

**MINUTES OF THE USSVI NORTHERN VIRGINIA BASE  
MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 2014**

The Base CDR, Howard Chatham, called the meeting to order at 1105 on 11 January, 2014 at American Legion Post 162, Lorton, VA and welcomed all members and guests.

**MEMBERS AND GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE**

Steve Bishop, **Cathy Chatham**, Howard Chatham, **Al Gagliardi**, Mickey Garverick, Robert Glover, **CDR(sel) Weston Gray (guest speaker)**, Brian Haller, Steve Jaeger, Chuck Martin, Bruce Miller, **Paul Nelson**, **Terry Nelson**, Tim Oliver, Gary Smith, Mike Varone, George Wallace and **Penny Wallace**. (18 attendees)

 **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 January. These were:

USS Scorpion (SS-278)	Jan 5, 1944
USS Argonaut (SS-166)	Jan 10, 1943
USS Swordfish (SS-193)	Jan 12, 1945
USS S-36 (SS-141)	Jan 20, 1942
USS S-26 (SS-131)	Jan 24, 1942

The out-going Vice Commander, Paul Nelson, swore in the newly elected NOVA Base Commander, Howard Chatham.

Howard Chatham then swore in the other newly elected NOVA Base officers:

Vice Commander	George Wallace
Treasurer	Steve Jaeger
Secretary	Steve Bishop

The Base Commander called the outgoing Base Vice Commander to the front and presented him with a certificate signed by all four current officers commending Paul Nelson for his years of dedicated service to the NOVA Base, and for his excellent "absquatulation" skills. "Absquatulation" signifies the ability to move off hastily to avoid prosecution.

The Base Historian, Richard Lowry, was AWOL in Florida. The Base CDR read a short historical vignette prepared by Richard on the demise of the USS Argonaut (SS-166). The USS Argonaut was the largest non-nuclear submarine ever built by the US Navy and she was under-powered as well as slow to dive and turn. After her first war patrol, she was converted to an underwater troop transport submarine. Among her missions, she would deliver up to 120 Marines to the Gilbert Islands and Macon Island. She was lost on her third war patrol near Rabaul. While attacking a convoy, she was depth charged by two other destroyers, and as she tried to surface was destroyed by the destroyers' gun fire.

A round of introductions was held to summarize all attendees' military service and current

activities. This gave our guest speaker a better sense of his audience's experience.

## MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of the December 2013 meeting had been distributed by e-mail to the membership. One change to the minutes was made to indicate the substitution of the word "wave" for "waive" regarding the Kap(ss) 4 Kid(ss) visit wave off. A motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the minutes as distributed and amended.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

Starting balance: \$ 5,578.26

Ending balance: \$ 5,750.50

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

The Base Commander presented a summary of the most recent Executive Board Meeting. Major items included: potential new members, planning for this year's Holland Club (and he asked for any recommendations for an appropriate guest speaker), membership renewal, the next K4K visit, upcoming Eagle Scout ceremonies, Wreaths Across America cleanup, next month's Sweetheart Luncheon, and the Veteran's ID card information sent out this week.

The COB reported that the next Eagle Scout Courts of Honor would be held on January 25th and February 22nd for six scouts. This will bring the total number of Eagle Scouts feted by the NOVA base, as part of the national USSVI Eagle Scout recognition program, to 12 scouts in the last year. The COB also reports that the SkillSource Group offers Northern Virginia veterans individualized career counseling, including training, job search assistance, and small business development services. Information on this will be sent out with these minutes to the membership. The Fairfax County POC is Ms. Laura Bowles at [laura.bowles@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:laura.bowles@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Membership Report by Steve Jaeger: 83 members. This total includes 25 Holland Club members, 48 regular members, and 10 associate members.

Public Affairs Officer Mike Varone reported that the article on the Tolling of the Boats at the F-4 Memorial was included in the latest edition of the *American Submariner(AS)*. The outgoing AS editor re-arranged some of our submitted words and included a typo. The Base CDR identified that our NOVA Base submission was indeed correct. Dex Armstrong also had his full page article published in AS about being a member of the torpedo gang.

The next Kap(ss) 4 Kid(ss) visit will be held Wednesday, January 15th at 2:30 at Fairfax Inova Hospital. (Post meeting update: We had to cancel this, our tenth visit, at the last moment because of multiple health-related issues by our core team of K4K volunteers. We will re-schedule soon.)

Tim Oliver, the NSL Executive Director, reported that their next Capitol Chapter luncheon will be held on January 24<sup>th</sup> and the speaker will be RADM James G. Foggo, III, the Assistant Deputy CNO for Operations, Plans and Strategy (N3/N5). Tim also noted that he has NSL patches for sale.

In the absence of the Regional Director, the Base CDR reported that USSVI has been approved to march in the D.C. Memorial Day parade this year. NOVA base will be participating in the parade and co-sponsoring with the Capital Base, the Tolling of the Boats Ceremony at the Navy Memorial on May 24<sup>th</sup>. All this is to celebrate the 50th birthday of USSVI.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

USSVI national has created, and is offering for sale, a commemorative patch and challenge coin in celebration of their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Details in an e-mail to follow.

The Wreaths Across America cleanup at Arlington National Cemetery will be held on January 25<sup>th</sup> and commence with a briefing at the Memorial Amphitheater at 0845. Anyone who wishes to assist in this effort is welcome.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

The Base CDR reported:

- If you have a Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans ID cards many hand held scanners and phones can read your social security number from the barcode information on these cards - BE CAREFUL!!
- The USSVI SubVet Scholarship Program is now accepting applications.
- INNOVATIVE WAY TO DONATE TO USSVI: If you ever buy anything on Amazon, you can do it and give 1/2 of 1% of your purchase price to the USSVI Charitable Foundation. All you have to do is to log on and make your purchase at: [www.SMILE.AMAZON.COM](http://www.SMILE.AMAZON.COM) and then select "USSVI Charitable Foundation" as your selected charity. You can't take the tax break for this donation, but USSVI gets the money.
- NEWS FROM THE FLEET:
  - Judge dismisses lawsuit opposing second Bangor Base Explosives Handling Wharf
  - Navy to begin inactivating 4 launch tubes on each SSBN to comply with START
  - 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CSS Hunley sinking the Housatonic is next month with ceremonies in Charleston SC
  - Due to lack of funds, the Newport News Mariner's Museum to shut down lab with USS Monitor turret
  - Canada's HMCS Chicoutimi, after 10 years, is set to return to the fleet

### **The Binnacle List**

Joe Phoenix, Ray Coe, and the family of ADM Kinnard McKee.

**For the Good of the Order**, the CDR read the list of birthdays for January: Dan Arquette, George Billy, Hank Chiles, Dr. Sam Dunlap, Nader Elquindi, Bob and Susan Glover, Roger Hall, Bruce Miller, Mike Murphy, Einer Nielson, and Judy Perrault .

The 50/50 raffle was won by Steve Jaeger.

The Benediction was delivered by the Chaplain.

Terry and Paul Nelson are once again coordinating the Sweetheart Luncheon event for us in

downtown Lorton, VA. Terry reported that it will be held after our February 8th meeting at 12:30 PM at the Fireside Grill restaurant. Please pay the Base Treasurer, Steve Jaeger, before you leave the American Legion facility. A flyer will be created and distributed.

The CDR requested a motion to adjourn. It was so moved and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 1147.

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After a short break, the Base CDR introduced CDR Weston Gray, Project Officer for the Next Generation Submarine Electronic Warfare Program in PMS435. (Base member George Wallace is PMS435 Chief of Staff.) The CDR spoke to his colorful slides to show us how the control room, electronic warfare systems, and periscope depth operations are changing on our modern submarines. The present day Electronic Warfare suites on our SSGNs and SSNs are a conglomeration of past standalone systems that are being cost-effectively modernized and integrated to meet the evolving threats across multiple slices of electromagnetic spectrum. An additional fleet challenge is maintaining trained ships company to properly operate these installed ESM systems. Once an ET "newbie" is trained and proficient on EW, he pursues further qualifications and moves on to operate and maintain the Exterior Communications Systems. Thus what little expertise was had on EW is lost. Modernizing the EW systems is also intended to make proficiency on the system easier to attain.

The Base CDR thanked CDR Gray and presented him with a USSVI Challenge coin. Thank you!!!

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