

# United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base

## Minutes of Business Meeting

### 12 May 2022

#### Opening Ceremonies:

- The May 2022 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko with a quorum of four officers and a total of 52 members. The meeting started at 1900 with the sound of the diving alarm.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Vice Commander Tom Lawson and recited by the members in attendance.
- The Invocation and the Tolling of the Boats lost during the month of May was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols.
- Submarines lost during the month of May:
  - **USS LAGARTO (SS-371) May 3, 1945 – 2<sup>nd</sup> War patrol Lost with All Hands – 86 Souls**
  - **USS SCORPION (SSN-589) May 22, 1968 – returning from deployment  
Lost with All Hands – 99 Souls**
  - **USS SQUALUS (SS-192) May 23, 1939 – during test dive 33 survivors – 26 Souls Lost**
  - **USS STICKLEBACK (SS-415) May 30, 1958 – under tow off Hawaii NO LOSS OF LIFE**
  - **FOUR Boats and 211 Men Lost**

**Master Chief Electricians Mate, Submarines  
James David Williams, U.S. Navy Retired  
Departed on Eternal Patrol on April 15, 2022**

- The Creed of USSVI was read by Vice Commander Tom Lawson.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

#### Introductions of New Attendees:

- No first-time guests here tonight

#### Old Business:

- **Nominations** – Ken Hutchison
  - Ken requested final nominations for Vice Commander and Secretary with no additional members called for these offices. Both VC and SEC retained positions by acclamation.

#### New Business:

- Tom Lawson and Gordon Long were sworn in for another two-year term for the offices of Vice Commander and Secretary respectively.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko read awards presented by the Southeast Regional District Commander to Ed Stank and Charleston Base.
- Vice Commander Tom Lawson read an award to Base Commander Mike Ciesielko from the District Commander for his recruiting efforts.

#### Secretary – Gordon Long:

- The Minutes from the April Base meeting have been emailed directly to the Base membership and had been promulgated on the Base Website. No additions or deletions were noted. The April Base Meeting Minutes were approved.

#### Treasurer – Ricky Collins:

- The Treasurer's Report for April was published and promulgated on the website. There were no additions or deletions. The report was approved as presented.

## Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

- Highlighted boat of the month:
  - **USS Squalus SS-192** was lost on **May 23, 1939** after suffering a catastrophic valve failure during a test dive off the Isle of Shoals. Partially flooded, the submarine sank to the bottom and came to rest keel down in 240 feet of water. Commander Charles Momsen and Navy divers on the USS Falcon (ASR-2) rescued 33 survivors using the diving bell he invented. 26 men drowned in the after compartments. Later Squalus was raised and recommissioned as the USS Sailfish. In an ironic turn of fate, Sailfish sank the Japanese aircraft carrier carrying surviving crew members from Sculpin, which had located Squalus in 1939. Only one of the Sculpin crew survived after spending the rest of the war as slave laborers in Japan.
- There are several shipmates and family members who have given me information which they wish to be kept confidential at this time.
- **EMCM(SS) Jim Williams** departed on EP on Friday, April 15 at home in Goose Creek. Jim joined the Navy in 1960 and retired in 1992. He was a Life Member of both USSVI [1998] & Charleston Base [1998], a member of the Holland Club, a member the Fleet Reserve Association Branch 269 and a member of the American Legion Post 0166. Jim qualified on USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN SSBN602 in 1964 and served on GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER SSBN656, L. MENDEL RIVERS SSN686 as COB, THOMAS JEFFERSON SSBN/SSN628 as COB and STURGEON SSN637 as COB. He served on shore duty at NMCRSta New Orleans LA, Recruit Training Command Orlando FL and Commander Squadron Four Squadron Master Chief. His service was held on April 21<sup>st</sup> with a large number of SUBVETS, FRA members, family and friends present with standing room only.
- **Trish Stanley, Mike Emerson's daughter**, passed away on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Her service was held on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- **Joyce Harden, widow of Jack Harden EP Feb. 2019**, passed away on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Her service was held on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- **Congratulations to new Grandpa James Graham Sr.** Louis Dewey Amay Graham was born at MUSC on May 2<sup>nd</sup> at 0218. 9 lb, 12 oz, 23.2 inches. He is the son of James Graham Jr. and Richelle Amay Graham. Son, parents and granddad are all doing well.
- **Larry Rosselot** sent this final report on my surgery: The surgery took place on May 10th almost as planned. We had a two hour wait past the scheduled time of the surgery. This was caused by the hospital schedule overflow. We arrived so 0900 for an 1130 surgery time. The surgery did not start till 2pm (1400). Very taxing on our patience. I arrived in recovery about 4:15 (1615). All went well and received over 100 prayer responses. These prayers were responsible for this success. I had very little sleep that night with all the wake-up's for vitals. Plenty of time to pray. Yes, I had a sleep over till today. Today was filled with follow ups and advice with instructions. We were able to get home by 1 O'clock and have got reorganized to support 15-25 minute walks along with naps and no more than 20-30 minutes sitting in a chair. We are both tired and I have some very low pain. I am to wear a back brace all the time I'm not in bed. (I can have 5 minutes without the brace for a bathroom stop. My first post-op visit with the surgeon is May 19 or 20. So far, no talk about follow-up PT. I seriously wish to thank all of the prayer warriors for your gracious prayers. You have made this a very successful surgery. I pray for each of you for your prayers for me. God bless each of you many times over.
- **Tom Skorepa** had his lung biopsy on the 3rd. Don Ort stopped in to see Tom Skorepa on Tuesday at Trident Medical Center. He looked really good. His wife and daughter were there. He had a surgical biopsy on his lung and a lymph node removed. He had a drain tube in and they planned to watch him overnight and release him some time Wednesday. They are waiting for the pathology report to be sure of the diagnosis.
- **Bill Kennedy** reported he has cancer in his right lung but don't know what kind. A sample was sent off to University of Michigan and they don't know either. He is taking radiation to reduce the size of the cancer and to help with the pain. The mass is 5in x 3in. Does have some pills to help with the pain.
- **Ed Stank** was in an accident on April 26 and his truck was totaled. They had to cut the roof off to get him out. After being checked out in the ER he was sent home the next day. A little stiff and sore but he is still with us.
- **Herb Anderson** was in the hospital (Georgetown) with polymorphic ventricular tachycardia [unstable heart rhythm in early-April. He was moved to MUSC the middle of April. He is now home recovering and feeling better each day.

- **Rodney McKanna** got home from the hospital on April 21<sup>st</sup> with a PIK line for antibiotics. He will be on them until May 11<sup>th</sup>. Full leg brace until the 27<sup>th</sup>.
- **Bob Gay** has been diagnosed with cancer and has begun his chemo.
- **Beetle Bailey** had hand surgery on April 14<sup>th</sup> due to tingling in his hands.
- **Don Londergan** is still in Cypress Place on Midland Pkwy in room 136.
- **Gene Weir** continues his cancer treatments.
- **Bob Snyder** is still with palliative care.
- Complete/update 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. Please take a look at your profile on the National site and update it if needed. Many have missing info.
- **Widows and email info.** When a CB SUBVET departs on EP his widow/family are asked if they wish to continue receiving emails and info from the base. If they agree they will receive info until 1) they request it to stop or 2) they discontinue the email in use.
- **'NEW' USSVI National Website.** It appears progress is being made for the new website. At least things are moving in that direction.

#### **Social Media – Lewis Leal:**

- Regarding the public videos, please make sure to give them a “Thumbs Up” as this will cause the algorithm to put the video at the top of a search.

#### **Submarine Veterans of WWII – Mike Ciesielko for Mike Emerson:**

- Stacy Power is here tonight along with his son Casey. We are glad to see both of them this evening.

#### **Kaps for Kids – Mike Emerson**

- Not present.

#### **Membership – Larry Knutson**

- We currently have 267 Charleston Base Members.
- Nick Nichols provided Base standings: Groton – 1159; Hampton Roads – 272; Charleston – 267; Bremerton – 254; Requin – 191; San Diego – 172

#### **National Awards – Mike Ciesielko for Mike Knaub**

- Mike Knaub has assumed the post of National Awards Chair for Charleston Base.

#### **VA – TOM LAWSON**

- Nothing to report

#### **Scholarship – Carl Chinn**

- The balance in the Scholarship Fund is \$9,400.
- The raffle for a large set of powder coated dolphins will be drawn at the end of the meeting tonight.
- Challenge coins are available. There are drawings which can only be won if you have the Challenge coin.
- We will be holding a rummage sale in November.

#### **Special Events – Rick Sparger**

- The Armed Forces Day ceremony will be at the Air Force Base picnic grounds on Saturday, May 21. We will bring the float and set it up as a static display. We will need some men in vests to attend it and answer questions.

**Fleet Reserve Association – Rick Sparger**

- The FRA has dinner available on Saturday.

**Recreation – Rick Sparger**

- The picnic originally planned for June 4 has been cancelled since no one offered to lead it.

**CRAMA – Butch Bryar**

- There has been no ruling from the judge in the case.
- There have been reports of parts being stripped off of Clamagore to be used on other submarine displays around the country. Butch noted that it is a violation to remove any parts from a ship in litigation. Lindsay Nelson noted that an injunction may need to be filed to stop any further cannibalization of material.

**Nuclear Power School – Rick Wise for Ray Sparks**

- The next NPS graduation is Friday May 27 at 0800. Muster at Exchange parking lot to carpool because of limited parking.

**Newsletter – Ed Stank**

- The Base Newsletter was published yesterday.

**Public Affairs – Ed Stank**

- Articles for the Amberjack ceremony and the Holland Club Induction will be submitted to American Submariner.
- Ed is planning to write an article about the Memorial Day ceremony, so please attend this event.

**Storekeeper – Woody Woodsmall**

- Nothing to report.

**COB – Rick Sparger**

- Requested information about the subscription to American Submariner for NNPTC. Nick Nichols will provide.
- We need some help to clean up the float for the Armed Forces Day event.
- Rick Wise thanked COB for the communication with NNPTC as the active duty turnout from the nuclear power school to the Amberjack Ceremony was terrific.

**Vice Commander – Tom Lawson**

- With NNPTC attendance, this was the best turnout we have had for the Amberjack Ceremony.

**Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko**

- A large set of dolphins had been donated to Charleston Base. Mike requested that they be given to the Scholarship committee. Those in attendance were in favor of this action.

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

- Not present.

**Non-Nuclear Historian – Harry Nettles**

- Not present.

**After Battery – Rick Wise for Ray Sparks**

- Nothing to report

**Gun Club – Mike Ciesielko**

- Nothing to report

**Drawings & Auctions**

- Scholarship Dolphins – Don Ort
- Scholarship “Nuclear Waste” – Stacy Power would have won, but did not have a Challenge coin. It will be held until next meeting.
- FRA Drawing – Julian Villegas
- Depth Charge Drawing – Bill Roup

**Closing Ceremony**

- Chaplain Nick Nichols led the group in a prayer of Benediction.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko announced adjournment of the meeting.
- Vice Commander Tom Lawson sounded three blasts of the diving alarm.
- Meeting closed at 1957.