

United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base

Minutes of Business Meeting

09 January 2020

Opening Ceremonies:

- The January 2020 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko with a quorum of four officers and a total of 78 members present. The meeting started at 1900 with the sound of the diving alarm.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Vice Commander Mike Tom Lawson and recited by the members in attendance.
- The Invocation and the Tolling of the Boats lost during the month of January was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols. Submarines lost during the month of January:
 - **USS SCORPION (SS-278) January 5, 1944 – 4th War Patrol Lost with all hands – 77 souls**
 - **USS ARGONAUT (SS-166) January 10, 1943 – 3rd War Patrol Lost with all hands – 102 souls**
 - **USS SWORDFISH (SS-193) January 12, 1945 – 13th War Patrol Lost with all hands – 89 souls**
 - **USS S-36 (SS-141) January 20, 1942 – 2nd War Patrol No loss of life**
 - **USS S-26 (SS-131) January 24, 1942 – 2nd War Patrol Lost with 46 souls – 3 men rescued**
- **5 Boats and 314 Men Lost**
- The USSVI Creed was read by Vice Commander Tom Lawson
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

Introductions of New Attendees:

- One man was present at the Base meeting for the first time:
 - Phillip Nunnelly – MMCM – Qualified on USS John Adams SSBN620 – 1981 – Also served aboard USS John C. Calhoun SSBN630, USS Sand Lance SSN660 and USS Holland AS32.

Old Business:

- **Hunley Ceremony – Harry Nettles**
 - The Hunley/Housatonic ceremony will be held on February 17 at 1900 – Sunrise Presbyterian Church, 3222 Middle St., Sullivans Island. The uniform will be the Charleston Tuxedo (dark blue jacket, light blue shirt, dolphin tie – available from Storekeeper if needed, khaki trousers and submarine qualification pin – AKA Dolphins)
- **Yearbook Advertisement – Secretary Gordon Long**
 - Gordon showed and spoke about the half-page advertisement which will be placed in the Stratford High School yearbook. Thanks to Brian Davy, whose daughter is on the yearbook committee, for presenting this idea. Thanks to other Base members who helped contribute to the cost. The design is essentially a recruitment ad with USSVI and Charleston Base logos.
- **Distinguished Submariner Award – COB**
 - COB reminded everyone that it is time for Distinguished Submariner Award nominations. The form is available on the Base website in both PDF and MSWord. COB also has blank forms available for those who prefer paper.
- **CRAMA – Butch Bryar**
 - Butch read an email from the attorney and informed the Base members about the upcoming court date regarding the Clamagore to be held at Charleston County Court, 100 Broad Street, Room 3E, Charleston, January 30 at 1030. Patriots Point signed a contract with the Navy to maintain the boat and has not done so. Now they have taken money from the state education budget in an effort to have the Clamagore sunk. Be there and wear your vest to show support.
 - CRAMA dues also are now due.
- **Guest Speaker: Wayne Phillips – SE District Commander**
 - Some folks reported not getting the bulletins. These are now being placed on the Base Website instead of cluttering up everyone's email.
 - Invited everyone to go to the USSVI National Website and update your personal profiles.
 - The 2020 USSVI Awards are fast approaching. Go to the National Website and submit a nomination.

- Elections are coming up for USSVI National offices. If you have a nomination, please submit it for consideration.
- The National Board of Directors conference is to be held in February for those who have questions or comments. Contact Base Commander and he will pass it on to Wayne.

New Business:

- **2020 Budget – Rick Wise**
 - Rick is waiting on some additional information and will present the 2020 budget at the next Base meeting.
- **2020 Base Election Coordinator – Ken Hutchison**
 - The offices of Vice Commander and Secretary are to be chosen at the May Base Meeting. Please submit nominations for these two positions. Let's have some good participation in this process. Ken will provide monthly updates until the election in May.
- **Oyster Roast – COB**
 - The Charleston Base Annual Oyster Roast is scheduled for February 29. It will be held at the FRA from 1200-1600 and is AYCE. The cost is \$25 per person and wrist tags will be required for those eating oysters.
 - In addition, members are invited to bring Chili for the Cook-Off. An award will be presented for the Chili receiving the most votes.
 - There was concern from one Base member regarding non-Base members attending and eating oysters. The cost for them will also be \$25. The FRA allows USSVI to hold monthly meetings here and also did not charge for the use of the facility at the 2019 Christmas party. Drinks will be purchased from the FRA bar.

Secretary –Gordon Long:

- The Minutes from the November Base meeting have been published in the Base Newsletter and promulgated on the Base website. There is one correction regarding the winner of the Depth Charge should have been Al Stoll vice GW. The corrected copy of the Minutes will be reposted to the website. There were no other additions or deletions to the November Base meeting minutes. The minutes were approved with the correction.

Treasurer – Gordon Williams:

- The Treasurer's Report for November has been published and promulgated on the website. There were no additions or deletions. The report was approved.

Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

- ****HUMOR****
 - A man and his wife are getting a divorce over in Greece, but the real issue was the custody of the children. The mother jumped to her feet and protested to the judge that since she brought the children into the world, she should retain custody. The man also wanted custody so the judge asked him for his side of the story. He sat there and thought for a moment then rose up from his chair and said to the judge, "Your Honor, if I put a coin into a vending machine and a Coke comes out, does the Coke belong to me or the machine?" He won custody.
- **Highlighted boat of the month:**
 - USS SCORPION (SS-278) was lost on January 5 1944, with the loss of 77 officers and men in the East China Sea, on her 4th war patrol. It is assumed she was sunk by a mine.
- There are several shipmates and family members who have given Nick information which they wish to be kept confidential at this time.
- **Andrew 'Andy' Maples** departed on Eternal Patrol Friday, Dec. 6 at the Victory House. A service was held on Dec. 9 and I found out about the passing on Dec. 11. Andy was a member-at-large of USSVI and the Holland Club. He retired after 22 years in the Navy and served on Calhoun, Clamagore, Bonefish and Trumpetfish. A condolence message was placed on the FH website.
- **Patti Oelkuch** [pron. El-ko], Tom Lawson's sister, passed away Nov. 26 in Fort Wayne IN. A condolence message was placed on the FH website.
- **Anna Emerson**, Mike's wife, had shoulder reversal surgery on Monday, Dec. 30 and went home for recovery on Tuesday, Dec 31.

- **Ed Simokat** fell on Friday, Dec. 27 and was taken to Trident where it was found he had a broken back. He had surgery Friday afternoon for plates and steel rods. There is NO PARALYSIS. He has since been moved to The Village of Summerville for rehab room 8. He would like to have visitors or calls, he has his cell phone.
- **Stacy Power** had his left big toe amputated on Dec. 5 as a result of problems he had before Elaine passed away. He has been at home recovering and was on IV antibiotics. He has a doctor's appointment on Jan 15 to discuss further treatment. He is here at the Base meeting tonight.
- **Jim Loveday** fell before Thanksgiving and broke his pelvis. After rehab in The Village, he went home on Dec. 8 for recovery and in-home PT.
- **Ron Chambers** was in the hospital early December with a blood clot on his lung. He was due to go home just before Christmas. He is in White Oak Rehab, RM 429 behind Trident Hospital. He would like to have visitors and he has his cell phone with him.
- **Ron Snyder** had a minor heart attack on Dec. 12 and was taken to Trident where he had stents put in two of his arteries. He is home recovering.
- **Don Londergan** is in Room 136 at Cypress Place. His phone number is now 843-990-3938. Rick Wise talked to him this afternoon and he is doing much better.
- **Bob Snyder** is home with palliative care.
- Please complete your page 2 if you have not done so.
- **Marvin Miller** collapsed just prior to the start of the Base meeting tonight. Berkeley County EMS was called and transported Marvin to the ER.
- Please complete your page 2 if you have not done so.
- Stacy Power spoke about the recent passing of his wife **Elaine** of 65 years. She had served in the Navy during the Korean War. Stacy thanked the Base members for performing the military honors. Nick said that due to the holidays, the Navy personnel were unavailable. Mike Emerson had arranged for Charleston Base members to do this instead and because of this situation, Mike is also restarting the honor detail. For those who can participate in the honor duty, please see Mike.

Webmaster – Nick Nichols:

- Website is constantly updated.
- Make use of the EVENTS page on the Charleston Base website. All events that are put out to the membership via email will be listed and updated on the events page.
- Pictures will now be on the USSVI National website. Please take a look at your profile on the National site and update it if needed. Many have missing info.

Submarine Veterans of WWII – George Sharf:

- We recognized Stacy Power here tonight. Stacy was not about to let his IV pump keep him away.

Social Media – Lewis Leal:

- No report

Kaps for Kids – Bill Kennedy

- Bill thanked the membership for providing the coloring books and crayons.
- He also expressed his gratitude for those Base members who made the visits to the hospitals as part of KAPS for KIDS.
- Bill sadly stated that he will have to quit as part of the KAPS for KIDS team. Tonight is Bill's last report.
- If there is someone in the room who would like to take over the leadership of this work, please see Bill.

Membership – Larry Knutson

- The Base currently has 290 members. About 30 of those are DINK. As of the January 31, those not paid up will automatically be removed from the USSVI National Sailing List. If you think that your dues are not current, please see Larry.
- Rick Sparger listed two Base members for whom he would like to take up donations and have the Base members pick up the cost of their membership. The original plan to pass the hat was not required after two Base members, Marty Sessler and John Lookabill offered to pay for one man each. Thanks to Marty and John.

VA – Tom Lawson

- The VA is still in need of volunteers, especially drivers.
- Tom recommended getting a Shingles vaccination if you have not had one.

Scholarship – Carl Chinn

- Carl thanked the Base members for last year's support of the Scholarship Committee's efforts. The receipts for 2019 was \$3,467.
- The 2020 USSVI Charleston Base Scholarship Application is available on the Base Website.
- The Base Challenge coins are still for sale.
- The Scholarship Committee will be holding a Rummage Sale on Saturday, May 2 to benefit the Scholarship Fund. The location will be on Old Trolley Road in the parking lot of Rodney's Rockets. The committee is asking for donations – not consignments – of household items (no clothing). At the end of the day, any remaining items will be picked up by the Kidney Foundation truck and taken to their Thrift Store. An email was previously sent to all Base members with the details.

Special Events – Rick Sparger

- We attended three Christmas parades in 2019 – Harleyville, Summerville and Ellore.
- We are going to try some parades in the summer. The Grits Festival in St. George was recommended.
- Rick thanked Charlie Hudson and crew for the recent maintenance of the float.

CRAMA – Butch Bryar

- See Old Business.

NPS – Ray Sparks

- Have not received a date for the next Nuclear Power School graduation ceremony, but will provide as soon as available.

Fleet Reserve Association – Skip Chilton

- The FRA will be having a Super Bowl party which includes a raffle for a 50 inch TV during halftime.
- There will be a Happy Valentines Day party on February 15. Elvis is expected to make an appearance and sing a bit during the party. Tickets for the Valentines party are \$28.50 which includes dinner (Prime Rib plus) and the show. Show tickets only are \$15.00.

Public Affairs – Jerry Stout

- Nothing to Report

Newsletter – Rick Wise

- Rick has been working as Newsletter Editor for four years is asking for a relief as Newsletter Editor. The task only requires a little skill using a word processor.

Recreation – Ed Stank

- Nothing to Report

Storekeeper – Ken Hutchison

- Nothing to report.

COB – Joe Lunn

- Tickets for the Oyster Roast are available now - \$25 each.

Vice Commander – Tom Lawson

- Lowes still offers Veteran's Discount except on Sale Items.

Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko.

- We have received a few inputs from Base members for Distinguished Submariner Award but we need more nomination forms to be submitted. It does not take long to write a small paragraph about someone who is worthy of this award. We should have about 20 to 30 forms. The award will be decided at the February Board meeting and presented at the March Base meeting.

Good of the Order

After Battery – Ray Sparks

- The Hog Roast in the Swamp will be April 19-25, 2020. Mark your calendars and don't plan any other events for that week.
- The After Battery is open every Wednesday starting at 10AM.

VA Hearing – GW

- The Audio Clinic at the VA will be phasing out the walk-ins and will be soon by appointment only.

USS Von Steuben Reunion – Rick Wise

- The USS Von Steuben Association will be holding a reunion from March 9-13 at Pigeon Forge, TN. Information is available at the Von Steuben website www.ssb632reunion.org.

Hunley – Lindsay Nelson

- Provided information about Friends of the Hunley
- Has tickets available for the landscaping expo to be held at the fairgrounds

USS James K Polk Reunion – Lou Leal

- The USS James K Polk Association will be holding a reunion from October 8-11 at the hotel on Patriot's Point. More info later.

USS Sand Lance Reunion – Rick Wise

- The USS Sand Lance Association will be holding a reunion from November 12-14 at the round Holiday Inn.

Nuclear Historian – Rick Carlson

- Not Present

Gun Club – Mike Ciesielko

- It is getting warmer and is time to do some more shoots. Mike wants to do one per month and include classes. Scheduling for him is sometimes difficult.

Kaps for Kids – Mike Emerson

- Thanked Bill Kennedy for his work as KAPS FOR KIDS coordinator. It has been great working with him.
- When Mike's six year old grandson suffered a head injury in the school yard in Washington State. Mike contacted the USSVI Seattle base and asked for a KAPS visit but was told that they can't get anyone to go. Mike was given contact information for Bremerton and was told that they would have someone there on Friday. Mike's grandson was discharged on Thursday.
- If any Base member has a child or grandchild in the hospital and would like a KAPS visit, please let him know.
- Bill's daughter, who is in charge of the children's wing of one hospital, has told the group that when some of the kids who regularly come back due to asthma problems, they want to know where the submarine sailors are.

Drawings & Auctions

- FRA Drawing – None Tonight
- Depth Charge – Mike Ciesielko – Donated \$50 to Scholarship Fund.

Closing Ceremony

- Chaplain Nick Nichols led the group in a prayer of Benediction.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko announced adjournment of the meeting followed by three blasts on the diving alarm.
- The meeting was closed at 2010