

United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base

Minutes of Business Meeting

11 February 2021

Opening Ceremonies:

- The February 2021 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko with a quorum of three officers and a total of 49 members. The meeting started at 1900 with the sound of the diving alarm. Vice Commander Tom Lawson was not present.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Base Commander Mike Ciesielko and recited by the members in attendance.
- The Invocation and the Tolling of the Boats lost during the month of January was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols.
- Submarines lost during the month of February:
 - **USS BARBEL (SS-316)** February 4, 1945 – 4th War Patrol Lost with all hands – 81 souls
 - **USS SHARK 1 (SS-174)** February 11, 1942 – 1st War Patrol Lost with all hands – 59 souls
 - **USS AMBERJACK (SS-219)** February 16, 1943 – 3rd War Patrol Lost with all hands – 72 souls
 - **USS GRAYBACK (SS-208)** February 27, 1944 – 10th War Patrol Lost with all hands – 80 souls
 - **USS TROUT (SS-202)** February 29, 1944 – 11th War Patrol Lost with all hands – 81 souls
 - **5 Boats and 373 Men Lost**
 - **H.L. HUNLEY** February 17, 1864 Lost with all hands – 8 souls
- **Senior Chief Quartermaster, Submarines, Gerald L. Farr, US Navy Retired – Departed on Eternal Patrol January 24, 2021**
- **Second Class Petty Officer Fire Control Technician Ballistic, Submarines, Richard H. Stevenson, US Navy - Departed on Eternal Patrol January 24, 2021**
- **Chief Electronics Technician, Submarines, Joseph M. Kosater, US Navy Retired – Departed on Eternal Patrol February 3, 2021**
- **Senior Chief Quartermaster, Submarines, Dennis W. Fuqua, US Navy Retired – Departed on Eternal Patrol February 7, 2021**
- The USSVI Creed was read by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko welcomed members to the meeting.

Introductions of New Attendees:

- No new guests here tonight

Old Business:

- None

New Business:

- None

Secretary – Gordon Long:

- The Minutes from the January Base meeting were published in the Base Newsletter and promulgated on the Base Website. No additions or changes were noted. The Minutes were approved as written.

Treasurer – Base Commander for Gordon Williams:

- The Treasurer's Report for January was published and promulgated on the website. There were no changes and was accepted as published.

Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

- **Highlighted boat of the month:**
 - AMBERJACK was lost on February 16, 1943 with the loss of 72 officers and men on her third war patrol. While off the coast of Babaul, she was attacked by a Japanese patrol plane, attacked by a torpedo boat and then depth charged by a subchaser. One additional man was killed earlier on the last patrol.

- There are several shipmates and family members who have given me information which they wish to be kept confidential at this time.
- **QMC(SS) Gerald 'Jerry' L. Farr, USN Retired**, 87, departed on Eternal Patrol on Jan. 24. His funeral service was on Jan. 31 with a good number of Charleston Base members attending. He joined the Navy in 1952 and retired in 1975, was a Life Member of USSVI National, Life Member of Charleston Base, the Holland Club and Life Member of FRA Branch 269. He qualified on SEA OWL SS-405 in 1963 and served on DANIEL WEBSTER SSBN-626 and MARIANO G. VALLEJO SSBN-658. He also served at COMNAVFOR MARIANAS GUAM, NAVAL TRAINING COMMAND GREAT LAKES IL and NTC SAN DIEGO CA. A note of condolence from Charleston Base has been placed on the funeral home website.
- **ETC(SS) Joseph M. Kosater, USN Retired**, 71, departed on Eternal Patrol on Feb. 3 at Trident Hospital. His burial will be at a later date. Joe joined the Navy in 1973 and retired in 1993. He was a member of USSVI National and Charleston Base. He qualified on USS HADDOCK SSN-621 in 1974. He also served on POLLACK SSN-603, NARWHAL SSN-671 and GUITARRO SSN-665. My original email listed him as a former member but was in error according to National.
- **FTB2(SS) Richard H. Stevenson, USN Retired**, 77, departed on Eternal Patrol on Jan. 24. His services will be held in Colorado. Dick joined the Navy in 1961 and left in 1968. He was a Member of USSVI National [2007], Member of Charleston Base [2014], and a Holland Club member. He qualified on USS SAM HOUSTON SSBN/SSN-609 in 1964
- **QMCS(SS) Dennis W. Fuqua, USN Retired**, 74, departed on Eternal Patrol on Feb. 7. IAW his wishes there will not be a funeral service. Frenchy joined the Navy in 1964 and retired in 1989. He was a Life Member of USSVI National, member of Charleston Base, member of Bonefish Base, member of the Holland Club, and a member of the FRA Branch 269. He qualified on USS BREAM SS/SSK/AGSS-243 in 1968. He also served on RONQUIL SS-396, SEGUNDO SS-398, VOLADOR SS-490 and BONEFISH SS-582.
- **LT Bernard C. Krafsig, USN Retired**, departed on Eternal Patrol on Jan. 8 in Mount Pleasant. He served on the Benjamin Franklin SSBN as the Supply Officer. He was not a member of USSVI.
- **CAPT John F. Jordan, USN Retired**, departed on Eternal Patrol on Jan. 28 in Aiken. He qualified on LEWIS AND CLARK SSBN644 in 1966, served for 27 years in a number of submarines and was the CO of USS Mendel L. Rivers. He also served at many shore stations and was COMSUBRON 4 Commodore 1987-1988. He was a member of USSVI and Naval Submarine League.
- **Ronny Vandiver** is out of ICU at SMC and in a regular room. When he is more stable he will start rehab but not sure where.
- **Ray Bryant** has been down with his back since 20 January. He went in on 3 Feb for lumbar injection. MRI shows L2, 3, 4, and S1 bulging discs. L5 herniated and mashing on sciatic nerve.
- **Gene Weir** continues his cancer treatments. He started Chemo and pills in September 2020 and has treatments every four weeks. Don't know how many more he has to do. Things are going well with very little side effects from the Chemo. He thanks everybody for their prayers. They do work. Don't know when he will be able to attend a meeting.
- **Don Ort** had heart surgery on December 15th to correct heart blockages and heart valve. Don drove his truck for the first time on Tuesday. He starts cardiac rehab on Monday. Things are moving along.
- **Bill Jennings** was in the hospital mid-January after falling while at church. He is home and on the mend.
- **Rodney McKanna** is 5 weeks out from his knee surgery. No cane and is now driving.
- **George Burton** is undergoing treatment for lung cancer. His most recent scans show great improvement.
- **Bob Snyder** is home with palliative care. He would like to come to our meetings if someone can drive him from Mt. Pleasant and back.
- Please complete/update your page 2 if you have not done so. Of all the Eternal Patrol this reporting period, no one had a page 2 on file.

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. Please take a look at your profile on the National site and update it if needed. Many have missing info.

Submarine Veterans of WWII – Mike Emerson for George Scharf:

- We gladly recognized Stacy Power here tonight for the second month in a row.

Social Media – Lewis Leal:

- We are attempting to record the Base meeting tonight. If the quality is good enough, it will be uploaded.

Kaps for Kids – Mike Emerson

- Nothing to report.

Membership – Larry Knutson

- We now have 263 Charleston Base Members after USSVI National removed members from the list for non-payment of dues. Charleston Base ranks third in membership behind Groton and Hampton Roads.

VA – Tom Lawson

- Not present

Scholarship – Carl Chinn

- As of tonight, the Scholarship Fund has just short of \$6,000. This does not include the shotgun raffle, which will happen at the end of the meeting tonight.
- There are three hats donated – Nautilus, Pennsylvania and SubBase New London.
- There is a box of books and other submarine related items on the table. Take something and make a donation to the scholarship fund.
- We received a very generous donation of \$1,000 from John Lookabil to get next year's Scholarship Fund underway. Thank you John!
- Carl introduced his son, who is a U.S. Navy Captain. He has been here before and it was good to see him again.

Special Events – Rick Sparger

- There are no immediate plans for parade entries, but we would like to pull the float earlier this year and not wait until Christmas.
- We plan to present a letter of thanks to the young lady who was so helpful for us to get into the Goose Creek parade.

CRAMA – Butch Bryar

- We were supposed to have a meeting with the SC Governor, LT Governor, Treasurer and Attorney General but it was cancelled. A new meeting should be scheduled next month.
- We are still waiting on the judge's ruling. The courts are backlogged.
- Butch encouraged all who have not joined CRAMA, to do so in order to help save the Clamagore.

Nuclear Power School – Rick Wise for Ray Sparks

- The date for the next NPS graduation is February 26. They sent invitations out for this event, but did not say where it will be held.
- Two performance awards from Charleston Base SubVets will be provided to the top officer and enlisted submarine designated individuals.

Fleet Reserve Association – Rick Sparger

- The FRA has no current activities on the schedule. Nothing to report.
- Stacy Power reported that the 65 year FRA pin presented at the last USSVI Charleston Base meeting was the only acknowledgment that he received. Directly from the FRA, he received nothing.

Recreation – Bill Hayes

- We are still trying to get a spaghetti dinner on the schedule. It looks as if March 6 will not happen. Rick Sparger explained that if the FRA holds a pool tournament on that day, the kitchen will be in full use and unavailable to us. In fact, most days other than a Sunday, the kitchen is usually busy. Rick suggested that we find another location.

Newsletter – Ed Stank

- Ed has relieved Rick Wise as Newsletter Editor.

Storekeeper – Ken Hutchison

- Nothing to Report

Comptroller – Rick Wise

- The approved Charleston Base annual budget is available on the Base website.

HUNLEY/HOUSATONIC – HARRY NETTLES

- The February 17 Hunley/Housatonic ceremony is cancelled. For all of those who volunteered to be presenters – Thank You!

Public Affairs – Ed Stank

- Last month we presented Stacy Power an award for 65 years as FRA member. Ed has submitted an article to American Submariner and FRA. He has received an acknowledgment back from American Submariner but has yet to hear from the Fleet Reserve.

COB – Rick Sparger (Acting)

- Rick reminded everyone to lock your cars when you are parked at the FRA. Recently an individual had opened one of the cars and was going through it. His current whereabouts are unknown.

Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko

- As everyone can see, schedule changes occur frequently and often at the last minute, so please keep up with your emails. We will keep up with the changes as best that we can.

Good of the Order**Nuclear Historian – Rick Carlson**

- Not present

Prescriptions – Rick Sparger

- There was a computer problem at Naval Health Clinic and the Air Force base causing several days of shutdown. [Secretary's Note: This should be corrected long before publication of the Minutes.]

After Battery – Ray Sparks

- The Hog Roast originally scheduled for April 2021 has been cancelled. Perhaps 2022 will be a better year for the annual event to be held.
- The August event in New London is still on schedule but the area up there is still locked down.

Gun Club – Mike Ciesielko

- Nothing to report

Can Tabs – Nick Nichols

- Nick asked everyone to collect aluminum can tabs for a project that his church is involved in.

Friends of the Hunley – Lindsay Nelson

- Lindsay reminded everyone of the items received as thanks for the support to Friends of the Hunley. Our Storekeeper Ken Hutchison has these items available for sale. Since Charleston Base already paid for the membership, money generated will go directly back to the Base General Fund.

Drawings & Auctions

- Finally, after several months of the Challenge Coin Door Prize drawing, using a random number chosen for the sign-in sheet, Rick Kiley was the winner of the bottle of bourbon.

- Our Base Chaplain, Nick Nichols was asked to pull a ticket for the shotgun. Gene Williams was the name written on the ticket. Our Base Treasurer Gordon (Willy) Williams produced the matching ticket stub for verification. Congratulations Willy. [Secretary's Note: Following the close of the meeting, Carl and Willy completed paperwork noting transfer of the shotgun.]
- FRA – winner not identified.
- Depth Charge – Ken Lutz – donated \$52 to the Scholarship fund.

Closing Ceremony

- Chaplain Nick Nichols led the group in a prayer of Benediction.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko announced adjournment of the meeting with three blasts of the diving alarm.
- Meeting closed at 1946.