

United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.

Pocono Base – Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, 18 October 2023

Photo # NH 42154 USS S-42 off San Diego, California, during the 1920s or 1930s



USS S-44 (SS 155)

Base Officers

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

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

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

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

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Meeting called to order at 1901 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 October:

28 Oct 1923	USS O-5	SS 66	3 Men
07 Oct 1943	USS S-44	SS 155	56 Men
11 Oct 1943	USS Wahoo	SS 238	79 Men
12 Oct 1943	USS Dorado	SS 248	78 Men
03 Oct 1944	USS Seawolf II	SS 197	102 Men
17 Oct 1944	USS Escolar	SS 294	82 Men
24 Oct 1944	USS Tang	SS 306	80 Men
24 Oct 1944	USS Shark II	SS 314	90 Men

Chaplain Tom Crosby delivered the invocation to the members present.

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

The Secretary verified that a quorum was present.

Roll Call: Members present were: Mike Smith, Alan Dempsey, Skip Donohue, Bob Smith, Bob Obrecht, Scott Gerber, Frank McDevitt, Tom Crosby, Bruce Frisch, Ken Kull, Gene Peppe and Bob Sweeney.

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

Meeting Minutes: The September minutes posted to the website by the Base Commander. The secretary also provided minutes at the meeting for the members.

Treasurers Report: The treasurer reported an actual ending balance of \$x as of the 29th of September. There is an outstanding check of \$70. A full final tally will be made available for the November meeting.

Committees:

Membership: Bob stated that we have 55 members in our base. William Gregor will be maintained on the sailing list until the end of the year. William has stated his intention to leave our base. This will leave us with 54 members. There are a few potential members from the West End Fair, but Bob said he has not heard from them.

Budget / Donation: The budget and donation committee will meet approx. 45 minutes before the November 2023 meeting.

Correspondence: Only correspondence

Flag Box Program: The flags boxes continue to produce. Alan said he got the one in Blakeslee and the one at Kinsley's Shop Rite.

Publicity: No publicity entries were submitted for this month.

Speakers Bureau: Tony Sturla did attend the Rotary Club meeting a few weeks ago. He will report on it at the next meeting.

Dinner: Christmas Dinner to be held on the 17th of December at Murph's Hideaway in Blakeslee, PA at the former Robert Christian Restaurant.

Parades: Monroe County Veterans Day Parade from Stroudsburg, PA to East Stroudsburg, PA on the 5th of November.

Eagle Scout: No courts of honor noted.

Kap(ss) 4 Kid(ss): Bob Obrecht said that the program continues to be on hold for the foreseeable future.

Float Committee: Bob Obrecht wants to get together to make a few repairs to the float. We need to have the front eyebolt reattached to the bottom front of the boat. The bouncing around in the cradle has pulled it out of the wood. Bob also wants to try and cushion the boat in its cradle to prevent further damage. Mike Smith needs to make repairs to the running lights in

the conning tower and replace the batteries. The existing lights need sockets that will allow the wires to remain attached to the lights. The repairs will take place on Saturday the 28th of October at Bob Smiths house, and we will meet around 1PM.

Bob Obrecht also stated that he took the pipes that make up the tent home and cleaned up all of the points where they join together. This will make assembly and disassembly much easier.

Mike Smith read from Submarine Operations of WWII about the loss of USS S-44. S-44 was lost due to combat against a Japanese Destroyer. The crew was ordered to abandon ship. Only 8 men initially survived, but only 2 were picked up and sent to the copper mines and released after the war.

Old Business: The Veterans Day Parade will be held in Stroudsburg and will travel to Dansbury Park in East Stroudsburg. The parade will start at 1PM on Sunday, the 5th of November. Line-up is at the Stroudsburg High School by 12:30PM. Members can park at Dansbury Park in East Stroudsburg and a bus will transport them to the high school.

Bob Smith stated that he talked to June Pepe and we will have a spot set aside at Dansbury Park in the parking lot to show off the float and answer any questions about it.

We were also invited to attend the Carbon County Veterans Day parade in Nesquehoning this year as well. This parade is also on the 5th of November and conflicts with the Stroudsburg Parade. The members voted to attend the Monroe County Parade. Bob Smith contacted Carbon County and let them know of our decision.

There were two Courts of Honor for the month of October. First was 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 8th of October. Mike Smith said that Josh Kolar and Gene Peppe have expressed interest in doing this. Unfortunately, due to scheduling conflicts, neither gentlemen were able to do this presentation. This package was subsequently mailed. 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 22nd of October at 3PM. Mike Smith stated that Darryl Betz has volunteered to do this presentation and the package was mailed to him. Bob Smith stated that Darryl may not be able to attend and will then forward the Eagle Scout Certificate in time for the Court of Honor.

Scott Gerber talked about the new banners that we are having made for the base. Scott brought a proof of what the banner will look like, and we were promised that they would be here before the parade. The new banners are 6ft x 18 inches high as we had requested.

Alan Dempsey talked about the Celtic Fest back in September. The base received \$43 in tips and a 50 Baht note. The 50 Baht note is only worth about a dollar and a quarter. The Baht is Thai Currency. We also received the check for Jen Crosby for the sum of \$40 for manning the register.

Alan also talked about the check from the Pocono Raceway. He stated that it got returned to Starr since it went to our original address.

Mike Smith will look into the issue with the change of address to prevent further issues with our mail.

New Business: Annual Base and National Dues are to be turned in by January 1st, 2024. National Dues are \$25. Base dues remain at \$10. Invoices for dues will be sent out for those not at our meeting. Please get them sent in.

The Annual Base Christmas Dinner will be held on Sunday, 17 Dec 2023 at Murph's Hideaway on Route 940 at 1PM. This was formerly known as Robert Christian's. There will be further information posted once Bob Smith and Alan Dempsey work out the details with the restaurant.

Bob Smith said that he and Bob Obrecht did go to Shop Rite a couple of days last month and sold \$794 worth of raffle tickets.

Bob Smith also said that June Pepe, the liaison to the Monroe County Veterans and the East Stroudsburg University about Good Morning America coming up on Oct 27th around 9AM to do a video taping that will be shown on subsequent days. The taping is in regard to advertising for the parade on the 5th of November. She wanted to know if any of our members would like to attend and to bring the float.

Bob Smith asked the members present if we would like to obtain medallions that are made of plastic and are similar to challenge coins to give to other veterans at different nursing homes. The Williamsport base had their made to say "Honorary Submariner" on theirs.

Skip Donohue made the first motion that the base pursue the purchase of the poker chip medallions. Bruce Frisch made the second motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Good of the Order:

Bob Smith talked about one of our new members, who lives in Myrtle Beach and was Holland Club Eligible upon joining our base. Bob gave the package to Bruce Frisch to either mail it or deliver it in person when he goes down there.

Alan Dempsey laid a bunch of Submarine Books on the table before the meeting for members to borrow and read. They were from Oliver Nordmarks collection that were donated to our base.

Calendar of Events:

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.

17 Dec 2023: Annual Base Dinner at Murph's Hideaway

25 Dec 2023: Christmas

1 Jan 2024: New Years.

17 Jan 2024: Monthly meeting at 1900 Hours.

Next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 15 Nov 2023 at 1900 Hours at the American Legion Wilson-Fischer Post.

Chaplain Crosby read the benediction to the members present.

1st motion made by Tom Crosby to adjourn the meeting; 2nd motion made by Skip Donohue.

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 1936 hrs.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael D. Smith
USSVI – Pocono Base Secretary

Ps. Food was provided by Sheila Smith and other wives at the conclusion of tonight's meeting.