

MINUTES OF THE USSVI NORTHERN VIRGINIA BASE MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY, February 8, 2025

The Base CDR, Brian Haller, called the meeting to order at 1033 on February 8, 2025, at American Legion Post 364 in Woodbridge, VA, and welcomed all members and guests. The Base officers introduced themselves, guest Aaron Stroeh, and new member Pete Scala introduced themselves.

MEMBERS AND GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE: Bruce Byrd, Erlinda Byrd, Cathy Chatham, Howard Chatham, Bob Glover, Brian Haller, Pat Haller, Ginger Haskell, Chuck Martin, Tim Oliver, Pete Scala, Aaron Stroeh, Mike Varone, Penny Wallace, George Wallace, Cliff Whitener, Woody Woodworth, and, via Zoom, Steve Bishop, Paul Nelson, Mark Riethmeier, and Noland Smith. (21 total)

■ Holland Club Member

■ Associate Member

■ Guest

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

For the Chaplain, the Secretary, Howard Chatham, delivered the Invocation.

The Vice Commander, George Wallace, read the list of boats lost in the months of January and February. These were:

USS S-36 (SS-141)	20 January 1942
USS S-26 (SS-131)	24 January 1942
USS ARGONAUT (SS-166)	10 January 1943
USS SCORPION (SS-278)	5 January 1944
USS SWORDFISH (SS-193)	12 January 1945
USS SHARK I (SS-174)	11 February 1942
USS AMBERJACK (SS-219)	16 February 1943
USS GRAYBACK (SS-208)	26 February 1944
USS TROUT (SS-202)	29 February 1944
USS BARBEL (SS-316)	4 February 1945

The following Northern Virginia Base members departed on Eternal Patrol in the months of January and February:

Edward R. Ettner, Holland Club and USSVI Life Member, qualified on USS Cabezon (SS-334), 1950, departed on his Eternal Patrol on 26 January 2022;

Gary Charles Grimes, Holland Club and USSVI Life Member, qualified on USS Diodon (SS-349), 1966, departed on his Eternal Patrol on 15 January 2021;

Michael "Mike" Naughton, Holland Club and USSVI Life Member, qualified on USS Baya (SS-318), 1967, departed on his Eternal Patrol on 12 January 2021;

Charles Thomas Pythian, USSVI Life Member, qualified on USS Bancroft (SSBN-643), 1968, departed on his Eternal Patrol on 12 January 2011;

Norman Earl Griggs, Holland Club and USSVI Life Member, qualified on USS Tiru (SS416) in 1957, departed on Eternal Patrol 26 February 202;

Einer Rosener Nielson, Associate Member, departed on Eternal Patrol 2 February 2021; and

George Frederick Steeg, Holland Club, and Lifetime USSVI Member; qualified on USS Cobbler (SS-347) in 1948, departed on Eternal Patrol on 12 February 2020.

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

IN MEMORIAM: LCDR Keith L. Parkinson, USN (Ret.) - 2 September 2024; FTB1(SS) George P. Kull - 22 October 2024; CAPT Thomas Harold Etter, USN (Ret.) - 30 October 2024; EMCS(SS) Thomas Arthur Wunder, Sr., USN (Ret.) - 18 November 2024; CAPT Paul David Ims, Jr., USN (Ret.) – 15 December 2024; TCMC(SS) James A. "Gabby" Gabarra, USN (Ret) – 25 December 2024; and President James Earl “Jimmy” Carter, Jr. – 29 December 2024.

The bell was tolled twice in remembrance of all the departed.

The **HISTORIAN**, Woody Woodworth, read an article on the war activities of the submarines in the U. S. Asiatic Fleet from 1 December 1941 to 1 April 1942. The article is included at the end of these minutes.

INDUCTION OF 2025 BASE OFFICERS

As no meeting was held in January the induction of the 2025 Base Officers was conducted at this meeting. The NE4 CDR, Chuck Martin, swore in the incoming **Base Commander**, Brian Haller. The Base CDR then swore in the incoming **Vice Commander**, George Wallace, and **Secretary/Treasurer**, Howard Chatham.



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

CHIEF OF THE BOAT – Mike Varone

MEMBERSHIP – Howard Chatham

CHAPLAIN – Mike Varone

SUBMARINE HISTORIAN – Woody Woodworth

STOREKEEPER – Chuck Martin

WEBMASTER – Howard Chatham

Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) – Ron Grabowski

SCOUTING and SEA CADET COORDINATOR – Chuck Martin

PAO – Mike Varone

Hearing no objections, these appointments were approved.

MEETING MINUTES:

The minutes from the last meeting, December 2024, have been disseminated to the membership. There was no discussion on them and the minutes were accepted as promulgated.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer, Howard Chatham, reported the status of the Base finances:

NOVA Base Treasurer's Report for February 8, 2025

● Beginning Cash on Hand:	\$12,861.04
● Plus Receipts:	
•NFCU Checking Account Dividends	\$0.14
•NFCU CD Dividends (December/January)	\$37.79
•Donation to Base from 50/50 raffle	\$40.00
•Donation to Base – C. Martin	\$35.00
•Donation to Base – USSVCF NE4 Challenge Winner	\$300.00
•Donation to USSVCF Scholarship Fund – C. Martin	\$20.00
•Base Dues – Fortier	\$15.00
•National Dues – Fortier, Duncan (5 yrs) & Scala (Life)	\$470.00
● Minus Expenditures:	
•Payment to National for USSVCF Scholarship Fund	\$20.00
•Meeting Location Donation to American Legion Post	\$150.00
•Payment to National for Base Liability Fee	\$25.00
•Dues to National –T. Fortier, C. Duncan & P. Scala	\$470.00
● Ending Cash on Hand:	\$13,113.97
Minus Local K4K Restricted Use Funds	\$1,379.40
Minus NFCU 12-month Share Certificate (CD)	\$5,000.00
● Total Local Discretionary Funds	\$6,734.57
● USSVCF NOVA Base K4K Balance	\$2,135.41
● Total K4K Funds (Local + USSVCF)	\$3,514.81

The original report did not separate the personal donation from Chuck Martin from the amount of the winnings from the District USSVCF Donation Challenge. As requested by the NE4 DCDR, the above report has been amended. This Treasurer's Report was accepted as amended.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

The **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** met via Zoom on 29 January 2025. The meeting agenda included committee reports, meeting-related items, old business, new business, and meeting/event planning.

The **VICE CDR, COB, PAO, and Secretary** had nothing to report.

TREASURER reported that the End of the Year financial report for 2024 has been submitted and accepted by the National Treasurer.

MEMBERSHIP: Howard Chatham reported:

- Membership information
 - 91 Members

- 50 Holland Club Members
 - 1 WW II Members
- 32 Regular Members
 - 16 – Life Members
 - 16 – Annual Members
- 9 Associate Members

Two members, Randy Tran and Steve Burnett, were removed from our ranks due to moving to another state and joining a local base. Member Mark Kenny was transferred to Member At Large. Our newest member is Pete Scala.

WEBMASTER: Howard Chatham reported that:

- Our website has been transferred to a local host and is operating normally, including forwarding of mail to the officers and appointees. It was down for 24 hours last weekend due to a power failure in the neighborhood. Everything is back in working order now. If members discover any problems, please contact the Webmaster at his personal address – hmc64@verizon.net.
- The on-line membership forms have been updated for the 2025 USSVI dues rates.

CHAPLAIN: - Unfortunately, the current Chaplain, Steve Jaeger, had to step down due to health issues. However, Mike Varone agreed to assume this position.

K4K – Steve Bishop has also stepped down as K4K chair due to health reasons. Ron Grabowski has agreed to assume this position.

STOREKEEPER: Chuck Martin reported that:

- The Storekeeper intends to update the on-line catalog in the near future.
- Anyone who is interested in purchasing submarine related items from the Base store or wishes to place a special order should contact Chuck, at storekeeper@ussvinova.org, as we can normally obtain items at a discount with some of the savings going to the Base treasury.

NE REGION/NE DISTRICT 4 NEWS – Chuck Martin, the NE District 4 CDR, reported that:

- The NE Regional Director, Jeff Walsh, is hosting a Zoom meeting on 12 February 2025 at 1800 with the District Commanders and anyone else that wishes to attend. Please let Chuck know if you wish to attend or have a topic that you want him to discuss.
- USSVI National is seeking candidates to fill the positions of USSVI Nomination Chair and New Base Development Chair. If you know of someone who may be interested in one of the positions let Chuck know.
- The current website contract with Blackbaud ends in March. USSVI National will be using MailChimp to send out emails until the new website is operational.
- USSVI Mid Atlantic Base will be hosting their Tolling of the Boats ceremony at Kete Monument Delaware Memorial Park on 20 March 2025 (USS Kete was lost 80 years ago on that date).
- USSVI Capitol Base will be hosting their Tolling of the Boats ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery on 17 May 2025 at the USS F-4 gravesite.

- Chuck will be stepping down as our DCDR this year. He noted that it has been an honor to serve as our DCDR. He is still looking for candidates to fill that position for the 2025-2027 term.

NAVAL SUBMARINE LEAGUE: upcoming events:

- Due to upcoming inclement weather, the Capitol Chapter luncheon has been rescheduled from 12 February to 12 March at ANCC Arlington; the guest speaker will be Rear Admiral Tim Woods, CBE (UK Defence Attaché and Head of the British Defence Staff (US)).
- Submarine Industrial Base Council Supplier Days will be held at the Renaissance Arlington Capital View Hotel 24-26 Feb 25.
- NSL Corporate Member Days will also be held at the Renaissance Arlington Capital View Hotel 26-27 February 2025.
- NDIA 2025 Undersea Warfare Spring Conference will be in San Diego CA 17-19 March 2025.
- Submarine Technology Symposium: “Lethality Today and Innovation for Tomorrow” will be held 13-15 May 2025 in Laurel, MD (a classified meeting).
- Submarine History Seminar: 125th Anniversary of the United States Submarine Force. In-person date and location details will be coming soon.
- The December 2024 edition of The Submarine Review has an article about USSVI.

ISA/USA

- To join the International Submariners Association of the United States of America (ISA/USA Inc.) visit their website at <http://www.isausa.org/> for an application. Lifetime Membership is \$50.00.
- The 60th International Submariners Congress will be held in Gdynia, Poland, 28 May – 1 June 2025. The website is: <https://60isc.pl/>. (You will likely want to select the link to the English version of the site as it comes up in Polish. French, German, Spanish, and Ukrainian are also available.)

UPCOMING SUBMARINE REUNIONS –

- USS George Bancroft (SSBN 643), 13-16 March 2025, St. Marys, GA
- USS Finback (SSN 670), 30 April–4 May 2025, Reno, NV
- USS Sam Rayburn (SSBN 635), 4-9 May 2025, Kerrville, TX
- USS Spadefish (SSN668), 9-11 May 2025, Smithfield, VA
- USS Tigrone (SS 419), 15-18 May 2025, Pittsburgh, PA
- USS Scamp (SSN 588), 1-7 June 2025, Punta Gorda, FL
- USS Houston (SSN 713), 10-13 July, Groton, CT
- USS Boston (SSN 703, CA 69, CAG 1), 10-13 July, Annapolis, MC
https://www.ussboston.org/Reunions/2020s/2025_Annapolis/Reunion_2025_Home.html
- USS Sea Leopard (SS 483), 11-15 August 2025, Groton, CT
- USS Sargo (SSN 583), 21-29 September 2025, Seattle, WA

Call or Email the POC listed in the American Submariner to determine the status of the reunion. You can also contact the VCDR for information on the Spadefish and Houston reunions.

OLD BUSINESS – there was no Old Business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

- USS Iowa (SSN-797) will be commissioned at 1000 5 April 2025, in Groton, CT.
- The Sea/Air/Space Expo is 6-9 April. CDR is coordinating with Steve Fischer, NSL Executive Director, to determine if he is willing to allow us to display USSVI items on the NSL table and if he desires help with staffing the table.
- The new National Website is projected to be up and running by May. The site will be single sign on (SSO) and permission based as to functions/sections available. The site will be a combined general membership website and a replacement for the current Tools capability.
- Base Annual Activities Report this year will be by Google forms with submission in May.
- The Base Membership Incentive Program is in the final development stages. NE4 District Commander is awaiting the approved process. Based on an increase of Base regular membership by 10% over the 1 January 2025 count, National will pay the Base \$30 per new additional member.
- The proposed amendment for Life Membership eligibility for Associate Members will be on the next ballot. The basics are that an Associate Member who has been in good standing for a minimum of the previous 3 years will be eligible for Life Membership. Once a Life Member, he or she will no longer require an ongoing sponsor.
- USSVI Nebraska Base has disbanded. Potentially 5 other USSVI Bases will be disbanding.
- USSVI National membership exceeded 12,000 on 18 November 2024.
- The 2025 National Convention website (<https://subvetconvention.org>) is up, but not all sections have been completed yet.
- Our Holland Club Induction Luncheon has been rescheduled to 3 May 2025 and will again be held at the Amphora Diner Deluxe. Chuck Martin has extended an invitation to John Jacques, USSVI National Commander, to be our speaker.

The VCDR read the **BINNACLE LIST**: Steve Bishop, Steve Jaeger, Terry McNamara, Bruce Miller, Tom Perrault, Joe Phoenix, Tim Shannon, Diane Whitener, and Woody Woodworth. It is requested that ALCON keep them and their families and friends in your prayers.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER: the COB read the list of **January** and **February birthdays**: Dan Arquette, George Billy, Hank Chiles, Sam Dunlap, Nader Elquindi, Bob and Susan Glover, Richard Hamly, Bruce Miller, Mike Murphy, Judy Perrault, Ron Grabowski, Donald Hall, Bill Lawton, Ross Sargent, and Gary Smith.

BASE ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Our next meeting will be on March 8th at American Legion Post 364.

BENEDICTION:

The Secretary delivered the Benediction.

The meeting was adjourned at 1118.

50/50 RAFFLE:

The 50/50 raffle was won by Chuck Martin who donated his winnings back to the Base.

A wonderful Sweethearts Luncheon at Armetta's was then enjoyed by 13 members and guests.

Our thanks to the COB for setting up this event and to the CDR for the roses for the ladies and chocolates for all.

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

SUBMARINE HISTORY

The following presentation is a portion of paragraph 7 of the “War Activities Submarines, U.S. ASIATIC FLEET December 1, 1941 – April 1, 1942 report from The Commander Submarines, U.S. ASIATIC FLEET to The Commander in Chief, U.S. FLEET and Chief of Naval Operations. The link to the full report is: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/133909661>

“On the afternoon of 10 December, enemy two engine high level bombers came over Manila Bay in two groups of twenty-four and twenty-seven planes, practically unopposed. In addition to bombing other objectives, these planes dropped 3 sticks on the Cavite Navy Yard.” *{The Submarine tender}* “OTUS had been brought in at daylight that morning from Mariveles for the purpose of redistributing her cargo of submarine spare parts in preparation for her trip south and had a narrow escape from the bombers.” *{The Submarine rescue vessel}* “PIGEON was in the Yard as a result of having damaged her steering gear in a recent trip in connection with bringing Yangtze Gunboats down along the China coast and to Manila. Anticipation of possible Jap bombing of the Cavite Navy Yard had caused her captain to have relieving tackles rigged and steam at the throttle. During the raid SEALION received two direct hits which cost the lives of four men and which wrecked her to an extent which later required her destruction by three depth charges to keep her from falling into the hands of the enemy. SEADRAGON was alongside SEALION and was damaged and had one casualty among the personnel in the conning tower but PIGEON did an excellent job of towing SEADRAGON away from the flames which soon enveloped the area. This saved her from extensive damage and, after temporary repairs were effected by CANOPUS, she was able to leave on 15 December, evacuating part of the Commander in Chief’s Staff. She was escorted by BULMER and was sent south through Suriago and Makassar Strait to Surabaya. Permanent repairs were effected there and SEADRAGON was on her way back through Makassar Strait for patrol off the Indo-China coast by the first of the year. In addition to the above, and insofar as submarines are concerned, the bombing and burning of Cavite on 10 December resulted in the loss of about 185 Mark XIV and Mod. 1 torpedoes, plus 48 which were in a lighter alongside SEADRAGON and SEALION. The ones which had been gotten into the casemates prior to that date were then further moved to Corregidor and practically all were later removed for war use by the several submarines which have visited Corregidor for various purposes since that date.”