

The SSSBS

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2011 – Sortie with SubRon Six Smoke Boats

In case you haven't heard of it, the SubRon Six Smoke Boat Sisters (SSSBS) is the new organization which is providing services every other reunion for Squadron Six Diesel Boats. This started in 2003 with the joint reunion between the USS Sea Leopard and the USS Sirago. In 2007, we added the Cutlass to the nest. And in 2011, we are going all out to invite every diesel boat that ever was part of SubRon Six at Pier 22.

This organization is a joint venture between and among all the boats holding reunions. Not sure you've noticed it, but we're all getting older and while we're not interested in professional tour groups grabbing profits from senior citizen submariners, we ARE interested in pooling our resources to have good reunions. For those of you who participated in the Sirago's and Sea Leopard's 2003 reunion or the Sirago, Sea Leopard, and Cutlass' 2007 reunion, you know what we mean. But 2011 will be a true blow-out since all Pier 22 Diesel Boats are invited.

So.... what does this mean to you (you might ask)? Well... if you were aboard more than one SubRon Six Smoke Boat, then you you'll be able to multiply your connections and fun. And if you were only aboard the USS Sirago (SS485) in SubRon Six, then you'll have the advantage of the type of classy and professionally run reunion that only our illustrious squadron can pull off. And... you'll have the pride of seeing what a bunch of coordinating smoke boat sailors can do when they pool their money and resources to entertain you and your better half.

If you can get to a website, you should review www.sssbs.org because you'll see what

boats we are talking about. I'm sure you'll recognize many of the names depending on when you were aboard the Sirago. They were our pier companions and we often worked together in Task Group Alpha. We saw them in foreign ports, and sometimes had to help them out when they had equipment problems.... and they helped us out too. That's why we call our organization the SubRon Six Smoke Boat Sisters (SSSBS). In our day we outperformed those Nukes many times... and as we all know... back in the day we were much quieter than they were so we did some... sneaky stuff they could not easily pull off.

The SSSBS has a membership defined as submariners who have attended any boat reunion – OR – are interested in attending the next one. So we have “members” and “prospective members”. There is no cost to this organization, but we gladly take contributions.

Our next reunion is 28 April – 1 May 2011 in Virginia Beach at the Wyndham Beachfront Hotel. This is the same hotel that served Sirago for her 2009 reunion. But with the potential crowd, we have negotiated prices down even further. If you like walking the beach and meeting crew members you haven't seen for many many decades, then this is the reunion for you. While it's still almost a year and a half away, we need to organize now.

Just to tell you about the number of interested crew members so far, here are the statistics:

Sirago (53), Cobbler (2), Sea Leopard (41), Grampus (16), Cutlass (14), Cubera (29), Requin (6), Redfin (7), Ray (1), Sailfish (1), Runner (5), Torsk (6), Argonaut (12), Sea Lion (3), Medregal (2), Carp (2), Tigrone (2).

We're just getting started right now and already have a huge crowd. With Dex Armstrong as an ally, we're planning to get the Requin aboard in strength. Already it's obvious that the boat coordinators for the Argonaut, Cubera, and Grampus are doing a yeoman's job!

We are also interested in your letting us know if you are “intending to attend”. An email has already been sent out to all the existing SSSBS emailing membership plus the emailing Sirago members. If you are NOT an emailer, we still want to know if you would “intend to attend”. We won't be sending out our sign up sheets until next summer, but we'd like to know if you “intend to attend”. Please contact:

Mike Bickel / 1125 Villaview Dr. / Manchester, MO 63021 / (636) 225-7528 / bickel485@aol.com if you are interested.

ALSO... we are doing a FUND RAISER for this event and are selling a PATCH (4" x 2") similar to what you see at the beginning of this article. We are selling this for \$10.00 to raise monies needed for down payments, etc. since our SSSBS organization is very new. If you can spare \$10.00 then make out a check to “SSSBS” and mark it “Patch” and mail it to Mike Bickel (see address above) and it will be greatly appreciated even if you can't make the reunion. We are also looking to expand the microfilm library that the Sirago already has by having the SSSBS fund more tapes to find more crew members from other boats. Each microfilm costs about \$35.00 but we feel it is an important cause to find lost crew members for any/all of our boats. As you know, the Sirago has already been very successful at finding all but about 45 of the 1600+ crew members ever aboard. As the “Fighter, Feeder, Squadron Leader” of SubRon Six, we feel it's important to lead this charge for the good of the Squadron. Anything you can do would be appreciated.