

# United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base

## Minutes of Business Meeting

### 8 August 2019

#### Opening Ceremonies:

- The August 2019 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko with a quorum of four officers and a total of 81 members present. The meeting started at 1901 with the sound of the diving alarm.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Vice Commander Mike Tom Lawson and recited by the members in attendance.
- The Invocation and the Tolling of the Boats lost during the month of August was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols. Submarines lost during the month of August:
  - **USS Bullhead (SS-332) August 6, 1945 – 3rd War Patrol Lost with All Hands – 84 Souls**
  - **USS Flier (SS-250) August 13, 1944 – 2nd War Patrol Lost with 82 Souls – 8 men survived.**
  - **USS S-39 (SS-144) August 13, 1942 – 3rd War Patrol No loss of life**
  - **USS Harder (SS-257) August 24, 1944 – 6th War Patrol Lost with All Hands – 79 Souls**
  - **USS Cochino (SS-345) August 26, 1949 No Navy loss of life – one civilian loss – Tusk lost 6 souls during the rescue**
  - **FIVE Boats and 253 Men Lost**
- The USSVI Creed was read by Vice Commander Tom Lawson
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

#### Introductions of New Attendees:

- Two men were present at the Base meeting for the first time:
  - Robert (Bob) Browning – FTGC – Qualified on USS James K Polk SSBN645B – 1972 – Also served aboard USS Daniel Boone SSBN629, USS Woodrow Wilson SSBN624, USS Francis Scott Key SSBN657, SUBTRAFAC, FBMSTC, and USS Canopus AS34.
  - John Furst – LT – Qualified on USS Mariano G Vallejo SSBN658 – JUN 1974 – Also served aboard USS Von Steuben SSBN632 and USS Simon Lake AS33
  - Simon Bolivar SSBN641G and MTS635

#### Old Business:

- **None**

#### New Business:

- **UNDIE 500 – Rodney McKanna**
  - Rodney reminded everyone about the UNDIE 500 event for the next Base meeting. Please bring new unopened packages of underwear (men's and women's) to the September 12 Base meeting.

#### Secretary – Gordon Long:

- The Minutes from the July Base meeting have been published in the Base Newsletter and promulgated on the Base website. There were no other additions or deletions to the July Base meeting minutes. The minutes were approved.

#### Treasurer – Gordon Williams:

- The Treasurer's Report for July has been published and promulgated on the website. There were no additions or deletions. The report was approved.

#### Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

- **Highlighted boat of the month:**

While on her 3rd war patrol 72 years ago today, **USS S-39 (SS144)** was lost without loss of life after grounding on submerged rocks off Rossel Island, Papua New Guinea. The entire crew was able to get off and rescued by the HMAS Katoomba. The S-39 was abandoned and left to "break up" on the rocks.

On this day, 19 years ago, technology allowed to begin the raising of the H.L Hunley which was lost over a century ago. Since being recovered and delivered to a high tech lab designed for excavation and preservation, scientists have been in the process of unlocking her secrets and trying to learn why she mysteriously vanished in February 1864. This is the "Happy Hunley Recovery Day."

- There are several shipmates and family members who have given Nick information which they wish to be kept confidential at this time.
- **EMC(SS) Frederick 'Fred' Pennell Sr., USN Ret, WWII SUBVET**, age 95, departed on Eternal Patrol on July 16<sup>th</sup>. His service was held on July 22<sup>nd</sup> with 15 Charleston Base members present. He qualified on USS CERO SS-225 in 1943 and served on TORO SS-422, CREVALLE SS-291 and AMBERJACK II SS-522. Not a USSVI member. Online condolence sent. I was asked by the family to speak on behalf of submariners and I asked that those base members, who could, please attend. He was a WWII Submariner with 4 war patrols and 7 enemy ships sunk on those patrols. We gave him the standard bell tolling service. He was not a USSVI member. Online condolence sent.
- **John Johnson, age 77**, departed on Eternal Patrol June 29<sup>th</sup>. He was known as "Jack", "Big Jack", or "Mr. J". He served in USS Torsk (SS-423) and as UDT. Not a USSVI member. Online condolence sent.
- **TMC(SS) William Wilcox, US Navy Retired**, age 75, departed on eternal patrol July 15<sup>th</sup>. He served on the RAY SSN 653. Not a USSVI member. Online condolence sent.
- **George Gallagher** had his MRI. He has the results of the MRI but can't read it. Its five pages and it may as well be Greek. He is waiting for them to give me an appointment so we can plan my next move. More as it develops.
- **Bob Snyder** is home with palliative care. He would like to talk to you so give him a call. His cell #: 843.412.2530. He has been able to show up at the After Battery. If there is anyone living in his area he would like to have a ride to the base meeting if possible?
- **Don Londergan** is in Room 136 at Cypress Place. His phone number is now 843-990-3938.
- **Bob & Kathleen Ingebretson** have moved to Cumming GA, northeast of Atlanta. He said it was not easy to move but they are now settled. I sent him the info for the Atlanta Base and his comment was: As for the base here they meet in Lawrenceville and with traffic here it could be a pain. At any rate with all we are doing right now I have been too busy to check them out, they will never measure up to the Charleston Base though I am sure. I will definitely stop in when back in the area.
- **Ken Curtis** was planning to attend tonight but he received a call from the VA to inform him that he was scheduled for ANOTHER EGD (endoscopy) today at 1100. That makes nine (9) he has had this year. Told me he's now on a first name basis with the nurses and doctors in the lab. Just keep him in prayer. He has retired from his DAV work at the VA Clinic due to many doctors' appointments he could not continue to be there on a regular basis.
- **Ron Chambers** has been in the hospital a couple of times since in the last couple of months. He's at the meeting tonight.
- **Jim Higgins** will be having back surgery on August 29.
- Please complete your page 2 if you have not done so.

#### **Webmaster – Nick Nichols:**

- Website is constantly updated.
- Make use of the EVENTS page on the Charleston Base website. All events that are put out to the membership via email will be listed and updated on the events page.
- Pictures will now be on the USSVI National website.

#### **Submarine Veterans of WWII – George Sharf:**

- We recognized Stacy Power here tonight.
- Stacy said that his hat got him a free haircut.

**Social Media – Nick Nichols for Lewis Leal:**

- If any member has anything that you would like posted onto the Base Facebook page, send Lou an email [social@ussvicb.org](mailto:social@ussvicb.org).

**Kaps for Kids – Bill Kennedy**

- The next Kaps for Kids visit will be at McLeod Hospital in Florence on Tuesday, August 13.
- A visit to Shriner's Hospital in Greenville is scheduled for Monday, October 7 at 1000. This trip will involve staying overnight. The group will be staying at Baymont Inn & Suites \$85 per night.
- Bill has contacted Summerville Medical Center about visits to the pediatric
- Bill has enough coloring books and crayons for the McLeod trip but he is starting to run out of both of these.

**Membership – Larry Knutson**

- The Base currently has 281 members.
- Annual Dues will start to be accepted in October. National dues are \$25 – Charleston Base dues are \$15.

**VA – Tom Lawson**

- The VA is looking for volunteers and are especially in need of drivers.
- Tom asked the membership if they would like to have an eligibility specialist attend the Base meeting. He received significant positive response, so he will follow up on this.
- A Base member mentioned that the VA is willing to pay for urgent care.

**Scholarship – Carl Chinn**

- The committee will be having a raffle tonight. It is a package of items containing:
  - A one-year gun range membership from ATP Gunshop
  - An ATP polo style shirt.
  - An ATP baseball cap.
  - An 8 LED flashlight.
  - A container of tannerite explosive target powder.
- Tickets for the raffle are \$1 or six for \$5.
- Challenge coins are available.
- The committee has some other items, including some USS George Bancroft objects, which were donated by Jenny Viering available for purchase. The prices for these vary. Please see Carl or Marty.

**Special Events – Rick Sparger**

- Rick has received permission from Short Stay to bring the float over Labor Day. We need people to attend and answer questions that folks may have.
- Rick was asked to announce that there will be a USS Thresher Memorial dedication ceremony at Arlington on September 26 at 1600.

**CRAMA – Butch Bryar**

- Still waiting on State to see if the case will be accepted.
- The marina at Patriot's Point is – in fact – owned by Patriot's Point.

**NPS – Ray Sparks**

- Nothing to Report

**Fleet Reserve Association – Larry Guthrie for Skip Chilton**

- There are two men who will be receiving a 45-year FRA membership pin. One of them is 96 years old.
- There will be a golf tournament on September 14. There will be a Prime Rib Dinner at the FRA afterward.

**Public Affairs – Jerry Stout**

- Not Present

**Newsletter – Rick Wise**

- Nothing to Report

### **Recreation – Ed Stank**

- Nothing to Report

### **Storekeeper – Ken Hutchison**

- Nothing to Report as Storekeeper.

### **COB – Joe Lunn**

- COB encouraged everyone to go see the H.L. Hunley exhibit.
- Larry Guthrie asked those who want to go to see him after the meeting.

### **Vice Commander – Tom Lawson**

- The Chief Selectee Breakfast will be Wednesday, 28 August at 0600 at the Cracker Barrel in North Charleston. All SubVet Chiefs are invited to attend.

### **Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko.**

- Nothing to Report

### **Good of the Order**

#### **After Battery – Ray Sparks**

- The After Battery is open every Wednesday.

#### **Gun Club – Mike Ciesielko**

- Mike is going to organize a shoot for September. Normally will meet at FRA 0815, then caravan to the location.
- Bring your own guns, ammo and paper targets.

#### **Nuclear Historian – Rick Carlson**

- It seems the USSVI and FRA are having retention and membership application problems. I can't do anything about the retention; the old guys are going to die sooner or later. All we can do is pray for them and hope that their dues are paid up. I would like to address the new membership and present some exciting ideas. Ever noticed how everything is "exciting"? If we were out in Kansas, where Dorothy is from, you don't see many submarine sailors, but we live in Charleston – the home of the Naval Nuclear Power Training Center. All those nuclear trained personnel – some of which – are qualified. So, ours is a sailor-rich environment. BUT!! This presents a different problem than New London or Norfolk or San Diego or Bremerton. Why, you ask? The nuclear trained personnel are used to the better things in life – and more expensive. So their enticements are a bit more expensive. I guess that is why American Express has the statement, "Membership has its rewards. If we were in New London, we'd be able to give a guy a couple of beers and BOOM! He'd join. But here, our standards are different. The new guys demand choices. So how about a \$100,000 lifetime bonus OR a new \$80,000 car OR a new house – without wheels. Maybe some other items. Advertise (dolphins on your vehicle, sign in the back window or on the tailgate of your truck, home, pocket cards you pass out. Why do I say advertise? I happened to be in Denmark. South Carolina – that is. We had dinner at Blackville – at Miller's Bread Basket. When I stopped in Denmark, I came out to find a little yellow sticky on my car saying, "I'm a Navy Brat. My Dad was a submariner. Where did you find that sticker? Go NAVY! Thanks." It also had the lady's phone number and her name. They may demand a ham at Easter; a turkey at Thanksgiving; a ham and turkey at Christmas; maybe we could give away free FRA tickets at all meetings. We could forgive their NNPTC education loans. Free healthcare while in the military, except for what they pay for Tri-Care. Free phone and phone cards. A free chicken in every pot. Give away free, historically correct superseded uniforms for the past year. A free wheelbarrow to take home your reenlistment bonuses. Why not? The national debt is at \$22 trillion dollars and moving up. We are always open to other great ideas. Please contribute.

#### **Drawings & Auctions**

- FRA Drawing – Nick Nichols

- SCHOLARSHIP ATP Drawing – Rick Sparger
- SCHOLARSHIP Consolation Prize – Larry Knutson
- Depth Charge – Larry Pepper

#### **Closing Ceremony**

- Chaplain Nick Nichols led the group in a prayer of Benediction.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko announced adjournment of the meeting followed by three blasts on the diving alarm.
- The meeting was closed at 1953.