

MINUTES OF THE USSVI NORTHERN VIRGINIA BASE MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY, OCT 12, 2024

The Base CDR, Brian Haller, called the meeting to order at 1031 on October 12, 2024, at American Legion Post 364, Woodbridge, VA, and welcomed all members and guests. New members Paul Siegrist and Ronald Rempert were recognized, and the Base officers introduced themselves.

MEMBERS AND GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE

Jim Bertine, Bruce Byrd, Joseph Brunson, Cathy Chatham, Howard Chatham, Bob Glover, Pat Haller, Brian Haller, Chuck Martin, Ronald Rempert, Mark Riethmeier, Paul Siegrist, Mike Varone, George Wallace, Penny Wallace, Cliff Whitener, Woody Woodworth, and, on Zoom, Mike Niblack (18 total; 17 members).

■ Holland Club Member

■ Associate Member

■ Guest

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

The Base Secretary, Howard Chatham, delivered the Invocation.

After a moment of silence, the VCDR, George Wallace, read the list of boats lost in the month of October. These were:

USS O-5 (SS-66)	29 Oct 1923
USS S-44 (SS-155)	7 Oct 1943
USS Wahoo (SS-238)	11 Oct 1943
USS Dorado (SS-248)	12 Oct 1943
USS Seawolf (SS-197)	3 Oct 1944
USS Escolar (SS-294)	17 Oct 1944
USS Shark (SS-314)	24 Oct 1944
USS Darter (SS-227)	24 Oct 1944
USS Tang (SS-306)	25 Oct 1944

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

- **Alfred Friedrich**, Qualified on USS Sea Poacher (SS-406), 1947. Departed on his Eternal Patrol on 10 October 2005.
- **Ralph M. Ghormley**, USSVI Holland Club and Life Member. Qualified on USS Sea Fox (SS-402), 1952. Departed on his Eternal Patrol on 7 October 2012.
- **Charles T. Mills**, USSVI Holland Club and Life Member. Qualified on USS Redfish (SS-395), 1951. Departed on his Eternal Patrol on 30 October 2017.

The Chief of the Boat tolled the bell twice in remembrance of the 43 USSVI NOVA Base members on Eternal Patrol.

In Memoriam:

- CDR E. Fred Murphy, USN (Ret) – 13 Aug 2024
- MMCM(SS) Richard J. Reuss, USN (Ret) – 1 Sep 2024
- CWO3 John Price, USN (Ret) – 14 Sep 2024
- YNCM(SS) Timothy John Baisley, USN (Ret) – 22 Sep 2024
- LCDR Brian K. Belcher, USN (Ret) – 25 Sep 2024
- LCDR Edward Thomas Barnes, USN (Ret) – 25 Sep 2024
- CAPT James R. Poole, USN (Ret) – 26 Sep 2024

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer, Howard Chatham reported:

NOVA Base Treasurer's Report for October 12, 2024

• Beginning Cash on Hand:	<u>\$12,532.10</u>
• Plus Receipts:	
•NFCU Checking Account Dividends (September)	\$0.06
•NFCU CD Dividends (September)	\$20.43
•Donation to Base from 50/50 raffle	\$35.00
•Donation to Base – C. Martin	\$35.00
•Donation to USSVCF Scholarship Fund – C. Martin	\$20.00
•Base Dues – C. Chatham, D. Bishop, S. Bishop, J. Kaysak, P. Haller, N. Smith, D. Jaeger, M. Niblack, W. Clement, D. Hall, & V. Fiebig	\$245.00
•National Dues – C. Chatham, D. Bishop, P. Haller, N. Smith, D. Jaeger, M. Niblack & W. Clement	\$210.00
•SK sales - Calendars	\$486.60
• Minus Expenditures:	
•Reimbursement to CDR for Member Luncheon	\$217.21
•Reimbursement to SK for SK supplies	\$412.00
•Reimbursement to SEC for printing of Base brochures	\$243.06
•Payment to National for USSVCF Scholarship Fund	\$20.00
•Dues to National – C. Chatham, D. Bishop, P. Haller, N. Smith, W. Lawton, D. Jaeger, M. Niblack, & W. Clement	\$240.00
• Ending Cash on Hand:	<u>\$12,451.92</u>
Minus Local K4K Restricted Use Funds	\$1,379.40
Minus NFCU 12-month Share Certificate (CD)	\$5,000.00
• Total Local Discretionary Funds	<u><u>\$6,075.52</u></u>

● USSVCF NOVA Base K4K Balance	\$2,135.41
● Total K4K Funds (Local + USSVCF)	<u>\$3,514.81</u>

The Treasurer's report was accepted as presented.

MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of the September 2024 meeting were previously distributed by e-mail and USPS. They were accepted as promulgated.

USSVI and NE4 District News

- A Northeast Region District Commander's meeting is being held on 17 October 2024. Contact Chuck Martin at cdr.ussvine4@mail.com or 240-876-2641 if there is an agenda item that you desire him to add to the discussion.
- Chuck announced that he would not be running for the office of District CDR next year. If anyone is interested in this position you can contact him at the above address/phone number. He highly recommends serving in this position.

NAVAL SUBMARINE LEAGUE

- The NSL Submarine History Webinar will be held on 22 October 2024 from 1900 to 2030. Information and registration are available on the NSL website at: <https://navalsubleague.org/events/submarine-history-seminar/>. This webinar is NOT restricted to only NSL members.
- The next NSL Capitol Chapter Luncheon will be on 1 November 2024 from 1130 to 1300 at Army-Navy Country Club. VADM James Pitts (OPNAV N9) will be the speaker.
- The NSL Annual Symposium and Industry Update will be held on Wednesday and Thursday, 13 and 14 November 2024 at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City, Arlington, VA. USSVI will have a vendor table at the Symposium and you can contact Chuck Martin at cdr.ussvine4@mail.com or 240-876-2641 for more information and to volunteer to help staff the table.

UPCOMING SUBMARINE REUNIONS:

- USS Lewis and Clark (SSBN 644) 15-18 Oct 2024, St. Marys, GA
- USS Chivo (SS 341) 20-23 Oct 2024, Kings Bay, GA
- USS Dogfish (SS 350) 23-27 Oct 2024, Kings Bay, GA
- USS Tunny (SS 282/SSN 682) 6-10 Nov 2024, San Antonio, TX

BINNACLE LIST: Please keep the following in your prayers: Steve Jaeger, Terry McNamara, Mary Miller (mother of Bruce Miller), Tom Perrault, Joe Phoenix, Tim Shannon, Anita Varone, Diane Whitener, and Woody Woodworth.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER, birthdays for the month of October are: Louise Decker, Richard Kelley, Mike Kwiecien, Lou Maruzo, Ed Mattran, John Newton, Mark Shafer, George Wallace, and the United States Navy. Woody Woodworth, the Base Historian, also noted that today is the 61st anniversary of the first USSVI meeting and the 124th anniversary of the commissioning of the USS Holland (SS-1).

BASE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regular meeting will be held on November 9th at American Legion Post 364 and will also be visible on Zoom. The EXCOM is considering changing the date of the December meeting to the 7th as a meeting on the 14th conflicts with participation in the Wreaths Across American event that morning. The date change has yet to be coordinated with the Post. **Post Meeting Note:** the 7 December date has been confirmed with the Post.

The Secretary delivered the Benediction.

The meeting was adjourned at 1051.

The **50/50 drawing** was won by Woody Woodworth who donated his winnings to the Base. Thank you, Woody.

THE BELOW INFORMATION WAS NOT DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING BUT IS INCLUDED IN THESE MINUTES FOR MEMBERS' SITUATIONAL AWARENESS.

EXECUTIVE BOARD – The Executive Committee met on 2 October via Zoom. The meeting agenda included committee reports, meeting-related items, old business, new business, and meeting and event planning.

TREASURER -

- Discussed current budget figures and planned expenses.
- Presented draft 2025 Base Budget for discussion.
- 8 of 23 members have renewed their membership (2025 dues) so far.

Membership –Howard Chatham reported:–

- Membership information (newest member Cliff Whitener)
 - 91 Members
 - 50 Holland Club Members
 - 1 WW II Member

- 32 Regular Members
 - 13 – Base Life Members
 - 19 – Base Annual Members
- 9 Associate Members

Chaplain -

- For the Chaplain, the Secretary reported that Tom Perrault is not doing well and we will be sending meeting minutes to his wife Judy instead of directly to him.

Storekeeper –

- SK still has a few 2025 USSVI Calendars for sale and three more are reserved for two members who had pre-ordered them.

OLD BUSINESS

- The Eternal Patrol and Base officers plaques have been updated and returned. They are stored at the Post. The IPCDR discussed with the Post Commander about the possibility of having the plaques on display at the Post.
- 100 printed copies of the new NOVA Base brochure have been received.

NEW BUSINESS

- On Friday, November 15th, the NSL will be holding an open house at their Headquarters. Note that is also the date that Tim Oliver retires as Executive Director of the NSL.
- Nominations are now being accepted for 2025 Base officers. The positions of Commander, Vice Commander, Secretary, and Treasurer are available. Elections will start at the end of the November meeting and end at the beginning of the December meeting. The IPCDR is the election master. All nominations should be emailed to pastcdr@ussvinova.org.

The **Guest speaker** today was retired CDR Joseph Brunson who discussed Maritime Security Issues in West Africa (Gulf of Ghana) and Around the Continent.

The purpose of the brief was: to expose and inform the public to issues that impact maritime security and American interest around the continent of Africa; provide an overview of the continent of Africa; explain the current security situation on the continent; and explain to why it is important for the US to not lose focus in our dealings on the continent. His conclusions were that: the U.S. strategy towards Africa seeks to balance the direct security interventions with support for governance, economic development, and institutional capacity building; by fostering stronger diplomatic and economic ties, the U.S. aims to counteract the

growing influence of other global powers and support African nations in achieving stable and sustainable development; and security issues in Africa are deeply intertwined with American foreign policy interests, particularly as they relate to countering global rivals and promoting stability and prosperity.

His briefing can be found on the Presentations link on our website. His biography is included at the end of these minutes.

Meeting Minutes Respectfully Submitted by
Howard Chatham
Secretary, USSVI Northern Virginia Base

Joseph R. Brunson
Baltimore, MD - 757-349-5854
josephrbrunson@gmail.com - www.linkedin.com/in/joseph-brunson

Summary:

Joseph R. Brunson is a distinguished veteran of the United States Navy with over three decades of leadership and operational experience in strategic intelligence, aviation, and military diplomacy. He has held numerous high-level positions, demonstrating expertise in global project management, personnel development, and cross-functional leadership. His career is marked by a commitment to mission readiness, operational excellence, and fostering strong international partnerships. He holds a TS/SCI security clearance and is fluent in both French and Spanish.

Education:

Master of Arts in Foreign Affairs – United States Naval War College, Newport, RI
Bachelor of Science in Mathematics – United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD

Additional Studies: MBA courses (Old Dominion University), Ed.D courses in Educational Leadership (Liberty University), Joint Professional Military Education (Phases I & II),
Graduate of Joint Military Attaché School (Defense Intelligence Agency)

Professional Experience:

Naval Attaché to Ghana, Togo, and Benin (06/2015 – 06/2018), Argentina (06/2020 – 06/2023)

Directed intelligence collection, analysis, and dissemination for U.S. military operations in West Africa and South America.

Served as a key military diplomat, leading engagements with foreign officials and maintaining strategic relationships with U.S. interagency teams and international partners.

Briefed senior U.S. officials, including Ambassadors and Admirals, on regional military capabilities, significantly influencing strategic decisions.

Managed high-level naval engagements, overseeing logistics and representing U.S. interests in foreign territories.

Aviation Warfare Officer:

Optimized daily flight operations and maintenance schedules, ensuring operational efficiency and mission success during combat operations.

Directed the training and certification of naval pilots and aircrew, contributing to enhanced combat readiness in various military theaters.

Advanced Command & Staff School Instructor:

Led the development and instruction of advanced military courses for senior officers and civilian leaders, covering topics such as strategic planning, military deception, and international relations.

Played a critical role in shaping the future leadership of U.S. and allied military personnel through rigorous training and curriculum development.

Delivered mobile training to various U.S. military commands and national agencies, strengthening interagency cooperation and operational effectiveness.

Aviator:

Piloted naval aircraft in support of training, diplomatic, and combat missions, accumulating over 3000 flight hours without incident. Have flight experience in 2nd , 3rd , 4th 5th , and 7th fleet areas of responsibility.

Instructed over 100 student naval aviators, achieving exceptional success in flight proficiency training.

Awards and Decorations:

Defense Meritorious Service Medal (2)

Recognized for exceptional leadership and outstanding contributions to U.S. national security and military operations.

Skills and Competencies:

Personnel Management, Aviation Operations, Strategic Intelligence, Global Diplomacy, Training Program Development, Budget and Resource Management. Proficient in French and Spanish (listening, reading, and speaking).