

**United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base**  
**Minutes of Business Meeting**  
**9 June 2022**

**Opening Ceremonies:**

- The June 2022 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko with a quorum of four officers and a total of 40 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 June was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols.
- Submarines lost during the month of June:
  - **USS HERRING (SS-233)      June 1, 1944 – 8<sup>th</sup> war patrol      Lost with All Hands – 83 Souls**
  - **USS R-12 (SS-89)      June 12, 1943 – practice torpedo approach near Key West FL  
Lost with 42 Souls – 21 Survivors**
  - **USS GOLET (SS-361)      June 14, 1944 – 2<sup>nd</sup> war patrol      Lost with All Hands – 82 Souls**
  - **USS BONEFISH (SS-223)      June 18, 1945 – 8<sup>th</sup> war patrol      Lost with All Hands – 85 Souls**
  - **USS S-27 (SS-132)      June 19, 1942 – grounded off Amchitka Island Alaska  
No Loss of Life**
  - **USS O-9 (SS-70)      June 20, 1941 – foundered off Isle of Shoals NH  
Lost with All Hands – 33 Souls**
  - **USS RUNNER (SS-275)      June 30, 1943 – 3<sup>rd</sup> war patrol      Lost with All Hands – 78 Souls**
  - **Seven Boats and 403 Men Lost**

**Second Class Electronics Technician, Submarines**  
**Robert William Hoizel, U.S. Navy Veteran**  
**Departed on Eternal Patrol on May 31, 2022**

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

**ADMIRAL OSBORNE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD:**

- The Scholarship Committee Members – Chairman Carl Chinn and Rick Sparger presented one award to recent high school graduate Chayse Cool – Granddaughter of Joe O'Saben – Graduated from Stratford HS – Will attend Charleston Southern University

**Introductions of New Attendees:**

- One new guest attended the Base Meeting for the first time this evening.
  - Megan Hartman – LT – Qualified on USS Michigan SSBN727B – November 2019. She is the first submarine qualified woman to have attended our meetings and is on active duty serving at NPTU.

**Old Business:**

- None

**New Business:**

- None

**Secretary – Gordon Long:**

- The Minutes from the May Base meeting have been emailed directly to the Base membership and had been promulgated on the Base Website. No additions or deletions were noted. The May Base Meeting Minutes were approved.

### **Treasurer – Ricky Collins:**

- The Treasurer's Report for May was published and promulgated on the website. There were no additions or deletions. The report was approved as presented.

### **COB – Rick Sparger:**

- COB spoke concerning the Anniversary of the Battle of Midway in WWII – June 4, 1942.

### **Chaplain – Nick Nichols:**

- Highlighted boat of the month:
  - **USS HERRING SS-233** was lost on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1944 with the loss of 83 men near Matsuwa Island. HERRING was on her 8th war patrol and was conducting a surface attack when a shore battery spotted her and made 2 direct hits on her conning tower causing her loss. Before being sunk, she had sank a freighter and a passenger-cargoman. HERRING was the only US submarine sunk by a land battery.
- There are several shipmates and family members who have given me information which they wish to be kept confidential at this time.
- **ET2(SS) Robert William 'Bob' Holzel, USN Veteran.**, 89, departed on Eternal Patrol on Tuesday, May 31, 2022. Bob was a Life member of USSVI [2011], member of Charleston Base [2013], and a member of the Holland Club. He qualified on USS TRUMPETFISH SS-425 in 1952 and also served on AMBERJACK SS-522. A note of condolence from Charleston Base was placed on the funeral home website. Bob's graveside service was held yesterday at 1100 at Riverview Memorial Park. A note of condolence was placed on the funeral home website.
- **CPO(SS) James Donald Phillips, Jr.**, 73, of Ladson, departed on Eternal Patrol on Friday, June 3, 2022. Jim was in the Navy for 23 years serving on USS Andrew Jackson SSBN-619, USS Fulton AS-11, USS Kamehameha SSBN-642, USS Stonewall Jackson SSBN-634 and USS John C Calhoun SSBN-630. His service will be on Sunday, June 12 at Bryant Funeral Home, St. George, from 5:00-7:00 PM. A note of condolence was placed on the funeral home website.
- **Shirley Gnable, wife of John Gnable**, passed away on May 26<sup>th</sup>. John was a previous member of Charleston Base and Shirley attended many of Charleston Base functions prior to COVID. Services were private. A note of condolence was placed on the funeral home website.
- **Tom Skorepa** sent an up-date to say he has been on a hades type roller coaster. Was told there was no cancer, and before he could get excited, was called by another doctor and told he needed to come back in because there was another test they wanted to do. It was up and then down like that for two more cycles, with the last one being surgery to retrieve a piece of lung along with lymph node for detailed pathology testing and then one more after that. He was then sent to the lung specialist today "the last doctor left". As he felt earlier, it "was not cancer". All testing confirmed that, but more like a low-grade bacterial infection. Will be seen in November for a follow up CT scan to see how things were going. PTL.
- **Tim France** had his second knee replacement surgery on Jun 2<sup>nd</sup>. It was his right knee this time. He is recovering at home from Beaufort Memorial Hospital. So far, this one seems much more painful than the left one eighteen months ago but that may be faulty memory or just that I am eighteen months older. Appreciate your prayers!
- **Jerry Stout** reported his tumor is shrinking and there is no need for a new trial at this time. There will be no radiation and any treatments will be performed at the Hollings Cancer Center here. He appreciates everyone's prayers.
- **Bill Kennedy** has lung cancer.
- **Herb Anderson** was in the hospital (Georgetown) with polymorphic ventricular tachycardia [unstable heart rhythm] in early-April. He was moved to MUSC the middle of April. He is now home recovering and feeling better each day.
- **Lee Rackley** is not doing well. He enjoys talking to anyone who might want to call.
- **Bob Gay** has been diagnosed with cancer and has begun his chemo.
- **Don Londergan** is still in Cypress Place on Midland Pkwy in room 136.
- **Gene Weir** continues his cancer treatments.
- **Bob Snyder** is still with palliative care.
- Complete/update your page 2 if you have not done so.

## 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 remember back in late December, I had a computer crash that lost all of the addresses in my email client. I have been able to find almost all of them but I'm still missing some for our EP widows. I just had an email from Ann Semler asking why I stopped sending her email. If you know of an EP widow that might still want to keep contact with us, please either send me her info or tell her to contact me so she can be reinstated.
- **'NEW' USSVI National Website.** It appears progress is being made for the new website. At least things are moving in that direction.
  - **Per a recent email from National, DO NOT** attempt to change, modify, or load anything from the old site, even if you could gain access to it. The site has been taken down for merging with the new one.
  - The old tools section (membership and updates of members and base info) is also down. Larry Knutson and I have been conducting backups for the current info in the system.
  - National is hoping to have an alternate site we can use to input new members and conduct updates for our database.
  - Larry and I will work together to ensure our info are kept as up to date as possible.
  - July 30, 2022 through August 31, 2022: Our new website from Blackbaud is planned to go live between July 30 and August 31.
- **Something interesting:** The USSVI National Commander has received a letter from the US Navy requesting that we relinquish our (USSVI) copyrighted insignia. We have learned that all of the US Armed Forces are attempting to obtain exclusive rights (copyright) of their individual insignias. It's really strange that our military never saw fit to do this when they developed/designed their insignias. The US Navy Submarine Service was organized in October 1900 with the commissioning of the USS Holland, SS-1, and much later came the development of our coveted 'Dolphins' pin. The USSVI designed our insignia, which includes the Dolphin pin, in 1966, two years after forming the organization. The US Navy is now wanting us to give up exclusive rights to the 'Pin'. The BOD approved the NC to communicate with the Law firm that we used for copyrighting our insignia regarding this issue. More will be released when I learn of it. No additional data on this issue as of May 9, 2022.
- **2022 National Election:** National election ballot is listed in the 2nd Quarter 2022 of the American Submariner. Election dates are included.
  - Online voting is preferred
  - Online 3rd party website link will be provided by email by June 24th
  - Election starts 0001 on June 24th
  - Election ends 2359 on August 23rd
  - Paper ballots must be received by Election Master by August 23rd
  - Election results will be announced at the National Convention. Read the ballot in your American Submariner magazine, page 19

## Social Media – Nick Nichols for Lewis Leal:

- The May Meeting Video is online and able to be viewed by those with access.
- The Memorial Day Ceremony video is online on the Charleston Base YouTube Channel.

## Submarine Veterans of WWII – Mike Ciesielko for Mike Emerson:

- Stacy Power is here tonight along with his son Casey. We are glad to see both of them this evening.
- Casey offered a Vietnam Veteran hat to anyone in the group. The decision was made to give it to Mike Knaubb.
- Stacy related a story from Vietnam.

## Kaps for Kids – Mike Emerson

- Not present.

### **Membership – Nick Nichols for Larry Knutson**

- We currently have 267 Charleston Base Members.
- Nick Nichols provided Base standings: Groton – 1160; Hampton Roads – 272; Charleston – 267; Bremerton – 253; Requin – 191; San Diego – 171; Long Island - 154

### **National Awards – Mike Knaub**

- Not present.

### **VA – TOM LAWSON**

- Coming in January 2023, the Veterans Affairs Life Insurance will provide guaranteed acceptance for life insurance coverage. All veterans age 80 or younger with a VA disability rating of 0 to 100 percent are eligible for VALife with no time limit to apply and it does not require medical exam. Some veterans, age 81 or older may also be eligible in certain circumstances. The coverage is incremental and is from \$10k to \$40k. Premiums are competitive with the private sector

### **Scholarship – Carl Chinn**

- Challenge coins are available.
- No raffle tonight.
- There are some historical naval prints on the side table which are available for whoever wants them, FREE!

### **Special Events – Rick Sparger**

- Armed Forces Day at the Air Force Base picnic grounds was attended by a few Base members on Saturday, May 21. Rick thanked the men that came out to help him clean the float to make it presentable for this event. These were: Ken Hutchison, Tom Lawson, Fred Woodley and Beetle Bailey,
- Some young guys that had just recently graduated from Boot Camp visited the float while at the AFB. They were planning to go into the submarine service and asked a lot of questions. Also, at the event, there was some challenging times as the tent had to be physically held down to keep it from blowing away with the wind.
- The float does need a new cover.

### **Fleet Reserve Association – Ken Hutchison**

- Ken Hutchison announced that he will be becoming the President of the Fleet Reserve Association #269.
- Skip Chilton will be the Home Committee chair.
- Stacy Power noted that the Fleet Reserve has a voice in Congress.

### **COB – Rick Sparger**

- Ed Johnson is going to 644 reunion in Bremerton July 13-17 and will be stopping by the Horse & Cow. He will purchase challenge coins for anyone who wants one. \$10 per. He will pay and then you pay him back at the August meeting. [**Secretary's Note: Change of Plans** – Due to health reasons, Ed will not be traveling to Bremerton, WA for the reunion and will not be able to get the challenge coins and T-shirts.]
- COB welcomed our first submarine qualified lady to the Base meeting.

### **Recreation – OPEN**

- Nothing reported

### **CRAMA – Rick Wise for Butch Bryar**

- Butch met with Senator Tim Scott and requested a meeting of all who want to save the Clamagore on Thursday June 16 at 1300. You do not need to be a member of CRAMA.
- Glenn Little spoke with Nancy Mace's office about the Clamagore.

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

- The next NPS graduation is Friday July 22 at 0800. Muster at Exchange parking lot to carpool because of limited parking.

### **Newsletter – Ed Stank**

- The Base Newsletter was published tonight.
- SOME GOOD NEWS!! The State of South Carolina will no longer tax your military retirement.

### **Public Affairs – Ed Stank**

- We had a really good turnout to the Memorial Day Ceremony at the Summerville Cemetery. He is planning to get an article in American Submariner about the event.
- Articles for the Amberjack ceremony and the Holland Club Induction have been submitted to American Submariner.

### **Storekeeper – Woody Woodsmall**

- Nothing to report.

### **Vice Commander – Tom Lawson**

- Nothing to report.

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

- Mike stated that he enjoyed the Armed Forces Day celebration at the AFB.

### **Good of the Order**

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

- Not present.

#### **After Battery – Rick Wise for Ray Sparks**

- Nothing to report

#### **Friends of the Hunley – Lindsay Nelson**

- He has a magazine from Friends of the Hunley available.
- For those who want to order Hunley items, Lindsay provided a discount code for online orders.

#### **Gun Club – Mike Ciesielko**

- Nothing to report

#### **Raffle Info – Carl Chinn**

- Lou Leal donated a bottle of bourbon to the Scholarship Committee which he received from a Hyman G Rickover reunion. It is a special bottling for the Rickover and may be of interest to some at NPS.

#### **Non-Nuclear Historian – Harry Nettles**

You are in the company of some of the greatest history that this world has ever seen. I am going to tell you about a guy that I served with. We'll call him Stuck Up. He was a Torpedoman. We're not really sure, but he was born somewhere in southern Alabama or the northern panhandle of Florida. This probably explains how smart he was.

The boat that he was one was getting ready to make a Med Run and they needed a diver. They had one, but needed two, so he volunteered to go off to New London for Dive School. On a Sunday afternoon, about a week before he leaves for school, he is sitting around in his Barcalounger there in his living room and he is getting bored. To give you an idea how long ago this was, it was before St. James Blvd was completed all the way out to 17A. Crowfield was "The Place" in Goose Creek and also as far as the road went.

So, he gets up from his Barcalounger and decides to go for a bike ride. Stuck Up gets on his dirt bike and starts heading out some of these old logging roads (that don't exist anymore) and while on one of them, he sees a fox come running out of the woods, thinking it could get past Stuck Up's bike before he got there. It was wrong! But it was also smart, because it did a hard right and now is paralleling Stuck Up, who saw the fox and thought, "I bet that fox would make a great pet." So, Stuck Up dives off of his little dirt bike, grabs the fox and now, they

are wrestling in the ditch. Unfortunately, for Stuck Up, the fox did not take up with wrestling and it bit him. After being bitten, he let it go, where it immediately ran back into the woods from where it came.

Stuck Up dusted himself off, got back onto his dirt bike and goes back home. Well, he is now back in his living room, sitting there in his Barcalounger. He looked at his hand, but started thinking to himself that the fox had bitten him pretty good and that he should go down to the Navy hospital to have it looked at.

So, Stuck Up gets into his pickup truck and drives down to the Navy hospital. He is sitting there in the room, waiting for the doctor. The doctor came in with his clipboard, saying, "I hear your pet fox bit you."

"Well, not exactly."

"What do you mean?"

Sighing, Stuck Up replied, "Well, I wanted the fox to be my pet, but he did not want to be my pet and when he bit me, I let him go."

"So, you don't have the fox?"

"No, sir. I do not have the fox."

"I'll be right back," said the doctor as he left the room.

A few minutes later, the doctor returned and told Stuck Up that he needed to be at the immunization clinic on Tuesday morning at 1000 for a rabies shot. Stuck Up agreed to be there and when he showed up that day, he got escorted to the room, where he takes off his dungaree shirt and waits. The corpsman came in and verified his name and asked if he is ready for his shot. As he pats his arm, he replied that, yes, he was ready. The corpsman informed Stuck Up that he obviously did not understand, since the injection was not going to be in his arm. Thinking that now he is going to get stuck in the gluteal region, he groaned, but started unbuckling his pants. The corpsman stopped him and told Stuck Up to pull up his tee shirt and lay on the table. This confused him and he had to be told again. The corpsman left as Stuck Up laid on the table, but came back a couple of minutes later and planted a golf ball right underneath his breastbone. Stuck Up stated how much that hurt. The corpsman told him that he needed to come back on Thursday, and he would be given another shot because they do not know whether the fox had rabies or not.

This did not please Stuck Up, but when he returned on Thursday, he brought a fox.

The doctor asked, "Are you sure that this is the fox that bit you?"

"I would recognize this fox anywhere," he replied. Well, they tested the fox for rabies, with the test coming back negative.

So, Stuck Up did not have to get another golf ball planted underneath his breastbone, however, on Sunday, he was on a flight to New London, CT, for dive school and at 0600, they were out on a three-mile run! He thought about that he still had golf ball under there. So, he did not make and dropped out and they sent him back home. I guess we deployed with only one diver after all. I really did not keep track up that stuff back then.

The lesson to be learned here is: DON'T PLAY WITH FOXES UNLESS YOU KNOW WHO THEY ARE.

### **Grateful – Joe O'Saben**

- Joe noted how pleased he is with his granddaughter and thanked the members of Charleston Base for treating her kindly. Joe thanked the Base for the Scholarship received.

### **Drawings & Auctions**

- Scholarship "Nuclear Waste" – KEN LUX got the bottle of "Nuke Waste" since he had a Challenge coin.
- FRA Drawing – James Graham
- Depth Charge Drawing – Tom Lawson

### **Closing Ceremony**

- Chaplain Nick Nichols noted that, on this day in 1959, the USS George Washington, SSBN-598, the first U.S. Navy nuclear powered fleet ballistic missile submarine was christened and launched at Groton, CT. Her nuclear capability was removed in 1983 and she was reclassified as SSN-598; serving until 1985. George Washington was later processed in the Nuclear Recycling section of Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in 1998.
- Nick then led the group in a prayer of Benediction.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko announced adjournment of the meeting.
- Vice Commander Tom Lawson sounded three blasts of the diving alarm.
- Meeting closed at 2010.