



# Hawgfish Scuttlebutt

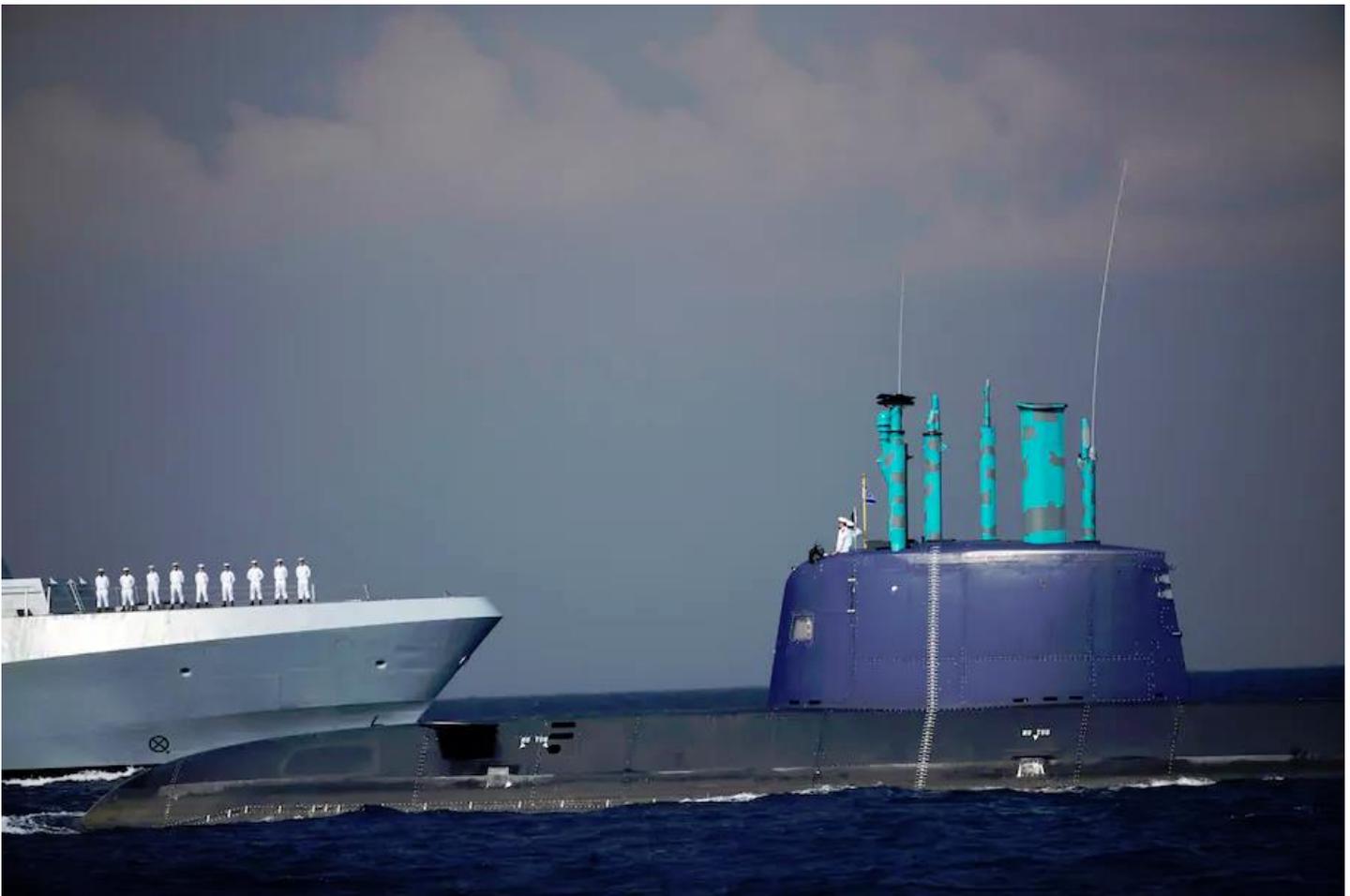


Razorback Base  
United States Submarine Veterans



JANUARY, 2021

**Israel deploys submarine to Persian Gulf in message of deterrence to Iran**



*Israeli sailors stand in formation on the Saar-6 corvette as it passes a submarine during a Dec. 1 welcoming ceremony for the warship off the coast of Haifa, Israel. (Ronen Zvulun/Reuters)*

By  
Shira Rubin

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**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.**

### ***COMMANDER'S CORNER***



Happy new year! I hope everyone had a great Christmas. I only have a couple of things that are important. First, we have a base meeting scheduled for the 23rd of January. The base will have hamburgers and hotdogs with chips. Lunch will be at 12:30 pm. The second thing I have is base elections. If anyone is interested in a office, please let Alan or Mark or me know. Our email address and phone numbers are listed on the back page of the newsletter. Also, I should mention that we need to plan tentative meetings and activities at our meeting. I hope to see everyone in January. God bless you all and stay safe

V/r,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David Boyer'.

David Boyer  
Base Commander



(CONT FROM PG 1)

TEL AVIV — An Israeli submarine has embarked for the Persian Gulf in possible preparation for any Iranian retaliation over the November assassination of a senior Iranian nuclear scientist, Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, Israeli media reported.

The above-water, fully visible Israeli deployment into the Suez Canal and then the Red Sea was a rare move that was reportedly carried out with the acquiescence of Egyptian authorities and was seen as a clear warning to Iran that Israel was preparing for battle as hostilities continue to rise.

The deployment, first reported late Monday by Israeli television channel Kan 11, coincided with the sighting in the Persian Gulf of the submarine USS Georgia, which is armed with 154 Tomahawk cruise missiles. It is the first time in eight years that an Ohio-class guided-missile submarine was publicly reported to be in the strategic waterway between the Arabian Peninsula and Iran.

On Dec. 9, two U.S. B-52 bombers also headed toward the gulf accompanied by Saudi aircraft in what Gen. Kenneth F. McKenzie Jr., head of the U.S. Central Command, said was an example of the two countries' "strong working relationship and shared commitment to regional security and stability." "Nothing is coincidental," said Yoel Guzansky, a senior fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies, in Tel Aviv, referring to the recent Israeli, U.S. and Saudi reports of increased military preparations close to Iran. "This is all trying to signal Iran a message: not to respond to the killing of Fakhrizadeh." Iran blamed Israel, which has been implicated in several killings of Iranian nuclear scientists, for the November assassination of Fakhrizadeh. Iranian officials have repeatedly vowed to take revenge on Israeli or U.S. targets in the region.

Since November, Israel has kept its embassies on high alert and has increasingly urged caution in recent weeks, ahead of the first anniversary of the killing of Iranian Maj. Gen. Qasem Soleimani in a U.S. drone strike near Baghdad Airport in January.

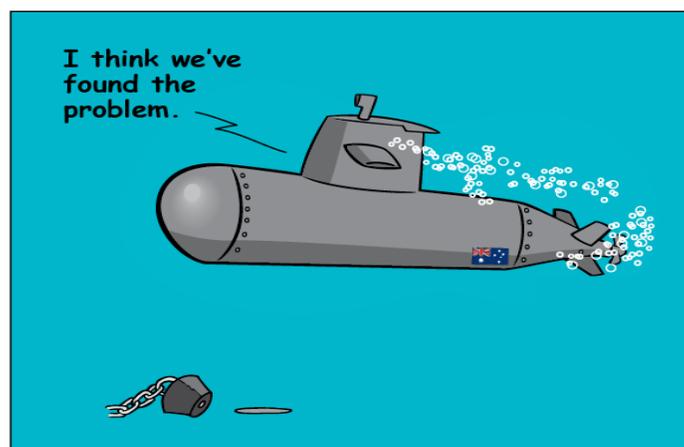
On Monday, Lt. Gen. Aviv Kochavi, chief of the general staff of the Israel Defense Forces, said “the IDF will attack with force, against anyone who is involved, from near or from far, in attacks against Israel or Israeli targets.” For years Israel has been secretly forging security and intelligence agreements with Arab countries in the gulf on the basis of shared concerns about Iran. With the help of the Trump administration, Israel recently announced agreements to normalize relations with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, in addition to separate agreements with Sudan and Morocco. Israeli officials have expressed hope that Saudi Arabia could be next in line. Recent satellite photos have shown that Iran has begun new construction at its underground Fordo uranium-enrichment plant, near the city of Qom, which is likely to trigger new concern in the remaining weeks of the Trump administration.

A 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and six world powers required Iran to sharply curtail its uranium-enrichment program. But after President Trump withdrew the United States from the agreement in 2018, Iran has resumed enrichment activities and stockpiled enriched uranium beyond the limits set in the 2015 agreement.

President-elect Joe Biden is expected to reengage with Iran and try to revive the nuclear deal, which leaves open the question of whether Tehran will respond to the Fakhrizadeh killing.

Guzansky described Israel’s submarine mission and other moves as a kind of psychological warfare to deter Iran.

“We don’t see the whole picture, and we don’t have all the details, but Israel’s interest is to deter its enemy, especially if it doesn’t know exactly where it is going to hit,” he said.





## *PhM1/c Wheeler B. Lipes and a Submerged Appendectomy*



On 11 September 1942, Pharmacist's Mate First Class (PhM1/c) Wheeler B. Lipes agonized over the most difficult decision of his life. He had just diagnosed his shipmate, Seaman First Class Darrel D. Rector, with acute appendicitis. With their submarine *Seadragon* (SS-194) cruising in enemy waters, there was no way to get Rector to port in time. World War II submarines always carried a well trained corpsman, but their small, 55-man complement did not rate a doctor. Lipes could attempt an appendectomy, but the operation might kill his shipmate.

After joining the Navy in 1936, Lipes had received his medical training in the Navy hospital course in San Diego and had served at the Naval Hospital in Philadelphia and at the Naval Hospital in Canacao near Manila before entering the submarine service in 1941. Classified as an electro-cardiographer, he had assisted Navy doctors during many operations, including several appendectomies.

On 8 September 1942, *Seadragon* was several days and thousands of miles out from Fremantle, Australia, on her fourth war patrol, cruising off the Indonesian coast, when Rector first came to Lipes complaining of nausea and abdominal pain. Lipes told him to get to his bunk and rest. At first, the corpsman thought something might be wrong with Rector's gall bladder, but Rector soon began to display the classic symptoms of appendicitis: fever, rigid abdominal muscles, abdominal tenderness, and acute, localized pain. Lipes kept Rector in his bunk, packed his abdomen with ice, and restricted him to a liquid diet.

Nevertheless, Rector's condition worsened. On the morning of 11 September, Lipes reported the situation to the commanding officer, Lieutenant Commander William E. Ferrall. Lipes said that unless Rector received an emergency appendectomy almost immediately, the 19-year-old seaman would die. The skipper asked the pharmacist's mate what he intended to do. "Nothing," said Lipes. Ferrall lectured him that everyone had to do

the best they could and asked the 23-year-old pharmacist's mate whether he thought he could do the surgery. "Yes sir, I can do it," said Lipes, but "everything is against us. Our chances are slim." The skipper explained the situation to Rector. Would the seaman allow the pharmacist's mate to operate? "Whatever the doc feels has to be done is okay with me," said Rector. Ferrall ordered Lipes to perform the surgery.

The skipper took the boat into relatively safe water and submerged to 120 feet to provide a stable platform. Every member of the crew, from the box-plane man to the galley cook, participated in the operation. Lipes boned up on the appendix from a medical book. The ship's medical kit provided a few basics, including sulfa tablets, twelve hemostats, a packet of scalpel blades, catgut for sutures, and a limited quantity of ether. The rest of the instruments had to be improvised. A hemostat became a scalpel handle. Five tablespoons with the handles bent back served as retractors. Commercially sterilized "Handi-pads" substituted for gauze sponges. A tea strainer covered with gauze served as a mask for administering the ether. Boiling water and torpedo alcohol provided sterilization. The operation would be performed on the wardroom table, barely long enough for the patient to stretch out on without his head or feet hanging over.

Lipes didn't know how long the operation would last and whether there was enough ether. He had no way to do a blood count or urinalysis or to monitor the patient's blood pressure, nor was there any intravenous fluid.

Nevertheless, with everyone at his assigned station, the operation began. Lipes began administering the anesthesia at 1046. Thereafter, Lieutenant Franz Hoskins, the communications officer, served as anesthetist. With the skipper making and recording detailed observations at four to seven minute intervals, Lipes made the incision at 1107. At first he had difficulty finding Rector's appendix. But then he slipped his fingers down behind the caecum, and there it was. The distal tip was black and gangrenous.

Lipes detached the appendix, tied it off, removed it, and preserved it in a jar of torpedo alcohol. He cauterized the stump with carbolic acid. He took sulfa, ground from tablets into powder and baked in the ship's oven to kill off spores, and sprinkled it into the peritoneal cavity. Lipes finished suturing at 1322. Rector regained consciousness less than half an hour later.

The seaman's three-inch incision healed nicely and he was back on duty in a few days. *Seadragon* returned to port six weeks after the operation. The medical officer of the submarine squadron pronounced Rector fit for duty. After examining the appendix, the medical officer concluded that Lipes and his shipmates had indeed saved Rector's life. When the story broke in the press, Lipes became a national hero.

At bottom, it was training and leadership that saved the seaman's life. The training Lipes had received had given him the know-how and confidence to perform at a level well above the normal expectations of his rating. The skipper's decision to order Lipes to perform the surgery reflected his own confidence in the pharmacist's mate's training. And it was Lieutenant Commander Ferrall's leadership that inspired Lipes to go above and beyond the call of duty and enabled him to organize the crew for an operation totally outside the realm of their experience.

***In my continued effort to keep this interesting and to show our submarines and sailors in some of their heroism, I felt this story fit the ticket for our new year!***

***Editor***

# *Walter Amburn Benson*



Rank/Rate	Seaman, First Class
Service Number	311 45 63
Birth Date	June 26, 1920
From	Charlotte, Michigan
Decorations	Purple Heart
Submarine	USS Seadragon (SS-194)
Loss Date	December 10, 1941
Location	Cavite Navy Yard, Philippine Islands
Circumstances	Killed by bomb that also hit USS Sealion
Remarks	One of first US submarine fatalities of the War

## MEETING IN JANUARY!!!

That is correct, you heard me right.....meeting!

Riverfront RV park, 1230 pm, Jan 23, 2021 (burgers and chips provided)

Weather permitting we will move outside. We have room to socially distance ourselves and stay safe from Covid. If you are able to come, please do.

This meeting is important. We need to select officers for the next two years. If you are interested in a position, please let Mark Taylor or David Boyer know. Numbers are at end of this newsletter. All positions are open for interested parties and we will hold elections to determine who will hold any contested positions. Due to the crazy situation, we are doing this in an unorthodox fashion but we need to get this done to keep our organization going. Despite Covid, we want to remain a viable and functioning group so please let us know your desire even if you are not comfortable coming to this meeting.

SAILOR, REST YOUR OARS.

Base Member Bill Woods lost his father Sunday. AO2 James Woods was a Navy Veteran of WWII, participating in numerous actions in the Pacific against the EOJ. Condolences go out to Bill and all of his family on their loss.



TREASURER'S REPORT		Dec-20
<b>TOTAL BASE FUNDS BEGINNING BALANCE</b>		<b>\$ 13,963.16</b>
<u>General Fund Beginning Balance</u>		\$ 4,038.85
<u>Booster Club Bob Christians</u>		\$ 100.00
<u>National Dues</u>		\$ 675.00
<u>Base Dues</u>		\$ 345.00
<u>NSK</u>		\$ 207.25
<u>National Dues</u>		\$ 475.00
<u>Deposit Slips</u>		\$ 13.40
<u>General Fund Ending Balance</u>		\$ 4,463.20
<b>Designated Funds</b>		
<u>Maint. Fund Balance</u>		\$ 2,652.66
<u>Charity Fund Balance</u>		\$ 372.00
<u>Snook Memorial Fund Balance</u>		\$ 1,386.86
<u>Designated Fund Balance</u>		\$ 4,411.52
<b>Checking Balance (General + Designated Funds)</b>		<b>\$ 8,874.72</b>
<b>Other Funds</b>		
	CD Balance	\$ 5,365.79
	Cash on hand	\$ 147.00
<b>TOTAL BASE FUNDS ENDING BALANCE</b>		<b>\$ 14,387.51</b>

## **Booster Club**

Pete Jilek (4)  
 Mark Taylor (7)  
 George Fore (7)  
 John Barr (8)  
 Mem. Of Lee Huss (8)

## **BIRTHDAYS FOR DECEMBER**

C. Dean Read, Jr.	7
Maurice Lee Barksdale	7
Bruce M. Lipe	8
Cecil H. Goins	10
Michael D. Moore	10
Sam Cecil	11
Marvin E. Vaughtner	18
Ted Yearwood	23
James H. Gates	28



## Base Officers

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Base Yeoman	Myna Miller	215-360-5960	mynamiller63@hotmail.com
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