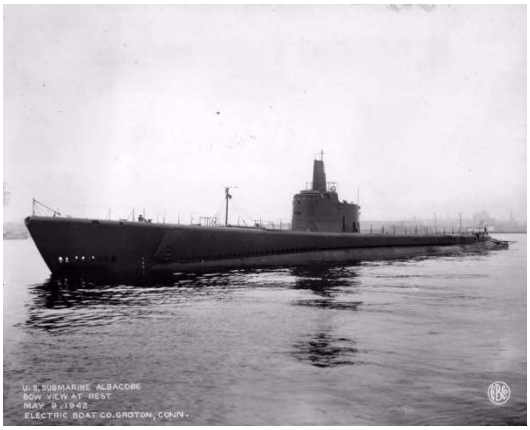
United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.
Pocono Base – Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, 21November 2026





USS Albacore (SS 218)

Base Officers

Base Commanding Officer – Robert Obrecht / 339 Lehigh Avenue, Palmerton, PA. 18071-5732 / Ph (484) 464-7534 / E-mail address: aquaknot339@gmail.com
Base Executive Officer – Robert Sweeney / 74 Summit Drive, Saylorsburg, PA 18353 / Ph (570) 269-2990 / E-mail address: scran123@ptd.net
Base Yeoman – Michael D. Smith / 40 Stedman Avenue, Lehighton, PA. 18235-2638
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Base Treasurer – Scott Jackson / P.O. Box 223, Pocono Lake, PA. 18347
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Chaplain – Tom Crosby/COB / 605 Gordon Lane, Tobyhanna, PA. 18466
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Storekeeper - David Wright 201 Bear Run Dr. Drums, PA 18222
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Meeting called to order at 1904 by Base Commander Bob Obrecht 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 November:

16 Nov 1943	USS Corvina	SS 226	82 Men
19 Nov 1943	USS Sculpin	SS 191	62 Men
23 Nov 1943	USS Capelin	SS 289	76 Men
07 Nov 1944	USS Albacore	SS 218	86 Men
08 Nov 1944	USS Growler	SS 215	84 Men
09 Nov 1944	USS Scamp	SS 277	83 Men

Mike Smith delivered the invocation after a moment of silence, as our base chaplain was unable to be at tonight's meeting.

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

Roll Call: Members present were Bob Obrecht, Bob Smith, Alan Dempsey, Scott Jackson, Gene Peppe, David Wright, Tony Sturla, Don Zimmerman, Mike Smith, Scott Gerber, Ken Kull, Bob Sweeney, Bill Pancoast, and Darryl Betz.

The members present introduced themselves and the boats they qualified / served on for the benefit of Don Zimmerman.

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

The secretary verified that a quorum was present.

Meeting Minutes: The Base Secretary stated that the minutes were posted. The secretary also provided minutes at the meeting for the members to look at. Again, if there are any corrections that need to be made, please let the secretary know.

Treasurers Report: The treasurer stated that we had balance of $x.xx as of 31 Oct 2026. There are a number of deposits that need to be made, and the base currently has a balance of $x.xx before the checks clear including the grand prize from the base raffle.

Committees:

Membership: Bob Smith reported that we currently have 47 members, and three pending new members. Unfortunately, it was discovered that we lost a member to Eternal Patrol and will be cove red in the Good of the Order. Bob Smith read off some names of members that remitted their dues including a few members at tonight's meeting.

Correspondence: Only correspondence was the Fisher House magazine. Alan Dempsey checked on the inbox at the Legion Post and this was the only item in it.

Flag Box Program: Bob Sweeney stated that the box at the Flag Store continues to be productive. Alan Dempsey stated that Kinsley's Shop Rite and Blakeslee post office continue to produce.

Speakers Bureau: No report

Publicity: Covered under old business.

Parades / Memorial Events: No more parades in the foreseeable future. The Carbon County Veterans Day Parade was the last one of this year. Bob Obnrecht thanked all who attended the parades this past year.

Budget / Donation: The budget / donation committee met before tonight's meeting and made their recommendations for donations. The list of organizations and amounts are listed under new business

Storekeeper: David Wright has 2027 Calendars available for the base. The cost is $10 per calendar, and they are available to any member who wishes one. Dave also has base ballcaps available for $15 each.

Fundraising: Complete for the year.

Dinner/Dance: Christmas Dinner to be held on the 13th of December at Murph's Hideaway in Blakeslee, PA. See below for details.

Eagle Scout: No Report.

Kap(ss) 4 Kid(ss): No information.

Float Committee: Mike Smith has the conning tower to affect repairs to the lights after the last parade. Some of the wiring is getting brittle and one of the lights stopped working. Bob Obrecht stated that one of the bolts on the support cradle had snapped. Bob stated he would install heavier bolts. Scott Gerber took the aluminum plate off the spare tire to have the base decal replicated on the plate itself. The paper artwork was falling off.

Mike Smith read from the Submarine Operations of WWII about the loss of the USS Albacore. It is believed that she was sunk due to the mines that were laid in the area by the Japanese, and debris was spotted by Japanese aircraft conducting. Albacore was one of the top boats in tonnage sunk in WWII.

Old Business: The Annual Base Christmas Dinner will be held on Sunday, 13 Dec 2026 at Murph's Hideaway on Route 940 at 1PM. This was formerly known as Robert Christian's. There is further information on the base website. Please let Bob Obrecht know of your choice of meals, and number of guests so they can plan accordingly. The price will be $25 per member and the first guest. Additional guests will be $50 per person. Bob Obrecht has a list of the dinners that are available at the meeting as well as on the website. There will also be a brief meeting prior to the dinner. We will toll the bell for the lost boats of December and for each member of our base, who have departed on eternal patrol. Bob is asking that there are no checks on the day of the dinner. This is to make it easier to pay the restaurant and not waste time playing with the money. Please make your payments before the dinner. The are about 26 attending the dinner as of tonight's meeting.

Bob Smith also stated that dues are starting to come in. Please make sure your dues are remitted by 1 Dec 2025, or you will become DINQ. National dues remain $40, and Base dues remain the same at $10 per member.

Bob Obrecht thanked all who have joined us for the various parades this past year. The Carbon County Veterans Day Parade was the last parade attended by our members. This was held on the 8th of November. We also attended the Monroe County Veterans Day parade in Stroudsburg back on the 2nd of November. The parade in Weatherly was challenging in it's location and line up of the organizations on a narrow road.

Alan Dempsey talked about the base looking into obtaining a power pack that can power the base klaxon instead of using the small horn during the parades. Alan also asked of Bob Smith to contact Peanut at the West End Fairgrounds if we could use the pack to power our lights instead of paying the additional fee for electricity.

Scott Gerber talked about the WWII Airshow at the Reading Airport and wanted to gauge potential participation from our members for the airshow next June. It will be held on the Weekend of June 6th to correspond to D-Day Anniversary. We will talk about it further come the January meeting. Another item that Scott talked about with the Air Show was how well received the float was and how the crowd even knew the specs of a Gato Class submarine. Scott said that the Reading Base and the Keystone Base used to participate but didn't see any value in

continuing. One member from the Keystone Base said he would be back if we participated next year.

New Business: The Budget / Donation committee submitted a plan of donations from the money that was allocated to our donations pool from our raffle proceeds. The base received about $x in raffle money from this year. Total donations this year amount to $x, which is an increase of $x over last year. Scott Jackson read the list of donations and amounts:

Wounded Warrior Project	$x
Fisher House Foundation, Inc.	$x
American Legion Wilson-Fischer Post	$x
American Legion Wilson-Fischer Post Angel Tree Program	$x
VALOR Clinic Foundation	$x
Warwick Valley Quilters Guild	$x
Salvation Army (in Honor of Robert Vaughan)	$x
Disabled American Veterans	$x
Tunnels to Towers	$x
Submarine Veterans Charitable Foundation	$x
Holland Club Challenge Coins	$x

We also have Boat Sponsorships for about $30 apiece. We sponsor the USS Hyman G. Rickover, and the Virginia Class Boat USS Barb SSN-804. With this sponsorship, the boats sponsored receive copies of the American Submariner magazine.

Bob Smith added an additional comment that the donation committee left the door open for other donations that may come up for the year.

Bob Smith sent invoices for those who owe dues, also included is a form to fill out to correct or update any contact information for the base sailing list.

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Gene Peppe stated that he got new picture frames but are too big for what he needed and will donate them to the base for further use with the float and tent. They are more robust that the one's that we are currently using.

Good of the Order: There will be no meeting on the 16th of December. We will have a small meeting prior to dinner on the 14th of December. If you wish to attend, please let Bob Obrecht know and have your money available in a mailed check, or in person the night of the dinner.

Bob Obrecht asked Mike Smith if he had heard anything from Don Ransel lately. Unfortunately, Mike Smith did a search on the web and found out that Don Ransel has gone on Eternal Patrol back on 1 Oct 2026. The last part of his obituary was that any donations be made to St Jude's Children's Research Hospital in Don Ransel's name.

Mike Smith made the 1st motion that the base donates $100 to St Jude's Children's Hospital. The motion was moved by the members of the base. Scott Jackson stated he would send the donation check.

Scott Gerber talked about being at King's Bay the week before the Weatherly parade and the WWII remembrance weekend where they tolled the bell for each lost submarine. Scott said the Commander of the base wanted USSVI representation because he said the Submarine Service is not seeing the increase in crews anymore and can't get enough craftsmen to build and repair submarines.

Scott talked about the Submarine Industrial Base and a school that teaches the skill needed to work in the shipyards on submarines. Part of it is from the sponsorship of Buildsubmarines.com from Brad Keslowski of NASCAR Cup Racing. There is a school in Virginia that deals with building submarines called Advanced Training in Defense Technology that teaches and places people in high paying shipyard jobs. Scott would like us to entertain going to the Carbon Career and Technical Institute and show the students there the float and how it was crafted.

David Wright made the 1st motion that we pursue coordination with the Vo-tech School in doing a presentation. Motion carried by the member present.

Scott Gerber said that he was approached at the Carbon County Parade and was told that our member, Bruce Frisch had received some bad news medically.

Bob Smith said that he would inform national about Don Ransel going on Eternal Patrol and will get the Eternal Patrol Certificate to give to Don's wife.

Calendar of Events:

26 Nov 2026: Thanksgiving.

13 Dec 2026: Annual Christmas Dinner.

25 Dec 2026: Christmas

1 Jan 2027: New Years.

20 Jan 2027: Monthly meeting at 1900 Hours.

17 Feb 2027: Monthly meeting at 1900 Hours.

Next full meeting will be held on, 20 January 2027 at 1900 Hrs. at the American Legion, Wilson-Fischer Post. A small meeting will be held prior to the dinner on the 13th of December.

1st motion made by Tony Sturla to adjourn the meeting; 2nd motion made by Bill Pancoast.

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."

Mike Smith offered the benediction at the end of our meeting.

Bob Obrecht declared the meeting of the Pocono Base adjourned at 1952 hrs.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael D. Smith
USSVI – Pocono Base Secretary

Ps. Mike Smith looked up Gerald Zeman, another member we had not heard from in quite some time and found out that he went on Eternal Patrol back on August 25th 2026.