

**MINUTES OF THE USSVI NORTHERN VIRGINIA BASE
MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY, February 10, 2024**

The Base CDR, Brian Haller, called the meeting to order at 1035 on February 10, 2024, at American Legion Post 364 in Woodbridge, VA, and welcomed all members and guests. The Base officer introduced themselves and guest Erlinda Byrd was introduced by her husband, Bruce.

MEMBERS AND GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE: Steve Bishop, Bruce Byrd, Erlinda Byrd, Cathy Chatham, Howard Chatham, Ron Grabowski, Brian Haller, Pat Haller, Jim Kraut, Chuck Martin, Randy Tran, Tiffany, Gemma, and Landon Tran, Mike Varone, Penny Wallace, George Wallace, Woody Woodworth; and, via Zoom, Joe Castell, Bruce Miller, Mike Niblack, and Paul Nelson. (22 total)

■ Holland Club Member

■ Associate Member

■ Guest

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

For the Chaplain, the COB delivered the Invocation.

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

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| USS SHARK I (SS-174) | February 11, 1942 |
| USS AMBERJACK (SS-219) | February 16, 1943 |
| USS GRAYBACK (SS-208) | February 26, 1944 |
| USS TROUT (SS-202) | February 29, 1944 |
| USS BARBEL (SS-316) | February 04, 1945 |

The following Northern Virginia Base member departed on Eternal Patrol in the month of February: Norman Earl Griggs, Holland Club and USSVI Life Member. Qualified on USS Tiru (SS416) in 1957, and departed on Eternal Patrol 26 February 2023; 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, and departed on Eternal Patrol on 12 February 2020.

The COB then tolled the bell twice in remembrance of the 42 USSVI NOVA Base members on Eternal Patrol.

IN MEMORIAM: CAPT Donald E. Watkins, USN (Ret) – 23 September 2023, CDR Larry D. Nace, USN (Ret) – 21 December 2023, Jane Ann Ryan (Widow of RADM Tom Ryan, USN (Ret.)) – 7 January 2024, CAPT William A. Wood, USN (Ret) – 15 January 2024, CAPT Myron “Mike” Gray, USN (Ret) – 17 January 2024, CAPT James P. Ransom, USN (Ret) – 19 January 2024.

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

The **HISTORIAN**, Woody Woodworth, read an article based on the first patrol report of USS Shark (SS-174). The article is included at the end of these minutes.

MEETING MINUTES:

The minutes from the January 2024 meeting 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 10, 2024

| | | |
|---|---|-------------------|
| ● | Beginning Cash on Hand: | \$12,939.33 |
| ● | Plus Receipts: | |
| | •NFCU Checking Account Dividends (January) | \$0.07 |
| | •NFCU CD Dividends (January) | \$20.46 |
| | •Donation to Base from January 50/50 Raffle | \$40.00 |
| | •Donations to Base from J. Beavers and H. Chatham | \$75.00 |
| | •National Dues – N. O’Brien and N. Smith | \$60.00 |
| | •Base Dues – N. O’Brien, N. Smith, S. Treece, G. Billy, M. Tucci, J. Leonard, and M. Kenny | \$105.00 |
| | •SK sales | \$30.00 |
| | •Donation to USSVCF Scholarship Fund – C. Martin | \$20.00 |
| ● | Minus Expenditures: | |
| | •Dues to National – N. O’Brien and N. Smith | \$60.00 |
| | •Payment to National for USSVCF Scholarship Fund | \$40.00 |
| | •Payment to J. Dugan for Holland Club caps | \$180.00 |
| ● | Ending Cash on Hand: | \$13,009.86 |
| | Minus Local K4K Restricted Use Funds | \$1,379.40 |
| | Minus NFCU 12-month Share Certificate | \$5,000.00 |
| ● | Total Local Discretionary Funds | \$6,630.46 |
| ● | USSVCF NOVA Base K4K Balance | \$1,895.00 |
| ● | Total K4K Funds (Local + USSVCF) | \$3,274.40 |

The Treasurer’s Report was accepted as presented.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

The **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** met via Zoom on February 1, 2023. The meeting agenda included committee reports, meeting-related items, old business, new business, and meeting/ event planning.

VICE CDR: George Wallace noted that we are looking for recommendations for a speaker at the upcoming Holland Club induction/luncheon.

COB: Nothing to report.

PAO: Mike Varone announced that our Sweetheart luncheon will be held after the meeting and got a show of hands of those planning on attending.

SECRETARY/TREASURER: Howard Chatham reported that the end of the Year financial report has been submitted and received by National, dues collection was complete with one previous member being transferred, at his request, to Member-At-Large (MAL) status and

another was dropped due to failure to pay dues (and as he was a Life member of USSVI he was also transferred to MAL status). As Secretary, Howard announced that he had started digitizing all the Base Secretary records (six file boxes weighing in at almost 90 pounds of paper). Jim Kraut asked what had happened to the proposal to get a Virginia license plate memorializing the Submarine Service and was informed that a plan to do that was initiated several times but never had sufficient backing by Submarine Force personnel in the state. He also asked when the Submarine Veterans of WWII became USSVI members. The District CDR, Chuck Martin, gave a brief history of the relationship between the two organizations and noted that members of the former were invited to join USSVI when the WWII organization disbanded in 2012.

MEMBERSHIP: Howard Chatham reported:

- Membership information
 - 89 Members
 - 49 Holland Club Members
 - 1 WW II Members
 - 31 Regular Members
 - 12 – Life Members
 - 19 – Annual Members
 - 9 Associate Members

Our newest member is Jeff Leonard who joined the Base last month.

CHAPLAIN:

- Unfortunately, the Chaplain, Steve Jaeger, is on the Binnacle List and was unable to attend the meeting.

K4K – Steve Bishop reported that we still don't have permission to visit potential K4K patients in any of the three hospitals we normally visit. He intends to personally go to the National Military Medical Center to determine who is the current POC for K4K visits as the previous Child Life Specialist seems to have retired.

STOREKEEPER: Chuck Martin reported that:

- The Storekeeper has three 2024 USSVI calendars and other submarine related items for sale. He can also order the USSVI 60th Anniversary coins and patches for those that are interested. Submarine Sweetheart T-shirts that were donated to the Base are being made into throw pillows and will be on sale shortly.
- Contact the Base SK, at storekeeper@ussvinova.org, if interested in any items.

WEBMASTER: Howard Chatham reported that:

- Our website is working properly, has been updated to reflect the 2024 Base officers, the January meeting minutes have been posted, and place holders for subsequent meeting minutes and events have been added.

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

- National Officers and Regional Directors election is this year. If you are interested in being a candidate for a position, verify that you meet the eligibility requirements and submit your nomination letter to the Election Master (John Markiewicz at markiewiczjohn4@gmail.com) per the email that was sent out from National.

- Les Altschuler, the current Northeast Regional Director, is not running for reelection.
- Current known Northeast Regional Director candidates are:
 - Jeff Walsh – National Awards Chair, NE1 District CDR, and
 - Chuck Martin – 2023-2024 District CDR of the Year, NE4 District CDR
- 2024 National Convention is being held in Cleveland, OH (Independence, OH) from August 19 – 24, 2024 (<https://subvetconvention.org> or <https://www.facebook.com/codbaseussvi>).
- The hotel is the Embassy Suites by Hilton Cleveland Rockside with a room rate of \$109 per night.
 - Includes free breakfast and a Manager’s Reception (2 complimentary drinks).
- Some great sounding tours are available.
- From Woodbridge it is only 377 miles.
- Chuck encourages all that can to attend the National Convention to see old shipmates and friends and to make new friends.

NAVAL SUBMARINE LEAGUE (NSL): The CDR reported:

- NSL and Related Events
 - NSL Capitol Chapter
 - The next NSL Capitol Chapter Luncheon meeting will be held at 1130 on Friday, 8 March 2024, at the Army-Navy Country Club. CAPT Garrett Burkholder will speak on challenges in Submarine Maintenance and Industrial Base issues.
- The following industry/engagement opportunities are upcoming in the next three months:
 - Submarine Industrial Base Council Supplier Days Conference: 4-6 March 2024
 - NSL Corporate Member Days: 6-7 March 2024
 - 2024 USW Spring Conference: 18-20 March 2024
 - Sea-Air-Space 2024: 8-10 April 2024. NSL is looking for volunteers again to assist at the NSL table at Sea-Air-Space. Morning and afternoon shifts are available. Volunteers should contact Steve Fischer at operations@navalsubleague.org.
 - NSL is planning to have tables at the Submarine Birthday Ball on Saturday, 4 May. Standby for John Newton to put out the call for those who will attend and would like a place at an NSL table.

ISA/USA – For Bud Cunnally, the CDR reported that:

- The 2024 Congress will be May 26-30, 2024, in Ireland hosted by the US, followed by the UK hosting the event in Northern Ireland May 30-31, 2024.
 - 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 <http://www.isausa.org/> for an application. Lifetime Membership is \$50.00.

UPCOMING SUBMARINE REUNIONS – the VCDR reported the following:

- 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
- USS Louisville (SSN 724) July 24-27, 2024, Louisville, KY
- USS Nathan Hale (SSBN 623) Aug 23-27, 2024, Cleveland, OH

Call or email the POC listed in the American Submariner to determine the status of the reunion.

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>.

NEW BUSINESS

- Groton Base is celebrating their 60th anniversary 29 May through 2 June. Could be a good time to meet up with old shipmates and tour the Submarine Force Museum and National Clubhouse.
- 124th Submarine Birthday Ball hosted by DC Submarine Association will be on Saturday, 4 May 2024 from 1730-2300 at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City. Submission of your RSVP, registration, and ticket purchase can be done via the registration page, <https://2024dcsubmarinebirthday.rsvpify.com>. Ticket sales end on 12 April 2024.
- Other Upcoming USSVI and Submarine Related Events
 - April 11-13, 2024 - 2024 Western Region Roundup - Hosted by USSVI Bremerton Base in Silverdale, Washington. For more information visit their website at <https://wrroundup.com/>.
 - May 16-19, 2024 – 2024 Lone Star Roundup - Hosted by USSVI Central Texas Base in Fredericksburg, Texas. For more information visit either their website at <https://lsru.org/> or on Facebook at Lonestar Subvet Round up (<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61555191504696>).
 - July 4-7, 2024 – 2024 Subfest - Hosted by Wisconsin Maritime Museum in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. For more information visit their website at <https://www.wisconsinmaritime.org/programs-and-events/subfest/>.
- Bruce Byrd mentioned a news article about an SSN being serviced at the drydock at TRIREFFAC Kings Bay. See the story at this link: [USS South Dakota \(SSN-790\) became first Virginia-class fast-attack submarine to enter Trident Refit Facility, Kings Bay Dry Dock primarily built for and used by Ohio-class ballistic missile & guided missile submarines.](#)

The CDR read the **BINNACLE LIST**: Steve Jaeger, Francis “Terry” McNamara, and Tom Perrault and requested that ALCON them and their families and friends in your prayers.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER: the COB read the list of **February birthdays**: Ron Grabowski, Donald Hall, Bill Lawton, Ross Sargent, and Gary Smith.

BASE ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Our next meeting will be on March 9th at American Legion Post 364. Our guest speaker will be CAPT Ben Shupp, the senior submariner on the Naval Academy staff.

BENEDICTION:

The COB delivered the Benediction.

The meeting was adjourned at 1121.

50/50 RAFFLE:

The 50/50 raffle was won by a very elated Gemma Tran.

A wonderful Sweethearts Luncheon at Armetta's was then enjoyed by 19 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

USS Shark (SS-174) First Patrol Report

The presentation today is based upon USS SHARK SS-174 first patrol report that was forwarded to the Commander Submarines, ASIATIC FLEET on 23 December 1941.

SHARK got underway from Manila and as described in the report:

“Area – Enroute to Santa Cruz Harbor, Marinduque, P.I. and return.”

“A. On 9 December 1941 proceeded to Mariveles Harbor and anchored between the mine fields, outside the submarine net, one-half hour after sunset. At 1900 a large Army searchlight was observed to be sending plain language signals to a DD patrol off Corregidor telling her the names and times of departure of submarines leaving Manila Bay the night of 9 December.”

“At 2030 got underway and stood out of the minefield channel. The buoys were illuminated by Army searchlight. Upon clearing minefield channel proceeded directly to the VERDE ISLAND PASSAGE at 12.5 knots on 2 main engines, passing two miles inside of FORTUNE ISLAND and two miles outside of CAPE SANTIAGO.”

SHARK arrived at Santa Cruz harbor at dusk on 10 December and anchored 800 yards from SANTA CRUZ LIGHT bearing 290° T.

On 11 December, at 0354 SHARK received a message indicating that sixteen enemy transports were in TABAYAS BAY and ordered attack. Radio had difficulty in receiving this message and could not decipher address, but assumed it was intended for SHARK. So at 0420 SHARK got underway. SHARK conducted a sweep of the area with no results so returned to the SANTA CRUZ LIGHT area and anchored sometime on 12 December.

“At 1245, 13 December, a small steamer flying Philippine flag stood in to harbor. Replied to hail that it was from BATANGAS, “coming home”. “At 1400 hailed a native fisherman in a fishing banca “(outrigger) “and using the steward as an interpreter informed him of the war. In answer to questions the fisherman stated that there were no white people on Marinduque. Sent fisherman into the town to send out the Mayor. At 1630 a dilapidated outboard motor boat stood out from the town bring the mayor and a retinue of fifteen. Several spoke excellent English. Obtained the following information from this group: (1) There are two or three Japs in Marinduque, all are now in the BOAC jail. One, the owner of the gold (iron) mine, had a short wave transmitter in his house as well as numerous maps. The informants were vague about the nature of the maps. (2) There is no diesel fuel on the island and very little gasoline. SHARK gave the natives all the gasoline remaining on board, about 110 gallons. (3) The only flat surfaces suitable for landing fields are at present rice paddies. (This from the Mayor). (4) Some fruit (bananas, limes, papayas), and some chickens, eggs and pigs can be bought. (5) The only arms on the island are a few .32 pistols in the possession of the police and a very few rounds of ammunition. (6) The police force is estimated at 10 to 20 men. (7) There is a cable to LUCENA and a radio transmitter on the island. Location not learned, but believed to be BOAC. (8) A blackout is maintained, except for occasional open fires in the hills. (9) There are a number of sailing boats and one or two motor boats at SANTA CRUZ.

At 1700 sent a man in Mayor’s boat to turn off SANTA CRUZ LIGHT. This is an acetylene light and natives were instructed as to manner of relighting it.”

On 17 December SHARK purchased eggs, chickens, fruit and dressed pigs from natives. SHARK also sent laundry ashore. On 19 December SHARK received orders to return to MANILA.

Wonder if they got their laundry back.