

MINUTES OF THE USSVI NORTHERN VIRGINIA BASE MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 2022

The Base CDR, Chuck Martin, called the meeting to order at 1110 on June 11, 2022, at American Legion Post 364 Pavilion, Woodbridge, VA, and welcomed all members and guests. (Diving alarm powered from Chuck's truck.)

MEMBERS AND GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE

Jim Beavers, Steve Bishop, Howard Chatham, Mickey Garverick, Ruth Garverick, Bob Glover, Brian Haller, Pat Haller, Rich Hamly, Gloria Hamly, Chuck Martin, Paul Nelson, Terry Nelson, Nancy O'Brien, Marie Phoenix, Joe Phoenix, Mark Riethmeier, Mike Varone, Anita Varone, George Wallace, Penny Wallace, and Lawrence Woodworth. (22 total)

■ Holland Club Member

■ Associate Member

■ Guest

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

The Chaplain, Mickey Garverick, delivered the Invocation.

After a moment of silence, the Vice Commander (VCDR), Brian Haller, read the list of boats lost in the month of June. These were:

USS Herring (SS-233)	Jun 1, 1944
USS R-12 (SS-89)	Jun 12, 1943
USS Golet (SS-361)	Jun 14, 1944
USS Bonefish (SS-223)	Jun 19, 1945
USS S-27 (SS-132)	Jun 19, 1942
USS O-9 (SS-70)	Jun 20, 1941
USS Runner (SS-275)	Jun 26, 1943

NORTHERN VIRGINIA BASE MEMBER(S) WHO DEPARTED ON ETERNAL PATROL IN JUNE:

- **Richard S. Lowry**, Qualified on USS Ulysses S. Grant (SSBN-631), 1968. Departed on his Eternal Patrol on 24 June 2017
- **William "Rod" Puffer**, Holland Club and Lifetime USSVI Member. Qualified on USS Pickerel (SS-524), 1953. Departed on his Eternal Patrol on 20 June 2013.

The COB then rang the bell twice in remembrance of the 34 USSVI NOVA Base members on Eternal Patrol.

IN MEMORIAM: CAPT Frederick Joeseoph Kollmorgen, USN, Ret. – 24 May 2022; CDR Warren Gregory Branges, USN, Ret. – 24 May 2022

HISTORIAN: Woody Woodworth read a submarine history article on the USS Sculpin (SS-191): Due to its length, the USS Sculpin (SS-191) history is appended to the end of these minutes. After the reading, Joe Phoenix tearfully said that his uncle was one of the survivors of both the severe depth charging of the USS Sculpin (SS-191) and the sinking of the Japanese warship carrying half of the American POWs. He knew from his uncle that the ship's diving officer who had lost depth control and initially exposed the submarine to the Japanese surface

ships went down with the sub out of shame and guilt.

MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of the May meeting were distributed by e-mail. Minutes were accepted as promulgated.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer, Howard Chatham, presented the following:

NOVA Base Treasurer's Report for June 11, 2022

● Beginning Cash on Hand:	<u>\$10,543.77</u>
● Plus Receipts:	
NFCU Dividends (May)	\$0.09
Base Dues	\$15.00
National Dues	\$200.00
Holland Club Meals	\$1,160.00
Donation to Base from Phoenix	\$220.00
Donation to Base from Oliver	\$10.00
● Minus Expenditures:	
Dues to National	\$200.00
Amphora for Holland Club Meals	\$1,223.78
SK for Reimbursement of Purchase Longevity Pins	\$43.36
CDR for Reimbursement of 4th of July Parade Ad	\$55.00
COB for Reimbursement of BBQ Picnic	\$436.35
● Ending Cash on Hand:	<u>\$10,190.37</u>
Minus Local K4K Restricted Use Funds	\$1,379.40
● Total Local Discretionary Funds	<u>\$8,810.97</u>
● USSVCF NOVA Base K4K Balance	\$3,054.10
● Total K4K Funds (Local + USSVCF)	<u><u>\$4,433.50</u></u>

COMMITTEE REPORTS

EXECUTIVE BOARD – The meeting was held on 1 June via Zoom. The meeting agenda included committee reports, Holland Club, meeting-related items, old business, new business, and meeting/event planning.

VCDR – Nothing to Report (NTR)

COB –

- The Base held a Holland Club Induction Ceremony for Tom Perrault on 6 June. Attendees were Judith Perrault (Tom's wife), Chuck Martin, Brian Haller, Steve

Bishop, Paul Nelson, Terry Nelson, and Kitty (Sunrise staff). Tom and Judith appreciated the ceremony.

- Pictures below show Judy Perrault, Tom, Paul Nelson (top) and Chuck Martin, Tom, and Paul Nelson (bottom). Pictures by Brian Haller and Terry Nelson



Paul Nelson was the Treasurer when Tom Perrault was the Base Commander

PAO – [COB remarks as desired]

- The Base will be participating in the Dale City 4th of July parade on Monday, 4 July. Those wanting to participate in the parade should contact either Chuck at cdr@ussvinova.org or Mike at cob@ussvinova.org to obtain further information.

Membership -

- Membership information
 - 79 Members
 - 46 Holland Club Members
 - 02 WW II Members
 - 26 Regular Members
 - 17 – Life Members
 - 09 – Annual Members
 - 07 Associate Members
 - Newest Base Member(s): Thomas “Tom” DeBenedetto, a retired Supply Corps CAPT

Kap(ss) 4 Kid(ss):

- Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) visits have been suspended until further notice.

Chaplain: NTR

Storekeeper -

- Storekeeper has USSVI NOVA challenge coins, submarine stickers, Holland Club pins and decals, and USSVI NOVA Base patches available for purchase.
- Three 2022 USSVI Calendars are available from the Base SK. The price is \$5 per calendar plus postage if mailed.
- Contact Mike Varone, at storekeeper@ussvinova.org if interested in any items.

Webmaster - No issues with the Base website.

NE Regional/NE District 4 News EN4 District CDR Chuck Martin remarked:

- **National News**
 - 2023 USSVI National Officer election voting begins on 24 June and ends at 2359 on 23 August. You will be able to vote online through a special URL, details coming, and by paper mailing in your ballot.
 - Ballot is located on page 19 in the American Submariner 2022 2nd quarter.
 - National and Regional Candidate statements are located on pages 16 and 17 in the American Submariner 2022 2nd quarter.
 - Proposed Amendment to the USSVI Constitution and Bylaws (PA 2022-1) is located on page 19 on the ballot in the American Submariner 2022 2nd quarter.
 - USSVI National Website
 - The rebuilt USSVI National website is scheduled to be operational by 15 June. It should resolve the access issue so that all browsers can access it.
 - The new USSVI National website is scheduled to be operational sometime in the 3rd week of August.
 - Other USSVI Websites
 - The USSV Charitable Foundation website and 2022 USSVI National Convention website are both accessible without going through the USSVI National website.
 - USSV Charitable Foundation - www.ussvcf.org
 - 2022 USSVI National Convention - <https://ussviconvention.org/2022/>

- **Region News**
 - USSVI Tri-State Base – Participated in two parades in May and hosting their Base picnic on 11 Jun 2022.
- **District News**
 - USSVI Capitol Base – Held their Tolling of the Boats ceremony at ANC on 21 May 2022.
 - USSVI Chesapeake Base –. Held a Memorial Service at USNA on 28 May 2022.

NSL – George Wallace remarked:

- NSL Headquarters address is 405 North Henry Street, Alexandria, VA 22314; phone number is 703-256-0891
- NSL celebrates its Ruby Anniversary (40 years) on June 21, 2022, and will hold an open house from 1200 - 1800.
- There will also be a Happy Hour on June 21, 2022, at Kilroy's restaurant at 1700.
- Naval Submarine League (NSL) and Related Events
 - NSL Capitol Chapter
 - The NSL Capitol Chapter spring meeting was held on 13 May 2022 at the ANCC. The next will be at ANCC in late July.
 - 2022 Submarine Technology Symposium held on 17-19 May 2022 was a huge success.
 - 2022 Annual Symposium & Industry Update
 - 2-3 November 2022
 - Hyatt Regency Crystal City, Arlington, VA

ISA/USA – The Base CDR remarked:

- International Submariners Congress in Karlskrona, Sweden was held on 22-26 May 2022 and was a huge success.
- 2022 ISA/USA Officers Election results:
 - **President** - John "Jack" Messersmith of Arizona, TMCS (SS) USN (Ret)
 - **Vice President** - John "Bud" Cunnally of Florida, ETC (SS) USN (Ret)
 - **Member At Large** - Ronald "Ron" Gibson of California, CWO4 USNR (ret)
 - **Treasurer** (Two Years) - Russell "Russ" Kraeger of Florida, MMCM (SS) USN (Ret)
 - **Secretary** (Two Years) - Ouida Ashmeade-Cunnally
- To join the International Submariners Association of the United States of America (ISA/USA Inc) visit their website at <http://www.isausa.org/> for application. Lifetime Membership is \$50.00

American Legion Post 364 – The Base CDR remarked:

- Sundays – Bingo; Cancelled until further notice
- Tuesday, 14 June – Flag Day Ceremony at 1900
- Tuesday, 21 June – Legion Membership Meeting at 1930
- Monday, 4 July – Dale City 4th of July parade at 1000 and picnic at 1300
- Tuesday, 19 July – Legion Membership Meeting at 1930

Upcoming Submarine Reunions – VCDR remarked:

- USS Will Rogers (SSBN-659) – 16-19 June; Groton, CT
- USS Baya (SS/AGSS-318) – 2-4 July; Manitowoc, WI
- USS Lewis and Clark (SSBN-644) – 13-17 July; Bremerton, WA
- **Call or Email the POC listed in the American Submariner to determine the status of the reunion**

OLD BUSINESS

- The NOVA Veterans Association and Dulles Area Transportation Association provide free transportation to medical appointments and COVID-19 vaccine appointments to Veterans who are disabled or over the age of 65.
 - Coverage areas are Alexandria, Arlington, Eastern Loudoun, Fairfax, Fairfax City, Falls Church, Manassas, Manassas Park, and Prince William.
 - Contact by phone at 703-659-0788 or by email at melissa@novavets.org
- For the latest COVID-19 information in the Northern Virginia area visit one of the below websites:
 - State of Virginia – <https://vaccinate.virginia.gov>
 - Dept of Veterans Affairs – <https://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine>
 - Arlington County - <https://www.arlingtonva.us/covid-19/>
 - City of Alexandria - <https://www.alexandriava.gov/Coronavirus>
 - Fairfax County - <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19/>
 - Prince William County - <https://coronavirus.pwcgov.org/>

NEW BUSINESS:

- The 2022 USSVI Northern Virginia Base Activity Report was submitted to the NE4 District Commander on 31 May 2022.
- Presentation of the USSVI Longevity Pins for 2022:
 - Awardees
 - 1 YR – 1 – Tucci
 - 5 YR – 1 – Huck
 - 10 YR – 4 – **Bishop**, Frick, Miller (Robert R), **Wallace (Penny)**
 - 15 YR – 2 – Elguindi, **Nelson (Terry)**
 - 20 YR – 4 – Arquette, Jaeger (Steve), **Nelson (Paul)**, White
 - 25 YR – 4 – Chiles, Cooper, Gilmore, Wootten
 - The Secretary will mail the longevity pins to those not in attendance. Those who attended are shown in **bold type** and received their awards.



PAUL Nelson receiving his Longevity Pin Award from Base CDR Chuck Martin.

- Howard Chatham, our Base Treasurer and MOAA member, announced that the Commonwealth of Virginia passed the military retired income tax reduction law on Friday, as well as passed a state budget. The Governor has not yet signed these passed bills into law yet.
 - There are three critical laws that are a part of the newly passed budget:
 - HB 1128 and SB 528 are compromised to create this passed bill. The benefit will begin with the tax year 2022. This means that when we file our Virginia taxes next year, we will see the 2022 benefit. **It will reduce our taxable military retired pay by \$10,000 in 2022, and progress in yearly \$10,000 steps to a \$40,000 reduction in year four for the 2025 taxes.** The law requires the military retiree to be at least 55 years old to receive this benefit. A non-accountant has calculated that this will result in: 2022 gross income reduction of \$10,000 leads to a reduced tax by \$575; the 2023 gross income reduction of \$20,000 leads to a reduced tax by \$1150; the 2024 gross income reduction of \$30,000 leads to a reduced tax by \$1725; and the 2025 gross income reduction of \$40,000 leads to a reduced tax of \$2,300.
 - Simultaneously, **the standard income tax deduction is raised** for individual taxpayers from \$4,500 to \$8,000 and from \$9,000 to \$16,000 for families.
 - **A tax rebate** of \$250 for individuals and \$500 for families was added.
 - Additionally, the **state grocery tax was eliminated**, but the local tax option for 1% grocery tax remains.

BINNACLE LIST

Please keep the following in your prayers: Alvin Anceravage, Cathy Chatham, Ginger Haskell, Steve Jaeger, Francis McNamara, Robert R. Miller, Tom Perrault, and Tony Poblete,

For the Good of the Order, the COB read the list of birthdays for June: Debbie Bishop, Marcy Bivens, Dan Burke, Dave Cooper, Brian Haller, Jim Huck, William Lehan, Mike Niblack, Tony Poblete, Art Rosen, Lee Turner, and Carl Wootten

We won't have a regular meeting in July, so the COB read the July birthdays too: Cathy Chatham, Bill Decker, Tom Fortier, and Robert Gilmore

50/50 Raffle The raffle was won by Mark Riethmeier. (\$55 to Mark, \$50 to the base.)

BASE ANNOUNCEMENTS:

NO BASE MEETING IN JULY; OUR NEXT BASE EVENTS WILL BE DALE CITY 4th OF JULY PARADE ON 4 JULY AND OUR INFORMAL DINING OUT AT KILROY'S (5250a Port Royal Rd, Springfield, VA 22151) ON 9 JULY AT 1800.

After this meeting was adjourned, we enjoyed our picnic. Special thanks to Mike Varone for arranging the catering from Dixie Bones

The chaplain, Mickey Garverick delivered the benediction and said grace for the upcoming meal.

The meeting was adjourned and the CDR thanked all for their participation.

Adjournment at: 1159 AM

SUBMARINE HISTORY

USS SCULPIN

During recent research for a historian presentation concerning the awarding of the Congressional Medal of Honor to Captain John Cromwell, the following account of the last day of the USS SCULPIN (SS -191) was identified as a possible additional presentation. This account was submitted to OP23C by Lt. George Brown Jr. USN upon his post-war repatriation as a prisoner of war. Lt. Brown was the senior surviving SCULPIN officer and was SCULPIN Engineering Officer and the battle station's diving officer during the last day. This complete interview comments of Lt. Brown, Jr. are located at the following link and page #s. https://issuu.com/hmsa/docs/ss-191_sculpin, pages 276-279.

“THE STORY OF THE LAST ENGAGEMENT OF THE USS SCULPIN AS SUBMITTED TO CAPTAIN HENSEL (OP23C) ON 1 OCTOBER 1945.

On the night of November 18th we had tracked a large convoy for some eight hours—at dawn we dove and went in to make a submerged attack. Just as we were in a position to shoot, the convoy (consisting of one freighter, five destroyers and one light cruiser) either spotted us or zigged normally. At any rate, they turned directly on us and came over us. The Captain ordered me to “take her down”, thus using negative tank, which made noise. I believe this outfit heard the Sculpin or was alerted, for the whole convoy speeded up. However, they did not drop any depth charges at this time. We stayed deep for an hour and at 0730 Captain Cromwell and Commander Connaway decided that because of the large escort this Maru was very important and we must go after it. Therefore, he ordered us to surface, which we did. However, we evidently did not take a good enough look for the Japs had left a “sleeper” (a large flotilla leader destroyer) which was about 6000 yards from us when we surfaced. We got the submarine down again by the time he came over to drop his first string. The damage received by the first depth charges was not unusual but disconcerting. An exhaust valve in the after engine room was ruptured and we started taking water in aft. Several sea valves were jarred off their seats and could not be made tight.

After about an hour or at 0830, he came over again, this time directly over us and dropped eighteen charges. The hands of the depth gauges fell off in front of my face. The pressure gauges near the diving station commenced flooding and there was other minor damage about the ship. The weather conditions were perfect for a destroyer, sound and echo ranging highly effective. There was a straight line on the Bathythermograph down to 300 feet; our evasion tactics were next to useless on that day.

At 0930 he came over again and dropped another string. This added more minor damage but we still had the submarine under control, in spite of the large up angle (13 degrees or more) and much weight in the boat. By now it was taking 100 or 110 turns to maintain our depth. At this time we detected a rain squall in the distance and headed for it. With the aid of this surface disturbance we shook the destroyer for over half an hour. At this time we decided to pump bilges and endeavor to regain diving trim. However, neither the drain nor the trim pump would take suction. Captain Connaway then had me relieved from the Diving Station so that I could inspect and report damage throughout the boat. Upon inspection I found the after engine room flooded to such an extent that I believed it unwise to attempt to place a bubble in #4 M.B.T. (which would have aided the trim considerably) because the flow of water forward might short main motor leads. We decided to bail the water forward to another compartment until we could trim the ship without endangering main motors.

While we were running up a bucket brigade the temporary diving officer broached the ship. However, no one could be blamed for this as the depth gauge was stuck at 170 feet, and, as I mentioned before, the pressure gauges around the diving station were all flooded out. When we stuck our nose out the destroyer saw us and came over again, dropping another string which tore our radio transmitter from the bulkhead and smashed the receiver, smashed light bulbs and severely damaged outboard vents in both torpedo rooms. We momentarily lost depth control and were down over 500 feet before regaining control. The steering mechanism had been damaged to such an extent that it was next to impossible for exhausted men to operate the wheel in hand power. At this time our evasion tactics were about at a standstill. The heat in the boat was terrific, having made a full power run the previous night all the engine heat had been sealed in the boat with us. Having vented negative two or three times and having so many leaks, the pressure in the boat was over 5". However, we decided to try and hold out for one more string, which we received at about 1230. At that time the forward and aft torpedo rooms reported cracks around the torpedo tubes. The sound heads were driven up into the boat sheering the holding down clamps. Thus were now without "ears". It required 170 turns to maintain depth, the battery was about shot and it was six hours till sundown, so Commander Connaway decided to surface and fight it out with the destroyer, and while the gun crew was engaging the destroyer the rest of the crew who wished could abandon ship.

Commander Connaway had been so calm, resourceful, and persevering during this five hours of sever depth charge, that it was hard for the crew to realize that the situation was as serious as it was. Commander Connaway said that it was a heartbreaking decision to have to make, but that he realized the Sculpin could not take another string of depth charges. Therefore, he felt he owed his crew, who had fought so well, the chance to abandon since the Sculpin was now completely shattered.

As he started up to the conning tower, he ordered me to make sure the Sculpin was scuttled, in case we lost the one-sided engagement with the destroyer. He still maintained his calm, collected, courageous manner which inspired his crew to carry on gallantly in the face of overwhelming odds. We surfaced about 1330, the gun crew led by Lieut. "Joe" Defrees manned the gun and opened fire on the destroyer. Commander Connaway stood on the bridge conning his ship into the most favorable position. Lt J. N. Allen was in the conning tower relaying the skipper's orders to the wheel. Lt.(jg) George Embury manned his radar in the conning tower and relayed fire control data to the gun.

There were at this time some men in the Control Room who asked what they might do. I ordered them to the torpedo rooms to make ready the tubes. I intended to fire a spread from the Control Room. However, the Japanese, with their superior fire control equipment, soon found the range and put two shells through the conning tower. These killed Lt. Allen and Lt. Embury, as well as Commander Connaway on the bridge. Flying fragments also killed Lt. Defrees on the gun.

At this time, I considered it unwise to wait longer for scuttling operations because the next shell might damage the hydraulic system, thus making it impossible to operate the vents.

I ordered "Emergency Speed" and when answered ordered "Abandon Ship". I waited one minute by the clock before ordering Philip Joseph Gabrunas, CMoMM (who had gallantly elected to remain with me and man a station not normally his) to open the vents. Before ordering Gabrunas to "open the Vents", I informed Capt. Cromwell, who was in the Control Room, of my intentions. He told me to go ahead, that he could not come with us for he was afraid the information he possessed might be injurious to shipmates if the Japanese made him reveal it by torture.

As I left the Conning Tower door water was coming waist deep over the sill, and I am

certain no one left the ship after me. I last saw Gabrunas going up the conning tower hatch. He either became fouled in wreckage or was killed by machine gun fire.

I collected the men in the water into one group. Those of us who were strong swimmers aided the wounded and weak swimmers.

The destroyer picked us up around 1500 and took us into Truk Atoll. There were 41 survivors at this point (3 officers and 38 men). After ten days of alternate beating with clubs and questioning at Truk we were divided into two groups and embarked on two aircraft carriers for passage to Japan.

On Dec. 2nd the U.S.S. Sailfish sank one of the carriers and as a result we lost 2 officers and 18 men. George Rocek MoMM1/c was the sole American survivor. One officer and 20 men arrived at Ofuna, the secret intimidation and interrogation camp of the Japanese Navy.

It is also my opinion that the following named officers and men displayed outstanding valor and perseverance in the face of overwhelming odds.

Captain John Cromwell, USN, for refusing personal safety to protect his shipmates and countrymen still engaged in war and operation at sea.

Lt. Nelson John Allen, USN, for his courage, leadership and devotion to duty.

Lt. Joseph Defrees, USN, for his courage, leadership and devotion to duty. It was his gun crew that held the destroyer at bay during scuttling and abandoning operations.

Lt. (j.g.) George Embury, USNR, the Radar Officer for outstanding courage and devotion to duty.

Ensign Max Fiedler, USNR, who preferred death in his ship to capture.

Ensign Charles Goldsmith, USNR, Ensign Worth Gamel, USNR, Weldon E. Moore CSM USN, For their leadership, courage, and devotion to duty, both before and after capture. They were instrumental in saving many lives of those struggling in the water before being taken aboard the Japanese destroyer as well as a great comfort and aid to me during our trying days at Truk.

W. E. Moore, CSM USN, H. T. Thomas, TMM1/c USN, W. R. Berry, TMM1/c USN, D. J. White, MoMM2/c USN, R. O. Wyatt, GM2/c USN, J. N. Baker F1/c USN, Ricketts EF MoMM2/c USN, Milbourne H.S. Jr. F1/c USN, who so gallantly manned the 3" gun in the face of such overwhelming odds, to keep the destroyer at bay while their shipmates abandoned and scuttled.

Harper, J. H. TMM3/c USN, Arneth E. S2/c, Pitser, C.E. TMM2/c USN, Parker, W. H. S1/c USN, Rouke, J.P. SN3/c USN, Colman, C. S. MoMM1/c USN, Gillet, A.B. F1/c USN, who so gallantly manned the 20 mm and light machine guns in the face of such overwhelming odds, thus facilitating scuttling and abandoning operations.

Gabrunas, P. J. CMoMM USN, for voluntarily manning an unassigned station and materially aiding in the scuttling of the Sculpin.

Undoubtedly there are others of this fine crew who carried more than their load during those difficult hours, however it is impossible for one officer to observe the entire crew who behaved so splendidly.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/ George Estabrook Brown, Jr."

Picnic photos



Paul and Chuck



Rich, Gloria, and Mark



Brian and Mike



Woody, Marie and Joe