

THE DEEP DIVE NEWS

March/April 2024



Our 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.

In addition, to perpetuate the memory of our shipmates, we shall provide a way for all submariners to gather for the mutual benefit and enjoyment. Our common heritage as submariners shall be strengthened by camaraderie.

USSVI Minneapolis Board Member Contact List

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* NOTE, from David Farran:

Any base member can contact me with requests or questions about USSVI at any time.
I am your link to the USSVI National Board of Directors.

Happy Birthday, Members!!

March

Donald Scott	March 9
Stephen Marquis	March 12
John Johnson	March 15
Patrick Rowan	March 17
Kenneth Tibesar	March 27
Gregory Cotton	March 30

April

Jack Gabler	April 1
Thomas Bullinger	April 7
Todd Holmes	April 8
Thomas Wilcox	April 8
Kenneth Schultz	April 13
Merlin Larsen	April 14
Brad Gawboy	April 23
Dale Steinke	April 29

Happy Birthday Guys and Gals!!!!

Commander's Corner

I want to thank everyone for the opportunity to serve as your Commander these last four years. It got off to a slow start because of Covid and not having any meetings or events for the first year. During that first year I took our roster and called just about everyone on it. That year we had 82 members and today we have about 115. Because of having great board members, it made my job easier. Thank you. To all of you that helped set up and take down on meeting days and at the Annual Picnic and the June Outing events Thank You. For all of you that showed up at the Float Events which aren't part of the Commanders job but are responsible for meeting most of the new members. Thank you. All of the events that we had during my term has brought me many hours of camaraderie with you and potential new members. Thank you.

It looks like the E-board is shaping up for next year. The nominating committee met on a Saturday with potential candidates. With the Master At Arms moving up into Vice Commander we need someone to fill the MAA's job. If you can help out with that please give Ken Tibesar a call 651-263-0522. Come to the Annual Base meeting on April 6th to meet and confirm the new Board members.

I will continue on as Past Commander and monitor of the Medallions because the main outlet of them is at the float events.

The float season is just around the corner. I started this project 8 years ago because I wanted to build a Submarine. The Board at that time was looking for things that they could spend some of the money from the successful National Convention in Rochester. I asked if they would finance the cost of building it and they said no. I said okay, and built it on my own. About halfway through the build I was talking to a member's better half and she decided to solicit funds for the build from other members, and the base, which brought in about 1/3 of the total cost, and they donated the trailer it rides on. Those donations sped up construction so it was ready for its first parade in Richfield's 4th of July parade. The events increased yearly until 2020 when we had 28 days of events set to go by April of that year only to be canceled by Covid.



Many members and I have put on a lot of miles on the old gal. When we got a schedule going, I needed help with that and Ken Tupper took care of that part and we were off and running. Steve Marquis was always there and by the end of the first year I, as the Captain, appointed them as COB and XO of the Minny 708, and Skippy the Yeoman kept the base informed of the events with after action reports.

Two years ago, the Base took ownership of the Gato/Balao class submarine which I named the USS Billfish SS-286 which was donated by a base member. At the Commissioning I named Bill Benzick as Captain and asked him to find an XO and COB. The Billfish has been going to all the events that Ken has set up.

This year Ken has set up a new group called Friends of SubVets to increase participation. Members of FOSV are asked to commit to attending at least 3 events a year. Because FOSV and the 708 aren't a part of the Base these events are being set up for the 708 only. We need someone to become the COB of the Gato/Balao Billfish to set up events for it. This member can do his own thing or work with Ken to join the FOSV events.

The first event this year is April 11th at Fort Snelling National Cemetery. See article below for information.

The Holland Club/Commodores Breakfast is on April 27. See [Holland Club/Commodore's Breakfast](#) below for information.

Fair Winds and Following Seas,

John Barnes
Base Commander

Armed Forces Service Center

The Armed Forces Service Center has 53 years of service to traveling military at the MSP airport. We are similar to a USO with the same mission: however, we are an independent organization started by a mom who lost her son in Vietnam.

We are always looking for volunteers to work a 4-hour shift of their choice at least once a month. The board has approved a donation of \$500. Members are still encouraged to volunteer at the center. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, go to our website, and complete the volunteer sign-up at the website; navigate the menu selection to 'volunteer'.

<https://www.mnafsc.org/>

K4K KAP(SS) 4 KID(SS)

<https://www.ussvcf.org/kapss-4-kidss-fund.html>

The US Submarine Veterans' Charitable Foundation Scholarship Fund

<https://www.ussvcf.org/kapss-4-kidss-fund.html>

A hearty welcome aboard to our newest members.

No New Members were reported as added this period.

USSVI Msp/Stp Base E-board Meeting Minutes

No notable events occurred during this abbreviated period.

Check out our website at: WWW.MSPUSSVI.COM

Holland Club/Commodore's Breakfast

This year's Holland Club/Commodore's Breakfast will be held on Saturday, April 27. We will be inducting 5 members into the Holland Club that have reached the 50th anniversary of being Qualified in Submarines and 7 into the Commodore's Club. This is a free event open to all members and guests. We need to know who's coming so the new Chef Bill Benzick, and his great crew know how much food to prepare.

Place VFW Post 1350
2483 7th Ave E
North St. Paul, MN 55109

When
Saturday, April 27st
Doors open at 9 AM
Breakfast at 10:00 AM

Menu

Scrambled Eggs open face.
Omelette toppings
Asst. peppers, dice ham, onions, tomato sauce
Creamed chip beef on toast points
Fried potatoes.
Pastry pieces in baskets on tables
Coffee, asst. juice, milk.

Contact Tim Martinson Base MAA by [April 14th](#) and let him know how many you are bringing.

860-734-6957 or martinsonti@gmail.com

HOLLAND CLUB INDUCTEES

Steven Galewski
Douglas Kirks
Tim Martinson
John Reidner
Ira Gaston

COMMODORE'S CLUB INDUCTEES

Ron Fuller
George St. Martin
John Barnes

Lawrence Marolt
Dale Steinke
Dan Selken

If we missed anyone, please contact me immediately.

John Barnes
Base Commander
612-251-2260
jbbblastit@gmail.com

Meal Selections and instructions for 6 April, 2023

MSP Base Meeting

Meeting Starts at 11:00am, Lunch at 1:00pm

The April meeting will be held on Saturday, April 6, 2024 at the Fred Babcock VFW Post 5555, 6715 Lake Shore Dr S, Richfield, MN, Phone: (612) 869-5555.

Meal selections for this meeting will be a choice of *eight* entrees, Liver & Onions, Walleye, Chicken Stir Fry, Vegetable Stir Fry, ½ Baked Chicken, 8Oz Prime Rib, 8 Pc Shrimp or, 8 Oz Top Sirloin. The prices are shown on the Reservation form below. Soft Drinks, Water, Tea and Coffee will be provided. Meal Selections may be *phoned in*, *texted* or *e-mailed* to the Base Master at Arms, Tim Martinson. Payment will be taken at the meeting. Place your order information to the base Master at Arms no later than Wednesday April 3rd 2024 before the meeting.

Meal Order Selections:

The listed prices include all costs: Food, taxes, service charges, and gratuity

Note: When placing your meal order please:

- Provide the number of each selection
- Call Tim Martinson with your questions
- All Dinners include: Dinner Salad, Baked Potato, Vegetable, Rolls & Butter
-

1. Liver and Onions	\$15.00, # _____	Total \$ _____
2. 8 oz. Top Sirloin	\$25.00, # _____	Total \$ _____
3. Broiled Walleye	\$25.00, # _____	Total \$ _____
4. 1/2 Baked Chicken	\$20.00, # _____	Total \$ _____
5. 8 oz. Prime Rib	\$30.00, # _____	Total \$ _____
6. Shrimp Dinner (6pc)	\$20.00, # _____	Total \$ _____
7. Chicken Stir Fry	\$20.00, # _____	Total \$ _____
8. Vegetable Stir Fry	\$15.00, # _____	Total \$ _____

• Grand Total..... Total \$ _____

Attendee's Names: _____

Respond to: Tim Martinson, MSP Base Master at Arms

Phone or text: 860-734-6957, e-mail: martinsoni@gmail.com

After Action Report

No notable events occurred during this abbreviated period.

Binnacle List

**Andy Anderson
David E. Anderson
Jeff Lundgren
Phyllis Thomton
Kevin Rosing-Clapp
Ken Tupper**

Chaplains Corner

Greetings Shipmates.

Please begin with a word of prayer.

Dear Lord, we come to you today as a thankful people for all your many blessings. May what will be accomplished in the times ahead be helpful to each of us, to our organization, and also to our country. Help us to be mindful of those in our number who are unable to be with us. Bless us each individually and collectively as we endeavor to do your will. And Lord as we journey on, we pray for the homeless, the hungry, the oppressed and ignored veterans. Wrap them in your arms of comfort and love. Amen

As we have moved through the Lenten Season at our Church, our focus has been on “Repentance and Repair.” Repentance should be directed more to those who have been harmed as well as to ourselves. Repair begins with admitting our harm, apologizing, and making better choices. I know, it’s a short couple sentences for a major subject in our lives, but it gives food for thought.

Our National Chaplain Jim Sandman pointed out four key relationships that are essential for our lives. First, he lists “With Family” as vital to us and our society. Next, “With God.” Spend time with him in his word. Next Chaplain Jim suggests “With Church.” We are meant to gather to interact with each other and hear the word of God. And last, “With Friends.” One good way is to join us at our base meetings. We need each other to lift us up and to have fun. Check out Jim’s article in the “American Submariner.” I apologize but I won’t be at the April meeting. We will be with family at The Chanhassen Dinner Theater on that day.

As of now, the base has scheduled the Holland Club Breakfast on Saturday April 27th at the VFW in North ST Paul. Hope to see you all there. It’s always been a fun time. We can always use an extra mess cook.

I am posting the lost boats list for March/April. Take a moment of silence for our departed shipmates on Eternal Patrol.

April Meeting boats lost in March and April			
Ships Name	Date Lost	Crew Lost	
1 USS F-4 Skate (SS-23)	03/21/15	21	Lost with twenty one Men on 25 March 1915 when it foundered off Honolulu Harbor.
2 USS H-1 SEAWOLF (SS-28)	03/12/20	4	Lost on 12 March 1920 with the loss of four men when it grounded off Santa Margarita Island, California.
3 USS Perch (SS-176)	03/03/42	8	Lost 3 March 1942 when sunk by Japanese surface attack 30 miles NW of Surabaya, Java. Sixty two men were taken prisoner, four men died as POWs.nine men were listed as lost.
4 USS Grampus (SS-207)	03/05/43	71	Lost with all hands (seventy one men) by Japanese surface attack in the Solomon Islands on 5 March 1943.
5 USS Triton (SS-201)	03/15/43	74	Lost with all hands (seventy four men) by Japanese Surface Attack off New Guinea on 15 March 1943
6 USS Pickerel (SS-177)	04/03/43	74	Lost with all hands (seventy four men) by Japanese Surface Attack off Honshu, Japan, on 3 April 1943
7 USS Grenadier (SS-210)	04/22/43	4	Lost on 22 April 1943, 10 miles West of Lem Voalan Strait. Sunk by aerial bombs. Sixty one men taken prisoner, four men died as POWs
8 USS Tullibee (SS-284)	03/26/44	79	Lost with seventy nine men on 26 March 1944 north of Palau. Sunk by her own torpedo. One man survived and was taken prisoner
9 USS Kete (SS-389)	03/01/45	87	Lost with all hands (eighty seven men) on March 1945 to unknown causes between Okinawa and Midway.
10 USS Trigger (SS-237)	03/28/45	89	Lost with all hands (eighty nine men) in the East China Sea on 28 March 1945 during a Japanese air and surface attack.
11 USS Snook (SS-279)	04/08/45	84	Lost with all hands (eighty four men) on 8 April 1945 to unknown causes off Formosa
12 USS Thresher (SSN-593)	04/10/63	129	Lost will all hands (one hundred and twenty nine men) on 10 April 1963 off the New England coast
A total of 724 men lost on 12 boats		Finally, and in addition to these, we remember all the brave men who died in the course of their duties aboard submarines where the submarine itself was not lost.	

Closing Prayer

We pray that the power of the Holy Spirit will flow through all Submariners, that the grace of God will renew them. That the love of God will pursue them today, tomorrow, and all of life's tomorrows and may we be born tenderly in the palm of the Almighty till time shall be no more. Amen

Quotes: Patriotism means to stand by our country, not to stand by the president. Teddy Roosevelt.

Health is the greatest gift, contentment the greatest wealth, faithfulness the best relationship.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (a Lutheran Pastor in Germany who was shot by the Nazis in a concentration camp two weeks before the war ended.)

Joel Bergstrom

Base Chaplain

Regional Scuttlebutt

No notable events occurred during this abbreviated period.

Skippy the Yeoman

"Shipmates, Again for the 4th year we will be gathering at Fort Snelling National Cemetery to honor the Birth of the US Navy Submarine Force and paying our respects for the 54 American Submarines on eternal patrol.

This is Thursday April 11th. We will be near the Main Flagpole at the Commemorative WWII Submarine Bronze Marker. Please Join us for this solemn and rewarding time.

Ceremony at 1100. Setup at 1030. Dismissal at 1200"



Shipmates

There will be a vote by the Members for the induction of an Honorary member under the Base Constitution. All members present will be asked to vote on this item at the Annual Business Meeting
April 6, 2024.

Float and Static Display Opportunities

(See Commander's Corner for an update of Float and Static Displays)

Member Submissions

Greetings:

Can anyone tell me in one word what it takes to keep this Submarine base vibrant?

You may say;

You

Participation

Sacrifice

Dedication

Support

Effort

Not only are those answers correct, but they are insufficient.

It Takes a Base participation! Yes YOU are the Most important item to keep the base going. Not Only the Dues, Not only coming to meetings, BUT PARTICIPATION.

What is Participation?

Participation is a multitude of things:

Willingness of Involvement:

Willingness to Serve;

Willingness to Support;

Willingness: Just Plain Willingness!

You are members. What have you done to be involved?

Is Involvement coming to a dinner or a Lunch Meeting?

Think about the last time you met a Submariner who was not a member. Did you try and recruit them to become a Member of the Base?

Is it important to you to keep the base strong and ongoing by getting new members? Or is it just a place to go and eat every two Months.

In 2016, the base was privileged to have a Submarine Float for Recruitment. This is not a Base asset.

Initially it was used as a Public Awareness item, to try and draw former Qualified Submarine Sailors to join our Base. It was Fun, but it did not provide the expected results. Since those early days, we have adjusted our efforts.

During the last 6 years, our team has been supported by the same 6-8 people. More times than not these supporters are not even members of our group.

Every event we attend is appreciated by the Public, and sometimes we are approached by NAVY personnel and Bubbleheads. Recruiting is still a skill.

Last year, Bill Benzick was the mainstay in the creation and building of a new WWII Submarine Float. Bill became our primary Recruiter and has done a superb job.

Countless hours are spent finding and setting up Base Events. Through the years we have created great relationships and are Expected to attend these events each year. Not a problem, but actually a good problem to have. We are Desired. The issue is that we have trouble getting Base member participation to make these events successful for securing new blood for the base.

We again are going to have a great summer. PLEASE Read the DDN and the Event Emails and think about giving to the group. Giving a few hours of your time to support the idea that we are the Finest Military organization in the history of the world.

~Anonymous

Submariners on the Internet

The True Story of the Only Underwater Submarine Battle Ever



So what happened?

by **Sebastien Roblin**

The Hunt for Red October dramatized for the public one of the tensest forms of warfare imaginable: combat between submarines submerged deep under the ocean's surface, the nerve-wracked crews scouring the fathomless depths for their adversary's acoustic signature using hydrophones.

However, while hunting undersea enemies is one of the primary jobs of modern attack submarines, only one undersea sub engagement has ever taken place, under decidedly unique circumstances.

This is not to say that submarines have not sunk other submarines. Indeed, the first such kill occurred in World War I, when *U-27* sank the British *E3*. Dozens other such engagements occurred in the two world wars. However, in all but one case, the victims were surfaced, not underwater.

This was foremost because the submarines of the era needed to spend most of their time on the surface to run their air-breathing diesel engines; they could only remain underwater for hours at a time with the power they could store on batteries, moving at roughly one-third their surface speed. Therefore, submerged action was reserved for ambushing enemy ships and evading attackers.

What a War Between NATO and Russia Would Look Like.

There were additional problems intrinsic to having one submarine hunt another underwater in an era that predated advanced sensors and guided torpedoes: how could submerged subs detect each other's position? During World War II, submarines came to make greater use of hydrophones as well as active sonar; however, the latter models could only plot out a submarine's location on a two-dimensional plane, not reveal its depth.

What a War Between America and China Would Look Like.

Furthermore, the torpedoes of the time were designed to float up to near the surface of the water to strike the keel of enemy ships. Although the "tin fish" could be reprogrammed to an extent, it was not standard to adjust for depth, and guessing the azimuth of an enemy submarine with the limited targeting information available posed an immense challenge.

U-864's Secret Mission

On February 5, 1945, the U-Boat *U-864* slipped from its quay in Bergen as it departed on a secret mission known portentously as Operation Caesar.

What a War Between China and Japan Would Look Like.

U-864's compartments were filled with key technology and resources that Nazi Germany planned on transferring to Japan. These included schematics and components for Jumo 004 turbojets to aid in the development of a Japanese jet fighter, and even two engineers from the aviation manufacturer Messerschmitt. There were also guidance components for V-2 ballistic missiles and two Japanese technical experts. *U-864* also carried more than sixty-seven tons of liquid mercury, carried in 1,857 steel flasks. The mercury had been purchased but not entirely delivered from Italy in 1942, and was a key material for manufacturing explosive primers.

Capt. Ralf-Reimar Wolfram's mission was to sail the long-range submarine north around Norway, then across the Arctic Circle past Soviet territory to deliver the goods. Germany was only months away from falling, but Berlin hoped that the technology and materials would allow Japan to stay longer in the fight and divert Allied combat power.

U-864 was a Type IXD2 "cruiser submarine," and at 87.5 meters long was larger than the more common Type VII U-Boat. It was designed for long-range transoceanic patrols, and the -D2 model in particular was even bigger to accommodate enlarged cargo compartments. Before departing, *U-864* had been modified with a piece of technology then unique to Germany—a snorkeling mast, allowing the submarine to sip air from the surface while shallowly submerged.

Despite this formidable advantage, Wolfram's mission proved ill-omened from the start. *U-864* initially set off from Kiel on December 5, 1944, but ran aground while transiting through the Kiel canal. Wolfram decided to have the ship undergo repairs in Bergen, Norway. But in Bergen, its armored pen was hit with twelve-thousand-pound Tall Boy bombs dropped by British Lancaster bombers on January 12, 1945, causing even more damage.

Unfortunately for Wolfram, the United Kingdom had long ago cracked the Enigma code, which German U-Boats used to communicate with the Naval headquarters. By February, the British Navy had decoded messages relating *U-864*'s mission, and decided to set a trap.

HMS *Venturer*, the first of the new V-class submarines, received orders from the Royal Navy Submarine Command to hunt down and destroy *U-864* off the island of Fedje, Norway. The smaller, shorter-range British submarine carried only eight torpedoes to *U-864*'s twenty-two, but it was nearly 50 percent faster underwater, at ten miles per hour.

Venturer arrived at its station on February 6. Its skipper, twenty-five-year-old Lt. James S. Launders, was a decorated submarine commander, who in addition to sinking twelve Axis surface ships, had dispatched the surfaced submarine *U-711* in November 1944.

Though he disposed of an ASDIC active-sonar system that offered greater detection range by emitting sound waves into the ocean, which could be tracked when they pinged off submerged ships, Launders elected to rely on shorter-range hydrophones. This was because the ping from ASDIC could be heard by adversaries from even further away.

But Launders didn't realize he was engaged in a hopeless hunt. *U-864* had slipped past him.

Back to Bergen

Many war stories tell of protagonists who avoid horrible fates out of sheer coincidence and dumb luck. More or less the opposite happened to Captain Wolfram.

U-864 was safely out of range of the *Venturer* when its diesel engine began noisily misfiring, hampering acoustic stealth and threatening to break down entirely. Only a few days out from port, Captain Wolfram decided he should play it safe by returning to Bergen for repair. He could not have known he was leading his submarine straight back into danger.

On February 9, the hydrophone operator on the *Venturer* overheard a contact that he at first believed was coming from the diesel motor of a fishing boat. Launders moved his submarine closer to the sound pickup, and spotted on the periscope what appeared to be another periscope in the distance. This was actually most likely *U-864*'s snorkel. Running submerged on batteries, Launders slipped the *Venturer* behind the German submarine and began tailing it.

He was waiting for *U-864* to surface before launching his torpedoes, but thanks to its snorkel, *U-864* could operate underwater for extended periods of time. The German submarine began zigzagging side to side, likely having detected the British sub.

After three hours of pursuit, the *Venturer* was running short on battery and would soon have to surface itself. Launders decided he would simply have to attack *U-864* while it remained submerged. He calculated a three-dimensional intercept for his torpedoes, estimating his adversary's depth by the height of the snorkel mast protruding above the water. However, he knew the enemy submarine would quickly detect a torpedo launch, and planned his firing solution to account for evasive maneuvers.

At 12:12, *Venturer* ripple-fired all four of its loaded torpedoes in a spread, with 17.5 seconds between each launch. Then the British submarine dove to avoid counterattack.

The U-Boat immediately crash dove as well, then swerved evasively. After four minutes, it had managed to duck under three of the incoming torpedoes. But Launders had launched the second pair of torpedoes at lower depths. The fourth torpedo struck *U-864*, breaking it in two; the gruesome sound of popping rivets and cracking metal filled the *Venturer*'s hydrophones. The U-Boat fell 150 meters to the bottom of the ocean, taking with it all seventy-three onboard and sinking Operation Caesar along with it.

More than a half century later, the wreck of *U-864* was found in 2003 by the Norwegian Navy, two miles off Fedje. It was discovered that the cargo of poisonous liquid mercury had been slowly seeping from the flasks into the surrounding ocean. After spending fifteen years evaluating the risks of raising the wreck and its dangerous, unexploded torpedoes, in February 2017 the Norwegian government finally "entombed" the broken submarine with a half-meter of sand and 160,000 tons of rocks to prevent further contamination, thus forming a cairn for the German submarine that had met its terrible fate under unique circumstances.

Sébastien Roblin holds a Master's Degree in Conflict Resolution from Georgetown University and served as a university instructor for the Peace Corps in China. He has also worked in education, editing, and refugee resettlement in France and the United States. He currently writes on security and military history for [War Is Boring](#).

Image: U.S. Navy

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/the-true-story-the-only-underwater-submarine-battle-ever-23253>

Photo of the Day



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United States Submarine Veterans

Minneapolis/St Paul Base



Pride Runs Deep



U.S. Submarine Force