

# United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base

## Minutes of Business Meeting

### 13 August 2020

#### Opening Ceremonies:

- The August 2020 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko with a quorum of three officers and a total of **25** members. The meeting started at 1900 with the sound of the diving alarm. Vice-Commander Tom Lawson was not present.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Base Commander Mike Ciesielko and recited by the members in attendance. We had no guests tonight.
- 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 August:
  - **USS Bullhead (SS-332) August 6, 1945 – 3rd War Patrol Lost with All Hands – 84 Souls**
  - **USS Flier (SS-250) August 13, 1944 – 2nd War Patrol Lost with 82 Souls – 8 men survived.**
  - **USS S-39 (SS-144) August 13, 1942 – 3rd War Patrol No loss of life**
  - **USS Harder (SS-257) August 24, 1944 – 6th War Patrol Lost with All Hands – 79 Souls**
  - **USS Cochino (SS-345) August 26, 1949 No Navy loss of life – one civilian loss – Tusk lost 6 souls during the rescue**
  - **FIVE Boats and 253 Men Lost**
- **Chief Engineman, Submarines, Billy Harold Buntin, US Navy Retired – Departed on Eternal Patrol July 20, 2020**
- **Chief Interior Communications Electrician, Submarines, Charles F. Spence, Jr., US Navy Retired – Departed on Eternal Patrol August 4, 2020**
- The USSVI Creed was read by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko welcomed members to the meeting.

#### Introductions of New Attendees:

- No first time guests were in attendance this evening.

#### Old Business:

- **2020 Charleston Base Elections – Mike Ciesielko**
  - At the last Base meeting, both Tom Lawson and Gordon Long were elected to retain their offices as Vice-Commander and Secretary respectively. Tom was not present for the election and is not here tonight. The oath of office for both positions will be held at the September Base meeting.

#### New Business:

- Ed Stank reported to the Base that the WWII ceremony in Kings Bay will not be held. The Submarine Museum is also closed. The Sub Base is not allowing any visitor access. All of this is because of the COVID restrictions.

#### Secretary – Gordon Long:

- The Minutes from the July Base meeting had been published in the Base Newsletter and promulgated on the Base website. The July Base meeting minutes were approved with no additions, changes or deletions.

#### Treasurer – Base Commander for Gordon Williams:

- The Treasurer's Report for July has been published and promulgated on the website.
- Willy noted that there was no mention of income from the July Base meeting. He was not at the Base July meeting. The July money will be included in the August report.
- There were no additions or deletions. The report was approved as provided.

## Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

### • **Highlighted boats of the month:**

- While on her 3rd war patrol 78 years ago today, **USS S-39 SS144** was lost without loss of life after grounding on submerged rocks off Rossel Island, Papua New Guinea. The entire crew was able to get off and rescued by the HMAS Katoomba. The S-39 was abandoned and left to "break up" on the rocks.
  - While on her 2nd war patrol 76 years ago today, **USS FLIER SS250** was lost with the loss of 78 crew members. Flier was transiting on the surface when she was rocked by a massive explosion (probably a mine) and sank within less than a minute. 13 survivors, some injured, made it into the water and swam to shore. 8 survived and 6 days later, friendly natives guided them to a Coast Watcher and they were evacuated by the USS Redfin.
- There are several shipmates and family members who have given me information which they wish to be kept confidential at this time.
  - **ENC(SS) Billy Harold Buntin** departed on Eternal Patrol on July 20. He joined the Navy in 1954 and retired in 1975. Bill was a Life Member of USSVI National [2014], Life Member of Charleston Base [2014], a Holland Club member and a member of FRA Branch 269. He qualified on USS SEA POACHER SS-406, and served on GRENADIER SS-525, TIRANTE SS-420, BARRACUDA SS-550, ORION AS-18 and TIRU SS-416. A note of condolence from Charleston Base was placed on the funeral home website
  - **ICC(SS) Charles F. 'Chuck' Spence, Jr.** departed on Eternal Patrol on Aug 4. He joined the Navy in 1954 and retired in 1974. Chuck was a Life Member of USSVI National [2019], a Life Member of Charleston Base [2019] and Holland Club member. He qualified on USS BARBERO SS-317 in 1956 and served on GEORGE WASHINGTON SSBN/SSN-598, NATHAN HALE SSBN-623, NATHANAEL GREENE SSBN-636 and TECUMSEH SSBN-628. When there is an obituary, a note of condolence from Charleston Base will be placed on the funeral home website.
  - **EMCM(SS) Tommy Matney** departed on Eternal Patrol on Aug 7 in Summerville SC. He served on several commands including JAMES K. POLK SSBN 629, LOS ANGELES SSN 688 and CSS 15 in Guam. He was not a member of USSVI. A note of condolence was placed on the funeral home website.
  - **TM2(SS) LeeAndre' Coltrane** departed on Eternal Patrol on July 30 in Charlotte NC. He served on DANIEL BOONE SSBN 629 from 1989-1996 and was US Army Military Police from 1996-2007. He was not a member of USSVI.
  - **Kathy Young**, widow of deceased Charleston Base member ETCM(SS) Francis 'Frank' John Young [Eternal Patrol on 7/17/2010], passed away on August 5. Kathy was the first staff ombudsman for Submarine Group SIX.
  - **Dorothy Pothier**, sister of George Scharf, passed away on July 19.
  - **Kathy Smith**, wife of P.M. 'Smitty' Smith, passed away on July 20.
  - **Harry Nettles** had successful retina repair on his left eye.
  - **Gene Weir** has had his cancer return for the third time. He is working with the doctors to decide a treatment plan.
  - **George Burton** is undergoing treatment for lung cancer. His most recent scans shows great improvement.
  - **Rick Wise** will be having nuclear medicine mid-to-late October in lieu of prostate surgery; he will be having some hormone pretreatment leading up to the procedure..
  - **Bob Snyder** is home with palliative care.
  - Please complete/update your page 2 if you have not done so. Of all the Eternal Patrols this reporting period, no one had a page 2 on file.

## 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.

## USSVI National Charitable Foundation – Nick Nichols:

- USSVI National is asking each Base to have a representative for their project of helping to provide laptops to children or grandchildren of submarine veterans for online classes due to COVID arrangements. Nick asked the membership for a volunteer and Ed Stank agreed to be the Charleston Base POC.

**Submarine Veterans of WWII – Mike Ciesielko for George Scharf:**

- We welcomed Stacy Power. It was good to see him out tonight.
- Stacy introduced his son Casey.

**Social Media – Lewis Leal:**

- Nothing to report for Social Media.
- A memorial bench for USS James K. Polk will be installed at the Cold War Memorial. All Polk shipmates are invited to attend.

**Kaps for Kids – Glenn Little for Mike Emerson**

- Kaps for Kids events are on hold until the hospitals contact us to resume visits.
- [See Donations in Good of the Order below for additional info]

**Membership – Larry Knutson**

- Not present

**VA – Tom Lawson**

- Not present

**Scholarship – Marty Sessler for Carl Chinn**

- Raffle tickets are available. Rick Sparger is accepting money tonight or the tickets can be requested by sending Carl a check for \$5 or \$10 (or other amount). He will take a picture of your tickets and send it to you, so that you have the numbers. The current drawings, for various values of gift cards to Top Dawg Tavern near Harris Teeter on Dorchester Road, will be held at the October Base meeting.
- The Rummage Sale will be held soon. The actual date is yet to be determined.
- The new Scholarship form is on the website. Please be sure to use the new form.

**Special Events – Rick Sparger**

- With some help, Rick would like to have a simple Base picnic in October. Plans would be for Base to provide hamburgers/hotdogs and members bring a side dish or two. At this point, there have been no plans discussed for holding a Christmas party, so we need to do something. At Bushy Park, we can spread out a bit.
- Rick also requested that the Base provide beer/wine for the picnic. Mike Ciesielko volunteered to cook.

**CRAMA – Butch Bryar**

- CRAMA has received a response from Patriot's Point. Butch read the new motion which has been filed by the attorney for CRAMA.

**Nuclear Power School – Rick Wise for Ray Sparks**

- The graduations are no longer open to the public. Charleston Base is still participating by providing the award but it is actually presented by the NPS staff to the students with video streaming.

**Fleet Reserve Association – Rick Sparger**

- Nothing to report.

**Public Affairs – Jerry Stout**

- Not present

**Newsletter – Rick Wise**

- Rick thanked Carl Chinn (in absentia) for his input to the Newsletter.
- If anyone has anything that you would like to put in the Base Newsletter, please send it to Rick.

**Comptroller – Rick Wise**

- Nothing to report.

## **Recreation – VACANT**

- Mike Ciesielko asked for volunteers to take over the Recreation Committee, saying that we need at about four members to work together.

## **Storekeeper – Ken Hutchison**

- If anyone is in need of something, please call Ken. You can also simply send him an email.
- It is time to purchase the 2021 submarine calendars. He is planning to only order 50 of them.

## **COB – Joe Lunn**

- Not present.

## **Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko**

- Mike, in general, acknowledged work that is being done by the doers in the Base, and specifically thanked some of the men for their effort and accomplishments. He also noted that we have some offices manned by individuals who are not fulfilling the need that is required by the office. It is time to consider that these positions get staffed by someone else who can or will be up to the task. The Recreation committee, however, is not currently staffed at all but needs to be.
- We need to get those Base members, who have not worked on committees before and get them active. So, call these members and encourage them to take part in the operation of the Base. If someone is willing to take on a task, please let him know and he will support that individual all the way. Mike realizes that with the current COVID situation, some people are not going out much, but we can do better.
- There are some in the Base that Mike wants to enter for National USSVI awards, but getting them submitted is difficult.

## **Good of the Order**

### **Donations – Ken Hutchison**

- Ken noted that, as being part of the Kaps for Kids trips and visiting the Shriner's Hospital in Greenville, he would like to see Charleston Base donate some money to their work. He requested that this be an annual amount of \$250 and made a motion to that end. This was seconded by Ed Stank. There was some discussion and the motion was amended to state that the \$250 donation would be made on October 1 each year to the Shriner's Hospital in Greenville, SC. Rick Wise, as Comptroller, pointed out that from a budget standpoint, we used to provide an annual \$250 to Victory House in Walterboro. This will take the place of that budgeted item. A vote was taken and the motion carried. Ken will provide the Base Treasurer with the information for sending the contribution.

### **After Battery – Ken Hutchison**

- Nothing to report.

### **Gun Club**

- Mike wants schedule a shoot at Twin Ponds during both September and October. He called them recently and found the location closed.
- Mike would like to have a representative from either Glock or S&W to come to a Base meeting and do a short presentation.
- There was discussion about the availability of CWP classes. There are several providers of the classes and Mike outlined a few of them and their training options.

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

- Not Present

### **Drawings & Auctions**

- Depth Charge – William Woodsmall.

**Closing Ceremony**

- Chaplain Nick Nichols led the group in a prayer of Benediction.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko announced adjournment of the meeting with three blasts of the diving alarm.
- The meeting was closed at 2001.