



VOL. 2021 #12

DECEMBER 2021

USS HENRY L. STIMSON ASSOCIATION SSBN655 NEWSLETTER

Association Officers & Board of Directors 2021 - 2023

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Other Positions 2021 - 2023

HISTORIAN / CUSTODIAN Larry [Linda] Knutson	WEBMASTER / NEWSLETTER Nick [Linda] Nichols	CHAPLAIN Bruce Stefanik
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From the Association President - Tom Krauser, MM1(SS) B 72-74

Marie and I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving and were able to get together with family members. We missed our traditional Thanksgiving at Marie's sister's

house because of Covid last year and are looking forward to being able to get together since we are all fully vaccinated now.

Christmas and New years are just around the corner and we hope everyone has a special holiday season with their families.

Marie and I are looking forward to the next reunion in Charleston in 2023.

If you have any questions or concerns for the board, please feel free to contact us so we can address them.



Custodian - Larry Knutson, MMCS(SS) B 79-81 USSVI-Charleston Base:

We still have the box of Gold Crew check-in cards that were from the time of Bob Weeks CO

tour. If you were on the Gold Crew during any time when Bob Weeks was the CO you completed a check-in card for him. The box of cards is now held by our base secretary. If you would like a copy of your card sent to you please contact our Secretary at 655webmaster@ssbn655.org.



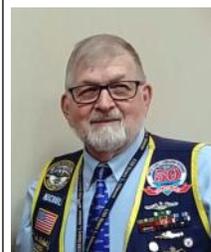
Chaplain's Corner - Bruce Stefanik, MS1(SS) B 73-77:

The time has come to look at the past and the future.

The past: I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving.

The future: May you all have a Merry Christmas.

Be blessed...Bruce Stefanik, Chaplain



From The Editor, Secretary & Webmaster - Nick Nichols, TM1 G/B 70-75; FTCS B COB 85-89, USSVI Charleston Base, Holland Club, 655 Assoc Life Member

IC3(SS) Carter Alan Andersson-Wintle

B 68-71

Eternal Patrol on 11.14.2021

[info reported by Bruce Stefanik & Mike Casella]

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The direct link to the Association Eternal Patrol page is: <http://ssbn655.org/eternal-patrol/eternal-patrol.html>



WELCOME ABOARD: Found & Updated Shipmates

(Shipmate has contacted us to be added or have info updated on our Sailing List. Please check the online Sailing List for shipmates contact info.)

TM2(SS) Michael J. Alix G 70-73

[info added per member request]

EM1(SS) James J. Hart G/SY2/B 81-85

[info added per member request]

MMFN(SS) Ronald R. Jacobson B 78-80

[info added per member request]

SK2(SS) William 'Bill' Adkins G 84-85

[info added per member request]

PNC(SS) Reuben 'Wes' Fleming PNC ? 90-92

[info added from USSVI National website]

YN2(SS) Richard Graves B 84-86

[info added from USSVI National website]

RM1(SS) William 'Bill' Gregor G 87-89

[info added from USSVI National website]

BINNACLE LIST UPDATES: If you know of a shipmate who should be on the binnacle list please let me know. I will contact the shipmate for permission to add them to this list. I only add those who have given permission.

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Karen Huckeba has been in the hospital fighting Covid-19 and pneumonia for the past few weeks since Nov. 4th. She is on a ventilator and she has been improving slowly. They have started to reduce the amount of sedation in hopes her body will start breathing and start doing the work. This is a very slow process and she has opened her eyes and moved her head. The next couple of days are going to dictate what the next steps are. Please keep Karen and David in your thoughts and prayers.

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Andrew 'Andy' McKay, TMC G 85-88

Cards to: 2207 FM 1729, Lubbock TX 79403

4.1.2021: Email from Andy: I was found to have lung cancer in 2007. I had surgery to remove half of my right lung. I did 4 months of chemo. I now have final stage COPD. I am on full time supplemental oxygen

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GREAT LINKS TO SPEND TIME WITH

655 Association Website

www.ssbn655.org

Submitted by George Birmingham, ET1(SS) G 69-74, Assoc. LM, USSVI Holland Club / Carolina Piedmont Base

A metallurgist in the US state of Washington has pleaded guilty to fraud after she spent decades faking the results of strength tests on steel that was being used to make Navy submarines.

Prosecutors say Elaine Marie Thomas, 67, gave false positive readings for strength and toughness tests in at least 240 cases between 1985 and 2017. Authorities did not disclose which vessels were affected. But there was no indication that any submarine hulls had failed. IMHO, this lady needs a few rides to test depth to understand why honesty and accuracy are critically important!

I saw this on the BBC News App and thought you should see it:

Metallurgist admits faking steel test results for US Navy subs

Submitted by George Stevens, MT2(SS) G 68-71

Elaine Marie Thomas, 67, plead guilty to fraud following more than 30 years of falsifying the outcomes of strength tests conducted on steel that was utilized to make Navy submarines, according to the Associated Press.

She previously served as the director of metallurgy at a foundry that provided steel castings utilized to create submarine hulls, according to the AP.

<https://www.theblaze.com/news/woman-pleads-guilty-to-fraud-in-connection-with-falsifying-steel-test-results-for-navy-submarines>

Submitted by George Birmingham, ET1(SS) G 69-74, Assoc. LM, USSVI Holland Club / Carolina Piedmont Base

Cyber Threats to Veterans in 2021: Spam and Scams Exploit Support for Veterans

NOVEMBER 16, 2021 • INSIKT GROUP®

Editor's Note: The following post is an excerpt of a full report. To read the entire analysis, [click here](#) to download the report as a PDF.

This report provides a high-level overview of cyber threats affecting veteran charity organizations in 2021 to include analysis of sample malicious domains, who is affected, and what individuals can do to protect themselves and others from falling for these types of scams.

Veterans and their charitable donors have become the targets of many types of financial scam operations in recent years. These operations benefit from two emotional avenues by which to exploit victims: veterans struggling to support themselves, and those who wish to help veterans through charitable giving. Per Recorded Future data, we have found that veterans and their supporters are likely targeted by scams or spam associated with newly registered domains.

We also identified an example of a scam operation called Protect Our Veterans SP, which uses several vectors to target veterans and their supporters, including fake charity, political action committee (PAC), and job scams. Finally, through psycholinguistic analysis, we have identified

words, phrases, and syntax used on scam sites that indicate malicious intent by scam operators.

To help those seeking to help veterans avoid falling prey to these operations, we offer several recommendations, such as how to research charitable organizations effectively and how to spot potential scams or spam based on their language and platform.

At the bottom of this article is a link to a full report in PDF format.

<https://www.recordedfuture.com/cyber-threats-veterans-spam-scams/>

Submitted by Pete Peterson, MM1(SS) B 70-72, USSVI Member-at-Large,

Anchoring Up: Why Soldiers, Airmen, and Marines Are Requesting Acceptance into the Navy's CPO Mess

By Boatswains Mate Chief Tony Palm, U.S. Navy (Retired) | October 7, 2021

During the Chief Petty Officer (CPO) Pinning Ceremonies held Navy-wide every September, a fairly recent phenomenon has changed this once tradition-bound event.

While wearing the uniform of their particular branch of service, soldiers, airmen, and Marines are standing in ranks with CPO Selectees anxiously waiting for their sponsors to place the distinctive Navy CPO khaki combination hats on their heads, while their family attaches the CPO fowl anchors to their collars. READ MORE

https://blog.usni.org/posts/2021/10/07/anchoring-up-why-soldiers-airmen-and-marines-are-requesting-acceptance-into-the-navys-cpo-mess?mc_cid=028a59e476&mc_eid=e3a85ca12a

SOMETHING FROM OUR SHIPMATES: SEA STORIES, COMMENTS, JOKES, ETC.

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Submitted by David Huckeba, MM1(SS) B 71-75

My nephew is M2 for Fat Albert with the Blue Angels. We saw him at the Rome Airshow. You will see John and Grethen, Paul and Vickie (my brother and wife), Mark (my youngest son) and Austin is the first pilot on the left next to Paul.



The C130 "Fat Albert" has three pilots. M1 is senior, M2 is next and M3 is junior. Since it's a three year billet each year the pilot has a new status. Austin will be M1 in January



It doesn't take long to see evidence of the changes to the team. The last show was yesterday, November 7th. [They've] Already have changed his parking sign to M1. OOHRAH !!

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Submitted by Pete Peterson, MM1(SS) B 70-72,
USSVI Member-at-Large,

Did You Know?

- ◆ Hugging and cuddling kills depression, relieves anxiety, improves skin and strengthens the immune system.
- ◆ Drinking cold water on an empty stomach can actually boost your metabolism by 30%.
- ◆ The brain is much more active at night than during day time.
- ◆ Our eyes are always the same size from birth, but our nose and ears never stop growing.
- ◆ Your thumb is the same length as your nose.
- ◆ Eating 2 bananas before 60 minutes of gym time provides you enough energy for 90 minutes intense workout.
- ◆ Press your tongue firmly against the back of

your bottom teeth to prevent a sneeze.

- ◆ If you're feeling sleepy, hold your breath for as long as you can and then release it.
- ◆ If you read a speech before you go to bed, you will remember it better in the morning.
- ◆ Put your hands in ice water and flex them if you have a migraine.
- ◆ Pinch the back of your hand if you just can't stop laughing.
- ◆ Keep an onion near you at night if you have a stuffy nose.
- ◆ Scratch your ear to stop the tickle in your throat.
- ◆ If you are in bed still feeling dizzy, place one of your feet on the floor. This will help you brain recalculate your position.
- ◆ Press you tongue against the roof of your mouth if you have a brain freeze.
- ◆ If you have a toothache, rub some ice between your thumb and forefinger.
- ◆ Turn the water to cold at the end of your shower to prevent acne. Cold water seals your pores and prevents dirt and bacteria from entering them.
- ◆ Yellow teeth are stronger; the natural color of your teeth is light yellow color. Whitening your teeth can permanently weaken them.
- ◆ Studies show that people who feel lonely are more likely to take longer showers and long baths.
- ◆ It's impossible to hum while holding your nose.
- ◆ Our fingers get wrinkly in water because wrinkled fingers would give us stronger grip on slippery objects underwater.
- ◆ Chewing gum while studying, then chewing the same flavored gum while taking a test can help you remember what you studied.
- ◆ People who eat spicy food tend to live longer.
- ◆ Cracking your knuckles does not hurt you bones; the sound you hear is just gas bubbles bursting.
- ◆ Lack of sleep can cause the brain to start eating itself.
- ◆ Eating grapes improves the brains ability to process new information and thus enhances intelligence.

Americans' health care needs — from hospital care and doctor visits to lab tests and prescription drugs. Here are some needs that aren't a part of the program — and how you might pay for them.

1. Opticians and eye exams
2. Hearing aids
3. Dental work
4. Overseas care
5. Podiatry
6. Cosmetic surgery
7. Nursing home care

READ MORE HERE



10 Worst Habits for Your Heart

by Jeanette Beebe, AARP, November 8, 2021

Everything from bad sleep to stress can hurt your heart and wreck your health

There's good news and bad news when it comes to your risk of developing heart disease, which is the leading cause of death in the U.S. Let's start with the bad. Several factors raise a person's risk for getting heart disease — a term used to describe a range of conditions that affect the heart — including some that can't be controlled, such as family history, and others that are more complex, like having access to good-for-you foods and safe, affordable housing.

That said, there's a lot you *can* do to prevent heart disease and, in certain cases, reverse it. Some of these actions, however difficult to achieve, are obvious: Get active, eat better, lose weight, and stop smoking. "Lifestyle changes are difficult for everyone," concedes Sabra Lewsey, M.D., a cardiologist and assistant professor of medicine at Johns Hopkins Medicine, "but they are profoundly important and can make lifesaving gains in your health."

Others are more surprising. Here are 10 habits to avoid if you're hoping to improve your heart health.

1. Being a couch potato
2. Drinking too much alcohol
3. Skimping on sleep
4. Opting for unhealthy foods
5. Living a lonely life

6. Smoking tobacco
7. Minimizing your mental health
8. Waiting to lose weight
9. Neglecting your teeth
10. Giving up too soon

READ MORE HERE



Protect Yourself From Pills That Raise Your Blood Pressure

by Cynthia E. Keen, AARP, October 22, 2021

If you have hypertension, beware of taking certain prescription and OTC medications

Nearly half of all adult Americans and 3 out of 4 people 60 and older have high blood pressure. That's about 108 million people at increased risk of heart disease or stroke.

Yet a remarkable 19 percent of adults with hypertension are currently taking one or more medications that could be elevating their blood pressure, according to a study of more than 10,600 patients presented earlier this year by John Vitarello, M.D., an internal medicine resident at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston.

If you're treating your hypertension, good for you — keep it up. But be aware that you may well be undermining your own well-being by mixing your blood pressure meds with one of the medications below.

Over-the-counter trouble

Ibuprofen and naproxen, for example, are nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), which can increase the risk of a heart attack or stroke with high doses or prolonged use, according to the American College of Cardiology (ACC). They're among many prescription and OTC drugs the ACC says can raise blood pressure — or prevent the drugs that lower blood pressure from working properly.

That list includes products for cough, colds and flu; decongestants; weight-loss stimulants; antacids high in sodium; and some herbal remedies and dietary supplements. If you regularly take an OTC medication, read the label carefully and talk with your doctor about safer alternatives.

a 100Mb Internet service and the test says you are getting substantially less then you can call your Internet service provider – Cable service or phone company – to get help to find out where the problem lies.

How to Check Your Internet Speed - from PC Magazine

Which internet speed test should you use to test your connection at home? - from CNET

Personally, I use **Speedtest.net** for my own periodic testing and will also use the test built into my AT&T U-Verse Gateway router for comparison. In fact I have it bookmarked on my browser for easy access. And I use it without creating an account to have to keep up with. It's just a quick check. The test at **fast.com** is also really simple to use if speedtest.net seems too complex or the ads are too annoying.

The Geek Stuff

These links get into more technical details for those of you who want to know more.

How Do Internet Speed Tests Work? (and How Accurate Are They?) - from HowToGeek.com

Here's how fast your internet connection really is - from CNET

This should get you off to a good start keeping an eye on the health of your Internet connection and making sure your Internet Service provider (ISP) is delivering the correct level of service.

Submitted by George Birmingham, ET1(SS) G 69-74, Assoc. LM, USSVI Holland Club / Carolina Piedmont Base

5G networks and your cellular dependent devices

I read the following articles this morning, and it strikes me that this could/will affect our shipmates in one way or another. This might be a good thing to share with the Association Members to give them a heads up.

- ◆ **3G shutdowns could leave most vulnerable without a connection**
- ◆ **Which iPhones support 5G?**
- ◆ **Will Old Phones Work on 5G Networks?**
- ◆ **Use 5G with your iPad** <-- looks like only a

few iPad Cellular capable models will work on 5G

◆ **Understand 5G network compatibility & roaming on Pixel phones (Google Phones)**

AT&T, which plans to shutter its network in February, says it has reached out to affected customers and provided them with discounted or in some instances free phone upgrades. Other networks, including T-Mobile, have delayed their shutdowns until slightly later to accommodate people who still haven't upgraded:

T-Mobile will shut down Sprint's 3G network on March 31, 2022.

Verizon has said it will shut down its network on Dec. 31, 2022.

Passing this along for you to use as appropriate. //George B.

Quick tip of the day

Sure, custom ringtones sound fun in theory. But what about all the skeevey websites out there? What if you download a ringtone from a shady site that infects your computer with malware?

Don't worry about wading through the world of ringtones. We've done the heavy lifting for you and found nine free websites for ringtones. Have fun!

Tap or click here to get all the free ringtones you'll ever need.

<<<<>>>>

Website of the day: This keylogger check can keep you safe

Ever heard of a keylogger? These are invasive programs that can monitor what you're typing in real-time. If that weren't bad enough, a keylogger could send your keystrokes to hackers.

Cybercriminals use this technique to steal passwords, email addresses and other private data in the blink of an eye. To protect your PC against this threat, look into anti-keylogging software. **One great free option is Ghostpress.**

This lightweight program runs in the background while you type. If anyone tries to record your keystrokes, it blocks them. Ghostpress even stops hackers from taking screenshots of your private information.

<<<<>>>>

Quick tip of the day

Your browser doesn't just store your passwords and favorite sites. There are also browser cookies, the trackers that follow you around the web and power the ads and content you see. Plus, your internet history, cache, and download history could be clogging things up.

A free program called CCleaner helps you sort out the cookies and archives you don't really need. When you download the app, you can focus on a specific browser you would like to clean up. CCleaner analyzes its backlog of information and lists the data that seems unnecessary.

[Tap or click here to get the details and links you need for CCleaner.](#)

You can delete cookies from your phone, too. [Tap or click here for the step-by-step instructions whether you're using iOS or Android.](#)

<<<<>>>>

Quick tip of the day

You remember to clear your cluttered computer from time to time, but what about your smartphone? Our phones are essentially handheld computers, and when they overflow with useless information, their operations can also slow down. Think overburdened call logs, search history, and saved x.

For Android users, try Clean Master or Magic Toolbox. You can use these apps to clean out junk files, clean your cache, delete cookies, wipe out temporary files. Note: Both are free to use but ad-supported.

[Tap or click here for direct links to download Clean Master or Magic Toolbox.](#)

iPhones don't have an equivalent app, but clearing your cache is simple. [Tap or click here and scroll down to "Clear that cache."](#)

<<<<>>>>

Quick tip of the day

Computer taking forever to start? In most cases, you can blame long computer startup times on apps you don't need and those essential to your PC's wake-up process. All of that is customizable.

Here's how to see (and change) which apps load during Windows startup:

Click on the Start menu.

Select Settings (cog icon) and click on Apps.

In the left menu, click on Startup. It should be the last option.

From here, toggle apps on or off.

Pro tip: For an easier view, filter the list of apps by impact. This way, you can quickly see which ones have a high impact on your PC's performance and adjust those accordingly.

Have a Mac? We love you, too! [Head to Komando.com for the steps you need to adjust what happens on startup](#)

<<<<>>>>

How your voicemail greeting could save your life

What would you do if you're lost, your car runs out of gas, or you're in a dangerous situation, and your phone's battery is almost dead? First, you should immediately call a friend or dial 911. But here's something important to remember. You should also change your phone's voicemail greeting.

[Tap or click here for a tech hack that could save your life.](#)

<<<<>>>>

Quick tip of the day

In addition to text like your name and contact info, you can also add images to your Gmail signature. If you have a business logo, headshot, signature, or something else to share, add it to your email signature to be sent out automatically with every message.

To add an image to your signature:

- Click the Settings cog > See all settings.
 - On the General tab, scroll down to Signature.
 - Click the button that says Create new, then create your custom signature.
 - Click the image icon to upload or drag a picture into your email signature.
-

USS Connecticut CO, XO, COB Relieved Over Collision in South China Sea 'Due to Loss of Confidence'

(USNI NEWS 04 NOV 21) ... Sam LaGrone

The commander, executive officer and senior enlisted sailor for attack submarine USS Connecticut (SSN-22) have been fired following the results of an investigation into the Oct. 2 underwater collision in the South China Sea, the Navy announced on Thursday.

Connecticut commanding officer Cmdr. Cameron Aljilani, executive officer Lt. Cmdr. Patrick Cashin and Chief of the Boat Cory Rodgers were removed from their positions at the direction of U.S. 7th Fleet commander Vice Adm. Karl Thomas.

The reliefs are "due to loss of confidence. Thomas determined sound judgement, prudent decision-making, and adherence to required procedures in navigation planning, watch team execution and risk management could have prevented the incident," reads a statement from the Navy.

"Capt. John Witte will assume duties as interim Commanding Officer. Cmdr. Joe Sammur will assume duties as interim Executive Officer. Command Master Chief Paul Walters will assume duties as interim Chief of the Boat."

The reliefs follow the completion of the investigation into the Oct. 2 collision in which the nuclear attack submarine collided with an uncharted underwater seamount in the South China Sea.

"The investigation determined USS Connecticut grounded on an uncharted seamount while operating in international waters in the Indo-Pacific region," 7th Fleet spokesperson Cmdr. Hayley Sims told USNI News in a Monday afternoon statement.

The submarine is now in Guam undergoing repairs overseen by Naval Sea Systems Command, personnel from the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and submarine tender USS Emory S. Land (AS-39).

On Thursday, the Navy announced Connecticut would return to Bremerton, Wash., for

repairs.

The Navy has not released damage information for Connecticut but sources have confirmed to USNI News that the forward section of the submarine was struck, damaging the ballast tanks. The damage to the tanks forced the submarine to transit for a week on the surface to Guam.

Earlier this week, the Chinese foreign ministry renewed calls for the U.S. to disclose additional details about the incident.

The U.S. "has yet to give clear answers to questions like the intention of the operation, the exact location of the incident, whether it lies in the exclusive economic zone or territorial sea of any country, and whether the collision led to a nuclear leak or polluted the marine environment, all causing great concern and doubt," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said on Tuesday.

"We once again urge the U.S. to give a detailed description of the incident and fully address regional countries' concern and doubt."

Pentagon spokesman John Kirby told USNI News on Thursday that the Defense Department has not provided Beijing any additional information on the collision.

The following is the complete statement from the Navy.

Vice Adm. Karl Thomas, Commander, U.S. 7th Fleet,

relieved Cmdr. Cameron Aljilani as commanding officer, Lt. Cmdr. Patrick Cashin as Executive Officer, and Master Chief Sonar Technician Cory Rodgers as Chief of the Boat, of Seawolf-class fast-attack submarine USS Connecticut (SSN 22), on Nov. 04, 2021, due to loss of confidence.

Thomas determined sound judgement, prudent decision-making and adherence to required procedures in navigation planning, watch team execution and risk management could have prevented the incident.

Capt. John Witte will assume duties as interim Commanding Officer. Cmdr. Joe Sammur will assume duties as interim Executive Officer.

Command Master Chief Paul Walters will assume duties as interim Chief of the Boat. USS Connecticut remains in Guam while undergoing damage assessment and will return to Bremerton, Washington for repairs.

<https://news.usni.org/2021/11/04/uss-connecticut-co-xo-cob-relieved-over-collision-in-south-china-sea-due-to-lose-of-confidence>

USS Connecticut Underway Off Guam After Undergoing Repairs

(USNI NEWS 18 NOV 21) ... Sam LaGrone

The U.S. attack submarine that struck an underwater seamount last month is underway off the coast of Guam after more than a month of damage assessment repairs, two defense officials confirmed to USNI News on Thursday.

USS Connecticut (SSN-22) left Guam on its own power Thursday evening local time, according to ship spotters tracking the automatic identification signal (AIS) as it left the U.S. naval base on the island. The departure was confirmed to USNI News by two defense officials.

Cmdr. Cindy Fields, a spokesperson with Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, would not confirm the underway when contacted by USNI News on Thursday. She said in a statement the submarine, “has been undergoing damage assessment, repairs and testing while in Guam. The submarine remains in a safe and stable condition.”

It’s unclear if the attack submarine was testing repairs and intended to come into port and begin the voyage to Bremerton, Wash., for its final round of repairs.

Following the Oct. 2 incident, the boat had traveled to Guam for initial repairs overseen by Naval Sea Systems Command, personnel from the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and submarine tender USS Emory S. Land (AS-39).

The damage to the submarine was localized to the forward portions and may have damaged the ballast tanks, USNI News understands. The Navy has said repeatedly that the nuclear reactor plant and the propulsion system were undamaged.

Connecticut’s underway comes as the

submarine force has announced a navigation stand down in what the Navy has determined was a preventable collision, Vice Adm. William Houston, commander of Naval Submarine Forces said on Wednesday.

“We have very rigorous navigation safety procedures and they fell short of what our standard was,” he said.

Earlier this month, U.S. 7th Fleet commander Vice Adm. Karl Thomas relieved Connecticut’s commanding officer, executive officer and chief of the boat “due to loss of confidence” following the collision.

Moving ahead, the service will now have to determine how to squeeze the attack boat into the repair schedules of the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, which is already suffering a backlog of maintenance.

“If we ended up doing [the Connecticut work] in one of the public shipyards, that would certainly cause perturbations in all the other work in the shipyards,” Stefany said before the House Armed Services Committee readiness subcommittee in October.

<https://news.usni.org/2021/11/18/uss-connecticut-underway-off-guam-after-undergoing-repairs>

Vice Adm. Houston: Sub Force Approaching Inflection Point Of 50 SSNs

(SEAPOWERS MAGAZINE 17 NOV 21) ... Richard R. Burgess

ARLINGTON, Va. — The decline in the number of the Navy’s attack submarines (SSNs) is leveling out sooner than was feared just a few years ago, made possible by the decision to extend the service lives of some older SSNs.

Previously, the force level of SSNs was predicted to decline to a “trough” of 41 SSNs in the mid-2020s before the number would start to increase as the building of two Virginia-class SSNs per year hit its stride.

With 50 submarines “we are at that inflection point right now,” said Vice Adm. Bill Houston, commander, Naval Submarine Forces, speaking Nov. 17 at the Naval Submarine League’s annual

symposium in Arlington. “We are actually very stable right now [at 50] and we’re starting to increase our numbers.

“How are we doing that? Through an awful lot of hard work by those people who came before me and whose shoulders we’re standing on right now; tremendous hard work from the shipbuilders and tremendous from the Navy, from the Department of Defense and from our overall government,” Houston said.

An important initiative is the service life extension of several Los Angeles-class SSNs.

“There is additional margin in the Los Angeles class,” he said. “We actually have reactor cores available which will refuel and extend a significant number of Los Angeles-class submarines.”

Houston was not specific in the number of Los Angeles-class SSNs submarines that will go through life extensions. The Navy previously has mentioned consideration of extending the service lives of five to seven boats.

“We found that on most of our Los Angeles [SSNs] had significant hull margins, so we were able to extend them, and they had the fuel to go longer,” he said. “There are several Los Angeles’s that we will physically refuel and add years on them. Just due to the absolutely incredible job we did when we built the Los Angeles and the Ohio [SSBN and SSGN] that we could extend those ships as long as we can.”

<https://seapowermagazine.org/vice-adm-houston-sub-force-approaching-inflection-point-of-50-ssns/>

Navy Assessing LA Sub Fleet For Possible Life Extensions

The fact the Navy can extend some of its submarine fleet's life by several years is likely due in part to the time some of those boats have sat in docks awaiting maintenance.

(BREAKING DEFENSE 18 NOV 21) ... Justin Katz

WASHINGTON – The Navy is “systematically” assessing each one of its Los-Angeles class submarines to determine if their service lives can be extended for two to three years, a process a

senior officer says will result in a 20% improvement in force projections compared to previous forecasts.

Rear Adm. Doug Perry, director of undersea warfare requirements, told attendees at Naval Submarine League today that he most recently approved a three-year extension for the nuclear-powered attack submarine Alexandria (SSN 757) earlier this year.

He added that each boat’s extension is being assessed on a case-by-case basis.

“We are currently forecast to sustain a force of 50 SSNs throughout this decade,” Perry said.

“And then as we build our Virginia-class submarines we will go above 50 and get up to the fiscal year 2016 force structure assessment requirement of 66 SSNs.”

At least one factor that has likely contributed to the Navy’s ability to squeeze out two or three extra years of service life on some of its submarines is, ironically, its maintenance backlog.

The service has taken harsh criticism from Capitol Hill for at times allowing some boats to sit in dock for several years at a time while awaiting servicing. That time in dock – and by extension time when the sub’s reactor was not being used – likely comes into play when assessing whether the boat can sail past its original service life.

The Navy is also starting to work on refueling “five still very capable” Los-Angeles submarines with new reactor cores, Perry said, potentially extending their service lives for an additional 10 years or more.

The service for several years now has been experimenting with whether it could effectively refuel the submarines and had previously stated additional refuelings would be contingent initial trials. Perry also said Portsmouth Naval Shipyard had been selected as the best yard to do that work.

<https://breakingdefense.com/2021/11/navy-assessing-la-sub-fleet-for-possible-life-extensions/>

Next Generation SSN(X) Attack Sub ‘Is Going to Carry a Lot of Torpedoes,’ Says Admiral

(USNI NEWS 22 NOV 21) ... Sam LaGrone
ARLINGTON, Va. – The next U.S. nuclear attack submarine must require less maintenance, be fast, quiet and packed with torpedoes, the service’s director of undersea warfare said on Thursday.

The SSN(X) nuclear attack boat will be more focused on the war in blue water than the multi-mission Virginia-class submarines, which are designed to operate closer to shore for missions like signals intelligence and special operation missions.

“Virginia remains the most capable multi-mission submarine in the world – bar none,” Rear Adm. Doug Perry, the director of the undersea warfare division on the chief of naval operations staff (OPNAV N97), said last week. “But we must maintain our undersea advantage by investing for future capabilities. And we know we need to start that work today to make sure we can deliver SSN (X) in time of need, and without lots of technical or schedule risk.”

In 2019, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that the SSN(X) boats could cost up to \$5.5 billion per hull. The current Virginia-class boats cost about \$2.8 billion per hull, while the Block Vs with the 80-foot Virginia Payload Module will cost about \$3.2 billion.

“The Navy indicates that the next-generation attack submarine should be faster, stealthier, and able to carry more torpedoes than the Virginia class—similar to the Seawolf-class submarine. CBO therefore assumed that the SSN(X) would be a Seawolf-sized SSN, which displaces about 9,100 tons when submerged, and would have an all-new design in keeping with the Navy’s description of it as a fast, lethal next-generation attack submarine,” the CBO wrote.

Before Virginia, the Navy developed the Sea Wolf-class to be a deep-diving submarine with a weapons room that can field about 50 torpedoes.

Perry said, in broad strokes, SSN(X) would take the heavily-armed Seawolf template, combine the stealthy technology developed for Virginia and keep the time in maintenance to a minimum.

Outside of a classified initial draft capabilities document, “we don’t know the specific characteristics that will be in SSNs. But we do believe that the next submarine will have a large horizontal payload capacity. You can read that as it’s going to carry a lot of torpedoes. And we know how to do that. It’ll be fast. And it’ll have acoustic superiority. That’s both sensors to hear the other ships out there as well as stealth – staying quiet,” Perry said.

“We know how to do all of these things, but we have to integrate them into one platform. Speed and large payload? We did that on Seawolf, and we need to pull that forward to a modular construction submarine.”

Part of the development of more offensive submarines, the Navy restarted the Mk-48 Advanced Capability (ADCAP) heavyweight torpedo in 2016.

“The heavyweight torpedo will remain the weapon of choice for the submarine for this for the foreseeable future, primarily due to its inherent stealth, its destructive effects in the battlespace, and [it’s] pretty difficult to defend against and it also [preserves] the stealth of launch platform,” Perry said.

The development of the Navy’s Acoustic Superiority Program began on Virginia-class USS South Dakota (SSN-790), which commissioned in 2019, Perry said. The package includes a large vertical array mounted on the hull just aft of the sail, a special exterior coating and machinery quieting improvements inside the boat.

Based on the timing of the construction of the Columbia-class, the new class would come just as the construction of the class of 12 nuclear ballistic missile submarines is ending in the 2040s and in the short term design work should begin soon.

“With Columbia 95 percent design complete, now is the time to begin transitioning that experienced design workforce,” Perry said.

“Fielding any new class submarine is challenging, but we got to strike while the iron is hot.”

The Virginia boats now – and the Columbia boats in the future – are built in a teaming

arrangement between Huntington Ingalls Industries and General Dynamic Electric Boat. Each yard builds part of a boat and the components are barged to each yard for final assembly, with EB being the lead yard for the design of each class. Perry said that the workforce would be key to making SSN(X) affordable.

“This maintains a steady demand signal for the shipyard workforce, which is a key element of developing and sustaining a resilient submarine industrial base,” Perry said.

The Navy is also considering how it will leverage unmanned undersea vehicles with its new class.

“We know the ability to influence the battlespace and leverage the seafloor is to get to the bottom of the ocean you will need UUVs,” Perry said.

“That requires a submarine interface that will drive what SSN(X) has to be in terms of a dimension for an interface that will launch and recover [UUVs]. It may be a torpedo tube it may be something different.”

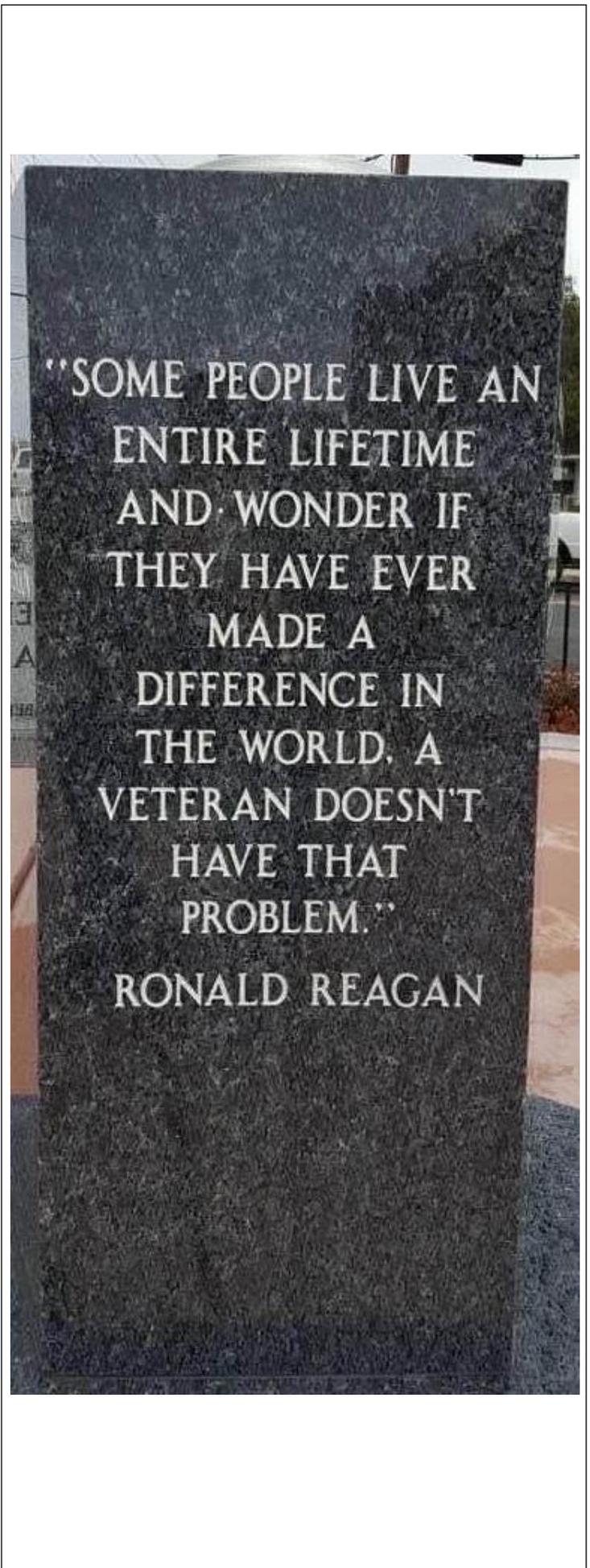
On the other end of construction, the Navy is working to increase the amount of time the submarines can operate by reducing time in maintenance.

“SSN(X) has to have high operational availability, [we’ve] got to be able to keep that ship at sea. And that gets to sort of the class maintenance plan. We’ve learned a lot from operating [the Los Angeles class], then Seawolf and Virginia.

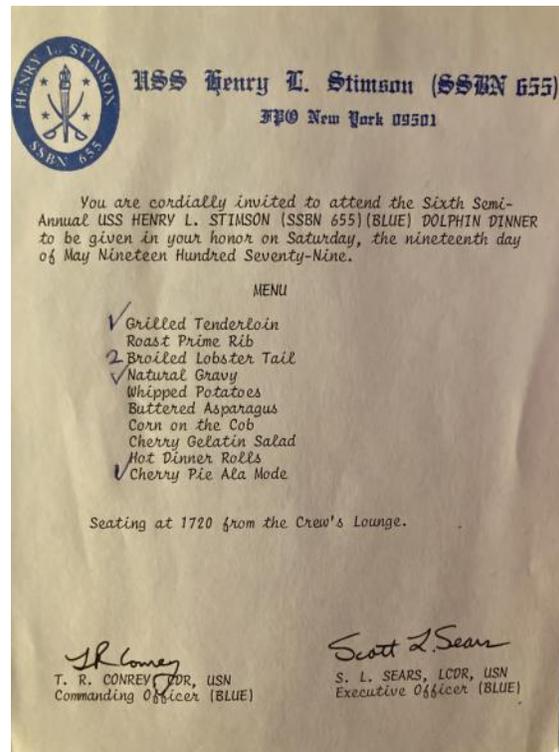
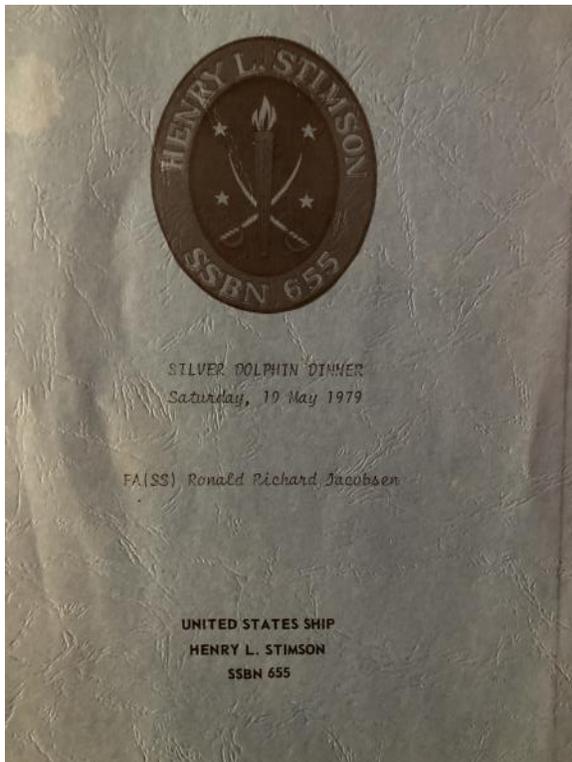
We are analyzing those class maintenance plans with PEO Subs and making sure that the class maintenance plan we’ve come up with gives us the highest operational building availability possible,” Perry said.

“That’ll be really part of our calculus as we define the work through the capability development document and [requirements] process and defining what SSN(X) needs to be.”

<https://news.usni.org/2021/11/22/next-generation-ssnx-attack-sub-is-going-to-carry-a-lot-of-torpedoes-says-admiral>



**SUBMITTED BY RONALD JACOBSON, MMFN(SS) B 78-80
 Seaman gang circa 78-80 - 2nd from left is TM2SS Lucky
 Logan - TM3SS Coles - ENS. Coles - COB Hinds**



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