



Vol. 17 No. 10

October 2021

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

Base Meeting:

BOD: Nov 4, 1800
 Membership: Nov 11, 1900
Location:
 FRA Branch 269
 Low Country Home
 99 Wisteria Rd.
 Goose Creek, SC



Base Commander	Mike Ciesielko	843.324.0011	Chief of the Boat	Rick Sparger	843.553.5594
Base Vice Commander	Tom Lawson	843.327.3282	Veterans Affairs	Tom Lawson	843.327.3282
Secretary	Gordon Long	843.214.2353	Membership	Larry Knutson	843.860.1155
Treasurer	Ricky Collins	843.276.4861	Scholarship	Carl Chinn	843.437.5515
			Storekeeper	Ken Hutchison	843.553.0935
			Historian	George Scharf	843.873.3318
			Public Affairs	Ed Stank	843.568.2148
			Chaplain	Nick Nichols	843.452.3189
			Holland Club	Bill Freligh	843.553.1115
			Newsletter	Ed Stank	843.568.2148
			Social Media Coordinator	Lewis Leal	843.270-8870
			Webmaster	Nick Nichols	843.452.3189
			Kaps for Kids	Mike Emerson	843.302.2650



Submarines lost during the month of October

USS Seawolf (SS-197)	83 Officers and Men and 17 Army	3 Oct 44
USS S44 (SS-155)	56 Lost, 2 Taken Prisoner and Survived	7 Oct 43
USS Wahoo (SS-238)	80 Lost	11 Oct 43
USS Dorado (SS-248)	77 Lost	12 Oct 43
USS Escolar (SS-294)	82 Lost	17 Oct 44
USS Shark II (SS-314)	87 Lost	24 Oct 44
USS Darter (SS-227)	No loss of life	24 Oct 44
USS Tang (SS-306)	78 Lost	25 Oct 44
USS O-5 (SS-66)	3 Lost	29 Oct 23

9 Boats loss and 546 Submariners and 17 Army

Table of Contents

From the Editor	2
From USSVI National	3
Humor	3
Navy Birthday	3
VA Claims	4
National Cemetery	5
Submarine Veterans Gulf Coast Christmas Party	6
COVID-19 Funeral Expenses	7
Senate NDAA Amendments	8
Veterans National Park Admission and 2022 COLA	9
Scholarship Submarine Book Ends Raffle	10
Charleston Base Christmas Party	11
Base Meeting Minutes	12-18

Upcoming Charleston Base Events

Charleston Base Board of Directors Meeting	Nov 4	1800	FRA Branch 269, Goose Creek
CPO Breakfast	Nov 10	0800	Cracker Barrel, Ashley Phosphate Rd
Charleston Base Meeting (Social Hr starts 1800)	Nov. 11	1900	FRA Branch 269, Goose Creek
Charleston Base Rummage Sale	Nov. 13	0800	1825 Old Trolley Rd Summerville, SC

From the Editor

This will be the last month I publish meeting minutes as they are dated by the time I receive them and events that you may want to participate in will have passed. This is not a criticism of the secretary as it takes many hours to compile the information from the base meeting and the timing that I would like to meet is difficult for him to accomplish.

From USSVI National

Nothing to Report

JOKE OF THE MONTH

While serving on the USS Seahorse (SSN-669) we had an XO who loved field days.

After about the sixth consecutive day of up all bunks turn-to clean up the ship and passing all the trash we had collected to throw over the side, the XO commented on never being aboard a ship with so much trash. The OOD who was my division officer commented that you (the XO) had never been aboard a boat that had that many field days. That DO went on to be the Commanding Officer of the USS San Francisco (SSN-711). Wonder how many field days he held.



Happy 246th Birthday, United States Navy!!!

In 1972, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt authorized the United States Navy's birthday to be recognized as October 13, 1775.

Since that time, this has been a day to celebrate and appreciate the heritage of the United States Navy.

VA CLAIMS

Starting in October, the Department of Veterans Affairs will hire and train new staff to ensure Veterans' claims are adjudicated quickly and help reduce an expected increase in the backlog of claims pending more than 125 days. VA is taking the following proactive steps to help in the reduction:

- Hire and train 2,000 new employees to assist in claims processing.
- Leverage authority to transfer CARES funding to VBA and utilize the American Rescue Plan to fund overtime to ensure timely claims processing.
- Deploy requested Fiscal Year 2022 budget resources to support Agent Orange presumptive processing, as well as for general Compensation and Pension claims processing.

As of October 11, there were more than 204,000 backlog claims in an inventory of 603,000 total claims. VA identified more than 70,000 claims to review for additional entitlement stemming from the presumptive relationship between Agent Orange and Parkinsonism, bladder cancer, and hypothyroidism. Many of these will enter the backlog in October, which is projected to reach 260,000 pending claims.

“VA is committed to ensuring timely access to benefits and services for all veterans. This includes making sure that veterans who may have experienced adverse health effects from military related exposures can get access to the benefits they need,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “As we process claims such as those for three new disabilities presumptively linked to Agent Orange exposure, including proactive application of [Nehmer provisions](#), as well as three new Gulf War particulate exposure presumptives, we anticipate the claims backlog to increase this fall. The hiring of new employees will help us resolve these claims more quickly.”

Several factors have contributed to the recent backlog. Beginning in March 2020, operational changes necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an untimely delay of the [Federal Records Centers'](#) retrieval of documents and suspended [Compensation and Pension \(C&P\) examinations](#). While these actions were necessary to protect the health and safety of employees and veterans, they slowed the processing time for claims. VA workload has also increased as a result of the aforementioned recent decisions and actions, including [a court order](#) mandating the review of previously denied Veterans on the basis of qualifying service in the 12 nautical miles surrounding Vietnam.

The backlog has decreased by more than 14,000 claims since the end of August 2021. With continued improvement of VA's ability to obtain C&P examinations and Federal Records, and with all requested resources received, VBA plans to address the impending increase and then further reduce the current claims backlog to 100,000 claims by April 2024.

Learn more about claims and to view reports visit [Detailed Claims Data](#).

National Cemetery Administration

Accepts Claims via Direct Upload

Dear Funeral Directors,

In response to your feedback stating submission of NCA Forms via fax and mail can be frustrating, the National Cemetery Administration partnered with the Veterans Benefits Administration to allow submitting claims and supporting documents online. Applicants may now use the [direct upload tool](#) through AccessVA to submit forms for memorial benefits.

What is Direct Upload?

Direct Upload is an online tool that provides the most convenient, secure, and safest way for Veterans and their family members to submit claims and evidence to NCA electronically.

What to submit to NCA via Direct Upload?

- VA Form 40-1330 Claim for Standard Government Headstone or Marker
- VA Form 40-1330M Claim for Government Medallion for Placement in Private Cemetery
- VA Form 40-0247 Presidential Memorial Certificate Request Form
- VA Form 40-10007 Application for Pre-Need Determination of Eligibility for Burial in a VA National Cemetery
- Death certificates
- Documents verifying service

Benefits of using Direct Upload

- Safely submit claims and evidence from any computer with an internet connection
- Cost free - avoiding mail and/or fax charges
- Submissions are tracked real time and copies are saved

How to get started

Please visit [AccessVA](#) at <https://eauth.va.gov/accessva/> to submit your information using Direct Upload. You will be instructed to register during your first sign-on attempt. Select the appropriate *User Type* button on the *User Identification* screen: Veteran, Veteran Family Member, or VSO/VA Business Partner (e.g., officer, attorney, or claims agent). Once your registration is complete, you will be able to upload your documents electronically online using Direct Upload.

Thank you,
The National Cemetery Administration

Submarine Veterans' Gulf Coast
2021 Annual Christmas Party

Thursday Dec 8th -- Sunday Dec 12th, 2021

Holiday Inn Resort

(New, Better, Completely Remodeled)

11127 Front Beach Rd, Panama City Beach, FL 32407

1-850-234-1111 or 1-800-633-0266 (toll-free)

Rooms \$89.00 plus tax

Hospitality Room and Banquet **\$50.00**

(Hospitality Room includes Morning Coffee & Donuts, Free Libations & Assorted Snacks)

Hosted by Robert Wilson, Sturgeon Base, (swfllegends@gmail.com),

John Duncan, Seawolf Base (narwhalssn@yahoo.com),

J.A.Honeycutt, Drum Base, (mcpo.ss@peoplepe.com)

This is a Christmas Party – Gifts Optional (to receive a gift, you must bring a gift)

Everyone Bring a Present (around \$15) - Men bring a Guy's gift and Ladies bring a Gal's gift.

Banquet Christmas Party Saturday Night

Banquet will have a *Cash Bar* starting at 5 P.M. followed by Dinner and Party at 6:30 P.M.

MENU – SANTA'S FAVORITE BUFFET

Garden Fresh Salad

Tender Roasted Tom Turkey with Giblet Gravy - Spiral Honey Glazed Ham

Country Style Sausage Cornbread Stuffing - Whipped Potatoes - Candied Yams

Green Bean Almandine - Fresh Whole Kernel Corn - Freshly Baked Rolls

Dessert Selections - Freshly Baked Pumpkin, Apple Pie or Cobbler - Iced Tea or Coffee

Memorial Service 11 A.M. Saturday December 12th

Nightly Bar 50/50 Raffles (w/extra prizes) - 6 for \$5.00

Large Split the Pot 50/50 Saturday Night Raffle (w/extra prizes) - 6 for \$5.00

(This is not a profit maker - Any Residual Funds will go to a Submarine Related Project)

**Mail Reservations for Banquet and Hospitality Room to
Robert A Wilson, 4935 N Peppermint Dr, Beverly Hills, FL 34465**

Make Checks out to Robert A Wilson, please Christmas Party in Memo

Reservations have to be in hand NLT November 20th

to guarantee your banquet seating

(Refunds for Banquet after December 1st, 2021, cannot be guaranteed)

Problems or Questions? Contact Robert Wilson, 352-212-0605 (swfllegends@gmail.com)

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____ Spouse /Guest: _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

(Tel) (____) _____ - _____ E-Mail Address _____

Local Chapter/Base _____

Number Banquet & Hospitality Room: _____

Hospitality Room (only) \$25 -- Banquet (only) \$35: _____

Saturday Night 50/50 Raffle (6 tickets for \$5) How Many: _____

_____ x \$50.00 \$ _____

_____ x \$xx.00 \$ _____

_____ x \$ 5.00 \$ _____

Total Remitted: \$ _____

COVID-19 Funeral Assistance

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought overwhelming grief to many families. At FEMA, our mission is to help people before, during and after disasters. We are dedicated to helping ease some of the financial stress and burden caused by the virus.

Under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, FEMA is providing financial assistance for COVID-19 related funeral expenses incurred after January 20, 2020.

COVID-19 Funeral Assistance Helpline

844-684-6333 | TTY: 800-462-7585

Hours of Operation:

Monday - Friday

9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern Time

To be eligible for funeral assistance, you must meet these conditions:

- For deaths that occurred after May 16, 2020, the death certificate must indicate the death was attributed to COVID-19.
- For deaths that occurred from Jan. 20 to May 16, 2020, any death certificate that does not attribute the cause of death to COVID-19 must be accompanied by a signed statement listing COVID-19 as a cause or contributing cause of death.
- The signed statement must be provided by the original certifier of the death certificate or the local medical examiner or coroner from the jurisdiction in which the death occurred.
- The statement must provide an additional explanation, or causal pathway, linking the cause of death listed on the death certificate to COVID-19.

Support Senate NDAA Amendments

The Senate is expected to consider floor amendments and pass its version of the FY 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) this week. Several of these amendments are supported by FRA. These amendments include:

- Sen. Jon Tester's (MT) amendment with the provisions of the "Major Richard Star Act" (S. 344) that expands concurrent receipt to include Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) beneficiaries who are medically retired with less than 20 years of service;
- Sen. Rob Portman's (OH) amendment with provisions of the "Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act" (S. 1669) that would authorize the retention of the full final month's retired pay by the surviving spouse for the month in which the member was alive for at least 24 hours;
- Sen. Lankford's (OK) amendment repealing the 180-day delay for retirees applying for Defense Department civilian positions GS-13 and below; and
- Sen. Richard Blumenthal (CT) amendment to require a joint report from DoD and the VA to designate the next national cemetery that affords full military honors as Arlington National Cemetery reaches capacity and directs DoD to not change ANC eligibility until after the report is submitted.

The House recently passed its version of the FY 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Once both chambers pass their version of the NDAA a conference committee will be appointed to resolve the differences and create a final bill. This bill will be voted on by each chamber and if approved will be sent to the President to be signed into law or be vetoed.

Members are strongly urged to use the FRA Action Center to weigh in on these Senate amendments at: <https://www.votervoice.net/FRA/campaigns/89054/respond>



VETERANS GET FREE ENTRANCE TO NATIONAL PARKS, REFUGES AND OTHER PUBLIC LANDS

Veterans, Gold Star Families, current Military and their dependents have free access to approximately 2,000 public locations spread out across more than 400 million acres of public lands, which host activities to fit any lifestyle, from serene to high octane, including hiking, fishing, paddling, biking, hunting, stargazing, camping and much more.

2022 COLA ANNOUNCED

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) recently announced that the annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase for 2022 will be 5.9 percent. This is the largest increase since 1981.

The new COLA rate is effective Dec. 1, 2021 and the adjustment will appear in the Dec. 30, 2021 payment. This increase pertains to military retirees, veterans receiving disability payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs, Social Security recipients and others.

By law, COLA is based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), which is a broad measure of consumer prices generated by the BLS from the third quarter of the previous year to the third quarter of the current year. It measures price changes for food, housing, clothing, transportation, energy, medical care, recreation and education. The COLA increase has averaged 1.65 percent for the past 10 years (2011-2020), and in 2009, 2010 and 2015 the increase was zero.

Admiral James B. Osborn Memorial Scholarship Raffle

Submarine Book End Set



Up for raffle is a beautiful hand cast set of book ends modeled after a World War II diesel boat. Made of polished aluminum and featuring solid brass details on heavy cast iron bases, your prized books are secured safely from stem to stern.

- Measures 5.5 H x 12.5 W x 3.5 D and weighs 6.75 lbs.
- Hand finished polished cast aluminum, brass and cast iron.
- Sturdy L-shaped design and felt backing holds standing books without slipping.
- Heirloom Quality - Expertly hand crafted and hand finished.

Tickets are \$1 each or six tickets for \$5

Drawing will be held at our regular meeting January 13, 2022

Charleston Base Christmas Party

Remember Pearl Harbor
And

Welcome Christmas and a New Year

Where: Fleet Reserve Association,
99 Wisteria Drive,
Goose Creek, SC

Time:

1800 Meet and Greet

1900 Finger Food and Music

2100 Depth Charge Drawing

This years Christmas Party is a get together of Charleston Base Members and their Families in a informal celebration of the upcoming holiday season.

There is no cost but attendance is limited to Charleston Base members and their immediate families. There are no reservations so come early to get a seat as attendance is limited.



Opening Ceremonies:

The October 2021 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko with a quorum of three officers and a total of unknown 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 October was given by Treasurer Ricky Collins for Base Chaplain Nick Nichols.

Chaplain Nick Nichols and Base Secretary Gordon Long were absent due to attending the USS Henry L. Stimson reunion.

Submarines lost during the month of October:

USS SEAWOLF (SS-197) October 3, 1944 – 15th War Patrol Lost with all hands –100 souls (83 crew and 17 Army)

USS S-44 (SS-155) October 7, 1944 – 5th War Patrol Lost with 56 souls – 2 men became POWs and survived the war

USS WAHOO (SS-238) October 11, 1943 – 7th War Patrol Lost with all hands – 80 souls

USS DORADO (SS-248) October 12, 1943 – New - training Lost with all hands – 77 souls

USS ESCOLAR (SS-294) October 17, 1944 – 1st War Patrol Lost with all hands – 82 souls

USS DARTER (SS-227) October 24, 1944 – 4th War Patrol No loss of life

USS SHARK II (SS-314) October 24, 1944 – 3rd War Patrol Lost with all hands – 87 souls

USS TANG (SS-306) October 25, 1944 – 5th War Patrol Lost with 78 souls – 9 men became POWs and survived the war

USS O-5 (SS-66) October 29, 1923 – near Panama Canal Lost with 3 souls

Nine Boats and 563 Men Lost

Vice Commander Tom Lawson read the Creed of USSVI.

Base Commander Mike Ciesielko welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

Introductions of New Attendees:

One man was present at the Base meeting for the first time: Dean Mungo – STS2 – Qualified on USS Henry Clay SSBN625 – Also served aboard USS Sand Lance SSN660 and USS Ray SSN653.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

2022 Charleston Base Budget – Comptroller Rick Wise. Rick Wise presented the proposed 2022 budget for Charleston Base. The budget will also be available online. An email will be sent with the link. The BOD elected to include an entry for recreation in the budget. This is to be reviewed by the Base membership prior to the November Base Meeting as it is scheduled to be approved at that time. In addition, the 3rd quarter expenses for 2021 have been published.

Secretary – Mike Ciesielko for Gordon Long: Not present.

The Minutes from the September Base meeting had been emailed directly to the Base membership and has been promulgated on the Base Website. There were no other additions or deletions to the September Base meeting minutes. The minutes were approved.

Treasurer – Ricky Collins: The Treasurer's Report for September was published and promulgated on the website. There were no additions or deletions. The report was approved.

Chaplain – Ricky Collins for Nick Nichols: Highlighted boat of the month: USS O-5 (SS-66) was lost on October 29, 1923 with the loss of 3 men when rammed and sunk by SS Abangarez off the Panama Canal.

There are several shipmates and family members who have given me information which they wish to be kept confidential at this time.

MMCS(SS) John Kevin Taylor, 49, departed on Eternal Patrol on September 13, 2021 in Goose Creek. He was not a member of USSVI. A note of condolence was placed on the funeral home website.

TM3(SS) Michael J. Nosis departed on Eternal Patrol on September 28, 2021 in Michigan. He served on USS Albany SSN 753 with base member Ken Lux 1993-1996. He was not a member of USSVI.

CAPT John Peters, past USSVI National Commander, departed on Eternal Patrol on September 19, 2021 in HI. He served as National Commander from 2002 to 2004 also many other positions within USSVI. John joined USSVI in 1993 and was a member of Bowfin Base. John qualified on Ronquil SS-396 and served on several SSN's and SSBN's. He was Commanding Officer of the John Adams SSBN-620.

MMC(SS) Carsten Stigers, USSVI National Chaplain, departed on Eternal Patrol on September 24, 2021 in PA. His death was unexpected. He qualified on George C. Marshall SSBN654 in 1977 and served on Sam Rayburn SSBN 635, Tinosa SSN 606 and Simon Lake AS33.

Margie 'Ma' Bell, wife of USSVI National Junior Vice Commander Steve Bell, passed away very suddenly on September 9th. She had just been at the National Convention in Orlando the week before.

Wanda Nelms, wife of Charleston Base member Steve 'Buddha' Nelms, passed away on Sunday, September 19th at 1310. Per her wishes there will not be a memorial service.

Darlene Graham, wife of Charleston Base member James Graham Sr., passed away on Sunday, September 19th at Trident Hospital. Her service was held on Monday, October 4th.

Jerry Stout had a PET scan on 9/23/2021. Results indicated a growth of cancer in the Iliac Lymph Node in the Pelvis area, however there has been no spreading to other areas. Plan is to start Radiation Treatment to groin and pelvis starting on 10/11 for 5 weeks and continued Bi-weekly infusion of Immune Therapy drug. Christine and Jerry appreciate your prayers during these times.

Steve Curry was in the ER on 16 Sept with chest pains. He was discharged after a lot of tests. Doing well now.

George Burton's cancer is growing. He has change treatment methods and meds. He is not in pain but has discomfort on his right side around the lung. He appreciates all your prayers.

Don Londergan is still in Cypress Place on Midland Pkwy in room 136. Rick Wise visited him and found out he no longer has his phone.

Gene Weir continues his cancer treatments.

Bob Snyder is home with palliative care. Ed will continue to contact him each month for the meeting.

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 – Ricky Collins for 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.

Vets in the Woods collection box is suspended until further notice. The donations overwhelmed the DAV.

There is a problem with accessing the USSVI National website.

If you send something out to the base members try to remember to put it in PDF format. Not everyone has the same programs to open files. Most everyone can view a PDF. **Social Media –**

Lewis Leal: Not present.

Submarine Veterans of WWII – Mike Ciesielko for Mike Emerson: We recognized Stacy Power as present this evening. It is good have him with us tonight.

Kaps for Kids – Mike Emerson Not present.

Membership – Larry Knutson The current roster lists 275 Charleston Base Members. October is the month that we begin collecting annual dues. When you pay your dues using cash or check, please go to Larry first. He will get you recorded in the roster and then make sure to get the payment to the Treasurer. If you use PayPal, the Treasurer gets the record first and then informs Larry to update the database.

Please get your dues paid, so that we are not stretching this out to the spring.

An assessment regarding the continuing use of PayPal for dues payment is being looked into at this time.

Scholarship – Carl Chinn

The balance in the Scholarship Fund is \$4,463. We have received five donations in memory of Bob Turner totaling \$725.

There is a raffle in progress for a set of polished aluminum/brass WWII diesel boat dolphin book ends. Tickets are \$1 each or 6/ \$5. The drawing for these will be at the January Base meeting.

The Rummage Sale is scheduled for Saturday, November 13, 0800-1300 at the same location (Rodney's Rockets/Halloween Express) on Old Trolley Rd. Please bring items early that morning or, if needed, the committee has a storage area. Contact Carl, Rick or Marty.

Challenge Coins are available for \$12.

Fleet Reserve Association – Rick Sparger

The FRA will hold an indoor picnic on Veteran's Day, November 11. This is also the same day as our Charleston Base meeting.

The FRA has a current raffle in progress for two coolers full of top grade booze. No Mad Dog 20/20. The drawing will be held on Veteran's Day.

Special Events – Rick Sparger

This year, we have several parades in which we can pull the float – Harleyville on December 2 / Moncks Corner on December 4 and Goose Creek on December 11. We do not intend to pull in Summerville this year due to the significant registration fee and the fact that they will not waive the fee as in years past.

The CPO Selectee Breakfast will be held on November 10 at the Ashley Phosphate Cracker Barrel, beginning at 0800.

Rick recommends that we purchase a new flag/stand/eagle so that we do not have to continue to borrow the set from the FRA. We used to have one, but no one knows of its whereabouts. Rick Wise pointed out that there is money already budgeted for this.

As of the day of this meeting, we have not heard from the organizer of the Veterans Day Ceremony.

VA – Tom Lawson The VA has published a new Veteran's Benefit Guide. It can be downloaded from the VA website. You can also order a printed copy to be mailed.

Booster shots are available at the Air Force Base. No appointment is necessary, but you may have to get on a wait list.

The VA is hiring medical staff and are also looking for volunteers.

CVS pharmacy is accepting walk-ins as well.

Recreation – Bill Hayes

After much debate, the BOD elected to hold the Christmas Party on December 4, here at the FRA. The dress will be casual. There will be no admission charge (YES – FREE!) for Base members or family members. No additional guests. Music is lined up. We will be having finger-foods instead of a banquet. Ed Stank pointed out that we will have limited seating at the FRA and advised that everyone should get here early, get your depth charge tickets and take seat. When capacity is reached, the door will be shut. Rick Sparger noted that previous Christmas parties held at the FRA – even with full banquet – still had room.

CRAMA – Butch Bryar Not present.

Nuclear Power School – Ray Sparks The next NPS graduation is December 3. The school is expecting to allow guests at this event.

Newsletter – Ed Stank The Base Newsletter will be published this weekend.

Public Affairs – Ed Stank We have received electronic publication notice regarding our four scholarship awardees.

Ed will resubmit the article for Stacy Power.

Rick Wise provided information to Ed for submission to American Submariner about the NPS awards. Rick Sparger – creatively – congratulated and thanked Ed Stank for his work getting Charleston Base articles published.

Storekeeper – Ken Hutchison

Ken has 2022 calendars for sale. He has about 25 of them remaining.

Ken also offered condolences to Ron Chambers after Alabama's devastating loss to Texas A&M.

COB – Rick Sparger The Nathaniel Greene recently held an event, to which Charleston Base provided tables, chairs, lectern etc. Rick thanked Rick Wise and Ken Hutchison for their help with this effort. Rick suggested that they could show appreciation by supporting the Scholarship fund. Rick also reminded those in attendance that the SubVet equipment, which were stored in the closet at the FRA, (with exception of the meeting items) have been removed to the storage facility due to an OSHA inspection.

Vice Commander – Tom Lawson Nothing to report – but reminded everyone to clean up your tables after the meeting.

Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko

Mike provided to each table a nine-page list of awards from the USSVI National Convention. Charleston Base is large enough with people qualified for these awards. He does not want to go to Buffalo next year, just to sit there and watch other Bases get awards and return to Charleston empty-handed. He specifically called out for recognition of our PAO and Chaplain, but there are plenty of others. All Base members can recommend any other member for these awards, but they need to be written by February 2022. Mike prefers a January deadline. If anyone needs some help at writing them, please contact Carl Chinn or Greg Landry. He may even get some others, if needed.

Mike recommends an award for Stacy Power and his son – who comes from Georgia every month to bring his dad the Base Meeting. Please email Mike Ciesielko with the basic information for an awardee. They will get all of the background for placement into the award submission. Mike will get the award list published on the Base website.

Good of the Order

Nuclear Historian – Rick Carlson Not present.

Non-Nuclear Historian – Harry Nettles

May 3, 1945 – WWII – Victory in Europe

The war in Europe did not end on May 3, because the Soviet Union never pulled out of Berlin. Stalin was so ticked off at the Germans for what they had done to his country, when they invaded him, that he was not going to let go of that prized jewel and the city was in trouble. All railroads were shut down and all highways were closed. The only thing open was the airport and thus, once again, the United States stepped up to the plate and began what became known as the Berlin Airlift.

The Berlin Airlift was thought to be maybe six weeks, at the most. No, that did not happen. It lasted for about a year-and-a-half. In 1947, a young country clubber (Air Force) transferred to Germany and was chosen to fly in on the Berlin Airlift. He contacted one of his buddies and hitched a ride in to take a look at the airfield so that he would know what to expect when he flew in the next day. He had his little Kodak movie camera and was filming. Over on the edge of the runway, he saw a small group of children – about a half-dozen. Well, he went over to talk to them and they just stood there looking at him. It struck him that something just wasn't right, because when he had gone to China and Costa Rica, the kids were asking him for candy. These German children did not ask for anything. He looked at them and said, "Here is what I am going to do for you. Tomorrow, when I fly in here, I am going to bring you candy." So, he reached in his pocket and pulled out the only thing that he had – two sticks of Double Mint gum. Tearing them in half, he passed them through the fence to the kids. The children on the other side, again, tore the sticks in half again. Why? Since 1943, there were no candy factories or stores. All of the industry had been bombed. From 1943 to 1947, the children did not have any candy. The children then asked how he was going to get the candy to them. He replied that when he flies in and gets to the outer marker, he would simply toss the candy out of the plane. But how were they to know which plane was his? After all, during the time of the Berlin Airlift, they were landing a plane every 90 seconds. He thought a moment, then told and demonstrated how he would wiggle his wings, so that they would know it was him, as he crossed the outer marker.

They were ecstatic and could not wait until the next day. So, he got back to his base, went to the exchange and bought all of the candy that he could find. He got his aircrew together and explained

explained to them the plan to deliver the candy to the children. While airborne, he would give the crew a signal and at that moment, they were to throw the candy out the window to the kids on the ground. Well, you know how engineers have questions about everything – especially nukes (not really part of the story, but just to aggravate the nukes). One of them said to the captain that they could not do that because the plane will be coming through the approach path at 110 knots and if a candy bar traveling at that speed hit a kid in the head, it could kill him.

The captain agreed that he made a valid point, but once again, American ingenuity kicked in. Suddenly, the captain said, “Parachutes.” They were to attach parachutes to the candy. So, they went and bought handkerchiefs and attached them to the candy. The captain wiggled the wings and the crew dropped the little parachutes with candy attached to the children below. This began what was known as “Operation Little Vittles”. When word got back to the United States about what Captain Halvorsen was doing for the children in Berlin, school children started sending their candy to Germany so that it could be dropped out of airplanes to the children.

The next thing you know, candy companies decided that they were going to contribute to this as well. Not only did they send candy, but they sent parachutes in the form of handkerchiefs so that his aircrew had plenty of candy to drop out of the window to the children. It is estimated that, by the time that the Berlin Airlift ended, twenty-six tons of candy had been dropped to the children in Berlin. In 1947, those children were 8, 9 or 10 years old. Today, they are in their 80s or 90s. Many of them became politicians, business owners and civic leaders. Think about how good of an ally that Germany has been in the NATO world since the end of WWII. Why? Because those kids grew up to be business leaders and politicians. They remember Captain Wiggle Wings and Operation Little Vittles. Don't forget.

After Battery – Ray Sparks The Hog Roast will be held from April 3 thru 9. This year will be different, as the major events will be held only Thursday, Friday and Saturday, instead of having meals all week. Campers will be allowed on the grounds beginning April 3.

Gun Club – Mike Ciesielko Mike is planning a gun shoot on October 23 and requested COB to send out email.

Drawings & Auctions

Scholarship Challenge Coin Challenge – A random number based on the Base Meeting attendance sheet had been chosen. Gerald Starr would have won, if he had had a Challenge Coin. The prize will be held until next month.

FRA Drawing – Rick Sparger

Depth Charge Drawing – Marty Sessler

Closing Ceremony

Ricky Collins 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 1955.