**Carolina-Piedmont Base Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Date:  January 25, 2025**

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

* Carolina Piedmont Base Commander Rick Petitt called our meeting to order at 1405 hrs. at VFW Post #9138 located in Fort Mill, SC.
* The meeting followed our potluck meal including some fabulous homemade desserts all brought in by our base families.

**INVOCATION**

* Raymond Zieverink started off our base meeting with an invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

* All joined in saying our nation’s Pledge of Allegiance, led by Base Commander, Rick Petitt.

**USSVI CREED**

* The USSVI Creed was read today by Joel Tuchfeld.

**TOLLING OF THE BOATS**

* Tolling for the 5 boats, which were lost during January months past, was presented by Raymond Zieverink and the bell was rung by Joel Tuchfeld.

**MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS**

* 15+1 base members were present at today’s meeting.
* We had one new person join our meeting today, Lowell Kemp, who now lives in Rock Hill SC as he recently moved south from Connecticut.
* Lowell first qualified aboard the Woodrow Wilson (SSBN 624) in 1972.
* Carolina Piedmont Base welcomes Lowell to our base.
* We also had another special visitor today, Will Cronkrite, who retired from NASCAR and who has written several books about NASCAR … however, Will has taken an interest in how submarines were once manufactured in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. Will joined us today to learn more about submarines and the terminology associated with submarine construction. Will is in the process of writing a new book on Manitowoc submarine manufacturing and he got the chance to “interview” a number of our members today to help him with this newest life’s project of his.

**REVIEW OF LAST BASE MEETING MINUTES**

* Members are reminded that minutes for each previous month’s base meeting are posted on our Carolina Piedmont website at [carolinapiedmont.org](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Ctom%5CDownloads%5C2022-03-26%20March%20CP%20Meeting%20Minutes.docx) for their review. Members are encouraged to read the previous month’s meeting minutes prior to attending our next base meeting.
* No comments or corrections were received on last month’s meeting minutes.

**READING OF THE TREASURER’S REPORT**

* Former Base Treasurer Raymond Zieverink read our latest treasurer’s report. Combined monies in all base accounts stands at $15,658.01 as of 1/25/2025.
* No comments or corrections were received on the treasurer’s report.

**BASE STOREKEEPER REPORT**

* Jeff Nieberding is our base contact for ordering USSVI items, including patches, vests, challenge coins, calendars, parking signs, etc.
* Jeff just sold his last 2025 USSVI calendar at today’s meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS**

* VFW Lighting Project Update.
* Don Schob is spearheading our lighting upgrade project to the meeting rooms and kitchen areas of the Ft. Mill VFW post where we meet. Don has walked down the facility gathering information for sizes and number of ceiling light replacements and has now got all the material that will be installed on order. Don is arranging to have a work party meet at the VFW in early February to accomplish this lighting upgrade. It is expected all new lights will be installed prior to our next meeting in February.
* All materials will be paid for out of our base general fund as a donation to the VFW and all labor for installation will be donated by qualified volunteers.

**NEW BUSINESS**

* None

**GOOD OF THE ORDER**

* **Kaps 4 Kids – Levine Hospital**
* Dave Violette went to Levine’s Children’s Hospital for our first visit back in this institution after Covid with John McHugh and Dave’s grandson to present Honorary Submariner Certificates, ball caps and now also teddy bears to the patients.
* Dave said there were 10 kids with their families in attendance and they were well received.
* New this time was the giving of teddy bears. The teddy bears were given as Honorary Shipmates for Life to the recipients. The bears can be obtained from National by contacting John Riley who is presently the National Kaps-4-Kids Chairman.
* **American Submariner Magazine Article**
* There was a nice full-page article in the latest issue of the American Submariner magazine (2025 First Quarter edition on Page 16) about how members of the NC Subvets (including our own Andrew Brown, Rick Petitt, Ray Fritz and Don Schob) provided aid to the folks in North Carolina who were stricken by the devastating floods from Hurricane Helene last year.
* Highlight of the article was how our very own Rick Petitt spearheaded a response from our submarine veterans to provide propane heaters, fuel and other things to those in need in the NC mountains and how Lowes Home Improvement Company matched our funds and donated the heaters that Rick, and others distributed to the mountains.
* Please read the article for all the wonderful details and we say a Bravo Zule to all of our members who supported this humanitarian mission and especially to those who made the trip to the mountains to distribute the heaters.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER** (cont.)

* **USS Charlotte Luncheon – Mar 3**
* UPDATE SINCE MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT: March 3rd luncheon has been canceled due to Charlotte having to leave suddenly on emergency employment.
* Rick had announced at our January meeting that Charlotte Fire Department, who is working to create a submariner museum in North Carolina, was going to have a luncheon on Monday, March 3rd at the Duke Energy Plaza in Charlotte.
* Guest speaker was going to be Commander Thomas Futch, who is currently the Commanding Officer of USS Charlotte (SSN-766) and who took over command of Charlotte in August of 2024, after she returned from a successful Westpac deployment.
* **Election Base Officers for 2025**
* The election season for base officers is upon us once again. Rick announced he is in his 10th year of being our base commander and he says it’s time for him to pass along this privilege to another fortunate person.
* This year (the odd-numbered year) we will be having elections for the Carolina Piedmont Base Commander and Base Secretary posts. Currently serving as base commander is, of course, Rick Petitt and Tom Kelly serves as our base secretary.
* Joel Tuchfeld has graciously accepted the role as our Election Master again for this year. Information about the election and the nomination process will be emailed out prior to our February base meeting.
* **Hurricane Helena Relief Fund**
* As a reminder, we currently have monies available from our base Hurricane Helene Relief Fund to assist folks affected by this disaster in the NC mountains. Funds must be used to assist local communities and for people living in the affected areas.
* We know there’s a group supplying hot meals to folks in the Spruce Pine area and we are looking for a contact name there to see if we can assist with this special service.
* **Assistance provided to Toecane, Baptist Church in the NC Mountains**
* One of the donations recently made was $2,000 for electrical supplies to the Toecane Baptist Church to help them restore their facility’s sound system as part of their church’s fellowship hall.
* **Bilge Rats Update**
* Raymond Zieverink provided an update that our first show at the Trevi Assisted Living facility, which was really intended to be our first dress rehearsal, turned out to be a wonderful experience as we had 19 visitors in attendance including many former veterans. The opportunity to perform at this facility was provided due to Cindy Petitt’s parents now live in this facility and they also were in attendance.
* Our next Bilge Rats show will be on the third Saturday, February 15th at the Laurels (The Haven and The Laurels) located at 13180 Dorman Road in Pineville, NC. Show start times at 1030, but Raymond asks for us all to be there by 1000.
* Our performers have performed at this facility many times in the past, so we look forward to visiting there again.
* **Dues**
* John McHugh announced there are still a few stragglers behind in paying their 2025 dues.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER** (cont.)

* **Burnsville – 2025, May 16 – 18**
* This is a reminder for those interested in traveling to Burnsville NC this year to the Moonshine Mountain Submarine Memorial remembrance ceremony to begin making their plans and reservations now to stay at the Big Lynn Lodge located on Hwy 226-A in Little Switzerland, NC 28749 soon. More information to follow.

**UNUSED SOUND EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE**

* Raymond Zieverink informed us he has many pieces of sound equipment left over from past years Bilge Rats shows which is now no longer needed by the base. The equipment is in excellent condition and our base has agreed to donate this equipment to any person or organization that could use it.
* The equipment includes the following items:
* Model PTU-71 Mid-Level UHF Dual Channel Wireless Microphone System
* A pair of SAMSON XP150 Portable PA System Speakers
* Extension stands to raise up the speakers and all necessary patch cords for connecting the components.
* Contact Raymond or Tom Kelly if interested in helping us find a new home for this sound equipment.

**NEXT BASE MEETING**

* Our next base meeting will be held on Saturday February 22nd at 1300 (the fourth Saturday) at the Ft. Mill VFW Post.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

* A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 1513 hours.  Motion passed.

**RAFFLE RESULTS**

* Raymond Zieverink won today’s raffle.

**A list of today’s meeting attendees can be found on the next page below:**

**January 25, 2025, Meeting Attendees**:

* Steve Bell and his son Mike
* Bob Bunney – Kathy
* Ed Eldridge
* Mary Gilles
* Jim Goins – Marsha
* Mike Hubbell - Glenna
* Clarence Jordan
* Tom Kelly
* Lowell Kemp (1st Timer)
* John McHugh - Donna
* Jeff Nieberding - Michele
* Rick Petitt – Cindy
* Zeke Rybczyk
* Joel Tuchfeld - Anna
* Kevin Walker - Tessa
* Raymond Zieverink – Linda

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by:

Tom Kelly

Base Secretary