

USSVI – Charleston Base Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

March 5, 2025

The Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 1800 by Base Commander David Harvey and attended by Phil Nunnally, Woody Woodsmall, Greg Landry, Bill Freligh, Tom Holcombe, Ed Stank, Larry Knutson, Lewis Leal, Jerry Stout, Ricky Collins, Gordon Long, Nick Nichols and Art Sattler

NPS Awards – Phil Nunnally:

- The next Nuclear Power School graduation is March 27. Phil will not be there, but Bob MacPherson will be presenting the awards.

Little David – Phil Nunnally:

- Planning work on Little David tentatively for April 7. Four boards need replacement. Phil will send out a reminder notice.

Newsletter – Phil Nunnally:

- Nothing to report.

Storekeeper – Woody Woodsmall:

- Nothing to report.

COB – Greg Landry:

- We will be able to get the float onto the Air Force Base on Thursday, April 30 at 1500 for the Air Show. We will be told where to set up. The Blue Angels will be at the show this year.

Holland Club – Bill Freligh:

- Read names of new inductees:
 - James J. Bargmann – MMCM(SS)
 - Loye Ray Bryant – QMC(SS)
 - A.B. Campbell – MTCS(SS)
 - Marvin Clift – MT1(SS)
 - Donald Donofrio – ICCS(SS)
 - David C. Horton – MS1(SS)
 - Don Kopczynski – FS1(SS)
 - Jay W. Pierce HMCS(SS)
 - Paul D. Reeves II – ETN2(SS)
 - Ray Dean Standfield – CMDCM(SS)
 - Jerry K. Stout – CWO4
 - Ronnie Vandiver – MMCS(SS)
 - Michael J. Welch – YN1(SS)
 - William M. Wilson – STS1(SS)
 - Joseph B. Rodgers – LCDR
 - Olin E. Thomas – CWO4

Special Events – Tom Holcombe:

- The Amberjack/Lost Boats memorial will be April 11. Tom will make an announcement next week and be looking for volunteers. This year, the names of the Amberjack crew will be read.

Comptroller – Tom Holcombe:

- Nothing to report.

HL Hunley – Tom Holcombe:

- Nothing reported.

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SC License Plate Coordinator – Ed Stank:

- The Submarine License Plates are available by completing the online form. Membership in USSVI is acceptable proof of eligibility or a copy of your DD214.
- Ed will be turning in his Handicap Tag for a mirror placard and putting the SV tag on his car.
- The winner of the SV 1 plate raffle is from Golden Corner Base. Ed reported that he received SV 3 instead, but Ricky Collins stated that he received both SV 1 and SV 3.
- Ed reported that \$349 was returned to Golden Corner.

Membership – Larry Knutson:

- We currently have 253 members and are still fourth in membership of USSVI.
- All of the recent membership names/checks paid to National have been reconciled.
- Base Standings [those with more than 200 members]: Charleston is #4 in USSVI membership. [AM = associate member]
 - o Groton 1170 w/70 AM - 2) Hampton Roads 299 w/12 AM – 3) Bremerton 254 w/17 AM – 4) Charleston 253 w/15 AM

Social Media – Lewis Leal:

- The Base Meeting Video description lists the Base calendar and other info. Lewis asked everyone about the homework assignment that he gave last month to watch and make suggestions.

PAO – Jerry Stout:

- Jerry sent pictures to National. He also will be writing an article about the SC Submarine License Plates and wants to get a picture of the raffle winner and his SV 1 plate.
- Jerry will submit an article about the SE Regional Conference. Nick Nichols has a bunch of photos which were taken at the SER.

Treasurer – Ricky Collins:

- The annual Charleston Base Treasurer's Report has been sent.
- Due to the amount of money that we spent in December, the bank charged two "Low Balance" fees.
- The dividends from the Investment account are currently being reinvested in the fund, but we could consider having the money sent to us instead.
- The second bank account associated with the SER will soon be at the low limit and will be charged fees. Dave Harvey wants to retain the second account for at least one more year, so he need to know how much money that the account requires to avoid low balance fees.

Secretary – Gordon Long:

- Nothing to report.

Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

There are several shipmates and family members who have given me information which they wish to be kept confidential at this time.

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ETERNAL PATROL

- **QM2(SS) Christian Louis La Force, USN Veteran, 73**, departed on Eternal Patrol on Sunday, 22 February 2026 at his home. Chris joined the Navy in 1972 and left in 1978. He was a life member of USSVI National and Charleston Base as of 2020. He was also a member of the Holland Club qualifying in 1973 on USS POLLACK SSN-603. He also served on USS JOHN ADAMS SSBN-620. Chris was a Life Member of FRA Branch 269 joining in 2006. He worked at NIWC ATLANTIC. No funeral service will be held.
- **CWO2(SS) Billie N. Hickerson, USN Retired**, departed on Eternal Patrol. He served on USS ETHAN ALLEN SSBN-608 and USS CARBONERO SS-337. Billie was not a member of USSVI.
- I am still waiting to hear from the families of **EMC(SS) John Brotherton** [EP 12 OCT 12] and **STS2(SS) Charles Spencer Wood** [EP 24 JAN 2026] about services for them

BINNACLE LIST

- Jim Higgins is recovering from having his left leg amputated above the knee due infection in his toe. It was his option to have the amputation. He is now in rehab but requests no visitors. He is in good spirits.
- **Sonny Rash** is recovering from having his right leg amputated 4 inches below the knee due to a bad infection. He will be fitted with a prosthetic as soon as his leg heals enough. [843.345.1430]
- **Ed Simokat** is recovering from being in Summerville Hospital in early Feb. Phone calls and visits are welcome. [843.810.0383]
- **Bob Sollo** is recovering from his shoulder surgery and has started PT.
- **Beetle Bailey** is recovering from surgery on his spine for a pinched nerve.
- **Rick Wise** is still taking chemo treatments. He will not be at base meeting due to an infusion on Tuesday. The CTs done on Feb. 16 showed an indication the infusions are having some effect. The round on Mar. 10 is the last of this set. The plan is to go to a maintenance schedule that reduce the chemo to one drug and the immunotherapy on a 5-week cycle instead of the current 3 weeks. Of course this can change based on the PET scan April 10th.
- **Don Meadows' son, Andrew age 33**, is again in Kidney failure. Andrew's numbers are slipping. Another med change leaves him very tired and sick. As far as me, one VA doctor who for three years told me she would do needed surgery for one reason or another was replaced by her boss. He took a look at my Xray, and stormed out. He came in with another doctor. They talked medical jargon. They looked at me and said you are having surgery on the 11th. My feet bones look like Swiss cheese. I am having plates, and pins, and screws to put in. I had a bad spell last Tuesday. 52 seizures. Then just for fun I had two injections in my spine for the leg and back pain. Shoots my sugar to the roof, then it drops to the low 50s. But, a United States Navy Nuclear Powered Submarine torpedoes an enemy warship. This is the best day ever!
- **Jerry Stout** has a recurrence of skin cancer near his left kidney and is being treated for that. Jerry personally provided his own update.

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LONG TERM / ASSISTED LIVING / HOMEBOUND

- **Tom Lawson** is home on 24/7 oxygen. He is on hospice care. He needs a ramp and the BC along with others are looking into getting one built. Calls are welcome but his voice tires easily [843.327.3282].
- **Steve Curry** was diagnosed with AFIB and congenital heart failure in July 2025. He is on 24/7 oxygen with very limited travel. Phone calls are welcome [843.270.9905]
- **Dave Woods wife, Fran**, is still recovering from a stroke in 2024 during a heart bypass.
- **Don Meadows** is confined to his bed much of the time but he hopes to make some base meetings.
- **Ed Simokat** is confined to his home and can't attend meetings. He enjoys calls from his shipmates. [843.810.0382]
- **Mike Knaub** is in assisted living on Daniel Island. His address is 514 Robert Daniel Dr. Rm 310, Daniel Island SC 29492-7375. You can contact Mike on his email mlk91444@yahoo.com or [843.795.6665].
- **Marvin Miller** is at White Oak Manor. 9285 Medical Plaza Dr. Room 117. This is behind Trident. He no longer answers his phone.
- **Bill [Becky] Roberts** in D409 in the Villages of Summerville. Becky in the Greenhouse Memory Care Unit. His mailing address is: William Roberts, 201 W. 9th North Street, D409, Summerville, SC 29483-6715. Bill's email is cbussvicob@yahoo.com and his cell phone is [843.509.3962]

Complete/update your page 2 if you have not done so. For the last five (5) Eternal Patrols, Nick had only one (1) page 2.

Webmaster – Nick Nichols:

- Please continue to report any change in your personal info to either Larry, COB, or me so the necessary changes can be made to national and local database.
- 2026 Submarine Birthday Ball is 18 April 1700-2230 at the Trident Tech Center. Cost is \$76.54 for SUBVETS and guest. Uniforms: Vest Uniform or Charleston Tuxedo or Military Uniform.

Chris LaForce Memorial Donations – Nick Nichols:

- Lou Leal forwarded me an email from Debra Hampton, C4I Division Head Support requesting where to send a Memorial donation cashier's check for Chris LaForce who passed away last week unexpectedly. I emailed Debra our condolences and asked her to send the check to our Base Treasurer to be put into the ADM Osborn Scholarship Fund.

Tom Lawson – Tom Holcombe:

- Tom spoke about upcoming plans for a ramp installation for Tom Lawson.
- Dave Harvey noted that the USSVCF Brotherhood Fund is set up for those who have a financial need since they obviously cannot pay for every request.
- Dave talked about when work is done such as a ramp, it must be done to Code due to liability issues.

VA – Dave Harvey:

- We recently had a representative from the VA attend our meeting, promising all kinds of medical assistance. Dave stated that he has gotten a rejection letter from the VA after

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applying for disability. He has attempted to contact her with no results. Nick Nichols recommended that Dave contact a member of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) if you really want to get results. The DAV holds its meeting on the second Saturday each month at 1000 in the same room as our Base Meeting – just about 36 hours later. Nick stated that we can have a representative from the DAV come to our Base Meeting. It is simply a matter of asking.

Vice Commander – Art Sattler:

- Nothing to report.

Kaps 4 Kids – Art Sattler:

- Nothing to report.

Contacts – Nick Nichols:

- Please add names, phone numbers and email addresses of all BOD members to your phone contacts. Or create a link to the officer's page of the website and add it to your home page on your phone.

Base Business Cards – Nick Nichols:

- New base business cards have the base website and a new contact email address which is **SubVetsCharleston@ussvich.org**. Everyone should be carrying a couple of these cards at all times. On the back of the card are two QR codes, one for the base and one for national.
- Base business cards are available.

FRA– Nick Nichols:

- FRA Auxiliary has a project for this year to help feed Veterans. The VA sponsored program is called **Curbside Veterans Delivery**. There is a box in the bar area for you to bring items to that can be used in this program. The BOD encourages you to support the FRA Auxiliary in this program.
- FRA Auxiliary is holding a Yard Sale at the FRA Home on 21 Mar 2026 beginning at 0800. They will be taking donations beginning at 1000 on Friday 20 Mar at the FRA Home.
- If you are a member of the FRA as many SUBVETS are, you will be receiving a postcard asking you to call. This is an effort to verify member data to ensure everyone is receiving FRA info.

Float Coordinator – Dave Harvey:

- Nothing reported.

2029 USSVI National Convention – David Harvey:

- Dave talked about the National Convention in Corpus Christi, TX.
- He had been asked at a recent convention about Charleston holding the 2029 USSVI National Convention in Charleston. The time frame will be early September. The Base will have to make the final decision. We should expect 500 people to attend
- Dave talked about the Hunley exhibit, Patriots Point, River Front Park which would be of interest to veterans. He mentioned The After Battery. Any visits to these locations will require a break into smaller groups.

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- Dave explained that we only need to make recommendations to USSVI for hotel selection, but a representative from National will have the responsibilities for the final hotel arrangements.
- We have time to get the details arranged for the event activities. When the National rep sets up the hotels, at that time we will be committed.
- There are conventions going on in Charleston right now having 3,000 attending.
- Art Sattler presented a motion with Greg Landry seconding that we recommend to the Base that Charleston Base should host the 2029 USSVI National Convention. In the last 27 years, this is the first time that it was even discussed to have the National Convention in Charleston. There was much discussion but the motion passed to send this to the Base for a full vote.

SE Regional Conference Report – David Harvey:

- Dave talked briefly about the SER Conference in Gulfport, MS, but the final report has not yet been sent.

Base Commander – David Harvey:

- Separate topics listed above. Nothing else reported.

USSVCF – Bob MacPherson:

- Not present.

FRA – Ken Hutchison:

- Not present.

Recreation – Johnny Brown

- Not present

Scholarship – Tom Lawson III:

- Not present.

NNPTC Coordinator – Anthony Mazza:

- Not present.

Photographer – Glenn Little:

- Not present.

Meeting adjourned at 1918.