



USSVI THRESHER BASE Regular Base Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2024

- I. CALL TO ORDER** at 1204
- II. OPENING PRAYER** – provided by Interim Chaplain Roger Retzke
- III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – was lead by Base Commander Suitter
- IV. TOLLING OF THE BELL:**

The tolling of the ship's bell reminds us of the reverence and gratitude we owe to our departed shipmates and to those who are currently on active duty serving aboard our nation's submarines who guard and honor our country.

Boats lost in the months of January and February

USS Scorpion SS-278 lost on January 5 1944 with the loss of 77 officers and men;

USS Argonaut SS-166 lost on Jan 10, 1943 with the loss of 102 officers and men;

USS Swordfish SS-193 lost on January 12, 1945 with the loss of 89 officers and men;

USS S-36 SS-141 lost on January 20, 1942 with No loss of life;

USS S-26 SS-131 lost on January 24, 1942 with the loss of 46 officers and men;

USS Barbel SS-316 lost on February 4, 1945 with the loss of 81 officers and men;

USS Shark I SS-174 lost on February 16, 1942 with the loss of 59 officers and men;

USS Amberjack SS-219 lost on February 16, 1943 with the loss of 72 officers and men;

USS Grayback SS-208 lost on February 27, 1944 with the loss of 80 officers and men;

USS Trout SS-202 lost on February 29, 1944 with the loss of 81 officers and men.

Remembering MM2 (SS) Joseph Ashley who died on January 8, 2005 on board USS San Francisco (SSN 711) as a result of injuries sustained on board when San Francisco hit underwater sea mountain.

With a moment of silent prayer, let us remember all of our departed shipmates who are now serving on the staff of the Supreme Commander. They made the supreme sacrifice

so that we may gather here in peace. Let us not forget our obligation to our absent shipmates.

V. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND NEW MEMBERS

- a. National Officers – None present
- b. Regional Officers – None present
- c. Guests – CDR Randal Leslie and his wife Carey – USS Idaho (SSN-799)
- d. New Members – Joe Afienko (Albacore Park)

VI. SOUND OFF:

- A. All members present shall introduce themselves (and guest if appropriate) and indicate the year and boat of qualification. Members and guests are listed in Attachment A.

Point of Order – Guest Speaker, Commander Randall Leslie, USS Idaho SSN-799 gave a presentation on his current command (USS Idaho) under construction in Groton by EB. He discussed the construction process, basic capabilities of the class and compared some of the similarities and differences between the Virginia, Los Angeles, Seawolf and Columbia classes. As part of his discussion, he took a number of questions from the members and remained for a brief lunch and additional discussion with the members.

VII. SECRETARY’S REPORT AND READING OF THE MINUTES:

Secretary – Reconciled snail mail list requesting update. Sent letters to those without email with a survey to update telephone and email (if available). There are currently 7 members who do not have email. Included a SASE to secretary to respond. Received 3 responses to date (one with \$100 donation). Currently 4 members do not have an email address.

Minutes were distributed electronically on November 30, 2023.

Motion to accept: Jerry Schock

Second: Charlie Manes

Motion Passed by voice vote

VIII. TREASURER’S REPORT: Treasurer Dave Webster (Full details are in Attachment B)

Operating Fund :

Memorial Fund:

Starting Balance	\$ 10,063.38
Deposits	\$ 1,907.98
Payments	\$ 2,860.19
Ending Balance	\$ 9,111.17

Starting Balance	\$ 27,895.22
Deposits	\$ 4.66
Payments	\$ 0.00
Ending Balance	\$ 27,899.88

Motion to accept: Tom Young

Second: Roger Retzke

Motion Passed by voice vote

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- A. **CHAPLAINS’S REPORT:** Ed Storer not doing well, please sign card. During sound off, Herm Stolzenburg provided an update on Ed's condition and mentioned his daughter felt that cards from the members could lift his spirits. Secretary McArdle will send the appropriate address out to the group after the meeting.

- B. HOLLAND CLUB REPORT: (Excused)
- C. RECRUITER'S REPORT: (position is open)
- D. EAGLE SCOUT COORDINATOR'S REPORT: Jerry Schock – 3 Eagle Courts of honor were recognized and attended by Thresher Base since the last meeting. Since then there are 5 new Courts of Honor being planned and the Base will be represented at each. 4 have been delivered and 1 will be delivered this coming week.
- E. STOREKEEPER'S REPORT: (Excused) – Nothing to report
- F. WEBMASTER'S REPORT: Kevin Galeaz (report was given by BC Suitter)
Photos from the October meeting have been uploaded to our Flickr website. Kevin is currently selecting from and editing 500 photos Steve sent me for the November meeting. This will be completed and uploaded to our Flickr site prior to the next meeting.

A report regarding the seriousness of the lack of meeting this years Armed Services recruiting goals has been placed on our Facebook page. Kevin plans to combine the strengths and assistance from all three organizations he supports to realize an increase in Sea Services recruiting locally: USSVI Thresher Base, Naval Submarine League and NH Council Navy League. If any TB member would like to be a Veteran mentor of these young men and women., please let Kevin know.

Next tasks:

1. Edit and upload the photos Steve Cook took at the Wreaths Across America ceremony.
2. Build a new web page that has the photos and bios for the current officers and trustees.

- G. COB's REPORT: Kevin Galeaz - Three cards to members are requested.
 1. Chuck Andrews for his marriage March 2023.
 2. Elmer Flanagan for his recent heart attack.
 3. Richard Hillman for loss of his wife (November).

Card was requested to be circulated at the meeting Ed Storer.

- H. USS THRESHER Annual Memorial Service Committee - 61st Memorial Kevin Galeaz
Event date: Saturday, April 13, 2024
Event location: Robert W. Traip Academy, Kittery, ME
Anticipated turnout: 300 - 350 (based on previous non-5 year anniversary services)
Family speaker: (tentative pending on their agreeing): Tom & Mark Guerette, sons of Paul Alfred Guerette, PNS Marine Engineering Technician
Navy speaker (TBD, I will be reaching out to Gary Hildreth shortly)
Insurance (USSVI Rider) Kevin informed Secretary McArdle he has the forms and will submit as he did in previous years.
Sea Cadets participation. (Kevin will reach out in his role as NH Council NLUS President as we sponsor them.)
Wreath layer (TBD, Kevin will look who is next in line to ask to ensure each family has the opportunity).

Invitations will be sent out electronically this year to save printing & mailing costs as we have done so in past non-five year anniversary memorial services.

Assistance will be needed for setting up the auditorium and the foyer on Friday, April 12th. Members will be provided details on timing for Friday and Saturday set up needs.

As in past years, we will rent the live stream box and associated laptop.

The live broadcast reaches many USS Thresher Family/Former Crew who are unable to travel due to cost or illness. Based on dropped and significantly noisy audio at the last two past memorial services, I recommend we consider the purchase or the renting of a center floor stereo microphone mounted on a tripod, along with the purchase or the renting of a video camera. We used a high end center floor stereo microphone for the 55th and it worked superbly.

The rental option may be the best as we can obtain the latest equipment and associated cables without tying us to a purchase. Additionally, renting will ensure the microphone will work with the camera, and the live stream box/laptop.

It will require two operators, one for the video camera and a second for the live stream laptop. Hank Bautzmann volunteered to assist with this activity. If we rent all equipment from Rule Camera, Kevin **will ask both operators to attend** the equipment walkthrough when we pick up the equipment on the morning of Thursday, April 11th. We will need a volunteer to run the video camera and see if Herm Bautzmann would operate the PC. Kevin will reach out to Rule Camera to obtain a quote for rental of all necessary equipment that will allow us to operate standalone.

Rich Suitter volunteered to be bell ringer, Jerry Schock agreed to read names (health concerns to be taken into consideration).

Steve Reichle offered to print name tags and assist at registration.

Roses/Flowers pick up - Dick Wood volunteered to do as he did last year.

Jill Schock offered to interface with the Traip for refreshments. She would like to know the name of the contact person and any specifics on type of items to be provided for guests.

As a point of information, similar to the 50th, memorial, the 60th was not covered by Seacoast Online (or WMUR for the 60th), even though both NH Senators spoke at both events. Rich Suitter has volunteered to handle putting together press release prior to the event.

It was suggested that a meeting be held in February to check status and verify all items/functions needed are assigned and understood.

- I. **FUND RAISING COMMITTEE REPORT:** BC Suitter gave an overview of the meeting held after the November meeting (notes are attached as Attachment C). One item that was presented was increasing Base Dues to \$20/year.

IX. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Dues – We have a number of members outstanding in their base dues. We have some that appear to be in arrears anywhere from a year to several years. If you are unsure of your dues status, please see the Treasurer. After today's meeting, we will review the list of outstanding dues and email the member requesting they pay ASAP. At some point, we may be releasing unpaid members to be members at large. The USSVI organization prefers its members to be part of a local base, but it is unfair to those who support our activities with their dues.

Motion was made by Tom Young and seconded by Steve Walsh. Motion passed by voice vote. This increase will be implemented for 2025 dues.

X. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Secretary requesting permission to pre-buy roll of 100 US "Forever" stamps prior to price increase next week. Motion was made by Roger Retzke for Secretary to purchase a roll of 100 stamps and Treasurer to do same prior to price increase later in January. Motion was seconded by Steve Walsh and passed by voice vote.
- B. Steve Lacey motioned for the base to pay for lunch for guest speaker and his wife, second by Steve Walsh – motion passed by voice vote
- C. Any other business before the body: (None brought up)

XI. FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER:

- a. Presentation of Appreciation Plaque was made to Jerry Schock for his ongoing activities as Eagle Program Coordinator.
- b. The Portsmouth Elks will be holding their Lobster and Meat Raffle to benefit Thresher Base on February 25. This will be open to members of Thresher Base (as guests). Steve Walsh provided information on specifics of the event (time is from 2-4, enter through main members door under the mounted elk head) Steve will have members available to sign non-members in. Location is 500 Jones Ave – Portsmouth.
- c. Thresher Base member Ken Cowan has a side business related to submarine specific metal dolphin plaques for SubVets. He will be attending and providing a couple examples during the March meeting. The item can be seen on Ken's facebook page. The info he includes are the individual's years of service, the boats seal, dates in commission etc.
- d. Lost Boats Pergola @ USS Albacore Memorial Garden (Kevin Galeaz)

The design for the lost boats pergola at the entrance to the USS Albacore Memorial Garden is in the design realization phase. Kevin is collaborating with the memorial garden landscape designer and a fine arts metal worker to realize the design concept. We are building a device to bend square stainless steel rods into the shape of waves along the sides to place the boat cutouts, as well as on top run along the length of the pergola to give the viewer a sense that they are underwater as they pass thru it. The bend in the square rods will allow the sun to hit the flat sides of the rods from multiple angles. Kevin will be working with both PNS and EB to obtain reasonably accurate side view cutouts (size scaled) of each of the boats that lost crew members to weld on

the stainless steel rods. The boat profile cutouts will most likely be laser cut from sheets of stainless steel.

e. First NH Council Navy League Meeting in Planning: (Kevin Galeaz)

A virtual meeting featuring Retired ADM James Foggo, Dean, [Center for Maritime Strategy](#) is being planned with a date dependent on his availability. This information will be forwarded to Base Commander Sutter when a date/time has been pinned down. Expect a charge of \$10, \$5 of which will be donated to the Center for Maritime Strategy, and \$5 of which will be used for NH Council charter activities including for our youth programs.

f. March Meeting is scheduled for March 16 at Newicks and will be combined with Maine Base. This is the last meeting prior to the Annual Memorial and final details are expected to be discussed. In addition we are pursuing a presentation by members of the group that have been seeking info from the Navy COI regarding the Thresher. This is pending ability to access a network to accommodate a Zoom meeting. BC Sutter is working on setting up a personal hot spot for this.

g. National elections – reminder that national elections are taking place shortly. Refer to the broadcast email sent out by national for instructions on how and when to vote.

h. DUES – If you aren't sure if you owe, please see Treasurer after the meeting.

XII. 50/50 Raffle was conducted. Total amount collected was \$185, winner was John McArdle and the total collected was donated to the Base General Fund.

XIII. CLOSING PRAYER: Interim Chaplain Roger Retzke

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to Adjourn by: Roger Retzke

Second by: Charlie Manes

Adjourned at 1325

Minutes recorded and respectfully submitted by

John Henry McArdle

Secretary, Thresher Base USSVI

Attachment A
Attendees and Guests

Attachment A					
LastName	FirstName	Guest	Qual Boat	Hull	Year
Afienko	Joseph		Tang	SS563	1980
Aquizap	Bruce F.		Chopper	SS342	1954
Bautzmann	Hermann		Henry Clay	SSBN625	1972
Beattie	David J.		Robert E Lee	SSBN601	1970
Brown	Wayne M.		Andrew Jackson	SSBN619	1975
Clayton	Thomas		Henry L Stimson	SSBN655	1971
Cook	Steven W		Jack	SSN605	1977
Dean	Mark M.		Jack	SSN605	1977
Devoid	Ralph E		Halfbeak	SS352	1955
Gale	John		Pasadena	SSN752	1989
Kearney	Michael		Jack	SSN605	1974
Lacey	Stephen D		George Washington	SSBN598	1968
Lamb	Jeffery		Greenling	SSN614	1981
Lavertu	Robert		Greenfish	SS351	1969
Manes	Charles	Clare	Casimir Pulaski	SSBN633	1976
McArdle	John Henry		Narwhal	SSN671	1978
Mitchell	Thomas		Houston	SSN713	1992
Naleway	Thomas S.		Croaker	SS246	1959
Nicholson	Daniel B.	Carol	Sailfish	SSR572	1957
Page	Alfred		Quillback	SS424	1956
Powell	Thurston		Sea Cat	SS399	1963
Reichle	Stephen	Patti	Sunfish	SSN649	1971
Retzke	Roger F.	Ruth	Casimir Pulaski	SSBN633	1977
Schock	Jerome Jordan	Jill	George Bancroft	SSBN643	1972
Stebbins	Donald E.	Kathy	Sailfish	SSR572	1966
Stolzenburg	Herman H.	(Son)	Conger	SS477	1957
Strawbridge	Carl N.		Von Steuben	SSBN632	1988
Suitter	Richard B		Sam Rayburn	SSBN635	1980
Walsh	Stephen T		Associate		
Way	Robert J		Sea Poacher	SS406	1959
Webster	David		Tinosa	SSN606	1981
Worthen	Charles		Jack	SSN605	1970
Young	Thomas E	Shirley	Wahoo	SS565	1955
Lachaw	Ken		Albacore	SS569	1969
Randall	Leslie	Carrie	Buffalo	SSN715	2006
Nadeau	Bob		HL Stimson	SSBN 655	1973

Attachment B

Thresher Base Treasurer's Report 11/19/2023 – 1/13/2024			
General Operating Fund		USS Thresher Memorial Fund	
Starting Balance	\$10,063.38	Starting Balance	\$27,895.22
Deposits		Deposits	
Interest	\$1.70	Interest	\$4.66
Dues	\$1,270.00		
Donations	\$200.00		
Fund raising, ships store	\$436.28		
Total Deposits	\$1,907.98	Total Deposits	\$4.66
Payments		Payments	
National Dues	\$1,050.00		
Bank service charge	\$4.00		
National Storekeeper	\$151.03		
AL Post 47 for Christmas dinners	\$500.00		
Lunch at Newicks	\$1,050.18		
Purchase of cards and envelopes	\$79.98		
Annual insurance to Nationa	\$25.00		
Total Payments	\$2,860.19	Total Payments	\$0.00
Ending Balance	\$9,111.17	Ending Balance	\$27,899.88

Attachment C

Fund raising committee – organizational meeting Nov 18, 2023 (Newicks)

In attendance: Rich Switter, Dave Webster, John McArdle, Kevin Galeaz, Steve Reichle, Mike Kearney, Dennis Lauze, Steve Walsh (absent Roger Retzke, Steve Misek)

This group was formed at the direction of the base (October 2023 meeting) to explore various fundraising options in order to enhance the ability of the base to support various activities deemed important by the membership.

At this point, Rich Switter offered to chair this committee.

Notes taken by Base Secretary John McArdle

Open discussion:

Options for raising funds to supplement the Base General/Operating fund were discussed as follows:

Raise annual dues by \$5 to \$20/year (Mike Kearney). This would require a vote of the membership and will be added to the January 2024 Agenda (*McArdle/Switter*)

Golf Outing (Rich Switter) – Rich explained he has organized golf fundraising outings in the past. He would hope to hold it in 2024 at a golf course close to the seacoast. Currently thinking of Sagamore/Hampton near Rt 95. Other possibilities would be the course at Pease. *Dennis Lauze* to check on other courses in the area. Dennis stated he will be heading south for winter.

Motorcycle Charity ride. Several members had suggested this as an event to include employees of the shipyard. Tom Beaudoin had suggested to Steve Walsh sometime ago that he was thinking of organizing a ride to benefit the base. Don Stebbins had mentioned earlier (per Mike Kearney) that he would look into one with the Submarine Sailors Motorcycle Club (SSMC). *Mike Kearney and Rich Switter to follow up with Don Stebbins; Steve Walsh to followup with Tom Beaudoin.*

General discussion regarding possible use of funds:

Scholarships (Local schools, Sea Cadets). *Kevin Galeaz to check with USSVI National Scholarship committee to ensure this would not conflict with USSVI scholarship program.*

Discussion on use of National EIN for charitable donations to the outing. Clarified there is one EIN that all bases fall under, we will not be obtaining a separate number.

Discussion on what the existing memorial fund can be used for. Question was if the Base could (or should) pay for expenses of keynote/guest speaker. Group felt that should be considered to defray personal expenses of the guest speakers. Kevin Galeaz pointed out that the shipyard (Gary Hildreth) typically takes care of setting up the keynote speaker and the Base is responsible for the family speaker.

Question was raised whether the base bylaws needed to be amended to allow us to create a scholarship.

Dave Webster pointed out we might need to establish a separate bank account for charitable donations that is not tied to our current bank account.

Roger Retzke had mentioned earlier if the Base should investigate the option of having the ability to accept credit card payments via the website. Dave Webster and Kevin Galeaz to look into options.

John McArdle stated he was working on creating a line item type budget for the base. Was hoping to reflect budget format of National (waiting on response from USSVI National)

End of discussions