

United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base

Minutes of Business Meeting

11 August 2022

Opening Ceremonies:

- The August 2022 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko with a quorum of three officers and a total of 54 members. The meeting started at 1900 with the sound of the diving alarm. Secretary Gordon Long was absent this evening.
- 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 July 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**

Chief Torpedoman, Submarines
Simon Peter Przyborowski, U.S. Navy Retired
World War II SUBVET
Departed on Eternal Patrol on August 6, 2021

Chief Mess Specialist, Submarines
Emmett Leroy 'Lee' Rackley, U.S. Navy Retired
Departed on Eternal Patrol July 14, 2022

Master Chief Machinist Mate, Submarines
Newell T. 'Soupy' Campbell, U.S. Navy Retired
Departed on Eternal Patrol on August 3, 2022

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

GUEST SPEAKER: Pat Suckow – Fleet Reserve National Ladies Auxiliary

- Pat spoke briefly about K9s For Warriors. This group trains service dogs for disabled combat veterans.
- There will be a barbeque dinner at the FRA on September 24 to benefit K9s For Warriors.

Introductions of New Attendees:

- One man was present at the Base meeting for the first time:
 - Bill Schroeder – QM1 – Qualified on USS L Mendel Rivers SSN-686 in 1978

Old Business:

- None

New Business:

- None

Secretary – Mike Ciesielko for Gordon Long:

- The Minutes from the July 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 July Base Meeting Minutes were approved.

Treasurer – Ricky Collins:

- The Treasurer's Report for July 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:
 - While on her 2nd war patrol **USS FLIER SS250** was lost with the loss of 78 crew members. Flier was transiting on the surface when she was rocked by a massive explosion (probably a mine) and sank within less than a minute. 13 survivors, some injured, made it into the water and swam to shore. 8 survived and 6 days later friendly natives guided them to a Coast Watcher and they were evacuated by the USS Redfin.
- There are several shipmates and family members who have given me information which they wish to be kept confidential at this time.
- **TMC(SS) Simon Peter Przyborowski, USN Ret., 100**, departed on Eternal Patrol on August 6, 2021. Simon joined the Navy in 1942 and retired in 1963, making him a WWII Submarine Veteran. He was a life member of SVWWII, USSVI & Charleston Base [2008] and a member of the Holland Club. Simon qualified on USS BALAO IN 1943 and rode her through 9 patrols. He also served on USS REMORA SS-487 as well as a member of a Sub Relief Crew in 1945. No one in CB was made aware of his passing and I cannot find an obituary in the paper. Bill Roberts happened to come across Simson's headstone picture and notified me on Aug 4th.
- **MSC(SS) Emmett Leroy 'Lee' Rackley, USN Ret., 83**, departed on Eternal Patrol on July 14. Lee joined the Navy in 1958 and retired in 1989. He was a USSVI & Charleston Base member, a member of the Holland Club, a member the Fleet Reserve Association Branch 269 and the Dorchester Shrine Club. Lee qualified on USS BLUEBACK SS-581 in 1962, and served on USS STONEWALL JACKSON SSBN-634, USS THOMAS A. EDISON SSBN/SSN-610 and USS LAFAYETTE SSBN-616. A note of condolence from Charleston Base was placed on the funeral home website. A memorial service will be held at the FRA on August 24 at 1400.
- **MMCM(SS) Newell T. 'Soupy' Campbell, USN Ret., 81**, departed on Eternal Patrol on August 3 in Cherokee NC. Soupy joined the Navy in 1958 and retired in 1987. He was a life member of USSVI & Charleston Base [2006], and a member of the Holland Club. Soupy served on the USS CONSTITUTION IX-21 early in his Navy career. He qualified on USS TRUMPETFISH SS-425 in 1960, and served on USS CLAMAGORE SS-343, USS THOMAS JEFFERSON SSBN/SSN-618, USS VON STEUBEN SSBN-632, USS LAFAYETTE SSBN-616, USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT SSBN-600, USS TECUMSEH SSBN-628, USS HENRY L. STIMSON SSBN-655 COB, USS JOHN C. CALHOUN SSBN-630 COB, USS MARIANO G. VALLEJO SSBN-658 COB, USS HENRY CLAY SSBN-625 and also on USS FRANK CABLE AS-40. A note of condolence from Charleston Base was placed on the funeral home website. CB participated in a bell tolling service yesterday, August 10th with 30 SUBVETS and wives in attendance.
- **RMCS(SS) George Frank Fuchs, USN Ret., 80**, departed on Eternal Patrol on June 30, 2022 in FL. He was laid to rest on Aug. 3, 2022 with an honor guard at Sarasota National Cemetery. George had been a member of USSVI and Charleston Base and a Holland Club member prior to his move to FL in 2019. He was not a member of USSVI at the time of his passing. He qualified on USS JAMES MADISON SSBN-237 in 1968. No obituary could be found for him. His wife, Helene, posted the notice of his passing on our Facebook page as a comment for Soupy Campbell's passing.
- **Stacy Power, 95**, was in Roper Hospital being treated for one of several issues that is causing his body to retain water and causing him heart and kidney issues. His condition was very serious and had complications. They drained over 3 gallons of water from his abdomen during the time he was there. Kitty got him home on Monday, 8 August and he is having home health doing his rehab.
- **John Camp, 88, [as reported by Michael Cousino]** has had a difficult past few months. His mental and physical health has declined to the point where doctors have indicated he needs 24/7 care. John's

daughter, Paula and son-in-law Dale, plus a few of his friends have been with him at home as much as possible. He recently had some other health issues; several falls at home, breathing issues, low blood pressure, and some memory loss. He contracted Covid and was moved to a unit at Trident Hospital. His health has rapidly declined and they are recommending Hospice involvement. John and the family could use our prayers. I don't believe he can have visitors at this time, and I'll stay in touch with Paula for status updates.

- **Bill Roberts, 83**, has a health issue with an aortic aneurism. A stent had been put in but it is now leaking. He will be going in for a consult but the VA has moved his case over to MUSC because of the better equipment there. The stent will either be repaired or replaced.
- **James Graham Sr., 70**, had serious foot surgery this morning (Aug 11). He called to say it went well and he'll be off his feet for 3-4 weeks. He's hoping to be back at the September meeting.
- **Woody Woodsmall, 70**, has COVID and will not be here. He expects to be at the meeting next week.
- **Thom Beach, 75**, has been at the Victory House in Walterboro since June 28. He would like everyone's prayers while he is there. You can call at 843.925.3045 or send cards to him for his large blank wall. Some have had problems contacting Thom. He has dialysis M-W-F 9:30 until around 2:30. His room changed to 129. I am doing well, actually little better. Keep cards coming. Long way to go on my big wall...
 - Thomas Beach, Veterans Victory House Nursing Home 2461 Sidneys Road, Walterboro. SC, 29488. Room 129.
- **Marvin Miller, 81**, has many health issues. Frieda said she is having a hard time getting him out to go anywhere. Give him a call if you have time.
- **Margie Deal [wife of Walt Deal]** Margie had a stroke and fell at Harris Teeters almost two months ago. She is in rehab at the Village in S'ville.
- **Gene Weir, 75**, was in Roper Hospital DT in from mid-June until early July with COVID19 pneumonia. He also has cancer. He went to an offsite rehabilitation unit and now he is doing home rehab and improving daily. Still not at full strength but getting there slowly but surely. Thanks for all the prayers and blessings.
- **Bob Snyder, 89**, is now in the Hospice Unit at the VA Hospital on the 4th floor. I have talked to Claire and she let me know any service will be held in Manning SC and does not expect the SUBVETS to be involved due to the distance. Harry Nettles has volunteered to attend the service and make presentations to Claire when something does happen.
- **Bill Kennedy, 75**, has lung cancer.
- **Don Londergan, 83**, is still in Cypress Place on Midland Pkwy in room 136.
- **Larry Turner, 79, Vietnam Era Marine Veteran & Nick's BIL** had a seizure followed by a cardiac arrest at the beginning of July. He passed away on Monday evening 31 days after being hospitalized. A celebration of life will be at a later date. Prayers and thoughts very much appreciated.
- 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.
- You can see our current National website by going to the URL of **www.ussubvets.org** to gain access. You can make changes to your profile on this website or you can ask either Larry Knutson or Nick Nichols to make them for you.
 - The new website is expected to be ready sometime in the next month.
 - **2022 USSVI NATIONAL ELECTION** Voting has started and will end 2359, August 15, 2022. Vote one of two ways. Use the newly reconstituted USSVI website (**www.ussubvets.org**) or you may vote by paper ballot no later than August 10, 2022.

Social Media – Lewis Leal:

- Nothing to report

Submarine Veterans of WWII – Mike Ciesielko for Mike Emerson:

- Stacy Power out of the hospital and is home tonight.

Kaps for Kids – Mike Emerson

- Not present.

Membership – Larry Knutson

- We currently have 262 Charleston Base Members. With two new members joined this evening, we will have a sailing list of 264 members.
- Dues will start again in October.
- Nick Nichols provided Base standings: 1) Groton 1198 - 2) Hampton Roads 273 - 3) Charleston 262
- We should strive to beat Groton

National Awards – Mike Knaub

- Not present.

VA – TOM LAWSON

- A new program regarding service related health issues has just been approved.
- Ed Stank noted that he has put an article in the Base Newsletter about this program.
- Rick Sparger inquired about the qualification for drivers. Tom Lawson noted that his approval took four weeks, but now it is taking six months.

Scholarship – Carl Chinn

- The committee is selling tickets for the large powder coated dolphins. The drawing shall be held at the September Base Meeting. Base Commander Mike Ciesielko noted that he has a smaller version of the dolphins at his desk and they really look good.
- The Rummage Sale will be held on November 12. This is the Saturday after the monthly Base Meeting. The location is at Halloween Express/Rodney's Rockets (1825 Old Trolley Road, Summerville). Carl will be there at 0530 to start setting up.
- The committee has Challenge Coins for sale. At the end of the meeting, you never know what you might win.

Special Events – Rick Sparger

- The Chief Selectee Breakfast will be September 24. The list of selectees will be provided on September 6. The location will be at the NNPTC Leader Development Center by the NWS swimming pool. It has been stated that the Selectees will be cooking breakfast. More information will be provided as available.

Fleet Reserve Association – Ken Hutchison

- Activity at the FRA took a big downturn due to COVID restrictions. Like a lot of places, participation is very slowly returning to normal. It may take a while, so be patient.
- Remember, that it is the FRA facility where we hold our SubVet meetings.

COB – Rick Sparger

- No additional report from the COB. – At least for now –.

Recreation – OPEN

- Rick Sparger suggested that we hold the Christmas Party at the FRA. We had a good event last year with the Base providing some finger foods and members bringing desserts or whatever. We can have karaoke and really have an enjoyable evening. Rick currently has the FRA meeting room booked for Saturday, December 3.

Nuclear Power School – Rick Wise for Ray Sparks

- The next NPS graduation will be in September. We did not participate in the July 22 event due to those of us who normally go had been exposed to COVID.

PAO/Newsletter – Ed Stank

- Ed informed everyone that South Carolina driver's licenses must be renewed before 2026 or it will be no longer valid.
- Ed submitted two articles to American Submariner that did not get published because the photo quality was not good enough. He has sent one regarding Memorial Day participation.
- The Base Newsletter will be combined for July/August.

Storekeeper – Woody Woodsmall

- The company that does the embroidery on our vests is Oakbrook Custom Embroidery on Bacons Bridge Road. They will embroider anything that you want on any shirt that you own. The stock that they have in the store is 50 percent off. Their prices are reasonable and they open at 11AM. The turn-around time is about a week. They do not actually make the vests.

Vice Commander – Tom Lawson

- Thanks to all that showed up to the event yesterday.

Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko

- Reminded everyone that Stacy Power is at home and that he enjoys visitors. If you can, please go see him.

Good of the Order

Nuclear Historian – Rick Carlson

- Not present.

After Battery – Rick Wise for Ray Sparks

- Nothing to report

Gun Club – Mike Ciesielko

- Nothing reported

Non-Nuclear Historian – Harry Nettles

How many of you can tell me how many submarine sailors have been awarded the Medal of Honor?

There were several guesses from the room. The correct answer is nine.

The first was a Torpedoman Second Class. In 1923, he went back down into a sinking submarine and sat with a crew until they could be rescued the next day as they developed a plan of action.

Seven of these Medal of Honor recipients were WWII submarine commanders.

One was a hospital corpsman who, because of action in Korea, and volunteered later in his career to become a submarine sailor. His name is William R. Charette. I told his story to you at a previous Base Meeting.

Then there was one of our illustrious submarine commanders, who skippers considered him to be the fearless one. Commander Richard O'Kane – CO of the USS Tang – October 1944. The Tang was having one serious evening. They ran into a convoy and were shooting torpedoes all over the place. The next day, they went back to the same area and stumbled across a transport and a couple of tankers. O'Kane decided to have some fun with these guys also. So, on the surface, they made an approach and launched enough torpedoes to damage the one transport and sink one of the tankers, but Tang had to run and hide for a little bit, because a Japanese destroyer was trying to chase her down. Well, a few hours later, after the situation had cooled down, they went back and found the damaged transport still floating. O'Kane decided that was unacceptable and had to put an end to this, so they launched two torpedoes. One ran, straight. The other circled back and headed for the Tang. O'Kane realized what had happened and asked for emergency speed. They got as much speed as they could, but, unfortunately the torpedo hit them amidships and detonated. The explosion blew him and eight other sailors into the water. Fourteen crewmen below decks managed to escape. Twenty three men went into the water that night – the next morning, only eight were alive. They were captured and picked up by a Japanese patrol boat. O'Kane was put into a POW camp – a SECRET POW CAMP, because they didn't want the folks back home to

know that they had a submarine CO. It was months before his wife learned his fate. At the end of the war, he was released and was reunited with his shipmates and family, but it was during that time, while he was in that POW camp that he was awarded the Medal of Honor – but the announcement was never made because they wanted to wait to confirm his survival first. The Fearless One. He was a submarine skipper that I would have been proud to serve with.

Drawings & Auctions

- FRA Drawing – Julian Villegas
- Scholarship Committee – Glenn Little, having a Challenge Coin, won this prize.
- Depth Charge Drawing – Dave Taylor

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 2002.