



Naval Submarine League Pacific Southwest Chapter October 2025 Newsletter

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Our speaker for **Tuesday, 7 October 2025 will be
ADM (ret) John Richardson, USN,
former Director of Naval Reactors and
Chief of Naval Operations (CNO)**

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.**

Admiral John Richardson served 37 years in the U.S. Navy, completing his service as the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), the top officer in the Navy. Since retirement, he has joined the boards of several major corporations and works in leader development.

While in the Navy, Richardson served in the submarine force. At sea, he served on USS Parche (SSN 683), USS George C. Marshall (SSBN 654) and USS Salt Lake City (SSN 716). He commanded USS Honolulu (SSN 718) in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii for which he was awarded the Vice Admiral James Bond Stockdale Inspirational Leadership Award.

He went on serve as a commander at every level of the Navy, serving as commodore of Submarine Development Squadron (DEVRON) 12; commander, Submarine Group 8; commander, Submarine Allied Naval Forces South; deputy commander, U.S. 6th Fleet; chief of staff, U.S. Naval Forces Europe and U.S. Naval Forces Africa; commander, Naval Submarine Forces.

Richardson also served as the naval aide to the President of the United States, the teacher for prospective submarine commanding officers, and a Director of Strategy and Policy. Richardson served as the Director of Naval Reactors from 2012 until 2015. In this capacity, he was responsible for the design, safety, certification, operating standards, material control, maintenance, disposal, and regulatory oversight of over 100 nuclear power plants operating on nuclear-powered warships deployed worldwide.

He was the 31st Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) from 2015 until 2019. The CNO is responsible for the current and future readiness and operational effectiveness of the

U.S. Navy: 600,000 Sailors and civilians, a \$160B budget, over 70 installations, 290 warships, and over 2000 aircraft deployed worldwide.

Richardson retired from the Navy in August 2019. Since leaving the Navy, Richardson has joined the Board of Directors for Constellation Energy Corporation, The Boeing Company, and BWX Technologies. He also serves on the boards of the Center for New American Security and the Navy League of the United States. He is a Senior Fellow for the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory and Director's Council for the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

Richardson graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1982 with a Bachelor of Science in physics. He also holds an Electrical Engineer's degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and a Master's degree in National Security Strategy from the National War College.



Bruce Renne, President (pres@nslpacsw.com)



**Highlights of the 9 September 2025 luncheon / professional forum with Mr.
John W.R. Pope III, Executive Director,
Naval Information Warfare Systems Command (NAVWAR)**



Aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN-72) and the Chilean Navy's CS Thomson (SS-20) sailed past the Oceanview on their way out of San Diego Bay, just before the NSLPACSW meeting.



(L) CAPT Phillip Sylvia discussed his new assignment as Commodore, CSS-11 with NSLPACSW members. (R) Our speaker, John W.R. Pope III, greeted by NSLPACSW member Dick Evert.



(L) Ed & Michelle Langmaid, Chapter President Bruce Renne & CSS-11 CMDCM(SS) Brandon Wallis. (R) Sean Hartig & Omar Maestas (representing Curtiss Wright) & Dave Semrau.



(L) Dick Evert (center) with guests Norm Houle (L) and Dr. Don Gregg (R)
(R) LCDR Gunn, John W.R. Pope III, & John Thomas



The head table (L to R): CAPT Phillip Sylvia (CSS-11), CAPT Jeff Yackeren (CO, NBPL), Bruce Renne, John W.R. Pope III (Speaker), CSS-11 CMDCM(SS) Brandon Wallis, Terry McKearney (President, SDMAC Foundation) & Joyce Murphy (President, Coronado Council, Navy League)



Bruce Renne kicked off the meeting and introduced USS ALEXANDRIA's (SSN-757) COB, CMDCM(SS) Mitch Gatton, who introduced ALEXANDRIA's Sailor of the Quarter awardees: (L to R): SSOQ HM1(SS/IMF) Calloway, BJOQ MMN3(SU) Fanning & JSOQ STS2(SS) Grfka.



John W.R. Pope III



There was a good turnout for this luncheon at the Oceanview.

Mr. Pope provided a thorough briefing on NAVWAR Next, which is a set of warfighter-focused processes implemented by PMW770 to coordinate Navy cyber activities through a single Cyber Directorate,

develop AI applications to more effectively turn data into actionable information, improve connected operations among NAVWAR Project Executive Offices, and deliver improved fleet readiness.



Bruce Renne presented Mr. Pope with a copy of "A Century of Submarines in San Diego" and an NSL challenge coin.

More photos are posted on the NSLPACSW

website at the following links:

[SLIDESHOW](#) (with captions)

[GALLERY](#) (for individual viewing or downloading)

Diesel-Electric Submarine Initiative (DESI) program Fall 2025 exercises

DESI exercises are being conducted in the waters off San Diego this autumn. This year, the visiting diesel-electric submarine is the Chilean Navy's CS Thomson (SS-20), which arrived in San Diego on 31 August 2025. SS-20 is an HDW Type 209/1400-L sub manufactured in Germany and commissioned in 1984. For more information on the CS Thomson, refer to the NTI Fact Sheet, "Chile Submarine Capabilities," dated 4 September 2024, which is available [here](#).



Chilean Navy's CS Thomson (SS-20) sails past the Zuñiga Point jetty on its way out of San Diego Bay, with the Hotel Del Coronado and nearby hi-rise apartments in the background, just before the 9 September 2025 NSLPACSW meeting. Source: NSLPACSW member Jim Mueller.



SS-20. Source: Armada de Chile

Additional information on the CS Thomson (SS-20) is available in these recent articles:

- "The Chilean Navy submarine Thomson arrived in the U.S. to participate in Exercise DESI," Zona-Militar, 31 August 2025: <https://www.zona-militar.com/en/2025/08/31/the-chilean-navy-submarine-thomson-arrived-in-the-u-s-to-participate-in-exercise-desi/>
- "Chile leverages US exercise to enhance regional deterrence and submarine warfare skills," Global Defense News, Army Recognition Group, 1 September 2025: <https://armyrecognition.com/news/navy-news/2025/chile-leverages-us-exercise-to-enhance-regional-deterrence-and-submarine-warfare-skills>

Roncador Memorial update

Concerns about the deteriorating condition of the Roncador Memorial on Naval Base Point Loma (NBPL) were addressed during the NSLPACSW annual planning meeting. The NBPL CO, CAPT Jeff Yackeren, has the lead on resolving this matter in collaboration with Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC). NSLPACSW has offered to provide some funding assistance once a plan has been agreed with NAVFAC.



Roncador Memorial. Source: Jonathon Van Slyke (2023)

“Have a great submarine summer!” photo contest ends on 30 September 2025

Time is running out! If you’ve been thinking about submitting a photo, please don’t delay. Submit your entry by e-mail to nslpacsw@hotmail.com, with the subject line “Great submarine summer photo contest,” and include a brief description of your photo(s), your name, phone number and e-mail address. The winner will be announced at the 7 October 2025 NSLPACSW luncheon. It could be you!

Navy SEAL Museum San Diego is scheduled to open on 4 October 2025



Check out the museum’s website, where you can sign up to receive the latest museum SITREP by filling in the [online form at the bottom of the homepage](#).

Fleet Week San Diego, 30 October to 9 November 2025

Fleet Week San Diego 2025 will celebrate the 250th birthday of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps while honoring and thanking these service men and women for their many contributions to our nation and our community. Mark your calendar. Fleet Week public events will be held from Thursday, 30 October to Sunday, 9 November 2025 at the Broadway Pier. Details are available online [here](#).



Where are the Los Angeles-class SSNs today?

A total of 62 Los Angeles-class SSNs were built in three Flights during the Cold War. The 1st boat was laid down in 1972 and commissioned in 1976, and 20 years later, the last boat was commissioned in 1996.

- **31 Flight I subs:** SSN-688 to -718, all with fairwater planes and an S6G reactor plant with a D1G-2 core that required mid-life refueling.
- **8 Flight II subs:** SSN-719 to -725 and -750, all with fairwater planes, a 12 tube vertical launch system (VLS) in the bow, and an S6G reactor plant with an D2W life-of-the boat reactor core.
- **23 Flight III 688i (Improved) subs:** SSN-751 to -773, all with VLS, life-of-the boat reactor core, more advanced BSY-1 sonar suite and retractable bow diving planes.



(Left) Flight I USS Los Angeles. Source: Wikipedia, (Mid) LA-class Flight II / III VLS. Source: Seaforces
(Right) Flight III 688i boat. Source: Seaforces

These subs originally were designed for a nominal service life of 33 years. They were built in only two shipyards, General Dynamics Electric Boat in Groton, CT and Newport News Shipbuilding in Newport News, VA. Delivery rate to the fleet averaged about three boats per year, ranging from just one in 1976, 1979 & 1980 to six in 1981.

All Flight I boats have been retired from active service. Many had short service lives, with twelve boats being retired halfway through their nominal service life. *USS Baltimore* was the “youngest” retiree at only 15 years, 11 months. Another five boats were retired after service lives of 20 to 25 years because their mid-life reactor refuelings were cancelled. A few Flight I boats were in service for substantially longer than their nominal service life of 33 years, including *USS Olympia* (36), *USS La Jolla* (38), *USS Bremerton* (40), *USS Jacksonville* (40), and *USS San Francisco* (41). Except for two boats that were converted to Moored Training Ship (MTS) configurations (*USS La Jolla* and *USS San Francisco*), all other Flight I boats have entered the Navy's Ship-Submarine Recycling Program.

All Flight II boats except the last-in-class *USS Newport News* (SSN-750) have been retired from active service after service lives of 34 to 38 years and have entered the Navy's Ship-Submarine Recycling Program.

Twenty of the 23 Flight III 688i boats currently are in commission. *USS Miami* (SSN-755) was lost in an arson-caused shipyard fire. The first-in-class *USS San Juan* (SSN-751) and *USS Topeka* (SSN-754) are the most recent Los Angeles-class SSNs to enter the Navy's Ship-Submarine Recycling Program, in 2023 and 2024, respectively, after service lives of 35 years.

There currently are 21 Los Angeles-class submarines in commission. Six of these currently are in shipyards or floating drydocks for extended maintenance / overhaul, leaving 15 available to support the active fleet. Their current status is summarized in the following table.

In their January 2025 report, "[An analysis of the Navy's 2025 Shipbuilding Plan](#)," the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) reported, "The (shipbuilding) plan also calls for the service to refuel the third Seawolf class submarine, SSN-23, in addition to refueling 7 Los Angeles class submarines, which the service had announced it would do in previous years' plans."

The refueling overhaul is expected to provide about 10 years of additional service life for a 688i sub. *USS Cheyenne* (SSN-773) has been in Portsmouth Naval Shipyard since 2022 for a life extension overhaul and will be the first 688i to be refueled. After all refuelings have been accomplished, there should be a small fleet of 688i SSNs still operating into the mid-to-late 2030s.

Thru September 2025, General Dynamics Electric Boat and Newport News Shipbuilding have delivered a total of 24 Virginia-class SSNs to the fleet since the first-in-class *USS Virginia* (SSN-774) was commissioned in 2004. That works out to an average delivery rate of slightly more than one boat per year. The Virginia-class SSNs delivered to date are known as Block I, II, III and IV boats, with five Block IV boats remaining to be delivered. The next production batch is known as Block V, which adds a large mid-ships "Virginia Payload Module" that resembles the multi-purpose, vertical launch missile tubes on Ohio-class SSGNs.

The CBO report cited above stated, "The Navy would continue to buy Virginia class submarines with the Virginia payload module (Block V) until 2029. After that, it would purchase 36 Virginia class ships without the VPM through 2054." That would be an extraordinary production run of more than 50 years.

Ultimately, the Virginia-class may become the Navy's largest class of SSNs, exceeding the 62 Los Angeles-class SSNs built in 20 years during the Cold War period.

For more information on Los Angeles-class and Virginia-class SSNs, see [Marine Nuclear Power: 1939 - 2018, Part 2A, United States – Submarines](#), pages 204 – 245.

September 2025 status of the U.S. Los Angeles-class (SSN-688 class) sub fleet

Squadron	Homeport	Name	Hull #	Flight	Date commissioned	Status as of September 2025
Submarine Squadron 2	Kittery, ME	USS Cheyenne	SSN-773	III, 688i	13 Sep 1996	Last LA-class SSN. Assigned to CSS-2. Entered Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in 2022 for start of life extension overhaul & first 688i refueling. More here.
Submarine Squadron 6	Norfolk, VA	USS Pasadena	SSN-752	III, 688i	11 Feb 1989	Active, in commission
		USS Albany	SSN-753	III, 688i	7 Apr 1990	Active, in commission
		USS Boise	SSN-764	III, 688i	7 Nov 1992	Moored at Naval Station Norfolk since last patrol for CSS-6 in 2015. Lost dive certification in 2017 while awaiting shipyard availability for major overhaul which wasn't funded until 2024. Expected completion 2029. More here.
		USS Montpelier	SSN-765	III, 688i	13 Mar 1993	Arrived at Norfolk Naval Shipyard from CSS-6 on 21 Aug 2024 for major overhaul. More here.
Submarine Squadron 7	Pearl Harbor, HI	USS Charlotte	SSN-766	III, 688i	16 Sep 1994	Active, in commission
		USS Toledo	SSN-769	III, 688i	24 Feb 1995	Active, in commission
		USS Tucson	SSN-770	III, 688i	18 Aug 1995	Active, in commission
		USS Columbia	SSN-771	III, 688i	9 Aug 1995	Active, in commission
		USS Columbus	SSN-762	III, 688i	24 Jul 1993	Previously assigned to CSS-7. Eight-year major overhaul due to be completed in Dec 2025 at Newport News Shipbuilding. More here.
Submarine Squadron 11	San Diego, CA	USS Scranton	SSN-756	III, 688i	26 Jan 1991	Active, in commission
		USS Alexandria	SSN-757	III, 688i	29 Jun 1991	Active, in commission
		USS Santa Fe	SSN-763	III, 688i	8 Jan 1994	Active, in commission
		USS Greenville	SSN-772	III, 688i	16 Feb 1996	Active, in commission
		USS Hampton	SSN-767	III, 688i	6 Nov 1993	Arrived in Portsmouth Naval Shipyard on 22 Nov 2024 (from CSS-11) for major maintenance. More here.
Submarine Squadron 12	Groton, CT	USS Newport News	SSN-750	II	3 Jun 1989	Active, in commission. Last Flight II boat (with VLS & fairwater planes) built, & only one remaining in commission.
		USS Hartford	SSN-768	III, 688i	10 Dec 1994	Undergoing engineering overhaul at Electric Boat, expected to be complete in Nov 2027. More here.

Squadron	Homeport	Name	Hull #	Flight	Date commissioned	Status as of September 2025
Submarine Squadron 15	Apra, Guam	USS Asheville	SSN-758	III, 688i	28 Sep 1991	Active, in commission. Completed one-year overhaul in ARCO floating drydock in San Diego in August 2025. Returning to Guam later in 2025.
		USS Jefferson City	SSN-759	III, 688i	29 Feb 1992	Active, in commission
		USS Annapolis	SSN-760	III, 688i	11 Apr 1992	Active, in commission
		USS Springfield	SSN-761	III, 688i	9 Jan 1993	Active, in commission
LA-class submarines converted to Moored Training Ships (MTS)						
Nuclear Power Training Unit (NPTU) Charleston	Goose Creek, SC	USS La Jolla	MTS-701	I	24 Oct 1981	Conversion to MTS configuration at Norfolk Naval Shipyard completed in Dec 2019 & placed in operation as an NPTU training ship in 2020. More here .
		USS San Francisco	MTS-711	I	24 Apr 1981	Conversion to MTS configuration at Norfolk Naval Shipyard completed in Aug 2021 & placed in operation in 2022 as an NPTU training ship. More here .
LA-class subs most recently transferred to Puget Sound Naval Shipyard for inactivation						
Puget Sound Naval Shipyard & Intermediate Maintenance Facility	Bremerton, WA	USS San Juan	SSN-751	III, 688i	6 Aug 1988	First LA-class Flight III, 688i sub. Arrived at PSNS on 20 Sep 2023 for inactivation. More here .
		USS Topeka	SSN-754	III, 688i	21 Oct 1989	Arrived at PSNS on 12 Dec 2024 for inactivation. More here .

Submarine Force news reported by the U.S. Naval Institute (USNI)

- Sam Lagrone, "NAVSEA Building Design Muscles Working on Next-generation Destroyer, Submarine," USNI News, 12 August 2025: <https://news.usni.org/2025/08/12/navsea-building-design-muscles-working-on-next-generation-destroyer-submarine>

"The SSN(X) is a return to a more aggressive blue water combatant that shares similarities with the three-boat Seawolf-class (SSN-21) that were built for hunting Soviet submarines in the open ocean."

- Sam Lagrone, "CNO Caudle Wants to 'Make Good' On AUKUS Sub Agreement," USNI News, 28 August 2025: <https://news.usni.org/2025/08/28/cno-caudle-wants-to-make-good-on-aukus-sub-agreement>
- Dzirhan Mahadzir, "Russian, Chinese Submarines Sail Together in Sea of Japan," USNI News, 28 August 2025: <https://news.usni.org/2025/08/28/russian-chinese-submarines-sail-together-in-sea-of-japan>



Russian diesel sub RFS Volkhov (B-603) and a PLAN submarine sailed together for the first time in early August 2025 in the Sea of Japan.

Source: Japan Joint Staff Office via USNI News

- Mallory Shelbourne & Sam Lagrone, “Co-CEO of BlueForge Alliance Steps Down,” USNI News, 3 Sep 2025: <https://news.usni.org/2025/09/03/co-ceo-of-blueforge-alliance-steps-down>

Submarine Force update from CRS, CBO, GAO & FAS

- “Navy Next-Generation Attack Submarine (SSN[X]) Program: Background and Issues for Congress,” CRS report IF11826, updated 12 September 2025: <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/IF11826>

Other U.S. submarine force news

- Carter Johnston, “U.S. Navy Begins Search for Machine Learning Combat Assistants on Submarines,” Naval News, 6 September 2025: <https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2025/09/u-s-navy-begins-search-for-machine-learning-combat-assistants-on-submarines/>
- Kevin Noonan, “The Navy Isn’t Prepared To Face The Growing Diesel Submarine Threat,” The War Zone, 3 November 2021 (re-posted 29 August 2024): <https://www.twz.com/42900/the-truth-about-the-growing-diesel-submarine-threat-from-a-veteran-sub-hunter>
- VIDEO: “Why the Seawolf Class Is the F-22 of Submarines,” (7:20 min), posted by Military TV, 14 August 2023: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrkfjnM9SGo>
- “DOE-EM sees nearly \$2M in savings in naval reactor D&D recycling,” Nuclear Newswire, American Nuclear Society, 12 September 2025: <https://www.ans.org/news/2025-09-12/article-7364/doeem-sees-nearly-2m-in-savings-in-naval-reactor-dd-recycling/>

International submarine force news

China

- Ryan Chan, “China State Media Reveals New Nuclear-Armed Submarine,” Newsweek, 1 August 2025: <https://www.newsweek.com/china-state-media-reveals-new-nuclear-armed-submarine-2107566>



*China has six Type 094 nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines.
Source: China Central Television via Newsweek*

- Gordon Arthur, "After dillydallying, Thailand proceeds with Chinese-built submarine," DefenseNews, 20 August 2025:
<https://www.defensenews.com/naval/2025/08/20/after-dillydallying-thailand-proceeds-with-chinese-built-submarine/>
- Michael Peck, "China's military wants to target US undersea sensor network: Analysis," Defense News, 13 August 2025:
<https://www.defensenews.com/global/asia-pacific/2025/08/13/chinas-military-wants-to-target-us-undersea-sensor-network-analysis/>
- Hans Kristensen, et al., "Nuclear Weapons At China's 2025 Victory Day Parade," Federation of American Scientists (FAS), 4 September 2025:
<https://fas.org/publication/nuclear-weapons-at-chinas-2025-victory-day-parade/>
- Steve Balestrieri, "The U.S. Navy's 'Achilles Heel': China's Underwater Drones," National Security Journal, 5 September 2025:
<https://nationalsecurityjournal.org/the-u-s-navys-achilles-heel-chinas-underwater-drones/>



China UUV Drones. Image Credit: X Screenshot via National Security Journal

Russia

- Eliana Johns, “Upgrades To Russia’s Nuclear-Capable Submarine Fleet,” Federation of American Scientists (FAS), 7 February 2024:
<https://fas.org/publication/submarine-upgrades-russia/>
- Tim Cooper, “Russian submarine threat resurfaces: How NATO works to track them down,” BFBS Forces News, 4 September 2025:
<https://www.forcesnews.com/nato/russian-submarine-threat-resurfaces-how-nato-works-track-them-down>

For more submarine news, visit the [NSL website](#).

Mark your 2025 calendars for these upcoming events

- 7 October 2025: **Chapter Luncheon**
- 17 October 2025: All Flags at the 52 Boat Memorial – Navy Birthday
- 11 November 2025: All Flags at the 52 Boat Memorial – Veterans Day
- 18 November 2025: **Chapter Luncheon**
- 7 December 2025: All Flags at the 52 Boat Memorial – Pearl Harbor Day
- 9 December 2025: **Chapter Luncheon**

Visit the NSLPACSW website for a more complete calendar of events [here](#).





NSLPACSW Luncheon / Professional Forum Reservations Information

<http://pacificsouthwest.navalsubleague.org>

Luncheon / Professional Forum - Tuesday, 7 October 2025
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.**

**The NSLPACSW Treasurer will send out the formal invitations for this
luncheon. Please make your reservation with him by e-mail at this
link: treasurer.nslpacsw@yahoo.com**

- Make your reservation by **4 pm, Thursday, 2 October 2025.**
- 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 NSLPACSW Treasurer 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, 2 October 2025.**

