

**MINUTES OF THE USSVI NORTHERN VIRGINIA BASE
MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY, February 8, 2014**

The Base CDR, Howard Chatham, called the meeting to order at 1100 on February 8, 2014 at American Legion Post 162, Lorton, VA and welcomed all members and guests.

MEMBERS AND GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE

Alan Amos, Steve Bishop, Cathy Chatham, Howard Chatham, Ed Ettner, Mary Ettner, Brian Haller, Patricia Haller, Darlene Jaeger, Steve Jaeger, Richard Lowry, Vickye Lowry, Chuck Martin, Bruce Miller, USSVI Eastern Region North Director Mike Naughton, Mary Lou Naughton, Paul Nelson, Terry Nelson, Pete Petruy, Gary Smith, Ann Smith, Mike Varone, Anita Varone, George Wallace and Penny Wallace. (25 total)

■ Holland Club Member

■ Associate Member

■ Guest

The COB, Chuck Martin, led all hands in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chaplain, Steve Jaeger, delivered the Invocation.

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

USS Barbel (SS-316)	Feb 4, 1945
USS Shark (SS-174)	Feb 11, 1942
USS Amberjack (SS-219)	Feb 16, 1943
USS Grayback (SS-208)	Feb 27, 1944
USS Trout (SS-202)	Feb 29, 1944

The Base Historian, Richard Lowry, read a passage on **Submarine History**: The defense of the Philippine Islands by the USS Shark (SS-174). This reading included her last patrol and probable cause of her demise during enemy action. Launched in 1935, the Shark was moored in Manila Bay, Philippines when the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor on December 7th. She then evacuated senior military officials to safer islands, and subsequently defended the Philippine Islands from Japanese attacks from the sea for months. However, she was sunk by enemy surface craft, most probably by depth charges, and was the first US sub lost to enemy surface craft in the Pacific.

The Base CDR asked that our **Legion Post 162** liaison, First Vice Commander Sam Ramseur, come forward for a presentation. The Base then donated two checks: one for \$100 to the Post to recognize their support of our Base; the second for \$50 to the Carville Star, a non-profit organization in Louisiana, which assists those afflicted with Hanson's Disease (formerly called Leprosy) in the Philippines. Accepting the Carville Star check was Post 162's Alan Amos, who is the National Director of the "40 Men and 8 Horses" Carville Star program for the American Legion. Sam remarked that he was very glad that the relationship between the Post and the NOVA Base has matured and grown significantly from several years ago when three submariners walked in and asked to use/rent the facility, to now where we all talk, drink, and eat together, march together in parades, and support each other's causes. Sam and Alan both thanked us for the two contributions.

MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the January 2014 meeting were e-mailed to the membership. A motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the minutes as distributed.

TREASURER'S REPORT

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

Starting balance: \$ 5,750.50

Ending balance: \$ 5,680.74

Two boats (USS Alexandria (SSN 757) and PCU John Warner (SSN 785)) have been sponsored by the Base and will receive several copies of each edition of the American Submariner.

The annual financial report for 2013 has been sent to USSVI National, and received by, the USSVI National Treasurer. Copies of the report were also forwarded to the Regional Director and District Commander.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the Treasurer's report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Base Commander presented a summary of the most recent **Executive Board Meeting**, which included: discussion of dues dinks and membership status; plans for this year's Sweethearts luncheon and the Holland Club initiation; Year End Financial Report to USSVI National, Base challenge coins, USSVI anniversary patch and coin sales and activities during Memorial Day weekend this year; donations to Legion Post 162; boat sponsorships; Eagle Scout program; and the USS Clamagore's dire maintenance situation in Charleston, SC.

The **Vice Commander**, George Wallace, spoke of the Holland Club arrangements for June 14th at PJ Skidoos restaurant in Fairfax, VA. He has contacted the nine inductees for this year, and he is waiting to receive their biographical information from them so he can have the presentation materials printed.

The **COB** reported that the next Eagle Scout Court of Honor for Boy Scout Troop 869 will be conducted at Immanuel Presbyterian Church in McLean, Virginia on Saturday February 22, 2014 at 1330 where we will present a certificate and USSVI patch to four new Eagle Scouts. This is part of a National USSVI program supporting Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Sea Scouts. Last month on January 25, the CDR and VCDR represented our base and attended an Eagle Scout Court of Honor for two brothers also in Boy Scout Troop 869.

There will be two new books coming out soon on submarines: the first is Silent Strength about the Thresher (SSN 593) crew which is due to be released in April 2014; the second is Trident Deception, a thriller by Rick Campbell which is due to be released in March 2014.

Membership Report by Steve Jaeger: 84 members, including 1 new associate member, Vickye Lowry, who signed up today; and 1 new member, Tom Eldridge, qual boat USS Norfolk (SSN 714) in 1990. Two members (Curt Haggard and Wayne Baldwin) have requested that their names be dropped from the NOVA Base roster, however they will continue their national membership.

The **PAO**, Mike Varone, reported that the **USS Clamagore** in Charleston, SC is in dire need of financial help to conduct repairs to the memorial. Over \$3 million is needed to support the maintenance efforts. USSVI National has sent a letter to the governor of SC asking for her support to prevent the disposal of the submarine (as a fishing reef off the Florida coast). Mike has also sent a letter and the Base CDR will send one on behalf of the Base.

The CDR noted that the NOVA Base **COB, Chaplain, PAO, and Storekeeper (SK)** positions are appointed and need confirmation of the Membership to act as appointed. The COB, Chuck Martin; the Chaplain, Steve Jaeger; the PAO, Mike Varone; and the SK, Howard Chatham were all approved by individual voice vote.

The **Storekeeper** reminded us that USSVI 50th Anniversary patches and coins are for sale. A flyer with a picture and costs has been forwarded to All Hands and is also attached to these minutes to make your purchase easy.

Steve Bishop spoke about the NOVA Base **Kap(ss) 4 Kid(ss)** effort. Our next visit to the Fairfax Hospital pediatric oncology ward is on hold due to the hospital's policy of not allowing any non-family visitors into any patients' rooms during the flu season. When the flu season abates and our hospital staff POC contacts Cathy Chatham, we will notify the Kap(ss) 4 Kid(ss) team by e-mail of the date and time for our next visit. Steve and Cathy Chatham presented Mike Naughton his K4K Team patch for his submarine vest. Mike Naughton and Mike Varone have made each and every visit since we started this K4K adventure. Thanks, shipmates!!

The **Naval Submarine League** representative was not in attendance, so the Base CDR announced that the next NSL monthly luncheon would be held on Wednesday, March 26th. The Historical Seminar will be held on April 3rd, and the Submarine Ball will be held on April 11th. (Don't stay out too late after the Ball, as our Tolling of the Boats ceremony is the next morning on April 12th.)

Regional Director Mike Naughton reported that:

1. The Combined Capitol and NOVA Bases' Tolling of the Boats ceremony will be held on May 24th at the Navy Memorial as part of the USSVI 50th anniversary celebration in Washington, D.C. USSVI National is asking for 8 speakers from our two bases to read the script, as well as more members to act as ushers for the ceremony in the indoor amphitheater, which has rather steep aisles.
2. The Memorial Day Parade will be held on May 26th and our base leadership needs to know how many of our members intend to march that day. The parade route is about two miles long. If you plan to march with us, please contact the Base Commander at: hmc64@verizon.net sometime before our March 8th meeting.
3. The URL to reach the USSVI Executive Board Election Candidates Forum is: <http://bod.subvets.net/ussvi-bod/forums/forum-view.asp?fid=57>. This page will provide you with links to what the requirements are for the various offices, postings from the candidates and questions to the candidates submitted by members of the organization and the candidate's responses.
4. Mike is running for the Eastern Region North Regional Director again. Feel free to use the aforementioned link to ask him any questions or you can reach him directly at submavrick@verizon.net.

OLD BUSINESS

The Base CDR spoke about of the **Wreaths Across America** project at Arlington National Cemetery, where he and thousands of other volunteers braved the cold, snowy slopes two weekends ago to collect the wreaths that were displayed on many of the grave markers. Lesson learned this year: go early to avoid the huge crowds entering the gates by car or go late and help load the dumpsters with all the wreaths that are collected by the early participants.

NEW BUSINESS

- The Sea Poacher base in FL is starting a memorial for lost boats. A \$65 donation is needed to sponsor one of the ship's memorials. The Base CDR will be providing details.
- The SSN-21's COB was recently relieved for cause due to unsatisfactory performance.
- There has been a reported cheating scandal among the staff instructors at NPTU Charleston.
- Three Supply Corps admirals have been called to task for an alleged "boondoggle" with their wives to the UK.
- Four think tanks say the Navy can cut the number of carriers to save subs and cyber warfare efforts from budget reductions - stay tuned.
- Tight budgets may cause the Navy to reduce the VA class build rate to pay for the OH replacement program. However, both programs are synergistic and slowing one program hurts both and will probably drive both program costs higher.
- There was a successful test of 8-hour watches conducted by the USS Scranton (SSN 756) during a 7-month deployment. Several other boats now want to try the new watch rotation plan.
- SSP is in charge of a new trade study to investigate sub-launched hyper-sonic weapons.
- USN and EB are beginning to test a new UUV launch system for SSGNs.
- British shipyard workers are now on strike at the nuclear submarine base in Faslane
- Canada's submarine force took another hit with now only one sub operating on each coast. The sub HMCS Windsor is now OOC with a broken generator. Nevertheless the Canadians intend to celebrate their submarine centennial August 5th - 8th, 2014 in Esquimalt, Canada (near Vancouver, BC).

The PAO reported he has an exciting video of the HMS Ambush. She is an Astute class UK submarine with automatic watertight doors, beer kegs, and other strange things we are not used to seeing on American subs.

The Binnacle List currently includes: Dex Armstrong, Joe Phoenix, and the families of CAPTs David Shaughnessy and Alan Cabot.

For the Good of the Order, the CDR read the list of birthdays for February: Doc Compton and both of his daughters, Don Hall, Charlie Mills, Stephania Nielson, Ross Sargent, and Gary Smith.

The 50/50 raffle was won by George Wallace.

Terry Nelson addressed the final details for the **Sweethearts luncheon** after the meeting, reminding ALCON to pay the Treasurer before leaving for the restaurant.

The speaker at next month's NOVA Base meeting will be Mr. Clyde Smith, Special Projects Director for National Underwater and Marine Agency (NUMA). This is the NUMA of Clive Cussler and Dirk Pitt fame. Searching for, finding, and recovering sunken and lost ships from the bottom of the earth's bodies of water is what the real NUMA does. **THIS SHOULD BE VERY EXCITING!!!**

The Benediction was delivered by the Chaplain.

The CDR requested a motion to adjourn. It was so moved and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 1150.

20 of the members and guests attended the annual Sweethearts luncheon at the Fireside Grill in downtown Lorton. The Base provided each lady with a red rose.

Meeting Minutes Respectfully Submitted by
Stephen C Bishop
Secretary, USSVI Northern Virginia Base