



# Hawgfish Scuttlebutt



Published monthly by the USS Razorback  
Base of the United States Submarine Veterans,  
Inc.

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## Upcoming Events:

2<sup>nd</sup> Sat. of each month is a boat work day.  
May 22<sup>nd</sup> Base Campout/Meeting

May 2010

## Commander's Corner

This month we are presented with a number of good opportunities to get together as a base and fraternal organization, starting with the Razorback work weekend on May 8th, the annual base picnic on the 22nd, and culminating with Memorial Day May 31st.

The 21st 22nd and 23rd of this month, Ray Wewers has reserved several spots at the Dardanelle State Park in Russellville for our annual base campout and picnic. As in past years Jim Stephens will be cooking the meat on his smoker for Saturday's lunch and dinner, and everyone should bring a side dish for dinner. We will also hold a base meeting at 1400 to read discuss and vote on the proposed bylaws changes and other base matters. An email will be sent out with details later to confirm what side dishes are needed for Saturday's dinner. Also the May work day on the USS Razorback will be 8 May at 0900.

The Department of Veterans Affairs is preparing for the Memorial Day ceremony to be held Monday, May 31, 2010 at 10:00 AM at the Arkansas State Veterans Cemetery 1501 West Maryland Avenue, in North Little Rock.

We have again been invited to attend and participate in this month's ceremony, and our own base Chaplain Carl Schmidt, will be representing the Fleet Reserve Association, and conducting the sea service portion of the ceremony. Billy Holloway is also preparing a short ceremony to remember our own members on Eternal patrol

down on the boat after the NLR Ceremony, and we will meet somewhere locally afterwards for lunch.

Parking for the cemetery will be at Woody's Sherwood Forest on Maryland Avenue, or at the Wall-Mart parking lot on 107. Vans and Busses will be available to shuttle people to and from the ceremony.

Last month's Submarine Birthday Dinner in Harrison was a great success; the evening was enjoyed by all who attended. In addition to members from Razorback Base, the event was attended by members of the Snook Base from Rogers AR, the Twin Lakes Base from Mountain Home AR and the Ozark Runner Base from Springfield MO. We also had a few long distance travelers, base members Jud and Betty Rouch came from as far away as Clover IN, and Jim and Marie Flanders from Plano TX. Barbara and I had a great time and look forward to doing it again next year. Thank you to everyone who made this event happen and to everyone who attended.

The USS Razorback also had a number of out of town visitors from the USS Razorback Association last month. 11 former crewmembers spent a week, working and living on board the boat. They were joined by the AIMM crew and several base members with the goal of starting number four engine and raising the number one periscope. Unfortunately it was discovered that both the high pressure air compressors were beyond repair and could not be

started, so the engine could not be rolled, and the scope just wouldn't budge. The association will be back in September for their annual reunion, and plan to give it another attempt with a new compressor to supply HP Air.

Another highlight of the week was that the galley was powered up and fresh meals were prepared by Maurice and Huey for the crew working and staying on board. It was reported by one crewmember that it was a real treat, to wake up onboard in the early morning to the smell of fresh sticky buns baking in the boats oven and breakfast cooking on the grill. I can also personally attest that the chili cooked for lunch on Thursday was some of the best I ever had. I can only imagine what it must feel like staying on board your old usta-fish after 40+ years and telling sea stories with your old shipmates. It was a real pleasure meeting and working with these gentlemen, and although I was not able to visit long, I enjoyed the sea stories very much, and look forward to the next visit.

I encourage everyone to try and attend at least one of the events this month.

**Greg Schwerman**  
Base Commander

## Submarines Lost/Damaged During the Month of May

[USS Squalus \(SS-192\)](#) **23-May-1939**. 26 men lost with 33 rescued.

[USS Lagarto \(SS-371\)](#) **4-May-1945**. All hands lost (88).

USS STICKLEBACK (SS 415) **30-May-1958**. No loss of life.

USS SCORPION (SSN 589) **22-May-1968**. All hands lost (99).



**USS SCORPION (SSN-589)  
May 22, 1968 – All Hands Lost (99)**

Assigned to SubRon5, SubDiv62, USS SCORPION (SSN-589) departed New London, Connecticut, on 24 August 1960 for a two-month deployment in European waters. During that period, she participated in exercises with units of the 6th Fleet and of other NATO navies. After returning to New England in late October, she trained along the eastern seaboard until May 1961; then crossed the Atlantic again for operations which took her into the summer. On 9 August, she returned to New London and, a month later, shifted to Norfolk, Virginia.

With Norfolk her home port for the remainder of her career, SCORPION specialized in the development of nuclear submarine warfare tactics. Varying her role from hunter to hunted, she participated in exercises which ranged along the Atlantic coast and in the Bermuda and Puerto Rican operating areas; then, from June 1963 to May 1964, she interrupted her operations for an overhaul in Charleston, South Carolina. Resuming duty off the eastern seaboard in late spring, she again interrupted that duty from 4 August to 8 October to make a transatlantic patrol. In the spring of 1965, she conducted a similar patrol.

During the late winter and early spring of 1966, and again in the fall, she was deployed for special operations. Following the completion of those assignments, her commanding officer received the Navy Commendation Medal for outstanding leadership, foresight, and professional skill. Other SCORPION officers and men were cited for meritorious achievement.

On 1 February 1967, SCORPION entered the Norfolk Naval Shipyard for another extended overhaul. In late October, she commenced refresher training and weapons system acceptance tests. Following type training out of Norfolk, she got underway on 15 February 1968 for a Mediterranean deployment. She operated with the 6th Fleet, into May, and then headed west. On 21 May, she indicated her position to be about 50 miles south of the Azores. Six days later, she was reported overdue at Norfolk.

A search was initiated; but, on 2 June, SCORPION and all hands were declared, "presumed lost." Her name was struck from the Navy List on 30 June 1968. The search continued, however and, at the end of October, the Navy's oceanographic research ship, Mizar, located sections of SCORPION's hull in more than 10,000 feet of water about 400 miles southwest of the Azores. Subsequently, the Court of Inquiry was reconvened and other vessels, including the submersible, Trieste, were dispatched to the scene, but, despite the myriad of data and pictures collected and studied, the cause of the loss remains a mystery.

SCORPION is in two major sections. The forward hull section including the torpedo room and most of the operations compartment is located in a trench that was formed by the impact of the hull section with the bottom. The sail is detached. The aft hull section including the reactor compartment and engine room is located in a separate trench that was formed by the impact of the hull section with the bottom. The aft section of the engine room is inserted forward into a larger diameter hull section in a manner similar to a telescope.

**NUCLEAR WEAPONS:** There were two Mark 45 ASTOR torpedoes with nuclear warheads aboard SCORPION when she was lost in 1968. The warheads were low-yield tactical nuclear weapons. The special nuclear material from the warheads has not been recovered.

The most likely scenario is that the plutonium and uranium core of these weapons has corroded to a heavy, insoluble material soon after the sinking and remains at or close to its original location inside the torpedo room of the submarine. If the corroded materials were released outside the submarine, their large specific gravity and insolubility would cause them to settle in the sediment.

**ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING:** Comprehensive deep ocean radiological monitoring operations were conducted in August and September 1986 at the SCORPION site. The SCORPION site had been previously monitored in 1968 and 1979 and none of the samples obtained showed any evidence of release of radioactivity from the reactor fuel elements.

## **Razorback Base News**

### **Razorback Base Meeting Minutes**

March 27, 2010

The Razorback Base Meeting was called to order by base commander Greg Schwerman at 1605 hours at the American Legion Post in Little Rock, AR. There 20 members present. The Creed was read by Greg Schwerman.

The Tolling of the Bell was presented by Billy Hollaway and Joe Mathis. Invocation was given by Carl Schmidt. The Pledge of Allegiance led by Billy Hollaway. David Boyer was introduced as a new member.

Minutes of the Jan. 23, 2010 meeting were read by Jane Farmer. The minutes were approved as read.

Treasurer's report was given by Greg Schwerman. The balance in the checking account as of Feb., 2010 was \$5756.53. A motion was made and seconded to accept the treasurer's report. Motion passed.

Treasurer's report filed with secretary.

#### Committee Reports

1. Chaplain-Carl Schmidt sent a bible to Marvin Blair in memory of his wife. Carl presented a bible to Barbara Schwerman in memory of her mother.

2. Membership Report-John Barr reported 2 new members giving us a total of 210. Award pins and patches that he had sent out were well received. Letter read from Joe Blanchet thanking base for his 5-year patch.

3. Storekeeper-Billy Hollaway reported giving some of his Razorback items to the boat to sell. He has several new items, and he had a 50/50 raffle sale for items that were out of date.

4. Memorials-Billy Hollaway announced a memorial for J.B. DeBari to be held on the Razorback.

5. Activities-Greg Schwerman gave details for the Navy's Birthday Dinner in Harrison. A motion was made and seconded to allot \$300 for room and flowers for dinner. Motion passed.

Several other activities were discussed May Camp-out in Russellville, Arena football in June, baseball game in July, and bowling in Heber Springs in Oct.

6. Communications-A check was present to the base from Mike Baron for restoration on the boat. Several notes were received from people who received year pins and patches.

#### Old Business

1. Second reading of the by-law changes were read by Joe Mathis. A motion was made and seconded to accept the second reading of the by-law changes. Motion passed.

2. Greg asked for a volunteer to accept treasurer position. Bob Bowlin accept the position, and he took the oath of office as treasurer of the Razorback Base from Greg Schwerman.

#### New Business

1. A motion was made and seconded to send \$250 to the U.S.S. Drum for restoration. Motion passed. It will be taken from the charity fund.

Good of the Order-Donations and money received in the last few months for the N.L.R. V.A. Hospital will be delivered on Sat. April 17, 2010.

Meeting adjourned at 1510 hours.

Recording Secretary  
Jane Farmer

## **Navy News**

### **Women to begin serving on Navy subs in 2011, officials say**

By Mike Mount, CNN Pentagon Reporter  
April 29, 2010 11:36 a.m. EDT

The first women to serve on U.S. Navy submarines are expected to be on the job by fall of 2011, Navy officials said Thursday, ushering in a policy change to what has been an elite service open only to men since the start of the modern Navy's submarine program.

While Defense Secretary Robert Gates announced the change last month, the Navy had to wait for Congress to review and approve the policy change over a 30-day period which ended at midnight Thursday morning.

The official announcement came later Thursday from the commander of Submarine Group 10, Rear Adm. Barry Bruner, during a news conference at the Navy submarine base at Kings Bay, Georgia.

The first women chosen for the program will be selected by the Navy among upcoming graduates from the Naval Academy, the collegiate Reserves Officer Training Corps -- also known as ROTC and officer candidate schools.

Those women will go through the intensive 15-month submarine officer training program,

which includes nuclear power school, submarine training, and the Submarine Officer Basic Course.

The Navy will implement the policy change by assigning three female officers to eight different crews of guided-missile attack and ballistic-missile submarines. The assignments involve two submarines on the East Coast and two on the West Coast, according to Navy officials.

Smaller, fast-attack submarines are considered to be too small to accommodate the necessary infrastructure change in living quarters that is possible on the larger subs, Navy officials explained.

Integrating female officers into the submarine squadrons is the first phase of the policy change. Including female enlisted sailors into the crews will take place in a second phase in the coming years, the officials said.

The change in policy was recommended by the top naval officer, Adm. Gary Roughead; the secretary of the Navy, Ray Mabus; and Gates. No Navy leaders opposed the plan, officials said.

"The young women that have come up to me since we announced our intention to change the policy have such great enthusiasm," Roughead said in a statement Thursday.

"There are extremely capable women in the Navy who have the talent and desire to succeed in the submarine force," Mabus added in the same statement.

Women make up 15 percent of the active duty Navy: 52,446 of 330,700 sailors in the service, according to Navy statistics.

Female sailors still cannot serve in the elite SEAL program, because those are considered frontline combat unit positions. Similar regulations in the other branches of the military also prevent women from serving in combat positions.

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### **Navy Probes Fatality On Submarine**

By William Cole, Honolulu Advertiser, May 4

The Navy yesterday said it continues to investigate the recent death of a 21-year-old sailor who died aboard the ballistic missile submarine USS Nebraska as it operated in near Hawai'i.

Machinist's Mate Fireman William Mack was given a full military funeral over the weekend, according to the Chattanooga, Tenn., Times Free Press.

He was buried in Booneville, Tenn. The Navy said Mack was found in the submarine's berthing area on April 19.

"It's a very difficult thing for the crew and certainly for the sailor's family and friends," said Lt. Cmdr. Dave Benham, a spokesman for the U.S. Pacific Fleet submarine force at Pearl Harbor.

"Anytime we lose a sailor that affects everyone who he has come into contact with — so we'd like to express our condolences to his family and friends during what is obviously a very difficult time," Benham said.

Agents with the Naval Criminal Investigative Service out of Pearl Harbor were brought out to the submarine following the death, officials said. Benham yesterday said the Navy is waiting on medical reports, including autopsy and toxicology results.

The 560-foot Nebraska, with a crew of about 155, carries MK-48 torpedoes, but it primarily has a role as part of the U.S. nuclear arsenal with 24 Trident II D-5 ballistic missile tubes.

The U.S. Pacific Fleet submarine force has eight Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines, or "boomers," based out of Bangor, Wash. The Navy said the Nebraska did not stop in Pearl Harbor after the death.

All of the submarines home ported at Pearl Harbor are either Los Angeles- or Virginia-class attack subs that do not carry ballistic missiles.

In September, the Nebraska experienced another death while it operated off Hawai'i. Machinist Mate 3rd Class Michael A. Gentile, 21, was killed on the submarine near Oahu.

The Naval Safety Center said Gentile died after becoming entangled and pinned in the rudder ram part of the sub's steering mechanism during cleaning duty. The Navy said the crewman was mortally wounded while the ballistic missile submarine was submerged and conducting routine operations.

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## **Gates Says U.S. Navy Plans Are Unaffordable**

*By Bettina H. Chavanne, Aviation Week, May 4*

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said May 3 the U.S. has to ask itself whether it can afford the U.S. Navy's current plan for billion-dollar destroyers, submarines and carriers.

"The Navy and Marine Corps must be willing to re-examine and question basic assumptions in light of evolving technologies, new threats and budget realities," he said. "We simply cannot afford to perpetuate a status quo that heaps more and more expensive technologies onto fewer and fewer platforms." He questioned whether a Navy that "relies on \$3 to \$6 billion destroyers, \$7 billion submarines and \$11 billion carriers" is affordable.

Gates said he wants to take a "hard look" at the U.S. Marine Corps' embattled Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle (EFV), and questions the need for the capability the vehicle would provide.

"What kind of new platform is needed to get large numbers of troops from ship to shore under fire?" Gates said at a Navy League luncheon here. "No doubt, it was a real strategic asset during the first Gulf War ... but we have to take a hard look at where it would be necessary or sensible to launch another major amphibious landing again."

He also took on the Navy's plan to have 11 carrier strike groups through 2040. "The need to project power across the ocean will never go away," he acknowledged, "but consider the massive overmatch the U.S. already enjoys. Do we really need 11 carrier strike groups for another 30 years when no other country has more than one?"

Gates addressed the budget as well, saying the Pentagon must accept responsibility for procurement problems, especially when the cost of "big-ticket items ... skyrocket far beyond initial estimates." Again, he faulted Navy programs gone awry, like the DDG-1000 and a new ballistic missile submarine, the SSBN(X).

By the time procurement was curtailed on the DDG-1000, Gates said, "the price of each ship had more than doubled and the projected fleet had dwindled from 32 to seven," and the buy is now for three ships. The

Defense Department is proposing spending \$6 billion in research and development over the next few years on the SSBN(X), with a projected buy of 12 submarines at \$7 billion each.

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## **US Navy Asked To Share Sub Detail**

*BBC News, May 1*

A US nuclear attack submarine could have been responsible for the sinking of a French trawler off the Cornish coast, a submarine expert has said. The Bugaled Breizh sank off the Lizard on 15 January 2004, killing its five crew members.

Expert Dominique Salles has now submitted his report to French judges investigating the incident. He wants the US Navy to reveal the position of all of its nuclear attack submarines at the time of the sinking. Monsieur Salles has suggested an unnamed US submarine may have been spying on a top secret consignment of military grade plutonium shipped from the French port of Cherbourg to Japan on board a British nuclear transport vessel. 'Highly probable'

The new investigation was ordered by the Appeal Court in Rennes in November last year.

M. Salles, who first looked into the incident in 2008, had previously concluded the boat had "most probably" been sunk by a submarine taking part in an international war exercise.

A NATO exercise involving submarines was being carried out off the Lizard at the time of the incident, but British and Dutch submarines were cleared by French court officials in 2007 of any involvement in the sinking.

An inquiry in Quimper in 2008 concluded a nuclear submarine snagging the boat's trawl was the "highly probable cause", but the judges recommended the investigation be wound up with no guilty party traced.

In November, however, the Appeal Court tasked M. Salles with tracing the submarine allegedly involved by trying to establish which nuclear subs were in the area and why.

The 72ft (23m) Bugaled Breizh, which means "child of Brittany" in Breton, was based at the small port of Locudy.

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**Shipmates Your Assistance Is Requested**

This letter will serve as a request for your assistance in helping me continue and complete an endeavor to commemorate our time as Submariners. As I am sure you will all agree the time spent in the Submarine Service was without a doubt one of the highlights of our time on this Earth. Despite the long hours, family separations, danger, stress and confined spaces, it's hard not to look back fondly at our time in the "boats".

Part of that fondness and respect is knowing that what we were doing was important. For you "elder" submariners it was fighting an enemy that had attacked our country and was determined on world domination. For us Cold Warriors it was knowing that we were the front lines in the battle to contain the spread of Communism and provide the world with a better alternative. And today's Submariners find themselves in a very different fight, that involving the global fight against terrorism.

But even more motivating than all of this was the thrill and uniqueness of being part of that submarine crew. What kept bringing us back to the hardships of sea duty was that internal gratification of being part of an elite group of sailors. Sailors who, more than in any other discipline had to rely upon each other for their lives. You had to have complete and unadulterated confidence that when you went to your rack for a few hours sleep, that those shipmates on watch literally held your life in their hands. I for one always slept soundly, if not for long, knowing the finest shipmates in the Navy stood the watch.

I have always felt it was important to get the story of our submariners out to the public. Clearly I am not alone in that respect as over the last 10 years or so an increasing number of books have materialized with accounts of the magnificent activities of our submarines and the men who manned them. Admittedly these have been written by Submarine heroes and experts from their unique perspective. These books cover the innumerable heroic activities of our submarines from the Civil War to today, again very important

information that the American public has not been privy to previously from the "Silent Service".

What hasn't been adequately addressed is the more personal side of our time in submarines. That is the gist of my efforts. To meet that goal I would like to get as much input as possible from the submarine community and its veterans to make that happen. My goal is to gather and publish those "sea stories" unique to the Submarine Service that we all have experienced on patrol and deployment. How often have we thought of those times we sent a young seaman searching the boat with a request chit for some "relative bearing grease" or 600 feet of "waterline"?

Therefore I hereby humbly ask that you pass this request along to your members so that they may submit their memories and stories of their time in submarines. This can include sea stories, personal anecdotes, family grams or just any fond memory that portrays the personal side of the submarine force. Please include name and boat so that proper acknowledgement can be made. My intention is to have these stories published to put a more personal face on a force that until recently has reveled in its anonymity. It's important that we get this story out especially as we continue to lose those aging submarine heroes of WW II whose stories would otherwise be lost forever.

Your assistance in this effort is greatly appreciated. As a career submarine officer myself I greatly look forward to your inputs in this both personal and professional endeavor. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

*Very Respectfully,*  
Thomas Sousa, LCDR USN (Ret.)  
109 Bel Aire Drive  
Indian Harbour Beach, FL. 32937  
sousa7779@aol.com

----- Pride Runs Deep -----



**May Birthdays**

- May 3<sup>rd</sup> – Bob Hickey
- May 3<sup>rd</sup> – Greg Zonner
- May 5<sup>th</sup> – Suzann Barr
- May 6<sup>th</sup> – Joe Manning

- May 9<sup>th</sup> – George Conro
- May 10<sup>th</sup> – Lee Huss
- May 10<sup>th</sup> – A.J. Wilson
- May 10<sup>th</sup> – Bob Bowlin
- May 10<sup>th</sup> – Dom Alvarado
- May 11<sup>th</sup> – Charles Smith
- May 12<sup>th</sup> – Steve Shelton
- May 13<sup>th</sup> – Bob Sykes
- May 14<sup>th</sup> – Tom McLeod
- May 17<sup>th</sup> – Mary Lemons
- May 20<sup>th</sup> – John Harrel, Jr.
- May 23<sup>rd</sup> – Herb Welch
- May 24<sup>th</sup> – Joseph Mehalick
- May 25<sup>th</sup> – Rey Esguerra
- May 26<sup>th</sup> – Jack Nease
- May 26<sup>th</sup> – Lowell Blue
- May 28<sup>th</sup> – Ralph Bulmer
- May 28<sup>th</sup> – Ken Brown
- May 28<sup>th</sup> – Frank Crawford
- May 31<sup>st</sup> – Marcial Pamintuan

***Happy Birthday!***

***Treasures Report: April 2010***

<b>BEGINNING BAL.:</b>	<b>\$ 6269.27</b>
<b>DEPOSITS:</b>	
Storekeeper	12.00
Birthday Dinner Deposits	322.00
<b>TOTAL DEPOSITS:</b>	<b>\$ 334.00</b>
<b>EXPENSES:</b>	
Dues Paid to National	20.00
Decorations for Dinner	72.83
Caterer Payment	802.88
Storekeeper	58.49
Chaplin Exp Bibles	88.78
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$ 1042.98</b>
<b>ENDING BALANCE:</b>	<b>\$ 5560.29</b>
<b>CHARITYS</b>	
<b>Maintenance Fund</b>	<b>\$ 1391.03</b>
Donation for J. Lemons	50.00
<b>ENDING BALANCE:</b>	<b>\$ 1441.03</b>
<b>Base Charity Fund</b>	<b>\$ 550.00</b>
<b>USS Snook Memorial</b>	<b>\$ 1255.86</b>
<b>Regions Bank CD</b>	<b>\$ 5099.98</b>
<b>TOTAL IN BASE FUNDS =</b>	<b>\$13907.16</b>

***Base Treasurer  
Bob Bowlin  
Greg Schwerman***

**HAWGFISH SCUTTLEBUTT  
IN GOD WE TRUST**

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**OUR CREED:**

*"To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their Country. That their dedication, deeds and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. A pledge of loyalty and patriotism to the United States Government its Constitution."*



**Razorback Base Executive Committee**

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