

# United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. Pocono Base – Meeting Minutes Wednesday, 20 September 2023



## USS Grayling SS-209

### Base Officers

**Base Commanding Officer – Robert Smith** / P.O. Box 601, Kresgeville, PA. 18333-0601

Ph (610) 681-2606. E-mail address: [rlincs@ptd.net](mailto:rlincs@ptd.net)

**Base Executive Officer – Robert Obrecht** / 339 Lehigh Avenue, Palmerton, PA. 18071-5732

Ph (484) 705-6018 / E-mail address: [aquaknot339@gmail.com](mailto:aquaknot339@gmail.com)

**Base Yeoman – Michael D. Smith** / 40 Stedman Avenue, Lehighton, PA. 18235-2638

Ph (610) 715-9257. E-mail address: [klaital@ptd.net](mailto:klaital@ptd.net)

**Base Treasurer / COB – Alan Dempsey** / 132 Scenic Drive, Albrightsville, PA. 18210

Ph (570) 355-5876 / [scubapopalan@hotmail.com](mailto:scubapopalan@hotmail.com)

**Chaplain – Tom Crosby** / 605 Gordon Lane, Tobyhanna, PA. 18466

Ph (570) 350-4657 / E-mail address: [crosbytr@webcrosby.com](mailto:crosbytr@webcrosby.com)

**Meeting called to order at 19:03** by Base Commander Bob Smith at the American Legion Wilson-Fischer Post in Pocono Pines, PA. The Purpose of the Organization was read. The Chief of the Boat tolled the Base Bell once for each of the following US Submarine Force Losses during the Month of September:

25 Sept 1925	USS S-51	SS 162	32 Men
09 Sept 1943	USS Grayling	SS 209	76 Men
28 Sept 1943	USS Cisco	SS 290	76 Men

Chaplain Crosby led the members present with an invocation.

The Chief of the Boat led the men in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call:** The following members were present: Bob Smith, Tom Crosby, Frank McDevitt, Mike Smith, Tony Sturla, David Wright, Gene Peppe, Bob Obrecht, Ken Kull Alan Dempsey and Bruce Frisch

The members present introduced themselves and the boats qualified / served on for the benefit of new member Bruce Frisch.

We were joined by the wives of a couple of our members.

The Secretary verified that a quorum was present.

**Meeting Minutes:** The August Minutes were posted to the website and the Base Secretary provided minutes at the meeting.

**Treasurers Report:** The Base Treasurer reported an unaudited balance of \$x as of 31 Aug 2023. There is one outstanding check to be cashed from the West End Fair for \$159 and raffle income turned in at this meeting.

#### **Committees:**

**Membership:** We currently have a total membership of 54 members. We have one new member from the West End Fair. Please welcome aboard Bruce Frisch, Patrick Nolan, Steve Vergalito and Joseph Thomas. Mike Smith stated that William Gregor has asked to be removed from the sailing list, as he has moved to Florida and will not be renewing for next year.

**Correspondence:** Covered under Eagle Scouts. Bob Smith also stated we received invites to two Veteran's Day Parades. Will be covered under new business. Bob also received an invite for a speaking engagement and will also be covered in new business.

**Flag Boxes:** Flag boxes continue to be productive. Alan said he collected from the Blakeslee Post office and Kinsley's Shop Rite. Bob Smith said the Flag Store in Sciota, PA continues to produce and David Wright still collecting from where he lives.

**Publicity:** No report.

**Christmas Party:** No report.

**Parades:** Carbon County Veterans Day Parade, Nesquehoning, PA and Stroudsburg, PA. Covered in new business.

**Eagle Scout:** Please see New Business and the Calendar of Events.

**Kap(ss) 4 Kid(ss):** Not active.

**Budget/ Donation:** Budget committee to provide report once the base raffle concludes in October. They will meet 45 minutes before the November Meeting.

**Float Committee:** Please see new business.

Mike Smith read from Submarine Operations of WWII on the loss of the USS Greyling. Greyling was lost with all hands due to unknown reasons and stricken from the records.

## **Old Business:**

Bob Smith talked about our PO box that we had and how the rate for it jumped up to \$166 per year. The base decided not to renew, and Bob put in a change of address to use the Wilson-Fischer Post address for our base moving forward. Tom Crosby said he would set up a location for us in the office for base mail. As of now, the change has not gone thru.

Tom Crosby talked about the Celtic Classis in Bethlehem again, as it is coming up shortly. Our group is a go for Sunday, the 24<sup>th</sup> of September. Tom said that we have 8 people to man the tent. Again, we will be manning the beer tent, pouring drinks from the taps, collecting money and any tips we receive during our time frame belong to the base. Tom said he sent the information to Bob Smith for dissemination to those members going to the Celtic Classic. We are encouraged to wear our vests and even bring the Base Banner. The information contains a map of the festival ground, how to get there and where to check in. Links to the website are also included. Tom Crosby has buttons for our members to be used to take the shuttle back to where they are parked. Please be at the tent and ready to go by 1PM on Sunday. Jen will be the cashier and her shift money will be given directly to the base, as she is on the board for the fair.

The raffle will be drawn after the Oct 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. Any outstanding tickets MUST be received by the end of the meeting. Any late ones will need to be refunded. The winner will be contacted that night.

Bob Smith commented about the bubble machine and how it was received. Will work better when the float is in motion. The wind kept blowing the bubbles back towards the tables. Bob Obrecht said he made a bracket to mount the machine for parades.

**New Business:** The base has been invited to the Carbon County Veterans Day Parade and will be held in Nesquehoning, PA this year. We have also received an invitation to the Monroe County Veterans Day Parade. Both parades are on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November. The members present voted to attend the Stroudsburg parade. Will line up at the Stroudsburg High School by 12:30 PM and step off at 1PM. The parade will end at Dansbury Park in East Stroudsburg, PA.

Mike Smith stated that the Eagle Scout Courts have been picking up lately. There were two Courts of Honor in September. The first was for Michael Dominick John Tuin and was held at the Chestnuthill Township Park on Rte. 715 on Sunday the 17<sup>th</sup> of September. The second was for Nathan Michael Fritz and was held at the First Presbyterian Church in Stroudsburg, PA on Saturday the 16<sup>th</sup> of September. These were both mailed, as there were no volunteers to do the presentation.

There are two Courts of Honor for the month of October. First is a Dual Court of Honor for Steven Robert Blannard and Andrew Martin Hawks. This will be held at the Terraview at Stroudsmoor Country Inn in Stroudsburg, PA on Sunday the 8<sup>th</sup> of October. Mike Smith said that Josh Kolar and Gene Peppe have expressed interest in doing this. He will verify that when he gets home. The second one for the month of October is for a Patrick Casey Weiss and will be held at the Effort United Methodist Church on Sunday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October at 3PM. Mike Smith stated that Darryl Betz has volunteered to do this presentation but will confirm when he gets home and checks his e-mail.

Mike Smith showed Bruce what our typical Eagle Scout package looks like. There is a certificate and an Eagle Scout patch. Also included is a paper that talks about the parallels between earning an Eagle Scout and our earning our Dolphins in the service. The second is a

small biography of Adm. Eugene Fluckey. Mike Smith also said that no two Courts of Honor have ever been the same and any are welcome to attend.

Bob Smith stated that there is a list of all the Eagle Scouts on a link on our base webpage and marked as to which ones were attended, mailed and if we have received Thank you Letters.

Bob Smith talked about the Belvidere Heritage Festival and that he made the agonizing decision to cancel our attending the festival due to the uncertainty of the weather for that Saturday. Ultimately the weather ended up being good on that Saturday but may have gotten wet on the way home after. At the suggestion of Tony Sturla, Bob has contacted Kinsley's Shop Rite in Brodheadsville, PA and secured two dates to set up a table in the foyer to sell our raffle tickets and other wares. Bob booked Friday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September and Wednesday, the 4<sup>th</sup> of October from 11-3 each day. Both are listed on the calendar of events on our base website.

The budget committee will meet 45 minutes before the November Meeting to work on the donations for the year. If there are any charitable organizations that would be worthwhile, please make your recommendation.

Bob Obrecht talked about the float needing a few repairs to the lifting mechanism for the sub. Bob said part of it is jammed and with the bouncing, has caused one of the eye bolts holding the sub to the cradle to be pulled out. Mike Smith also stated that he needs to repair the running lights again. The batteries need replacing and Mike is also working on getting the sockets for the light themselves. The wiring keeps coming off the light and won't take the solder. Bob wants to try and spring load the cradle in the lifting mechanism to try and keep damage from happening again. Mike and Bob will work on getting together to affect the repairs.

Alan Dempsey talked about our base banner and was inquiring about having another made, but with information about the USS Barb float. The only identifiers are the numbers on the hull and the name, but they are in small letters, and one needs to be close up to be able to read them. There was discussion about what to have on the banner and also the possibility of having small posters with the information about the Barb on them. Bob Smith stated that Scott Gerber is waiting to have a new banner delivered but was unable to attend tonight's meeting. Bob Smith also voiced a concern about having too much information on the banner / posters. There was also discussion about the use of a QR Code that would link to a website for information.

Bob Smith talked about the advertisements that are on our base website. There was a page on the base website, and it had advertisements from a couple of our base members. Bob Smith is looking to revisit having this again and allowing outsiders to advertise for a nominal fee.

Bob Smith also said that we have a link on the base website to obtain the SubVet License Plate form Penn Dot.

Bob Smith is also looking for members to help as backups for the Database, The Barb Trailer, the base website and for the treasurer. Bob Smith asked Alan if there was another with signature authority for the account and the answer was no. Mike Smith was asked if he would be the back up for the treasurer and Mike Smith was hesitant to commit. There is no longer a close PNC Bank Branch if he would need to go to one. Scott Gerber might be willing to help with the database and website with Bob Smith.

Bob Smith talked about a member from the Rotary Club of Smithfield, who had picked up our base brochure and noted that we used to have a speaker's bureau. They meet every

Tuesday morning at 7AM and they were wondering if any of our members would like to go over and give a small talk. This would be at the Shawnee Inn by the Delaware Water Gap. Please let Bob Smith know if anyone would be interested in doing this so he can get back with the Rotary Club.

**Good of the Order:** Bob Frisch was installed as a Holland Club member at the end of tonight's meeting.

Tom Crosby talked about some items that are going on with the Legion Post. There is a gun raffle in progress. Also upcoming is a Coach Bag Bingo. Please get with Tom Crosby for further information.

### **Calendar of Events:**

22-24 Sep 2023: Celtic Classic Highland Games & Festival. Our shift to man the Beer tent is on the 24<sup>th</sup> from 1-4PM.

8 Oct 2023: Dual Eagle Scout Court of Honor for Steven Blannard and Andrew Hawks at Terraview at Stroudsmoor. No takers as of the meeting.

18 Oct 2023: Monthly Meeting at the American Legion Wilson-Fischer post. The Raffle Winner will be drawn at end of this meeting.

22 Oct 2023: Eagle Scout Court of Honor for Patrick Weiss at the Effort United Methodist Church. Darryl Betz is the tentative presenter for this.

5 Nov 2023: Monroe County Veterans Day Parade in Stroudsburg PA at 1PM.

15 Nov 2023: Monthly meeting at 1900 Hours.

23 Nov 2023: Thanksgiving.

25 Dec 2023: Christmas

1 Jan 2024: New Years.

**Next meeting** will be held on Wednesday, 18 October 2023 at 1900 Hrs. at the American Legion, Wilson-Fischer Post.

1<sup>st</sup> motion made by Tom Crosby to adjourn the meeting; 2<sup>nd</sup> motion made by David Wright.

All in favor, motion carried.

The members present joined the Base Commander in the reading of the Base Creed.

“To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds, and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution.”

Bob Smith declared the meeting of the Pocono Base adjourned at 1938 hrs.

Respectfully submitted  
Michael D Smith.