



# THE DRUM BEAT

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF DRUM BASE USSVI PENSACOLA FLORIDA

## February 2024

### USSVI 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. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America and its constitution.

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### COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

While reminiscing with a former shipmate, he reminded me of the "weekly op" that turned into a 45-day mini-West Pac. Basically, the typical training evolved into a cat-and-mouse game when we detected a Kilo operating near the California coast. At the height of the cold war, it was a common mission for fast attack submarine to shadow a boomer.

The "cold war" terminology began at the end of World War II when George Orwell used it in his essay "You and the Atomic Bomb" (10/19/1945). The end of the cold war was supposed to coincide with dissolution of the USSR (12/25/1991). However, the submarine's mission for gathering coastal intelligence and tracking submarines continued beyond the cold war.

In fact, less than 7 weeks after the official end of the USSR, an embarrassing collision provided evidence that these missions were still active. On February 11, 1992, the USS Baton Rouge (SSN-689) was operating at periscope depth near Kildin Island (14 miles away from the Russian port of Murmansk). At 08:16, something massive struck the Baton Rouge from below, scratching the nuclear-powered submarine's hull and causing tears in its port ballast tank. Fortunately, the American submarine's pressure hull was not compromised.

It turned out a Russian Sierra-class nuclear-powered attack submarine, the B-276 Kostroma, had attempted to surface underneath the American submarine. Maneuvering at around 6 knots, the Russian boat's conning tower had impacted the American submarine. The titanium-hulled Kostroma's sail was partially crushed from impacting the Baton Rouge's belly, and pieces of the American submarine's anti-sonar tiles were later found embedded on the Russian submarines sail. The Baton Rouge circled around and contacted the other submarine to make sure it did not require assistance, and then both vessels returned to port for repairs.



The accident caused one of the United States' first diplomatic incidents with the newborn Russian government, with Secretary of State James Baker having to meet in person with Yeltsin and assure him that the United States would scale back its spying in Russian waters (contradicted by another submarine collision off the Kola peninsula<sup>1</sup> the following year).

The incidents highlight differences on the definition of "international waters"; the US follows the standard of measuring 12 miles away from the nearest landmass while Moscow defines them as extending 12 miles from a line formed by the two sides of a gulf.

Baton Rouge was the second Los Angeles class boat commissioned and was only seventeen years old at the time of the incident. However, the cost of repairs combined with the already scheduled expenses of nuclear refueling was judged excessive, and she was decommissioned in January 1995. The Kostroma, however, was repaired and put back to sea by 1997. Russian sailors have painted a kill marking on its conning tower to commemorate the "defeat" of the Baton Rouge.

**USSVI & REGIONAL EVENTS**

United States Submarine Veterans Charitable Foundation (USSVCF) Academic Scholarship Program for the 2024-2025 academic year will launch on 10/31/23.

All children, grandchildren, and legal dependents of USSVI members preparing for college or trade schools are encourage to apply.

Application information will be promulgated via all-hands email, American Submariner articles, and the Charitable Foundation [United States Submarine Veterans Charitable Foundation](https://www.ussvcf.org/)<sup>2</sup> website.

The application process is online via the Charitable Foundation website; applications will be accepted until 05/17/24.

**BASE EVENTS**

Drum base normally meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month.

February 10, 2024 at 11:30 → Bonefish Grill

March 9, 2024 at 11:30 → Bonefish Grill

April 13, 2024 → No Meeting (Tolling the Boats at the USS Battleship Alabama Memorial Park)

May 11, 2024 at 11:30 → Bonefish Grill

June 8, 2024 at 11:30 → Bonefish Grill

**BOATS LOST THIS MONTH  
Lest We Forget**

Shark (SS-174) – no sinkings  
 Amberjack (SS-219) – sunk 5,225 tons (2 ships)  
 Scorpion (SS-278) – sunk 18,316 tons (4 ships)  
 Grayback (SS-208) – sunk 63,835 tons (14 ships)  
 Trout (SS-202) – sunk 37,144 tons (12 ships)  
 Barbel (SS-316) – sunk 15,263 tons (6 ships)

**SUBMARINE VICTORIES FOR THIS MONTH**

	<b>Ships Sunk</b>	<b>Tonnage</b>	<b>Rescues</b>
1942	5	17,042	
1943	12	58,417	
1944	54	256,219	10
1945	29	67,142	6
Total	100	398,820	16

**DRUM BASE BIRTHDAYS**

*If I missed anyone's birthday or anniversary, I apologize; please let me know so I can update the Drum Base records.*

- Samuel W. Edwards (1928)
- William E. Monroe (1928)
- Walter C. Marsh (1941)
- Edward Bruette (1944)
- Richard P. Mullen (1944)
- Joseph J. Spry (1949)
- Gary B. Brown (1950)

**DRUM BASE ANNIVERSARIES**

- None Listed

<sup>1</sup> While tracking the Russian Navy nuclear ballistic submarine K-407 Novomoskovsk, the USS Grayling (SSN-646) collided with her 90 miles north of the Russian naval base of Severomorsk on 03/20/93.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ussvcf.org/s>

### BINNACLE LIST

As most of you know, the January meeting was cancelled because Rodger Clark and myself were recovering from a generalized crud. Rodger had a cold and I was recovering from COVID/flu (whatever the latest version is called). I caught my COVID from Holly, and it took about 3 weeks for both of us to recover.

*If you know anyone who should be on the Binnacle list, please let me know and if, Lord forbid, anyone passes between now and then please let me know.*

*Please keep all of our shipmates in your thoughts and prayers*

### DRUM BASE ETERNAL PATROL

- Vincent J. DeNicola (2007)
- Floyd Huston Matthews (2008)
- Mary Elizabeth Dunn Frith (Spouse 2018)
- George W. Boyle, Sr. (2021)
- Paul DeLesdernier (2022)
- Judy DeLesdernier (Spouse 2022)

This is a tribute to WWII Submarine Veterans written by one of my Barb shipmates – [Fewer Left to Thank](#)<sup>3</sup>.

[On Eternal Patrol](#)<sup>4</sup> is a website that is dedicated to all men lost while serving in the U.S. Submarine Force.

### 2021 DRUM BASE BOOSTERS

The task of perpetuating the memory of our lost shipmates is forever and cannot be done alone. As George Eliot put it, "Our dead are never dead to us, until we have forgotten them." This task takes time, money, dedication, and patriotism from all walks of life both veteran and civilian. USSVI Drum Base would like to recognize all those that help us fulfill the task of remembering and honoring those we have lost to secure the freedoms we enjoy.

Our current income source is annual base dues, the 50-50 raffles, and little else. Boosters help the base by contributing funds. These funds allow the base to continue and start new projects (e.g., costs for presentations, memorials, printing, etc.). Please present any ideas that may supplement our Treasury at any meeting.

### DRUM BASE MEETING MINUTES

There was not a January meeting.

### USSVI CORRESPONDENCE

No new USSVI correspondence except for emails that have been forwarded by the base commander to the Drum Base members.

### NEARBY BASE MEETINGS

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Redfish Base meetings are normally held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of even months at the American Legion Post 185, 1680 Saint Ann Place, Slidell, LA 70460 at 1200.

Richard Pasnak (walmsleysc@aol.com or 504-324-4798) is the Base Commander.

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Mobile Bay Base meetings are normally held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month at the Original Oyster House, 3733 Battleship Pkwy, Spanish Fort, AL 36527 at 11:00.

Paul York (subss485@hotmail.com or 251-689-9380) is the Base Commander.

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Seawolf Base meetings are normally held in Panama City on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every other month (odd-numbered months) at the American Legion Post 392, 535 Oak Ave, Panama City, FL at 13:00.

Even-numbered months are a family luncheon with the location decided at the prior month's meeting also starting at 13:00.

George Hackett (gmhackett@gmail.com or 850-624-3587) is the Base Commander.

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Tullibee Base meetings are normally held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of each month at the American Legion Post 1992, 3824 Old Spanish Trail, Gautier, MS 39553 at 11:00 (no meetings in November or December).

Steve Walmsley (walmsleysc@aol.com or 228-324-4309) is the Base Commander.

### REGIONAL MUSEUMS INFORMATION

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National WWII Museum  
945 Magazine Street  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
504-528-1944  
info@nationalww2museum.org

[www.nationalww2museum.org](http://www.nationalww2museum.org)

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSqjLMMbVhE>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.oneternalpatrol.com/>

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St. Marys Submarine Museum  
102 St. Marys Street West  
St. Marys, GA 31558  
912-882-2782 (ASUB)  
ExecutiveDirector@stmaryssubmuseum.com

[www.stmaryssubmuseum.com](http://www.stmaryssubmuseum.com)

The museum will be hosting the 34<sup>th</sup> WWII Submarine Veterans Annual Memorial beginning November 1<sup>st</sup> thru November 5<sup>th</sup>. All submarine veterans and their guests are invited.

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- 2023 Living History Crew Drills. The call to battle stations typically occurs at 13:00 as vintage airplanes attack the ship in a mock battle scene (weather permitting).
  - [USS Drum Virtual Tour](#)<sup>5</sup>

USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park  
2703 Battleship Pkwy  
Mobile, AL 36603  
251-433-2703

[USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park](#)<sup>6</sup>

Visit the USS Drum (SS-220) and volunteer to become a living crew member or lecturer.

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USS Hunley is located on the old Charleston Navy Base.

Friends of the Hunley  
Warren Lasch Conservation Center  
1250 Supply Street  
North Charleston, South Carolina 29405

843-743-4865  
info@hunley.org

[The Friends of The Hunley](#)<sup>7</sup>

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### INTERNET NEWS

Submarine videos and websites to explore:

- [How to Sink a \\$3 Billion Dollar Nuclear Submarine: Leave a Hatch Open](#)<sup>8</sup>
- [Someone Left a Hatch Open and Crippled India's \\$2.9 Billion Submarine](#)<sup>9</sup>

- For those on Facebook, there is a group called "Heroes of the United States Naval Academy".

Please email the Base Commander with any interesting internet sites that you find.

### SUBMARINE STORIES AND OTHER SEA TALES

#### Hyman George Rickover Birthday

Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, the father of the nuclear Navy, was born in Makow, Poland (then part of the Russian Empire), on January 27, 1900. At the age of 6, he came to the United States, settling in Chicago. Rickover entered the U.S. Naval Academy in 1918 and was commissioned an ensign in June 1922. Following sea duty aboard the destroyer USS La Vallette (DD-315) and the battleship USS Nevada (BB-36), he attended Columbia University, where he earned a master of science degree in electrical engineering. From 1929 to 1933, Rickover qualified for submarine duty and command aboard the submarines USS S-9 (SS-114) and USS S-48 (SS-159). In June 1937, he assumed command of the minesweeper USS Finch (AM-9). Later that year, he was selected as an engineering duty officer and spent the remainder of his career serving in that specialty.

During World War II, Admiral Rickover served as head of the Electrical Section of the Bureau of Ships and later as commanding officer of Naval Repair Base, Okinawa. In 1946, he was assigned to the US Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) Laboratory at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and, in early 1949, to the Division of Reactor Development, AEC.

As director of the Naval Reactors Branch, Admiral Rickover developed the world's first nuclear powered submarine, USS Nautilus (SSN-571), which went to sea in 1955. In the years that followed, Admiral Rickover directed all aspects of building and operating the nuclear fleet.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=5SRGLwNjB8r>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ussalabama.com/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.hunley.org/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/how-sink-3-billion-dollar-nuclear-submarine-leave-hatch-open-208170>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.popularmechanics.com/military/navy-ships/a14783891/someone-left-a-hatch-open-and-crippled-indias-dollar29-billion-submarine/>



Admiral Rickover's numerous medals and decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Navy Commendation Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal. In recognition of his wartime service, he was made Honorary Commander of the Military Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. Admiral Rickover was twice awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for exceptional public service. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter presented Admiral Rickover with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest non-military honor, for his contributions to world peace.

Admiral Rickover retired from the United States Navy on January 31, 1982, after more than 63 years of service to his country and to 13 Presidents. His name is memorialized in Rickover Hall at the Naval Academy, and two attack submarines, the Los Angeles class USS Hyman G. Rickover (SSN-709) decommissioned after 22 years of service and the Virginia class Hyman G. Rickover (SSN-795) commissioned in October 2023. Admiral Rickover died on July 8, 1986 and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery. The engineering honor society Tau Beta Pi named Admiral Rickover as one of the "Top Ten Engineers of the Twentieth Century" in December 1999.

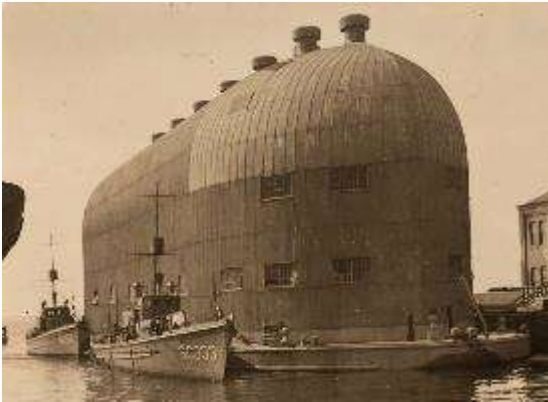


### Cartoons & Memes for the Month





Naval Aviation School, Warrington Beach, Pensacola, Jan 26 1918. Floating blimp hanger with Submarine Chasers 333 and 156.



**Qual Question Answers**

December's newsletter asked you to identify the following Navy Insignia (without Google).



This is the Dirigible Pilot insignia; a "half-wing" version of the Naval aviator wings.

The answer for the extra credit qual question.



Insignia worn by Disneyland Submarine Voyage cast members between 1959 to 1963.

**MEDAL OF HONOR CITATIONS**

**Commander George Fleming Davis**

Commander George "Red" Fleming Davis was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his January 6, 1945 actions as the Commanding Officer of the USS Walke (DD-723) while operating in the Lingayen Gulf, Luzon, Philippine Islands. Commander Davis died aboard the USS Walke (just hours away from his birthplace in Manila) and was buried at sea. The award ceremony was held in Washington, DC on November 16, 1945 with the award being presented to his widow, Shelagh J Davis, by the Secretary of the Navy, James V. Forrestal. Also in attendance was Admiral Ernest King (Chief of Naval Operations) and Admiral Walden L. "Pug" Ainsworth (Commander, Cruisers and Destroyers, Pacific Fleet). Commander George Davis's Congressional Medal of Honor citation is below:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. Walke engaged in a detached mission in support of minesweeping operations to clear the waters for entry of our heavy surface and amphibious forces preparatory to the invasion of Lingayen Gulf, Luzon, Philippine Islands, 6 January 1945. Operating without gun support of other surface ships when four Japanese suicide planes were detected flying low overland to attack simultaneously, Commander Davis boldly took his position in the exposed wings of the bridge and directed control to pick up the leading plane and open fire. Alert and fearless as the Walke's deadly fire sent the first target crashing into the water and caught the second as it passed close over the bridge to plunge into the sea off portside, he remained steadfast in the path of the third plane plunging swiftly to crash the after end of the bridge structure. Seriously wounded when the plane struck, drenched with gasoline and immediately enveloped in flames, he conned the Walke in the midst of the wreckage; he rallied his command to heroic efforts; he exhorted his officers and men to save the ship and, still on his feet, saw the barrage from his guns destroy the fourth suicide bomber. With the fires under control and the safety of the ship assured, he consented to be carried below. Succumbing several hours later, Commander Davis, by his example of valor and his unhesitating self-sacrifice, steeled the fighting spirit of his

command into unyielding purpose in completing a vital mission. He gallantly gave his life in the service of his country.

[Commander George Fleming Davis MOH Actions](#)<sup>10</sup>

[Punchbowl Memorial Service for WWII MOH Commander George Fleming Davis](#)<sup>11</sup>

### **HMCM (SS) William R. Charette**

On January 12, 1954, HMCM (SS) William R. Charette was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his actions in support of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Marines during the battle for Outpost Vegas, South Korea on March 27, 1953. His citation is below:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty in action against enemy aggressor forces during the early morning hours. Participating in a fierce encounter with a cleverly concealed and well-entrenched enemy force occupying positions on a vital and bitterly contested outpost far in advance of the main line of resistance, HC3c. Charette repeatedly and unhesitatingly moved about through a murderous barrage of hostile small-arms and mortar fire to render assistance to his wounded comrades. When an enemy grenade landed within a few feet of a marine he was attending, he immediately threw himself upon the stricken man and absorbed the entire concussion of the deadly missile with his body. Although sustaining painful facial wounds, and undergoing shock from the intensity of the blast which ripped the helmet and medical aid kit from his person, HC3c. Charette resourcefully improvised emergency bandages by tearing off part of his clothing, and gallantly continued to administer medical aid to the wounded in his own unit and to those in adjacent platoon areas as well. Observing a seriously wounded comrade whose armored vest had been torn from his body by the blast from an exploding shell, he selflessly removed his own battle vest and placed it upon the helpless man although fully aware of the added jeopardy to himself. Moving to the side of another casualty who was suffering excruciating pain from a serious leg wound, HC3c. Charette stood upright in the trench line and exposed himself to a deadly hail of enemy fire in order to lend more effective aid to the victim and to alleviate his anguish while

being removed to a position of safety. By his indomitable courage and inspiring efforts in behalf of his wounded comrades, HC3c. Charette was directly responsible for saving many lives. His great personal valor reflects the highest credit upon himself and enhances the finest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service.

In 1960, he transferred to the Submarine Service, becoming one of the first hospital corpsmen to serve on a nuclear submarine. He served as an Independent Duty Corpsman (IDC) in the Navy's nuclear submarine program and completed his submarine qualifications on the USS Triton (SSN-586).

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0z06Pli9eYY>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0oJrDIgTtQ>

USSVI AND DRUM BASE CONTACT INFORMATION**USSVI National & Regional Officers**

Office	Officer	Phone	e-Mail
National Commander	Bill Andrea	561-790-1287	wcandrea@bellsouth.net
Senior Vice Commander	Jon Jaques	615-893-7800	jjaques@bellsouth.net
Junior Vice Commander	Steven Bell	704-824-3510	usnret82@carolina.rr.com
Secretary	David B. Campbell	919-926-1635	davidcampbell4@att.net
Treasurer	Paul Hiser	910-691-5650	paulhiser664@gmail.com
Past Commander	John Markiewicz	904-743-2924	markiewiczjohn4@gmail.com
Chaplain	James (Jim) A. Sandman	615-975-4792	jsandman85@gmail.com
Holland Club Chairman	Edwin F. Atkins	860-440-3120	bud-tmcm-ss@sbcglobal.net
Region Director Southeast	Kenneth W. Nichols	352-465-7732	ken2lorna@bellsouth.net
District Commander ES3	Steven Walmsley	228-324-4309	walmsleysc@aol.com

**Drum Base Officers Mailing Address**

Office	Officer	Phone & e-mail	Mailing Address
Base Commander	John Algee	304-919-0686 <a href="mailto:john.b.algee@gmail.com">john.b.algee@gmail.com</a>	5807 Somerset Drive Pensacola, FL 32526
Vice Commander	Rodger Clark	209-345-2622 <a href="mailto:reyandrodg@comcast.net">reyandrodg@comcast.net</a>	3289 Pitcher Plant Circle Pensacola, FL 32506
Secretary	John Stein	850-449-0235 <a href="mailto:stein_jo@bellsouth.net">stein_jo@bellsouth.net</a>	7919 Mobile Hwy Pensacola, FL 32626
Treasurer	John Stein		7919 Mobile Hwy Pensacola, FL 32626
Chaplain	Base Commander is Acting		
Storekeeper	Base Commander is Acting		
Drum Beat Editor	Base Commander is Acting		