



USSVI Northern Virginia Base



MINUTES OF THE USSVI NORTHERN VIRGINIA BASE MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 2024

The Base **CDR**, Brian Haller, called the meeting to order at 1032 on January 13, 2024, and welcomed all members and guests. The meeting was conducted in person at the Woodbridge, VA American Legion Post 364 and via Zoom. The Base Officers were introduced and TMCM(SS) Ret. Jeff Leonard, who just joined before the meeting, introduced himself noting that he qualified on the USS James Madison (SSBN 627) in 1974.

MEMBERS AND GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:

Steve Bishop, **Bruce Byrd**, **Howard Chatham**, **Cathy Chatham**, **Bob Glover**, **Ron Grabowski**, **Brian Haller**, **Pat Haller**, **Jim Kraut**, Jeff Leonard, Chuck Martin, Mark Riethmeier, **Mike Varone**, George Wallace, **Penny Wallace**, and **Woody Woodworth**; and Joe Castell, Bruce Miller, Mike Niblack, and **Tim Oliver** via Zoom (20 total).

■ **Holland Club Member**

■ **Associate Member**

■ **Guest**

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

The **CDR** delivered the Invocation.

The **VCDR**, George Wallace, read the list of boats lost in January. These were:

USS S-36 (SS-141)	January 20, 1942
USS S-26 (SS-131)	January 24, 1942
USS ARGONAUT (SS-166)	January 10, 1943
USS SCORPION (SS-278)	January 5, 1944
USS SWORDFISH (SS-193)	January 12, 1945

NORTHERN VIRGINIA BASE MEMBERS WHO DEPARTED ON ETERNAL PATROL IN JANUARY:

- **Edward R. Ettner**, Holland Club and USSVI Life Member. Qualified on USS Cabezon (SS-334), 1950. Departed on his Eternal Patrol on January 26, 2022.
- **Gary Charles Grimes**, Holland Club and USSVI Life Member. Qualified on USS Diodon (SS-349), 1966. Departed on his Eternal Patrol on January 15, 2021.



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- **Michael "Mike" Naughton**, Holland Club and USSVI Life Member. Qualified on USS Baya (SS-318), 1967. Departed on his Eternal Patrol on January 12, 2021.
- **Charles Thomas Pythian**, USSVI Life Member. Qualified on USS Bancroft (SSBN-643), 1968. Departed on his Eternal Patrol on January 12, 2011.

The COB then tolled the ship's bell twice for the 42 USSVI Northern Virginia Base members on Eternal Patrol.

IN MEMORIAM:

- RADM Brian Llewellyn Davies, USN – 30 December 2023
- CAPT Paul L. Callahan, USN (Ret) – 21 December 2023
- RADM Thomas Logan Malone, Jr., USN (Ret) – 25 November 2023
- CAPT Melvin Schweiger, USNR (Ret) – Date Unknown

BASE HISTORIAN: Woody Woodworth read an article on the history of the USS Scorpion (SS-278). The article is appended at the end of these minutes.

INDUCTION OF THE 2024 BASE OFFICERS

The NE4 District CDR, Chuck Martin, swore in the Incoming Base CDR
Commander Brian Haller





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The Base CDR then swore in the other elected Base officers.

Vice Commander

George Wallace

Treasurer

Howard Chatham

Secretary

Howard Chatham



Photos by Steve Bishop

Next the Base CDR presented the following nominations for Base approval:

CHIEF OF THE BOAT – Mike Varone [incumbent]

MEMBERSHIP – Howard Chatham [incumbent]

CHAPLAIN – Steve Jaeger [incumbent]

SUBMARINE HISTORIAN – Woody Woodworth [incumbent]

STOREKEEPER – Chuck Martin [incumbent]

WEBMASTER – Howard Chatham [incumbent]

K4K – Steve Bishop [incumbent]

SCOUTING and SEA CADET COORDINATOR – Chuck Martin

PAO – Mike Varone [incumbent]

BASE PHOTOGRAPHER – Mark Riethmeier

Hearing no objections, these appointments were approved.



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MEETING MINUTES

The December 2023 NOVA Base meeting minutes were previously distributed to the membership. The CDR asked if there was any discussion on them. Hearing none, the minutes were accepted as promulgated.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The **TREASURER**, Howard Chatham, presented the Treasurer's monthly report:

NOVA Base Treasurer's Report for January 13, 2024

● Beginning Cash on Hand:	\$12,569.83
● Plus Receipts:	
•NFCU Checking Account Dividends (December)	\$0.07
•NFCU CD Dividends (December)	\$20.43
•Donation to Base from December 50/50 Raffle	\$27.50
•Donations to Base from Woodworth and Martin	\$167.50
•National Dues – Clement, P. Haller, D. Jaeger, Tran, Kwiecien, Fortier, Tucci	\$265.00
•Base Dues – Clement, D. Jaeger, P. Haller, Tran, Kelley, Meyers, Fortier	\$185.00
•SK sales	\$40.00
•Donation to USSVCF Scholarship Fund - Martin	\$20.00
● Minus Expenditures:	
•Dues to National – P. Haller, Clement, D. Jaeger, Tran, Kwiecien, Fortier, Tucci	\$265.00
•Payment to USSVI 2024 Base Liability Insurance	\$25.00
•Reimbursement to Webmaster for Website Hosting	\$66.00
● Ending Cash on Hand:	\$12,939.33
Minus Local K4K Restricted Use Funds	\$1,379.40
Minus NFCU 12-month Share Certificate	\$5,000.00
● Total Local Discretionary Funds	\$6,559.93
● USSVCF NOVA Base K4K Balance	\$1,895.00
● Total K4K Funds (Local + USSVCF)	\$3,274.40

The CDR asked whether there were any questions regarding the report, and hearing none, the report was accepted as read.



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COMMITTEE REPORTS:

The Executive Committee met via Zoom on 3 January to discuss committee reports, meeting related items, old business, new business, and meeting/event planning.

The **VCDR** reported that he was working up inputs needed for this year's Holland Club induction.

The **COB** had nothing to report but as **PAO**, Mike Varone, noted that he is working with the USMC Artist in Residence for the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Kris Battles, to be a guest speaker at a base meeting later this year.

The **TREASURER** ceded his time to Steve Bishop who reported on the annual financial audit of the Base funds/processes. Steve noted one minor deficiency that was corrected during the audit. Otherwise, the records and processes were considered sound and appropriately conducted. The detailed report has been submitted to the Base CDR for approval.

Post Meeting Note: The NOVA Base End of the Year report, prepared by the Treasurer, was reviewed by the Base CDR after the meeting and approved. The report was forwarded to the USSVI National Treasurer later that day.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT presented by Howard Chatham:

With the addition of Jeff Leonard as a base member, we now have 91 members.

- 45 Holland Club members
 - 1 WW II member
- 37 Regular Base members
 - 14 Life members
 - 23 Annual members
- 9 Associate members

The Membership Chair also reported that we have 4 dinks in 2024 membership and that he would be pursuing resolution of their status throughout the month as dues were due last month and any dinks on January 31st will be dropped from the rolls.

The **KAPS 4 KIDS** Chairman, Steve Bishop, reported that all K4K visits are still suspended until further notice. He has sent letters to the three hospitals we normally visit inquiring as to when bedside visits will be able to resume.

The **STOREKEEPER**, Chuck Martin, reported:



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- He has a multitude of submarine related items in the Base store (click on the Ship's Store link on our website to see a catalog of available items). Not shown in the catalog are the USSVI 60th anniversary coins/patches that he has for sale. Other items can be special ordered by the SK.
- 2024 USSVI Calendars are also available from the Base SK. The price is \$10 per calendar plus postage if mailed.

The **WEBMASTER**, Howard Chatham, reported:

- No issues with the Base website.

NE Regional/NE District 4 News – the **NE District 4 CDR**, Chuck Martin, reported:

- National Officers and Regional Directors are up for election this year. Anyone who is interested in being a candidate for a position should verify that they meet the eligibility requirements and submit a nomination letter to the Election Master, John Markiewicz, iaw directions in the e-mail sent to All Hands on December 1, 2023 by the National CDR.
 - Note that the current NE Regional Director, Les Altschuler, is not running for reelection.
 - Right now, there are two candidates for that position:
 - Jeff Walsh – National Awards Chair and NE District 1 CDR; and
 - Chuck Martin – NE District 4 CDR and the 2023-2024 District CDR of the year.
- Chuck also noted that this year's USSVI Convention is being held in Cleveland (actually, Independence), OH August 19-24, 2024 (<https://subvetconvention.org>).
 - The hotel is the Embassy Suites by Hilton Cleveland Rockside with a room rate of \$109 per room per night.
 - This includes free breakfast and a Manager's reception nightly with two complimentary drinks.
 - Activities available include: Pro Football Hall of Fame tour; Winery tour; City of Cleveland Bus tour; Christmas Story House, Dinner and West Side Market; Cleveland Museum of Art & Western Reserve Historical Museum; Stan Huyet Hall and Garden tour; Brewery tour; USS COD tour; Dinner Cruise; Cleveland Guardians game; and Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railway and National Park tour.
 - It was noted that Cleveland is also the home of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. There will also be several boat reunions.



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- As the convention site is only 377 miles from Woodbridge, Chuck encourages all that can attend to see old shipmates and friends and to make new friends.

NSL -

- Tim Oliver, NSL Executive Director, reported that NSL would have a booth at the upcoming USSVI convention and that the effort of Chuck Martin in convincing USSVI to set up a booth at the recent NSL symposium was a great example of the two organizations working together. It resulted in a number of new members for USSVI.
- George Wallace reported that the next NSL Capitol Chapter luncheon meeting will be held at 1130 on Friday, 8 March 2024, at the Army-Navy Country Club. RDML Mark Behning (Director, Undersea Warfare Division, OPNAV N97) will be the speaker.
- The following industry/engagement opportunities are upcoming this quarter:
 - Submarine Industrial Base Council Supplier Days Conference: 4-6 March
 - NSL Corporate Member Days: 6-7 March
 - 2024 USW Spring Conference: 18-20 March
 - Sea Air Space Expo: 8-10 April

On behalf of the **International Submariners Association of The United States of America (ISA/USA)** Vice President, John “Bud” Cunnally, the Base CDR provided the following:

- The 2024 Congress will be May 26-30, in Ireland and will be hosted by the US, followed by the UK hosting the event in Northern Ireland May 30-31.
 - The link to the Congress webpage is: <https://isaireland2024.com/>.
- To join the International Submariners Association of the United States of America (ISA/USA Inc.) visit their website at www.isausa.org/ for an application. Lifetime membership is \$50.00.

Upcoming submarine reunions:

- USS Von Steuben (SSBN 632) April 11-14, 2024, Jacksonville, FL
 - USS Simon Bolivar (SSBN 641) April 14-18, 2024, Branson, MO
 - USS Batfish (SSN 681) May 7-10, 2024, Nashville, TN
 - USS Spinax (SS 489) May 14-16, 2024, North Little Rock, AR
 - USS Hawkbill (SSN 666) May 20-24, 2024, Galveston, TX
- Call or Email the POC listed in the American Submariner to determine the status of the reunion.**



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OLD BUSINESS

- USS Groton Sail Foundation is a 501(c)3 tax exempt nonprofit organization focused on building a lasting public monument to celebrate their region's contribution to our nation's defense. The centerpiece of the monument will be the USS Groton's sail and rudder, which will serve as a permanent tribute to the Navy's submarine community, past, present, and future. The Foundation is now attempting to raise \$2 million to secure a site in Groton, Connecticut and to build the monument. They are selling pavers and taking donations at <https://grotonsail.com>.

The CDR called for other items of old business, and none were provided.

NEW BUSINESS

- The Wreaths Out event (collection of wreaths from graves) at Arlington National Cemetery will be on January 20 starting at 0800.

THE BINNACLE LIST - Please keep the following, as well as their families and friends, in your thoughts and prayers: Steve Jaeger, Francis "Terry" McNamara, Nancy O'Brien, and Tom Perrault.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER - The COB read the list of birthdays for January: Dan Arquette, George Billy, Steve Burnett, Hank Chiles, Sam Dunlap, Nader Elquindi, Bob and Susan Glover, Richard Hamly, Bruce Miller, Mike Murphy, Einer Nielson, and Judy Perrault.

BASE ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be at 1030 on Saturday, February 10, 2024, at American Legion Post 364. After the meeting we will have our Sweetheart's Luncheon at Armetta's Italian Grill and Pizzeria. Individuals will be responsible for their own meals.

Howard Chatham delivered the Benediction.

The CDR called for a motion to adjourn, and the meeting adjourned at 1120.

The 50/50 raffle was won by Howard Chatham who returned \$20 back to the Base.

Submitted by Howard Chatham
USSVI NOVA Base Secretary



SUBMARINE HISTORY

A day on the USS SCORPION (SS-278) during the first war patrol.

SCORPION's first task on her first patrol was to lay MK12 & MK 10 mines in a designated area. All SCORPION torpedo tubes were loaded with the mines: MK12's forward and MK10's aft. This reading is of SCORPION's war patrol report on the day of the mine laying. All times read are for time zone I.

"April 19, 1943.

0226 I Sighted first of a number of lighted and unlighted sampans. As many as 12 lighted boats and at least 1 unlighted were in sight at one time. Used various courses and speeds to get through the line unseen. SJ Radar made contact at 5350 yards, and tracked one of them (the closest) in the 2600 yards. Sampans appeared to be in an irregular North – South line some 25 - 35 miles East of NAKA Minato.

0343 I Cleared sampans and headed for the coast.

0400 I Submerged to reconnoiter coast and mining area. Visibility getting poor, cirrus haze thickening and lowering.

0600 I Visibility now 4000 yards; light rain; sky like a wool blanket; sea glassy calm. Sighted two sampans aft, going away.

0941 I Changed course to avoid two more motor sampans. I don't believe this pair actually detected our presence, but they certainly stuck around and gave us a bad two hours. Went deep and used various courses toward coast, rigged for silent running but sound kept reporting "coming in closer". Finally at

1029 I one of them passed over our bow while we were at 150 feet. Shortly after, a rather alarming loud grating, sawing noise was heard throughout the ship. Men in FTR said they thought someone was pulling our superstructure off. Went to 250 feet and noise ceased.

1042 I Started up, but noise re-commenced at 230 feet, accompanied by rapping on the hull aft. Had visions of either (1) a grapnel hanging on



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to us, (2) a fish net draped around the screws, or (3) U.S.S. SCORPION towing a flock of fishing floats. None of these prospects helped. Finally went to 300 feet, changed course and went ahead 2/3 speed.

1136 I Came to 65 feet and observed we were clear of nets and other loose gear, no floats aft, both sampans stooging about at some distance.

1201 I Sighted smoke of small steamer. Commenced attack and went to battle stations. Enemy disappeared or turned away in mist. He may have been a patrol boat, as he was small.

1236 I Abandoned attack and resumed reconnaissance. Rain steady.

1421 I Sighted coastline in haze. In view of the increasingly bad weather and visibility conditions which would make further reconnaissance and accurate piloting impracticable; and should the weather clear, the condition of full moon plus the large number of sampans in the vicinity, decided to lay mines this date.

1721 I By star fix and soundings (subsequently verified by star fix after plant) determined we were in position for mine plant. Commenced laying MK12 from bow; took sounding at discreet intervals during plant.

1911 I Completed entire plant, having fired 12-MK12 and 10-MK10 at spacings from 600 to 1000 yards in irregular lines. (See Chart #1).

Retired to deep water on 090° T as battery was very low and pressure in boat 8 inches. A sound contact at

1924 I made it unwise to pump down this pressure, so went to best escape depth; rigged for depth charge attack and retired.

2027 I Surfaced after 16 ½ hours submerged with battery low (used spurts of 2/3 speed between mines), reload crews tired, but crew very happy to get rid of these “eggs” and get torpedoes in all tubes. Headed for area – at high speed.”