

**United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base**  
**Minutes of Business Meeting**  
**14 August 2025**

**Opening Ceremonies:**

- The August 2025 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Dave Harvey with a quorum of two officers and a total of 57 members. The meeting started at 1900 with the sound of the diving alarm. Secretary Gordon Long arrived late but in just in time to provide the Secretary report in person. Vice Commander Tom Lawson was not present this evening.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Base Commander Dave Harvey and recited by the members in attendance.
- The Invocation and the Tolling of the Boats lost during the month of August 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 83 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 Yeoman, Submarines**  
**Elmer Bennett Mullins, US Navy Retired**  
**Departed on Eternal Patrol 18 July 2025**

- The Creed of USSVI was read by Base Commander Dave Harvey.
- Base Commander Dave Harvey welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

**Special Presentation:**

- Sharon Sessler spoke about how much her husband Marty loved clocks as she and her daughter Lauren presented one to Charleston Base in his memory. Marty built, repaired, bought and sold clocks.
- Lauren briefly expressed how much her dad had enjoyed his time in the Service and that SubVets had meant a lot to him – especially reuniting with old shipmates.
- Nick Nichols accepted the clock and stated that we have a spot in this room right beside the Base Charter on the wall. When you see it, you will be able to remember Marty. “Good or bad, but remember Marty - ☺.”

**Dismissal of Guests and Start of Business:**

- Base Commander Dave Harvey asked anyone who is not a member of the Base or is not a submarine qualified guest, to depart the meeting room. A brief recess was held during this time.

**Introductions of New Attendees:**

- There was one new man in attendance who introduced himself evening.
  - Myles Smith – ETNC(SEL) – Qualified on USS Helena SSN725 – 2021

**Old Business:**

- None

**New Business:**

- **Chief Selectee Submarine Brunch - Myles Smith**
  - Myles Smith from NNPTC asked Charleston Base members to attend a Chief Selectee Submarine Brunch at 1200 on 13 September at Bldg 777. The invitation is for Chief and above only.

- **FRA Annual Donation - Nick Nichols**

- Nick Nichols presented a motion as recommended by the BOD:
  - Charleston Base shall make an annual donation of \$1000 to the FRA Home beginning September 1, 2025 and continue each year on September 1.
- Several voices were heard as a second to the motion, the loudest and most distinct was Ken Hutchison. Nick noted that we use this facility for our meetings, Christmas Party, fund raisers and anything else we want to do including several fund raisers for the recently held USSVI Southeast Regional Conference. They could be renting this out but elect to let us use it. We should support them as much as possible other than buying food and drinks. The motion carried.

**Secretary – Gordon Long:**

- The Minutes from the July Base Meeting were emailed to all Base members. The Minutes have been published on the Base Website for download. There were no revisions. The Minutes were approved as written.

**Treasurer – Ricky Collins:**

- The Treasurer's Report for July was published and promulgated on the website. There were no revisions. The report was approved as presented.

**Chaplain – Nick Nichols:**

- **Highlighted boat of the month:**
  - **USS BULLHEAD (SS-332)** was the last submarine lost during WWII. She was sunk on August 6, 1945 with the loss of 84 crew members in the Lombok Strait while on her 3rd war patrol. BULLHEAD was sunk by a depth charge dropped from a Japanese Army plane.
- **TODAY 80 years ago - August 14, 1945 - VJ Day – Victory in the Pacific**
- **67 years ago - August 12, 1958 - USS Nautilus completes first undersea voyage to North Pole**
- **25 years ago - August 12, 2000 - Soviet Submarine KURSK sank in Barents Sea – loss of all hands**

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

All of the shipmates on this binnacle list would really appreciate a phone call or even a card from their shipmates in the base. Contact information can be found on the Sailing List.

- **YNC(SS) Elmer 'Moon' Mullins, 89**, departed on Eternal Patrol on 18 July 2025. Moon joined the Navy in 1954 and retired in 1978. He was a Member of USSVI National [2002] and Charleston Base [2002]. He was a member of the Holland Club qualifying in 1964 on USS RATON SS/SSR/AGSS-270. Moon also served on USS DENTUDA AGSS-335, USS PARCHE AGSS-384, USS CHARR AGSS-328, USS SEADRAGON SSN-584 and twice on USS LEWIS AND CLARK SSBN-644, the first tour he was a Plank Owner putting her in commission and then as his last sea tour. He also served on the staff of COMMANDER SUBMARINE SQUADRON ONE. Moon was also a member of the Fleet Reserve Association Branch 269, American Legion Post 166 Goose Creek and a Life Member of VFW Post 3433 Ladson. There was a Memorial Service on 26 July at Parks Funeral Home Chapel where he was given a FRA Two Bell Ceremony and SUBVET Eternal Patrol Bell Tolling.
- **FTCS(SS) Albert 'Al' Stoll, 80**, departed on Eternal Patrol on 5 July 2025. There was a Celebration of Life Memorial at the FRA Home on July 25<sup>th</sup>. Al was given a FRA Two Bell Ceremony and SUBVET Eternal Patrol Bell Tolling.
- **Tom Holcombe's** sister, Norma Jean Holcombe, passed away in 15 July. Tom traveled home for her service on 19 July.
- **Bobbi Sutton's** daughter, Becky Grammer, passed away on July 17. Bobbi is the FRA Branch 269 Chaplain and widow of RMCM(SS) Jon Sutton who departed on EP 28 June 2011. Her service was held on 29 July at Hillcrest Baptist Church.
- **Tom Lawson** was taken to Summerville ER on Wed for possible pneumonia but he did not have that. He ended up staying overnight and will be there tonight also. Tests show that he does not have it but he will have a final CT scan this evening.. With his breathing issues they are testing everything.

- **Jerry Stout** had a recent PET scan and it showed no residual skin cancer cells. He will continue having monthly immune therapy infusions. On Monday 11 August he had a difficult 5 ½ hr surgery and was home on Tuesday. Thoughts and Prayers are appreciated. Jerry personally provided an update on his condition.
- **Walt Deal's granddaughter's** heart surgery went great. She was home in record time is now playing like a little girl should.
- **Ed Simokat** fell in his house on 22 July, and after being treated at the hospital was sent home. He was banged up badly.
- **Fred Woodley** continues to have urinary tract problems. He had a procedure conducted that went very well and is recovering at home. The procedure left a hematoma from his waist to right knee. On Wednesday he learned his brother Larry in Michigan has been diagnosed with a cancerous tumor pressing on his airway and his is intubated.
- **Rick Wise** had a CT scan on 28 July with very good results. No new nodules were found in the lungs but a small nodule that has been present in the right lung has had a small increase in size. He will have his next PET scan in three months.
- **Mike Knaub and wife Deborah** have moved to Daniel Island to an assisted living location.
- **Sue Eckles** had a stroke and is now in the Village of Summerville.
- **Kit Sparger** is at home. Rick Jr., says she is doing OK and continuing her treatments and so far, looks positive.
- **Don Meadows** is confined to his bed much of the time. Even though he can't attend the meetings he does watch them on YouTube. His seizures are getting worse and more frequent.
- **Ken Curtis** is at home with Palliative Hospice care coming to the house several times during the week. He is in good spirits and welcomes phone calls and visitors. Please keep Ken and Barbara both in your prayers.
- **Marvin Miller** is at White Oak Manor. 9285 Medical Plaza Dr. Room 117. He is answering his cell 843.873.0564. This is behind Trident.
- **Bill & Becky Roberts** are living in the Villages, him in Cottage 606 with Becky in the Greenhouse Memory Care Unit. His mailing address is: William Roberts, 201 W. 9th North Street, Unit 99, Summerville SC 29483-6715.
- **Connie Dempster** is in The Bridge of Charleston Assisted Living. Mailing address is: Connie Dempster – Room 222, 2590 Elms Plantation Blvd., North Charleston, SC 29406. Apartment phone – (843) 793-1187.
- Complete/update your page 2 if you have not done so.

#### **Webmaster – Nick Nichols:**

- Please report any change in your personal info to either Larry, Nick or the COB so the necessary changes can be made to national and local database.

#### **Saturday Base Meeting – Nick Nichols**

- Nick Nichols updated everyone on the plans for a daytime Saturday Base Meeting – the purpose is to allow those members who cannot drive at night an opportunity to attend a Base Meeting. There is not enough time for proper coordination. Because of this, we will plan for such a change for possibly the March 2026 Base Meeting.

#### **Social Media – Lewis Leal:**

- Nothing to report

#### **Membership – Nick Nichols for Larry Knutson**

- **Base Standings** [those with more than 200 members]: Charleston is #3 in USSVI membership. [AM = associate member]
  - Groton 1125 w/62 AM - 2) Hampton Roads 288 w/11 AM – 3) Charleston 247 w/12 AM - 4) Bremerton 243 w/12 AM – 5) Requin 207 w/20 AM
- Beginning with the renewal of dues in October members who pay annual dues will be able to make 1, 3 or 5-year dues payment for next year. The hope is to reduce the number who forget to pay their dues. Fee will remain \$20/yr.

**Scholarship – Tom Lawson III**

- The balance in the Scholarship fund is currently \$6,567.
- Tom is still asking for a third member to be part of the Scholarship Committee.
- Challenge coins are available.
- There is a raffle in progress for a set of Dolphins.
- Plans are still being made for the Rummage Sale in November.

**National Awards – Dave Harvey**

- Several awards were submitted to USSVI, but no advanced notice is provided prior to the National Convention in Orlando.

**Fleet Reserve Association – Ken Hutchison**

- The FRA will be holding an indoor picnic on Labor Day beginning at 1130.
- Ken Hutchison thanked Charleston Base for the contribution to the FRA. Treasurer Ricky Collins still must provide the check.
- Ken talked about the drawing in progress for the members of the FRA. It will be held on Tuesday.
- Ken recently was privileged to conduct a Two-Bell ceremony for a FRA member who was 102 years old. The man had been on the USS Hornet when Dolittle's Raiders flew off and also was in the battle of Coral Sea.
- Ken listed the "Four Stages for an Old Guy".
  - First – You look around and don't remember names.
  - Second – Is when you forget people's faces.
  - Third – When you go to the head and come out with your zipper open.
  - Fourth – When you forget to unzip.

**Recreation – Johnny Brown**

- Johnny talked about the combined FRA/Charleston Base SubVets picnic which was held at Marrington Plantation on July 19. It was HOT, but we had a good time. We will avoid future July picnics.
- We will have our Christmas Party at the FRA on December 12. The menu has not yet been worked out.
- Charleston Base sponsored the breakfast bar at the Navy Birthday Ball golf tournament fund raiser. The SubVet banner will be displayed.

**NNPTC Liaison – Anthony Mazza**

- Nothing to report

**Comptroller – Rick Wise**

- Nothing to report

**Nuclear Power School Awards – Phil Nunnally**

- The last NPS graduation was August 1. It was hot, but it was still good.
- The guest speaker was the Commanding Officer of PCU John F. Kennedy. He had been a Machinist Mate who became an officer.
- The next NPS graduation will be September 26.

**Newsletter – Phil Nunnally**

- Please send anything submarine related of you just think it may be of interest to members – even if you think that he may have heard it already.

**Little David – Phil Nunnally**

- Nothing to report

**Float Coordinator – Dave Harvey**

- Working on things for September.

### **Ambassador USSVCF– Bob MacPherson**

- USSVCF website has changed the information regarding the various topics. Be sure take the time to refresh your memory on the opportunities available from children, scholarships, fellow submarine community with desperate needs etc.
- If you have standing donations to USSVCF, to continue these donations, you must redo them. The vendor which had been handling the donations stole approximately \$40,000 from the Foundation by holding onto the donations. The Foundation is getting this corrected, but in the meantime, the instructions for making recurring donations are on the USSVCF website.
- The USSVCF will be holding some auctions at the National Convention. There is a WWII Jeep and other things that are used to raise funds for memorials and other projects. The Foundation provided a list of items for auction donations. Tom Holcombe noted that the Jeep has been fully restored.
- Bob spoke about the 2025 WWII Memorial Week in St. Marys.

### **PAO– Bob MacPherson**

- Please provide Bob with info so that he can get it to National. It's great to have a newsletter but articles about Charleston Base events must be also be sent to National in a timely manner so that we can get the recognition that we need. This Base has great enthusiasm and does amazing things; the work, therefore, must be acknowledged. When it comes time for awards at the end of the year, it will be apparent why this Base is deserving of those awards.

### **Kaps 4 Kids – Art Sattler**

- We may be able to have a K4K visit in October. More info later.

### **Submarine License Plates – Dave Harvey for Ed Stank**

- The plate design which Ed submitted was denied by the DMV. At this point, what is permitted is the National USSVI logo, the letters "SV" and the number. Ed will provide an update at the next Base Meeting.

### **Special Events – Tom Holcombe**

- Tom reported a recent posting from Joint Base Charleston of a Country Music event at the Air Base. Tom asked Webmaster Nick Nichols to post the info on the Charleston Base website.
- Tom talked about the upcoming National Convention.
- The dates for the Coastal Carolina Fair are 30 OCT to 9 NOV. Tom will be putting together a watchbill for the event. He wants to have the float attended from gates open to gates closed. He hopes to be at the same location on the grounds.
- Tom, along with Rusty Pickett and Rodney McKanna met with David Coat from Patriots Point to discuss the Cold War Memorial. There are plans to put a waterproof membrane, which is supposed to last for five years, over the top the sail to keep water from getting inside the sail. Patriots Point will be sending a list of plans for future work as well.
- There is cleaning at the CWM. Tom stated that Rodney will coordinate these working parties for later when it is cooler.
- There are discussions in progress to gather funds for maintenance of the CWM. If a good many of the boat associations donate to the cause, then plenty of money will be secured. There was a question from the floor about how Patriots Point would direct the money. Tom stated that it would be earmarked for the CWM.

### **Storekeeper – Woody Woodsmall**

- The 250/125 year Navy/Submarine Birthday Coin is available for only a short period of time. There will be no more produced after October. Woody has only a few left at \$12 and does not expect to order anymore.
- Woody has only one more 60 year Coin/Patch Combo – Never mind – It is gone. Woody offered the set for a discount price of \$15. It was claimed quickly by Casey Power.
- Woody has oak wood Dolphin pens available which are made by one of our Base Members. The wood come from an old whiskey barrel. The pen uses a Parker refill and is \$30 each.
- Woody has placed an order for 2026 calendars. He only purchased 40 based on previous years' sales.

- Two PSAs:
  - Use the microphone. For those who are unable to attend the Base meeting – as Woody was last month – and must depend on the video to hear what is going, it is very important to use the mic. When someone was talking without the mic, it was similar to watching a Charlie Chaplain silent movie for what could be heard. Woody noted that we had to have missed him because his table was totally empty as no one set it up in his place.
  - The Oxford Dictionary defines the word “Committee” as, “A group of people appointed for a specific function, typically consisting of members from a larger group.” Those who went to the picnic in July should have noted how hard Johnny worked to do almost everything for that picnic. Johnny is not the committee. The committee must be more than one man. It was brought up at the BOD meeting, but there must be some guys in this room tonight who are willing to be part of the Recreation Committee so that when we have these events, one man is not getting the ice, doing all the cooking, etc. Johnny needs to be recognized for his effort. He was offered a little help the day of the picnic, but the work involved to put on a picnic truly requires a committee.

#### **COB – Greg Landry**

- The Coastal Carolina Fair is coming up soon and we need volunteers. COB encouraged everyone to be part of the Charleston Base float display at the fair. It was a lot of fun last year.
- There will be an Air Show in May 2026. More info at a later date.

#### **VA – Tom Lawson**

- Not present

#### **Vice Commander – Tom Lawson**

- Not present

#### **Base Commander – Dave Harvey**

- Dave has received a very large donation of antique furniture and other items of value. He has contacted the town of Ellore which, on Oct 11, closes the street and has an event called Trash to Treasure. Dave expects to have three of the spaces at this event. Dave will have a trailer at the September Base Meeting for those who want to bring something.
- For those going to the National Convention, you sign up for your table once you are there. We can arrange to sit together at check-in.
- There will be a Holland Club Breakfast at the National Convention. The meal is also open to your wives, not just yourselves.
- The Base/District Commanders’ Meeting at the National Convention will be held on Friday. It is available to any member based on seat availability.
- Charleston Base has several open committee positions – Associate Chaplain, FRA and others. Dave recognized how hard Nick Nichols works as Base Chaplain and truly needs some assistance in this important work.
- Dave Harvey encouraged Base members to go visit other Base members who are not at the Base Meetings. In the last three months since he became Base Commander, we have lost 5 members.

## **GOOD OF THE ORDER**

### **After Battery – Steve (Buddha) Nelms**

- USS RAY (SSN-653) will be holding a reunion beginning on Wednesday, OCT 8. On Friday OCT 10, the Ray group will visit The After Battery all day.
- USS Will Rogers (SSBN-659) will hold a reunion in October, with plans to visit The After Battery with 120 people on the October 17. Buddha read some questions from the 659 Reunion Committee.
- The 2026 Hog Roast will be held in April. Plans are being made right now.

### **GUN CLUB – Mike Ciesielko**

- Mike is planning a shoot for late September or early October.

### **VFW – Rodney McKanna**

- The VFW in Summerville is holding 50s/60s sock hop.

### **Drawings & Auctions**

- FRA Drawing – Dennis Lanier
- Depth Charge Drawing – Pete Garrison

### **Closing Ceremony**

- Chaplain Nick Nichols led the group in a prayer of Benediction.
- Base Commander Dave Harvey announced adjournment of the meeting with a sound of three blasts of the diving alarm.
- Meeting closed at 2019.