

United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base
Minutes of Business Meeting
13 June 2024

Opening Ceremonies:

- The Jun 2024 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Mike Ciesielko with a quorum of four officers and a total of 42 members. The meeting started at 1902 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 – 8th 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 – 2nd war patrol** **Lost with All Hands – 82 Souls**
 - **USS BONEFISH (SS-223)** **June 18, 1945 – 8th 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 – 3rd war patrol** **Lost with All Hands – 78 Souls**
 - **Seven Boats and 403 Men Lost**
- The Creed of USSVI was read by Vice Commander Tom Lawson.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

Admiral Osborn Scholarship Award:

- Carl congratulated the Base members for the contributions to the Scholarship Fund which totaled more than \$13,000 this year.
- The committee had received three applications this year, but one missed the requirement of being a current year high school graduate.
- The Scholarship Committee Members – Chairman Carl Chinn and Marty Sessler presented two awards. Only one was presented in person:
 - Reagan Pepler – Granddaughter of Johnny/Susan Brown – Graduated from Cane Bay High School where she was captain of her volleyball team, in the band, in choir and Student Council as VP and Treasurer. She was inducted into National Honor – She was accepted at Trident Technical College and University of South Carolina. She will attend Trident Tech for two years and then transfer to University of South Carolina with a major in Hospitality. A photo of Reagan with her family members was taken to record the occasion.
- The other recipient will receive her award separately:
 - Elizabeth Chinn – Granddaughter of Carl/Connie Chinn – Lives in Simpsonville, SC – Graduate of Greenville Technical Charter High School – She was accepted at Clemson University, Anderson University, Presbyterian College, College of Charleston, Belmont Abbey, Winthrop University, Wingate University and Western Carolina University. She will attend Clemson University majoring in Elementary Education. With the forty credit hours she has already earned while attending high school, she expects to obtain her Master's Degree in four years.
- Carl thanked his wife – not in the room – for all the work that she did for the Scholarship Committee.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko congratulated the Scholarship Committee for great effort this year.
- The guests were dismissed for the remainder of the meeting.

Introductions of New Attendees:

- Two men were at the Charleston Base meeting this evening.
 - Leo Chiasson – LCDR – Qualified on USS George Bancroft SSBN643 – 1984 – Also was Plankowner aboard USS Nevada SSBN733 and Plankowner aboard USS Maryland SSBN738.
 - Howard Snyder – CWO3 – Qualified on USS Sarda SS488 – 1959 – Also served aboard USS Thomas A Edison SSBN610

Old Business:

- None

New Business:

- None

Secretary – Gordon Long:

- The Minutes from the May Base meeting were emailed to all Base members. The Minutes have been published on the Base Website for download. There was a question about the date of the Minutes which were distributed. The Minutes were found to be correct. There were no changes, additions or deletions. The Minutes were approved as written.

Treasurer – Base Commander for Ricky Collins:

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

Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

- Highlighted boat of the month:
 - **USS Bonfish (SS-223)** lost on June 18, 1945 with the loss of 85 men when sunk near Suzu Misaki. Winner of 3 Navy Unit Citations, Bonfish departed Guam for her 8th war patrol as part of a submarine group for operations in the Sea of Japan. On the morning of 18 June Bonfish received permission to conduct a patrol of Toyama Wan, Honshu. After sinking a passenger-cargoman, Bonfish was subjected to a savage depth charge attack. She was never heard from again.
- There are several shipmates and family members who have given me information which they wish to be kept confidential at this time.
- **John Francis “Frank” Cook, Jr., Commander, U.S. Navy retired, 85**, departed on Eternal Parol on Monday, June 3, 2024 in Charleston, SC. He graduated the Naval Academy class of 1963. He was a Commanding Officer of the USS Henry Clay before his retirement in 1983. Frank was not a USSVI member.
- **Donna Rutter**, wife of Gene Rutter, Tarheel Base Chaplain, fell on June 3rd, fractured her humerus bone, dislocated her left shoulder, and has massive bruising over her left back, down her left arm, and a bruise mark under her chin, and a lot of pain. Please keep both Donna and Gene in your thoughts and prayers.
- **Bill ‘Robby’ Roberts** will be having surgery on July 8th at MUSC to correct the leaking aneurysm he's had for a long time. Expects to be there overnight. His niece will take him and take care of Becky while he's in the hospital.
- **Mike Emerson** had right shoulder reversal surgery on Tuesday, 11 June. The Doctor said it's in and out the same day if there are no problems.
- **Johnny Brown** had an infection being treated with antibiotics and then tested positive for Covid just before Memorial Day. He now believes it was a false positive caused by the meds he was taking.
- **Glenn Little** was diagnosed with pneumonia after Memorial Day and is doing better.
- **Rick Wise** had a PET scan on Tuesday 4 June. His results Scan showed no visible signs of cancer but has two vague areas. He had a bronchoscopy on 11 June to get biopsies and will hear the results the week of 17 June. He has also received his prosthetic arm and is learning how to use it.
- **Ken Curtis** was in the VA at the end of May due to some heart issues but is now home. Still needing to do infusions.
- **Fred Woodley** has recovered from a serious UTI and sepsis in early April; however, his bladder has a narrowing of canyon walls and will have to be watched. Other point of concern is increased PSA.

- **Tom Cyrek** is at home with a home health nurse coming by each day. Due to his Parkinsons meds, if you call do so between 1200-1400 so as not to interfere with his evening meds. His wife Gloria had hip surgery and currently has the help she needs but may need our future help to get Tom to his doctor appointments
- **Jerry Stout** C-Scan results show no new cancer and a significant shrinkage of both tumors on kidney and center chest lymph node in excess of 60 %. Will continue on single dose of Optivo Immune therapy every month until further notice.
- **Al Dempster** and his wife, Connie, are in The Bridge of Charleston Assisted Living. His mailing address is: Alan Dempster – Room 222, 2590 Elms Plantation Blvd., North Charleston, SC 29406. They have a phone in their apartment – (843) 793-1187.
- **Thom Beach** has moved back to Summerville and is at the Blake at Carnes Crossroads. He is in room 108. His dialysis days are Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Visitors are welcome. The address is 4015 2nd Ave., Summerville SC 29486.
- **John Glave** is a retired MMCS and a USSVI MAL HC living in Williston, SC. He qualified on the IREX SS482 in 1964 and also served on POLK, DANIEL BOONE, DACE, RAY, BLUEFISH, and SKIPJACK. He recently had a stroke and several mini-strokes. The doctors have given him only a few months. Robby Roberts gave me this info and said if you know him or want to just talk to him you can call him at 803-624-7086
- Complete/update your page 2 if you have not done so.

Webmaster – Nick Nichols:

- If you change your number or drop your home line, please contact either Larry, Nick or the COB so that we can make the necessary changes locally and with National.
- Until told differently, continue to use the website of <https://ussubvets.org>

Social Media – Lewis Leal:

- Not present.

Membership – Larry Knutson

- **Base Standings** [those with more than 200 members]: Charleston is #3 in USSVI membership. Groton 1140 - 2) Hampton Roads 275 - 3) Charleston 254 - 4) Bremerton 238

National Awards – OPEN

- The position is open.

Scholarship – Carl Chinn

- With the two awards presented, it is time to start working on next year.
- The raffle for the German U-Boat model will conclude at the end of tonight's meeting.
- Challenge coins are available for \$12. At the end of the meeting we have a drawing which requires possession of a challenge coin.
- On June 30, Rusty Bull Brewery located at 3005 Montague Avenue will have a Pint Night. Every beer that is sold will net \$1 for the Scholarship Fund. They also food available. Right next door is Charleston Axe Throwing.

Fleet Reserve Association – Ken Hutchison

- The FRA has reelected Ken as President.
- The Memorial Brick for Stacy Power is in place in the foyer.

Recreation – Johnny Brown

- We had a good time at the River Dogs game on May 24. The SubVets were recognized over the PA.
- In October, we will have a picnic at Marrington. More info later.

NNPTC Liaison – Anthony Mazza

- Anthony had eight Submarine Ball glasses available to give away. The glasses were gone in short order.

Base Comptroller – Rick Wise/Tom Holcombe

- [SECRETARY'S NOTE: Turnover of position from Rick to Tom is in progress.]

Nuclear Power School Awards – Phil Nunnally

- Not present.
- Ed Stank will present the Legacy Award at the next NPS graduation.

Newsletter – Phil Nunnally

- Not present.

Little David – Phil Nunnally

- Not present.

SC License Plates – Ed Stank

- Ed is going to Columbia to talk to the Base there.
- The plate is a Submarine – not SubVet plate.
- SC requires \$6,800 to set up the plate

Special Events – Tom Holcombe

- Tom advised everyone of Freedom Fest at Locklear Park on Friday June 28. The event will start at 1800.
- The fireworks will start after dark.

PAO – OPEN

- The position is open.

Storekeeper – Woody Woodsmall

- USSVI 60TH patch/coin (individual or sets) are available.
- SUBVET Edition Vehicle Emblems are available.
- Veteran Flag lapel pins are available.
- Submarine magnets are available.

COB – Greg Landry

- We will have a picnic at The After Battery on 13 JULY. Request all bring sides.
- Greg questioned why the SC bases have not been already working together on the license plates.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko recommended that we attend events of other bases to promote camaraderie.
- The main goal is to increase membership.

Kaps4Kids – Ken Hutchison

- Ken recommended that we restart K4K.
- BC suggested that maybe someone at NNPTU would be willing to do this function. This would be a “Chief Maker”. We will check with all of the hospitals. Anthony will check at NNPTU.

VA – Tom Lawson

- Nothing to report.

Vice Commander – Tom Lawson

- Nothing reported.

Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko

- Mike thanked everyone for attendance tonight.

Good of the Order

Carolina Celebration of Liberty – Nick Nichols

- Nick advised everyone of the annual event at First Baptist Church in Columbia on Sunday, 30 June.
- Tickets are free, but required. Nick will send more info on email.

Summerville Elks Lodge – Woody Woodsmall

- The Elks Lodge will conduct a Flag Presentation and Folding Ceremony on 15 June.

Nuclear Historian – Rick Wise

- UNNATURAL LAWS:
 - Murphy's Law – Whatever can go wrong, WILL. Commentary: Murphy was an optimist.
 - Unspeakable Law – As soon as you mention something, if it's good, it goes away – If it's bad, it happens.
 - Hal's Law – Every man has a scheme that will not work.
 - Victorious Observation – The other line moves faster.
 - The Law of Selective Gravity – An object will fall in such a way as to do the most damage. Jennings Corollary: The chance of the bread falling with the buttered side down is directly proportional to the cost of the carpet.
 - Segal's Law – A man with one watch knows what time it is. A man with two watches is never sure.
 - Wise's Observation: After age seventy, any medical tests performed will raise more questions than answers and lead to more tests.

After Battery – Steve Nelms

- Buddha provided an update on The After Battery:
 - Dave Harvey has installed new RV electrical outlets.
 - The work shop has been converted to a bunk room.
- Open on Wednesday and Saturday starting at 1000 each day.
- Johnny Brown / Dave Harvey have put a lot of work into the facility.

Gun Club – Mike Ciesielko

- Nothing reported.

Drawings & Auctions

- German U-Boat Model – Mike Ciesielko
- Challenge Coin Display Cabinet Auction – Tom Lawson \$35
- Book – Thunder Below (Hardback) Auction – Ken Hutchison \$25
- Book – Blind Man's Bluff (Hardback) – Willy Williams \$25
- Challenge Coin Drawing (Booze) – Nick Nichols won but said to auction – Greg Landry \$25
- FRA Drawing – Bill Freligh
- Depth Charge Drawing – Julian Villegas

Closing Ceremony

- Chaplain Nick Nichols led the group in a prayer of Benediction.
- Base Commander Mike Ciesielko announced adjournment of the meeting with a sound of three blasts of the diving alarm.
- Meeting closed at 2009.