



Vol. 21 No. 6

June 2025

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

Base Meeting:

Newsletter & Little David Phil Nunnally 843.518.8301

BOD: Jun 5, 2025

Membership: Jun 12, 2025

Location:

FRA Branch 269
Low Country Home
99 Wisteria Rd.
Goose Creek, SC



ELECTED

Base Commander	Dave Harvey	812.773.1312
Vice Commander	Tom Lawson	843.327.3282
Secretary	Gordon Long	843.214.2353
Treasurer	Ricky Collins	843.934.3754

APPOINTED

Chief of the Boat	Greg Landry	843.813.4361
Chaplain	Nick Nichols	843.452.3189
Webmaster	Nick Nichols	843.452.3189
Veterans Affairs	Tom Lawson	843.327.3282
Scholarship	Tom Lawson III	843.813.0244
Membership	Larry Knutson	843.860.1155
Storekeeper	Woody Woodsmall	304.676.8356
Nuclear Historian	Rick Carlson	843.875.4030
Public Affairs	Bob MacPherson	717.606.7047
CF Ambassador	Bob MacPherson	717.606.7047
Navy League Coord	Bob MacPherson	717.606.7047
Holland Club	Bill Freligh	843.729.3524
Social Media Coord	Lewis Leal	843.270.8870
Kaps for Kids	Art Sattler	843.813.6899
FRA Rep	Ken Hutchinson	843.793.4896
Base Photographer	Glenn Little	843.797.1867
Comptroller	Rick Wise	843.276.0899
Hunley/Housatonic	Tom Holcombe	843.607.9610
Special Events Coord	Tom Holcombe	843.607.9610
Patriots Point POC	Rusty Pickett	843.762.3888
Cold War Mem POC	Rodney McKanna	843.851.3415
Scout Recog Prog	Dick Koehler	843.553.2171
Recreation Comm.	Johnny Brown	843.276.8264
License Plate Coord	Ed Stank	843.568.2148
NNPTC POC	Anthony Mazza	912.322.8224
Float Coordinator	Dave Harvey	812.773.1312
SE Regional Coord	Dave Harvey	812.773.1312
National Awards Co	VACANT	
Base Historian	VACANT	

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Submarines lost during the month of June

USS HERRING (SS-233)	01 June 44	83 Souls lost
USS R-12 (SS-89)	12 June 44	42 Souls lost – 21 Survivors
USS GOLET (SS-361)	14 June 44	82 Souls lost
USS BONEFISH (SS-223)	18 June 45	85 Souls lost
USS S-27 (SS-132)	19 June 42	No Loss of Life
USS O-9 (SS-70)	20 June 41	33 Souls lost
USS RUNNER (SS-275)	30 June 43	78 Souls lost

Seven Boats and 403 Men Lost

USS Herring (SS-233) Only US Submarine Sunk by a Land Battery

On her 8th war patrol, Herring was conducting a surface attack on a freighter and passenger-cargo ship when she was spotted by a shore battery and sunk off Matsuwa Island.

Read the entire story [here](#).



CHARLESTON SHIPMATES ON ETERNAL PATROL

Shipmates Reported Lost Since our 2024 Base Christmas Party Bell Tolling

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| • MMCS(SS) James Terry Sickle, USN Retired | 19 February 2025 |
| • LCDR (SS) Roy Edward Morrow, USN Retired | 9 June 2024 |
| • FTMC (SS) Martin K. Sessler USN Retired | 25 March 2025 |
| • ETN3(SS) Craig C. Emerson, USN Retired | 1 January 2025 |
| • QMC(SS) Alan Dempster, USN Retired | 23 May 2025 |



**ETN3(SS) Craig C. Emerson, USN Ret.
Now on Eternal Patrol**

With great sadness I must report on Wednesday, January 1, 2025, our shipmate and friend Craig Emerson, 83, departed on Eternal Patrol in Virginia. Craig joined the Navy in 1960 and discharged in 1962. He was a Life Member of USSVI National [2007] and Charleston [2007], and the Holland Club having qualified in 1961 on USS AMBERJACK SS-522. He also served on USS CLAMAGORE SS-343. After leaving the Navy Craig spent a 32-year career as an electronics specialist and manager with the FBI in WDC and Quantico. Afterwards, he served for 20 years as a private consultant and trainer for law enforcement and intelligence agencies. Craig's son, Clint, informed me of his father's passing.

Obituary Craig C. Emerson

July 1, 1941 - January 1, 2025

Craig C. Emerson, 83, of Spotsylvania County, passed away on January 1, 2025, after a long illness.

He was preceded in death by his father, Easley Emerson; his mother, Sarah Johnson Emerson; an older brother, Woody Emerson – all of North Carolina; and a sister, Valerie of Montpelier. Craig is survived by his wife and best buddy of over 60 years, Claudia Kathleen McKinney Emerson; their three sons Christopher Emerson of Stafford, Clifford Emerson (Ingrid) of Winchester, and Clinton Emerson (Helen) of Powhatan; his grandson, Marshall Emerson; granddaughter Alexandra Emerson; younger brother, Brion Emerson of Climax, NC; and three nieces and a nephew, all of whom he was justifiably proud, Tonjua Lohnes, Paige Shanklin, Dusti Power, and Daniel Emerson.

Craig graduated from Pleasant Garden High School (NC) and served in the Navy in the submarine service. He was a life member of the U.S. Submarine Veterans Association and was a member of their Holland Club. He spent a 32-year career as an electronics specialist and manager with the FBI in WDC and Quantico. Afterwards, he served for 20 years as a private consultant and trainer for law enforcement and intelligence agencies. He was a charter member of the National Technical Investigators Association and had spoken at their national conferences on numerous occasions.

**ETN3(SS) Craig C. Emerson, USN Ret.
Now on Eternal Patrol**

Craig was a long-time member of Mt. Ararat Baptist Church in Stafford County but after moving to Fredericksburg, had attended Spotswood Baptist Church, where he was a member of their Steadfast Men's Group. His hobbies included his passion for boys' activities and with his three sons, he coached in all of their sports. He was one of the founders of the EPWBA in Woodbridge, VA. Craig was a follower of ACC basketball for over 70 years. He was also an avid genealogist and at one time was an active member of several NC and VA genealogical societies.

Craig leaves many friends and associates of long standing represented by his honorary pall bearers: Charles Byrd, Rick Heflin, Ric Keiper, Martin McDermott, Mark Perry, Terry Plaughter, and Billy Spellings. They, along with unnamed others, were always very special to Craig.

There will be a family and friends gathering from 1 to 3 p.m. on Thursday, January 16, 2025 at Spotswood Baptist Church College Building, 4105 Lafayette Blvd, Fredericksburg, VA 22408.

Sent by Chaplain Nick Nichols by email 9 May 2025.



**QMC(SS) Alan Dempster, USN Ret.
Now on Eternal Patrol**

With great sadness I must report on Friday, May 23, 2025, our shipmate and friend Alan Dempster, 86, departed on Eternal Patrol. Alan joined the Navy in 1955 and retired in 1977. He was a Member of USSVI National [2013] and Charleston Base [2013]. He was a member of the Holland Club [2023] qualifying in 1958 on USS SARDA SS-488. Alan also served on USS BALAO SS-285, USS THRESHER SSN-593, USS ALEXANDER HAMILTON SSBN-617 Plank Owner, USS CHIVO SS-341 and USS BARRACUDA SS-550/SSK-1/SST-3.

The family has requested the Eternal Patrol Bell Tolling at Alan's service.

- Alan Dempster Funeral Service
- Stuhr Funeral Home Greenridge Rd
- 14 June 2025
- 1000 Visitation
- 1100 Funeral



UPCOMING BASE EVENTS
See www.ussvicb.org for details

Upcoming Charleston Base Events

Board of Directors Meeting	June 5	FRA Branch 269, Goose Creek
Base Meeting	June 12 (Social Hour—1800)	FRA Branch 269, Goose Creek
NIGHT AT THE RIVERDOGS	June 13	Joseph P. Riley, Jr. Park
Father's Day	June 15	
Freedom Fest	June 27	NWS Locklear Field

NIGHT AT THE RIVERDOGS
13 June 2025 @ 1905

RIVERDOGS VS THE AUGUSTA GREEN JACKETS

MILITARY GROUP TICKETS ARE \$5.00 EACH (MINIMUM 20 TICKETS MUST BE PURCHASED). PARKING IS AVAILABLE FOR \$5.00 WITH THE PURCHASE OF GROUP TICKETS.

THE RIVERDOGS WILL SHINE A SPOTLIGHT ON ACTIVE DUTY AND RETIRED MILITARY MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES. FOLLOWING THE GAME, ENJOY THE BEST FIREWORKS SHOW IN THE LOWCOUNTRY SET TO AN ASSORTMENT OF MUSICAL THEMES.

Sent by Johnny Brown email 13 April 2025.



IMPORTANT DATES

D-DAY June 6th 1944

The D-Day operation of June 6, 1944, brought together the land, air, and sea forces of the allied armies in what became known as the largest amphibious invasion in military history. The operation, given the codename OVERLORD, delivered five naval assault divisions to the beaches of Normandy, France. The beaches were given the code names UTAH, OMAHA, GOLD, JUNO, and SWORD. The invasion force included 7,000 ships and landing craft manned by over 195,000 naval personnel from eight allied countries. Almost 133,000 troops from the United States, the British Commonwealth, and their allies, landed on D-Day. Casualties from these countries during the landing numbered 10,300. By June 30, over 850,000 men, 148,000 vehicles, and 570,000 tons of supplies had landed on the Normandy shores. Fighting by the brave soldiers, sailors, and airmen of the allied forces western front, and Russian forces on the eastern front, led to the defeat of German Nazi forces. On May 7, 1945, German General Alfred Jodl signed an unconditional surrender at Reims, France.



IMPORTANT DATES

**SCPO and MCPO ranks started
1 June 1958**

Prior to 1958, Chief Petty Officer was the highest enlisted rate in both the U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard. The pay grades of E-8 and E-9, Senior Chief and Master Chief, were created effective June 1, 1958, under a 1958 Amendment to the Career Compensation Act of 1949.



**FLAG DAY
June 14th**



From the Editor
Contact me at newsletter@ussvicb.org

Based on an email from National dated 7 May 2025, I'll need to paraphrase my articles and provide a link to the article to keep the Newsletter legal. I am also unable to copy pictures from websites that are copyrighted so this will reduce the graphic nature of many articles.

I still intend to provide as much information as I did previously, just in another format.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dave Harvey is our New Base Commander

Congratulations to Dave as our new Base Commander!. Dave brings the energy and drive he showed during the Southeast Regional Convention process.

- SEND ALL CHARLESTON BASE RELATED EMAIL to the address basecommander@ussvicb.org
- SEND ALL PERSONAL EMAIL to the address bigdumydave587@gmail.com

Ricky Collins is Re-elected as our Base Treasurer

Ricky will remain as our Base Treasurer for another term

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bob MacPherson is our new PAO And will Serve as our Navy League Coordinator

Congratulations to Bob MacPherson as our new PAO. Bob brings the energy he has shown as CF Ambassador.

Bob spoke during the May 8th Base Meeting praising Charleston Base as the best base for all of national and his desire to spread that praise throughout our area and the entire SubVet community.

Bob is a member of the Navy League and will serve as a coordinator between our two organizations

Welcome New Associate Members!

We now have twelve Associate Members in our base.

Welcome and I look forward to your ideas and input!

Opportunities to Serve our Base

- Openings for
 - ◊ Base Historian
 - ◊ ADM Osborn Scholarship Committee Members to assist Chairman Tom Lawson III
 - ◊ National Awards Coordinator

We are down to three openings. Could one of these be your calling?

Contact the Base Commander, the COB or any officer if you can help

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Amendment to CB By-Laws

This Amendment was Passed at the May Base Meeting

THE BOD RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT BE ADDED TO THE BYLAWS.

Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws

ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP

Section 3. ASSOCIATE

E. Associate Members will not hold the elected Base offices of Base Commander, Vice Commander, Secretary, Treasurer or appointed position of COB. Associate Members may participate and vote on Base matters during any meeting just like regular members. The Base Commander may appoint Associate Members to serve on Base Committees and as Committee Chair.

Gordon Long - RM2(SS)

Charleston Base Secretary

United States Submarine Veterans Inc.

Email Scam Waring from the National Commander

Several members have received emails Allegedly from USSVI National Officers requesting help, money, gift cards, etc. for various reasons. They may also state that there is a “secure message” from Jon Jaques or other national leader. The emails will appear to come from and have an officer’s name, but the email address for that officer will not be correct. These are SCAMS! Do not reply or click on any links in those emails. Delete them. If you have any questions or concerns reference the validity of those emails, call or contact that officer by means of his contact information from our website, www.ussvi.org or www.ussubvets.org. Do not respond using any contact info in the email.

Email from the National Commander 1 May 2025

PAST EVENTS

Ramp Built for TMC (SS) Ed Simokat 3 May 2025

This ramp was built by the NNTPC First Class Petty Officer's Association and funded by the USSV Charitable Fund.



PAST EVENTS

CMC Huratiak Retirement 5 May 2025

Command Master Chief Naval Nuclear Power Training Command MMNCM (SW/AW) Cynthia Huratiak



Master Chief Cynthia M. Huratiak, a native of Calexico, California, enlisted in the Navy in April 1997. Following basic training at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Illinois, she completed Nuclear Field Machinist's Mate "A" School and Nuclear Power School at Naval Nuclear Power Training Command (NNPTC), Orlando, Florida. She then finished the Nuclear Power Training Pipeline at Nuclear Prototype Training Unit (NPTU), Goose Creek, South Carolina.

At sea, she served aboard USS Nimitz (CVN 68) during a refueling and complex overhaul; USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) as initial manning and for the ship's commissioning and homeport change to San Diego, California; USS Enterprise (CVN 65), completing a rigorous maintenance period, workups and deployment; USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) for pre-commissioning duty, where she was selected for advancement to chief petty officer in 2007; USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), serving as the reactor propulsion leading chief petty officer and reactor training division officer, while completing two deployments and returned to USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) where she served as Reactor Department Master Chief and completed a 28 month availability and subsequent certification and return to full operational status.

Her shore tours include administrative support at Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Conversion and Repair, Newport News, Virginia; instructor duty at Naval Nuclear Power Training Command, Nuclear Field "A" School, where she was selected for advancement to senior chief petty officer; and Women in Nuclear Power Coordinator and Command Master Chief at Submarine Learning Facility, Norfolk.

Huratiak reported as Command Master Chief for Naval Nuclear Power Training Command, Goose Creek, SC in February 2022.

She was the 2013 recipient of the Master Chief Anna Der Vartanian Leadership Award; her decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (five awards), Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (four awards) and various unit and campaign awards. She is married to Thomas Huratiak and has a son, Zachary Huratiak and a hairless dog, Ramses.

PAST EVENTS

Distinguished Submariner Award Dave Harvey 13 May 2025



PAST EVENTS

Charleston Base Fish Fry 24 May 2025

This fund raising event was to support participation in Everything Submarines in Manitowoc Wisconsin in the July 4th Parade



NON-BASE EVENTS

2025 Freedom Fest 27 June 2025

Tom Holcombe will bring details to the June base meeting to determine interest, our base involvement level and if the float will be there.

A promotional poster for Freedom Fest 2025. On the left, a cartoon illustration of Uncle Sam wearing his iconic top hat with stars and stripes, and playing a red and white electric guitar. The background is a photograph of a large outdoor festival at night, with a stage, lights, and a crowd. In the top right corner, a red banner reads "PREMIUM EVENT" and "ESTIMATED ATTENDANCE 4000". The title "FREEDOM FEST" is prominently displayed in the center, with "FREEDOM" in large white block letters and "FEST" in a stylized yellow script. Below the title, it says "FRIDAY • JUNE 27 • 2025" in red. At the bottom, a white text box contains a description of the event.

PREMIUM EVENT
ESTIMATED ATTENDANCE 4000

FREEDOM FEST

FRIDAY • JUNE 27 • 2025

Our Independence Day celebration is held each year on the last Friday of June on the JB Charleston Weapons Station at Locklear Park. It's a family event featuring live stage music, fun activities for the kids, local food vendors, and culminates with an impressive fireworks display that lights up the sky. This great event kicks off the 4th of July holiday for the entire community, including active duty, reservists, retirees, civilians, & their families!

NON-BASE EVENTS

FRA Indoor Picnic 4 July

- FRA Home Goose Creek
- 1100 - 1400
- 1200 Meal Time



NON-BASE EVENTS

Navy Ball Golf Tournament 2025 31 July 2025

Posting this for Shipmates Johnny Brown and Bob MacPherson.

More information can be found [here](#).

A promotional poster for the Navy Ball Golf Tournament 2025. The background is a lush green golf course with a golf club lying on the grass. The text is arranged in a dynamic, overlapping layout. At the top left is an anchor logo. The main title 'GOLF TOURNAMENT 2025' is in large, bold, green and white letters. To the right, a text box explains the purpose of the event. Below the title, a white box contains the date and time. To the right of the date, a 'REGISTER NOW' section provides contact information and location. At the bottom, a disclaimer is included.

**NSA CHARLESTON
NAVY BALL
COMMITTEE**

3RD ANNUAL

**GOLF
TOURNAMENT
2025**

Give aways
hole-in-one prizes
Captains Choice

WHAT ARE WE
JOIN US IN SUPPORTING THE 2025
NAVY BALL COMMITTEE AS WE
STRIVE TO RAISE FUNDS TO
PROVIDE AN INCREDIBLE
EXPERIENCE FOR SAILORS
IN OUR AREA!

INCLUDED
BREAKFAST & LUNCH
18 HOLES
CART

SUPPORTING THE 2025 NAVY BALL
CONTACT 757-609-7882 or 757-348-3564 for reservations

*PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN CLUBS, LIMITED AMOUNT OF RENTAL CLUBS
AVAILABLE*

**31 JULY
2025**

REGISTER NOW
\$400 PER TEAM

SUMMERVILLE COUNTRY CLUB
400 COUNTRY CLUB BLVD
SUMMERVILLE, SC 29483

8 AM REGISTRATION
9 AM SHOT GUN START

THIS IS A PRIVATE ORGANIZATION. IT IS NOT A PART OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OR ANY OF ITS
COMPONENTS AND IT HAS NO GOVERNMENTAL STATUS

NON-BASE EVENTS

2025 USSVI National Convention 31 August—6 September 2025

- Rosen Shingle Creek Orlando, FL
- August 31 - September 6
- [Convention Registration](#)



**USSVI
2025
National
Convention**



The CSS David

A low-profile steam-powered spar torpedo boat used in the defense of Charleston, SC during Civil War (AKA the War Between the States, the War of Northern Aggression and the Late Unpleasantness). It attacked and damaged the USS New Ironsides on October 5, 1863. The USS New Ironsides was a first-line Union warship and although the CSS David failed to sink it the ship was replaced in the blockade and dry-docked in Philadelphia, PA, where a fire subsequently destroyed it.

This is a replica of that ship, the CSS David. The CSS David was built near here by Theodore Stoney and David Chenoweth Ebaugh. It was designed by Dr. St. Julian Ravenel. It is 56 feet long and about 5 ½ feet in diameter. A 25 foot spar with a gunpowder contact mine (called a torpedo) on the end is mounted on the bow. Pulling the lanyard that goes to the cockpit could also fire the torpedo.

The David had a crew of four. The Captain, Lieutenant W. T. Glassell, and the pilot, W. Cannon, sat in the cockpit and steered the ship. The Captain was to manually set off the torpedo if it failed to fire on contact with the target. Inside the ship was a boiler tender, J. Sullivan, who kept the small boiler producing steam and an engineer, J. H. Tomb, who tended the single piston steam engine and the propulsion drive train. The engineer also was to shift the drive train linkage to allow the ship to go astern (reverse).

Just imagine the conditions within the hull of the David. The boiler and exhausting steam from the engine would rapidly increase the temperature and humidity. The only ventilation was from the air drawn in from the after stack and exhausted out the forward stack.

The tactic used by the CSS David was to launch the attack on a dark (no moon or overcast) night. Moving as quietly as possible the ship would close on the target vessel. Because only three or four feet of the ship were above the surface of the water it was difficult to see. As soon as an alarm was raised on the target the captain would signal and the ship's speed would be increased as much as possible. The pilot would steer for the target ship while the captain fired pistols at the target to help reduce the return fire. By the time the David was noticed it had moved so close that the ship's cannon could not be lowered enough to fire on it. Once the torpedo had been detonated the David would reverse and move away as quickly as possible to the safety of Charleston Harbor.

GREAT TRUTHS

1. In my many years I have come to a conclusion that one useless man is a shame, two is a law firm, and three or more is a congress.

-- John Adams

2. If you don't read the newspaper you are uninformed, if you do read the newspaper you are misinformed.

-- Mark Twain

3. Suppose you were an idiot. And suppose you were a member of Congress. But then I repeat myself.

-- Mark Twain

4. I contend that for a nation to try to tax itself into prosperity is like a man standing in a bucket and trying to lift himself up by the handle.

--Winston Churchill

5. A government which robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on the support of Paul.

-- George Bernard Shaw

6. A liberal is someone who feels a great debt to his fellow man, which debt he proposes to pay off with your money.

-- G. Gordon Liddy

7. Democracy must be something more than two wolves and a sheep voting on what to have for dinner.

--James Bovard, Civil Libertarian (1994)

GREAT TRUTHS

8. Foreign aid might be defined as a transfer of money from poor people in rich countries to rich people in poor countries.

-- Douglas Case, Classmate of Bill Clinton at Georgetown University

9. Giving money and power to government is like giving whiskey and car keys to teenage boys.

-- P.J. O'Rourke, Civil Libertarian

10. Government is the great fiction, through which everybody endeavors to live at the expense of everybody else. --Frederic Bastiat,

French economist (1801-1850)

11. Government's view of the economy could be summed up in a few short phrases: If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it.

--Ronald Reagan (1986)

12. I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts.

-- Will Rogers

13. If you think health care is expensive now, wait until you see what it costs when it's free!

-- P. J. O'Rourke

14. In general, the art of government consists of taking as much money as possible from one party of the citizens to give to the other.

--Voltaire (1764)

GREAT TRUTHS

15. Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you!

-- Pericles (430 B.C.)

16. No man's life, liberty, or property is safe while the legislature is in session.

-- Mark Twain (1866)

17. Talk is cheap, except when Congress does it.

-- Anonymous

18. The government is like a baby's alimentary canal, with a happy appetite at one end and no responsibility at the other.

-- Ronald Reagan

19. The inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of the blessings. The inherent blessing of socialism is the equal sharing of misery.

-- Winston Churchill

20. The only difference between a tax man and a taxidermist is that the taxidermist leaves the skin.

-- Mark Twain

21. The ultimate result of shielding men from the effects of folly is to fill the world with fools.

-- Herbert Spencer, English Philosopher (1820-1903)

22. There is no distinctly Native American criminal class, save Congress.

-- Mark Twain

GREAT TRUTHS

23. What this country needs are more unemployed politicians

--Edward Langley, Artist (1928-1995)

24. A government big enough to give you everything you want, is strong enough to take everything you have.

-- Thomas Jefferson

25. We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office.

-- Aesop

Can you think of a reason for not sharing this?

Neither could I.

Article provided by shipmate Jim 'Lew' Lewis

Time To Restore Veterans' Constitutional Rights

<https://veterans.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=6687>

Washington, April 23, 2025 | [Kathleen McCarthy](#)

Subcommittees: [*Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs*](#) , [*Full Committee*](#)

This week, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Chairman Mike Bost (R-Ill.), published the below opinion piece in the [*Daily Caller*](#) to discuss Republicans' plan to cement the constitutional rights of veterans with fiduciaries through HR 1041, the Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act, which Chairman Bost [introduced](#) earlier this year alongside Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs Chairman Jerry Moran (R-Kan.), Subcommittee on Disability Assistance & Memorial Affairs Chairman Rep. Morgan Luttrell (R-Texas), and Senator John Kennedy (R-La.).

The Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act would ensure that no Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) bureaucrat can strip a veteran with a fiduciary of their right to bear arms without a judge or court ruling first that the veteran is a danger to themselves or their community.

Under current law, and since 1993, a veteran who needs assistance managing their finances and VA benefits because of a disability – without an additional finding by a court of law or any medical professional that the veteran may be a danger to themselves or others – is immediately reported to the FBI's NICS list and stripped of their Second Amendment right to legally purchase and own a firearm. The [FY 2024 MilCon/VA Appropriations bill, and the subsequent two continuing resolutions, ended this practice](#) on a temporary basis to afford veterans with fiduciaries the due process rights they fought to protect. However, the temporary policy expired on March 14, 2025, without a permanent legislative fix in place. In January, the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance & Memorial Affairs held a [hearing](#) on this issue. To learn more about the Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act, click [here](#). Bill text can be found [here](#).

Provided by shipmate Nick Nichols

VA announces major survivor benefits reforms

For immediate release

May 5, 2025

10:12 am

<https://news.va.gov/press-room/va-announces-major-survivor-benefits-reforms/>

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs today announced a three-pronged approach to eliminate barriers and streamline the process for how eligible survivors and dependents of deceased Veterans and servicemembers apply for and receive VA benefits and services.

Specific improvements include:

Starting this month, VA's Office of Survivors Assistance will be moved from the Veterans Benefits Administration to the Office of the VA Secretary, reversing a Biden-era decision that buried OSA under layers of bureaucracy. Starting this month, VA will create a "white-glove" survivor outreach team to guide and assist eligible survivors throughout their Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) claims process.

- Starting immediately, VA will begin work to identify areas where automation can be used to make the DIC claims process easier to navigate for survivors.

"The last thing survivors need in their time of grief is frustrating red tape and bureaucracy. That's why we are creating a better system to more quickly and effectively provide survivors the services, support and compassion they've earned," said **VA Secretary Doug Collins**.

Background information on the changes VA announced today is below.

VA announces major survivor benefits reforms

Relocating OSA

In 2021, the Biden administration moved OSA from the Office of the VA Secretary to the Veterans Benefits Administration, creating a siloed system at odds with the intent of the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2008. Starting this month, VA will reverse this decision and move OSA to the Office of the VA Secretary, where a staff of five full-time employees will advise the Secretary on all matters related to the policies, programs and legislative issues affecting survivors and dependents.

“White-Glove” Survivor Outreach Team

Under previous administrations, there were gaps in the survivor claims system and no defined outreach process for VA employees to gather information from survivors navigating the benefit process. VA’s “White-Glove” Survivor Outreach Team will begin operations in May 2025 and consist of experts based out of the Philadelphia VA Regional Benefit Office. These experts will receive specialized training and guide and assist eligible survivors throughout every step of the DIC claims process with the goal of getting to “yes” on DIC claims decisions for eligible survivors.

Automation Improvements

VA now automates more than 1,000 DIC claims payments or adjustments per day and is in the process of ongoing enhancements to increase automation that will expedite survivors’ claims and improve their experience. VA will also be identifying additional areas where automation can be used to make all benefits delivery processes easier to navigate for eligible surviving dependents.

Provided by shipmate Nick Nichols

Australian Sub News

Royal Australian Navy Celebrates AUKUS Milestone at NPTU in Charleston

Read the article [here](#)

Australia Remains Firmly Bound to U.S. by AUKUS Submarine Pact Amid Rising China Threat.

Read the article [here](#).

Russian Sub News

A UK warship has tracked a Russian submarine in the Channel as part of a NATO mission to shadow Russian vessels.

Read the entire article [here](#).

Putin announces new submarines, but the industry is strained

Read the entire article [here](#).

British Sub News

HMS Astute participates in first photo exercise of the 2025 carrier strike group deployment

Read the entire article [here](#).

Canadian Sub News

South Korea doubles down on its bid to equip the Royal Canadian Navy with its new KSS-III attack submarines

Read the entire article [here](#).

Denmark News

Denmark to field unmanned vessels for monitoring busy shipping routes

Read the entire article [here](#).

Netherlands News

Netherlands to buy anti-torpedo weapon

Read the entire article [here](#).

What's going on in politics and the Navy?

Sea Launched Cruise Nuclear Missile to Deliver in 2034

Read the entire article [here](#).

Report to Congress on Chinese Naval Modernization

Read the entire article [here](#).

Navy Awards Up to \$ 18.5B in Contracts for 2 Virginia-class Attack Subs, Workforce Development

Read the entire article [here](#).

'Make American Ships Again:' On Heels of Shipbuilding EO, Lawmakers Re-Introduce SHIPS Act

Read the entire article [here](#).

Trump requests \$892.6 billion base defense budget, a real-terms cut

Read the entire article [here](#).

After politics, we all need a little humor

I got myself a senior's GPS.

Not only does it tell me how to get there...it tells me why I wanted to go!

Husband: Honey, I broke a glass in the kitchen

Wife: Wait, I'm coming with the broom

Husband: It isn't urgent. You can come on foot

United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base
Minutes of Business Meeting
10 April 2025

Opening Ceremonies:

- The April 2025 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko with a quorum of four officers and a total of 51 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 April was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols.
- Submarines lost during the month of April:
 - ◊ USS PICKEREL (SS-177) April 3, 1943 – 7th war patrol
Lost with all hands – 74 souls
 - ◊ USS SNOOK (SS-279) April 8, 1945 – 9th war patrol
Lost with all hands – 84 souls
 - ◊ USS THRESHER (SSN-593) April 10, 1963 – sea trials
Lost with all hands – 129 souls
 - ◊ USS GUDGEON (SS-211) April 18, 1944 – 12th war patrol
Lost with all hands – 79 souls
 - ◊ USS GRENADIER (SS-210) April 22, 1943 – 6th war patrol
76 POWs – 72 survived the war
 - ◊ Five Boats and 370 Men Lost

Master Chief Fire Control Technician, Submarines
Martin K. Sessler, US Navy Submarine Veteran
Departed on Eternal Patrol 25 March 2025

- The Creed of USSVI was read by Vice Commander Tom Lawson.
- Vice Commander Tom Lawson welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

Honor and Appreciation:

- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko and Chaplain Nick Nichols presented a small award to outgoing NNPTC Command Master Chief MMNCM(SW/AW) Cindy Huratiak as a token of Appreciation from Charleston Base in recognition of her outstanding support of Charleston Base.
- Cindy graciously accepted the award with a very short speech.
- She will be relieved as NNPTC CMC by our Base Member and NNPTC Liaison Anthony Mazza.

Holland Club Award Presentation:

- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko introduced Holland Club Chairman Bill Freligh.
- HC Chairman Bill Freligh read the names of the former WWII Swamp Fox Chapter members and many of their contributions to the U.S. Navy Submarine Force and USSVI Charleston Base. All of these men are now on Eternal Patrol.
- Bill recognized Honorary and now Associate Member Casey Power – in attendance this evening – who would drive from Atlanta to ensure that his dad Stacy could be at the meeting each month.
- Bill explained the purpose of the Holland Club and read the text of the USSVI National award.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko read the award from Charleston Base and signed each certificate.
- John Lookabill was presented with a qual rocker denoting 70 years of submarine qualification, who then assisted the ceremony by presenting the Holland Club hat to each man.
- Bill Freligh read the Name, Qual Date and Boat of each man below, who came forward with his guests to accept the Holland Club award. Each individual presentation was recorded with a photograph, followed by a group picture once all citations were given:
 - ◊ FTGC(SS) Kenneth Brenneman
 - ◊ MSC(SS) Randy Bognar
 - ◊ LT John Furst
 - ◊ FTCS(SS) Thomas Lawson
 - ◊ MM1(SS) Joseph O'Saben
 - ◊ CAPT Stephen Weise
 - ◊ EMC(SS) William Woodsmall III
- Bill Freligh asked the senior Base members – in turn – to stand and be recognized as submarine qualified for 65/60/55 years.

Introductions of New Attendees:

- Two men introduced themselves to the group this evening:
 - ◊ Rich Holt – MM1 – Qualified on USS Parche SSN683 – JUN 2000
 - ◊ James Railton – STS1 – Qualified on USS George C Marshall SSBN654 – SEP 1981 – Also served aboard USS John C Calhoun SSBN630, USS Batfish SSN681, USS L Mendell Rivers SSN686, FLEASWTRACEN PAC, FBMSTC Charleston

Old Business:

- SC Submarine License Plates – BC Mike Ciesielko / Ed Stank:
 - ◊ Ed talked about the Submarine Designated SC License Plates.
 - ◊ To obtain the plates, SC requires a non-refundable fee of \$6,800. Other bases and individuals have contributed to the effort. Treasurer Ricky Collins reported a balance (including the expected \$3,500 to be approved by the Base) of \$6,455.
 - ◊ Ed has provided info to the Regional Commander for consideration of 501C designation. It is more likely that one of the State House Representatives will have the tags pushed through as legislation.
 - ◊ Currently, there are three of the bases in SC that have not yet participated.
 - ◊ Ed has talked to the director at DMV who advise Ed that SC has more than 400 specialty license plates. This number of different plates makes it difficult for police to keep up with what is/is not a valid plate.
 - ◊ The sales of the tags are to be applied to the reimbursement of the \$6,800 original fee. Once plate sales exceed that amount, the money shall be provided to the USSVCF. Bob MacPherson is the Ambassador at Charleston Base for USSVCF.
 - ◊ Ken Hutchison made a motion with Art Sattler seconding to draw \$3,500 from the Charleston Base Investment Fund to be applied to the Submarine SC license plate effort. The motion passed without any discussion. Treasurer Ricky Collins will withdraw \$3,500 from the Investment Fund.

New Business:

- Charleston Base By-Laws Amendment (First Reading) – Base Secretary Gordon Long
- (First Reading in April – Vote at Second Reading in May 2025)
- THE BOD RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT BE ADDED TO THE BYLAWS.

ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP

Section 3. ASSOCIATE

E. Associate Members will not hold the elected Base offices of Base Commander, Vice Commander, Secretary, Treasurer or appointed position of COB. Associate Members may participate and vote on Base matters during any meeting the same as Regular members. The Base Commander may appoint Associate Members to serve on Base Committees and as Committee Chair.

NOTATION: This paragraph E will be inserted into Article V – Section 3. The existing paragraphs E, F and G shall be relabeled as F, G and H respectively.

Charleston Base Elections – Election Coordinator Ken Hutchison

- The upcoming Base election has two (2) nominees for Base Commander
 - ◊ Dave Harvey
 - ◊ Johnny Brown
- Ken made additional requests for nominees for Base Commander with no response.
- The upcoming Base election has one (1) nominee for Treasurer – Ricky Collins
- Ken made additional requests for nominees for Base Treasurer with no response.
- Elections for both of these offices will be held at the end of the May Base Meeting.

Secretary – Gordon Long:

- The Minutes from the March Base Meeting were emailed to all Base members. The Minutes have been published on the Base Website for download. The Minutes were approved as presented.

Treasurer – Ricky Collins:

- The Treasurer's Report for March 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 THRESHER (SSN 593) was commissioned in 3 August 1961. 62 years ago today, on April 10, 1963 the THRESHER was lost with all hands during deep-diving exercises, 112 crew members and 17 civilian technicians – a total of 129 men. 15 minutes after reaching test depth, she communicated with USS Skylark that she was having problems. Skylark heard noises "like air rushing into an air tank" - then, silence. Rescue ship Recovery (ASR-43) subsequently recovered bits of debris, including gloves and bits of internal insulation. Photographs taken by Trieste proved that the submarine had broken up, taking all hands onboard to their deaths in 1,400 fathoms of water, some 220 miles east of Boston.
- Historic date: 125 years ago, April 11, 1900 the United States Submarine Force was established.

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

- Marty Sessler departed on EP on 25 March at Summerville Medical Center. He had been admitted for double pneumonia, fluid on his lungs and a bacterial infection in his blood. Sharon has said there will be a memorial service at St. Luke's Lutheran in Summerville on 22 May. SUBVETS will participate. More info will be forthcoming after we talk with the funeral home and pastor.
- Gail Railton, wife of base member Jim Railton, passed away early morning on 6 April at Agape Hospice Care after suffering a stroke. Please be in prayer for Jim and the family.
- Ed Collins, a non-base member but many of you know, had a triple bypass on 18 March. We understand his recovery is going well.

- Ronnie Vandiver had throat surgery on 2 April. The surgeon told Kim it went well. He was hospitalized for a couple of days and is now home recovering
- Jerry Stout is managing his skin and prostate cancer with treatment plans.
- Rick Carlson has been diagnosed with low level prostate cancer.
- Ed Simokat is receiving some assistance at his house from the NNPTC FCPOA. Ed fell on Sunday and his wife, Judy, hurt her back when she tried to stop his fall. Ed would like to hear from some of his shipmates. Number and email are on the Sailing List.
- Dave Harvey is recovering well from neck surgery.
- James Graham Sr. is a new grandfather. Daniel Dewey Graham was born on 27 March.
- Ken Curtis is at home with Palliative Hospice care coming to the house several times during the week. He welcomes phone calls and visitors. Please keep Ken and Barbara both in your prayers. Rick Carlson visited Ken and said he is doing well.
- Roger Rader has home health coming in and recovery is going well. He is getting out now.
- John Lookabill had the heart valve repair on 24 Mar. The surgery was successful and he is recovering at home.
- Al Stoll is in Room 3 at the skilled Nursing section at the villages at Summerville rehab center at the end of West 9th North Street. He has a very hard time hearing so phone calls are not easy for him. If visiting before or after lunch is best time.
- 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.
- Al & Connie Dempster are in The Bridge of Charleston Assisted Living. Mailing address is: Alan 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:

- If anyone is having a boat reunion here in Charleston there is a place on the home page of the base website to inform shipmates about it. I just put up the 641 2026 Reunion.
- If you change your number or drop your home line, please contact either Larry, Nick or the COB so that we can make the necessary changes locally and with National.
- USSVI National Senior Vice Commander Tim Carlisle reports that the Blackbaud Contract ends on 3/14/25, so on 3/15/25 the ussui.org website will go down. Please use <https://ussubvets.org> for any of your website needs. We are working hard on the replacement website and will announce updates soon.

- Many of us are used to the magazine called “Shift Colors”. It has been discontinued. The new one is Sailor for Life, a magazine designed especially for Navy Veterans, Retirees, and Families. Its pages contain updates on Navy matters including news from the SECNAV Retiree Council, stories about DOD policies, medical and educational benefits, legislation affecting veterans, and photographs from around the fleet. It is now the Official Newsletter of MyNavyHR, and is dedicated to ensuring Sailors have the most up-to-date information about Personnel, Pay, Education, Training, Retention and MyNavy HR transformation. It will be delivered to you via email if you have a DFAS email address. Also you can find the first two issues of this magazine on our base website on the Documents webpage.
- Base Standings [those with more than 200 members]:
- 1) Groton 1090 - 2) Hampton Roads 284 – Tied for 3) Charleston 242 & Bremerton 242

Hobson Memorial – Nick Nichols:

- On 27 April at 1330 the FRA will be having a Memorial Service at the Home to recognize the sinking of USS HOBSON DD464/DSM464 on 26 April 1952. Hobson collided with the aircraft carrier USS Wasp (CV-18) and sank with the loss of 176 crew. The ships had been undertaking amphibious exercises in the Atlantic, with Wasp practicing night flying, when Hobson attempted to turn in front of the carrier and collided with Wasp. Hobson was broken in two and quickly sunk, causing the greatest loss of life on a US Navy ship since World War II. Hobson was commissioned in 1942. SUBVETS will be participating with other groups in the laying of a wreath during the service.

Social Media – Lewis Leal:

- Not present.

Membership – Larry Knutson

- Larry reported that as of this moment, USSVI NATIONAL lists Charleston Base as having 242 members, however, these numbers will increase next month.
- Larry read the names of those members whose dues had lapsed and membership restored.
- Larry read names of new Regular and Associate members.
- [SECRETARY’S NOTE: Was unable to clearly hear the names on the recording. Names will be obtained from Membership and published in the May Base Minutes. The meeting was paused briefly while one of the Base members, having had medical training, checked him out. There was no medical emergency. The shipmate left the meeting under his own power with some help.]
- Base Standings [those with more than 200 members]:
- 1) Groton 1090 - 2) Hampton Roads 284 – Tied for 3) Charleston 242 & Bremerton 242

National Awards – Bob Browning

- Bob requests help with obtaining information for the National Awards.

Scholarship – Tom Lawson III

- The drawing for the heavy metal Dolphins will be at the end of the meeting tonight.
- The drawing for another set of Dolphins will be at the May Base Meeting.
- The balance in the Scholarship fund is approximately \$6,300 at this time. We have had some very generous donations and we are thankful for these.
- The Base Website Scholarship information has been updated.
- The deadline date for scholarship applications is now May 9, 2025. Scholarships will be presented at the June Base Meeting.
- The Admiral Osborn Scholarship is limited to graduating High School Seniors.
- Tom joined the Scholarship Committee after seeing the results it provided for his granddaughter.
- Tom is looking for another team member to be part of the Scholarship Committee.

Fleet Reserve Association – Ken Hutchison

- Ken Hutchison issued a Mea Culpa for the scheduling conflict of the FRA Old Fashioned Navy Breakfast with the Amberjack/Lost Boats Ceremony.
- There will be a drawing for a Barbeque Smoker on April 12 during the breakfast..
- On Sunday, April 27, the FRA will hold the Hobson Ceremony. The Fleet Reserve National President will be there as guest speaker.
- The FRA will hold a Memorial Day Ceremony and will put flags on veterans' graves at Plantation Memorial Gardens.
- On May 3, the FRA is planning a simple get-together to simply drink beer and "have a good time".
- Ken recognized Cindy Huratiak again, as she was the guest speaker at the FRA Veterans Day event two years ago, where she did an outstanding job.

Recreation – Johnny Brown

- Nothing reported

NNPTC Liaison – Anthony Mazza

- Anthony reported about the Submarine Birthday Ball. Several of the young submariners mentioned how good it was to meet the retirees.
- The tentative date for the Submarine Ball is April 18, 2026 to be held at Trident Tech on Rivers Ave. (Same as this year).
- Ken Hutchison, along with those in the room, congratulated Anthony Mazza on his new job as NNPTC CMC.

Comptroller – Rick Wise

- The First Quarterly Report is available online. If you would like to see it, Rick has a copy at his table; see him after the Meeting tonight.

Nuclear Power School Awards – Phil Nunnally

- The next graduation ceremony will be held on April 11.
- Phil likes to see people there – even if not a NUC.
- Parking is limited. Meet at the NEX parking lot to carpool, leaving at 0800 sharp.

Newsletter – Phil Nunnally

- There are a lot of events this month.
- Even if you are not the official photographer, please send photos to Phil. He will put as many as he can in the Newsletter.

Little David – Phil Nunnally

- Working party on April 26 to replace boards. On April 29, we will paint.

SER Conference – Dave Harvey

- The location for the next SE Regional Conference has not yet been determined, however Dave expects to hear from them by next month.
- The National Convention is in Orlando, FL on August 31 – September 6.

Float Coordinator – Dave Harvey

- Dave asked and Anthony Mazza will check on placing the float outside the building for the Sub Ball next year.
- The float will be commercially transported to Manitowoc, WI for “All Things Submarine” where it will be in the parade.
- Dave will take the float out to the Lost Boats Ceremony at Patriot’s Point.
- Dave talked about fund raising for Scholarship with the float.
- Dave talked about the contacts made at the fair. He is interested in putting together a Membership Promotion Team.

Ambassador USSVCF – Bob MacPherson

- Bob spoke of a recently designed coin of which the sales support the USSVCF Brotherhood fund. This is a fund of which we can use to provide material for the NNPTC FCPOA when they are assisting one of our Base members.
- The USSVCF has ten different funds which offer varied assistance. The USSVCF Scholarship fund is another source of money for our young people.
- A sailing regatta will be held on Saturday, May 31. They are looking for crew members. A lot of recognition to Charleston Base could be obtained.
- Fund raising is all about networking. We may even be able to take the float there for display.

Kaps 4 Kids – Art Sattler

- Nothing to Report

Special Events – Tom Holcombe

- The Lost Boats ceremony will be held 1000 on Saturday, April 12 at the Cold War Memorial at Patriots Point. The conflict with the FRA Navy Breakfast was noted. Tom asked for a show of hands for how many expect to be there at CWM.
- COB and BC will meet at the storage building to get chairs and other items for the ceremony.

PAO – Rafael Guzman

- Not present

Storekeeper – Woody Woodsmall

- Woody did some investigative work and located the owner of the patch found in the parking lot.
- Woody has obtained more of the USSVI 60-year patch sets.
- Woody encouraged everyone to go to “theleansubmariner.com” and follow the link to the USSVCF to place orders for five of the new coins. He has a couple of them right now, which he provided to Scholarship for auction.
- Woody has some heavy dolphin pens which take a Parker refill. The wood is from a whiskey barrel and will last you a lifetime. \$30.
- There are plenty of items to put on your vehicle to display your submariner status. Go see Woody.

COB – Greg Landry

- Nothing reported

VA – Tom Lawson

- 2024 VA Benefits book is now on the Charleston Base website under DOCUMENTS.

Vice Commander – Tom Lawson

- Nothing to report.

Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko

- Mike thanked the members of the Board for support during his seven years as Base Commander.
- Mike expressed his gratitude to Cindy Huratiak and Anthony Mazza for the coordination between NNPTC and Charleston Base.
- Mike thanked Chaplain Nick Nichols for his sound advice in many situations.
- Mike believes that his goal as BC to leave the Base better (and younger) than he found it has been met.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

After Battery – Rick Wise

- Nothing to report

Gun Club – Mike Ciesielko

- Mike will plan some good Gun Club activity in the future.

Drawings & Auctions

- FRA Drawing – Stephen Weise
- Depth Charge Drawing – Ken Hutchison
- DOLPHINS – Woody Woodsmall

Closing Ceremony

- Chaplain Nick Nichols led the group in a prayer of Benediction.
- Vice Commander Tom Lawson announced adjournment of the meeting with a sound of three blasts of the diving alarm.
- Meeting closed at 2054.