

# United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base

## Minutes of Business Meeting

### 12 March 2020

#### Opening Ceremonies:

- The March 2020 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko with a quorum of four officers and a total of 52 members present. 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 was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols.
- Submarines lost during the month of March:
  - **USS PERCH (SS-176)**      **3 March 1942 – 1<sup>st</sup> war patrol**      **59 POWs; 53 survived the war; 6 died as POW**
  - **USS GRAMPUS (SS-207)**      **5 March 1943 – 6<sup>th</sup> war patrol**      **Lost with all hands – 71 souls**
  - **USS H-1 (SS-28)**      **12 March 1920 – grounding**      **Loss of 4 souls**
  - **USS TRITON (SS-201)**      **15 March 1943 – 6<sup>th</sup> war patrol**      **Lost with all hands – 74 souls**
  - **USS KETE (SS-369)**      **20 March 1945 – 2<sup>nd</sup> war patrol**      **Lost with all hands – 87 souls**
  - **USS F-4 (SS-23)**      **25 March 1915 - foundered**      **Lost with all hands – 21 souls**
  - **USS TULLIBEE (SS-284)**      **26 March 1944 – 4<sup>th</sup> war patrol**      **Lost with 79 souls – 1 POW survived the war**
  - **USS TRIGGER (SS-237)**      **26 March 1945 – 12<sup>th</sup> war patrol**      **Lost with all hands – 89 souls**
  - **Eight Boats and 431 Men Lost**
- **First Class Mess Specialist, Submarines, Stephen S. Morris, US Navy – Shipmate departed on Eternal Patrol – March 4, 2020**
- 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:
  - Greg McCallum – EM1 – Qualified on USS George Washington Carver SSBN656 – 1971 – Currently COB of Denizens of the Deep Base – QM, Savannah River VFW Post, Aiken – made note that Charleston Base sponsored his Base.

#### Old Business:

- **2020 Charleston Base Elections – Ken Hutchison**
  - Nominations for the offices of Vice Commander and Secretary are scheduled for next month (April) with election in May.

#### New Business:

- **None**

#### Secretary – Gordon Long:

- The Minutes from the February Base meeting had been published in the Base Newsletter and promulgated on the Base website. A Base member noted a date error in the Lost Boat section of the Minutes. The correction was made and resubmitted for publication on the Base website. There were no other additions, changes or deletions to the February Base meeting minutes and were approved with the correction.

#### Treasurer – Gordon Williams:

- The Treasurer's Report for February has been published and promulgated on the website.
- Due to the turmoil in the markets, the Base Investment Fund lost \$2007 as of this meeting date.
- There were no additions or deletions. The report was approved as provided.
- Treasurer reported that Charleston Base donated \$250 to the Submarine Birthday Ball.

### Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

- **Highlighted boat of the month:**
- TULLIBEE was lost on March 26, 1944 with the loss of 79 officers and men, on her 4th war patrol. It's believed she was a victim of a circular run by one of her own torpedoes. The lookout was the only survivor and he survived the war as a Japanese prisoner.
- There are several shipmates and family members who have given me information which they wish to be kept confidential at this time.
- **MS1(SS) Stephen S. Morris** departed on March 4, 2020 at his home. Steve would have been 75 in June. He joined the Navy in 1963 and left in 1967, reentered the Navy in 1979 and left in 1987. Steve was a Life Member of USSVI National (2009) and Charleston Base (2009). He qualified on USS STURGEON SSN-637 in 1983 and also served on JOHN C. CALHOUN SSBN-630. Prior to entering the submarine service he served on USS INVESTIGATOR AGR-9, USS FLOYD COUNTY LST-762 and USS KITTYHAWK CV-63 in addition to serving at USAMPHIBASE SAN DIEGO and CHARLESTON NAVAL BASE.  
On Friday, March 6, Walt Deal and Gary Williams conducted a welfare check on Steve. He was not at breakfast on Wednesday morning and after calling him without an answer, they went to his house and found him deceased in his bedroom. The Coroner reported natural causes. There will be no service. Walt notified the family and found out that no one was planning to come into town so he and Margie took responsibility and paid for Steve's cremation. As GW said in his email, Walt took care of everything, and he took care of Walt and Margie.
- For all the Base members who live alone, it is important to have something available with your Next-of-Kin information. This could be papers left visible for someone to see. It could be left in your smartphone outside of the screen lock as an emergency contact.
- **A.C. Mitchum**, Walt Deal's brother-in-law, passed away March 8 at his home. He was in the Navy during the Korean War. The funeral was today at 1400.
- **Don Ort** has been diagnosed with pneumonia.
- **Steve Curry** has been battling pneumonia for almost 4 weeks and spent two days in the hospital. He is trying to get strength back and only working half days another week, hoping things will return to normal.
- **Darlene Graham, James' wife**, is recovering from a stent procedure and is doing well.
- **John Furst** has recovered from his bronchitis and is here tonight.
- **Ed Stank** is recovering from his neck surgery early last month and is here tonight.
- **Ed Simokat** is recovering from his broken back.
- **Stacy Power** is recovering from his toe amputation but had another infection that is being treated.
- **Jim Loveday** is recovering from his fall around Thanksgiving last year.
- **Don Londergan** is in Room 136 at Cypress Place. His phone number is now 843-990-3938. Don was at the February Base meeting.
- **Bob Snyder** is home with palliative care.
- Please complete your page 2 if you have not done so. [Secretary's Note: Nick has them in print form if needed, but they are available from the Base website at <http://ussvicb.org/documents/index.html>. Click on PDF or DOC file – your preference.]

### 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. If you are responsible for an event, please keep Nick updated on any changes, so that he can get the update onto the Base website.
- Please take a look at your profile on the National site and update it if needed. Many have missing info.
- **2020 Charleston Submarine Birthday Ball** will be held on Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup> at the Marriott Downtown on Lockwood Blvd., same place as last year. Tickets for WW2 vets are always available at no cost, and tickets for SUBVETS & Spouse are \$35 each. The theme is will be the USS Clamagore SS-343. Tickets are now on sale. Challenge coins will be numbered by boat hull numbers with no more than two coins for each hull. Be sure to send Nick an email letting him know the numbers you want after buying your tickets. [Secretary's Note: The Submarine Birthday Ball in April has been cancelled due to virus concerns.]

### **Submarine Veterans of WWII – Mike Emerson for George Scharf:**

- We recognized Stacy Power is here tonight.
- We plan to start lunches with Stacy again soon and are looking for a location in West Ashley.

### **Social Media – Lewis Leal:**

- If any Base member has something that needs to be promoted, please send it to Lewis.
- Facebook – Instagram – LIKE IT / SHARE IT. If you don't know what that means, ask your grandkids.
- Lewis said that the Scholarship Rummage sale is being promoted on the social media pages.
- Nick Nichols pointed out that he had run into a young sailor at the mall who stated that he liked our Base Facebook page.

### **Kaps for Kids – Mike Emerson**

- Last month (February) the KAPS FOR KIDS team visited fifteen children at McLeod Hospital in Florence. Mike emphasized that they never see a sick child, but rather children and families that need to be cheered up. That is what they do during these visits.
- Last month, Mike asked for contributions to get "Charleston Base" put on the hats that we are purchasing now. So far, just over \$400 has been donated for this and the cost will be about \$5.50 per hat.
- Mike hopes to go to Florence again next month. They have been going every two months, but the nurses and the director have asked them to come more often. They are now planning a 6-week interval.
- Base members are invited to make these trips. The usual plan is to meet at the hospital at 1000, visit the children's ward, and have lunch at about 1130. Most everyone is back in the Charleston area by 1500.
- Any questions, please see Mike.
- Our guest from Georgia reported that the hospitals there cancelled all Kaps for Kids visits until further notice.

### **Membership – Larry Knutson**

- Charleston Base currently has 276 members. Nothing else to report.

### **VA – Tom Lawson**

- Because of the virus, the VA Hospital has implemented new procedures regarding entry to the building. Everyone will be questioned about their health.

### **Scholarship – Marty Sessler for Carl Chinn**

- The Rummage Sale is set for Saturday, May 2 to benefit the Scholarship Fund. The location will be on Old Trolley Road in the parking lot of Rodney's Rockets. Global Storage nearby has donated a small storeroom for items to be staged. This includes small items placed in cardboard boxes. Please hold your larger bulky items (sofas, lawn mowers etc.) until the sale. Setup will begin at 0500. The sale will run from 0800 to 1300. At the end of the day, any remaining items will be picked up by the Kidney Foundation truck and taken to their Thrift Store nearby. [Secretary's Note: The Rummage Sale has been postponed. Carl Chinn will advise when the new date has been determined.]
- There is a raffle tonight called "Grits and Groceries" which includes a \$50 gift certificate from Harris Teeter.
- The committee also has a \$30 gift certificate from Top Dawg Tavern located in the same shopping center as Harris Teeter on Dorchester Rd at Wescott Blvd.
- The committee has Base Challenge coins for sale. There are a few bolo ties still available.
- In addition, there will be a drawing for a one day pass from ATP Gun Shop at the end of the meeting tonight.

### **Special Events – Rick Sparger**

- Rick is attempting to enter our float in the parade at the Grits Festival in St. George on April 18. We need Base members to participate. [Secretary's Note: This event has been cancelled due to virus concerns.]

### **CRAMA – Butch Bryar**

- Not Present

### **NPS – Ray Sparks**

- The next Nuclear Power School graduation is next week 20 March. Rick Wise will make the presentation.

### **Fleet Reserve Association – Skip Chilton**

- The FRA Annual Branch Picnic is planned for May 9. The expected location is at Short Stay. The cost will be \$5 each with a raffle at the end. Entertainment has yet to be determined. There will be prizes for those bringing desserts or side dishes. A flyer for the event is still being assembled.

### **Public Affairs – Jerry Stout**

- No Report

### **Newsletter – Rick Wise**

- No Report

### **Recreation – VACANT**

- No Report

### **Storekeeper – Ken Hutchison**

- Nothing to report.

### **COB – Joe Lunn**

- Received a call from Dave Del Duca of the Louisville Naval Museum regarding the USS Clamagore. They are currently refurbishing the USS Ling which had been severely vandalized and flooded. They are offering to refurbish the Clamagore as well. It will cost far less than the Ling. COB has provided the information to Butch. Base Commander Mike Ciesielko provided more details. The group is asking all Base members to sign a letter that they will provide in an effort to get the Clamagore from Patriots Point.
- COB commented on the Charleston Base oyster roast which was held at the FRA.

### **Vice Commander – Tom Lawson**

- Be sure to do a good cleanup tonight of your tables.

### **Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko.**

- Mike reminded everyone that nominations for Secretary and Vice Commander are currently been accepted. If any base member would like to run for either position, to let Ken Hutchison know.

## **Good of the Order**

### **After Battery – Ray Sparks**

- Open every Wednesday.
- The Hog Roast in the Swamp will be April 19-25, 2020. [Secretary's Note: This event has been cancelled due to virus concerns.]

### **Gun Shoot – Mike Ciesielko**

- Scheduled a shoot for Saturday, March 21. Meet at FRA at 0830, then drive to Twin Ponds Range.
- If any of the retired Base members would like to organize a weekday shoot, Mike encouraged them to do so. He will provide information – including a map – about the location.

### **National Awards – Rick Sparger**

- Rick addressed the 2019 awards in The American Submariner. More than 50 awards were presented at the National Convention. Charleston Base did not receive any of these. We should get recognized for what we do. Rick will help to get the Base recognized, but he can't do it by himself. Don Ort was appointed as National Award Coordinator, but his health has not allowed him to be very active.

### **Nuclear Historian – Rick Carlson**

- Not Present

**Drawings & Auctions**

- FRA Drawing – Greg Landry
- Scholarship Drawing – GRITS/GROCERIES – HARRIS TEETER – Ed Stank
- Scholarship Drawing – TOP DAWG TAVERN – Dave Menefee
- Depth Charge – Chuck Gravley

**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 by Vice Commander Tom Lawson.
- The meeting was closed at 2006.