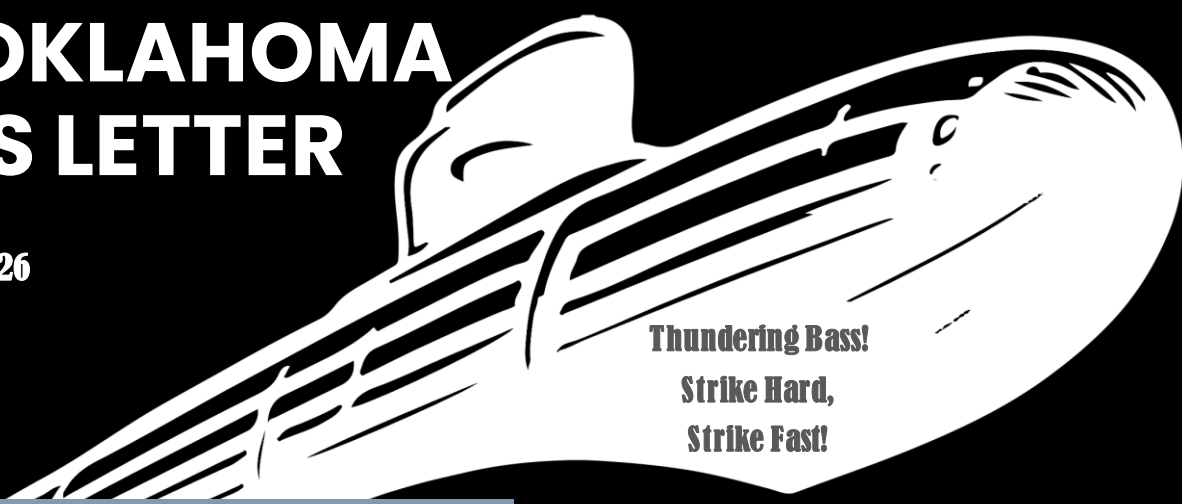


# USS OKLAHOMA NEWS LETTER

Date: 04102026



**Thundering Bass!  
Strike Hard,  
Strike Fast!**



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# ATTENTION ON DECK



**Thundering Bass!  
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Strike Fast!**

## Updates from the Commissioning Committee

CDR Jason C. Kim relieved CAPT Aaron Stutzman as commanding officer of USS Oklahoma during a ceremony at Vista Point on Naval Station Norfolk on November 20, 2025



We are just around \$200,000 away from meeting QuikTrip's Million Match Challenge, thank you to all who have contributed!!!

## Submarine School

### Submariner Term of the Month:

**"CHOP"**

The "Chop" is a standard, semi-formal nickname used to refer to the ship's Supply Officer. The name is derived from the "pork-chop like" appearance of the Supply Officer's collar insignia:



**In a sentence:** "Hey Chop, are we going to be able to get any okra at our next port call? I've been craving fried okra ever since I participated in the namesake visit!"

## Fundraising Progress

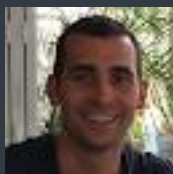


## Fun Facts

OKLAHOMA's predecessor, the famed battleship USS OKLAHOMA (BB-37) that was lost in 1941 along with 429 crew members, also played an important historical role in World War I – being part of the convoy that escorted President Wilson to France in 1919 for peace talks.



## Editor



Matt Clement is a research scientist at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, MD. He is a former submariner, having served on the USS Topeka from 2012-2015. He received his PhD from the University of Oklahoma in 2019.

# CAPTAIN'S CORNER



**Thundering Bass!  
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Okies,

Over the past several months, our focus has remained clear: delivering PCU OKLAHOMA to the Fleet on schedule and fully ready to serve as a critical national asset. The strategic environment demands capable, ready submarines, and every milestone we achieve brings us closer to providing our nation with the undersea advantage it relies upon. Timely completion is not simply about meeting a date on a calendar—it is about ensuring combat credibility, strengthening deterrence, and reinforcing America's ability to operate wherever our interests require.

Maintaining schedule discipline requires relentless coordination between the shipyard, program leadership, and our crew. Every system installation, inspection, and certification is approached with the understanding that delays ripple outward—impacting operational availability, force posture, and global commitments. By driving accountability and prioritizing readiness at every step, we ensure OKLAHOMA enters service prepared to immediately contribute to national security objectives.

Equally important is the preparation of the crew who will take this submarine to sea. Delivering the platform on time must be matched by delivering a warfighting team ready to operate it. Our Sailors are training rigorously, qualifying across mission areas, and building the professional competence necessary to execute complex undersea operations. A submarine is only as capable as the team that operates it, and we are committed to ensuring both are ready together.

As we move forward, the mission remains front and center: bring OKLAHOMA online as scheduled, fully capable, and ready to defend our nation's interests around the globe. The work being done today directly supports tomorrow's operational success. Our responsibility is clear, and we are fully committed to delivering a warship that will answer the call whenever and wherever it is needed.

Very respectfully,

CDR Jason Kim

Thundering Bass! Strike Hard!, Strike Fast!



# CONSTRUCTION GALLERY



**Thundering Bass!  
Strike Hard,  
Strike Fast!**

~December 2025 (credit Ashley Cowan/HII)



In December Newport News Shipbuilding reported that the OKLAHOMA is officially pressure hull complete, marking a major milestone for the first Block V Virginia class submarine in the fleet. The Block V boats are being fitted with superior electronics and next-generation silencing technology; making them among the most advanced, capable and lethal submarines to ever patrol the seas. OKLAHOMA herself is a transitional boat between Block V and Blocks I through IV. In particular, subsequent Block V boats – occasionally dubbed “stretch Viriginas” – will be fitted with the 64 foot long Virginia Payload Module in the boat’s midsection. The module can hold up to 28 Tomahawk missiles – bringing the platform’s total missile payload to 40 – with added flexibility to bring on other large diameter payloads. This capability will be a critical addition to the nation’s submarine fleet as the first four Ohio class submarines OHIO, FLORIDA, GEORGIA and MICHIGAN – which were converted from ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) to guided missile submarines (SSGNs) capable of carrying up to 154 Tomahawk missiles in the late 1990s and critical 2000s – all scheduled to decommission in the coming years. These converted boats have played critical roles for the nation over the past 30 years, as the Block V submarine class – with OKLAHOMA in the lead – certainly will as well.



# VIRGINIA CLASS AT GLANCE



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In this month's issue, we compare the Virginia Class of submarines to the Shipjack-class, which was in service from 1959-1990



USS Sculpin  
Image Credit: US Navy



USS Virginia  
Image Credit: General Dynamics EB

6 (last retired in 2004)  
First to combine control room and attack center  
6 angled torpedo tubes  
251 ft  
3569 tons  
78 MW Westinghouse S5W  
93  
Fairwater & Stern planes  
First to integrate radar system into periscope  
BQS-4 Sonar suite  
USS Sculpin (SSN 590)  
USS Scorpion memorial in Little Rock, Arkansas

**Boats in class**  
**Claim to Fame**  
  
**Armament**  
**Length**  
**Displacement**  
**Reactor**  
**Crew**  
**Control Surfaces**  
**Masts**  
  
**Sonar Arrays**  
**Best Name in Class**  
**Link in the chain**

25 (66 planned)  
First with computer assisted diving  
4 torpedo tube and 12 vertical launch tubes  
377ft  
7900 tons  
210 MW GE S9G  
134  
Retractable Bow & Stern  
1<sup>st</sup> with photonics sensors instead of periscope  
BQQ-10 Sonar suite  
USS Oklahoma (SSN 802)  
USS Arkansas (SSN 800)

# SHIP'S SWAG



**Thundering Bass!  
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**NEW DROP!!!**

Get your OFFICIAL USS OKLAHOMA challenge coin [HERE](#) to add to your collection, or as the perfect gift for any Navy vet or Okie!



FRONT  
\$25.00  
BACK



## **Ship's Store: Continue to check back for NEW ARRIVALS**



USS OKLAHOMA  
Polar Camel  
tumblers in  
black, navy or  
white

\$25.00



USS OKLAHOMA  
clique ballcap.

\$25.00



USS OKLAHOMA Men's Brooks Brothers® Wrinkle-Free Stretch Pinpoint Shirt

\$75.00

# CATCHING UP WITH CHET CADIEUX



**Thundering Bass!  
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Tulsa native Chet Cadieux has been CEO of the QuikTrip Corporation since 2002. QuikTrip was founded in 1958 by Chet's father, Chester, along with his friend Burt Holmes. Chet graduated from the University of Tulsa in 1989 and ascended through the ranks at QuikTrip over the next decade and a half — all the way from the graveyard shift to store manager, to Vice President, and ultimately President/CEO.

In over 30 years with the organization, he has seen it grow into the 19th-largest privately held company in the U.S., with over 1,200 stores across 21 states, over 32,000 employees, and estimated annual revenue of nearly \$12 billion. QuikTrip consistently ranks among the top 30 companies on the Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work For list — coming in at number 14 on the list of large companies in 2025.

In the aftermath of QuikTrip's generous gift of \$200,000 to the USS Oklahoma commissioning fund last year, and the ongoing "\$1 Million Match Challenge," I had an opportunity to sit down with Chet for a candid interview.

As with many others in the state of Oklahoma, Chet and the rest of his team were not aware until recently that a ship bearing the name Oklahoma was under construction. "I have been to Pearl Harbor, visited the Arizona Memorial, and heard and read stories about the battleship Oklahoma, so I guess I naively thought that the name had been retired," Chet explained. "One day, one of my board members walked into my office and literally slapped the Commissioning Committee's pitch onto my desk. I immediately knew that we needed to be involved in some way."

Involvement with the USS Oklahoma commissioning is just one of many large efforts and financial commitments that QuikTrip has made in support of the armed forces. "The most important work that we do as an organization is through a program



called Folds of Honor, which provides scholarships to family members who have lost a loved one who was serving our country," said Chet. While this program



*QuikTrip CEO Chet Cadieux. Image Credit: Lawrence Journal-World*

# CATCHING UP WITH CHET CADIEUX



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has been QuikTrip's largest financial endeavor in support of military service personnel — to date, they've given out over \$14 million in scholarships through the program — it is by no means their only undertaking in this area.

"We've been committed to supporting our warriors for years, if you are serving and come into any of our stores with a military ID, we will always take care of you," explained Chet. Indeed, QuikTrip frequently sponsors promotions in support of veterans, and is well known for offering all current and former service members a free drink on Veterans day.

Given the company's history of support for the military, Chet is particularly excited about the new partnership with the USS Oklahoma Commissioning Committee. During a recent "namesake visit" to the state, some of the USS Oklahoma crew members stopped by QuikTrip's corporate headquarters in Tulsa.

"It was awe-inspiring," recalls Chet. "The entire office of about 1,000 folks came out and gave the crew a big round of applause."

After hearing tales of submarine life from the crew, Chet is enthusiastic about the possibility of seeing the completed Oklahoma in person at the commissioning

ceremony in a couple of years. "I think it would be absolutely amazing if it works out. I would really like to go represent the state of Oklahoma. I've been on some World War II submarines before," he continued, "and I've read all kinds of submarine books over the years, but seeing the latest and greatest in person really will be a treat. The whole process is just fascinating — the way all those blocks get pushed together. I'm a business major, not an engineer, so it's hard for me to even



*QuikTrip presenting USS Oklahoma commissioning committee chair Rocky Gains with its initial gift of \$200,000 last year*

imagine how they are able to complete a process like this, get a boat through sea trials, and take it to sea."



# CATCHING UP WITH CHET CADIEUX



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As the commissioning draws closer, QuikTrip plans to continue increasing its support for the crew. "Stand by," Chet told me. "We have some concepts that we are working on now. There will definitely be a campaign this fall with messaging in all of the Oklahoma stores to help get the word out to the citizens of Oklahoma that this crew will soon be going to sea on the Oklahoma, and we want to make sure they have all the support we can give them."

When asked if QuikTrip's financial commitment to the Oklahoma was at all motivated by the knowledge that the USS Texas had recently set the record for raising the largest commissioning fund, Chet quipped, "We were aware of that, and it goes without saying that it makes a pretty easy pitch for people in Oklahoma. But it was more important to us to develop a fund that takes care of the men and women going to sea on the Oklahoma for years to come. It isn't so much about beating Texas; it's about taking care of the men and women who will go to sea on this boat for decades — to provide for their education, to have resources available for those expecting babies while they are out on deployment, and to set the tone for what is possible for all the boats that follow the Oklahoma."

Chet concluded the interview on a personal note and discussed what the company's support for the Oklahoma crew would have meant to the company's founders, his father Chester Cadieux and Burt Holmes.

"Both my dad and Burt would have been enormously proud and would say that we are doing the right thing. My dad served in the Air Force during the Korean War. He always believed in supporting those who serve and always made sure to reinforce



QuikTrip founders Chester Cadieux and Burt Holmes. Image Credit: QuikTrip

within the company that the men and women of the armed services should be held in the highest regard. He probably would have had a little tear in his eye, but in all seriousness, I know that this just would have meant the world to him."