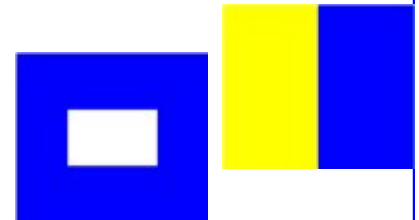
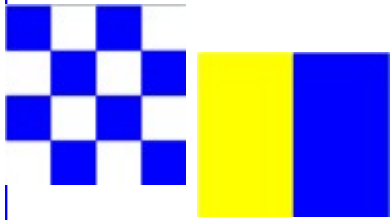


# SEA POACHER ASSOCIATION



**DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO SERVED ON THIS INCREDIBLE SUBMARINE!**

VOLUME 16, ISSUE 4

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EDITOR and PUBLISHER: BILL BRINKMAN EM 60-62

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## **LAST** Call for Manitowoc !

**We're in the final stages of preparing for the September 25-28 , 2019 National Reunion for the USS Sea Owl , USS Sea Robin and USS Sea Poacher.**

**Karl Schipper has done a great job getting us ready to visit Historic Manitowoc , the USS Cobia , the Wisconsin Maritime Museum , Roger's Street fishing Village , and the Wisconsin Farm Discovery Center.**

**We'll have breakfasts in the Holiday Inn Manitowoc ( 920-682-6000 ) , lunches at the Lighthouse Inn and Harborside Restaurants and the Banquet at the Wisconsin Maritime Museum. Our guest speaker at the Banquet will be Admiral Gerald Clusen.**

**SEE the April and July Newsletters for further information , and the registration forms.**

**So far we have 40 sailors , wives or friends registered as follows:**

**SS 405 and SS 406 : Bill & Lin Brinkman**

**SS 406 : Bob & Caroline Acor, Deirdre Bridewell , Dick Carney & Lois**

**Koval , Richard & Nancy Clubb , Cal Cochran & Vincent Sottile , Meryln & Shirley Dorrheim , Hubert & Linda Jackson , Chuck & Bobbie Killgore , Robert Lawrence , Joe Murdoch & Linda**

**Machado , Karl Schipper & Joan Carpenter , John & Annette Snook , Rick Socha & Sharon Lyon , Larry Weinfurter**

**SS 407 :** Terry & Carolyn Klausen , Joe Palmer & Jordan Darrah , Mike Repko & Betty Schafer , Michael & Jaqueline Trombley , Edward Para , Ron & Peggy Plumlee , Tony & Clara Ucci.

## How to Spot Submarines

By Bill Brinkman



**Spotted July 31 , 2019 in Copenhagen , Denmark.**

**Note the red tipped torpedo.**

**This Tumleren Class sub was built by West Germany in 1965 for the Norweign Navy , and bought from them by Denmark in 1986.**

**Crew of 17 , 8 Forward Torpedo tubes , length =140 Feet.**

## **Baltic Sea Facts**

**The Baltic Sea is fed by many rivers and is actually brackish, that is, much less salty than the oceans. It exits through the narrow Denmark strait next to Copenhagen and it takes 25 years for a complete change of water volume.**

**The average depth of the Baltic Sea is only 180 feet, thus its not favorable for Submarine operations.**

## **Richard E. Whitmire EN 63-66**

Bellevue - Richard E. Whitmire, 83, passed away on Tuesday morning, June 11, 2019. He was born on February 7, 1936 in Milwaukee to the late Richard and Lorraine (Kornetzky) Whitmire. Richard served in the U.S. Naval Reserve from 1952 to 1956 and went on to serve active duty in the U.S. Navy from 1956 until his retirement in 1975. On May 26, 1962, he married Darlene Beth at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Green Bay. After his retirement from the Navy, he worked for the city of Green Bay Metropolitan Sewerage for many years until his retirement. Richard enjoyed hunting, fishing and camping. He is survived by his loving wife, Darlene; his sons, Michael and Marshall; grandchildren, Abbey (Adam) Nelson, Trevor Whitmire and Ethan Whitmire; great grandchildren, Audrey Nelson and Adam Nelson, Jr., and many other relatives and friends. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his sister and brother-in-law, Ann (Ken) Dewitt; grandson, Tyler Whitmire; and niece, Diane Dewitt.

Full military honors will follow. Online condolences may be expressed at [www.prokowall.com](http://www.prokowall.com). Published in Green Bay Press-Gazette from June 12 to June 13, 2019



# Howard Arthur Coffman HMC 51-56

By Karl Schipper QM 1958-1960

Howard was born Mead Washington on 22 April 1918. He came on board the Sea Poacher in 1952. In 1954 he was transferred to the Reserve Training Center in Riviera Beach Florida. According to our records he was a crew member again in 1956 and then transferred to the Trumpet Fish in January 1957. The Decklog web site lists him as also serving on the Tirante and Chopper. He enlisted in the Navy about 1942. He served in the Navy for 24 years, and after he retired, he worked as chief of security for Spokane School District 81 for eight years. Howard went on Eternal Patrol on 24 December 1995 in Desert Hot Springs, Calif., where he and his wife lived in the winter.



A Spokane navy man, Chief Hospitalman Howard Coffman (left), son of Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Coffman, N5517 Hoffman, recently was one of the first enlisted men to serve on a navy court of justice. With Coffman is a shipmate from the submarine Sea Pacher, Chief Torpedoman Howard H. Beers of Connecticut. Under the new code of military justice, enlisted men are now eligible to sit on navy courts. Coffman is a veteran of nine years' naval service. (Navy photo.)

## 3 LUCKY FLYERS TELL OF JUMPS

SEATTLE, June 10. (P)—Three Washington state men were under treatment in Puget Sound naval hospitals today after parachute jumps that saved their lives in mountainous northern California last Friday.

The pilot of the navy torpedo bomber, Lt. R. W. Hewitt, Marine Corps reserve, of Seattle told of the most grueling experience of the trio. He was reported missing for a night and day while he wandered by daylight and shivered through a sleepless night.

The admonition from his wife, who was at a Seattle hospital with their new-born son while her husband was missing without her knowledge, was: "No more flying."

Hewitt won't do any for a while, at least. He is suffering from a back injury.

In the bed next to him at Sand Point naval air station hospital is Howard Coffman of Spokane, chief pharmacist's mate who also suffered a back injury in jumping ahead of the pilot.

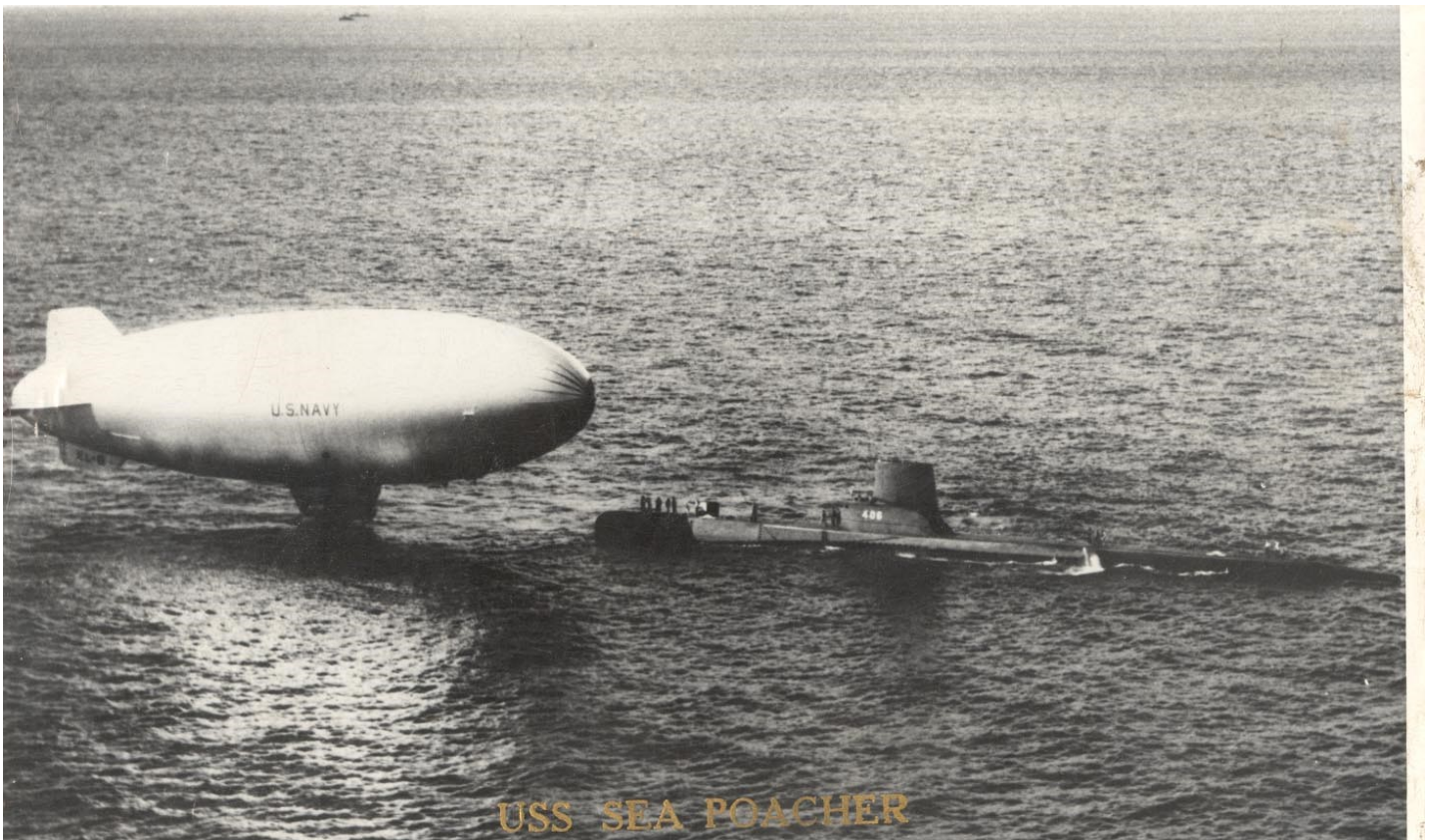
The third is R. D. Barlen, chief pharmacist's mate from Richland, Wash., who is in the naval hospital at Bremerton with a fractured knee.

Coffman told today of parachuting into a small river and following its course to a ranger station.

# Blimp Rescue 1951

By Bill Buckley

It was 1951 and I was on Sea Poacher which was scheduled for shipyard . COB warned three of us SN's that we must qualify before shipyard or it wouldn't happen. Underway off Key West operating ASW with a blimp from Boca Chica. Received com from blimp stop operation blimp had lost propulsion. Surfaced and sure enough blimp had come to close to water and a wave had bent props on both engines. CO directed COB and he call the three of us on deck. Two JG' followed. They started giving us conflicting directions. CO on bridge shouting but JGs weren't listening..COB told us if we didn't ignore them and do exactly as he said or we would never see our liberty cards again. Since we were behind our accelerated schedule we weren't seeing them anyway. Did as COB directed and spliced two mooring lines together and then to blimp's nose line and started to tow. No problems for a couple of hours. Ran into a rain squall , temp dropped in blimp's gas and started to bend in the middle and losing altitude. They starting tossing stuff to lighten and troops jumped into water. We fished them out and kept towing. Came out of the squall and the blimp stretched out and we towed to Shallow water where AVR took tow line and finished tow. We went to base, Following day we were at quarters and a pickup with our two mooring lines and a sedan from the airbase arrived. Officer from airbase went below and we retrieved our mooring lines.Shortly officer went back to airbase and CO appeared at quarters. CO then read a commendation from base CO. Then applauded crew action and did the darnest ass chewing of the JG's I have ever heard! Quarters secured and back to work. Thirteen hundred liberty commenced. COB called the three of us SN's to the goat locker. We expected a tirade about not being on sked for qualification but got instead a hand shake and our liberty cards. Probably set a record for going from pier 5 to Duval street and the Brown Derby. The length of this may have put you to sleep but next time we get together for a cool one I will tell you about when I was on Threadfin, in the Red Sea, at anchor I blew the starboard screw off of the shaft so we could get underway to Malta drydock.



# Veteran spent service on submarine

By T.W. BURGER  
For Public Opinion

Chambersburg's Jack "Barry" Ensminger, 74, has spent a big chunk of his life under water, most of that without holding his breath.



He served more than 20 years in the U.S. Navy, all of it in the Submarine Service.

Barry Ensminger was born in Waynesboro in 1938. His wife, Delores, who goes by Lori, was born in Chambersburg.

"Twelve other boys and I from Waynesboro High School all signed up for the Navy at the same time," he said. "We were still in high school. We signed up in January of 1955 and were inducted June 9 of that year. We were sent right to Bainbridge, Md. for training."

After moving a number of times

to follow the home ports of the various submarines on which Barry served, the couple built a house in the Waynesboro area when he retired from the Navy and went to work in the private sector. After a quarter-century, they moved again, this time to Chambersburg. That was 11 years ago.

His Navy career spanned the history of submarines from the diesel-electric to the nuclear age. He has a letter from one of his superior officers stating that at one time, he had fired more Polaris missiles than anybody else in the world.



Ensminger

"Of course, that was a long time ago. That's not true anymore," Ensminger said.

He served on the:

■ USS Dogfish SS 350: 309.5 feet long, diesel-electric power, commissioned 29 April 1946, sold to the Brazilian Navy in 1972, scrapped in 1983;

■ USS Barracuda SSK 1: 196 feet long, commissioned on 10 November 1951, a hunter-killer sub designed specifically to hunt down and destroy other submarines. It was small, fast and highly maneuverable, and the first U.S. sub built from the keel up post-war. President Jimmy Carter also served on the Barracuda, though not at the same time Ensminger did. The boat was scrapped in 1974.

■ USS Sea Poacher SS-406: 311 feet, 8 inches long, commissioned July of 1944, transferred to Peru in



Ensminger during his service years.

1976, and decommissioned 1995;

■ USS Thomas A. Edison, SSBN-610: Ensminger's first nuclear sub and first sub armed with ballistic missiles. 410 feet, four inches long, commissioned

▲ See VETERAN, Page 5A

## Veteran

▲ From Page 1A

March, 1962, decommissioned December 1983, and scrapped December, 1998.

■ USS John C. Calhoun SSBN-630: 425 feet long, commissioned September 1964, decommissioned March 1994, scrapped November, 1994.

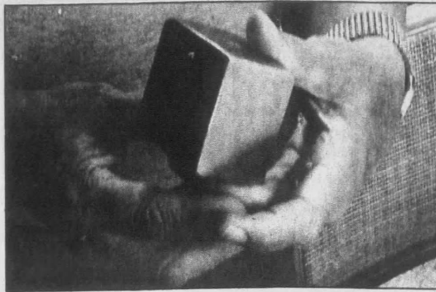
■ USS Daniel Boone (SSBN-629), 425 feet, commissioned April of 1964, decommissioned in February, 1994, and scrapped in November of that year.

So, why the Navy, and why submarines? The answer to both is that there was a hero who lived just up the street.

"When I was a boy, there was a guy who lived up the street. His name was Diz Freeman, and he served on submarines in WWII. He was my hero. I always wanted a career in the Navy. I knew what I was going to do."

His first assignment was on the Dogfish, which was commissioned in 1946, the year after the end of WWII.

"I had the best 'sea daddies' I could have had," Ensminger said. "About 50 percent of the crew had served on subs during the war. They



**Impressive:** This hull sample is a cube of a special steel alloy nearly two inches thick. It was a piece of the material used for the pressure hull on a nuclear sub. It will withstand hull pressure of up to 8,000 pounds per square inch.

knew what it was all about, and I learned a lot. All of them are gone now."

Ensminger said he had seen some action, but not in any declared war.

"Once we were on an exercise when we were supposed to get in close to a task force of our own ships undetected and do some reconnaissance. We would have been fine if the navigator hadn't screwed us up and put us right in the middle of the place where Navy destroyers were dropping depth charges. Some of them came pretty close. That was exciting," he said.

"Another time, we were out in the North Atlantic in another exercise, and we were someplace where the Russians didn't want us to be. They dropped a couple of depth charges, but they didn't

get very close. We evaded the Russians OK."

Opponents come and go, Ensminger said, but whatever else is going on, the sea is always your worst enemy.

"The ocean is unforgiving," he said.

For example: "We had a J.G., ('junior grade') officer, fresh out of school and looking for a bright future in the submarine service. He was with us as a sort of final exam to get qualified for sub duty. He gave an emergency dive order ... and put the sub into a dive that took us nose-first into the bottom. Fortunately, the bottom there was hard and we bounced off instead of getting stuck. But he turned the sub up too hard and one of the screws hit the bottom and got all dinged up, badly enough that

we couldn't run that engine, and we had to make it back to home base on one engine. And when we hit bottom, the commodore was knocked off the bunk in his stateroom and all the way out into the passageway.

If the sub had hit the "floor" at 6,000 feet instead of 150 feet ... Ensminger just shrugged. The boat's hull could easily have collapsed with the extra pressure on it. Or it could have become mired hopelessly in a soft bottom, with little chance of rescue.

"The J.G. didn't get into the submarine service," he said.

Barry Ensminger was in the submarine service when the USS Thresher, SSN-593, was lost at sea with all 129 hands on April 10, 1963 a little more than 200 miles off Cape Cod during a diving exercise. The sub rests on the bottom, more than a mile and a half beneath the surface.

He said it was a bad day when the news came out.

"We were all pretty quiet when we heard about it. Any time a sub is lost, no matter whose, we all feel it. We have a sense of what they went through," he said.

From a desk drawer he pulled out a cube of a special steel alloy nearly two

inches thick. It was a piece of the material used for the pressure hull on a nuclear sub. It will withstand hull pressure of up to 8,000 pounds per square inch. And yet subs have been lost that had their hulls crushed like wadded up paper. Ensminger doesn't know the figure for how far his deepest dives went, but he knows some went deeper than the Empire State Building is tall. That's 1,454 feet or more. At that depth, pressure on the hull would have been about 650 pounds per square inch. Don't be too impressed: Sperm whales dive to more than 7,000 feet to hunt, and withstand pressures of more than 3,000 pounds per square inch.

Barry and Lori met at Rock Top in February of 1963. They were married the next month while he was assigned to the Thomas A. Edison.

After that, he was assigned to the pre-commission crew of the John C. Calhoun. Essentially, that meant he was assigned to the boat while it was being constructed and stayed with the project through the Calhoun's shakedown cruise.

After that assignment, he went off to learn all about firing guided missiles. His formal job designation was

Torpedoman's Mate, but as the Navy's technological know-how grew, Ensminger's title came to include the launching of nuclear missiles that could hit targets far inland. The nuclear subs on which he served carried 16 such missiles.

"Our job wasn't to start a war," he said. "Our job was to finish it."

Not long before his retirement, Ensminger received a letter from a commander informing him that at that point he had fired more Polaris missiles than anybody else in the world.

He was in demand; he said he served more than 10 years of sea duty before ever being given shore duty. Even then, the shore duty more often than not involved submarines.

During the couple's time with the Navy, they lived in Virginia, South Carolina, and Washington State. He retired at the rank of Senior Chief Petty Officer.

After his retirement in 1976, Ensminger worked for Grove Manufacturing for a number of years until retiring for the final time. Well, not exactly retired. He is active in the U.S. Submarine Veterans Association, and served as the organization's national commander from 2000 to 2002.

# Hickmans Proud Of 4 Navy Sons

**GLEN ALLEN** — Recently this newspaper ran a picture and story about three Glen Allen brothers serving in the U.S. Navy. Now, there are four!

Freddy Hickman, oldest son still at home, decided to join up too, this month, and he now is taking boot training at San Diego, Calif.

Others already in the Navy are Donald M. Hickman, Air Controlman 2nd Class serving at New Iberia, La.; Billie J. Hickman, Electronics Technican 2d Class, serving aboard the U. S. S. Sea Poacher, a submarine out of Key West, Fla., and Johnny E. Hickman, Chief Petty officer, also at Key West.

Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Hickman of Glen Allen Rt. 1, although admitting they miss their sons terribly bad, are also proud that they have four sons who are able and willing to serve in the United States Navy.

Marion County News Jan 31 , 1961

Edmond E. Gibbons, U. S. N., son of Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Gibbons, has been advanced to the rank of Torpedoman Mate, third class. He is serving aboard the U. S. S. Sea Poacher.

Wetumpka Herald May 31 , 1951

## Edmond E. Gibbons In New Orleans For Armed Forces Day

NEW ORLEANS, MAY 21 — Here for Armed Forces Day was Edmond E. Gibbons, seaman, USN, son of Mrs. Cynthia J. Gibbons, Prattville.

He was a guest of the city over Armed Forces Day weekend.

An Armed Forces Day dinner with Vice President Alben W. Barkley as principal speaker climaxed a four-day-long celebration. Activities began last Wednesday with a dramatized radio play and bloomed into full color during an armed forces parade Friday night.

Saturday, thousands of New Orleans citizens swarmed aboard visiting ships and Army and Navy installations for open house inspections.

Gibbons is aboard the *Sea Poacher*, one of a four-ship submarine unit visiting here.

From the *Prattville Progress* May 25, 1950

Editor's Note: Ed Gibbons was my COB on USS *Sea Owl* in 1959-1960.

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Note on next page : Julian Maynard's Articles from the *Onlooker* May 31, 1952



Julian Maynard, U. S. Navy, writes home that he will take his first long ride on the submarine, U. S. S. Sea Poacher, since reporting aboard at Key West, Fla. The sub will go to Galveston, Texas, to participate in "Splash Day", the official opening for the swim season.

## *Dolphins Given R'dale Seaman*

A Robertsdale sailor was awarded dolphins in a ceremony at Gibraltar while the Key West based submarine Sea Poacher was serving with the Sixth Fleet there recently, the Navy has announced.

He is Julian H. Maynard, Jr., seaman, USN, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Maynard of Robertsdale.

Dolphins are awarded to men who pass theoretical training at the New London, Conn. submarine school and carry them out practically aboard a submarine. He must know the job of his shipmates as well as his own.

Maynard entered the naval service in July, 1951.

# Memorial Plaques

## Donald Warner Dunn YN 1959-1961

Moss Point -Donald Warner Dunn , a resident of 7713 Albert Ave., Moss Point , died Thursday at the age of 42. His services were held at the Mount Plagah Baptist church in Andalusia ,ALA. A Masonic graveside service was conducted at graveside. Born in Walnut Hill ,Fla., he had resided in Jackson County for eight years. Mr. Dunn formerly owned and operated Don's Auto Repair Shop in Moss Point. He was a member of the Moss Point Masonic Lodge # 202, the Hamasa Shrine Temple in Meridian and Mount Plagah Baptist Church. Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Peggie Bowers Dunn ;three sons , Rodney, Timothy and Cleveland" BO" Dunn, all of Moss Point; his mother , Mrs. Dalay Dunn of Andalusia; a brother , James A. Dunn of Albany ,GA.; and two sisters , Mrs. Wanda Lloyd of Andalusia and Mrs. Rosalynn Williamson of Sunnymead , Calif.

From the Sun , Biloxi ,MS 5 Jan 1979

## William Kent EM 1946-1947

Greensboro News & Record (NC) - Thursday, August 27, 1992

SANFORD - William Wesley Kent, 65, of 3931 Minter School Road died Aug. 25, 1992, at his home. Funeral will be at 3 p.m. today at Central Baptist Temple, of which he was a charter member. Burial will be in Lee Memory Gardens. A native of Combs, Ark., he was a retired employee of the U.S. Postal Service, a World War II Navy veteran on the USS Ling and a deacon and trustee at his church. Surviving are wife, Barbara N. Kent; daughter, Mrs. Vickie Kent McCauley of Sanford; sons, Terry Kent of Danbury, Lynn Kent of Bryson City, Victor Kent of Sanford; 12 grandchildren.

## Richard Whitmire , EN 1963-1966

( See Page 3 for Richard's Obit )

## Howard Arthur Coffman HMC 51-56

( See Page 4 for Howard's stories )

**Carroll Lawson**, QM 1962-1963, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, May 22, 2019 in Perry Oklahoma surrounded by his loving family.

Carroll was born April 27, 1933 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma to Ernest Albert, Sr. and Della Marie (Stevens) Lawson. He grew up in Perry and graduated from Perry High School. He joined the United States Navy in July 1950 and served his country for three plus years. Upon completion of his enlistment he worked for Halliburton Co. for four years. After several harrowing experiences on the job, he decided to rejoin the Navy in October 1958, applying for Submarine School and qualifying, served on USS Sea Poacher and USS Mackerel in Key West Fla. during the Cuban Crisis. Upon recommendation for Warrant Officer he was promoted to WO1 and attended school to become a Deep Sea Diver. He served as Chief Bosun on USS Florikan in San Diego and USS Penguin in Key West in charge of salvage operations. He retired in 1975 after a tour in Washington D.C. as instructor at the Navy Diving School and a tour at Pearl Harbor in charge of the Escape Training tank for divers.

Carroll and Jandryd Casey were married May 26, 1952 at the University Christian Church in Enid, Oklahoma. They were blessed with 66 wonderful years of marriage.

He was a member of the I.O.O.F Lodge #27 for 40 plus years, during which time he served his lodge in many offices and in all elected offices at the State level, going on to serve the Order as Sovereign Grand Master in 2005. He was also a member of the Perry Rotary Club. After retirement he worked for Kathy Lewis and David Dolezal as Deputy County Assessor. Survivors include his wife Jandryd of the home; four children, Judy Marie Cadle of Perry, Oklahoma, Carolyn Jo West and husband John of Springfield, Missouri, Mark R. Lawson of Perry, Oklahoma, and Marisa J. Lawson of Sp5 Springfield, Missouri; five grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren; and one brother, Michael Lawson and wife Betty of Mustang, Oklahoma. He was preceded in death by his parents; a grandson, and six siblings.



### USS Sea Poacher Quartermasters :

Richard Clubb 62-63, Buster McCollum 62-63, John Snook 59-62, Carroll Lawson 62-63

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