

Central Oregon Submarine Veterans Base of USSVI

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/526883156122811>

The Central Oregon Submarine Veterans Base of USSVI is a local base of the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. (USSVI), a national nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the history of the U.S. Submarine Force and supporting those who served beneath the sea. The Central Oregon base was established in 2002, providing a fraternal home for former U.S. Navy submariners living in Central Oregon.

From its founding, the base has focused on honoring submarine service, preserving naval traditions, and supporting submarine veterans and their families. Like other USSVI bases nationwide, it serves as a gathering point where veterans share camaraderie, maintain connections to their service, and ensure that the unique history of the Submarine Force is not forgotten.

For many years, the Central Oregon base operated primarily as a local veterans' organization. In the mid-2020s, the base expanded its public outreach and community engagement, leading to its most visible and significant project: the creation of the S.S. Redside memorial model submarine.

The S.S. Redside is a hand-built, large-scale model representing a Sturgeon-class (637-class) nuclear fast attack submarine, widely regarded as the workhorse of the Cold War submarine fleet. The project was conceived as the first phase of a broader effort to establish an Oregon Submarine Veterans Memorial, honoring all who served in the U.S. Submarine Force, particularly during the post-World War II and Cold War eras. Construction of the model was completed in October 2025.

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.

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The submarine made its first public appearance in the 2025 Veterans Day Parade in Redmond, Oregon, and was formally commissioned and christened on March 7, 2026, at Riverbend Park in Bend, Oregon, following traditional naval ceremony. Although not a functional vessel, the S.S. Redside serves as a powerful symbol of submarine service and sacrifice and is used for parades, educational events, and public displays.

The Central Oregon Submarine Veterans Base maintains strong ties with other USSVI bases, particularly throughout the Pacific Northwest, reflecting the shared heritage and lifelong bonds of submariners. Through public ceremonies, memorial efforts, and continued fellowship, the base plays an important role in preserving submarine history and educating future generations.

Today, the Central Oregon Submarine Veterans Base of USSVI stands as both a veterans' organization and a steward of naval heritage—committed to remembering the past, honoring those who served, and ensuring that the legacy of the U.S. Submarine Force endures.

Central Oregon Submarine Veterans set to christen model sub in Bend

<https://ktvz.com/news/top-stories/2026/03/04/central-oregon-submarine-veterans-set-to-christen-model-sub-in-bend/>

Anchor Aweigh: Central Oregon honors submariners with SS Redside commissioning

<https://ktvz.com/news/central-oregon/2026/03/07/anchors-aweigh-central-oregon-honors-submariners-with-ss-redside-commissioning/>

Reminiscing



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On the previous page, two old sailors reminisced about the 637 class submarines. On the left is Jeff Scheetz, Lieutenant, who served on the USS Archerfish (SSN-678), a stretch hull 637, from 1975 to 1979. [USS Archerfish \(SSN-678\) - Wikipedia](#) and on the right is David Pittman, retired ETCM (SS), who served on the USS Pintado (SSN-672), a short hull 637, from 1984 to 1988. [USS Pintado \(SSN-672\) - Wikipedia](#) He also served on the USS Dace (SSN-607) and USS Topeka (SSN-754).

They compared the 3D model of the sail and the masts and antennas (on the left) to the actual Sturgeon sail located at the United States Naval Undersea Museum (Keyport)

<https://navalunderseamuseum.org> and marveled at its accuracy.



Sturgeon-Class (637-Class) Nuclear Fast Attack Submarine

The Sturgeon-class, also known as the 637-class, was a class of nuclear-powered fast attack submarines (SSN) that served as the backbone of the United States Navy's undersea force during much of the Cold War. A total of thirty-seven Sturgeon-class submarines were built between 1963 and 1975 and remained in service from 1967 until 2004. [\[en.wikipedia.org\]](https://en.wikipedia.org)

Designed as an evolution of the earlier Thresher/Permit-class, the Sturgeon-class featured a lengthened hull, a larger sail, and improved internal layout to carry additional weapons and advanced sensors. These submarines were built to rigorous SUBSAFE standards, incorporating safety and structural improvements following the loss of USS *Thresher* in 1963. [\[en.wikipedia.org\]](https://en.wikipedia.org) [Continued on the next page]

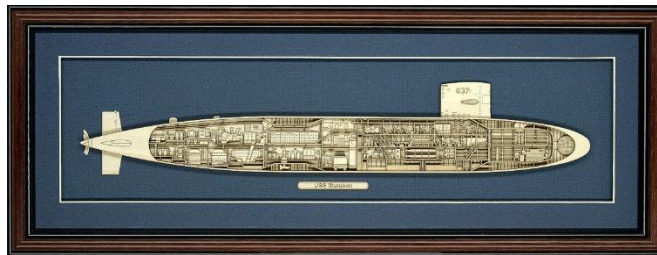
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Powered by a nuclear reactor, Sturgeon-class submarines could remain submerged for extended periods and operate at sustained underwater speeds, allowing them to perform long-duration patrols across the world's oceans. Their missions included anti-submarine warfare, intelligence collection, surveillance, and special operations, including operations beneath Arctic ice. [\[en.wikipedia.org\]](https://en.wikipedia.org), [\[nationaljournal.org\]](https://nationaljournal.org)

Often described as the “workhorses” of the Cold War submarine fleet, Sturgeon-class submarines played a critical role in tracking adversary submarines and maintaining undersea deterrence until they were gradually replaced by the Los Angeles-class attack submarines in the late Cold War and post-Cold War era. [\[en.wikipedia.org\]](https://en.wikipedia.org)

The Gathering (or Prelude to the Commissioning)



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**Welcome by USSVI
Central Oregon Base
Commander Rick
Neault**

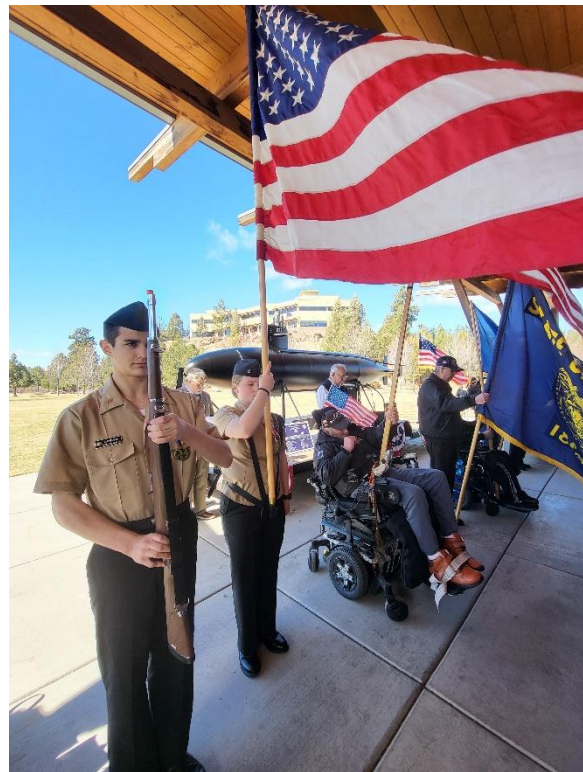
Rick was a QM2 (SS)
who served on the USS
Bonefish (SS-582) and
USS Blueback (SS-581).



**Invocation by John W. Long
Central Oregon Band of Brothers**

**Parade of Colors by Norm Church, Kelly
Mayfield, Jim Vaughn, and Tim Vaughan
Central Oregon Band of Brothers**

**National Anthem by Gregory Byers (not
pictured)
USMC Band, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing,
Cherry Point, NC 1975 - 1982**



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The Birth of Redside and a History of Commissioning by USSVI Central Oregon Base Commander Rick Neault



A suitable “body” was located, purchased, and trailered to the build site; then cleaned out and refurbished.



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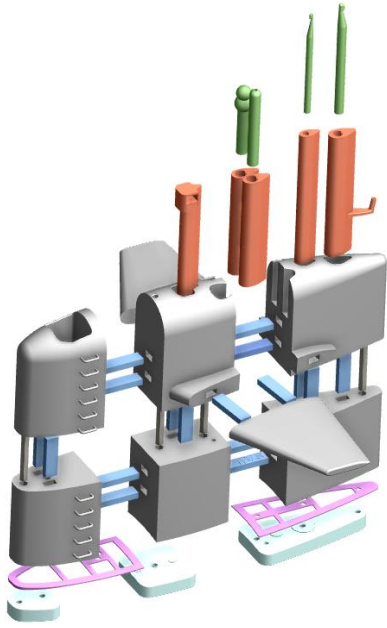
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Many hours of body work!

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3D printed sail with masts and antennas.

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Printed parts installed



Primed and ready for painting

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After painting, assembly, and adding the draft marks, the boat was ready for its trailer – which was another feat of undertaking.

**Remarks by USSVI
Western District 4
Commander Jim
DeMott**

Jim is a retired MT1 (SS) who served on the USS Andrew Jackson (SSBN-619), USS Daniel Webster (SSBN-626), USS Kamehameha (SSBN-642), and USS Pittsburgh (SSN-720).



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S.S. Redside Sponsor – USSVI Bremerton Base

The membership of USSVI Bremerton Base provided seed funding in 2025 to get the ball rolling for the Central Oregon Submarine Veterans Base of USSVI.

A contingent of members made the trek to Bend to assist in the commissioning of S.S. Redside.

Bremerton Base Commander Ilene Davis, representing over 250 members, commissioned S.S. Redside.

Ilene is a retired CSSC (SS) who served on the USS Michigan (SSGN-727), USS Emory S. Land (AS-39), USS Harry S. Truman (CVN-75), and USS Bainbridge (DDG-96)

Photos on the next page – (left) reading the Commissioning and (right) breaking the champagne bottle.

Closing Remarks were given by USSVI Central Oregon Base Commander Rick Neault

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Reception – Larkspur Community Center Keynote Speaker Captain Michael Lewis

Michael retired as the COMSUBRON 19 Commodore in 2019 [DVIDS - News - Submarine Squadron 19 Welcomes New Commodore](#) after 30 years of service. He served as the Commanding Officer of USS Ohio (SSGN-726), USS Buffalo (SSN-715), and USS Houston (SSN-713).



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Base Websites (Transition in Progress)

The Gertrude Check <https://gertrudecheck.org>

Puget Soundings <https://pugetsoundings.org>

Base Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/ussvibremerton>

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