

**United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base**  
**Minutes of Business Meeting**  
**9 March 2023**

**Opening Ceremonies:**

- The March 2023 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko with a quorum of four officers and a total of 48 members. The meeting started at 1901 with the sound of the diving alarm.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Base Commander Mike Ciesielko and recited by the members in attendance.
- The Invocation and the Tolling of the Boats lost during the month of March was given by Vice Commander Tom Lawson for Base Chaplain Nick Nichols who was not present this evening.
- 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 –  
One 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**

**Master Chief Machinist's Mate, Submarines/Surface Warfare**  
**Joseph I. Hayes Jr., USN Retired**  
**Departed on Eternal Patrol on Feb. 12, 2023**

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

**Introductions of New Attendees:**

- There were no new guests this evening.

**Old Business: (Base Commander Mike Ciesielko)**

- **Distinguished Submariner Award –**
  - A Distinguished Submariner for Charleston Base has been selected. The award shall be presented at the April Base Meeting.
- **Amberjack Ceremony –**
  - The Amberjack Ceremony will be held at 1000 on April 8, at the Cold War Memorial in Mount Pleasant.
- **Submarine Birthday Ball –**
  - The Submarine Birthday Ball is on April 8 at the North Charleston Marriott on Goer Dr. (I-26 and Montague). Base Secretary will send information to entire Base.

**New Business:**

- **None**

**Secretary – Gordon Long:**

- The Minutes from the February Base Meeting were emailed directly to the Base membership, published in the Base Newsletter and have been promulgated on the Base Website. There were no changes. The Base Meeting Minutes were approved as presented.

### **Treasurer – Ricky Collins:**

- The Treasurer's Report for February was published and promulgated on the website. There were no revisions. The report was approved as presented.

### **Chaplain – Tom Lawson for Nick Nichols:**

- **MMCM(SS/SW) Joseph I. Hayes Jr., USN Ret., 76**, departed on Eternal Patrol on Feb. 12, 2023. Joe joined the Navy in 1964 and retired in 1994 after 30 years of service. He was a life member of the USSVI & Charleston Base joining both in 2011, a member of the Holland Club having been qualified for 55 years, and a Member of FRA Branch 269. Joe qualified on USS PLUNGER SSN-595 [67-72] in 1968. He also served on USS DRUM SSN-677 [72-75], USS LEWIS AND CLARK SSBN-644B [COB 78-81], USS BENJAMIN FRANKLIN SSBN-640 [COB 81-85], USS JOHN ADAMS SSBN-620 [COB 85-87], and USS WILLIAM V. PRATT DLG-13/DDG-44 [CMC 88-91]. Joe's shore duty assignments included NAVAL RESERVE CENTER DAYTONA BEACH FL [INSTRUCTOR 75-78] and NAVAL WEAPONS STATION CHARLESTON SC [CMC 91-94]. Joe's service was at Parks Funeral Home on Feb. 16<sup>th</sup> with burial following at Summerville Cemetery. Charleston Base was well represented and also provided the pall bearers. The family was very appreciative of the service.
- **Phil Nunnally** had knee surgery Wed. Mar 1 which the doctor's thought would be minor. The surgery discovered the damage was more extensive than expected and he'll be on crutches for 4-6 weeks and PT after that. He is home and has plenty of family help. Feel free to text or call. I'll miss the next Subvets meeting and Nuke school graduation. I was planning on taking over the Little David maintenance this spring but that will need to wait until the fall window. I've been trying to get more involved in more Subvet activities and responsibilities over the past few months but Wendy's Covid recovery and now this keeps holding me back. Bummer.
- **Brenda Woodsmall** is having her right knee replaced on Mon Mar 6<sup>th</sup>.
- **Don Petersen** is not doing well. He can't take phone calls however he does text. If you want to text him the number for text only is 843.532.6464.
- **Tom Clark** had surgery on Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> for a mass on his intestines. Not cancerous. He spent some time in ICU and then in Rehab and was discharged to home on Feb. 26<sup>th</sup>. Still requests no calls or visitors until further notice.
- **Rodney McKanna** had his new knee joint put in on Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>. After spending some time rehab where heh was next doon neighbors with Tom Clark, he was discharged to home a week early. He is doing well and will soon return to work.
- **Rick Wise** has had two infusion and they went well. Base members stepped in to provide transport and two more will do so for the trips in March. He is doing well and has been having elevated temperature which makes him believe the infusions are working. Please continue your prayers.
- **Howard 'Andy' Anderson** has been in Trident hospital since Jan. 10. He had 4 heart attacks & 3 procedures during this time. Now on 6<sup>th</sup> floor for rehab. Says he is still kicking.
- **Thom Beach** is still at the VICTORY HOUSE in Walterboro. His phone number is 843.809.9417. He called me Tuesday to say he's doing OK and to also say he is asking for pictures of submarines to hang at the Victory House. He has talked to those in charge and they have agreed to use pictures if he can get them. These should be similar to those the Scholarship committee has now if possible.
- **Joe Lunn** is still battling his Parkinson's Disease. I've been playing text tag with him this week.

### **Webmaster – Tom Lawson for Nick Nichols**

- OLD VS NEW NATIONAL WEBSITES:
  - You should ensure you are using the website of <https://ussubvets.org>  
Until further notice the rebuilt old website is the current active system that should be used for all of your normal research and data entries (Tools).
- I have been able to put 170 member pictures into the National database. That's 73% of our members. Please update your profile on National.
- 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. Contact the webmaster with any updates to this page.

- On 31 March, I will be updating our website with the new membership application and also update PayPal with the new fees for National and Charleston Base membership dues. The membership application and PayPal links will indicate this increase on 1 April.
  - National will increase to \$30 per year and CB will increase to \$20 per year.
  - All three life membership levels of Charleston Base will increase \$20 for each level.
  - All three life membership levels of National will increase from \$20 to \$100 depending on the level.

#### **Social Media – Lewis Leal:**

- Not Present

#### **Kaps for Kids – Mike Emerson**

- Not present.

#### **Membership – Larry Knutson**

- We currently have 246 Charleston Base Members.
- Dues will increase on April 1.
- See Larry after the meeting or you can send dues payment via mail to Larry.
- **Base Standings [those with more than 200 members]:**
  - 1) Groton 1088 - 2) Hampton Roads 270 - 3) Charleston 246 - 4) Bremerton 234

#### **VA – Tom Lawson**

- Nothing to report.

#### **Scholarship – Carl Chinn**

- The deadline for Scholarship applications is April 14. If you have kids, grands or great-grands, be sure to remind them about this resource. Although it is very simple and easy to explain, BE SURE to review their application. Sometimes, we get forms in that are not signed, or has some required information omitted.
- Challenge coins are available (\$12) to support the Scholarship fund.
- The Scholarship fund now has a balance of \$12,504.
- We also want to welcome Rusty Pickett this evening. He purchased the painting of the WWII submarine battle in support of the Scholarship fund.
- We still have the Hunley painting. It has incredible matting.

#### **Special Events – Rick Sparger**

- The Amberjack Memorial will be held on April 8. Last year, we recognized the Lost Boats. This year we will read the names of those on Eternal Patrol from when Amberjack was lost.

#### **Election Coordinator – Ken Hutchison**

- Elections for Base Commander and Treasurer will be held at the May Base Meeting. Please consider one of these positions. Email, call or text Ken if you would like to be on the ballot.

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

- The FRA will be having a picnic at Marrington Plantation on April 29 from 1000 to 1800.
- This coming Wednesday, March 15 is our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the local Fleet Reserve chapter. On Thursday, when we have our regular meeting, we will have cake cutting featuring our Southeast Regional President.

#### **Recreation – Johnny Brown**

- Tickets for the Oyster Roast at Short Stay are available from Dave Harvey. The pavilion has been reserved from 1000 to 2200 on Saturday, March 18. For Oysters \$20 – Non-Oysters (BBQ) \$5

#### **Nuclear Power School – Ray Sparks**

- This Friday, March 17 is NPS Graduation. Ray will be making the presentations since Rick Wise is unable to at this time.

### **Newsletter – Nick Nichols for Ed Stank**

- The Newsletter was published yesterday. In this edition, there is an article about Parkinson's. There is no recovery from this debilitating disease, from which there is no cure. Read this article, because if you know someone with Parkinson's, you may find them to be very difficult to deal with.

### **PAO – Ed Stank**

- Two articles have been submitted to American Submariner. One was about the Scholarship committee and the wonderful donations that have been made. The other is about the H.L. Hunley Memorial. Both of them have been accepted, so Ed expects them to be printed in the next American Submariner.

### **Storekeeper – Woody Woodsmall**

- Woody still has at "boat load" of 2023 Submarine Calendars. The theme is "*Perils in the Deep*" and are \$10 each. Everyone needs a calendar to keep track of all the meetings, doctor appointments etc...
- There are a dozen stories about dangers at sea.

### **COB – Rick Sparger**

- We are in need of help for the oyster roast at Short Stay.
- COB expressed gratitude to Terry Trump for being able to use the fantastic location at Bushy Park. Cooper River Partners no longer allow their retired employees to use facility, however we are thankful for the many times that we have been granted use of this picnic facility for more than ten years.

### **Vice Commander – Tom Lawson**

- Nothing to report.

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

- Mike is still working through the Sailing List to contact each of our Base Members.

### **Good of the Order**

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

- Not present.

#### **After Battery – Ray Sparks**

- We are open every Wednesday.
- There will be a cookout on March 17 for St. Paddy's Day. We will enjoy the meal at 1700.
- The Hog Roast will be April 15 through 22. We only ask for donations.
- Visit the website for more information – [www.theafterbattery.org](http://www.theafterbattery.org)

#### **Gun Club – Mike Ciesielko**

- We will have a Gun Shoot this weekend. Muster here at FRA for 0830 departure.
- Bring your guns, ammo and targets.
- You can also meet us there at Twin Ponds Range which opens at 0900.

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

- I don't have a particular story tonight, but I do have an outstanding Sea Story. By a show of hands, how many here tonight were only on SSBNs? How many were on SSNs – or – both? Of those who were on SSNs, how many of you were involved with PCO ops?  
What is the most exciting thing of PCO ops? You take a whole bunch of yahoos that want to be Commanding Officers who come aboard YOUR boat and act as if they ARE the CO. Did this always work out well? Let me see some hands if it worked out really well!! ...[pause] ... I see none!!  
Well, I will tell you about MY experience with PCO ops. Oh yea, if you were only on a boomer, you have no idea. [At this point, there was disagreement in the room.] So, I was on the Grayling and did two PCO ops. Yea, that was exciting!! [dripping sarcasm]. What do you do before you go on PCO ops? The first thing that

you do is to go out and do things that PCOs are expected to do. Yes, you do EMERGENCY DEEPS and all that other kind of nonsense, right?

So, we had this one group of PCOs and this one guy had never been on anything except a boomer. He did not understand the concept. So, we go out there to AUTEK. Show of hands – everyone knows where AUTEK is? – GOOD! It's us against a dipping helo, a frigate and a P3 which has the ability to launch torpedoes. This is going to be fun, right? So this one PCO that must have only on boomers his entire career. Well, we hear this report from Sonar, "Weapon in the water!" Well, SSN guys, what are supposed to do? [Go fast/deep/turn.] Right!! What else? ...[pause] ... Open the MBT vents and do a 3 second blow!! What does that do? It puts a great big bubble of air in the water, that as it approaches the surface – you Nukes should figure this out – it gets bigger and bigger and bigger. The torpedo gets in the bubble and keeps running around until it runs out of fuel.

Anyway, we're doing PCO ops and I'm the Diving Officer of the Watch. Well, I hear Sonar's report about the weapon in the water, and BINGO, we dive!!

The PCO said "Open the forward MBT vents. Conduct 3 second blow of the Forward Main Ballast Tank." Well, I turned to him and said, "Sir, shouldn't we open all the vents?"

He responded, "I said, open the FORWARD ballast tank vents!" So, we did that and then did the 3 second blow. Then immediately he said, "Make your depth 400 feet and shut the vents."

Are you kidding me? I said, "Sir, we need to open the vents."

He answered, "I said SHUT the vents."

"Chief of the Watch, shut the vents." So, here we are screaming to the surface with a 25+ degree up-bubble. I have both planes on full dive. "Reverse speed, Sir!"

"Negative!"

"Reverse speed, Sir!"

"Negative!"

"Reverse speed, Sir!"

"Negative."

POOOOM! As we popped through the surface, the #2 scope comes up and a P3 aircraft flies right over the top of us. Gentlemen, that was the day that I had a near mid-air collision with a P3 aircraft. Unless you have never been on PCO ops, you have no idea what I talking about, but being in the Control Room, that was the time of my life.

- Rusty Pickett spoke up then saying, "As the only one in this room who has been a PCO and done the ops twice, as a participant, you wouldn't believe the CL....F... that is amongst the PCOs when you get a Bozo like that in front your whole section."

### **Drawings & Auctions**

- A number was selected from the sign-in list. Woody Woodsmall won a half-gallon of Evan Williams since he had a Scholarship Challenge Coin
- FRA Drawing – Don Ort
- Depth Charge Drawing – Dave Harvey

### **Closing Ceremony**

- Vice Commander Tom Lawson led the group in a prayer of Benediction.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko announced adjournment of the meeting.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko sounded three blasts of the diving alarm.
- Meeting closed at 1946.

[SECRETARY'S NOTE: After the meeting was closed, Tom Holcomb introduced himself as the new Hunley/Housatonic Coordinator]