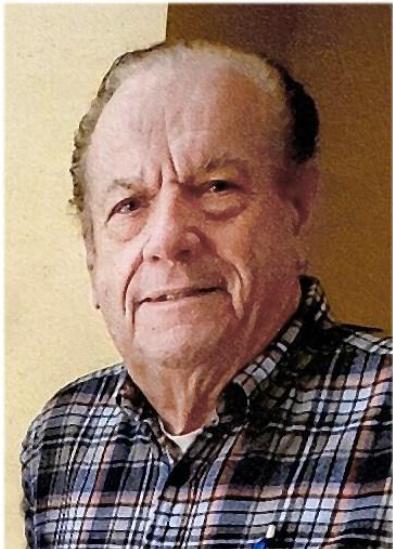




The official newsletter of the Wolverine Base, United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.

Volume 2026, No. 1

## In Memoriam – Johann Krenzer



Johann Krenzer, of Eastpointe, Michigan, departed on Eternal Patrol on November 5, 2025, at the age of 88. Born on February 13, 1937 in Detroit, MI to the late Anton and Katharina Krenzer, In 1954, Johann enlisted in the Navy and served with distinction on a submarine during the Korean War. After his honorable discharge, he continued his commitment to his country by serving in the Navy Reserves for 28 years.

Johann qualified in USS Corporal (SS-346) in 1956 as an Electrician's Mate. He subsequently converted to Machinery Repairman and served in submarine tenders and repair ships, leaving the active Navy in 1963 as an MR2 (SS).

Johann's extensive community involvement included membership in St. Paul's Lutheran Church in St Clair Shores, as well as affiliations with the VFW, Wolverine Base (USSVI), NRA, DASV, Michigan United Conservation Club, Safari Club International - Flint, German American Cultural Center, the GBU Saxonia-Rheingold Choir, and the Carpathia Choir.

He is survived by his wife, Marianne Krenzer of Eastpointe, children Matthias Krenzer of Eastpointe, Sieglinde (Vincenzo) Lico of Macomb, Wolfgang (Heidi) Krenzer of Findlay, Ohio, Ursula (Jeff) Lundberg of Grosse Pointe, and Annette (Todd) Fisher of Detroit; and eight grandchildren.

Johann was laid to rest with military honors at Resurrection Cemetery, Clinton Township, MI, on November 12, 2025.



Sailor, rest your oar.

## In Memoriam – Peter L. Thompson

Wolverine Base learned late last year of the passing of Base member Peter L. Thompson of Livonia, MI. Pete departed on Eternal Patrol on May 28, 2025 at the age of 82.

Born on October 17, 1942, Pete enlisted in the Navy in 1959. He qualified in submarines in USS Jallao (SS-368) in 1967 as an Engineman, and subsequently converted to Machinist's Mate and served in USS Nathanael Greene (SSBN-636), and USS Kamehameha (SSBN-642). He then served as Chief of the Boat (COB) in USS George C Marshall (SSBN-654), City of Corpus Christi (SSN-705), and USS Georgia (SSBN-729). After being promoted to Warrant Officer, he served in USS Sierra (AD-18), and as Chief Engineer in USS Opportune (ARS-41). He retired from the Navy in 1990 as a CWO4.

Pete was interred at Great Lakes National Cemetery, Holly, MI on June 24, 2025.

Sailor, rest your oar.



## HOLLAND CLUB GETS NEW MEMBER

Wolverine Base's latest Holland Club member is Ernest J. Sittaro, who qualified in USS Tench (SS-417) in 1952. Ernie's induction was conducted at the December Base meeting on December 14. Witnessing the induction was Ernie's wife Gwen, and his son Ernest R. Sittaro, also a Wolverine Base member, who qualified in USS Swordfish (SSN-579) in 1980. The Sittaros are the only father/son pair in Wolverine Base.

The Holland Club is named after John Philip Holland, the engineer who developed the first submarine to be formally commissioned by the U.S. Navy. To become a member, one must have been designated "Qualified in Submarines" for fifty years or more.

Wolverine Base now boasts 19 members of the Holland Club.



## **PARADE TRAILER GIFTED BY THE FAMILY OF JIM THELANDER**



For several years Wolverine Base has participated in parades in St. Clair Shores and Wyandotte with a float having a model of the submarine USS Scorpion (SSN-589). Most members know that the float was constructed under the leadership of now-Base Commander Steve "Tex" Ritter. What many may not know is that the flat-bed trailer used to transport the submarine model was owned by member Jim Thelander, who lent the trailer to the Base for use in the parades. Sadly, Jim departed on Eternal Patrol last August, but his family

has donated the trailer to the Base, so our ability to participate in future parades is not diminished.

As with many events associated with submariners, there is more to the story. The trailer was in Maine, where Jim's oldest son Ed (a former Navy SEAL) lives. In addition, Jim's red Impala, which the family wanted to keep, was still in Michigan. So three stalwart Base members, Steve Ritter, Frank Woechan, and Sam Ritchie, drove Sam's truck to Maine, towing the Impala on a dolly.

After staying overnight at Ed's house (where they were able to visit with Ed, his wife Liliana, and Jim's widow Pierette) they hooked up the trailer and made the trip back to Michigan, with a stop along the way to visit the USS Albacore (SS-569) museum ship at Portsmouth, NH. There will be more about this visit in a future edition of the 1MC.

The entire excursion took less than 48 hours. Frank, whose Ford F-250 usually tows the trailer in parades, had to endure riding in a Chevy, with all the banter that submariners know how to provide.

The trailer now is stored in Frank's barn, awaiting its next appearance at a 2026 parade.



Sam, Ed, Steve, and Frank

## **NOVEMBER MEETING IS BECOMING A BASE TRADITION**

Reprising last year's November meeting, "Thanksgiving Dinner" was the theme again this year as Base Commander Steve "Tex" Ritter and his wife Helene again graciously opened their home. Once again, turkeys were provided by Frank Woechan's and Carol Carter's farm (can't get fresher than that), and the sides arrived "pot luck." Despite the cold and wet snow that came during the event, everything was good. Miraculously, the Ritter house escaped major damage.



**Many thanks to  
Steve and Helene!**

## WOLVERINE BASE HOLIDAY PARTY

The ninth annual Wolverine Base Christmas Party was held on 14 December 2025. Members, spouses, significant others, and guests gathered at the Buoy 12 Pub and Eatery in St. Clair Shores, MI for the gala, organized by Steve and Helene Ritter.

In a change from our normal meeting practice, Buoy 12 provided a buffet-style dinner, which eased the logistics of the serving and billing process.

As with all Wolverine Base meetings, a solemn “Tolling of the Boats” for those lost during the month of the meeting was conducted to honor of our shipmates on Eternal Patrol.



## WOLVERINE BASE SUBMARINE VETERAN OF THE YEAR

The December meeting included the presentation of the fifth Wolverine Base “Submarine Veteran of the Year” award. Phil Klintworth, a Base plankowner, was recognized for various activities in support of the Base’s mission. He

- Served faithfully as Senior Vice Commander of Wolverine Base
- Has been the Eagle Scout Chairman for several years, with several presentations in 2025
- Edited the base’s newsletter the 1MC.
- Provided a classic Chrysler LeBaron convertible for use in holiday parades



CONGRATULATIONS Phil!

## MORE PICTURES FROM THE HOLIDAY PARTY



## USSVI NATIONAL CONVENTION 2026



For additional information, visit the website at [USSVI National Convention 2026](http://USSVI National Convention 2026)

## COMING EVENTS

11 Jan	1400	Monthly base meeting, Buoy 12, 29161 Jefferson Ave, Saint Clair Shores, MI
15 Feb	1500	Monthly base meeting, Buoy 12, 29161 Jefferson Ave, Saint Clair Shores, MI
8 Mar	1600	Monthly base meeting, Buoy 12, 29161 Jefferson Ave, Saint Clair Shores, MI



## LOST BOATS [JANUARY – MARCH]

### **USS Scorpion (SS-278)**

Lost on Jan 5, 1944 with the loss of 77 officers and men in the East China Sea, on her 4th war patrol. It is assumed she was sunk by a mine.

### **USS Argonaut (SS-166)**

Lost on Jan 10, 1943 with the loss of 102 officers and men off Rabaul, on her 3rd war patrol. While attacking a convoy, she torpedoed a Jap destroyer who along with 2 other destroyers depth charged her. As she tried to surface, the destroyers sank her by gun fire.

### **USS Swordfish (SS-193)**

Lost on Jan 12, 1945 with the loss of 89 officers and men somewhere near Okinawa, on her 13th war patrol. Probably was lost to a mine.

### **USS S-36 (SS-141)**

Lost on Jan 20, 1942 with no loss of life, on her 2nd war patrol. She ran hard aground on a reef and radioed for help. The entire crew was rescued by a Dutch ship after they scuttled her.

### **USS S-26 (SS-131)**

Lost on Jan 24, 1942 with the loss of 46 officers and men in the Gulf of Panama, on her 2nd war patrol. She was rammed by the USS PC-460 and sunk within seconds. The CO, XO and one lookout on the bridge, were the only survivors.

### **USS Barbel (SS-316)**

Lost on Feb 4, 1945 with the loss of 81 officers and men on her 4th war patrol. Based on Japanese records, she was bombed near the southern entrance to the Palawan Passage.

**USS Shark I (SS-174)**

Lost on Feb 11, 1942 with the loss of 59 officers and men on her 1st war patrol. Shark was the 1st US submarine sunk by enemy surface craft in the Pacific. She was most likely sunk by depth charges.

**USS Amberjack (SS-219)**

Lost on Feb 16, 1943 with the loss of 72 officers and men on her 3rd war patrol. Off Rabaul, she was attacked by a Japanese patrol plane, attacked by a torpedo boat and then depth charged by a subchaser. One additional man was killed earlier on the last patrol.

**USS Grayback (SS-208)**

Lost on Feb 26, 1944 with the loss of 80 officers and men on her 10th war patrol. She appears to have been caught on the surface in the East China Sea by a Japanese carrier plane whose bombs made a direct hit. During this patrol she sank 4 ships totaling 21,594 tons and was tied for 11th in the number of ships sunk.

**USS Trout (SS-202)**

Lost on Feb 29, 1944 with the loss of 81 officers and men on her 11th war patrol. She was sunk by escorts in the middle of the Philippines Basin after sinking a passenger-cargoman and damaging another in a convoy.

**USS Perch (SS-176)**

Lost on March 3, 1942 near Java with no immediate loss of life, while on her 1st war patrol. She survived 2 severe depth chargings in less than 200 feet of water by 3 Japanese destroyers. The crew abandoned ship and scuttled her. Of the 59 officers and men taken prisoner, 53 survived the war and six died as POWs.

**USS Grampus (SS-207)**

Lost on March 5, 1943 with the loss of 71 officers and men, on her 6th war patrol. She was lost in Vella Gulf, sunk after engaging 2 Japanese Destroyers.

**USS H-1 (SS-28)**

Lost on March 12, 1920 with the loss of 4 men as they tried to

swim to shore after grounding on a shoal off Santa Margarita Island, off the coast of Baja California, Mexico. Vestal (AR-4), pulled H-1 off the rocks in the morning of 24 March, only to have her sink 45 minutes later in some 50 feet of water. She was originally named the USS Seawolf before becoming H-1.

**USS Triton (SS-201)**

Lost on March 15, 1943 with the loss of 74 men. She was sunk north of the Admiralty Islands during a fight with 3 Japanese Destroyers. Triton was the 1st boat to engage the enemy in December 1941 off Wake Island, sinking 9 ships, 1 submarine and a destroyer.

**USS Kete (SS-369)**

Lost on March 20, 1945 with the loss of 87 officers and men at the end of her 2nd war patrol. Probably sunk near Okinawa, by a Japanese submarine that itself was subsequently lost.

**USS F-4 (SS-23)**

Lost on March 25, 1915 with the loss of 21 men. She foundered 1.5 miles off of Honolulu when acid corrosion of the lead lining of the battery tank let seawater into the battery compartment, causing loss of control. She was raised in August 1915.

**USS Tullibee (SS-284)**

Lost on March 26, 1944 with the loss of 79 officers and men, on her 4th war patrol. It's believed she was a victim of a circular run by one of her own torpedoes. The lookout was the only survivor and he survived the war as a Japanese prisoner.

**USS Trigger (SS-237)**

Lost on March 26, 1945 with the loss of 89 officers and men, on her 12th war patrol. She was lost during a combined attack by Japanese antisubmarine vessels and aircraft. Trigger ranked 7th in total tonnage sunk and tied for 8th in number of ships sunk.

## Lost Harbor

by Leslie Nelson Jennings

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 an eddy at the mooring place . . .  
Gulls, veer no longer. Sailor, rest your oar.  
No tangled wreckage will be washed ashore.



**Our purpose is** To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution.

In addition to perpetuating the memory of departed shipmates, we shall provide a way for all Submariners to gather for the mutual benefit and enjoyment. Our common heritage as Submariners shall be strengthened by camaraderie. We support a strong U.S. Submarine Force.

The organization will engage in various projects and deeds that will bring about the perpetual remembrance of those shipmates who have given the supreme sacrifice. The organization will also endeavor to educate all third parties it comes in contact with about the services our submarine brothers performed and how their sacrifices made possible the freedom and lifestyle we enjoy today.



## **Wolverine Base Macomb County, Michigan (586) 212-6757**

**<https://www.ussvimich.org/>**

Base Commander: Steve Ritter

Sr. Vice Commander: Phil Klintworth

Jr. Vice Commander: Frank Woechan

Secretary: Carol Carter

Treasurer: Sam Ritchie

Chaplain: Robert Dickinson

Storekeeper: Frank Woechan

Chief of the Boat: Mike Loffreda