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As mentioned in the last POC Broadcast, Ron Martini will be providing a weekly digest of submarine news and related commentary. This is being distributed to the Base POCs for distribution to your members.

SONAR SUBMARINE ONLINE NEWS AND REVIEW

Impact of Submarine Grounding Injured Much of Crew

New York Times, Published on 01/11/05

The nuclear submarine that ran aground Saturday in the South Pacific hit so "incredibly hard" that about 60 of its 137 crew members were injured and the sailor who died was thrown 20 feet by the impact, according to internal Navy e-mail messages sent by a top admiral.

The messages said the submarine's hull was severely damaged after the head-on crash into what Navy officials believe was an undersea mountain that was not on the navigation charts. One message said the submarine, the San Francisco, was traveling at high speed, and the impact practically stopped it in its tracks and caused flooding in parts of the bow.

The messages were written by Rear Adm. Paul F. Sullivan, the commander of submarines in the Pacific. They paint a more dire picture of the accident, which occurred 360 miles southeast of Guam, than had previously been disclosed. They also hint at the extensive efforts to steady the vessel and save the sailor who died.

The e-mail messages indicated that the Navy had tried to evacuate the fatally injured man, Joseph A. Ashley, within hours after he had been thrown forward and hit his head on a metal pump, which knocked him unconscious.

Ashley's father, Daniel L. Ashley, said in an interview he had been told that as a helicopter hovered over the choppy seas, crew members could not maneuver a stretcher carrying his son through the submarine's hatches before he died.

"They tried numerous times to maneuver him through various hatches," Ashley said. "But it just didn't happen."

Sullivan, who is based in Hawaii, sent the e-mail messages to other Navy officials. As the messages circulated within the submarine community, two people provided copies to The New York Times, and Navy officials confirmed their authenticity.

The e-mail messages also indicated that about 60 crew members had been injured. All the Navy had said publicly was that 23 crew members were treated for broken bones, cuts and bruises.

The messages said those 23 were hurt seriously enough that they were unable to stand their watch duties as the submarine limped back to Guam. Daniel L. Ashley said the submarine's captain, Cmdr. Kevin Mooney, told him by phone on Monday that among the injured crew members, "there were a lot of broken fingers, broken arms and legs and one fractured back."

Navy officials said Tuesday that the rest of the injuries were minor.

The admiral's e-mail also said an outer hull ripped open at the submarine's nose, causing flooding in a dome with sonar sensors and in four of the ballast tanks used to submerge the vessel or take it to the surface.

The flooding caused the submarine to sit deeper in the water and made it hard to maneuver on the trip back to Guam. Sailors had to keep

pumping pressurized air into the tanks to prevent the water from rising and to maintain buoyancy.

An inner hull, which surrounds the crew's living and work spaces, held firm, the e-mail said. The nuclear reactor and critical propulsion systems were not damaged.

In the e-mail, Sullivan did not discuss why the vessel ran aground. The Navy is investigating, and the admiral, who ultimately will have to decide whether to reprimand any of the submarine's crew members, did not respond to requests for comment.

Navy officials have said that the submarine, which was headed for Australia, appeared to have smashed into an uncharted undersea mountain.

Ashley, who lives in Akron, Ohio, said Mooney told him the same thing on Monday.

"He said, 'On the charts we have, this is a clear area all the way through to Australia,'" Ashley said.

Navy officials said the San Francisco was traveling at 30 knots when it careened off some part of the undersea mountain range. In one of the e-mail messages, Sullivan wrote that on impact, the vessel made a "nearly instantaneous deceleration" to about four knots.

Ashley said Mooney told him that his son, who was a machinist's mate second class, had just gotten off watch duty in the engine area and was chatting with other sailors when the accident occurred.

Ashley said his son, who was 24, "loved the Navy and that submarine" and had just re-enlisted.

Ashley said Mooney, who could not be reached for comment, also told him that his son's condition seemed to worsen as sailors labored to tilt the stretcher through the evacuation hatch.

Ashley said that at the end of the conversation, Mooney told him that he took full responsibility for the sailor's death. Ashley said he replied that he had heard all he needed "to know that you and your crew did everything you could do to save my son's life."

U.S. submarine ran into apparently uncharted undersea mountain: official

WASHINGTON, Jan 11 (AFP) – The nuclear-powered US submarine that ran aground in the Pacific last week, causing the death of a sailor and injuring 23 others, ran head-on into an undersea mountain that apparently was not on the navy's charts, a US defense official said Tuesday.

The USS San Francisco, a Los Angeles-class attack submarine, arrived at its home port in Guam under its own steam Monday as the navy investigated the mishap.

A senior defense official, who asked not to be identified, told AFP initial reports were that the submarine was cruising at high speed at a depth of about 120 meters (400 feet) Sunday when it ran into an uncharted sea mountain.

Typically, a vessel's commander is held responsible for such mishaps, but the official said that might not be the result here if an investigation concludes that it was an uncharted sea mountain and the skipper's judgments were sound.

"Our hearts and prayers and sympathies are with the family of the sailor lost in that accident, his shipmates and all others injured and affected," Admiral Thomas Fargo, commander of the US Pacific Command, said in Hawaii.

"As we are still gathering facts, it would be inappropriate to speculate on the cause," he said. "But I assure you that the Pacific fleet will conduct a rapid and a thorough investigation and we'll let you know what happened once that investigation is complete."

The navy said the submarine's nuclear plant was not damaged and its hull was still intact.

But the sonar dome in the bow of the vessel was partly flooded during the collision, the official said.

The sailor who died Sunday of injuries sustained in the accident was identified as Machinist Mate 2nd Class John Allen Ashley, 24, of Akron, Ohio.

Twenty-three other crew members on the USS San Francisco were being treated "for a range of injuries, including broken bones, lacerations, bruises and a back injury," Petty Officer Alyssa Batarla told AFP.

The accident occurred on Friday, some 560 kilometers (350 miles) south of Guam, when the vessel was conducting underwater operations on its way to Brisbane, Australia with its crew of 137, the navy said.

Memorial set for Sailor

Guam Pacific Daily News, 01/12/2005

As the military continues to investigate the USS San Francisco collision, Navy officials here are planning a memorial service tomorrow for the sailor who died as a result of injuries in the incident.

It is too soon to determine whether the USS San Francisco can be repaired on Guam, as Navy officials continue assessing the damage it sustained when it ran aground, striking a topographical feature underwater.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Joseph Allen Ashley of Akron, Ohio, died as a result of injuries sustained. Dozens more were injured when the incident occurred Saturday while the submarine was traveling about 350 miles south of Guam.

Lt. Cmdr. Jeff Davis, spokesman for the U.S. Navy Pacific Submarine Force, said yesterday that the Navy is planning a memorial service for Ashley, who was a machinist mate. Davis said the memorial is slated to be held tomorrow, but details of the memorial were not available yesterday.

Ashley died Sunday afternoon after he suffered head trauma while he was working in one of the ship's engineering spaces. Nearly two dozen other sailors received injuries ranging from broken bones to lacerations, several of whom were brought to Guam Memorial Hospital for "specialized testing" but were not admitted to GMH, Davis said.

Davis said since the damage assessment has just begun, no decision has been made about where the repairs will take place.

The USS San Francisco, one of three nuclear-powered submarines based on Guam, was on its way to Brisbane, Australia, for a routine port visit when the submarine ran aground. It made its way back to Guam and was moored at Sierra Pier on Monday afternoon.

NBC News reported yesterday, citing unnamed Navy officials, that the submarine was traveling at 40 mph at a depth of 525 feet when it hit an "undersea mound."

The collision slowed the 7,000-ton San Francisco to about 5 mph instantly, the report stated. The submarine then made an "emergency blow," or rapid ascent, to the surface.

The nose of the submarine, which contains the submarine's sensitive sonar system, was destroyed, the report added. Had the inner hull been breached, the pressure at 525 feet below sea level would have crushed the submarine, the report said.

In the NBC News report, unnamed Navy officials, citing the submarine commander, said the San Francisco hit an "uncharted" mound that would have been invisible to the submarine's crew if they were running silently -- without using underwater sonar.

Some officials say, however, that the usual underwater sea lanes used by U.S. submarines have been fully charted and it's not clear why the San Francisco would have been operating in waters that were not adequately charted, according to the NBC News report.

Navy officials on Guam yesterday would not comment on the NBC News report, but stressed that the incident would be investigated thoroughly.

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Navy man Joseph Ashley remembered for 'Dixie' tune, big smile

Sub accident leaves a void

By Marilyn Miller, Beacon Journal staff writer

The *Dixie* song played by Joseph Ashley's green Jeep could be heard whenever he drove it through his neighborhood.

The song came from the car's horn, patterned after his favorite 1980s television show, *The Dukes of Hazzard*.

"We always knew where he was in Manchester," said his father, Dan Ashley.

But since 2001, when Joseph Ashley joined the Navy, those noises have seldom been heard.

A few months ago, Dan Ashley blew the horn to see if it still worked, and people started calling to ask if his son was home.

Joseph Ashley will be flown home this week, but he will be escorted by four to six of his crew members.

The 24-year-old Navy man died Sunday after a submarine accident. The family was told Friday their son hit his head on a pump when the nuclear submarine he was stationed on ran aground about 350 miles from its home port in Guam.

The Navy was preparing to fly Vicki and Dan Ashley to their son's bedside. They knew the injury was serious, but their son was holding on.

On television Friday night, the parents watched and sympathized with the families of six soldiers who were killed in a car bombing in Iraq.

"I said those families would love to be in our position, because at least our son is alive," Dan Ashley said.

They went to bed unsettled, but relieved.

Vicki Ashley tossed and turned so much that night she moved to the couch in the living room to try to rest.

"I couldn't sleep, but when I saw a flash of lights from a car pulling into the driveway about 2 a.m., I knew my Joey was gone," she said. "I looked out the window and saw two men dressed in uniform. I ran to tell my husband."

The men confirmed her fears.

"I nodded to them to go ahead. I already knew what they had to say," said Dan Ashley, a former Navy man himself. They stood at attention and announced Machinist's Mate 2nd Class Ashley's death.

It was then the parents learned their son died while medics prepared him for transport to a military hospital. He had never regained consciousness from the accident. The Navy has launched an investigation into the accident, in which 19 other sailors were injured.

His parents will now fly to Guam for a memorial service with his shipmates and commanders. A second memorial service will be held in Canal Fulton, when their son is brought home.

Machinist's Mate 2nd Class Ashley was about 5 feet 11 inches tall with blond hair, blue eyes and a big smile.

"When he had his heart set on something, he would try his best to get it done," said his mother. "I always told him to do what he wanted to do in life, but to be the best at it and to always try his hardest."

He attended Stark State College of Technology for a year and took welding classes, but he couldn't find a welding job after he got certified.

One day he came home and shared his future plans.

"He said, 'Mom I passed the Navy test; I'm going to do what daddy did. He always excelled in what he did.'"

He made rank in minimal time and was named Junior Sailor of the Year for the entire Guam naval base.

"He loved the Navy, and he loved his country. He just signed up for another four years. He said he was young and wanted to make a career out of it," she said. He had just completed the fourth year of his original 5-year enlistment.

His father spent eight years in the Navy.

His grandfather, also named Joseph, was in the U.S. Army during World War II. Machinist's Mate 2nd Class Ashley and his grandfather talked often because he was also stationed in the South Pacific during his time in the service.

Machinist's Mate 2nd Class Ashley wasn't afraid to share his feelings with his family. He called at least once a month to share what he was doing and to find out what other families were doing. There was never a time he called that he didn't tell family members how much he loved them.

The family last talked to him on Jan 3. He was excited about coming home in March -- his first visit home in 18 months.

His father had just recently made airplane reservations.

The green Jeep Wrangler was waiting for the young sailor, who graduated from Manchester High School in 1999 and played the drums in the high school band. He played freshman football, then joined the band in his sophomore year.

Family members said he was always happy, wearing a big smile and beating his drums while marching in the band.

His older brother, Dan Jr., also a *Dukes of Hazzard* fan, saw the show's impact on his brother.

"He always thought of himself as a good ol' Southern country boy wearing his cowboy hat, a red and black checkered shirt with steel-toed black boots."

Dan Jr. said his brother sported a Confederate flag and the word "redneck" on his Jeep, not because he was a rebel, but because he loved the good ol' boy brothers and their driving tactics on the television show.

"He liked to stand out in a crowd," said his younger brother, Benjamin. "Dan and I are the quiet ones. Joseph would be more likely to do the talking for us both."

He will be buried at Fox Cemetery near Spencer, W. Va., where the family owns 35 acres and a cabin, a place where he spent many good times.

Machinist's Mate 2nd Class Ashley will be buried next to his great grandfather and namesake, Joseph Ashley, also a veteran.

You can see the cemetery from the crest of the hill of the cabin's property, family members say. They remember the last time their Navy son and brother was on leave.

``One of our last memories is of Joey parked in his Jeep at the crest of the hill playing that *Dixie* song," Dan Ashley said. Family members heard him say: ``Hallelujah, I'm home."

So family members know what they must now do.

``We will play that horn one more time in his memory at his burial."

During a last man roll call yesterday, all the sailors in the Auxiliary Division of the Engineering Department were present -- except Petty Officer 2nd Class Joseph Allen Ashley.

The "brotherhood," as many submariners call it, gathered yesterday at a memorial service for Ashley, who died from injuries suffered when the nuclear-powered submarine USS San Francisco ran aground Jan. 8 about 350 nautical miles south of Guam.

Ashley, 24, of Akron, Ohio, was known as a great shipmate who loved submarines, and most especially the USS San Francisco, where he belonged for nearly three years and where he lost his life. A Navy official has said the submarine struck a topographical feature underwater and the investigation into the accident continues.

"(Ashley) dedicated himself to San Francisco, our Navy and our great country. By so doing, he earned the love, honor, trust and respect of his shipmates," Cmdr. Kevin Mooney, commanding officer of the USS San Francisco, said in a release. "Although our hearts ache and we miss him, we thank God for the time together. We also thank Petty Officer Ashley's family for sharing their son and brother with us."

Mooney further highlighted Ashley's positive impact on the crew.

"He was my shipmate, my friend and a great submariner. ... He loved his job and life in the Navy so much," Mooney said. "Not only was Petty Officer Ashley happy all the time, he made it his personal business to make sure all his shipmates were happy, including me."

Lt. j.g. Josh Chisholm, who is a chemistry/radiological assistant, said Ashley was a great sailor who "loved submarines and being on the San Francisco, through and through."

"He always brought a smile to everybody's face when he was around," Chisholm said, adding that Ashley always had a positive, upbeat attitude.

"For us, he was somebody we knew we could trust," said Chisholm, who was interviewed after the memorial service. "We knew he would do the right thing in terms of when he was standing watch."

Four sailors from USS San Francisco, along with sailors from Submarine Squadron 15, will escort Ashley's body off island. He will be laid to rest in West Virginia, said Master Chief Petty Officer Bill Cramer, who is the chief of boat on the San Francisco.

"He was one of those guys who was ready to make the Navy and the submarine force a lifelong career because of the tightness. It is like a brotherhood as we refer to it," Cramer said. "We were very close to him -- everybody on board."

Ashley was in charge of the submarine's emergency diesel on board and took great pride in that, Cramer said.

"In our most recent engineering exam, he got the highest grade that someone would get," Cramer said. "He took pride in everything he did ... and was always willing to learn more."

Cramer said the crew has sought some counseling after returning to Guam earlier this week, adding that the experience has been traumatic. He said 23 sailors were brought to Naval Hospital on Monday, and all but three were released the night they were brought there. By Wednesday, the remaining sailors were released from the hospital.

"Most of my sailors, the very next day, were mustering with me on the pier -- which wasn't required -- but they were ready to get back to work," Cramer said. "A lot of the guys that were getting out of the Navy have said, 'the San Francisco brought me home from that, I'm gonna stick around until (it's) seaworthy again.'"

Ashley enlisted in the Navy in 2001 and reported to USS San Francisco as a machinist's mate in February 2002, according to a Navy release. While serving aboard the Los Angeles-class, fast-attack submarine, he was selected Junior Sailor of the Quarter for the third quarter of 2004, the release said.

Chisholm said since the grounding, the sailors have been relying on each other and their families for support and do not second-guess getting back on the submarine despite the accident.

"We've been through such a difficult situation with the grounding," Chisholm said. "But I think most of us, if it went back to sea today, would go right back and operate that ship, mainly because we've got all of each other there."

A brief video from a TV station in Ohio at the funeral is available at: <http://www.wkyc.com/video/player.aspx?aid=9428&sid=28881&bw=>

Sources Say Crew's Heroics Saved Sub

USS San Francisco reportedly could have sunk following crash

By ROBERT A. HAMILTON, Day Staff Writer, Navy/Defense/Electric Boat

It is increasingly clear that the submarine that hit a seamount in the Pacific Ocean last week came close to being lost and that only the valiant efforts of its crew kept it afloat, Navy sources said Tuesday.

With uncontrolled flooding in its forward ballast tanks, the USS San Francisco had to run a low-pressure air pump for 30 hours straight to maintain buoyancy on its trip home, Navy sources said. The pump is rated for only intermittent use.

In addition, the submarine ran its diesel engines, channeling the exhaust into the forward ballast tanks in an effort to force out more of the water and make the ship lighter.

"Based on the information I've seen so far, they're very lucky this ship didn't sink," said retired Navy Capt. John C. Markowicz. "Only through the heroic efforts of the crew did that ship survive."

The San Francisco, home ported at Guam, was traveling more than 500 feet below the surface at more than 30 knots - about 35 mph - when it slammed into the seamount about 360 miles southeast of Guam.

The New York Times, in its editions today, reports that the submarine hit so "incredibly hard" that about 60 of its 137 crew were injured and that the one sailor who died was thrown 20 feet by the impact, according to internal Navy e-mail messages sent by Rear Adm. Paul F. Sullivan, the commander of submarines in the Pacific.

The messages sent by Sullivan paint a more dire picture of the accident than had previously been disclosed, The Times reported.

The accident came just minutes after the crew had finished a "field day," a cleaning process that involves breaking down a lot of equipment. If the accident had happened an hour earlier, the situation could have been much more serious because the loose equipment hatches and other parts could have become missiles, one source said.

Submariners also noted that if the boat involved had been a newer version of the Los Angeles class, the results could have been catastrophic.

The San Francisco, SSN 711, was commissioned in 1981. Starting with the Groton-based USS Providence, SSN 719, Los Angeles-class submarines have 12 missiles in vertical launch tubes in a compartment just behind the sonar dome.

Several submariners acknowledged that such an incident involving a newer boat could have led to a fire in the missile fuel systems, which could have led to a low-order detonation of up to 12,000 pounds of high explosives.

"It could have been a real Kursk-type situation," one Navy source said, referring to the Russian submarine that sank in August 2000 after a fire broke out in its torpedo compartment.

Submariners around the country were poring over charts of the area where the San Francisco hit the seamount and were coming to the same conclusion: The ocean bottom was supposed to be more than a mile below where the San Francisco hit.

In fact, sources said the San Francisco had just submerged from periscope depth and had taken a bottom reading with its Fathometer four minutes before it hit the seamount and that the reading indicated the bottom was 6,000 feet below the keel.

The damage to the submarine, which includes a cracked sonar sphere and severe damage to three of the four ballast tanks near the bow, and some buckling of the forward pressure hull, all argue that the submarine hit something akin to an underwater cliff.

"Going from 6,000 feet to almost nothing in four minutes is a very steep seamount, no question about it," Markowicz said.

The local chapter of U.S. Submarine Veterans has started a fund-raising campaign for the crew of the San Francisco. John Carcioppolo, the local base commander, said the group just finished raising \$3,800 for the family of the Canadian submariner killed in a shipboard fire last October, and one of the first pledges has come from the group's counterpart in Canada.

"Before I even announced I was doing fund-raising, I already got a commitment from Buster Brown up in Canada," Carcioppolo said. Brown is the head of the Submarine Association of Canada, Eastern Branch, and a former high-ranking enlisted member of the Canadian Navy.

Carcioppolo said he would send any money raised to the captain of the San Francisco, Cmdr. Kevin Mooney, "to be disbursed as he sees fit." Carcioppolo is a mentor of one of the young enlisted men on the San Francisco, and is acquainted with Mooney as well.

"There's been a very strong outpouring of good wishes for Kevin and for everyone on board," Carcioppolo said.

San Francisco was on its way to Brisbane, Australia, just before noon Saturday when it ran into the seamount, crushing the front end of the submarine.

At that depth, the water pressure was almost 250 PSI, or about 16 times atmospheric pressure, so the chief concern was to get to the surface as quickly as possible. The crew executed an "emergency blow," forcing high-pressure air into the ballast tanks to make the submarine rise sharply.

Once on the surface, though, the crew realized the ship was experiencing severe flooding into two of the three forward ballast tanks, and had to come up with some type of quick fix.

The low-pressure air system normally used for short periods of time was pressed into continuous service, and the ship started its diesel generators and used the exhaust to augment the blower to keep as much water as possible out of the ballast tanks.

With those emergency procedures in place, the ship limped home to Apra, Guam, where the Navy has rushed flotation devices, underwater engineering gear and technical experts to begin analyzing the damage.

Machinist Mate 2nd Class Joseph A. Ashley, 24, of Akron, Ohio, died from a head wound he sustained when he was thrown against a pump in the machinery spaces. Another machinist mate on duty in the engine room also received a serious head injury and was listed in stable condition Tuesday.

The Navy said 22 other men were injured badly enough to be taken off the submarine, so crew members from the USS City of Corpus Christi and the USS Houston, which are also homeported in Guam, as well as the tender USS Frank Cable, met the ship on its return and took over many of the injured crewmen's functions.

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Rosewood sailor aboard submarine that went aground

By Phyllis Moore, Greensboro News-Argus

Tuesday night's phone conversation between Roxann Barnes of Rosewood and her Navy son Bryan was brief but priceless. The days preceding it had been fraught with emotion.

On Saturday, she came home to find a phone message from a naval friend, inquiring about the status of her son. The USS *San Francisco*, a 360-foot submarine, had reportedly run aground about 35 miles south of Guam. One crewman was reported killed and 23 others were critically injured.

Roxann Barnes and husband Dean admit they were thrown off course by the news. But more so, they say they were disturbed at the lack of communication from the military.

"We were not notified by anybody that's official," Mrs. Barnes said. Instead, the couple worked fervently until they got some answers. They called their friend back twice before reaching him, they said. They refused to leave the house and would not turn on the television until they could find out any news about their son. Mrs. Barnes also put the word out for friends and family to say prayers for those on the submarine.

Then in Sunday's News-Argus, Mrs. Barnes said, she found an article about the accident that included a Web site. The site provided a phone number to call.

Mrs. Barnes said she wanted to talk to someone directly about the accident and was able to contact the U.S. Pacific Fleet public affairs office that day. She was relieved to learn that her son was not among those critically injured.

At 2 a.m. Monday, the Barneses answered their phone and heard the voice of their 21-year-old son.

"He said everybody in Guam was trying to get up with family members," Barnes said. "By the time they got into port, he called us.

"I could hear all the commotion in the background. They were being loaded onto a bus to go for treatment."

Barnes said his son could not talk about the incident in detail but described it as being "like slamming into a wall."

The second conversation with their son came unexpectedly Tuesday night.

"He's sore. He's tired. But he's still working," the relieved mother said after she hung up. "He's been on duty every since."

"This is an unusual situation," Barnes said. "They're all banged up, but it's a nuclear sub. You don't just come back and lay around. They're back on duty, all of them."

Mrs. Barnes said her son sounded good, considering what he's been through over the past few days.

"You can tell that they have been through some trauma, but he's a tough kid. By the grace of God, he got back."

She said she told her son, "I just needed to hear your voice. He said, 'I needed to hear your voice, too.'"

She said he also asked that she wish his older brother a happy birthday. Rocky Barnes, who also lives in the Rosewood area, turned 24 on Monday.

The Barneses say their son loves the Navy and is proud to be a sailor. An avid surfer since he learned to swim as a boy, he also enjoys photography and art, his mother said. He has been to Hawaii three times, might even choose to live there one day, and has the goal of surfing in every ocean, says Dad.

He graduated from Rosewood High School in 2001, enlisting in the Navy later that year. He holds the rank of E-5 and has re-enlisted through 2010. He also aspires to get into the officers program.

He has been stationed on Guam since 2003, say his parents. The last time he was home for a visit was in September, when his uncle Ron died.

"We are so grateful to Commander Kevin Mooney for granting him three weeks emergency leave to be with us," Mrs. Barnes says.

News reports say the *San Francisco* returned Monday to her home port of Apra Harbor, Guam. She is one of three submarines based on Guam.

Officials are investigating the accident, which reportedly occurred while the submarine was conducting underwater operations. The Barneses say they are reserving judgment.

"Accidents happen," said Mrs. Barnes. "The investigation will reveal the cause. Blame will not heal the pain of the loss."

She said the family is grateful that Bryan is all right and credits being able to cope throughout the ordeal because of its faith.

"You just try to be as positive and upbeat as you can," she said. "But we do believe there should be a better system for notifying families."

As parents, she said, "We have always been very open with our children and supported their choices. Bryan's gotten to see the world, and he's doing what he loves."

Barnes said after what happened, he told his son, "I don't think I could get back in that sub. He told me, 'I've got a job and I'm committed to do it.'"

"He has always said, 'I'm not a quitter.'"

[Navy Not 'Correctly Balanced' For Future, Clark Says](#)

By Michael Bruno, AEROSPACE DAILY & DEFENSE REPORT, 12 JAN 05

The Chief of U.S. Naval Operations, Adm. Vern Clark, said Jan. 11 that the Navy is not "correctly balanced and optimized for the world of the future," and that it faces a three-decade-long effort to fully reform its forces to accommodate national security needs such as anti-

terrorism and homeland security.

Reiterating his call for a "new strategic construct" for the Navy, Clark said the days of major naval engagements are past - at least for now - and that concerns such as missile defense and close-shore operations are driving structural changes in Navy force sets.

"Building a force set that is designed only to deal with ... major combat operations ... is the incorrect approach," he said in the keynote address to the Surface Navy Association's national symposium in Arlington, Va.

Instead of pulling from its major-combat operations force set for smaller operations such as peacekeeping and stability operations, the Navy should have whole force sets that address those needs, Clark said.

He pointed to tsunami-relief efforts and military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan as examples of the Navy's near future missions. Clark also noted the Sea Power 21 vision, which is transforming the way the Navy fights, in refining the service's battle against terrorism.

The CNO also said he is prepared for a tougher appropriations process on Capitol Hill this year. Although Congress will not receive the fiscal 2006 defense budget until early February, possible naval cuts already have been leaked (DAILY, Jan. 4). Funding could be reduced for the Navy's aircraft carriers, DD(X) destroyer, LPD-17 ship, Virginia-class submarine and the Marine Corps' Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle.

Where once he believed the country should work toward 375 Navy ships, new methods and technologies such as "sea swapping" crews among ships at sea have led Clark to re-evaluate even that number. "We're not walking around with our heads in the sands," he said.

New Missions To Rely On Sea Basing, U.S. Navy Chief Says

By Christopher P. Cavas, DEFENSE NEWS 12 JAN 05

The U.S. Navy must reshape itself to handle anti-terror missions as well as traditional naval operations, said Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Vern Clark on Jan. 11.

"Our Navy is not correctly optimized and balanced for the challenges of the future," he told an audience at the Surface Navy Association symposium in Crystal City, Va.

"The strategic landscape is changing in front of our eyes ... challenging our thinking about irregular and catastrophic threats."

The new missions will rely upon sea basing, a new concept to enable joint military forces to operate from ships offshore rather than seek to establish bases on land, Clark said.

"Everything we do in the maritime environment is about sea basing," he said.

Clark spoke forcefully and with confidence as he addressed the audience of surface warfare officers, and frequently pointed to and mentioned those he knew. But the CNO, who came up through the surface warfare ranks, seemed to predict a dire future for ship drivers, and pointed out dramatic increases over past decades in the costs of building new ships.

"We've got to have the courage to face things the way that they are," Clark said, hinting at a scaled-back shipbuilding plan.

"I expect it to be an exciting time on the Hill this year," he said, eliciting a laugh from the audience. Congress will hold its annual defense budget hearings after President Bush submits his fiscal 2006 budget request on Feb. 7.

Throughout his 35-minute address, Clark told his audience to "challenge every assumption" in preparing the Navy for the future.

"It can't get better by staying the way it is," Clark said.

Echoing Clark's words, Vice Adm. Joseph Sestak told the audience the keys to the future were "sizing the force to execute speed of response." Sea basing, he said, "is the one element linking the Global War on Terror and major combat operations."

Sestak, the deputy chief of naval operations for warfare requirements and programs, is heading the Navy's participation in the Quadrennial Defense Review, a congressionally imposed Pentagon effort to set the military's strategies and goals for the next four years. The current QDR is to be submitted to Congress by Sept. 30.

Sestak noted that the Navy's traditional areas of operations — overseas offensive combat operations and homeland defense — are merging.

"It is not just an away game for the U.S. Navy any longer, and it is not a home game either," he said. Rather, the Navy's roles are merging into "one game," requiring the service to monitor global developments continuously.

The Navy needs to organize itself to respond with great speed to any threat or development, Sestak said.

Group 10 to change command

From Staff, Submarine Group 10 public affairs

Rear Adm. Jeffrey Cassias, commander of Submarine Group 10, will be relieved by Rear Adm. Mark Kenny in a change of command ceremony Jan. 14 at 10 a.m. at the base chapel here.

The guest speaker will be Vice Adm. Charles Munns, commander of Naval Submarine Force.

Cassias has been assigned as commander of Submarine Force, US Pacific Fleet, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

Rear Adm. Kenny previously served as the deputy director for Submarine Warfare on the Navy Staff in Washington, DC. He will also relieve Cassias as commander of Submarine Group 2 and Navy Region Northeast in Groton, Conn.

U.S. Sub accident shows earth's crust changing fast without notice to the monitoring systems - sudden Tsunamis without warning possible?

Srini Balasubramaniam, India Daily, 13 Jan 05

The U.S. Navy submarine accident that killed one sailor and injured 24 others occurred when the vessel -- traveling at high speed -- hit an undersea mountain head-on, Pentagon officials said recently. The mountain was uncharted while the submarine was in the area that was supposed to be charted. There is absolutely no evidence that the submarine was attacked or collided with another naval vessel.

This story has a major untouched issue that needs to be addressed by USGS and other similar bodies under UN and other nations. While there is no reason to believe the above 9.0 Richter earthquake has anything to do with the new unknown mountain, in many parts of the world, the sources are reporting extreme changes in the earth's crust and severe tectonic movement.

The submarine was traveling in excess of 33 knots -- about 35 mph -- when its nose hit the undersea formation head-on, officials said. This again points to unknown tectonic activities that are unnoticed by our monitoring services.

Common assumption is that tectonic plates move and earth's crust changes through earthquakes and sudden stress relief. According to some Geological experts that may not be true always. There are cases where earth's crust has reshaped itself in a relatively silent way. In addition, according to a large number of oceanographers, our earthquake and Tsunami monitoring systems in the ocean are not capable of monitoring many of the underwater deformations and changes.

If really an under water mountain came up in recent days without any notice to the present civilization then this can be serious trouble in the coming days. First, the commercial and military vessels, ships as well as submarines are vulnerable in sailing in uncharted water. But even more dangerous, there may be some mega tectonic changes coming and we are slipping under a catastrophic time bomb.

If you look at history, there were similar signs before Atlantis was struck with massive tectonic devastation. There were underwater and on the surface deformation and movements that finally built up the quick devastating catastrophe.

Some Geologists are saying that the tectonic movements all over the world are all related. Some even bring in the theory that atmospheric extremes are always accompanied with major tectonic changes.

Open Letter From the United States Submarine Veterans Incorporated

From the United States Submarine Veterans Incorporated, Groton Base website

USS San Francisco Shipmates,

By now I'm sure most of you have heard about the deadly accident of the USS SAN FRANCISCO (SSN 711). If you haven't you can search anywhere on USS SAN FRANCISCO and find out all the information. In short the USS SAN FRANCISCO was transiting between Guam and Australia and at high speed hit some type of land fixture. The crew did an emergency blow, and saved the ship. There were extensive damages to the front end of the ship. There was one fatality, and many injured. The ship is now back in Guam due to the efforts and training of the crew.

This type of accident could have easily happened to any of our Submarines and to many of us.

It was a deadly accident that reminds us older Submariners as well as current Submariners just how dangerous this Submarine Business truly is. It is constantly a dangerous job.

We are very thankful that the entire boat was not lost and that there were not more casualties. As members of this organization share in this tragedy, and in the loss of a shipmate. The deceased Shipmate's name is MM2 Joseph A. Ashley, from Akron Ohio.

As Groton Base did with the Canadian Submarine HMCS CHICCATAUNI that had a fire in October and lost one Sailor, SUBVETS Groton Base will be doing a fund raiser in support of this. All funds will be forwarded to the CO USS SAN FRANCISCO Cdr Kevin Mooney who is a member of U.S. SUBVETS Lockwood Internet Base and a past member of Groton Base for disposition as he sees fit. I have heard talk of flying MM2 Ashley's family from OH out to Guam to participate in a memorial Service with the crew. If the CO wants to use the funds raising for this fine. If he just wants to present it to the family fine. If he wants to use it for something else that's fine too.

Any way that we at SUBVETS Groton Base can help that is what we want to do.

Any donations should be written to U.S. SUBVETS, and mailed to:

U.S. SUBVETS

Attn: USS SAN FRANCISCO FUND

40 School Street

Groton, CT 06340

In closing, "There is a port of no return where ships may ride at anchor for a little space. And then some starless night the cable slips leaving only an eddy at the mooring place. Gulls veer no longer, Sailor rest your oar. No tangled wreckage will be washed ashore."

Shipmate Ashley rest your oar!

John J. Carcioppolo

SUBVETS Groton Base First and Finest

Base Commander

Submarine Crash Investigations Begin

USS San Francisco mishap focus of two separate probes

By Robert A. Hamilton, New London Day, 14 Jan 05

...The Pacific submarine force commander, Rear Adm. Paul Sullivan, has ordered two separate investigations into how the submarine USS San Francisco grounded in the Pacific last Saturday, an accident that killed one crewman and wounded more than 60 others.

Sullivan, in an e-mail sent to top officers in the Pacific Fleet, said he has appointed Capt. Cecil E.D. Haney, who commanded Submarine Squadron One in Pearl Harbor until last year, to conduct a thorough investigation of the accident to determine whether it could have been avoided.

Concurrently, in a separate e-mail, Sullivan has directed the Naval Submarine Training Center, Pacific, to convene a Mishap Investigation Board to conduct a separate inquiry into whether the submarine force needs to change any of its operating procedures or equipment to prevent anything similar from happening in the future. The Day obtained both e-mails.

Cmdr. Kevin Mooney, the captain of the Guam-based San Francisco, had not been relieved of duty as of Thursday night, an indication that Sullivan is not concerned that he was at fault in the accident, Navy sources said.

Privately, several retired senior submarine officers said it would not be surprising if Mooney is eventually court-martialed for the incident, but only so that he can be acquitted in a public forum, giving him a stronger defense in the event of any civil actions by the family of crewmen. Given the nature of the accident, few expect he would be held liable for the crash.

"If he is court-martialed, it would be for his own protection," one of the sources said.

The San Francisco was apparently following all the required procedures and was supposed to be more than seven miles from any obstacles when it hit a seamount, or underwater mountain, while traveling about 500 feet below the surface at more than 30 knots, or about 35 mph, sources said.

...The Pacific Fleet Public Affairs Office, which is handling all inquiries about the San Francisco, was unavailable to comment Thursday.

Preliminary analysis of the damage to the San Francisco, which returned to port Monday, continues, but several Navy sources have said that three of the four main ballast tanks at the front of the submarine were severely damaged.

The sonar sphere also filled with water and is badly dented, but the sources said the sphere appears to be intact and the leaks stemmed from broken or displaced seals around the hydrophones that penetrate the dome.

Given the damage at the front of the submarine, however, the engineers have been surprised at how little damage occurred in the rest of the ship. No major equipment ripped loose, and the reactor and steam turbine generators, which are designed to shut down automatically in the event of a serious problem, continued to run. One submariner said it was a testament to the sturdy design and construction of the San Francisco.

There had been speculation that the San Francisco might be decommissioned as a result of the accident, but now Navy sources say it could be put back into service. The Navy has several nose sections that could be salvaged from decommissioned sibling ships to make repairs if the damage aft of the nose is not overly serious.

A strong argument in favor of keeping the submarine in service is that two years ago it underwent a refueling overhaul at a cost of some \$250 million.

Decommissioning the ship would cost in the neighborhood of \$80 million to \$100 million, so if the damage is less than about \$300 million, it would make economic sense to fix it.

Sullivan's e-mail on the Mishap Investigation Board notes that under Navy rules for accidents resulting in a fatality or damage of more than \$1 million - San Francisco's grounding meets both criteria - the investigation must be finished within 30 days of his memo, dated

Tuesday.

When the report is finished, copies must go to the board, which has a week to review and endorse it, and to Sullivan, Submarine Squadron 15 in Guam,

Submarine Group Seven in Yokosuka, Japan, and the Naval Safety Center, which have two weeks to review and endorse it.

A Navy source familiar with the Mishap Investigation Board said they proceed rapidly so that any shortcomings in operating procedures or equipment can be quickly fixed.

Under Navy rules, witnesses to the board do not testify under oath, and the board has wider discretion than a Navy court in terms of soliciting opinions and speculation.

Typically, the board will include at least one senior officer, probably a Navy captain who is an expert in submarine operations; one or two mid-level officers, perhaps lieutenant commanders, who are experts in safety investigations; and a junior officer who oversees the administrative aspects of the investigations.

Haney's investigation, which will determine liability for the crash, is likely to take several weeks, perhaps months, and include interviews with all the crewmen and a review of the physical evidence. In grounding cases, investigation reports can run into the thousands of pages.

Haney will make a recommendation that could include a non-judicial hearing or a court martial. His report will go either to Sullivan or to the Pacific-based Seventh Fleet - the Pacific Fleet commander will decide which will be the convening authority, and traditionally the job would go to Sullivan, or his replacement, since Sullivan will be relieved in the spring.

Rear Adm. Jeffrey Cassias, commander of Submarine Group Two and Navy Region Northeast in Groton, as well as Group 10 in Kings Bay, Ga., will become the next Pacific submarine force commander.

Haney, a 1978 graduate of the Naval Academy, has served as a junior officer on the USS John C. Calhoun, SSBN 630; as engineer on the USS Hyman G. Rickover, SSN 709; as executive officer on the USS Asheville, SSN 758; and as captain of the USS Honolulu, from 1996-99, when he made two deployments to the Western Pacific.

He also served as commander of Submarine Squadron One in Pearl Harbor until last summer. Selected for promotion to admiral in March 2004, Haney serves as deputy chief of staff to the Pacific Fleet Commander in charge of fleet warfare requirements, program force structure and analysis.

SHIPMATES HONOR SAILOR

By Theresa Merto, Pacific Daily News, 13 Jan 04

During a last man roll call yesterday, all the sailors in the Auxiliary Division of the Engineering Department were present -- except Petty Officer 2nd Class Joseph Allen Ashley.

The "brotherhood," as many submariners call it, gathered yesterday at a memorial service for Ashley, who died from injuries suffered when the nuclear-powered submarine USS San Francisco ran aground Jan. 8 about 350 nautical miles south of Guam.

Ashley, 24, of Akron, Ohio, was known as a great shipmate who loved submarines, and most especially the USS San Francisco, where he belonged for nearly three years and where he lost his life. A Navy official has said the submarine struck a topographical feature underwater and the investigation into the accident continues.

"(Ashley) dedicated himself to San Francisco, our Navy and our great country. By so doing, he earned the love, honor, trust and respect of his shipmates," Cmdr. Kevin Mooney, commanding officer of the USS San Francisco, said in a release. "Although our hearts ache and we miss him, we thank God for the time together. We also thank Petty Officer Ashley's family for sharing their son and brother with us."

Mooney further highlighted Ashley's positive impact on the crew. "He was my shipmate, my friend and a great submariner. ... He loved his job and life in the Navy so much," Mooney said. "Not only was Petty Officer Ashley happy all the time, he made it his personal business to make sure all his shipmates were happy, including me."

Lt. j.g. Josh Chisholm, who is a chemistry/radiological assistant, said Ashley was a great sailor who "loved submarines and being on the San Francisco, through and through."

"He always brought a smile to everybody's face when he was around," Chisholm said, adding that Ashley always had a positive, upbeat attitude.

"For us, he was somebody we knew we could trust," said Chisholm, who was interviewed after the memorial service. "We knew he would do the right thing in terms of when he was standing watch."

Four sailors from USS San Francisco, along with sailors from Submarine Squadron 15, will escort Ashley's body off island. He will be laid to rest in West Virginia, said Master Chief Petty Officer Bill Cramer, who is the chief of boat on the San Francisco.

"He was one of those guys who was ready to make the Navy and the submarine force a lifelong career because of the tightness. It is like a brotherhood as we refer to it," Cramer said. "We were very close to him -- everybody on board."

Ashley was in charge of the submarine's emergency diesel on board and took great pride in that, Cramer said.

"In our most recent engineering exam, he got the highest grade that someone would get," Cramer said. "He took pride in everything he did ... and was always willing to learn more."

Cramer said the crew has sought some counseling after returning to Guam earlier this week, adding that the experience has been traumatic. He said 23 sailors were brought to Naval Hospital on Monday, and all but three were released the night they were brought there. By Wednesday, the remaining sailors were released from the hospital.

"Most of my sailors, the very next day, were mustering with me on the pier -- which wasn't required -- but they were ready to get back to work," Cramer said. "A lot of the guys that were getting out of the Navy have said, 'the San Francisco brought me home from that, I'm gonna stick around until (it's) seaworthy again.'"

Ashley enlisted in the Navy in 2001 and reported to USS San Francisco as a machinist's mate in February 2002, according to a Navy release. While serving aboard the Los Angeles-class, fast-attack submarine, he was selected Junior Sailor of the Quarter for the third quarter of 2004, the release said.

Chisholm said since the grounding, the sailors have been relying on each other and their families for support and do not second-guess getting back on the submarine despite the accident.

"We've been through such a difficult situation with the grounding," Chisholm said. "But I think most of us, if it went back to sea today, would go right back and operate that ship, mainly because we've got all of each other there."

Navy Investigating Suicide On Sub

By Chris Barron, Bremerton Sun, 14 Jan 04

The Navy is investigating a suicide aboard the Bangor-based Trident submarine USS Nebraska that occurred last week while the sub was deployed.

A machinist mate third class committed suicide by hanging while he was at his duty station. The Sun does not identify suicide victims by name.

The suicide occurred Jan. 6, and the Nebraska made it back to port the following day, the Navy said.

Although the sailor was on duty at the time, there was no danger that his station was not monitored, the Navy said. The sailor was one of 13 assigned in the "engineering spaces" and monitoring the operation of steam plant machinery at the time.

"All of the key parameters monitored are available at other locations," Submarine Group 9 spokeswoman Lt. Herlinda Rojas said. "Watchstanders and their supervisors are trained to be forceful backups to provide redundancy and ensure safe operations."

The Naval Criminal Investigative Service is conducting a standard investigation to "determine or exclude the possibility of criminal activity," Rojas said.

Submarine Squadron 17, which oversees half of Bangor's Trident fleet, is conducting its own investigation into the death by interviewing all crew members. In addition, "there will be a thorough investigation that will include examining the ship's command climate," Rojas said.

Records show the sailor who committed suicide had no history of mental disorders or previous suicide attempts, Rojas said.

"The Navy has always been concerned with loss of any life and has established depression awareness and precautionary efforts to prevent suicides in the Navy," Rojas said.

After the sailor was discovered, the Nebraska sent a message requesting medical support and headed for Bangor. Resuscitation efforts "were initiated and did not cease until a physician was transferred on board" in the early morning hours of Jan. 7, Rojas said.

Wyoming Crews Capture Omaha Trophy

By JO1Jennifer Spinner, Submarine Group 10 public affairs

The blue and gold crews of USS Wyoming (SSBN 742) were honored Jan. 6 at a special ceremony in the base chapel.

Marine Gen. James Cartwright, commander of United States Strategic Command, was on hand to present the blue crew with the prestigious Omaha Trophy, which is awarded annually to the best missile unit (ICBM or SSBN) and best strategic aviation unit assigned to STRATCOM.

"This award acknowledges the hard work it took to get to your current state of capability and readiness," said Cartwright. "You and your families have worked hard and sacrificed much and this is a small way to say thank you."

U.S. Strategic Command Consultation Committee member Jack Baker addressed the crew during the ceremony and lauded them for their

service to country and community.

"I am in awe of what you do," said Baker. "You represent the highest ideals of professionalism and selfless service. I am here to remind you that the Heartland supports you, admires you and values your commitment to excellence."

The committee chooses winners in both categories and is composed of influential business executives and professional people of Omaha and eastern Nebraska. The committee acts as advisor and consultant to the commander of U.S. Strategic Command on matter of mutual concern to the command, Omaha and the state of Nebraska.

Discovery Channel Celebrates 20th Anniversary Year with Specials that Honor our History and Embrace our Future

Released by Discovery Channel, 13 Jan 05

The one-hour special SUBMARINE: HIDDEN HUNTER, on Sunday, April 17, 9-10 PM (ET/PT), heads deep into top-secret territory with an engrossing profile of the new Virginia Class vessel, which represents a quantum leap forward in submarine design. Downloading the details, intricacies and specialties of the sub's high-tech design and impressive systems, the special gives the ultimate view of its role in leading the Navy into a bold new phase of undersea warfare.

Russia, Japan To Scrap Five Nuclear Submarines In 2005

Russian News & Information Agency, 13 Jan 05

MOSCOW, January 13 (RIA Novosti) - Russia and Japan intend to start scrapping five Russian nuclear submarines in 2005, Sergei Antipov, the deputy head of the Federal Agency for Nuclear Energy (Rosatom), stated.

In his words, the decision on this was made on Thursday at the 24th meeting of the board of the Russian-Japanese committee on cooperation in disposing of Russia's nuclear weapons subject to reductions.

Russia and Japan agreed to cooperate in mothballing three Victor-III-class nuclear submarines phased out of the Russian Navy in the Far East, a Victor-I-class submarine and a Charlie-class submarine. At present, these four Victor-class submarines are based near Vladivostok, and the Charlie-class submarine in Kamchatka.

According to preliminary information, Japan's financial participation is estimated at about \$40 million.

"Russia has the technological potential of plants for scrapping nine nuclear submarines a year. Regrettably, it has no funds. For the time being, we are planning to mothball five nuclear submarines gradually, one by one, so as to accumulate a joint experience of cooperation with the Japanese side," Antipov noted.

"In the course of 2005, the Russian-Japanese committee is planning to sign an executive agreement with Rosatom on disposing of nuclear submarines, to study related technological and financial issues, as well as security aspects, and then, proceeding from the results of this work, sign a financial contract with the bodies recommended by Rosatom.

In Antipov' words, foreign specialists will not directly participate in the scrapping effort and confine themselves to environmental monitoring. The dismantling of the phased out nuclear submarines is provided for in the Russian-Japanese plan of action signed during the visit of Japanese Premier Junichiro Koizumi to Russia in January 2003.

The scrapping of Russian nuclear submarines is seen as one of the areas of the global partnership of the G8 countries in the non-proliferation of the WMD and the materials used to create them. The agreement to this effect was reached by the G8 at the summit in Kananaskis (Canada) in 2002.

The first project implemented by the Russian-Japanese committee was the dismantling of a Victor-III-class nuclear submarine in December 2004.

End