

**United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base**  
**Minutes of Business Meeting**  
**9 April 2026**

**Opening Ceremonies:**

- The April 2026 Base Meeting was called to order by Base Commander Dave Harvey with a quorum of four officers and a total of 79 members. The meeting started at 1907 with the sound of the diving alarm.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Vice Commander Art Sattler and recited by the members in attendance.
- The Invocation and the Tolling of the Boats lost during the month of April was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols.
- Submarines lost during the month of April:
  - **USS PICKEREL (SS-177)** April 3, 1943 – 7<sup>th</sup> war patrol Lost with all hands – 74 souls
  - **USS SNOOK (SS-279)** April 8, 1945 – 9<sup>th</sup> war patrol Lost with all hands – 84 souls
  - **USS THRESHER (SSN-593)** April 10, 1963 – sea trials Lost with all hands – 129 souls
  - **USS GUDGEON (SS-211)** April 18, 1944 – 12<sup>th</sup> war patrol Lost with all hands – 79 souls
  - **USS GRENADE (SS-210)** April 22, 1943 – 6<sup>th</sup> war patrol 76 POWs – 72 survived the war
  - **Five Boats and 370 Men Lost**

**Master Chief Fire Control Technician, Submarines**  
**Thomas W. Lawson, US Navy Retired**  
**Departed on Eternal Patrol 19 March 2026**

- The Creed of USSVI was read by Vice Commander Art Sattler.
- Base Commander Dave Harvey welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

**Holland Club Induction:**

- Base Commander Dave Harvey introduced Holland Club Chairman Bill Freligh.
- HC Chairman Bill Freligh read the names of the former WWII Swamp Fox Chapter members and many of their contributions to the U.S. Navy Submarine Force and USSVI Charleston Base. All of these men are now on Eternal Patrol. He then read the names of those who had served in Korea.
- Bill recognized Associate Member Casey Power – in attendance this evening – who would drive from Atlanta to ensure that his dad Stacy (WWII Vet) could be at the meeting each month.
- Bill explained the purpose of the Holland Club and read the text of the USSVI National award.
- Base Commander Dave Harvey read the award from Charleston Base and signed each certificate.
- Dick Koehler assisted the ceremony by presenting the Holland Club hat to each man.
- Bill Freligh read the Name, Qual Date and Boat of each man below, who came forward with his guests to accept the Holland Club award. Each individual presentation was recorded with a photograph, followed by a group picture once all citations were given:
  - James J. Bargmann – MMCM(SS)
  - Loye Ray Bryant – QMC(SS)
  - A.B. Campbell – MTCS(SS)
  - Donald Donofrio – ICCS(SS)
  - David C. Horton – MS1(SS)
  - Don Kopczynski – FS1(SS)
  - Jay W. Pierce HMCS(SS)
  - Joseph B. Rodgers – LCDR
  - Ray Dean Standfield – CMDCM(SS)
  - Jerry K. Stout – CWO4
  - Olin E. Thomas – CWO4
  - Ronnie Vandiver – MMCS(SS)
  - Michael J. Welch – YN1(SS)
  - William M. Wilson – STS1(SS)

Not Present

Marvin Clift – MT1(SS)

Paul D. Reeves II – ETN2(SS)

- Bill Freligh asked the senior Base members – in turn – to stand and be recognized as submarine qualified for 65/60/55 years. In addition, Terry Trump received a rocker patch for 70 years.

### **Introductions of New Attendees:**

- There were two shipmates in attendance at the Base Meeting for the first time this evening.
  - Jeff Sallee – ET1 – Qualified on USS James Monroe SSBN622 – 1984.
  - Joe Shaffner – EMNCM – Qualified on USS Pittsburgh SSN720 – 2003. Also served aboard USS Seawolf SSN21, USS Santa Fe SSN763, USS Greeneville SSN772 and shore tours at NNPTC, NRMD NLON and COMSUBPAC.
- In addition to the first-time guests:
  - Ted Webb – STS1 – Qualified on USS Woodrow Wilson SSBN624. Also served aboard USS Stonewall Jackson SSBN634. Ted introduced himself after years ago had gone dink; had not attended any Base Meetings and was dropped from USSVI and Charleston Base membership for quite some time. Welcome back.

### **Old Business:**

- **No Old Business**

### **New Business:**

- **No New Business**

### **Secretary – Gordon Long:**

- The Minutes from the March Base Meeting were emailed to all Base members. The Minutes have also been published on the Charleston Base website. With no corrections noted at the Base Meeting, the Minutes were approved as written.

### **Treasurer – Ricky Collins:**

- The Treasurer's Report for March 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 PICKEREL SS-177 was lost on April 3, 1943 with the loss of 74 officers and men while on her 7th war patrol. Pickerel departed Pearl Harbor, HI, and after topping off with fuel at Midway Island on 22 March, headed for the Eastern Coast of Northern Honshu and was never heard from again. The exact cause of her loss has never been determined, but her OP area contained numerous minefields.

### **ETERNAL PATROL**

- **FTCS(SS) Thomas W. Lawson, USN Ret., 84**, departed on Eternal Patrol on Thursday, 19 March 2026. He was a life member of USSVI National and Charleston Base as of 2009 and a member of the Holland Club qualifying in 1975 on USS JAMES K. POLK SSBN-645. Tom recently served as the Base Vice Commander for 6 years from 2019 to 2025.
  - His funeral service was held on March 27<sup>th</sup> with 31 SUBVETS there.
  - Inurnment with Military Honors was held Beaufort National Cemetery on March 29<sup>th</sup> with three SUBVETS attending.
- **FTCM(SS) John Edward Newby, USN Ret., 82**, departed on Eternal Patrol Wednesday, 18 March. He joined the Navy in 1962 retiring in 1992 with 30 years of service. He was not a member of USSVI. He was a member of FRA Branch 269.

### **BINNACLE LIST**

- **Steve Jarrett** had shoulder surgery in March and recently the shoulder came out of socket. He is recovering at home and can't be here to receive his Holland Club tonight. [843-906-4192]
- **Steve Curry** was diagnosed with AFIB and congenital heart failure in 2025. He is on 24/7 oxygen. He has also been diagnosed with stage 3 cancer and begins chemo on 15 April and will also have radiation. Phone calls are welcome [843.270.9905]
- **Walt Deal** is recovering after being in Summerville Hospital with double pneumonia. Calls are welcome. [843-509-7973]

- **Rick Wise** March PET Scan showed some decrease in areas of concern and the bone lesions have not increased. This past Tuesday the Oncologist agreed that it was a favorable report. Rick has shifted to maintenance Chemo with only one drug as well as Immunotherapy with Keytruda and now on a 5-week cycle instead of 3. [843.276.0899]
- **Jerry Stout** was in the VA 23 March until Sat 4 April. [843-568-5923]
- **Mike Knaub** had surgery on 2 April according to an After Battery email. [843-795-6665].
- **Roger Gibson** is recovering at home from after being in the hospital for possible gall bladder issues. Surgery was not needed. [843-875-4933]
- **Jim Higgins** is doing well recovering from his amputation. He is going to PT and the leg is healing. He is in good spirits. [843-553-7510]
- **Ed Simokat** is now on hospice care. Between hospice and home health he is covered just about every day. If you want to visit, please call first and talk to Judy. [843-810-0383]
- **Don Meadows** had major foot surgery and will need many more. [843.475.7043]
- **Sonny Rash** is recovering from having part of his leg amputated. [843.345.1430]

#### **LONG TERM / ASSISTED LIVING / HOMEBOUND**

- **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. [843.475.7043]
- **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](mailto: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](mailto:cbussvicob@yahoo.com) and his cell phone is [843.509.3962]

Complete/update your page 2 if you have not done so.

#### **Webmaster – Nick Nichols:**

- The new National website has been online since around midnight 3 April. I had the privilege to be a beta tester on the new site. It has been put together well but you will notice a total change in how to navigate it. It definitely looks different and is more of a graphical interface. If you have any questions on how to find info and how to operate the site let me know. Also, I've been told eventually there will be short tutorial videos for help. All the info we had on the old site is there...just a matter of where to find it.
  - It is even more important to check your profile on the new site. If you see a problem or need a change it is much easier make your own changes to your profile. Or you can let Larry or me know so we can get it corrected. We've already found a few issues that have been fixed.
  - On that note, if you have any change in your personal info change it on your profile or let either Larry or me know so the necessary changes can be made.

#### **FRA Ladies' Auxiliary – Nick Nichols:**

- Well, we nearly did it! The 'Break the Table Challenge'. We almost – and it would have certainly would have if some items had not been placed on the floor. The FRA Auxiliary supports the VA **Curbside Veterans Delivery**, which is a program to help feed hungry veterans. Nick noted that Casey Power showed up tonight with his truck bed loaded full of food.

#### **Base Business Cards – Nick Nichols:**

- Everyone should be carrying a couple of the new base business cards at all times. On the back of the card are two QR codes, one for the base and one for national.

### **FRA – Nick Nichols:**

- Nick inquired if those in attendance had read the new FRA rules. With a positive response, he opted not to read them.
- [SECRETARY’S NOTE – For clarity the new rules are included here:]
- There are some new rules we must follow at the fleet when attending a SUBVET meeting:
  - If you are an FRA member you can go into the bar area anytime you want to.
  - If you are not an FRA member, use the bartenders in our meeting room to order food and drinks.
  - If you bring a guest and you are an FRA member the guest can enter the bar area as long as you (the FRA member) sign them in the guest log at the bar.
  - If you bring a guest and you are not an FRA member then you and guest must stay in the meeting room unless an FRA member signs you into the guest log at the bar.
- If you are not an FRA member, consider joining. Support the FRA as they support SUBVETS by allowing our use of the meeting room.
- Ken Hutchison noted that he “knows a guy” for those who want to join the FRA.

### **Social Media – Lewis Leal:**

- Nothing to report

### **Scholarship – Tom Lawson III**

- The current balance in the Scholarship fund is \$12,517.
- The Scholarship application deadline is May 1. The printed copy of the application must be in Tom’s hand by that date. Tom has received his first scholarship application.
- We have a raffle for a SubVet Flag. The flag cost the Base \$150, so this will be paid back before any money is provided to the Scholarship Fund. Tickets are \$2 each.
- Challenge Coins are \$12
- Not Scholarship related, but Tom thanked those who had a part in the wheel chair ramp which was built for his dad.

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

- We have some Dual Members. Unless Charleston Base is your Primary Base, you are not listed on USSVID National as a member of our Base even though you live here.
- Base Standings [those with more than 200 members]: Charleston is #4 in USSVI membership. [AM = associate member]
  - 1) Groton 1051 w/38 AM - 2) Hampton Roads 291 w/11 AM – 3) Bremerton 258 w/13 AM – 4) Charleston 239 w/16 AM

### **NNPTC Liaison – Anthony Mazza**

- Submarine Ball Tickets for April 18, 2026 at Trident Tech are now available through Eventbrite. Search “2026 Charleston Sub Ball” in Google and it will get you to the link. Anthony is expecting it to be a good time and hopes to see a bunch of folks there. Base Commander Dave Harvey asked Anthony to meet him after the meeting about the float.

### **Comptroller – Tom Holcombe**

- Prior to the start of the meeting tonight, Tom provided each table a copy of the First Quarter 2026 Budget Report. Tom requested comments from those in attendance about the report since he has changed the format. A motion was presented and seconded to accept the First Quarter 2026 Budget Report. There was a call for discussion, but there was none. The motion carried with no objections.

### **Special Events – Tom Holcombe**

- The Amberjack ceremony will be held at the Cold War Memorial this Saturday, April 11 beginning at 1000.
- Tom read the names of the participants and reminded everyone to be there by 0930.
- The color guard for the ceremony will be provided by NNPTC. Thank you Anthony for arranging this.
- Tom requested help with transporting chairs. See Tom after the meeting.

- We will be going to Manitowoc, WI for the July 4 SubFest at the Wisconsin Maritime Museum. Base Commander Dave Harvey stated that the organizers of the event requested us to return with the float.
- Tom checked into lodging in the area and has booked a four bedroom 3 ½ bath home for a few days. Talk to him after the meeting if interested in sharing the expense.
- Tom talked about the U505 German submarine that is in the museum in Chicago. It is completely inside of a building. Tom thinks that it would be a good thing to have a group of submariners to visit this exhibit either on the way up or on the return trip.

#### **CSS Hunley – Tom Holcombe**

- Nothing reported.

#### **Ambassador USSVCF – Bob MacPherson**

- The USSVCF has been existence for 25 years. Bob showed a booklet which explains the mission and purpose of the USSVCF. The booklet is written for businesses and other large organizations which make contributions to charitable causes.
- The financial footing of USSVCF is strong even with all of the assistance they provide. In order to maintain the fund, the principal is left intact and it's the earnings that are distributed. This year 2026, there are 80 scholarships expected to be granted and last year, over \$40,000 in hardship assistance was provided to members.
- If any SubVet knows someone who works for a major maritime corporation, Bob would like to meet with them to explain why this foundation is worthy of their support, not only for submarine veterans but also their families.

#### **Nuclear Power School Legacy Awards – Phil Nunnally**

- The next NPS graduation will be Friday, MAY 22.

#### **Newsletter – Phil Nunnally**

- Nothing to report.

#### **Little David – Phil Nunnally**

- This week, we replaced five boards and did some pressure washing.
- The Berkeley Museum appreciates the maintenance work that we do for the Little David.

#### **Recreation – Ed Stank**

- Ed just took over as Recreation Chair today and is planning a picnic at Marrington on Saturday, 16 May. Johnny Brown will be helping him in the planning of this event.
- If anyone has ideas about what you would like to do, please let Ed know.

#### **Submarine License Plates – Ed Stank**

- The Submarine License Plate is now available using the MV-37 online form. As of last report, 37 tags have been ordered. The cost is the normal registration plus \$20. If there are no problems, it normally takes about 10 days.
- If you have any questions about getting a plate, contact Ed.

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

- Congratulations are in order to Bill Freligh for his effort making today's Holland Club Induction the best that Ken has ever attended.
- Currently, the only candidate that we have for Vice Commander is the incumbent – Art Sattler.
- Likewise, the only candidate for Secretary is the incumbent – Gordon Long.
- Ken Hutchison encouraged Base Members to place their hat in the ring for either of these offices.
- Just as we had other collateral duties onboard the boats, we have such here. These positions are also important and the old guys need a replacement/relief.

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

- Ken wants to know, for those who have not joined the FRA, “Why not?”

### **PAO – Jerry Stout**

- Jerry is working on articles for American Submariner:
  - Submarine License plate – Jerry has a picture of the SV 1 plate – currently on a Corvette upstate.
  - Little David maintenance.
  - SER Conference in Gulfport, MS.

### **Veteran’s Affairs – Jerry Stout**

- The VA is now using electronic filing.
- The VA is no longer reporting veterans to the FBI who have a negative criminal history.
- The claims at the VA now stands at 100,000 – the lowest since 2020.

### **Storekeeper – Woody Woodsmall**

- USSVI awarded Charleston Base a civic involvement award for 2024. Woody has one patch left but can get more.
- Woody has hats – United States of America - 250 Years - \$20
- The National Storekeeper has two new patches – Operation Epic Fury and Operation Roaring Lion. He also has a patch – U.S. Submarine Force - Operation Epic Fury - Silent Service, Quiet Death. These are \$12. Woody will make a list of names and order them all at once. See him after the meeting in the lower level engine room - bilge area.

### **COB – Greg Landry**

- The air show on the Air Force Base has been cancelled. Instead, the Blue Angels will perform over the Charleston harbor. Greg does not have details at this time.
- Those who received their yellow hats this evening, please come back to the meetings again. You have a lot of history to share with the rest of us.

### **Kaps 4 Kids – Art Sattler**

- Nothing to report.

### **Vice Commander – Art Sattler**

- Nothing to report.

### **USSVI National Awards – Dave Harvey**

- Tom Holcombe has some awards to submit before the April 30 deadline.
- Dave Harvey reminded everyone that anyone can submit an award nomination. If you need help writing one, contact Tom.

### **Float Coordinator – Dave Harvey**

- The float has been put onto the new trailer and is being welded today. It then must be pressure washed so that can be painted. It is needed for display at the Hog Roast and the Sub Ball.

### **SER Conference – Dave Harvey**

- The 2027 SE Regional Conference will be held in GA. More details later.

### **Base Commander – Dave Harvey**

- It has been not quite a year since Dave has taken the job as Base Commander. He wrote a letter and asked Nick to post it on the Base Website for all to review. Please provide Dave your comments.
- Dave thanked everyone for attending the meeting this evening.

## **GOOD OF THE ORDER**

### **After Battery – Ray Sparks**

- Some campers will be arriving on Saturday, April 11. There will be a working party that day also.
- The Hog Roast will be held from April 11 to 18 with food every night and Hog Day on Saturday April 18.
- Ray reminded everyone that they operate only on donations.
- There will be a raffle for a scoped Ruger 22. They will have basket raffles and a Depth Charge drawing.

### **GUN CLUB – Mike Ciesielko**

- Planning a gun shoot at Twin Ponds for May.

### **NUCLEAR HISTORIAN – Rick Wise**

- Nothing to report.

### **Drawings & Auctions**

- FRA Drawing – Nellie Kirtley
- Depth Charge Drawing – Greg Landry

### **Closing Ceremony**

- Chaplain Nick Nichols led the group in a prayer of Benediction.
- Base Commander Dave Harvey announced adjournment of the meeting with a sound of three blasts of the diving alarm.
- Meeting closed at 2037.