



**Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet
Commander, Submarine Force Pacific
Submarine Officer's Ball
Hilton Hawaiian Village
Honolulu, Hawaii
Admiral Cecil D. Haney
14 April 2012**

Thank you Admiral Frank Caldwell, for that introduction and for your leadership here in the Pacific.

As I start my speech, I hope my voice makes it all the way through here. I met many of you tonight and I know you were disappointed that I didn't shake your hand. I've had the flu all week long and Wednesday I couldn't talk, so I don't want to pass my germs. I want to give you lots of Aloha, but nothing extra, so please bear with me.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, and especially my fellow submariners and all those who support us: Happy 112th Birthday and Aloha!

It's my pleasure and honor to be here for this celebration and to have this opportunity to speak to you.

I would especially like to extend a warm Aloha to all the spouses, family members and loved ones here tonight. Your contribution to our mission cannot be overstated. Your encouragement and support are so important to our submarine force's efforts and is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

I know that I am the only thing standing between you and the dinner and dancing, not to mention the nail biting results of the table decorating contest. So let me get started.

Admittedly I was a little surprised, but delighted, to get the honor of speaking here tonight. There are many out of town Flags who would fight for the opportunity to come to Hawaii and speak to you. I can think of a long list of Flags in D.C. who are desperate to be released, albeit only temporarily, from that 5-sided wonderland called the Pentagon.

As Commander of the Pacific Fleet, it is great to be here in the Aloha State and to celebrate with an audience that values the defense of our nation, that values our Navy, and that values our submarine force.

Tonight's theme is "A Deeper Calling". How appropriate as I look at all those in attendance here tonight. Our submarine force has such a rich history and heritage. We have much to celebrate and such a solid foundation to continue to build on.

It has been that calling that has drawn men to explore the ocean deep. From our first tentative sojourn beneath the waves as explorers, that calling has urged us to go farther and deeper. Today we

are still answering that calling as we slide beneath the waves in today's submarines, dominating the global underwater environment.

So tonight, please indulge me as I go back to the inventor, John Holland, who was called on by the Navy in 1895 to build the submarine named *Plunger* with a steam engine for surface propulsion.

Now at least the Navy was trying to keep up with the scientific advances of the day. Steam power had a better chance at succeeding on a submarine than sail power did. But John Holland wasn't convinced this would work. He told the Navy that it was a bad idea, but the Navy knew what it wanted and had him built it anyway. The requirement was for an 85-foot submarine that would go 15 knots on the surface, powered by a steam engine.

The big problem was that they could not submerge her. While operating on the surface, temperatures inside were as high as 137 degrees Fahrenheit. Needless to say, the crew couldn't take the heat.

Here in a bit I'm going to come back to the *Plunger*.

Now luckily for us, the combustion engine was invented in time for John Holland to sell a seven-man submersible named the *Holland* to the U.S. Navy. That was in 1900, 112 years ago. Since those humble beginnings, U.S. Navy submarines have come so far. We have played a prominent role in the writing of U.S. and world history.

Consider their effectiveness in World War II where 55 percent of all enemy ships sunk at sea were last seen through the sights of a periscope. Our forefathers had sailed the seas, they had mastered the deep and they helped win that war.

We have the honor to have a submarine veteran of World War II with us here tonight. A man who can tell you firsthand what it was like to survive depth charges dropped by the enemy and who can tell you what it was like to hear torpedoes leaving the tube as they sought enemy warships. Admiral Joe Vasey, it is truly an honor to have you here with us tonight to represent the submarine veterans from that era. Thank you for your service.

Many of you may not know it, but the State Senate of Hawaii formally recognized Admiral Vasey on his 95th birthday just a few months ago, so happy belated birthday. If you read the pronouncement, it is clear that he is a great example of tonight's theme, A Deeper Calling.

He served on three different submarines during World War II, including the USS *Gunnel*. It was on that boat that he and his fellow shipmates survived a depth charge attack by enemy forces that lasted 36 hours. In the midst of this life-or-death struggle he realized that "There has to be a better way to resolve disputes." He vowed that if he survived, he would one day look for that "better way."

His calling led to the founding of the Pacific Forum in Honolulu. This is a think tank that works to persuade Americans and Asians that good relations are in the best interests of everyone in the Asia-Pacific region. Once again Admiral, I thank you for your example and for all that you have done for our Navy, our country, and the world.

Submarines have changed dramatically since World War II. With Admiral Rickover's vision of a nuclear fleet, the *Nautilus* was launched and ushered in a new and historic era. With the completion of the first strategic deterrent patrol of *George Washington*, we fundamentally changed the calculus of nuclear deterrence.

During the Korean and Vietnam wars, submariners continued to play essential roles. Our efforts were at the very heart of the Cold War where we played our important part in the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union. Now here I want to mention that Admiral Fargo, who is here tonight, had been the Executive Officer on the *Plunger*, a newer *Plunger* than the one I spoke about. He later went on to be Commanding Officer of the *Salt Lake City*.

Most recent in our history we have been involved in Operations Desert Storm, Allied Force, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Just last year the world watched in awe as more than 100 Tomahawk missiles rose up from the deep, headed into Libya during the opening shots of Operation Odyssey Dawn. That brings us to today's calling.

In a speech given this week to the Naval Academy, the Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, stated that "the 21st century will be America's Pacific century. . ." and for good reason. The Pacific is a vast and dynamic region. It is home to several of our closest allies; it has six of the world's largest militaries, some of the most important emerging economic powers growing in promise, with some of the most active trade and energy routes in the world.

But the Pacific neighborhood has unique challenges. For example we are working to understand China as they continue to increase the size and strength of their military, including their submarine force. North Korea continues their provocations and nuclear ambitions. This week, the world watched and waited for what would turn out to be a failed rocket launch.

Given these challenges, we know that we can always count on our submarines being forward deployed, underway, doing their job, ready and answering the call, 24/7. Over the last year Submarine Force Pacific's submarines were deployed around the world. Twenty-one SSN's conducted 5th and 7th fleet operations and one SSN deployed to SOUTHCOM. There are also numerous SSBN patrols providing strategic deterrence.

We are working to make sure those submarines are always at the ready, we have shore facilities such as the Naval Submarine Support Command (NSSC), Naval Submarine Training Command, Pacific (NSTCP), and Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, working tirelessly to prepare and sustain their efforts. Some of you have tables here tonight. Thank you for all that you do.

Nearly a third of the force is deployed at any given time. Tonight, we have friends who could not be here because they are underway answering that deeper calling while carrying out our nation's business.

From Pearl Harbor we have *Tucson*, and ladies I know you are out there. Also *North Carolina*, *Columbus* and *Louisville* are forward deployed. Also away from their homeports tonight, sailing the

waters of the Pacific are *Buffalo*, *Michigan* and *Topeka*. And of course we have SSBNs underway and on patrol.

I would like to pause here for just a moment and ask that any spouses here tonight whose husbands are deployed, would you please stand and be recognized? Thank you ladies for being here tonight.

But what about the future? Our submarine forces will play a critical role in whatever that future calls out. As we continue to ensure our maritime security in an uncertain world, we will work to maintain our warfighting readiness and continue to foster strong relationships with our allies and partners. Our Navy, to include our submarine force, will continue to provide purposeful forward presence.

Our submarine heroes, like Joe Vasey, Dick O’Kane, Mush Morton and others, were able to do so much with the submarines of their generation. Today whether it is the *Los Angeles* class, *SeaWolf*, *Virginia* or the *Ohio* class submarines, each provides our nation with remarkable capabilities. I take great comfort in the fact that with our technology, combined with the skill, training and the determination of our men and women at sea, we will continue the same traditions of our forefathers. We will continue to answer our deeper calling.

Too often today we read headlines that question whether America is in decline. Just looking at the talent in this ballroom tonight, I have confidence that this and future generations of submariners will continue to carry out that legacy of a deeper calling to ensure America’s security and prosperity.

As we approach the 70th anniversary of our victory at the Battle of Midway this June, I am reminded of a quote from our former CNO, Admiral Gary Roughead, that is particularly relevant.

He said, “We’re the strongest and most capable Navy in the world . . . Midway taught us that it takes more than advanced technology and excellent training to win a war. Those are vital, but without our people, their passion, and will to win, we cannot achieve success. People make us a great Navy and Midway is a reminder to never forget it.

And how true that is, our Navy and our country are great because of people like you. I’m proud of all that you do and all that you will continue to do.

God Bless our grateful nation, our Navy, and all those with the deeper calling to serve in the world’s finest submarine force.

Happy Birthday and Mahalo!