, the 18th, to display a memorial design and hand out flyers.
- H. The next project meeting will be on August 19 at 3 p.m. at Clermont City Hall.

Shawn provided an update on **float construction**. It is about 60% complete. Ed reported that the review of two possible trailers found them unacceptable. Paul Ernandez reported pushback on the float storage location in his neighborhood.

New Items Discussed

1. Upcoming **Veteran Day** activities have yet to be identified. The project is being handled by the Clermont Recreation Department (Cody).
2. The **social event** at Texas Roadhouse was a success. \$ 102.00 in free-will donations and a \$100.00 donation from the business.
3. **Nominations** for Commander and Secretary are open and will close at the October meeting. Tim has been nominated for Commander.
4. **Plaques:** Ed suggested a design that includes the SLF Challenge Coin and nameplate. Rollin stated that he could create the required wooden portion. Possible 5-year membership gift.
5. Carlos said he had a **2026 USSVI sticker** for membership cards for those members paying yearly dues to USSVI.
6. Tim reported he was attempting to obtain permission for SLF to man a **greet-and-meet table** at the Clermont VA Medical Clinic. He is awaiting a call from Hymie Rodriguez, VA District Administrator.
7. **Mission BBQ** will serve SLF dinner at the September meeting.
8. A motion was made to **relocate SLF monthly meetings** to either the VFW or the American Legion hall. Seconded and passed. A subsequent motion was made to hold meetings at the American Legion hall on Desoto Street. Seconded and passed. Bobby will follow up with the American Legion to determine the weekday and time our meetings could be held,
9. A recent change to **USSVI by-laws** made lifetime membership available to Associates. SLF bylaws will be amended to reflect this change.
10. There was a brief discussion regarding what constitutes a **quorum** in order to conduct business. A quorum is described in the SLF by-laws.
11. Tim said he had sent the **Diego Guzman** and scholarship activity to South Lake Tablet and American Submariner.
12. There has been no response from local Veteran groups regarding the organizational oversight needed for future Memorial Day and Veteran Day events.
13. Lewis Otto discussed using the State (FDVA) VSO Representative to assist in getting issues resolved. Lewis shared his personal experience.

Good of the Order (Ed).

- a) Breakfast at Keke's every Wednesday at ~0700.
- b) Birthdays: Ken Brown, Lewis Otto, and Fred Pando.
- c) Next meeting date is **August 20th**.
- d) The 50/50 raffle was won by Tom Barber. Tom received \$23.00. \$22.00 was placed in the general fund.
- e) Tim asked about an **SLF monthly charitable donation**. Ed motioned a \$50.00 donation to the USSVCF Legacy Fund. Seconded and passed.
- f) Ed sought a motion to adjourn. Approved at 1908.

Benediction by Paul Kenard.

Minutes were submitted for Approval. July 18.

Minutes were reviewed by the Commander on July 18.

The newsletter is titled "Blow Negative" as a nod and hand salute to the earliest days of submariners. The earliest submarines of WWI were built with positive buoyancy, which included a "negative" tank. This tank was located within the submarine so that, when flooded with seawater, the submarine could dive.

Our meeting location is at Minneola Town Hall. Minneola, Florida. The newsletter is published and edited by Timothy Blevins, MM1(SS), blevinst@gmail.com. Suggestions, corrections, and submittals are always appreciated. Publication occurs once a month, with occasional email updates.

The South Lake Florida chapter of USSVI consists of members living in and around Clermont, Florida. Our monthly meetings take place on the third Thursday of every month except December, when we hold a social event. Veterans from all services and submarine enthusiasts are always welcome guests at our meetings.

Currently, the newsletter does not solicit advertisers. The chapter is grateful to our local sponsors for their support.

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Lakeridge Winery, Total Wines and More, Mission Barbeque, National Golf Course and Country Club, Legends Golf Course, Publix Supermarkets, Costco, Portillo's, Texas Roadhouse, KeKe's, Margaritaville, Kings Ridge Country Club, and Culver's Hamburgers. Additionally, the chapters acknowledge the support of local businesses that offer our members discounts on their products and services.



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