

United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base
Minutes of Business Meeting
10 October 2024

Opening Ceremonies:

- The October 2024 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 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 September was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols.
- Submarines lost during the month of October:
 - **USS SEAWOLF (SS 197) Oct 3, 1944 – 15th War Patrol** **Lost with all hands – 100 souls (83 crew and 17 Army)**
 - **USS S-44 (SS 155) Oct 7, 1944 – 5th War Patrol** **Lost with 56 souls – 2 men became POWs and survived the war**
 - **USS WAHOO (SS 238) Oct 11, 1943 – 7th War Patrol** **Lost with all hands – 80 souls**
 - **USS DORADO (SS 248) Oct 12, 1944 – New - Training** **Lost with all hands – 77 souls**
 - **USS ESCOLAR (SS 294) Oct 17, 1944 – 1st War Patrol** **Lost with all hands – 82 souls**
 - **USS DARTER (SS 227) Oct 24, 1944 – 4th War Patrol** **No loss of life**
 - **USS SHARK II (SS 314) Oct 24, 1944 – 3rd War Patrol** **Lost with all hands – 87 souls**
 - **USS TANG (SS 306) Oct 25, 1944 – 5th War Patrol** **Lost with 78 souls – 9 men became POWs and survived the war**
 - **USS O-5 (SS 66) Oct 29, 1923 – Near Panama Canal** **Lost with 3 souls**
 - **Nine Boats and 563 Men Lost**
- 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:

- No new guests for were present at tonight's meeting for the first time.

Old Business:

- **None**

New Business:

- **Comptroller – Rick Wise:**
 - Rick recommended / made motion to increase Float Budget by \$2,000. Several Seconds – overlapping audio – name not determined. Motion passed – no objection. There was one question regarding the source of the funds. The \$2k will come from money currently existing in our Checking Account.
 - The 2025 proposed budget has been uploaded to the Charleston Base website. We will vote on the 2025 Budget at the November Base meeting.
- **Carolina Piedmont Base Hurricane Helene Relief – Chaplain Nick Nichols:**
 - The Carolina Piedmont Base Commander has set up a GoFundMe account for a \$10k goal. Many have already donated. For those who want to donate, but not through the GFM account can send a check directly through the Carolina Piedmont Base Commander. The address is available on the National website www.ussubvets.com. Several SubVets in the Appalachians are still unaccounted for. Help those that you can – Pray for those that you can't.
 - FEMA is confiscating the donated material, turning away trucks and threatening fines for returning.
- **Thresher Float Overhaul – Dave Harvey**
 - Dave talked about the renovation to the float that is currently in progress.

- **Coastal Carolina Fair Float Presentation – Dave Harvey**

- Dave described the plans for the Charleston Base recruitment effort at the fairgrounds. The watchbill is already complete, however anyone attending the fair is encouraged to wear your vest.

- **USSVI Southeast Regional Conference – Dave Harvey**

- Dave spoke about the SER that Charleston Base is sponsoring during the period of 13-16 FEB 2025. Using the recent FRA convention in the area as a mold to work from, Dave listed the available attractions to the Charleston area during those dates including the Southeast Wildlife Expo (SEWE).
- Lodging and banquet will be held at the Double Tree Hotel located at Ashley Phosphate. Buses have been arranged for daily events to including trips to the FRA for the Charleston Base Meeting, The After Battery, SEWE. Dave described the tentative schedule for each day. Plans are based on 200 attendees.
- USSVI has provided \$1500 seed money for the conference. Ray Sparks stated that The After Battery will provide \$500.
- Base Commander emphasized that we need to have all hands to help.

Secretary – Gordon Long:

- The Minutes from the September Base meeting were emailed to all Base members. The Minutes have also been published on the Base Website for download. The Minutes were approved as presented.

Treasurer – Ricky Collins:

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

Hurricane Relief – Nick Nichols:

- Nick spoke about the USSVICF and hurricane relief efforts in progress.

Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

- Highlighted boat of the month:
 - **USS WAHOO (SS238)** was lost on October 11, 1943 with the loss of 80 men near La Perouse Strait. Under command of one of the great sub skippers of World War II, LCDR "Mush" Morton, Wahoo was on her 7th war patrol. Wahoo had won a Presidential Unit Citation and ranks 5th in the number of enemy ships sunk. She was lost to depth charges dropped by a Japanese patrol aircraft.
- There are several shipmates and family members who have given me information which they wish to be kept confidential at this time.
- **Jim Boggs** (former CB member) wife, Bettie, passed away on Saturday evening. Her funeral was yesterday. There were 6 SUBVETS and 4 wives attending.
- **John Lookabill** will be 90 on October 12th.
- **Jim Keller** is in NY state for medical treatment. The VA has recently placed him in a program called Home Based Patient Care due to the fact he is a shut-in with zero mobility. In his email to me he stated: **I seriously doubt that I will ever again "make it" back to SC (in this life) - I'm 87 and deteriorating rapidly. Diagnosis: Chronic emphysema (C.O.P.D.) With severe skeletal deterioration (OSTEO POROSIS / Arthritis & SCOLIOSIS in 2 places in my spine).**
- **Beetle Bailey** ruptured hi right quad several weeks ago. He is in a leg brace now, using a walker and is healing well.
- **Bob Browning** continues to heal well from the serious hand surgery he had in August.
- **Rick Wise** has been told he will get a new arm that is programable.
- **Tom Cyrek** had spine surgery on Sept. 17th which enabled him to regain some slight movement in his legs. He was moved to the Elms Life Care Center on University Blvd for rehab but he has been moved back to the VA. Gloria reports it has been a difficult three weeks since he was moved to rehab. The facility was awful and the care was even worse. Tom is being monitored for infection and pneumonia. Planning on taking him to their daughter's home after his planned discharge next week.
- **Marvin Miller** is now living at White Oak Manor. 9285 Medical Plaza Dr. Room 417, This is behind Trident.

- **Bill Roberts** continues to heal from his surgery in August. He will see his doctor next week to discuss his aneurism. He and Becky live in the Villages and he is in Cottage 606 with Becky in the Greenhouse Memory Care Unit. His mailing address is: William Roberts, 201 W. 9th North Street, Unit 99, Summerville SC 29483-6715.
- **Fred Woodley** is still having the bladder issues and also high PSA levels.
- **Jeff Reuer** has been diagnosed with partially blocked arteries in both legs. His recent CT scan determined there is a 100% blockage in both legs but his body is regenerating his own bypasses. They are watching it for 6 months and maybe surgery will not be needed.
- **Al & Connie Dempster** are in The Bridge of Charleston Assisted Living. Mailing address is: Alan Dempster – Room 222, 2590 Elms Plantation Blvd., North Charleston, SC 29406. Apartment phone – (843) 793-1187.
- 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>

Wall That Heals – Nick Nichols:

- Nick has been asked and will be offering the prayer for the Wall That Heals Welcome Home Ceremony on Thursday 17 October at 1800.
- Steve Nelms spoke about contributions that The After Battery is making to this event and requested Base members sign-up for work.

Social Media – Lewis Leal:

- Nothing to report.

Membership – Larry Knutson

- Annual Dues are due now.
- **Nick Nichols provided Base Standings** [those with more than 200 members]: Charleston is #3 in USSVI membership. Groton 1159 - 2) Hampton Roads 282 - 3) Charleston 252 - 4) Bremerton 24700.32

National Awards – Base Commander Mike Ciesielko

- Nothing reported

Scholarship – Carl Chinn

- Tom Lawson III has taken over as Scholarship Chairman and will soon choose committee members.
- A letter of appreciation is due to Connie Chinn for her help as the unseen member of the Scholarship Committee.

Fleet Reserve Association – Ken Hutchison

- Dues for the FRA are only \$40. If not a member, see Ken Hutchison. He “knows” the FRA president.
- The FRA Southeast Region (SER) Convention was a success because of the hard work of many.
- The FRA will hold an indoor picnic on 11 NOV.
- Medal of Honor recipient Major General Livingston has been designated a Lifetime Member of FRA269. If you would like to meet him, he will be at the FRA meeting on Thursday, 21 NOV to receive his FRA membership card.

Recreation – Johnny Brown

- The SubVet Christmas party will be held at the FRA on 6 DEC. Dinner will include prime rib.
- Cost is \$10. Proceeds will be used to purchase gift cards and door prizes.
- Johnny sent a flyer via email.

NNPTC Liaison – Anthony Mazza

- Nothing reported

Nuclear Power School Awards – Phil Nunnally

- The next graduation ceremony will be held on October 11. This graduation will include the first group of Australian enlisted personnel.
- The Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy and the Australian Warrant Officer of the Navy (Aussie equiv.) will be in attendance at this graduation.

Newsletter – Phil Nunnally

- Nothing to report.

Little David – Phil Nunnally

- Nothing to report.

SC License Plates – Ed Stank

- Need more votes to get a quorum.

Hunley/Housatic – Tom Holcombe

- Nothing reported.

Special Events – Tom Holcombe

- Tom is putting a watchbill together for the fair.
- The float will be taken to the fairgrounds on 28 OCT.
- Each of us will be responsible to getting admission to the fair. For those who will be attending multiple times, you can get an ID card for \$40.
- We will have a tent with lights; will provide flyers and write contact info in a logbook.

PAO – Base Commander Mike Ciesielko

- Not present.

Storekeeper – Woody Woodsmall

- A SUBRON 8 patch was found in the parking lot. Not claimed.
- Woody has a sale currently happening for Military Appreciation Month.
- Any item that is less \$10 or less is \$1 off. Any item above \$10 is \$2 off.

COB – Greg Landry

- Come to the fair and help.
- The teardown working party for the Wall That Heals is on Sunday Morning at 0700.

VA – Tom Lawson

- Nothing to report.

Vice Commander – Tom Lawson

- Nothing to report.

Base Commander – Mike Ciesielko

- Mike thanked everyone for attendance tonight.
- Reach out to those in the states which were hard hit by the two hurricanes.
- We need a Kaps for Kids Chairman.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

After Battery – Steve (Buddha) Nelms

- One of the Hood Brothers who writes the books will be at The After Battery looking for sea stories.
- The Hog Roast will be held from 30 MAR to 5 APR 2024 for long term planning.

Gun Club – Mike Ciesielko

- Nothing reported.

VET FEST – Rodney McKanna

- Rodney spoke about a VET FEST event to help the VFW on 19 OCT.

Drawings & Auctions

- FRA Drawing – Ray Sparks
- Depth Charge Drawing – Gerry Starr – Donated entire winnings to the Scholarship fund

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 2015.