



Naval Submarine League Pacific Southwest Chapter March 2024 Newsletter

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Our program for **Tuesday, 12 March 2024:
Vice Admiral Robert L. Thomas, Jr. USN,
and Vice President of the NSLPACSW Chapter,
will provide an update on East Asian security.**

Please plan to join us from **11:15 AM to 1:00 PM
at the Oceanview on Naval Base Point Loma (NBPL)
for this in-person luncheon / professional forum.**

Vice Admiral Robert L. Thomas, Jr., U.S. Navy (ret), is a Professor of Practice at the University of San Diego (UCSD) School of Global Policy and Strategy (GPS). Professor Thomas served in the U.S. Military for 38 years. The son of a career Marine, VADM Thomas graduated from U.C. Berkeley with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. He holds a Master of Arts in National Security Studies from the National War College in Washington, DC.

At the school, he teaches courses on security related policy and strategy to include GPPS 442 Foundations of Strategic Studies, GPPS 443 U.S. National Security Decision Making, and GPPS 444 A History of Warfare. In the Spring of 2021 he will also teach a section of the GPS Capstone Course.

As a career submarine officer, VADM Thomas served on fast-attack submarines operating in both U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Central Command theaters of operation. His assignments included USS Guitarro (SSN 665), USS Permit (SSN 594), USS Asheville (SSN 758) and USS Bremerton (SSN 698) where he served as commanding officer. Additionally, he took command of USS Tucson (SSN 770) while serving as deputy commander, Submarine Squadron (SUBRON) 11.

VADM Thomas served as commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet Representative West Coast; commander, Submarine Squadron 11 and commander, Task Force 74/54 in Yokosuka, Japan. In his last operational assignment, VADM

Thomas commanded the U.S. 7th Fleet from July 2013 to September 2015. He then assumed duties as the Director of the Navy Staff and retired in January 2017. Ashore, VADM Thomas served as flag aide to the deputy chief of naval operations (OP-07); program analyst in the Secretary of the Navy's Office of Program Appraisal; director of Operational Support (CNO N23); assistant deputy director for Politico-Military Affairs, Western Hemisphere, J5, on the Joint Staff; director, Plans and Policy (N5) for Naval Special Warfare Command; director, Strategy and Policy Division (OPNAV N51); vice director of operations, J3, on the Joint Staff; and chief of staff, J5, on the Joint Staff.

Professor Thomas' international awards include The Order of the Rising Sun, Second Class (Gold and Silver Star), and The Republic of Korea Order of National Security Merit, Second Grade (Gukseon Medal).

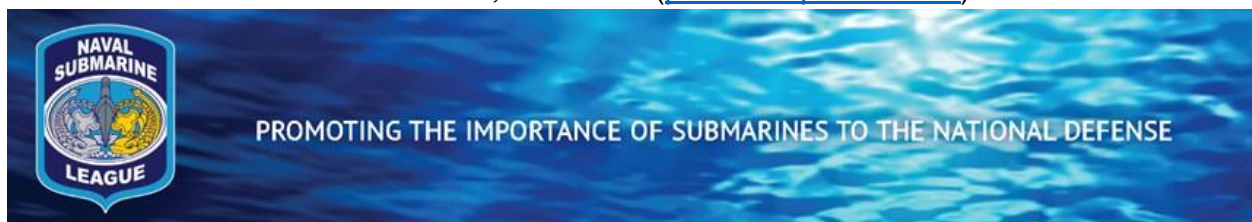


Mark your 2024 calendars for these upcoming events

- Apr (TBD): COMSUBPAC Sailor of the Year Award Luncheon
- 9 April (Tuesday): Chapter Luncheon
- 3 May (Friday): Old Timers Luncheon & Tolling of the Boats
- 4 May (Saturday): Submarine Birthday Ball San Diego

Check the NSLPACSW website for a more complete [2023/2024 calendar of events](#).

Bruce Renne, President (pres@nslpacsw.com)



**Highlights of the 2 February 2024 luncheon / professional forum
with Rear Admiral Richard Seif, USN
Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet (COMSUBPAC)**

There was no NSLPACSW luncheon in January 2024. The date for the February 2024 luncheon was moved up to take advantage of an opportunity to have COMSUBPAC as our guest speaker.



RADM Richard Seif & Chapter President Bruce Renne



*CDRE Ken Douglas (COMSUBRON 11)
& RADM (ret) John Jolliffe*



*CAPT Jeff Yacker (CO, Naval Base Point Loma),
Paul Van Benthem & Don Mathiowetz*



Chapter VP VADM (ret) Robert Thomas, John Schmidt & Gary Blackburn



Two of RADM Self's former shipmates (left) with Midn 1/C Vandegrift & Charlie MacVean



Mike Yawn (L) & Frank Borik (R) & their spouses



Ed & Michelle Langmaid & Sharon Stephensonpino (NBPL PAO)



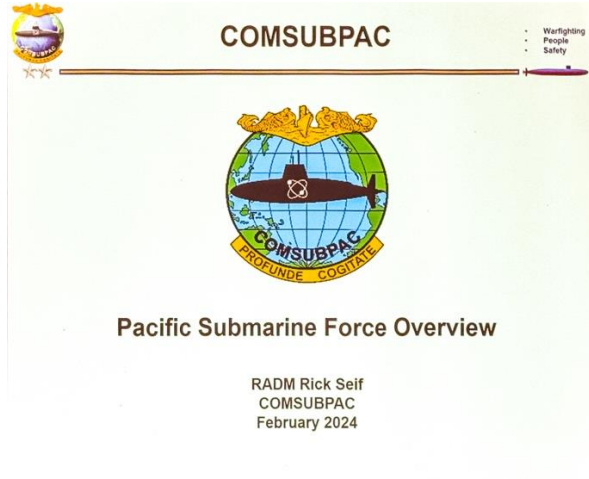
L to R: CAPT Jeff Yackerer, RADM Richard Seif, Bruce Renne, VADM (ret) Robert Thomas, RADM (ret) John Jolliffe, CAPT (ret) Sam Ward & CDRE Ken Douglas



We had a full house for this luncheon with COMSUBPAC.



Bruce Renne kicks off the meeting.



RADM Seif's briefing addressed three main topics:

- Security environment in the western Pacific
- Force structures
- U.S. Navy's priorities

RADM Seif noted the dramatic expansion in all of the Chinese military services over the past two decades, which appears to be focused on long-term goals of capacity overmatch and area denial, particularly in the South China Sea area. In contrast, the U.S. Navy's goal in that region is deterrence.



Five U.S. Navy attack subs currently are stationed in Guam. New piers for Virginia-class SSNs are being built. The first is expected to be homeported in Guam later in 2024.

The rapid growth in the Chinese naval force is aided by their massive shipbuilding capacity, which far exceeds current U.S. shipbuilding capacity. About 50% of the U.S. Navy's shipbuilding budget is for submarines.

RADM Seif discussed how the Navy's priorities of Warfighting, People & Safety are implemented in the fleet. Key initiatives include integration of women into the fleet, leadership development, and retention of the best service members.



Bruce Renne thanked RADM Seif for his presentation.



More photos from the 2 February 2024 luncheon are posted on the NSLPACSW website here: [Slideshow](#) and [Photo Gallery](#).

Submarine force news reported by the U.S. Naval Institute

- Edward L. Bartlett Jr., “The Navy’s Submarine Maintenance Crisis Needs Ready, Affordable Solutions,” U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, Vol. 150/1/1,451, January 2024: <https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2024/january/navys-submarine-maintenance-crisis-needs-ready-affordable>
- Video, “Sweden’s Gotland-class Subs: AIP pioneers of the Baltic Sea,” (3:50 min), U.S. Naval Institute, 8 November 2023: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rYt4M3JiNs>
- Mallory Shelbourne & Sam Lagrone, “House Members Send Warning to White House Over AUKUS, Attack Submarine Procurement,” U.S. Naval Institute. 18 January 2024: <https://news.usni.org/2024/01/18/house-members-send-warning-to-white-house-over-aukus-attack-submarine-procurement>
- “North Korea Tests Nuclear-Capable (Underwater) Drone in Response to U.S.-led Naval Drills Off South Korea,” U.S. Naval Institute, 19 January 2024: <https://news.usni.org/2024/01/19/north-korea-tests-nuclear-capable-drone-in-response-to-u-s-led-naval-drills-off-south-korea>
- Dzirhan Mahadir, “North Korea Tests Sub Launched Cruise Missile, Russian Warships Sail Near Japan,” U.S. Naval Institute, 19 January 2024: <https://news.usni.org/2024/01/29/north-korea-tests-sub-launched-cruise-missile-russian-warships-sail-near-japan>
- Sam Lagrone, “Australian Sailors to Embed on U.S. Navy Submarine Tender in Guam,” U.S. Naval Institute, 5 February 2024: <https://news.usni.org/2024/02/05/australian-sailors-to-embed-on-u-s-navy-submarine-tender-in-guam>

Submarine force update from the CRS

- “Great Power Competition: Implications for Defense—Issues for Congress Updated,” Congressional Research Service, Report R43838, updated 10 January 2024: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R43838>
- “China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress,” Congressional Research Service, Report R33153, updated 30 January 2024: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL33153>

More naval & submarine news

- Joseph Trevithic, “Alarming Navy Intel Slide Warns Of China’s 200 Times Greater Shipbuilding Capacity,” The Drive, 11 July 2023: <https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/alarming-navy-intel-slide-warns-of-chinas-200-times-greater-shipbuilding-capacity>
- Alyn Griffiths, “Migaloo aims to disrupt superyacht market with giant luxury submarine,” Deezee, 14 February 2024: <https://www.deezee.com/2024/02/14/migaloo-m5-luxury-submarine-superyacht/>



NSLPACSW Luncheon / Professional Forum Reservations Information

<http://pacificsouthwest.navalsubleague.org>

Luncheon / Professional Forum - Tuesday, March 12, 2024
Oceanview at Ballast Point, Building 501, Naval Base Point Loma.
Doors open 11:15 AM.

The meeting is called to order at 11:45 AM.

Lunch is served at 11:50 AM.

The presentation starts about 30 minutes later and the meeting concludes after a Q & A session, a bit after 1:00 PM.

For Members and Guests:

The Luncheon / Forum price is \$30 per person, payable at the door with cash, VENMO or check made payable to: NSLPACSW Chapter.

All active duty enlisted and officers O-1 to O-3 are guests of the Chapter and welcome to attend at no charge.

Please make your reservations with the NSLPACSW Treasurer, Jim Piburn, by e-mail at this link: treas@nslpacsw.com

- Make your reservation by **4 pm, Thursday, 7 March 2024.**
- Include the names of each member and guest attending.
- **BASE ACCESS PROCEDURES:**
 - Individuals with CAC / DOD Retired ID / other accepted base access ID may enter the base after showing their valid ID at the base access gate.
 - Individuals without such an ID require a 5512 form on file with NBPL Security OR registration in DBIDS. WITH A 5512 FORM ON FILE, YOU ARE REQUIRED TO STOP AT THE NBPL PASS & ID OFFICE AND PICK UP A ONE-TIME PASS EACH TIME YOU ENTER THE BASE. See Simone Reyes in the PASS & ID Office. Then show the ID at the base access gate.
 - If you are unsure of your base access status, please contact Jim Piburn at treas@nslpacsw.com at least 2 weeks prior to the luncheon to work out access details.
- Any cancellations are required by **4 PM, Thursday, 7 March 2024.**

