

MINUTES OF THE USSVI NORTHERN VIRGINIA BASE MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2020

The Base CDR, Chuck Martin, called the meeting to order at 1100 on February 8, 2020, at American Legion Post 364 in Woodbridge, VA and welcomed all members and guests.

MEMBERS AND GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE

Steve Bishop, Steve Blackstone (American Legion Post 364 Commander), Marcher Castell, Joe Castell, Cathy Chatham, Howard Chatham, Dominick Grimaldi, Pat Haller, Brian Haller, Darlene Jaeger, Steve Jaeger, Chuck Martin, Marie Phoenix, Joe Phoenix, Mike Varone, Penny Wallace, George Wallace, and Woody Woodworth (18 total).

■ Holland Club Member

■ Associate Member

■ Guest

The COB, Mike Varone, led all hands in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chaplain, Steve Jaeger, delivered the Invocation.

The Secretary read the list of boats lost in the month of February. These were:

USS SHARK I (SS-174)	Feb 11, 1942
USS AMBERJACK (SS-219)	Feb 16, 1943
USS GRAYBACK (SS-208)	Feb 26, 1944
USS TROUT (SS-202)	Feb 29, 1944
USS BARBEL (SS-316)	Feb 04, 1945

The COB then tolled the ship's bell twice for the 26 USSVI Northern Virginia members on Eternal Patrol.

IN MEMORIAM: CAPT Donald M. Ulmer, USN, Ret. – 11/3/2019; CMDRCM(SS) Paul H. Gagnon, USN, Ret. – 12/25/2019.



The Base CDR asked for Steve Blackstone, Commander of American Legion Post 364, to come forward. The CDR presented a donation of \$150.00 to Commander Blackstone on behalf of USSVI NOVA Base. Commander Blackstone accepted the donation and remarked that the Post was glad to host USSVI NOVA Base and invited NOVA Base member to participate in the many activities provided by Post 364.

BASE HISTORIAN: Woody Woodworth read an article on the USS AMBERJACK (SS-219). The article is appended after these minutes.

MEETING MINUTES

The January 2020 NOVA Base meeting minutes were previously distributed to the membership. No comments or corrections were noted, and they were accepted as distributed.

The Treasurer, Steve Jaeger, presented the Treasurer's monthly report:

• Beginning Cash on Hand:	\$ 9,469.40
• Receipts:	\$ 318.40
- Dues-Annual, Base	
- Dues-Annual, National	
- Donations-Base	
- Interest/Dividends	
- Revenue-Meetings	
- Revenue-Raffles	
• Expenditures:	\$ 359.00
- Dues to National	
- Other-Boat Sponsorship	
- Payments to Charitable Foundation (for 2019)	
- Base Operating Expenses	
• Ending balance:	\$ 9,428.80
- Minus remaining Walmart Grant rest. Use funds	(\$1,169.40)
• Grand Total (discretionary)	\$ 8,259.40
• NOVA USSVICF K4K Total:	\$ 2,054.10

The Treasurer reported that the Base 2019 End of Year Financial Report had been submitted to, and accepted by, the USSVI National Treasurer.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

The **Executive Board** meeting was held on January 29, 2020. The meeting agenda included:

- Membership
- 2020 Holland Club
- 2020 Base Budget
- K4K Program
- New Website
- Other Base events/calendar

MEMBERSHIP REPORT by Steve Jaeger: 81 members comprised of:

- 44 Holland Club members,
 - 4 WW II Members
- 29 Regular members
- 8 Associate members

- The following members resigned from the Base: Dennis Mohr and Rich Cappel

The **Vice Commander**, Brian Haller, had nothing to report (NTR).

The **COB**, Mike Varone, provided the status of USS CLAMAGORE (SS-343): The Patriots Point's motion to dismiss and CRAMA Motion for a Preliminary Injunction was heard before Judge Price on January 30th; no decision was made so further review of the law can occur.

The **PAO**, Mike Varone, provided excerpts from WWII Diesel Boat Era by Michael Skurat, member of Groton Base USSVI & Central CT Chapter of Sub Vets WWII:

- There were no Silver Metal Dolphins for enlisted personnel. Dolphins for enlisted personnel consisted of embroidered "patches" (white for blues and blue for whites) sewn on the right forearm. Silver Metal Dolphins for enlisted personnel were authorized after WWII.
- Officers did wear Gold Metal Dolphins as they do today.
- Submarine School - six weeks enlisted and three months for officers.
- Submarine School was the sole tyrannical domain of one Chief Torpedoman Charles Spritz. Submarine School was called "Spritz's Navy".
- The complete WWII DIESEL BOAT ERA by Michael Skurat can be found at <http://www.northofseveycorners.com/infolink/db-era.htm>.

The PAO also stated that he was still working USSVI NOVA Base road naming initiative and would be crafting letters with appropriate historical information to local, state, and national representatives to request their support.

The **CHAPLAIN**, Steve Jaeger, provided that Ray Stone's interment at Arlington National Cemetery would be on Wednesday, February 12, 2020 starting 3:00 PM at the Fort Myer Memorial Chapel (101 McNair Rd, Arlington, VA) followed by a reception, hosted by Ray's daughter, Jeanene, at the Ft. Myer Officers' Club. The CDR requested a head count for those base members in attendance who were planning on attending. Nine members at the meeting indicated they were planning to attend.

The **KAPS 4 KIDS** Chairman, Steve Bishop, provided information on the next K4K event at Walter Reed Bethesda. That visit is scheduled for 1030, February 20, 2020. Since access to the base is controlled, Steve Bishop requested those planning on attending contact him in order to arrange escort onto the base. The K4K Chairman also stated that the next K4K event would be at INOVA Falls Church on March 19, 2020 at 1430. Steve indicated he was still waiting for the 2020 Walmart Community Grant application to be released and estimated submission of applications in February.

The CDR reported as **SCOUTING COORDINATOR** that there were no currently scheduled Eagle Scout Court of Honors. However, American Legion Post 364 has an upcoming scouting recognition event and additional information would be obtained from the Post.

The **STOREKEEPER**, Howard Chatham, reported that he has had plenty of USSVI NOVA Challenge Coins, submarine stickers, and USSVI NOVA Base patches available for purchase. Howard also provided that he could take orders for submission to the National Storekeeper for individuals desiring other items. If interested, contact Howard.

The **WEBMASTER**, Howard Chatham, reported that the USSVI Northern Virginia Base website is up and operational without any known issues from the recently completed rehosting.

NAVAL SUBMARINE LEAGUE (NSL) Capitol Chapter President, George Wallace provided the following information on upcoming NSL and related events:

- Upcoming Naval Submarine League (NSL) and related events:
 - NSL Capitol Chapter Winter Meeting - Friday, 21 Feb 2020
 - Location: Army Navy Country Club (Arlington)
 - Time: 1200 with doors opening at 1130
 - Please RSVP by email to Chapter Secretary, Dixon Hicks, CapitolNSL1@outlook.com, no later than 1600, 10 Feb.
 - Featured Speaker is RDML Scott Pappano, Program Executive Officer, Columbia
- Next N97 hosted BEQ (Beers Every Quarter) event is scheduled for February 28, 2020, starting at 1400 at Sine Irish Pub in Arlington, VA. Additional information will be provided once promulgated by N97.
- 2020 Submarine Birthday Ball – Saturday, 4 April 2020
 - Location: Crystal City Hyatt Regency
 - Contact George Wallace if interested in attending at georgew@rmi.net
 - More details as available
- 2020 Submarine History Seminar – Thursday 23 April 2020
 - Location: Smithsonian's Dillon Ripley Center, 1100 Jefferson Dr. SW, Washington, DC (Metro: Orange, Blue or Silver line - Smithsonian (Mall exit))
 - Time: 6:45 - 8:45 PM
 - In conjunction with Smithsonian Associates
 - Nuclear Deterrence, or How a U.S. Submarine in the Mediterranean Helped Resolve the Cuban Missile Crisis!
 - Panelists – ADM Cecil Haney, USN, Ret.; RADM George Ellis, USN, Ret.; and CAPT Al Perry, USN, Ret.
 - To purchase tickets, call the Smithsonian at 202-633-3030 or purchase online at <https://smithsonianassociates.org/ticketing/tickets/inside-cuban-missile-crisis>
 - There are discounts available to NSL members and other associations.

The **VCDR** provided information on upcoming submarine reunions:

- USS VON STEUBEN (SSBN 632) – March 9-13, 2020; Pigeon Forge, TN. Additional information can be found at the ship's website at : <http://ssbn632reunion.org/index.html>
- USS PORTSMOUTH (SSN 707) – April 3-5, 2020; Fairhope, AL
- USS JALLAO (SS 368) – April 7-10, 2020; Philadelphia, PA

- USS CAVALLA (SS 244/SSN 684) – April 17-18, 2020; Galveston Island, TX
- USS CAIMAN (SS 323) – April 20-23, 2020; Albuquerque, NM
- USS RAZORBACK (SS 394) – April 20-24, 2020; Little Rock, AR
- USS BLUEFISH (SS 222/SSN 675) – April 23-26, 2020; Myrtle Beach, SC
- USS SIMON BOLIVAR (SSBN 641) – April 26-30, 2020, Galveston, TX

OLD BUSINESS

- The newest book by Charles Hood and Frank Hood is “Sub Tales: Stories that Seldom Surface.” Profits from the book are supporting the United States Submarine Veterans Charitable Foundation (USSVCF) Scholarship fund.
- 2020 USSVI National Election Nominations for the 2020 USSVI National Officers are being accepted for the following National Officer Positions: National Commander, National Senior Vice Commander, National Junior Vice Commander, National Treasurer, National Secretary and Regional Directors.
 - Nominations must be accompanied with a letter from the Nominee indicating his willingness to accept the nomination and willingness to serve if elected.
 - Nominations must be received by the Nominations Committee Chairman on or before March 1st, 2020.
 - The 2020 Nominations Committee Chairman is IPNC John E. Markiewicz, email is jemjax2@att.net

The CDR called for other items of old business, hearing none;

NEW BUSINESS

- Ray Stone has bequeathed his collection of submarine memorabilia to our organization (substantial number of plaques and various items). The Base CDR is in contact with Rob Knox to make arrangements to pick up the items when ready.
- Woody Woodworth recommended reading the article “Death Run ’79: One Submarine’s Story of Hellish Heat and Hurricanes and How a Sister Submarine Rushed to Her Aid” in the latest American Submariner magazine.
- Steve Bishop recommended reading John Lehman’s book “Oceans Ventured: Winning the Cold War at Sea.” It puts into perspective all the U.S. Navy’s efforts in countering the Russians.
- Penny Wallace provided information that George Wallace had been invited and accepted an invitation to be the guest speaker for the Holland Club breakfast at the 2020 USSVI National Convention to be held in Tucson, Arizona; August 24-30.
- Cathy Chatham recommended discussing meeting locations with Post 364 to see if the Post would consider use giving us advance notification if our meeting needs to be held in the Bingo Hall vice the Main Hall as the Bingo Hall is not a smoke-free environment. The Base CDR indicated he was already in discussion on the issue with the Post.

The Binnacle List

The Chaplain asked that we keep the following in our thoughts and prayers: Steve Bishop, Brian Haller, Barbara Harmody, Tony Poblete, Tom Perrault, and Lorraine Sargent.

For the Good of the Order, the Base CDR read the list of birthdays for February: Roger Hall, Ross Sargent, and Gary Smith.

The 50/50 raffle was won by Woody Woodworth who donated his portion of the proceeds to the USSVI Scholarship Program.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on March 14th at American Legion Post 364 followed by (tentative) guest speaker, CDR Jeff Fassbuger, USN, who will discuss his role as the military aide to the President.

The Benediction was delivered by the Chaplain.

The CDR requested a motion to adjourn and commence our sweetheart luncheon at Armetta's Italian Restaurant. It was so moved and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 1137.

After the Sweetheart Luncheon at Armetta's, the Base CDR presented the Manager with a USSVI NOVA Base Patch.

Submitted by Joe Castell
USSVI NOVA Base Secretary

SUBMARINE HISTORY

USS AMBERJACK (SS 219)

EXCERPTS FROM NAVY DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATION DIVISION OF NAVAL HISTORY (OP 09B9) HISTORY OF USS AMBERJACK (SS 219)

(Available at the following link: https://issuu.com/hnsa/docs/ss-219_amberjack)

"On 24 January 1943 AMBERJACK sailed for her third war patrol but put back to port for minor repairs. She again departed Brisbane on 26 January, bound for the Solomon Islands. Her first radio message reported contact with an enemy submarine southeast of Treasury Island on 1 February, and the sinking of a two-masted schooner by gunfire, 3 February, while twenty miles from Buka. On the night of 4 February, she began chase of a target, believed to be a freighter. Upon closing for a night-surface attack, AMBERJACK encountered a heavily armed munitions ship and was met by a hail of gunfire which wounded one of her deck officers in the hand and killed Chief Pharmacist's Mate Arthur C. Beeman, USN. AMBERJACK fired a salvo of five torpedoes which scored hits on the enemy and Lieutenant Commander Bole reported the sinking of the target. However, the loss of an enemy vessel at the indicated position of the attack could not be confirmed from records available after the war. On

14 February a radio report from AMBERJACK related that she had taken a downed Japanese aviator from the sea on the afternoon of 13 February and had been forced down by two destroyers during the night. The message was acknowledged and AMBERJACK was ordered to continue patrol in the Rabaul shipping lands." {? lanes} "This was the last communication with AMBERJACK. All further messages to the gallant fighting ship remained unanswered and she was presumed lost on 22 March 1943, twelve days after she was due to return to Brisbane.

AMBERJACK may have been lost on 16 February 1943 when a United States submarine in her assigned patrol area was bombed by an enemy patrol plane, then attacked by Japanese torpedo boat HAYODORI and Japanese submarine-chaser number 18. These Japanese anti-submarine vessels reported a sinking, having observed a large amount of heavy oil and "parts of the hull" come to the surface. This evidence, however, is not conclusive. The U. S. submarine GRAMPUS was also lost in the same area during February 1943 and it is possible that she was the victim of the reported attack."

Note: The "UNITED STATES SUBMARINE VETERANS of WORLD WAR II, Volume IV", page 334, last sentence of the AMBERJACK (SS-219) article states "The enlisted men's recreation center at the Submarine base, Pearl Harbor is named for Chief Pharmacist's Mate Arthur C. Beeman, who was killed in the gun battle of 4 February."