



# The Dolphin Brotherhood

## Meeting Recaps

Here are some short recaps of the most recent Seattle Base meetings. Please note that there will be no meetings in November or December, although we hope to see everyone at the Christmas luncheon (see page 11). Also remember that the January meeting will have the base elections. If you are interested finding out more about the duties of the officers or in running for an office, be sure to contact one of the current base officers.

### September Meeting

The Tolling of the Boats ceremony was held on September 10 (in lieu of the September business meeting). You can read more about the ceremony on page 8.

### October Meeting

October's meeting saw a visit by the University of Washington's Human Powered Submarine group, along with their sub. The 2005 team finished in 6th place in the last competition at the David Taylor Basin, but this year's team is hoping to improve on that finish. The team is broken into five design groups; Hull, Electronics, Testing, Propulsion, and Controls. While each group

is focused on their specialty, the project does allow the students to work in teams (something that usually isn't emphasized in college work) to ensure that the whole project comes together smoothly. As with most college groups, the Human Powered Submarine group needs sponsorship; not just money (although that helps), but also with technical expertise and support. You can get more information about the project and how to donate or help out at the group website:  
<http://courses.washington.edu/uwsub/>



**The 2005 Human Powered Sub Group**

## Commander's Corner

By Karl 'Dutch' Krompholz, Base Commander



Shipmates,

If you missed this year's Tolling of the Boats Ceremony, you missed the best yet. From Commander Mooney's reading of the

lost boats, to the bagpipes in the background, from the sunlight glinting off the lake, to the heel snap of the honor guard, it was a memorable experience. Don Masoero and Phil Ward exceeded all expectations with their organization and attention to detail. The date for next years Tolling Ceremony has already been set for August 5th, so mark your calendars.

The October business meeting was well attended, and with good reason. The

U.W. Engineering Dept. did a show and tell on their entry in the human powered submarine competition. Jim Foote (National Vice Cmdr.) presented USSVI National Recognition awards to Dave Schueler for our base newsletter, and Don Smith for our base web site. Charlie Ryan reported on the status of our Christmas Lunch set for December 17th. I will be sending, via e-mail, or snail mail a registration form which includes all the info you should need (there is a form on page 11), so make your plans to attend.

Our next base activities include the Veterans Day Parade on November 5th, and the Veterans Day Ceremony at Tahoma Cemetery on November 11th.

Remember, there will be no business meetings in November and December. Our next meeting will be in January 18th. Be prepared to elect your choices for new base officers.

Dutch

## Tango Bravo Today

By Joe Buff: from Military.com

In late autumn 2004, the U.S. Navy and DARPA jointly announced a new submarine design feasibility study, TANGO BRAVO. The name derives from the initials T and B, standing for "Technology Barriers" (or more optimistically, "Technology Breakthroughs.") That initial announcement was met with a mix of enthusiasm, skepticism, and confusion, depending on who you were and whom you listened to back then.

Well, enough time has passed for some dust to have settled, some multi-million-dollar contracts to have been awarded, and some clarity in general to have emerged. As stated rather emphatically by senior Navy officers who are now overseeing and managing the project, TANGO BRAVO is not the design of a new class of super-submarine. Rather, the effort consists of a cluster of interrelated feasibility studies, looking "outside the box" at many different aspects of fast-attack sub layout, arming, and manning. There's no guarantee that any particular one of these innovative concept thrusts will pan out in practice, and the timeframe for any payoff - in terms of new subs actually in commission, in the water - may be better measured in decades than in years. But this is definitely not bad news: It's simply a reality check on public expectations.

The driving force behind TANGO BRAVO can be summarized in one word, cost. The latest class of fast-attack sub (SSN), the *Virginias*, at the present funded building rate of one a year have a price tag around 2.5 billion dollars each. Some experts believe that if this building rate could be doubled, to (say) one *Virginia* per year by General Dynamics Electric Boat, and one by Northrop Grumman Newport News Shipbuilding (who now share the work on each sub in a complicated teaming arrangement), the cost per boat would drop to around \$2 billion each. That's still a lot of money, though arguably it's reasonable for what the Navy and America get in undersea peacekeeping and combat power - the *Virginias* are truly superb 21st century capital ships.

But here's where the problem of fleet size comes in, driven by the problem of cost: A modern SSN has a useful hull life of about 33 years. Building at the rate of one a year, eventually the fast-attack component of our Submarine Force would reach a steady state of 33 vessels. By the 2020s, however, China alone could outnumber us with nuclear-powered and diesel subs together by a factor of five, maybe more. That puts us at the danger point where the advantage tilts from individual quality to sheer quantity, especially in enemy home waters - i.e., WESTPAC.

If we could build more than one good or great SSN for the same money that currently pays for just one *Virginia*, our Navy and our country would be better prepared for whatever challenges the future holds. One conceivable way to get a cheaper but capable SSN is to perfect innovative means to make it smaller without sacrificing performance, and perhaps even while enhancing performance. Hence the bold push named TANGO BRAVO.

TANGO BRAVO feasibility studies are looking at five main areas of technology, every one of which contributes significantly to SSN cost over a sub's useful lifespan, and every one of which could produce very valuable breakthroughs - genuine upside discontinuities - in what next-generation American SSNs look like and how they work. It's way too soon to know for sure how much each of these different directions of exploration and experimentation will pan out productively. Tradeoffs will have to be made, and competing new design options will lead to winners and losers in the always-brutal Beltway acquisition game. Above all, there's the chance of technology failure. Some ideas that sound wonderful today or next year may prove to be too expensive or even infeasible in practice. Enticing artists' conceptions of futuristic-looking fast attacks in magazines or brochures are merely that - artists' conceptions. And implementation of any new prototype models or production designs will be subject to the same familiar bugaboos as ever: deadline delays and budget overruns. (The *Virginias*, originally, were supposed to go for something like only half their current price in constant dollars. The UK's new *Astute*-class SSN has suffered nearly crippling delays and overruns due to an atrophying design and engineering expertise base - a cautionary tale for the U.S.)

So a bit of healthy disbelief seems advised when TANGO BRAVO's goal is labeled as "the same or better mission capabilities for half the money," or claims are made that "with concerted effort, an SSN design derived from TANGO BRAVO would be ready for procurement in 2011 or - under ideal conditions - even earlier." On the other hand, we can't afford to not do TANGO BRAVO, or our own expertise base will wither irrecoverably, and we won't have a good follow-on class beyond the *Virginias*.

These are the five main technology areas encompassed in legislation and contract language for TANGO BRAVO:

1. Shaftless propulsion. The propulsion shaft of current SSN designs is long and rather heavy,

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causing center-of-gravity (trim) difficulties for naval architects, and the shaft requires a large hole in the stern of the pressure hull. Moving to all-electric propulsion, with the drive motors encased in pods outside the people tank, and with hull penetrations needed only for power cables that don't rotate, is a very attractive alternative. A word of devil's advocacy, though. A commercial ship with a similar arrangement recently suffered a serious fire in one such pod; no one was injured, but the ship was crippled. And this was on the surface with help nearby - not deeply submerged during battle maneuvers. The tech for submarine use will surely get there, but the point is it isn't there yet and it won't be cheap.

2. External weapons stowage. Right now, a lot of pressure-hull volume is taken up by an SSN's torpedo room, including its weapon-handling machinery and the torpedo tubes themselves. Were weapons to be carried outside the hull, the ship could prove to be smaller and cheaper. In fact a greater number of bigger weapons might be deployable on a submarine significantly smaller than today's available SSN classes. If it works, it's a major gain for American taxpayers. But once more, just for argument's sake, let me play devil's advocate. If weapons are stored outside the hull, several new requirements arise. The weapons have to be protected from ambient sea pressure until ready to fire, because riding around for months on end at tens of atmospheres, down deep in corrosive salt water, is more than an Improved Mark 48 ADCAP torpedo or Tactical Tomahawk cruise missile is meant to bear. The weapons, whatever their physical arrangement, need to be enclosed in a streamlined casing of some sort, or else they'd create severe hydrodynamic drag and "singing" that would emit a telltale - noisy - acoustic signature and also reduce the ship's maximum speed. (Are we moving toward a double-hull design like long-standing Russian/Soviet practice? If so, are our cost savings quickly evaporating?) Lastly, even if the weapon-rounds themselves are "wooden," i.e., meant to be free from any maintenance while on board, the hookups for data links and other required preambles to firing, plus the entire complicated firing mechanism itself, could create fatal problems in case of any malfunction that occurs outside the main hull. Today, at least, all these numerous items required to put torpedoes on target, and the supporting equipment that comes with each Tomahawk vertical launch system tube, are accessible to men in the torpedo room in a shirtsleeves environment.

3. Hull adaptable sonar array. This is a very promising area, since at present an SSN is equipped with several different sonar complexes each of which makes for awkwardness in ship equipment layout, and also in sonar blind spots. As just one example, the sonar dome within the soft nose of current SSNs makes the bow extremely vulnerable in case of collision or battle damage. (See photos released by the Navy of *USS San Francisco's* sonar dome while in dry dock after she hit an uncharted seamount.) If sensors could be integrated directly with high-yield steel, all around an SSN's hull, designers would have important new flexibility.

4. Ship infrastructure reduction. At present, different auxiliary sub-systems in an SSN are powered by electricity, hydraulics, compressed air, or other sources of energy. The result is a multitude of hardware throughout the internal compartments which calls for several distinct sets of maintenance skills, different stocks of spare parts, and different problems (and solutions) in case of a failure or a mishap. All-electric systems could greatly simplify this profusion of cables, pipes, valves, and operating machinery. The result could be a major saving in space (always at a premium in any submarine design), and in cost. However, traditionalists or conservative engineers and seasoned submariners might (rightly?) feel that using a single system to power every device aboard abandons redundancy and puts too many eggs in one basket.

5. Crew size reduction. From the *Los Angeles* class to the *Seawolves* to the *Virginias*, crew size has dropped only slightly, remaining at well over one hundred men. There's a type of Catch-22 here, since the larger the crew, the more design weight, space, and cost must be allocated toward habitability. If automation could be significantly increased, crew size might substantially shrink - and along with it, the size and cost of the ship. There's also a possible double-whammy benefit, as a smaller crew means not only a smaller, cheaper ship (provided automation is achieved at moderate unit expense), it means much lower lifetime charges for the entire fitted-out vessel as an integrated weapon system. This is because personnel themselves cost money, not only to train and nurture as they strive to earn their Dolphins and then climb their chosen career ladders, but also in terms of payroll, health benefits, dependent allowances, pension expenses, and so forth. A devil's advocate warning I've often heard from submariners is that over-automation could become an SSN's Achilles' heel. Scuttlebutt has it that

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newer data displays are non-ergonomic to the point of sometimes being distracting or overwhelming, as it is. When automation extends into the realm of artificial intelligence and expert systems for the control room, we're entering some pretty serious terra incognita. And when physical things break, it takes human experience, improvisation, and often brute strength to repair them. The human body itself is frail (think *USS San Francisco* again), so crew injuries are another deleterious factor that can't be ignored. If an SSN is too mechanized, and available manpower too small, that SSN may look like a terrific bargain on paper, but prove to be a dreadful flop at sea when it goes in harm's way. Between fixing damage, manually compensating for whatever things have been damaged until they're fixed, and treating wounded guys with healthy guys who can't do two things at once, there won't be adequate people to go around. Mission failures could result, presenting unacceptable threats to national security.

Nobody said TANGO BRAVO would be easy. This discussion can barely scratch the surface of a topic that will be worked on by some of our country's finest minds, and finest contractors and think tanks, for a long time to come. Hopefully readers have gained a sense of what TANGO BRAVO is so far, what it isn't, what it might be eventually, and what it can never be. By my own estimate, the first TANGO BRAVO submarine won't be built, shaken down, tuned up back in dry dock, and ready for battle before about 2022.

The one thing we do know, with the highest certainty, is that the TANGO BRAVO feasibility study has such a long-range payoff, in terms of practical undersea platforms in the water and passing stress tests, that the problem of the one-per-year *Virginia* build rate will haunt us constantly. Unless, that is, we wise up and allocate more money to build two *Virgins* per annum when Congress first has the option to do so for fiscal year 2007, rather than putting things off to FY 2012 or forever. In a report to Congress dated June 24, 2005, a TANGO BRAVO fast-attack was already being discussed as costing 75 percent as much as a *Virginia*. That's a heck of a lot of price creep from the 50 percent referred to barely six months earlier! How much further will this creeping go? When the day is done, will TANGO BRAVO cost savings turn out to be completely illusive, with all emphasis placed on the tech benefits, not the money?

Sea power is the key to global dominance, and to peace-enforcement on favorable terms. Undersea warfare is the key to modern sea power, especially when unmanned vehicles (submerged and

airborne) enter the picture. There's a major backlog in SSN construction compared to even minimum national requirements - our fast-attack fleet is too small and getting smaller, but the worst shortfall won't be manifest until 2015 or later, enabling dangerous complacency right now. If that backlog is allowed to grow, instead of being redressed with immediate urgency, America - if only by default - will take a big step toward becoming the latest former superpower.

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## Smoke

by Mike Hemming

It's hard to believe for some but there is an aging group of men bound together by smoke. Not the smoke people ordinarily draw into their lungs for a buzz, legal or illegal, but stinky old diesel smoke made by burning hydrocarbons. It's burned in great big old noisy diesel engines designed for railroad locomotives and transplanted into a submarine, of all places.

This smoke binds them together with wispy chains stronger than the finest hardened steel. Men that sit around remembering shipmates and times good and bad, their memories brought to them on grey blue clouds. Clouds of it shot out over ports of the seven seas, on lighting off for going to sea. Underway and across those seas the smoke settles to an efficiency haze, but the diesel smoke smell follows them. The smoke and sounds that shut down when reaching homeport after many days alone at sea.

Today, these old timers travel many miles to see, hear and once more catch that wonderful reminder of their youth. With tears in the eyes of some they lean forward to breathe it in. They take photographs of diesel smoke clouds belching from exhaust pipes of museum piece subs. Back home they show them to others and post video clips on the internet. Others sit and wait for those clips to download over slow internet connections, just to see that smoke and hear the sound.

It is said that the sense of smell brings back the strongest memories. If so then we are lucky ones, because our smoke is strong and memorable. Along with our smoky chains we have those memories and neither can be removed from our hearts.

Many a submariner says, "One more time, just one more time". For some, that means to go out and make another dive, for others just to hear the roar and to smell that smoke. Me, I'd like to yank a throttle lever, feel the deck plates shudder under my feet, hear the sounds, smell the smoke and be with those that are bound together by these things.

## **Submarine warfare experts gather at NPS Naval school's prominence puts it at the forefront of confronting China's growing naval threat**

By Julia Reynolds, Monterey Herald Staff Writer

The specter of a war with China over Taiwan was one of several global security issues that drew U.S. submarine officers from around the world to a top-secret meeting at the Naval Postgraduate School this month.

The fact that more than two dozen Navy leaders met under the highest security in Monterey puts the Navy school on the front line of a developing Cold War-type scenario in the Pacific. In recent months, military exercises there have been marked by tense diplomacy and saber-rattling between the U.S. and China.

Under security conditions that one Pentagon insider described as "impenetrable," Chief of Naval Operations Mike Mullen was quietly whisked in and out of town Sept. 28 and Sept. 29 to address the admirals on undisclosed military and security topics, said Mullen's spokesman, Cmdr. John Kirby. He said Mullen, the Navy's top officer, was invited by the admirals. During his quick trip to the Peninsula, Mullen visited Fleet Numerical Laboratories.

Kirby said he could not comment on whether Mullen discussed China and the Pacific with the submarine commanders, but he said Mullen talked about the future direction of the Navy and "the crucial role of the submarine forces." In 2006, the Navy plans to rapidly develop its anti-submarine warfare technology, according to a report released Friday by Mullen.

Other participants at the meeting, including an Asian security expert contracted by the Pentagon, discussed China's strategies.

Those responsible for all U.S. submarine operations across the globe were there, including Vice Adm. Chuck Munns, commander of the Navy's submarine forces and the Atlantic fleet, and Rear Adm. Jeff Cassias, commander of submarine forces in the Pacific.

### **Center for sub strategy**

The location of such a high-level meeting is not surprising. Monterey is in many ways ground zero for submarine intelligence and strategy, in part because Naval Postgraduate School dean Rear Adm. Patrick Dunne comes from the submarine side of the Navy. Among other projects, Naval Postgraduate School researchers have built and tested unmanned submarines in Monterey Bay. Fleet Numerical has strong ties to the fleets, supplying weather and ocean tools for submarines and anti-submarine warfare.

The Navy's submarine fleets are often

referred to as "the silent service" because much of their activity is covert and involves espionage.

The meeting in Monterey was similarly under wraps, with no official information available until the officers left the area. Described by Munns' office as a submarine flag officers' training symposium, it was organized by Munns and hosted by Dunne, and was one of a number of high-level submarine conferences held in different locations over the years.

The gathering came just weeks after the Navy's Pacific Fleet commander vowed to keep a close watch on the first joint war exercises between China and Russia, held in late August.

The joint exercises, called Peace Mission 2005, were conducted across the Yellow Sea from the Korean peninsula and involved nearly 10,000 troops on land, sea and air. As part of the weeklong drills, two submarines tested anti-ship missiles, according to foreign press reports.

### **Battling U.S. presence**

Though the drills were officially billed as anti-terrorism exercises, Chinese and Russian reporters concluded that their real purpose was to stand up to U.S. dominance in the region and to show that China has the military capacity to invade Taiwan.

"It's a not-so-subtle signal that there is an alliance," said Christopher Twomey, a Naval Postgraduate School researcher who spoke on Chinese foreign policy at the meeting. "You don't do amphibious land exercises to stop terrorism. It was clearly a signal that China is capable of landing in Taiwan." According to the Senate Armed Services Committee, China will acquire 11 new subs this year and is engaged in a military buildup that has been described as "breakneck," although its military budget is estimated by the Pentagon to be between \$60 billion and \$90 billion, compared to \$455 billion in the United States.

The Pentagon, however, is taking the news of the buildup seriously.

"Since no nation threatens China," Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said this summer, "one must wonder: Why this growing investment?"

But China does think it's threatened. Earlier this year, China and Russia, angered by U.S. unilateralism and what they consider to be meddling near their borders, recently issued a joint proclamation of unity. As all sides hustle to stay on top of a delicate balance of power in the region, the United States is trying to reassert its former dominance in the Pacific and has stepped up its air power and submarine forces in the region.

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### **Sending more subs**

The Navy is moving more subs to its Pacific fleet, and for the past four years has been enlarging a submarine base in Guam in an expansion dubbed "the Guam Experiment." The submarine *USS Houston* was ordered to Guam in December, and the Navy plans to send another sub soon.

Mullen recently promised to double U.S. submarine manufacturing quotas to two subs a year. He made the announcement while visiting the Groton, Conn., sub-building base, which was spared from closure at the last minute by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

All this comes as military and diplomatic experts see Taiwan as a potential battleground for the U.S. and China. The Pentagon issued a report this summer noting that China still has more than 500 missiles pointed at Taiwan.

If a conflict over Taiwan were to break out in the Pacific, it would likely fall to the Navy's submarine commanders to do something about it.

"These are the guys that will be at the front lines if anything happens," said Twomey, a civilian professor and researcher at the Naval Postgraduate School's department of national security affairs.

Twomey analyzes U.S.-China relations for the Pentagon's Defense Threat Reduction Agency, charged with safeguarding U.S. interests from weapons of mass destruction, and has been involved in diplomatic efforts to calm tensions in the Pacific.

### **U.S.-China meeting**

In early August, days before the Navy held its own weeklong, 10,000-troop war exercise in the Pacific, Twomey took part in a U.S.-China diplomatic dialogue sponsored by the Defense Department and the Naval Postgraduate School.

The idea was for each side to understand the other's perception of the military threats they face. Such "unofficial" and frank dialogues, Twomey said, "were very useful in the Cold War. The hope is that we will get attention in the Pentagon."

The dialogues included Chinese military leaders, a representative from the Navy's Pacific Command, and diplomatic and military scholars. The U.S. and China "are at a critical juncture," Twomey and two NPS colleagues wrote in a report on the meeting. Taiwan may be the only potential source of military conflict between the two countries. "Chinese willingness to use violent means to prevent permanent military separation of Taiwan was emphatically repeated," the report said.

In response to this perceived threat, the Bush administration has been trying since 2001 to get Taiwan to buy billions of dollars worth of U.S.

submarines and submarine-hunting aircraft to defend itself from a possible mainland invasion. If the sale goes through, it could provoke China into demonstrating the force of its own sub fleets. The \$10 billion sale has so far been blocked by Taiwan's opposition parties.

China has told the U.S. it does not want to see any military cooperation between the U.S. and Taiwan, reminding the White House that it has agreed to respect the "one nation" status of the island and China.

### **Taiwan apart**

In recent months, the island's dominant political parties seem content with the status quo — not trying to reintegrate with the mainland, but not wanting complete independence either.

"The opposition parties are not interested in unification. They want to keep it as it is," said J.D. Yuen, who teaches Chinese foreign policy and East Asian security at the Monterey Institute of International Studies. The diplomatic balance of power is so delicate right now, he said, that China would likely hesitate to attack Taiwan. "But if Taiwan is going to publicly declare independence, China would feel it has to attack," he said.

Some say that balancing weaponry doesn't have to mean war. Yuen said the Russia-China alliance is "more rhetorical" than real. "Certainly they would like to keep their influence and minimize U.S. influence," he said, but the approach of both sides has been a combination of "engagement plus hedging."

### **Rumsfeld weighs in**

Recently, while the nation's headlines have been occupied with hurricanes and Iraq, the Cold War-style standoff with China has been building.

In late August, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, who has done little to downplay his views of China as a threat, refueled China's fires when he referred to Taiwan as a "sovereign nation," a statement the State Department soon disavowed.

Simulated electronic war games planned for the U.S. and Taiwan were quietly canceled this week, and when pressed, the Navy said that the newly appointed head of the Pacific Command needed more time to get oriented to his job. A spokesman for China's foreign ministry, however, said Monday his office specifically pressed the U.S. "not to have any military exchanges and links with Taiwan."

Last week, over China's objections, Taiwan's fiery former president Lee Teng-hui was in Los Angeles visiting "old friends" and drumming up

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support for the independence movement. The last time Lee came to the U.S., in 1995, China was angry enough to launch missiles into the Taiwan Strait.

Rumsfeld scheduled a trip to China this week, his first since taking office in 2001. China's foreign ministry said Rumsfeld will arrive sometime between Tuesday and Thursday to meet defense minister Cao Gangchuan and other military leaders.

## **Carter takes on water, returns to port**

By Christopher Munsey, Navy Times

Just hours after starting a long transit on Friday October 14, to its new homeport in Bangor, Wash., the attack submarine *Jimmy Carter* had to turn around and come back to port at Naval Submarine Base New London after a big wave crashed over the submarine's sail, sending seawater pouring down the open hatch.

After falling down the hatch, the water short-circuited a piece of electronic equipment inside the submarine, said Lt. Mark Jones, a spokesman for Commander, Submarine Group 2.

At the time, weather conditions were rough, with "choppy" seas, Jones said. At the time, the submarine was transiting on the surface, heading east towards the Atlantic.

Following procedure, the officer of the deck and one or two lookouts would have been standing watch at the top of the sail, hooked on with safety harnesses, Jones said.

"The submarine was not at a point where it could dive yet," he said.

No one from the crew was injured in the incident, said Jones, and watchstanders were able to mop up the water.

After returning to New London, the destroyed equipment was swapped out for a new component and the submarine left port the following day. "This was an essential piece of equipment," Jones said.

Commissioned in February, *Jimmy Carter* is the third and final Seawolf-class submarine. The Navy spent \$975 million lengthening Jimmy Carter with a 100-foot hull extension, making the submarine longer and 2,500 tons heavier than *Seawolf* and *Connecticut*, the first two submarines in the class. The hull extension opens up space for the submarine to store, launch and recover large unmanned underwater vehicles. Several naval analysts have said Jimmy Carter eventually will serve as a successor to *Parche*, long described as the Navy's spy submarine. *Jimmy Carter* will be assigned to Submarine Development Squadron 5.

## **Hundreds gather to honor fallen shipmate**

By: JOSN Arianne Anderson

Military Honors presented to STS1(SS) Eric Paul Skinner at his memorial service at Shepherd of the Sea Chapel on Oct. 15.

Hundreds of family members, friends, and shipmates gathered at Shepherd of the Sea Chapel Oct. 15 to honor Sonar Technician 1st Class (SS) Eric Paul Skinner, who died Oct. 5 aboard *USS Virginia* (SSN 774).

"Eric's shipmates would best remember him as a dedicated and hard working submariner, always first to lend a hand. His love and commitment to the U.S. Navy was evident in his unwavering support and guidance of the junior Sailors," said Machinist's Mate 1st Class (SS) James Norris.

"Those blessed to call him a friend remember him as a loyal man with a mischievous sense of humor and a love of practical jokes and brotherly joshing," Norris continued.

"I served with Eric aboard *Virginia* for almost three years," retired CMDCM (SS) Casey L. White said during his eulogy. "He was known throughout the boat as the 'Computer Guy,' and when I say 'Computer Guy,' I mean he was an expert."

White continued, "He became one of my most valuable Sailors. Eric would stand out and about programming, formatting, testing, re-building ... you name it - he did it on a computer."

Along with being known as the 'Computer Guy' he was known as a great leader among his crew members and his family.

"I'm not going to stand here and tell you what a great person Eric was, you all know that," said Skinner's wife, Dianne, at the ceremony. "What I want to talk about is the way he took Sailors under his wing and taught them the way of the Navy. Eric was Navy through-and-through. We were a Navy family through-and-through. And I believe the best way everyone can honor my husband is to teach and pass on his knowledge to the Sailors that will lead the Navy of tomorrow."

Eric is survived by wife Dianne, children John, Natasha, Brandon, Dianna, mother Diane, father Paul, stepmother Judy, sister Stephanie Schafner and brother Kyle Sullivan.

*There is a port of no return where ships may ride  
at anchor for a little space.*

*Then some starless night the cable slips, leaving  
only an eddy at the mooring place.*

*Gulls veer no longer, Sailor rest your oar.  
No tangled wreckage will be washed ashore.*

*Rest your oar, shipmate, as you go on your final  
patrol. May you sail in peace.*



## Tolling of the Boats Ceremony

By Pat Householder

Wow! M&C Chair Don Masoero pulled off a masterful "Tolling the Boats" ceremony in Kirkland on Saturday, Sept 10, 2005. By early afternoon the rain clouds that threatened the ceremony had withdrawn, leaving blue skies and puffy white clouds.

As we live our busy lives, it is fitting and proper that we all should set aside a couple hours one day each year to honor the sacrifice these now 'forever young' submariners made when they gave their lives in the service of our land and our freedoms. They gave all their tomorrows for us, and we all should give them that measure of respect and appreciation each year in this annual solemn remembrance. It is the very least we can do.

Attended by around 100 people, including the mayor and deputy mayor of the city of Kirkland, and accompanied by the mournful skirling of the bagpipes, CDR Kevin Mooney, skipper of the ill fated *USS San Francisco*, reminded us all that but for the craft and precision of her builders, the skill and teamwork of his crew, and by the grace of God, we would have been tolling one more boat in this somber ceremony.

Holland Club members and inductees, plus the WW II subvets Robbie Robertson, Art Benny, Erv Schmidt, Ralph Sterley and Admiral Horton Smith were piped aboard in ceremony (most of whom are also Holland Club members).

Preceding the tolling ceremony, Base Cdr Karl Krompholz presided over a very dignified Holland Club induction for five of our honored members, including Bruno Uptagrafft, Larry Aasness, Ian Ellis, Eugene Posel, and Bob Vanderway, assisted by NSVC Jim Foote.

Mike Bennett, LTCOL USAF(Ret)/SO3(SS) gave a moving invocation and benediction. NJVC and Past Seattle Base Cdr Pat Householder explained the significance of the Tolling the Boats Ceremony, followed by the listing of the lost boats by CDR Kevin Mooney, with Base COB Ted Taylor manning the ships bell.

Dave Goodson was in charge of the sound systems and did a very professional job. The sound quality was excellent! Phil Ward was head usher and was the 'go-to' guy for all the myriad details needing on the spot attention. A Sea Scout unit presented themselves and did usher and general duties as needed. ADM Horton Smith remarked to the gathering that these young men and others like them are the bright and shining future of our Nation. Steve Shelton, as our official photographer, manned the video and still cameras. Doug and

Connie Abramson provided the wreath festooned with sixty five white carnations, representing each of the lost submarines. Cliff Nutter, John Bush, and Bill Giese multitasked, providing assistance wherever and whenever needed. Shari Bitcon, our honorary member and Bagpiper, performed beautifully as usual, even though five months pregnant. What a trooper! She was accompanied by a VFW piper, whose name I did not receive.

And special thanks and "Bravo Zulu" to Phil Ward. Don Masoero reports, "He was there when I needed him. We had many conversations along the way and not once did I have to pick up something up that Phil dropped through the cracks, because he did not miss anything. Many do not know the hours that are needed to make something like this happen. This is the first year that I have not had to do something myself that I had delegated to someone else."

As before, Pat Householder developed and printed the program flyer

Jim Weaver's National Award winning VFW Post 2995 Drill Team performed with precision and their flag folding ceremony, narrated by Don Masoero, was very moving. We are fortunate indeed to have them in attendance as participants.

In the middle of the proceedings, Don Masoero carried out a tribute to *USS Perch* (APSS 313) and called the four other *Perch* veterans, one from California who flew up for the ceremony) to the quarterdeck, where he presented each with a beautifully framed shadowbox with three ships patches and a actual piece of the decking from *Perch*.

*Continued on next page*





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In short, while Don Masoero as MC was the 'visible point of the spear' in the ceremony, it was submariner teamwork that made it all work so very well. In private comments following the ceremony, the Deputy Mayor remarked that this ceremony completely eclipsed and exceeded any expectations she had, and she hoped we would carry it out here again next year. She also said, anything we needed, to give her a call. She was very impressed, to say the least.

*Editor's Note: The date for next year's Tolling of the Boats ceremony has been set for August 5, 2006 and will be held at that Kirkland Marina Pavilion. Be sure to mark it down on your calendars, you won't want to miss it.*



**Don Masero, Admiral Smith, and Commander Mooney at the Tolling Ceremony**

## Request from a Shipmate

Shipmates,

Since 1942 I have been an active VFW member. Two years ago, my Yuma Arizona VFW Post, # 1763, which received its charter in 1923, burned to the ground. The Post plans to build a new 100 foot by 60 foot building to replace the old one. The insurance paid the Post \$76,000 to rebuild; however, with all the permits and codes that seem to change from inspector to inspector, the final cost is expected to be about \$200,000. It has been a real struggle, but other Arizona chapters are helping. Our Yuma Sub Vets Road Runner Chapter, the Pearl Harbor Chapter, and also our USSVI Barbel base (Barbel base is helping since we may be hoping to hold future meetings there) have contributed to the rebuilding effort.

The Post is looking for assistance with the reconstruction effort. So, if any shipmates would like to help this post rebuild, they can send me a donation check made out to VFW Post #1763. The post would really appreciate any help they can get.

If you would like to send a donation to Post #1763, you can mail checks to me in Yuma at the address below or to Seattle Base Newsletter editor Dave Schueler at the return address on your newsletter.

Ervin O. Schmidt  
13339 E. 47 Drive  
Yuma, AZ 85367  
(928) 342-1171

## YOU CAN WIN A USSVI NATIONAL LIFE MEMBERSHIP!

Renew your Annual membership now or prior to **December 1st** and you will be entered into the Early Bird National Life Membership drawing with a chance in two drawings. Renew prior to **December 31st** and you will have a chance in one drawing. The terms are, you must renew either for five or three years, both National and Local, beyond your current membership expiration.

If your name appears in this list, you are eligible to participate through Seattle Base: SOTH John F. R05; BARGER Wayne L., R05; SCHAEFERS Mark, R05; ALLRED Andy, R05; FISHER Bruce E., R05; KINGMAN James I., R05; FRANCKE Donald W., R05; MILNE Alexander S, R05; FRIEDLEY Stephen H., R05; PRETTYMAN Thomas J, R05; BURLINGAME Carrol A., R05; GOODSON Dave, R05; MURPHY, Wilford K., R05; BREUM, Chris, R05; BERG, Gerald R05; BINNION, James R05; STEVENSON Michael R., R05; GORDON Dave, R05; BAKER, William, R07; FREEMAN, Steve R07; LINN, William, R07; SASS, Donald, R07; THODY, Ron B., R07.

The combined National and Base dues are available now on a 5 year, 3 year or 1 year basis, with the longer term offering a 5 and 3 year discount.

5 year Term: \$ 140.00 - 3 year: \$ 85.00 - 1 Year: \$ 30.00  
Send your checks made to: USSVI Seattle Base, c/o Jim Harper,  
Treasurer, 12105 48th Dr SE, Everett, WA 98208-9106

**GOOD LUCK IN THE DRAWING!**

## Veteran's Day Commemorations

The Auburn Veteran's Day parade will be on November 5. SubVets will again be an important part of the parade. If you would like to march in the parade, meet at the parking garage on A Street (near the train station) around 10 AM to assemble for the parade.

The Veteran's Day service at the Tahoma National Cemetery will be on November 11 at 11 AM. If you are planning on going, be sure to show up early as there is limited parking. Also, be sure to find the other SubVets after the ceremony for pictures at the memorial stones.

Welcome Aboard New Crewmembers	
Bob Treggett	John Marshall 6/68
John McHugh	Halibut 12/71
Darin Detwiler	William H. Bates 4/89
Keith Watson	Wahoo 6/57

## Birthday Wishes

Here is a list of Seattle Base member birthdays for July and August. Be sure to wish them a 'Happy Birthday and many returns' the next time you see them, offer to buy them a drink, and see if you can guess how old they really are.

John Fankhouser	Nov 2
James Marr	Nov 2
Alexander Milne	Nov 2
Kenneth Martinson	Nov 3
Lincoln Loehr	Nov 5
Milford Terrass	Nov 8
Ric Hedman	Nov 8
Karl Krompholz	Nov 9
Phillip Carlson	Nov 25
Donald Manley	Nov 26
Al Harwood	Nov 28
Marc Vellat	Dec 5
James Harper	Dec 8
John Mc Hugh	Dec 12
Douglas Abramson	Dec 24
Michael Hein	Dec 24
Charles Ryan	Dec 25
Len Schutt	Dec 25

## On the Internet:

USSVI National Website: <http://www.ussvi.org>  
 Seattle Base Website: <http://seattlebase.donmac.org>  
 Don Gentry's BBS: <http://www.submarinesailor.com/forum>  
 Ron Martini's BBS: <http://rontini.com/bbs>

## 2005 Seattle Base Officers and Chairs

Commander:	Karl 'Dutch' Krompholz	253-631-5736
Sr. Vice Commander:	Steve Friedley	425-806-9116
Jr. Vice Commander:	(OPEN)	
Secretary:	Steve Shelton	206-526-1130
Treasurer:	Jim Harper	425-357-6485
Membership Chair:	Steve Friedley	425-806-9116
Ceremonies Chair:	Don Masoero	253-569-1916
Base Chaplain:	Don Smith, Mike Bennett	360-273-9416 206-767-1934
Chief of the Boat:	Ted Taylor	425-228-3764
Base Storekeeper:	Bill Giese	425-355-5590
Webmaster:	Don Smith	360-273-9416
Newsletter Editor:	Dave Schueler	206-243-6784

## Upcoming Events

### November

**5** Auburn Veteran's Day Parade

**11** Veteran's Day Service, Tahoma National Cemetery

### December 17

Holiday Luncheon at the Seattle Yacht Club.

## Get on the Map!

For those with internet access, an online map has been set up to show where the Seattle Base members live. (Note: Those members not having email have already been added.)

To add yourself to the list, go to the link:

<http://www.frapp.com/ussviseattlebase>

It may come in handy for ride sharing purposes. You only need put in your name, zipcode, and in the misc box you may want to put your city name, qual boat and yr, and if you are a Holland Club member. If you want to include your telephone number to make it easier for ridesharing, please do.

To see who is represented by the little 'teardrops', click on one and the identification info will pop up. The map can be enlarged, shrunk or moved, as suits your convenience. There is no cost or identification involved.

## Online Binnacle List

A nationwide binnacle list has been added to the Pargo website. You can find it at:

[http://usspargo.net/Binnacle\\_List.htm](http://usspargo.net/Binnacle_List.htm)

Don Gentry also has the link to the list on his BBS.



**Submarine Veterans of World War II and United States Submarine Veterans Inc. Joint  
Holiday Lunch at the Seattle Yacht Club  
Saturday, December 17, 2005 from 10:30-3:00**

USSVI Seattle Base and Lockwood Chapter of Subvets of WWII will hold another Christmas social and luncheon at the Seattle Yacht Club. The successful formula from prior years will be repeated; private dining room overlooking yacht moorages and Portage Bay houseboats features a full size Christmas Tree, a blazing fire and Bing Crosby Christmas songs in the background. It's the perfect ambiance for shipmates, spouses and guests to catch up on the past year's events and plan new adventures for 2006.

**This is a semi-formal event. All veterans are encouraged to wear uniforms and/or medals!**

Following the cocktail hour and three-course luncheon, WWII vets, post-war submarine veterans and guests will reminisce about past Christmas deployments and hear how WWII vets spent the *Christmas of '45*. The cost is \$35 for each attendee. An additional no-host cash bar will offer cocktails, beer, wine and non-alcoholic beverages.

Lunch includes salad and cheesecake desert and this year's entrée choices are:

- 1) Poached Fillet of Salmon with Peppercorn Béarnaise Sauce
- OR
- 2) London Broil with Mushroom Sauce

*Please circle each person's entrée choice and print name as you want in on name tags*

Subvet _____	Salmon Strip	London Broil
Qual Boat and Qual Year _____		
Guest _____	Salmon Strip	London Broil
Guest _____	Salmon Strip	London Broil
Guest _____	Salmon Strip	London Broil
Address _____		
City, State, ZIP _____		
Telephone _____		

Total reservations \_\_\_\_\_ x \$35.00 = Total Payment \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail this form and check made out to USSVI Seattle Base to:**

Jim Harper  
 US Submarine Veterans (Holiday Lunch)  
 12105 48th Drive SE  
 Everett, WA 98208-9106

**Last year's event sold out! Seating is limited and reservations will be honored in the order payment is received.**

**Call Charlie Ryan – (509) 996-4272 – for additional information or questions.**

USSVI Seattle Base Newsletter  
c/o Dave Schueler  
10631 31st Ave SW  
Seattle, WA 98146

To:

*"No matter where you travel, when you meet a guy who's been...  
There's an instant kind of friendship 'cause we're brothers of the 'phin."*  
- Robert Reed, G.W. Carver (SSBN-656) -



**Commander Mooney and Don Masero at the Tolling of the Boats Ceremony. See Page 8 for more about the ceremony.**



**The Christmas Luncheon at the Seattle Yacht Club is set for December 17. See page 11 for a registration form.**