

TORPEDO ALLEY



Vol. 2, No. 4

April 2006

Newsletter of Charleston Base, United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.



USSVI Creed

"To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds, and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States Government"



Base web page: www.ussvicb.org
 National web page: www.ussvi.org

Base Meeting:

Thursday, April 13, 2006
 Social hour & board of directors Meeting at 1800
 General meeting at 1900

Location:

VFW Post 3433, 10154 Bellwright Rd.
 Summerville, South Carolina. Phone 843-871-0607

Base Officers		Phone Number
Commander	Steve Nelms	843-563-7115
Vice Commander	Keith Schnebel	843-851-7334
Secretary	Jerry Stout	843-871-9533
Treasurer	George Lisle	843-559-4242

Special Officers		Phone Number
Chief of the Boat	Dave Mueller	843-553-2775
Public Affairs	Richard Cleeve	843-899-4563
Sub Vets WWII	Barnwell Chaplin	843-762-6945
Nuclear Historian	Ed Simokat	843-873-1709
Veterans Affairs	John Nichols	843-873-5897
Chaplain	Bill "Friar Tuck" Kennedy	843-875-3109
Membership	Carl Chinn	843-875-3098
Holland Club	Bob Lowe	843-573-9045
Little David Project	Rick Wise	843-875-5559
Roving Reporter	Rick Wise	843-875-5559
Scholarship	Jim Yates	843-873-0246
Newsletter	Carl Chinn	843-875-3098
Storekeeper	Paul Viering	843-797-2623

Minutes of the March 2006 meeting

Opening Ceremony: Base Commander, Steve Nelms calls to order. Quorum was present and the meeting was commenced at 1900.

Introductions: New persons were introduced including shipmates Ed Bowles, Norris Nathan, Howard Sosa, Nathan Sessler, George Dale, David Horton, John Colitte, and Frank Zeigler. Welcome aboard.

Treasurer: Financial report given by George Lisle.

Secretary: February meeting minutes read in detail. A motion was made and seconded; no discussion. Minutes approved.

Storekeeper: Paul Viering reported that the store is well stocked.

Chaplain: Chaplain made his report on the binnacle List. Bill thanked all those who sent flowers and cards during his short stay in the hospital. Ed Simokat and Stacy are recovering well and were attending the meeting tonight. Curry will be entering the hospital for prostate surgery. Our prayers go out to all of our shipmates and families for a quick recovery.

Public Affairs: The USSVICB website has the most recent photographs of the Christmas Party and the Oyster Roast. Take a look at www.ussvicb.org. If any members have input to the design and/or content please email, call or see Richard Cleeve.

SubVets WWII: No report given. Any USSVICB member made participate as an Associate Member. Dues are only \$10.00.

Veteran's Affairs: Nick Nichols informed all present that there is serious discussion that Tri-Care Prime could be increasing, in addition to charges for Tri-Care Standard. He reminded all Vets to pay attention to the RAO summary that is published weekly, as there are news events that affect our health care and other retired benefits. Reports are available on-line or through the VA. There is much information that all veterans can use, including pay, VA benefits, military records, Tri-Care for Life.

Base Commander: Amberjack: Ceremony to be held March 25, 2006 at White Point Gardens.

Float: A proposal is being drafted that will outline the amount of work and money necessary to refurbish the submarine float that will take place over the winter months. The plan is to raise the physical height of the Submarine to about 18-24 inches of where it is today. This will then make the submarine more visible to the general public and also allow more seating for Vets directly on the float.

Membership: Carl Chinn was on a cruise for his wedding anniversary and was not able to attend the meeting. A stand-in made the announcement that there are several members who have not paid for 2006. Phone calls were going out for reminders. There are 10-15 members who have not paid for 2006. Please pay your dues by the next meeting. Your dues are important to keeping the organization active. As of the meeting there are 215 active members.

Nuclear Historian: Ed Simokat II was present and entertained the members with his humor.

Scholarship: No report.

Chief of the Boat: COB reported on the following: Oyster Roast was a stellar success. The food was great; in addition to select oysters were hotdogs, salads, taco dip, catfish stew and an ample amount of desserts. The music was well received by those who attended. Thank you to all who assisted in planning, setting up, serving, cooking, clean up and take down. In addition, thank you to Charlie Rook and the police protection that apprehended Dana Johnson and Gary Johnson. Both of these violators were booked on Aluminum Can charges. Because of their donations to the Oyster Roast, charges were dropped. This was a strong warning that all aluminum cans need to be placed in recycle containers. Aluminum cans reaped over \$35.00 for a two month period. Can sales are important for the Jim Eckles' beer fund. \$5.00 a head (over 21) was collected at the door and proved to offset our costs. Process will continue at all events.

Pole Barn working party will be held 3/13/2006 at 0900. COB reported that \$100.00 has been paid back to Sub Vets for the compressor. Keep selling advertisements for the booklet. Carl Chinn has been arranging these ads in the booklet and will finish up when he returns from the cruise.

Casino night will be held 3/22/2006 at 1800. Dinner will be fried catfish, hush puppies, cole slaw and grits. The revenue from Casino is paying down the debt incurred due to the modernization of the barn. Again, only Casino Night monies are being used to improve the condition of the After Battery.

Other members are always encouraged to volunteer to bring food for the Casino Nights.

Old Business: No old Business.

New Business: Brake shoes are needed for the float. If anyone knows a source that will barter, please call Ben Heber. Jerry Madison's surviving spouse desires to donate \$500.00 to Sub Vets in memorial to her late husband. She desires for USSVICB to purchase necessary items to support the group. Discussion was on what that would be. Sub Vets could use tables and

Convention Program: The booklet is complete. Thank you to all Sub Vets who supported this fund raising effort.

Steering Committee: No report.

Holland Club: No Report.

chairs for their social events. Cost would be \$40.00 for chairs and \$460.00 for tables. A motion was made and seconded and approved by members present. Buddha will take this to Mrs. Madison for her approval.

Good Of The Order: Depth Charge Drawing was held. Winner announced as Bob Isaman.

The Base Commander adjourned meeting at 1950.

**** End of the minutes for March, 2006 ****

From the COB



For the last 6 months I have been taking a long look at our Charleston Base. I have observed the working parties, the memorials, the funerals and the get togethers like the hog and oyster roast. I am impressed at what a diverse organization we really are but yet so close knit. We have men of all ages, from all different rates and ranks, from all different jobs and trades, from all different income levels, from all different races, nationalities and religions but we have one thing in common and that is camaraderie. Some of us did not serve together but we are now as close as if we did. We are often called “brothers of the ‘phin”, the dolphin. We are all qualified submarine sailors. We qualified once and we will remain qualified the rest of our lives. The gold and silver dolphins are the glue that holds us together. We are a unit and we operate still just as we did years back on board submarines and some of us are still on active duty. We have expert carpenters, plumbers, painters, computer operators, financial experts, electricians, mechanics, entrepreneurs, directors, cooks, welders and every other trade you can think of. I have observed men in their seventies up on ladders wiring electrical outlets or running cable up in the attic or making something special on the computer, or writing letters for some function we are involved in, or doing plumbing work under the “After Battery”, or being involved with the scholarship foundation we support, or visiting our sick members in the hospital. Or any number of different things we do together. Its funny but you never hear about “I” or “me”. It’s always about “us” or “what we did as a group”, as a team just like it was on submarines and still is. I watched 23 guys last week dig 8 holes and install 8 power poles in the ground for the shelter of our float, lay a whole wall of insulation in the “After Battery”, and then come in and eat dinner and never once did I hear anybody say “I” or “me”. It was all about what “we” accomplished as a unit. We have guys that donate money or just buy something like pretzels or some snack or some piece of equipment the group needs, or donate a TV set or a computer or some piece of furniture, or because of their health can’t work but come up and support the guys that can just by being there. With this upcoming convention we have so many people doing so many different jobs to help it go right. Some setting up ads on the computer, others ordering and planning things others selling ads, others spreading the word, others doing just about

Base Chaplin Bill “Friar Tuck” Kennedy



If you are going to get sick please let me know!

Membership and Dues Information:

If all the below listed guys renew their membership, we have 222 members.

If you have not paid your dues, you will be removed from our sailing list on 1 April. Dues are \$20 for National and \$15 for Charleston Base.

If you miss a meeting and need to pay your dues you can mail them to:

Carl Chinn
217 Brailsford Road
Summerville, SC 29485

The following will be removed from the National and Charleston Base Sailing Lists on 1 April:

Adinolfi Becker Meyers Presley

The following are National Life Members and will be transferred to the Member-At-Large list (not Charleston Base members) on 1 April:

*Fledderjohn Garcia Gupstill
Loveday Patterson Rourk*

If you have any changes to your membership info (address, phone, e-mail, etc.) please let Carl Chinn know at chasbasemembernews@sc.rr.com or carlc@sc.rr.com or call 875-3098.



Sub Vets World War II:

I would like to Thank everyone that participated in the Annual Amberjack Memorial Service on Saturday, March 25, 2006. We had three World War II veterans and two widows that came to celebrate the memorial service with us!

Special thanks goes to Roger Gibson who brought his battery box for power and helped set up the electrical equipment. Thanks to Lee Allison for going to Steve Nelms house and picking up some of our articles that we needed and also stopping by the VFW and picking up the speaker systems.

everything you could imagine to make this convention work. No one man accomplishes these things alone. We do it as a group, as a unit, as a submarine. We have 215 members and last month we had 98 at the meeting. That is impressive. Most of these other military groups don't get that type of participation. We play hard together also. Its fun going to an oyster roast, or hog roast, or casino and meeting you're wives, kids, and grand kids all having a good time and telling a few stories on each other. Listening to the music that some of our talented members provide for us. We are a unique group; we are "brothers of the dolphin". Lets never let it die. I am proud to be a member of our unit, our submarine, the Charleston Base.

From the Base Commander



Election of base officers will take place at the May meeting. All nominations for Base Commander, Base Vice-Commander, Base Secretary and Base Treasurer need to be submitted to Stan Standrich as soon as possible. Contact Stan at: 843-688-4619 or e-mail: anethas@hotmail.com Additional nominations may be made at the April meeting.

It is extremely important that you register for the Combined Conference to be held May 3 thru 7. We need to get an accurate count as soon as possible for planning purposes. If you intend on attending the hospitality room to "chew the rag" with your shipmates, you must be registered! We have over 200 members...we ought to have a great showing of our base. Get you registration form/money to the COB.

****April Happenings!****

April 11, U.S. Submarine Force Birthday – In 1900 John P. Holland sells his internal combustion, gasoline-powered submarine, Holland VI, to the Navy for \$160,000, after demonstration trials off Mount Vernon, Virginia. This marks the official birth date of the U.S. Navy's Submarine Force.

To celebrate the 106th Submarine Force Birthday, the Naval Submarine League, Navy Historical Foundation and the U.S. Navy Memorial's Heritage Center will co-host the seminar at the Navy Memorial's Heritage Center theater on Tuesday, April 11, 2006 at 6:00 PM. This year's program is the celebration of the Strategic Systems Program's 50th anniversary. Speakers will include RADM Robert Wertheim, USN (Ret) on the early years of the program, VADM Kenneth C. Malley USN (Ret) on the

Thanks to everyone else that came and helped read, set up and take down the speakers and systems.

Thanks to everyone that came and recorded and took pictures.

Thanks to Steve Fletcher's lovely bride for taking video pictures and coming out.

The day could not have been any more lovely with a light breeze, sun out and great friends to celebrate our "Big Brothers" in the submarine force and the sacrifice that they endured to bring peace to the world during World War II so that we could all have the freedoms that we have today!

Special Thanks goes to Swede Hanson for his benediction! It was not the usual prayer benediction, but one from the heart of a dear friend, fellow shipmate and World War II Submariner! Thanks Swede!

Thanks again to everyone for all of your help, coming out and being with your fellow Submarine Brothers on such a great day! Hope that we can see more of our brothers and shipmates next year!

Randy Bogнар



Public Affairs Announcement Richard Cleeve

Pictures from the March 4th oyster roast are available on our Web site.

April Submarines Lost:

USS Pickerel (SS 177) April 3, 1943
USS Grenadier (SS 210) April 22, 1943
USS Snook (SS 279) April 8, 1945
USS Thresher (SSN 593) - April 10, 1963

The Final Patrol

Lord, this departed shipmate with dolphins on his chest is part of an outfit known as the best.

Make him welcome and take him by the hand. You'll find without a doubt he was the best in all the land.

So, heavenly Father add his name to the roll of our departed shipmates still on patrol.

Let them know that we who survive will always keep their memories alive.

Birth of the Submarine Force

American attempts to develop underwater boats achieved some success during the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. Unfortunately, such boats usually proved more dangerous to their crews than their targets. Only in the 1890s did John Holland and Simon Lake develop practical submersible boats. The U.S. Navy purchased its first submarine from Holland on 11 April

development of the Trident systems and RADM Charles Young, USN on the current state of the program. Watch the Naval Submarine Leagues website for details on registration for the event. (www.navalsubleague.com)



Carlson	Comp	Erickson	Giannetto
Gibson	Hill	Hyatt	Little
Oser	Rummans	Shoosmith	Smith
Sosa	Sparger	Vacher	Vlam
Walsh			

Combined Conference reminder!

USSVI Charleston Base, Denizens of the Deep Base (Aiken) and the Southern Region WWII Submarine Veterans will be hosting the *Combined Conference of USSVI Eastern Region Districts Four & Six and Southern Region Sub Vets WWII* in Charleston, May 3-7, 2006. See registration form in the January issue or on our web site. You can book rooms at the hotel any time. The conference will be held at the Radisson Hotel Charleston Airport, on Rivers Ave. at Aviation. All base members are reminded that we will need many volunteers to make this conference a success. More information to follow.

Combined Conference Book

Our conference book ad sales are closed. This effort led to some monies collected that will help offset the cost of the May conference. Thanks to all who sold ads!

A new submariner

On one of my many trips to Groton, CT as a member of the Virginia (SSN-774) Class Submarine Design-Build team, I was invited by the Senior Instructor at the Submarine Advanced Operations Department to attend a Basic Enlisted Submarine School graduation.

Like everything else in both life and our military forces today, all the presentations and graduation speeches were temperate, colorless, gentle admonitions to go forth and do good stuff... Keep your fly zipped and don't pee on the petunias.

I sat there and mentally composing what I would have said

1900, the traditional birthday of the U.S. Submarine Force.

Quickly adopted by nations throughout the world, improved submarines influenced the course of both world wars, though they remained essentially surface ships able to hide only temporarily under water. During World War II, the U.S. force of large, fast, long-range fleet submarines played a major role in winning the Pacific war by sinking so much Japanese shipping.

In the ten years after the war, a series of technological innovations, culminating in nuclear propulsion, transformed the submarine into a true underwater boat, faster beneath the surface than above and able to remain submerged indefinitely.

The first submarine purchased in 1900 cost \$160,000; today the price of a Trident is over \$2,500,000,000 - without missiles.

Special "Thank You"

A special thank you is order for the following businesses who have kindly donated to Charleston Base:

- To Real Art Framing and Matting for their donation of print framing for scholarship and conference items
- To CSA Galleries for their donation of a CSS Hunley print
- To Outback Steakhouse for their door prize donation for our inaugural Co-Ed Casino Day.
- To Frame Design & Gallery for donation of 2 gift certificates
- To Francis Marion Hotel for gift certificate for one night's stay
- Sticky Fingers for donation of gift certificate
- Logan's Roadhouse for 2 free dinners
- Cisco's Café for \$20 gift certificate

Whenever possible please use the businesses that have been generous to our organization!

March 21, 2006

No retirees' Tricare fee hikes — for now

By Rick Maze

Times staff writer

In a major concession, the Defense Department has told Tricare contractors to cancel plans for an Oct. 1 increase in health care fees for military retirees under age 65.

Defense officials have not given up on their basic proposal, which calls for fee hikes of as much as \$1,500 a year for working-age retirees using the military health care system. But they now seem to recognize that fierce opposition from military and veterans' groups and

to these fine young men poised on the threshold of the finest experience of their lives. Master Chief "Black Jack" Dawson asked me to put into words what I felt being a submariner was all about from a raghat point of view.

Based on my experience, a Submarine School graduation talk should ignite a raging fire in a young man's heart. Here's what I would have said:

"Gentlemen, you represent the top 2% of The United States Navy and to be here with your butts planted in folding steel chairs in this magic carpet ride launching pad, you had to volunteer not once, but twice. Once to join the greatest navy that there ever was or ever will be. And then you signed up for one of the most respected fraternal organizations in the history of naval warfare - The United States Submarine Force.

"The course completion certificate you will be given here today will serve as your adoption papers in a family that will embrace you for a lifetime and define you as a citizen of this fair republic who earned his rights by unselfish arduous service in a universally recognized tough, elite outfit. A man... My old COB, once told me to look on the back of my Dolphins...

"Bob, you see an expiration date on your Dolphins?"

"Nope, sure don't."

"You know why?"

"Don't have a clue."

"Because you are just as much a member of this community today as you

were the day they pinned those Dolphins on your wet dungaree shirt."

"Think about that a second... Let that sink in. The United States Submarine Force is a commitment you have made voluntarily, and have proven, through rigorous selection and the successful completion of this course, worthy of acceptance in an organization of special men having lifetime benefits.

"You are the latest, bright, shiny link in a continuous chain of American Submariners who have established a worldwide, fully justified reputation as the world's toughest saltwater meateaters riding the finest steel sharks ever made.

"You stand on the threshold of an adventure... An unparalleled magic carpet ride that will exceed anything you can conjure up in your finest fantasy. What you are about to embark on, is a trip that would make Jules' Verne's eyes pop out. I envy you. I am so damn jealous of your youthful enthusiasm, your evident pride in your accomplishment and the amazing journey you begin here today.

"Ah, the yellow brick road.

"Fathers will point you out in bus stations...

"Son, you see that sailor over there?"

growing concern in Congress have made an Oct. 1 effective date for the increases virtually impossible.

Last week, the Republican chairman and Democratic ranking member of the Senate Armed Services personnel panel promised military associations they would not support the fee increases until an independent audit of the military health care system is completed to determine if there are other ways to cut increasing health care costs.

Additionally, the Republican chairman and ranking Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee have announced they oppose the Tricare fee increases, and a bipartisan bill was introduced in the House to block any increases without specific congressional approval.

That bill, sponsored by Rep. Chet Edwards, D-Texas, and Walter Jones, R-N.C., already has 77 cosponsors.

"It is just recognition of reality," Steve Strobbridge of the Military Officers Association of America said about the Pentagon's message to Tricare contractors. "The Department of Defense really didn't have a choice."

"That is great news," said Joyce Raezer of the National Military Family Association. "We had hoped Congress would send a message to DoD to slow this thing down. They went too fast."

The Pentagon's proposed fee increases, still being reviewed by the White House's Office of Management and Budget, would increase enrollment fees, copayments and deductibles for military retirees under the age of 65 and their families. Increases would be based on pay grade, and would apply to both Tricare Prime and Tricare Standard, with a maximum increase of \$1,500 a year.

Defense officials have defended their proposal as necessary to hold down escalating expenses so health care does not squeeze higher budget priorities such as weapons modernization.

Free Eye Exams possible...

All veterans who are registered with the VA can get eye exams and glasses. Depending on your VA status, you may have to pay a co-pay for the exam and pay for the glasses or get everything completely free. If you have to pay for the glasses they are at about cost. You can get an eye exam appointment by calling 789-7392 or 789-7276. If you prefer you can use your civilian prescription. You just contact the eye clinic to convert it to a VA prescription and go to the optical shop to order your glasses. Remember you must be registered with the VA!

"Yessir."

"He's a submarine sailor. He tougher than a boarding house steak and rides submarines."

"He rides submarines. Can you think of a prouder title? I saw a little kid riding a tricycle on the sidewalk in Groton. The kid was wearing a T-shirt that read, 'My dad is a submariner'. I can only think of one kid's T-shirt that would top that... 'My dad checks Meg Ryan for ticks.'

"Your voluntary selection of the Sub Force as your way to serve your nation has given you access to the seaports of the globe and a life where you will be able to fit all your worldly possessions in a seabag.

"You will go places in the oceans of the globe where damn few men have ever been... Where you will hear sounds and experience sensations known only to a minute fraction of the world's population.

"You will serve in the most advanced technical submersible platforms known to man. Craft that serve as the farthest extended invisible bulwark of American defense.

"You will go from here to earn your Dolphins, representing your qualification and acceptance as a United States Submariner.

"I have previously mentioned how I envy you. I have had my opportunity to dance the saltwater fandango with the Goddess of the Main Induction. I have experienced the camaraderie that you will soon experience. I have heard the creak and groan of steel at depth, but nowhere near the depths the modern marvels you will ride, will achieve.

"You have opened the magic oyster that will change your life forever and that will serve as your ticket to adventure. You have achieved a status that will provide the only credentials required to sit at tables covered with beer glass rings and swap bullshit and sea stories with your undersea fraternity brothers while the sailors not associated with the life below sunshine penetration look on in wonder and envy.

"And, you will be forever embraced by the elite Sub Force family up to the point that the Great Commander issues you your pine peacoat and assigns you to a boat moored at the Big Silver Pier in the Sky.

"A hand salute to the mothers who bore you. The parents who put the steel of honor and conviction in your spine and the patriotic values in your hearts You are, by the road you have chosen to travel, a credit to, not only your family, hometown, state and nation but to yourselves.

"Let me assure you that your name will be listed alongside the best of the best. It will appear on a list containing both long ago legends and giants of the force and the names of the pioneers of nuclear propulsion. Lads, that is a damn fine group of men to be associated with.

"In conclusion, as you sit here today, there are lads in your

hometown whose greatest thrill in life will be making a three cushion shot at the local pool hall. They will never travel more than 300 miles from the hospital where they were they were born and end up marrying some sweetheart whose ambition will begin and end with accumulating grocery store discount coupons and attending PTA spaghetti dinners.

"The closest those jaybirds will get to exotic faraway lands will be thumbing through the pages of a barbershop National Geographic.

"While your uncle Ralph is back home guarding his hen house with a rusty 20-gauge, you will be cruising the seas of the planet, hauling ordinance capable of causing urban renewal with a 500-mile radius. You will be standing watch over weapons, capable of sending entire populations off to Hell in a flash of fire.

"The American submariner is the principle reason the bad guys rarely get to peek under Lady Liberty's nightie and your kids don't eat sushi at school.

"You have joined the family of America's undersea warriors.

"Tomorrow when you shave, take a good look in the mirror, smile and say to yourself...

"Mothers, lock up your daughters, there's a new boat sailor in town."

"WELCOME ABOARD, SAILOR."