

"Really diving into your work" *or Buffalo on the Buffalo...*

by MSC/SS Martin CJ Mongiello, CEC, CFE, CFPH

You hear it all the time. "Dive into your work, that's the best way to get anything done!" But, what if diving to the bottom of the ocean depths was part of your daily job in the kitchen? What if "going down under" was not a trip to Australia but rather a visit to Neptune's darkest realm and the bottom of the earth?

Recently, as a US Navy Chief and American Culinary Federation (ACF) member, I offered to show and explain what it is like. My target was Executive Chef Rick Scott of the world famous Tokyo American Club located in Tokyo, Japan. I offered to plunge Rick Scott deeper



into the Navy world of submarine kitchens and technology. I offered him the opportunity to go on a historic cruise with the underwater chefs of the USS Buffalo (SSN 715)!



Scott did the United States Navy one better... Knowing that the Navy encourages training and education with the ACF and other chefs he offered to work in the kitchen. I was elated and proposed a two-day journey into the Pacific Ocean with the cooks and chefs of the USS Buffalo. We were all set to go!

Pictured from left to right (standing) are Executive Chef Rick Scott of the Tokyo American Club, MSC/SS Mongiello, CEC, CFE, CFPH-Executive Chef for Commander Submarine Group Seven and the chefs of the USS Buffalo (SSN 715), MS1/SS Blanton, MS1/SS Vyhnanek, (seated back are) MS2/SS/SW Ferrer, MS3/SS Sylvia, (and forward are) MS3/SS Robenolt and MS3/SS Hults. Chef Scott discusses ideas with the chefs.

The day of our excursion came with Chef Scott arriving at my office which is located at Commander Submarine Group Seven in Yokosuka, Japan. Rick was greeted by everyone and spent some private introductory time with our Chief of Staff, Captain Ollie Oliver. Our "COS" went over

the contributions of the submarine force to America's fighting forces as well as some other interesting anecdotes. Rick was very upbeat and looking forward to the "astronaut-like" atmosphere. His allergies were bothering him a bit on land and he had heard that we made our own oxygen out of seawater. "Was it true that the atmosphere was purer onboard?" he asked. I promised him a clear nose for smelling the fresh hand made breads that would be baking in MS3/SS Sylvia's ovens all night long



During the trip we asked Executive Chef Scott to eat with the Officers in the dining room that the Navy calls a wardroom, on the mess decks with the Chiefs and crew and to taste and sample items in our galley (kitchen). The result exceeded all of our predictions and desires.

Rick started out with an excellent dinner of common submarine fare. Our first underway day was a Wednesday and I perused the menu with earnest! I jumped into my chef's coat and joined an eager MS2/SS/SW Ferrer in the boats galley. (Subs are called "boats" as in U-boat). Ferrer is a proud Filipino chef and quite skilled. Tonight he was in prime form. The menu called for Chicken Parmigian and he had wonderful boneless breasts lined up for tender dredging in his egg batter. Next he tossed them back and forth like Joe Frazier doing a "rope a dope" in boxing ring of a secret breading mixture. He took the extra step to grill them in light oil and



brown them. Many chefs skip that part. Next he showed me how to transfer them onto sheet pans for the final provolone cheese and red sauce dressing. Into the oven now for a quick "jolt," and just in time! MS1/SS Vyhnanek was calling for more-the crew was going crazy!

After dinner, Chef Scott sat in on an amazing briefing of upcoming operations. Later he spent time with the cooks and chefs saying hello and getting ready for the next day's work. LTJG Jeffries, the boats Supply Officer (or "CHOP") offered to take Chef Scott up to the control room so he could drive the USS Buffalo underwater. Rick was shocked. He was unsure if he could

Here the crew thanks Executive Chef Scott for his time aboard teaching America's young Navy chefs and cooks. From left to right are: the Chief of the Boat MMCS/SS Hibbs, Commanding Officer Robert Hennegan, Executive Chef Rick Scott of the Tokyo American Club, LCDR Nagaoka of the Japanese Fleet Submarine Force Staff and my supportive boss, Commander Submarine Group Seven, Rear Admiral Joseph J. Krol.

understand the myriad of dials and buttons let alone the yoke-like "stick" between his legs now. "This is like a jumbo jet cockpit" he uttered. With some tutoring from the smart crewmen of the Buffalo he was off driving and diving.

Later that the dark, coldness of of hot action chilly 24 hours a day. Navigation and the of the high way of life and more the highly intelligent leave their families for up to six months at a time.



The Submarine Enlisted
Dolphin Breast Insignia

night he would venture into the sonar room where stacks computer equipment are kept Stops at Fire Control, Torpedo Room showed more technology that protects our importantly-it showed Rick and friendly young men who

In my quest to share with a fellow chef our submarine force and it's chef's - I was successful. In my desire to see him impart knowledge and techniques, I hit the jackpot. Executive Chef Scott spent quality time with the Mess Management Specialists (that's "cook" or "chef" in the Navy) and further encouraged them to join in the Chef's Exchange Program upon their return. This program is known by many of you as the Adopt a Ship Program and has proven to be highly successful. When the USS Buffalo returns next to the country of Japan, I as an American Culinary Federation Chef, will be waiting on them. With friends like Rick Scott supporting the US Navy we'll see these young chefs working and learning as interns in his kitchens in Tokyo for a day or two.

It's free training for them and you. You help out your country; a young man and maybe his future will be brighter with a few techniques he learned from your place. I've received nothing but tremendous support on these projects from my Master Chief, Ray Atwood at Commander Submarine Pacific Fleet Headquarters in Hawaii. I can honestly say, that if you call the Navy about the Adopt a Ship program you'll get a wonderful, welcoming and friendly response. It's not everyday that we get a chance to perform on this level but we can perform. And yes, we can win at culinary salons and when our country asks us to win at war.

In the future of my golden years I'll but remember of my days at sea. Of days gone by and sea stories but made only in my experiences of when "we had Buffalo on the Buffalo."



Commander Submarine Force
Pacific, Rear Admiral Albert A.
Konetzni controls all US Navy
Submarines on this half of the
world.

USS BUFFALO SSN 715

"A CREWS RECIPE FOR SUCCESS"

*from the chefs onboard the nuclear powered submarine
while deployed to the Western Pacific Ocean 1999*



PAN SEARED MARINATED BUFFALO STUFFED W/VIDALIA ONIONS, SHITAKE MUSHROOMS AND BLACK TIGER PRAWNS

MARINADE INGREDIANTS:

2	Cups	Virgin Olive Oil
1/4	Cup	White Wine Vinegar
3/4	Teaspoon	Fresh ground Black Pepper
1/2	Teaspoon	Fresh ground White Pepper
1	Teaspoon	Fresh grated Garlic
1/2	Teaspoon	Fresh minced Thyme
1/2	Teaspoon	Fresh minced Oregano
2 1/2	Teaspoon	Mesquite BBQ Seasoning
1/4	Teaspoon	Tabasco Sauce
1/2	Teaspoon	Worcestershire
1/4	Teaspoon	Sea Salt
Pinch		Fresh minced Marjoram
1/2	Teaspoon	Onion Powder

MAIN INGREDIANTS:

2	12 Ounces	Buffalo Prime Rib Steaks, trimmed
1	Each	Yukon Gold Potato
8	Ounces	Shitake Mushrooms, sliced
1	Each	Vidalia Onions, cut in strips
1/4	Cup	2 % Milk
6	Ounces	Real Sour Cream
1/2	Pound	Honey Cured Bacon
1/4	Pound	Sharp Cheddar Cheese, shredded
1	Each	Orange and Yellow Bell Peppers, cubed small
1	Each	Green Poblano Pepper, cubed small
8	Each	Black tiger Prawns, peeled and cleaned

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1.) Trim the fat off of the Buffalo steaks and butterfly (like cutting a pocket in the side). Mix all marinade ingredients together and place the steaks inside of the marinade. Allow the steaks to marinate for 24 hours in the refrigerator.**
- 2.) The next day when you are ready to begin -- cook the bacon and drain it well on paper towels. Crumble into pieces after it is cool and set aside for later.**
- 3.) Place the potato in a preheated 350-degree oven and cook for about an hour or until soft inside. Check with a thin, small knife for doneness inside. When the potato is done you can cut it in half lengthwise and scoop out the center. Leave some potato to hold up the skin and structure of the potato. Do not scoop all the way down to the bare skin. That is a common mistake.**

With the hot potato scooping in a bowl now add the milk, sour cream, bacon and cheddar cheese and mix gently. Refill the potato and garnish on top with the small cubed peppers. When needed, heat up quickly in the Microwave and place the stuffed potato on the plate with the Buffalo steak.
- 4.) Sauté the mushrooms and onions in a touch of butter until translucent. Throw in the shrimp and pour a cup of the marinade over and reduce the liquid while simmering for a few minutes. This allows for the shrimp to get drunk on the marinade as well.**
- 5.) Grill the Buffalo steaks and stuff them with the mushroom, onion and shrimp mixture and plate. Place the stuffed potato next to it and garnish further with the small cubed peppers.**