

My name is Kevin Galeaz. I am a Cold War Submarine Veteran and President of the USS Thresher Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Foundation. Accompanying me are other Foundation members including retired USN Submarine Force & Naval Sea Systems Admirals, Captains and USS Thresher Family members.

Our mission is to erect a privately funded National Commemorative Monument to USS Thresher on the hallowed grounds of Arlington National Cemetery that is designed to perpetuate both the memories of the 129 men lost on April 10, 1963, and their enduring SUBSAFE legacy in order to help minimize the likelihood of another similar tragedy from occurring.

The Thresher tragedy is bracketed between the Cuban Missile Crisis and President Kennedy's assassination, a time of significant National anxiety. Thresher was the most technologically advanced Fast Attack Submarine of its time, designed to silently locate and destroy the very Russian Submarines armed with Nuclear Missiles that sat off our coasts during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The crew aboard USS Thresher were the elite of the US Submarine Force. On the day of the tragedy, 112 Officers and Enlisted crew members along with 17 Naval & Civilian observers gave their lives during deep dive Sea Trials.

Thresher's impact is truly National in scope:

1. Prior to the tragedy we experienced an average loss rate of one submarine every three years.
2. Three months after the tragedy, the USN responded with the inception of the Submarine Safety Program (SUBSAFE), a program so effective that in the 55 years since its inception, only one Submarine has been lost, USS Scorpion.
3. Thousands of US Navy Submariners, including myself, owe our lives to the men lost aboard USS Thresher.
4. Thresher's SUBSAFE legacy was so effective and enduring that NASA sought its institutional paradigm shifting guidance after the Columbia and Challenger accidents.

Three million visitors a year visit ANC to Honor, Remember & Explore. A USS Thresher memorial on these hallowed grounds would be the ultimate honor we could bestow on the men lost and their loved ones, and it would allow many more beyond our community to learn how their enduring SUBSAFE legacy has contributed, and continues to contribute, to our Nation's defense.