

United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base
Minutes of Business Meeting
14 May 2026

Opening Ceremonies:

- The May 2026 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Dave Harvey with a quorum of four officers and a total of 65 members. The meeting started at 1900 with the sound of the diving alarm.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Vice Commander Art Sattler and recited by the members in attendance.
- The Invocation and the Tolling of the Boats lost during the month of May was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols.
- Submarines lost during the month of May:
 - **USS LAGARTO (SS-371) May 3, 1945 – 2nd War patrol Lost with All Hands – 86 Souls**
 - **USS SCORPION (SSN-589) May 22, 1968 – returning from deployment Lost with All Hands – 99 Souls**
 - **USS SQUALUS (SS-192) May 23, 1939 – during test dive 33 survivors – 26 Souls Lost**
 - **USS STICKLEBACK (SS-415) May 30, 1958 – under tow off Hawaii NO LOSS OF LIFE**
 - **FOUR Boats and 211 Men Lost**

Senior Chief Machinist Mate, Submarines
Marvin D. Miller, US Navy Retired
Departed on Eternal Patrol 22 March 2026

Senior Chief Electronic Technician, Submarines
Joseph Barnes Van Swearingen Jr., US Navy Retired
Departed on Eternal Patrol 16 September 2024

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

Introductions of New Attendees:

- There was one shipmate in attendance at the Base Meeting for the first time this evening.
 - Fred Bolz – HTCM – Skimmer – Welcome Associate Member – Served aboard USS Fulton AS11, USS Canopus AS34 and USS Alamogordo ARDM2 taking care of submarines.

Old Business:

- **Election of Officers (Vice Commander/Secretary) – Ken Hutchison**
 - Ken announced that we had only one candidate nominated for the office of Vice Commander – Art Sattler. He then, three times, requested additional nominations from the floor for Vice Commander with no response. A motion was made, seconded and carried for Art Sattler to be accepted by acclamation.
 - As there was also only one candidate for Secretary – Gordon Long, the same procedure with three requests was conducted, followed by a motion, second and vote for acceptance by acclamation.
 - Congratulations to Art Sattler and Gordon Long. Term of office to expire in 2028.

New Business:

- **FRA Monthly Donation – Dave Harvey / Nick Nichols**
 - Dave Harvey talked about providing money to the FRA for the use of the meeting room (rent). The Board had discussed at the BOD Meeting last week. Nick Nichols presented a motion with Art Sattler seconding for Charleston Base to donate \$200 per month for the next 12 months.
 - In discussion, Rodney McKanna noted that Charleston Base originally came to the FRA because there was food available. Nick pointed out that while do support the FRA through food and drinks we are planning to make a donation – not pay rent. Charleston Base has never been billed and the \$200 donation is far less than what FRA normally charges as rent for use of this meeting room. The Treasurer was asked how much money we had available, followed by a successful vote for the motion.

Secretary – Gordon Long:

- The Minutes from the April Base Meeting were emailed to all Base members. The Minutes have also been published on the Charleston Base website. With no corrections noted at the Base Meeting, the Minutes were approved as written.

Treasurer – Ricky Collins:

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

Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

- **There are two highlighted boats this month:**
 - USS LAGARTO SS-371 was lost on May 3rd 1945 with the loss of 86 men near the Gulf of Siam. She was on her 2nd war patrol and is believed to have been lost to a radar equipped minelayer. HAWKBILL SS-366 got revenge two weeks later by sinking the minelayer.
 - USS SCORPION (SSN-589) was returning to Norfolk, VA from a Mediterranean deployment. On May 22, 1968 she reported her position to be about 50 miles south of the Azores. Scorpion was never heard from again. The exact cause of her loss has never been determined.

ETERNAL PATROL

- **MMCS(SS) Marvin D. Miller, USN Ret., 85**, departed on Eternal Patrol on 22 April 2026. He joined the Navy in 1959 and retired in 1979. Marvin was a life member of USSVI National and Charleston Base as of 2004. He was also a member of the Holland Club qualifying in 1962 on USS SKIPJACK SSN-585. Other duty stations were USS PLUNGER SSN-595, USS DANIEL BOONE SSBN-629, USS JOHN ADAMS SSBN-620 and USS JAMES MADISON SSBN-627. Additionally, he served at Navy Recruiting District New Orleans LA, his only shore duty in a 20-year career.
 - Marvin's Memorial Service was held Saturday, May 9th at 1400 at the FRA Home There were 26 SUBVETS in attendance.
- **ETCS(SS) Joseph Barnes Van Swearingen Jr., USN Ret., 97**, departed on Eternal Patrol on 16 September 2024. He was a Life Member of USSVI National [2004] and Charleston Base [1999]. He was a member of the Holland Club qualifying on USS SIMON BOLIVAR SSBN-641 in 1966. His death was found by accident while searching the obituaries on the web.
- **STSCS(SS) Walter Frank Ziegler, USN Ret.**, departed on Eternal Patrol on 11 May 2026 in FL. He was not a member of USSVI but had been a member of Charleston Base prior to 2011. He qualified in 1964 on USS NATHAN HALE SSBN-623. He also served on USS MARIANO G VALLEJO SSBN-658.
- **SCPO(SS) Bryan Beckes Smith, USN Ret., 78**, departed on Eternal Patrol on 1 May 2026. He was not a member of USSVI. He joined the Navy in 1968 and retired in 1990. He served on USS PARCHE SSN-683 and USS NATHAN HALE SSBN-623. His service was 8 May at Stuhr's on Greenridge Rd.

BINNACLE LIST

- **Kim Matthews** had a spinal stroke and has some minor paralysis. He is using a walker and a scooter to get around.
- **Jerry Stout** was at MUSC 21-30 April. After many attempts for the proper medication for his post immune therapy treatment his no on the mend. He thanks his shipmates for thoughts and prayers and appreciates phone calls or texts.
- **Bob MacPherson** fell and fractured 3 ribs. He is going to have to miss another meeting, sorry. Had made some progress on ribs healing but still moving slow. See you in June. This getting old thing is not for the faint of heart.
- **Rick Wise** has shifted to maintenance chem with only one drug and changed to a 5-week cycle. He had chemo on Tuesday and is not here tonight. The next thing coming up is the vocal cord injection on May 26. Since he will be unable to talk for up to 2 days after the procedure no calls please but he will respond to texts. [843.276.0899]
- **Brenda Woodsmall** will have knee surgery on Monday, May 18.

LONG TERM / ASSISTED LIVING / HOMEBOUND

- **Steve Curry** has AFIB and congenital heart failure and is on 24/7 oxygen. Also diagnosed with stage 3 cancer and began chemo on 15 April. Phone calls are welcome [843.270.9905]
- **Dave Woods wife, Fran**, is still recovering from a stroke in 2024 during a heart bypass.
- **Don Meadows** is confined to his bed much of the time but he hopes to make some base meetings. Has had foot surgery, with many more to come, to correct his problem. [843.475.7043]
- **Ed Simokat** is confined to his home and can't attend meetings. He is now on hospice care. If you want to visit, please call first and talk to Judy. [843.810.0383]
- **Mike Knaub** is in assisted living on Daniel Island. His address is 514 Robert Daniel Dr. Rm 310, Daniel Island SC 29492-7375. You can contact Mike on his email **mlk91444@yahoo.com** or [843.795.6665].
- **Bill [Becky] Roberts** in D409 in the Villages of Summerville. Becky in the Greenhouse Memory Care Unit. His mailing address is: William Roberts, 201 W. 9th North Street, D409, Summerville SC 29483-6715. Bill's email is **cbussvicob@yahoo.com** and his cell phone is [843.509.3962]

Complete/update your page 2 if you have not done so.

Webmaster – Nick Nichols:

- The new National website has been up for over a month. Everyone should have received an email from Tim Carlisle with three videos. The last video is a tutorial for the website. It's very good and will walk you through the site.
- If you have any changes to your info on National you can update it yourself or send the info to either Larry or Nick to get them made on National and local.

Base Contacts – Nick Nichols:

- You should have the names, phone numbers and email addresses of all members that you normally contact in your phone contacts or use the link to the officers' page to get contact info.

Base Business Cards – Nick Nichols:

- Carry a couple of the new base business cards at all times. On the back of the card are two QR codes, one for the base and one for national.

FRA Ladies' Auxiliary – Nick Nichols:

- The 'Break the Table Challenge' was very successful last month. We will do this again later in the summer but anyone can still bring food items. The FRA Auxiliary really appreciates all the SUBVETs have done to help this cause. BZ!!

FRA Support – Nick Nichols:

- The 'Break the Table Challenge' was very successful last month. We will do this again later in the summer but anyone can still bring food items. The FRA Auxiliary really appreciates all the SUBVETs have done to help this cause. BZ!!

FRA Rules – Nick Nichols:

- New rules we must follow at the fleet when attending a SUBVET meeting:
 - If you are an FRA member you can go into the bar area anytime you want to.
 - If you are not an FRA member, use the bartenders in our meeting room to order food and drinks.
 - If you bring a guest and you are an FRA member the guest can enter the bar area as long as you (the FRA member) sign them in the guest log at the bar.
 - If you bring a guest and you are not an FRA member then you and guest must stay in the meeting room unless an FRA member signs you into the guest log at the bar.
- If you are not an FRA member, consider joining. Support the FRA as they support SUBVETS by allowing our use of the meeting room.

- The FRA needs the support of the SUBVETS to get them through these next few months. When out for lunch stop by and have lunch at the Home. Every little bit helps.
- There are two services you can attend for Memorial Day.
 - May 23 @ 1530 will be the multi-fraternal service at McAlilster-Smith Goose Creek
 - May 25 @ 1030 will be the FRA service at the Home. Guest speaker is Tom Ishee. After the service there will an indoor picnic.

Fleet Reserve Association – Ken Hutchison:

- Beginning at 0800, the FRA will place flags on veterans' grave sites at Plantation Memorial Gardens on Hwy 17A. Come out and help.
- Ken announced that the FRA Memorial Day Remembrance at The Fleet will begin at 1030. Our very own SubVet Admiral Tom Ishee will be our guest speaker. Following the ceremony, we will have an indoor picnic. All are invited.
- The FRA, for a long time and will soon (again) have a Submarine Veteran (COB) as President.
- Ken welcomed Fred Bolz as an Associate Member of USSVI.
- The FRA will be holding a Two-Bell Ceremony for David Cox at 1000 on 07 JUN.

Social Media – Lewis Leal:

- Two videos have been published on the public YouTube Channel:
 - Amberjack Ceremony
 - Holland Club Induction
- There were 130 VIEWS of these two videos, but only 2 LIKES. The more Likes that the videos get, the more YouTube will spread it around, so when you watch the video, be sure to click the LIKE button.

NNPTC Liaison – Anthony Mazza

- Nothing to report.

Scholarship – Tom Lawson III

- We had two Scholarship applicants this year. Each will receive \$3k at the June Base Meeting.
- We have a raffle for a SubVet Flag. The flag cost the Base \$150, so this will be paid back before any money is provided to the Scholarship Fund. Tickets are \$2 each.
- Tom has a USS SEAPOCHER throw which is available for a donation to the Scholarship Fund.
- Challenge Coins are \$12
- Base Commander Dave Harvey asked for three volunteers to work with Tom Lawson for review/recommendations of the Scholarship procedures and report back by August.

Membership – Larry Knutson

- Charleston Base currently has 240 Members.
- Nick Nichols provided Base Standings [those with more than 200 members]: Charleston is #4 in USSVI membership. [AM = associate member]
 - Groton 1043 w/38 AM - 2) Hampton Roads 294 w/11 AM – 3) Bremerton 264 w/13 AM – 4) Charleston 240 w/18 AM [with the new AM tonight]

Comptroller – Tom Holcombe

- Nothing to report

Special Events – Tom Holcombe

- Tom noted that, although he could be heard, video of his “playing the bugle” at the Amberjack ceremony was “dubbed out”. His comments were all in fun and we got a good laugh.
- Freedom Fest at Locklear Park is Saturday, June 6.
- The video “Battle of Sullivans Island” is schedule to be shown at the Town Hall on May 18 and June 4. Tom has had reports of this being a video worthy of seeing. He will provide more info.

CSS Hunley – Tom Holcombe

- Nothing reported.

Nuclear Power School Legacy Awards – Phil Nunnally

- The next NPS graduation will be Friday, MAY 22. Meet at NEX 0800.

Newsletter – Phil Nunnally

- Nothing to report.

Little David – Phil Nunnally

- After replacing boards last month, we did some painting this month to get ready for the Berkeley Museum's U.S. 250th year events. We want the Little David to look good for all the activity.

Ambassador USSVCF – Bob MacPherson

- Not present.

Recreation – Ed Stank

- We will be having a SubVet picnic at 1000 on June 13 at The After Battery. We will have hamburgers, hotdogs and pork – not chicken. Please bring a side dish or dessert.
- Ed stated that he will not be staying as Recreation Chair for very long and encouraged some of the younger members to step in, form a committee and take charge.
- Ed spoke about getting discount entertainment tickets from VETTIX.

Submarine License Plates – Ed Stank

- Ed reported having seen Submarine License plate #76.
- If you have any questions about getting a plate, contact Ed.
- Ed stated that money coming to Charleston Base from DMV for the plates sold is to be direct deposited into the Base bank account.

PAO – Jerry Stout

- Jerry is working on articles for American Submariner:
 - SER Conference in Gulfport, MS.
 - Submarine License plates.
- The USSVI National Elections are approaching. Jerry is now a candidate SER Director.
- Jerry told of a visit that he and Gerry Starr made to the Gulfport, MS Veteran's Retirement Home, where they visited an old submariner Robert Wetzel AKA Dutch. Jerry read a Thank You note he had received from Dutch after they had given him a Holland Club hat.

Veteran's Affairs – Jerry Stout

- The Volunteer Services at Ralph Johnson now includes lawn services.
- Jerry provided a short list of restaurants that offer VA discounts.

Storekeeper – Woody Woodsmall

- The National SK has developed two new patches (Operational Epic Fury and US Submarine Force) Woody has two left at \$12.
- Woody has "Lest We Forget" Poppies. \$5.
- Wood has "Deep, Fast, Silent, Deadly" pins.
- He also has a MK48 Trouble Maker patch. TMs especially will appreciate this one.
- Woody has relocated from the Engine Room Lower Level bilge area to AMR2 Port Side Upper Level
- If you need something and he does not have it, Woody will order it.

COB – Greg Landry

- Not present

Kaps 4 Kids – Art Sattler

- Art has been talking to Security at MUSC about K4K. Art expected him to attend the meeting tonight, but received a cancellation text message.

Vice Commander – Art Sattler

- Nothing to report.

USSVI National Awards – Dave Harvey

- Tom Holcombe has submitted some awards to National. No other submittals were reported.

Float Coordinator – Dave Harvey

- Dave requested help to do some float maintenance this coming Saturday at The After Battery. We will be repacking wheel bearings, painting and installation of a stainless steel cable.

SER Conference – Dave Harvey

- The 2027 SE Regional Conference will be held in GA. More details later.

USSVI National Convention – Dave Harvey

- Dave requested a show of hands of who is/planning on going to the USSVI National Convention in TX.

Manitowoc – Dave Harvey

- On June 27, a fish Fry will be held at the FRA. This is a fund-raiser for helping to get fuel to transport the float to/from Manitowoc, WI (about 3k miles).
- For those who are planning to go to Wisconsin, Dave recommended that you get your lodging reservation in immediately. Locations will fill up quickly.

Base Commander – Dave Harvey

- Dave advised the Associate Members that they can serve on any committee that they would like to, so please get involved. [SECRETARY'S NOTE: The only offices that AMs are not permitted to hold are the four elected offices and the appointed office of COB.]
- Dave thanked everyone for attending the meeting this evening.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

After Battery – Steve Nelms

- The After Battery will host a Charleston Base Picnic on June 13 starting at 1000
- We enjoy playing cards other than poker, including Cribbage, Pinochle, War etc. We even play Acey-Deucey.
- At the recent Hog Roast, we fed 181 people that week.
- The After Battery has 461 members nationwide.

Honor Flight – Nick Nichols

- Nick and Linda met a lady whose husband is a Load Master.
- Nick is expecting more info from her in a couple of weeks as she is part of a group which is planning the next Honor Flight from Charleston. This is expected to be a chartered rather than commercial flight.
- Nick plans to reach all of the local fraternal organizations. They can contact her about the event which will not be limited to a particular group such as WWII or Vietnam veterans.

Gun Club – Mike Ciesielko

- Not present.

Nuclear Historian – Rick Wise

- Nothing to report.

Regatta for Veterans – Tom Holcombe for Bob MacPherson

- Tom provided info about the regatta that will be held in the Charleston Harbor.

Submarine Birthday Ball – Nick Nichols

- Nick Nichols expressed his congratulations to NNPTC for the outstanding Sub Ball. There were 22 SubVets and wives present (11 couples).
- NNPTC had 400 tickets and sold 380 of them.
- It was well worth it, so – to those who did not attend, you will have another opportunity next year.

Drawings & Auctions

- FRA Drawing – Casey Power
- Depth Charge Drawing – Casey Power – Donated entire winnings to the Fleet Reserve Association
- Challenge Coin Display Case – Bob Browning

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 2007.