



Jan 2023

## COMMANDER'S SCUTTLEBUTT

Tic-Tok and the time fly's by...If you are like me, you need to spend more time to make sure that your heirs will have an easy time taking care of your affairs when you set sail on your last patrol. My new year's resolution is to try and do just that. You should make it yours too and do it. That's the latest scuttlebutt. Do you know where the term scuttlebutt came from? In the days of sailing ships, the crew met every morning at a cask of water called a scuttlebutt and shared stories, rumors and lies, got a drink of water and then went to work. Today this happens in workplace break rooms, coffee shops and submarine reunions. Get yourself a cup and enjoy the Newsletter. \*\*\* HAPPY NEW YEAR \*\*\*

Greg "Hawkeye" Baer, Commander

## EMAIL PROBLEMS

We had email problems when I sent out the last newsletter. After much experimentation I finally determined that two free emails servers have decided to change their spam requirements and our newsletters were not delivered to shipmates with Gmail and Yahoo addresses. Several of you received more than one copy of the newsletter due to my experiments. I finally solved the problem by re-sending the newsletter to the problem email addresses in smaller groups. Some received it in their spam folders. Remember these email services are free. This means the providers may make changes without informing the customers or on their whim. They increased spam regulations so that their servers are not as busy with emails, and they do not have to install more servers. This allows them to avoid spending money on a free service. They do not have to please you as no money is involved so they can do what they want when they want. The best email service to use is the email service furnished by your Internet Service Provider (ISP). They want your business and will do what is necessary to keep you as a customer. Newsletters are sent out every four months, January, May, and September. If you do not receive a newsletter, please inform me and I will correct the problem and ensure you receive the newsletter. The newsletters are also available on the CAIMAN website.

## NAVY IS INSTALLING 3D METAL AND PLASTIC PRINTERS

The Navy has installed 3D metal printers and 3D polymer printers on the USS Bataan LHD-5 to evaluate whether they should install them on all ships and submarines. These printers can fabricate precision individual parts out of either stainless steel or plastic. The benefits are twofold. It maximizes the ships' overall readiness, reduces obsolescence issues and the demand on the supply chain. So far, the evaluation has been a success. The Navy has always been the front runner in the adoption of new technology and this event is another example of that continuing trend. (NAVSEA)

## REUNION PLANNING TRIP

Dings and I along with our adult supervisors will be traveling to San Diego next year to plan our 2024 reunion. Butch Warnberg is providing invaluable help as he is very familiar with the San Diego area. Butch is a retired San Diego police officer, but we plan to avoid the majority of the people he has dealt with in the past. We normally contact the tourist or convention office in the city CAIMAN plans to visit and they survey the hotels in the area to help us determine which hotel we will grace with our presence. San Diego does not have this type of office. This is where Butch's knowledge of San Diego becomes very valuable. The lack of this office to assist us will require Dings and I, with Butch's assistance, to survey the hotels in San Diego individually to find a hotel that will meet our standards. We plan to send many emails. I am sure many hotels will want our reunion in their establishments.

## PAY RAISES

Social Security is not the only pay that will receive a cost-of-living adjustment. Military retirees and disabled veterans will see their monthly checks increase by 8.7% in 2023, thanks to an annual adjustment to the federal cost of living allowance (COLA) due to inflation. This will be the largest increase since 1981. Retirees saw a 5.9% in 2022 and 1.3% in 2021. The annual adjustment has averaged 1.9% for the last 10 years. ED NOTE: Inflation wiped out this pay raise before we will receive it.

## MILITARY RECRUITMENT CRISIS

During the House Armed Services, Military Personnel Subcommittee (HASC-MP) markup of the FY2023 National Defense (NDAA-H.R.7900), Ranking Member Mike Gallagher (Wis.) said, "We are on the cusp of a military recruiting crisis." Lawmakers from both parties have expressed concern that this year could be the worst recruiting environment since the end of the Vietnam War. According to Politico the Army has reached 66 percent of its goal for the fiscal year ending in September and the Navy is at 89 percent according to data compiled from October 2021 to May 2022. Even with rates of 100 percent for the Air Force, Space Force, and the Marine Corps (Marines reduced their end strength by 1500), that leaves the department with a total rate of just 85 percent.

## HYPERSONIC MISSILES

The Navy will soon deploy C-HGB hypersonic missiles. Hypersonic missiles travel at speeds greater than mach 5. These missiles were developed in a joint Army/Navy program and will be launched from ships, submarines, and from Army transporter launchers. They will soon be installed on the 3 Zumwalt DDGs and underwater testing is underway. Each Zumwalt ship will carry 12 missiles. The Army plans to deploy them next year (2023) and they will be installed on submarines starting in 2029.

## LIFETIME PASS TO FEDERAL RECREATION SITES

Effective Nov. 11, 2022, veterans and Gold Star Families can obtain a free lifetime pass to more than 2,000 federal recreation sites across more than 400 million acres of public land, including national parks, wildlife refuges and forests. For more information and how to obtain a pass, go to <https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/veterans-and-gold-star-families-free-access.htm>. (If you do not have internet access, have your kids or grandkids look it up for you)

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## USS CLAMAGORE

The ex-USS Clamagore was towed away from Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina on Friday, 10/21/2022, and taken to Norfolk, Va. where it will be recycled. The submarine has been closed to the public since Dec. 2021 because of a leak in a main ballast tank. The Patriots Point Development Authority Board voted to recycle the Clamagore in March 2022, and a contract was secured in August. Crews have been working to remove materials and improve buoyancy on the submarine since August. The museum says 504 batteries, each weighing 900 pounds, have been removed from the submarine along with the boat's sail. The Clamagore was commissioned in 1945, but it was too late to serve in World War II. The submarine was decommissioned in 1975 and became part of the museum in 1981.

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## TRICARE PHARMACY NETWORK SHRINKING

The Defense Health Agency (DHA) has announced that beginning Oct. 24, 2022, thousands of community pharmacies will leave the TRICARE network. Express Scripts Inc. (ESI) is the TRICARE pharmacy contractor with oversight of home delivery, military pharmacy, and civilian contract facilities. Walmart and Sam's Club pharmacies are among those leaving the network. It is recommended that beneficiaries contact their pharmacy to see if it will remain in the network. DHA estimates that almost 400,000 beneficiaries, or roughly 4 percent of the TRICARE-eligible beneficiaries, will be impacted by the change. Impacted beneficiaries will receive a letter from ESI with a list of alternative in-network pharmacies. Walgreens, Rite Aid, and CVS will remain in the network as will many grocery store pharmacies and smaller chains. Network pharmacies also can be found at <https://militaryrx.express-scripts.com/find-pharmacy>. (If you do not have internet access, have your kids or grandkids look it up for you) DHA notes that beneficiaries can file a claim for a partial reimbursement for the cost of their medication when filling at a non-network pharmacy.

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## USSVI 2023 NATIONAL CONVENTION

The 2023 USSVI National Convention is scheduled for 27 August to 3 September 2023, in Tucson, Arizona. It will be held at the scenic Hilton El Conquistador Tucson Resort in Oro Valley.

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## SIX MORE STATES EXEMPT OR PARTIALLY EXEMPT MILITARY RETIRED PAY FROM TAXATION

This year six states exempted or partially exempted military retirement pay from their state income tax. According to Military.com state legislators in New Mexico, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, and Virginia passed laws giving retirees in those states tax breaks based on their military service. These tax changes include:

- New Mexico: Beginning in 2022, up to \$10,000 of military retirement is tax free. That amount increases to \$20,000 in 2023, and to \$30,000 until at least 2026.

- In Oklahoma, Rhode Island, and South Carolina military retirement income is fully tax-free beginning in 2022.

- Vermont: Beginning in 2022, up to \$10,000 in retirement income is tax free for those with a gross income less than \$50,000 for single filers or \$65,000 for joint filers.

- Virginia: In 2022, up to \$10,000 in retirement pay is tax free for retirees ages 55 and older. That amount increases by \$10,000 each year until 2025, when up to \$40,000 is deductible. This leaves only California and the District of Columbia fully taxing military retirement income. The States without income tax, those with only sales tax, have not changed. They do not tax our retirement pay but hang on because they are probably looking for a scheme to tax us.

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## USS GRAYBACK SS-208 FOUND

Seventy-five years after a U.S. Navy submarine sank in the Pacific Ocean during World War II, the family members of its 80 lost sailors are finally getting closure as to where their loved ones rest.

The USS Grayback under 1,400 feet of water was discovered off the Okinawa coast on June 5, 2019. The sub was last heard from in February 1944.

Stories of sunken ships have fascinated the world for centuries, including the story of the USS Grayback. It was one of 52 U.S. submarines reported missing during the great conflict. Six have been found in the decades since, and now the Grayback can be added to the list of subs whose demise is no longer a mystery.

The Lost 52 Project is an organization dedicating its time and resources to finding these lost subs. This month the Navy History and Heritage Command verified the discovery of the Grayback which the Lost 52 Project found 1,427 feet below sea level on June 5, off Okinawa's coast. It is the first U.S. submarine to be found in waters off Japan.

According to a news release, the Lost 52 team discovered that historical documents erred in the translation of the longitude of where the Grayback sank. With the new data and newly discovered Japanese mission logs, the searchers were able to refocus their efforts. Using groundbreaking robotics and technology, they found the dilapidated sub 100 miles from the area recorded in the original historical records.

The Grayback was one of the most successful submarines of World War II, but it never returned from its last mission in late February 1944.

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## **SUBMARINES PLAYED MAJOR ROLE IN WORLD WAR II VICTORY**

Submarine warfare took place in both the Pacific and European theaters of World War II. However, U.S. Navy submarines saw their greatest success against Japanese merchant vessels and warships. Submarines also played humanitarian and special operations roles in the campaign against Japan. In many of the hardest-fought battles of the war, submarine crews rescued downed carrier pilots including future President George H.W. Bush.

Fleet submarines also delivered troops tasked with special missions. In August 1942, USS Nautilus and USS Argonaut delivered Marine Corps Col. Evans F. Carlson's "Raiders" to Makin Island in the Gilbert chain as a diversion during the Guadalcanal campaign. Subsequently, the two submarines returned to pick up the Marines after they completed their missions to reconnoiter the island and destroy important enemy facilities.

In all, U.S. submarines destroyed 1,314 enemy warships in the Pacific, representing 55% of all Axis power warships lost and a total of 5.3 million tons of shipping. Out of 16,000 U.S. submariners, the force lost 375 officers and 3,131 enlisted men in 52 submarines. In the final months of the war, American submarines had difficulty finding targets because the Japanese had virtually no ships left to sink.

Submarines also played an important role in the European theater in the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea where German U-boats posed a menace against allied shipping particularly in the early years of the war.

By mid-1943, U.S. advances in sensors and antisubmarine weapons carried by warships convoying merchant vessels greatly reduced the U-boat threat, and much of the submarine force was transferred to the Pacific theater.

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## **SENIORS**

All CAIMAN sailors have reached the age where we can get paid to not go to work. In other words, they are paying us to stay away. Now we get to spoil our grandchildren and get even with our kids. This would be a great age if we did not have to assist doctors in paying their green fees. I assume many of you are like me and visit several doctors monthly. I cannot complain about my social life as I have the privilege of talking to several nurses and doctors often. I also manage to spend several hours a week in the local coffee shop (vice the local watering holes as in my younger days). I know several CAIMANITES would rather visit the golf course instead of a coffee shop and a few that regularly visit their recliners. I also make sure my recliner does not become lonely.

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## **WINTER WEATHER**

This winter's weather has been brutal in several areas. Here in the Pacific Northwest, we received snow in late November and early December which is not normal. The news has reported some severe weather in other parts of the United States. Good news summer will return, but never fast enough. Remember the reunion is in sunny San Diego.

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## **USS CONNECTICUT**

Investigators have determined USS Connecticut (SSN-22) hit an uncharted seamount that grounded the nuclear attack submarine on the underwater feature in the South China Sea. The damage to the forward section of the submarine damaged its ballast tanks and prompted Connecticut to make a week-long voyage on the surface from the South China Sea to Guam. The Navy has said repeatedly that the submarine's nuclear reactor and propulsion system are undamaged. The boat is currently in Guam undergoing initial repairs overseen by Naval Sea Systems Command, personnel from the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and the submarine tender USS Emory S. Land (AS-39). The Navy will first determine how the submarine can be repaired to safely leave Guam for follow-on repairs. "If we ended up doing the Connecticut work in one of the public shipyards, which would certainly cause perturbations in all the other work in the shipyards," Jay Stefany, acting assistant secretary of the Navy for research, development, and acquisition told the House Armed Services Committee readiness subcommittee on Thursday.

Connecticut is one of three Sea Wolf-class attack nuclear boats that were developed for deep-water operations to take on Soviet submarines in the open ocean. Since the end of the Cold War, the trio has been upgraded and modified to carry out some of the Navy's most sensitive missions.

The commander, executive officer, and senior enlisted sailor have been fired following the results of the investigation into the Oct. 2 underwater collision in the South China Sea. ED NOTE: (Fired for hitting an uncharted mountain – an unavoidable act)

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## **ETERNAL PATROL**

The reason our eternal patrol list is shrinking is our members that are still around are shrinking. Reunion attendance is the best way to stay in touch with friends and shipmates as our numbers will continue to decrease. This is an unpleasant fact and medical science has not found a way to change it or cure it. Barber, Donald LCDR (59/59) 6 October 2022  
Floyd, Daniel RM2(SS) (63/66) 10 May 2022  
Green, William CAPT (62/64) 1 December 2022  
Hamann, Dennis ST2(SS) (60/62) 21 September 2021  
Kurath, Craig QM2(SS) (68/70) 27 November 2022  
McGill, Harry EM1(SS) (70/72) 26 October 2022

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## **SAILING LIST**

I have not been able to find any more shipmates from our lost list. I have exhausted all my resources to locate any of our lost shipmates. As I discover more ideas, I will keep looking. Finding all CAIMAN shipmates has become an obsession of mine. 38 is a lot less than we had when we started, but zero is better and that is my goal.

Located shipmates	1376
Hopefully at the next reunion:	391
Eternal Patrol:	985
Lost List:	38

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**I SPENT YEARS OF MY LIFE ON SHIPS  
THAT SUNK ON PURPOSE AND YOU  
EXPECT ME TO BE NORMAL.**

# Those Who Sail Beneath the Swells

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by Bob 'Dex' Armstrong

In every generation, the navies of the world always seem to find the necessary number of that 'special breed of man' needed to man their undersea ships... Those truly magnificent fools with the requisite pride and spirit of adventure needed to voluntarily crawl into an iron cylinder full of similar mental defectives and take the contraptions to sea.

I can't speak for the rest of the Navy. The only 'rest of the Navy' I ever met, were perpetual shore duty shore patrols. Looking back, I can't remember one positive interaction I had with any sonuvabitch sporting an SP armband. The last thing they were interested in, in the old days, was spreading goodwill. My entire short-lived naval service career was spent with like-minded jaybirds who actually liked going to sea in what closely resembled a sinkable septic tank.

I actually thought that to be a sailor, one had to go to sea. Sailing had to involve stuff like seagulls, saltwater and large metal objects that were painted gray, displaced tons of water and bounced around a lot in heavy weather.

How guys who interpreted photographs in a windowless building in Omaha, Nebraska called themselves sailors was way beyond the level of comprehension of a seventeen-year-old who cut his teeth on books about Pacific submarine action.

Lads who turned up at New London back in the 1950s weren't the kind of young men whose sense of naval adventure could be satisfied inventorying jocks and socks in some damn quonset hut in East Rat's Ass, Minnesota, or typing liberty cards at some shore station where they hot-patched weather balloons. Submariners had no desire to belong to any organization that issued clothing designed to blend in with poison ivy plants... required you to dig holes and own a personal shovel... or any desire to eat unidentifiable food out of little green cans in the rain.

We liked hydraulic oil-laced coffee, crawling up on a pre-warmed flash pad and freely exchanging insults with men as equally ugly as ourselves. We enjoyed knowing that in any unscheduled altercation, our entire crew would show up to extract our drunken fanny and chastise those we had stirred up.

Back in the old days, (before any of you modern day techno undersea washbucklers get a twist in your bloomers, I only know about the old days. I never rode anything that was intended to go below 412 feet or stay down for several months at a time.) So, as I started to say...

Back in the old days, the old leather-faced, hardboiled Chiefs used to say,

"Gahdam sailors belong on ships and ships belong at sea."

There was some kind of selection process that they put you through at New London that eliminated the fainthearted, the not totally committed, guys lacking desire to engage in intimate cohabitation with members of the opposite gender, communists, bedwetters, whiners, and anyone who entertained the slightest desire to be stationed in Omaha, Nebraska.

The system, God bless it, sorted out the true believers and packed the rest off to the surface fleet, Omaha and God knows where else.

And they put us on boats. A lot of us went to old, late in life, boats with combat histories. They were old World War II boats with racks, that once bunked our heroes... the men we wanted to be accepted by and to be exactly like.

We qualified and in so doing we joined the continuous chain that is and will always be the U.S. Submarine Force.

I don't know what the dreams and aspirations consist of for the young men of today. Ours was a far simpler time. We grew up chasing fireflies, shooting marbles, spinning tops, teaching each other yo-yo tricks, shooting each

other with BB guns, playing two hands below the waist tag football, neighborhood kick the can and pick-up-game after school hardball. Nobody cried, tattle-taled or went home to pee.

Back then, you didn't have to have made all 'A's in diathermic razz-a-ma-tazz physics or have a working understanding of the components in the formulation of the universe, to ride submarines.

You had to have an understanding of honor, loyalty, faithfully performed duty, obedience to command, respect for leadership, and total and absolute faith in your ship and shipmates.

Added to these qualities, a true boat sailor had to have a wide-screen sense of adventure and the same brand of curiosity that has lived in the hearts of those in every generation who ventured beyond known limits.

And you had love dancing with the devil. Somewhere, real major-league devil dancing got shot out the garbage gun.

But some things never change. It's still pitch-black dark below 150 feet, a boat is always no farther than 9 miles from land (straight down) and the skipper's word is law.

And so far, every generation has worn the same insignia, and nobody ever forgets the hull number of their qual boat or the name of their first COB.

There are many common denominators among the worldwide community of undersea sailors.

When the Kursk went down, I was struck and frankly dumbfounded by the genuine outpouring of sympathy for the families and loved ones of the lost boat sailors. To me, they had always been our enemy. Up to then, I had given no thought to the similarities found in our manner of service and the commonality of the danger of operating deep within a hostile environment surrounded by potential death on all sides.

Likewise, I never cease to be surprised by the way that submariners embrace their adversarial counterparts. There appears to be a universal acceptance with implied forgiveness of all German U-boat crewmen.

You never hear the term 'Nazi' U-boatmen. The term 'German' has become substituted for the term 'Nazi'.

America has a short national memory, and everybody gets out of the penalty box in one generation.

I sat in a theater rooting for the former 'bad guys' in the film *DAS BOOT*. What we were seeing on the screen, was a boat full of sons of Hitler sneaking around and sinking our citizens. But the fact that we, having lived a similar life inside a recognizably similar pressure hull, elicited a sympathy and irrational forgiveness. In short, we related to both the characters and their circumstances.

I guess that in the final analysis, all submariners are brothers when you look into the depth of their souls.

That is good. In times of war, nobody who transits the surface of the world's oceans loves submarines.

Submarines and submariners are viewed as implements and practitioners of the black arts... backstabbing, bushwhacking sonuvabitches. We slip up from hiding below the waves and blow ships to pieces in a totally unfair, unsportsmanlike fashion. Any way you cut it, that's the way we made our living.

We black sheep... we predatory sharks... we saltwater sneaky Petes stick together.

We are a very small group when you consider the total world population and the percentage that never had any desire to crawl into a steel tank and sink out of sight.

Submariners, when all is said and done, are special unique people who are the only ones who truly understand each other and ever will.

The old warhorses who fought submarine wars are leaving us. These submersible sea dogs passed down the lethal reputation we carried and the awesome respect our boats were given.

I for one have been both honored and extremely proud to have been a part of this fine body of extraordinary adventurers and patriots.