

**United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base**  
**Minutes of Business Meeting**  
**11 September 2025**

**Opening Ceremonies:**

- The September 2025 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Dave Harvey with a quorum of four officers and a total of 58 members. The meeting started at 1900 with the sound of the diving alarm.
- 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 September was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols.
- Submarines lost during the month of September:
  - **USS S-5 (SS 110) Sep 1, 1920 – Practice Dive No loss of life**
  - **USS GRAYLING (SS 209) Sep 9, 1943 – 8<sup>th</sup> War Patrol Lost with all hands – 76 souls**
  - **USS S-51 (SS 162) Sep 25, 1925 – Rammed off Block Island Lost with 33 souls; 3 survivors**
  - **USS CISCO (SS 290) Sep 28, 1943 – 1<sup>st</sup> War Patrol Lost with all hands – 76 souls**
  - **USS POMPANO (SS 181) September, 1943 – 7<sup>th</sup> War Patrol Lost with all hands - 77 souls**
  - **Five Boats and 262 Men Lost**
- The Creed of USSVI was read by Vice Commander Tom Lawson.
- Base Commander Dave Harvey welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

Noting today's date, **Base Chaplain Nick Nichols** read the following:

Here's something really important to think about in your life – not just for today but every day.

**On this day, in 2001 ....**

---**246 people** went to sleep in preparation for their morning flights.

---**2,606 people** went to sleep in preparation for work in the morning.

---**343 firefighters** went to sleep in preparation for their morning shift.

---**60 police officers** went to sleep in preparation for their morning patrol.

---**8 paramedics** went to sleep in preparation for their morning shift of saving lives.

**None of them saw past 10 a.m. September 11, 2001.** None.

Life is random - In one single moment, life may never be the same.

Tonight, as you go to sleep in preparation for your life tomorrow, kiss the ones you love.

Hug your spouse and snuggle a little tighter, and **never take one second of your life for granted.** Never.

**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 were two men in attendance at the Base meeting for the first time this evening.
  - Richard Jordan – RMCS - Qualified on USS Grayback SS574 – 1960 – Also served aboard USS Silversides SS236, USS Ulysses S Grant SSBN631B, USS Abraham Lincoln SSBN602G, USS Theodore Roosevelt SSBN600B
  - Roy Pertell – TM3 – Qualified on USS Sea Owl SS405 – 1968 – Member of Saratoga BaseBoth of these men are members of other bases who attended the USSVI National Convention and visited our Base Meeting on their route home.

**Old Business:**

- None

## **New Business:**

- **New Trailer for Float – Dave Harvey – Float Coordinator**

- After turning over control of the Base Meeting to Vice Commander Tom Lawson, Dave Harvey as Float Coordinator explained that he recently was able to acquire a 22 foot 15,000 pound capacity, heavy duty trailer which has regular tires and electric brakes.
- A conservative estimate to fix the old trailer with correct axles, tires and brakes would be upwards of \$4,500. After hearing that the planned use was by SubVets, the man who sold the trailer to Dave agreed to an \$800 reduction in price, making the cost for this new trailer \$2,000.
- The plan is to remove the wheels/jacks and tongue from the old trailer and weld the current trailer onto the top of the new trailer. This allows us to use everything as it is now without changes or additional cost to place a good stable frame under the float.
- Dave had asked the BOD to recommend and present this request to the Base to reimburse him the \$2,000 cost. Ken Hutchison made the motion with Nick Nichols seconding.
  - There was a brief discussion with positive input from Tom Holcombe who had towed the float in its current condition.
  - Ed Stank noted that we had previously towed the float to locations outside the Charleston area and inquired about being able to do this again. Dave Harvey stated that this new trailer could be towed all the way to San Diego. Another man noted to the group that he was able to pull this new trailer with his Jeep.
- Vice Commander Tom Lawson asked the Base for a vote on the motion which carried enthusiastically and without objection.

The meeting was interrupted briefly for a statement that the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis has been locked down due to report of an active shooter.

- **National Awards – Tom Holcombe/Dave Harvey:**

- Tom read the USSVI citation and presented the USSVI 2025 Meritorious Base Award to Charleston Base as most representing the submarine motto, "Pride Runs Deep". Mike Ciesielko accepted the award on behalf of Charleston as prior Base Commander.
- Dave Harvey read the excerpt and presented Mike Ciesielko with an award from the National Commander. Mike spoke a few words of acceptance after he was presented the award.
- Tom Holcombe read the text of the USSVI Robert Link Award and presented the award to Nick Nichols.
- Tom Holcombe presented the Individual USSVI Award to Dave Harvey. After accepting the award, Dave spoke about the assistance he received from numerous Base members during the recent SER Conference, for which he was recognized.
- Dave Harvey explained the procedure for which the awards will be submitted in the future.

## **Secretary – Gordon Long:**

- The Minutes from the August 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 August was published and promulgated on the website. There were no revisions. The report was approved as presented.

## **Chaplain – Nick Nichols:**

- **Our shipmate William Carman** presented the base with a bullhorn to use at our picnics. A great gift and it will be very useful at base functions.
- **Highlighted boat of the month:**
  - **USS POMPANO (SS-181)** was sunk between Sept 17 and Oct 5 with the loss of 77 men while on her 7th war patrol. Before being lost, she sank two enemy cargo ships. The exact cause of her loss remains unknown, but she probably fell victim to a mine on or after September 25th. This boat's last recorded

ship sunk happened on Sept 25th, so she probably hit a mine on or after that date but before Oct 5th, when she was scheduled back at Midway.

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.

- **SKCM(SS) James Brooks USN Retired, 82**, departed on Eternal Patrol on 31 August 2025 in Mt. Pleasant. He was not a member of USSVI.
- **EMCM(SS) Harold L. Zachariah, USN Retired, 91**, departed on Eternal Patrol on 4 September in N. Charleston. His service was held on Wed, 10 September. He was not a member of USSVI.
- **Sue Eckles**, wife of Jim Eckles (EP 2009) passed away. Her service was this past Tuesday.
- **Buddha Nelms** will be having his pace maker replaced on Monday morning 15 September.
- **Tom Lawson** has been having issues which caused him to be in the hospital. He is home recovering.
- **Jerry Stout** is now clear of his prostate cancer and going through rehab.
- **Fred Woodley** received a good report from his urologist. Determined his thyroid issue was due to his weight loss. His brother is at the UofMichigan and being evaluated on treatment plans.
- **David Wood sent the following: My wife Fran**, had a stroke on February two years ago February 2026. This happened during a heart bypass procedure and they also had to replace her aorta during all of that. She is home now and doing better. We have a friend of hers that helps during the week.
- **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. You can contact him at cell 843.475.7043 or [torpedochief@aol.com](mailto:torpedochief@aol.com).
- **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. Ken can't talk for long but you can contact him at cell 843.906.1880 or [kencurtis@comcast.net](mailto:kencurtis@comcast.net).
- **Mike Knaub and wife Deborah** have moved to Daniel Island to an assisted living location. Their address is: Daniel Point Retirement Community, Room 310, 514 Robert Daniel Drive, Daniel Island, SC 29492. You can contact him at cell 843-795-6665 or [mlk91444@yahoo.com](mailto:mlk91444@yahoo.com).
- **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** has changed his location in the Villages. He is now in D409 in the main building. Becky is still in the Greenhouse Memory Care Unit. His mailing address is: William Roberts, 201 W. 9th North Street, D409, Summerville SC 29483-6715. You can contact him at cell 843.509.3862 or [cbussvicob@yahoo.com](mailto:cbussvicob@yahoo.com)
- 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.

#### Social Media – Lewis Leal:

- Not present

#### Membership – Larry Knutson

- **Base Standings** [those with more than 200 members]: Charleston is #3 in USSVI membership. [AM = associate member]
  - Groton 1130 w/62 AM - 2) Hampton Roads 290 w/11 AM – 3) Charleston 247 w/12 AM - 4) Bremerton 244 w/12 AM – 5) Requin 207 w/20 AM
- Dues for annual members will be due at the Base Meeting in October. This year, we will have multi-year payment options for 1/3/5 years at a time.
- At the National Convention, Dave Harvey reported that – as noted during the recent National Convention – 61 percent of the current USSVI members are Holland Club members,

**Scholarship – Tom Lawson III**

- There is a raffle in progress for a large set of dolphins. The drawing will be held at the of the meeting tonight.
- Dave Harvey has received a significant amount of antiques. This will be taken to Elloree, SC for their annual Trash to Treasure event on October 11 rather than putting them out at the Rummage Sale. Dave is asking for help on October 4 to load up the new trailer for the trip to Elloree where we will be setting up at 0500.
- We have already sold five items totaling \$500
- Our Rummage Sale will be held on November 15 at Rodney's Rockets/Halloween Express on Old Trolley Rd. in Summerville. (The same place as previous years). We will begin setting up at 0500 for this also. Anything not sold will be taken to the National Kidney Foundation Thrift Store
- Tables are needed for smaller items.
- Tom is still asking for a third member to be part of the Scholarship Committee.
- Challenge coins are available for \$12.

**Fleet Reserve Association – Ken Hutchison**

- Nothing to report.

**Recreation – Johnny Brown**

- Nothing to report.

**NNPTC Liaison – Anthony Mazza**

- On Saturday, September 13 at BLDG 777, NNPTC will host the Chief Selectee Breakfast.

**Comptroller – Rick Wise**

- The 2026 Charleston Base Budge is being prepared by Rick and Tom Holcombe. It will be presented at the November BOD Meeting for initial review. Afterward, it shall be sent to the entire Base membership for final review. And a vote by the Base members at the November Base Meeting.
- This will be Rick's last budget. With that change, Rick will be out of a job at Charleston Base. Applause ensued, recognizing Rick Wise's long-term of work at Charleston Base.

**Nuclear Power School Awards – Anthony Mazza for Phil Nunnally**

- The next NPS graduation will be September 26.

**Newsletter – Phil Nunnally**

- Not present

**Little David – Phil Nunnally**

- Not present

**Float Coordinator – Dave Harvey**

- The float will remain in its current state (not attached to the new trailer) until after the Coastal Carolina Fair

**Ambassador USSVCF– Bob MacPherson**

- At the Nation Convection, Ken Earles won a National Award.
- There are 10 elements to USSVCF – especially the Brotherhood Fund
- Bob welcomed Jerry Stout to his committee
- USSVCF website has changed as they shift to another website provider. The orginal was withholding funds.

**PAO– Bob MacPherson**

- Bob encouraged everyone to read his LEAN SUBMARINER blog.
- It costs \$125S to sponsor a young enlisted man and his spouse for the Navy Ball.

**Kaps 4 Kids – Art Sattler**

- Art stated that other Bases are having trouble getting back into the hospitals.
- Currently planning for the Fair.

### **Submarine License Plates – Ed Stank**

- The template for the plate has been approved.
- A DD214 must be submitted.
- The cost for the plate will be \$20 in addition to the normal registration fee.
- As money is received, the contributors will be reimbursed.
- There will be a raffle for the first plate

### **Special Events – Tom Holcombe**

- The Coastal Carolina Fair is coming up soon. Tom is asking for volunteers to sign up. He wants to have the float manned from “Gates Open to Gates Closed”
- The Hunley will be having an Oyster Roast on October 24. They will be offering behind the scenes tours to SubVets. More info later

### **Storekeeper – Woody Woodsmall**

- Woody had one last Navy 250 / Submarine 150 year coin. It was quickly claimed by Nick.
- Woody has flag pins with VETERAN on it – Get yours now.
- Woody has flag pins with dolphins also.
- Woody has a new license plate frame.
- Woody has some new hats.

### **COB – Greg Landry**

- The AFB will be having an Air Show in May 2026 with the Blue Angels.

### **VA – Tom Lawson**

- VA needs volunteers – especially drivers.

### **Vice Commander – Tom Lawson**

- Due to his breathing issues, Tom is stepping down as Vice Commander.
- At the conclusion of this meeting, Tom will resign his position.
- Base Commander Dave Harvey has appointed Art Sattler as Interim VC to fill out the term of office until the regular election in May, 2026.

### **Base Commander – Dave Harvey**

- Dave Harvey asked anyone who is involved in politics to not wear your vest, hat etc.
- Sub School reports that 40 percent of the students are female. By 2030, they expect it to be 60 percent.

### **GOOD OF THE ORDER**

#### **After Battery – Ray Sparks**

- Ray reported that several submarine reunions are visiting The After Battery.
- There is a need for a Fall Clean Up.
- The After Battery is open each Wednesday at 5PM
- 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.

#### **USSVI Campaign – Jerry Stout**

- Jerry reported that he is running for the office of USSVI SE Region Director. The office is currently held by Ken Nichols.
- Jerry gave Buddha a Sculpin Belt Buckle

**CPR/AED Class – Art Sattler**

- Took poll for interest in CPR/AED Class. Art is a certified instructor.

**GUN CLUB – Mike Ciesielko**

- Nothing to report.

**Nuclear Historian – Rick Wise**

- Nothing to report.

**Drawings & Auctions**

- Scholarship Dolphins – Mike Ciesielko
- FRA Drawing – Linda Nichols
- Depth Charge Drawing – Ken Hutchison

**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 2018.