



U.S. Submarine Veterans, Inc.

Albany-Saratoga Base
American Legion Post 70
34 West Ave.
Saratoga Springs, NY

Meetings every 3rd Wed of the Month
Minutes from **15 June 2011** meeting

- 7:00 pm: The regular meeting of the Albany-Saratoga Base was called to order by CDR Bob Bailey with 20 members present
- Base muster was taken
- Members stood and saluted for the Pledge of Allegiance to the US Flag
- The Base Chaplain offered an opening prayer

The Bell was tolled for Boats lost during the month of June.

Base members introduced themselves and the boats they served on.

Base Secretary Fritz Feldhaus confirmed a quorum was present.

The reading of the minutes for the May meeting was waived; however, the minutes were revised to note that – in addition to Senior Vice CDR John Christopher - **base members Charles Norton and Tom Flanders also attained Holland Club status.** Member Al Singleman motioned to accept the minutes; member Tom Glenn seconded. The motion was passed.

Randy Stein gave the Base Treasurer's report; net base assets: \$7069.87. Secretary

Feldhaus motioned to accept the report; member John Mishoe seconded. The motion was passed.

WW II Submarine History revisited...

Member Frank Hardick spoke about his former CO, Charlie Rush. Much of the following is excerpted from a google search:

In November 1943, while on war patrol in the Makassar Strait off Borneo, the **USS *Billfish*** was spotted by the Japanese who launched a vicious depth charge attack that no sub could possibly survive... As diving officer, Charlie Rush ordered the ship to dive, despite the confusion and hesitation of his captain. The ***Billfish*** endured fifteen hours of sheer hell under the sea.

Boldly assuming command of the submarine – and summarily relieving his commanding officer – Rush led key members of the crew in a seemingly impossible effort to keep their boat intact as they tried to escape. Through his extraordinary heroism and cool-headed judgment, the young officer saved the crew of the ***Billfish*** from certain death.

Sixty years later, 91-year old Charlie Rush was finally awarded the Navy Cross. This riveting story is the stuff of heroes in Don Keith's book "War Beneath the Waves".

Frank tells us that one day this story will appear on a film screen near you!

Frank counts Charlie Rush the best of four CO's he served under. He has arranged to be our point of contact for getting your copy of ***War Beneath the Waves*** signed by Captain Rush. Anyone who wants their book signed, put your name inside the book cover and give the book to Frank. He will bring the signed books to the October base meeting.

Binnacle List Update: Base member Tom Kelley is back home recuperating and doing well. Tom has bought three bricks!

Foundation report:

Pavers for the courtyard that will surround the monument are on sale. To facilitate your purchase, we have enclosed a paver order form along with these minutes.

Base Float skirt patches –

Janet Irwin has completed attaching the ship’s patches to the Base float skirts. The eye-catching layout was on display, spread out on the long table for all to see – great job, Janet!

New parade banner –

All took notice of the new banner – an outstanding job by Karen Chapman. We have forwarded a heartfelt **thank you** to her.

VA Hospital “ditty bag” – (current balance: \$187.50). Please remember to bring in your donations.

50/50 raffle – (worth \$37.50) and the winner was **John Mishoe - hey, how could he miss: he was sitting right next to Harry!**

Al Singleman reported that he is currently crafting a model of the USS Albany. The ship itself is in the yard – Al is looking to catch a ride on the boat while she is at Cape Canaveral. He is also lobbying to obtain a ships’ brow banner.

The Saratoga County Board of Supervisors and Veterans Service Agency will honor deceased Navy veterans Lois J. Bydairk and Walter J. Bydairk in a ceremony on the front lawn of the Saratoga County Complex next Tuesday (21 June 2011) - 2:30pm.

Base Picnic set – mark your calendars! Saturday 17 September is the date for our annual base picnic – and, as we did last year, our September monthly meeting will be held at the picnic. Base member Bruce Talbot has again stepped up to make our reservations at the Navy’s MWR Field on Galway Road. Thank’s Bruce!

Memorial Day at Saratoga National Cemetery – a huge all volunteer event – and a first-ever for the Saratoga Cemetery - observed the time-honored Memorial Day practice of adorning the grave of each deceased veteran with a US flag. To see the results of that effort is a moving experience.

While at the Cemetery that day, Base member John Cook located the gravesites of past base members, and noted that Ed Luther’s grave was the only one with flowers. John strongly recommended that we, the Albany-Saratoga base, subsidize the annual purchase of Memorial Day floral wreaths for deceased base members interred in this cemetery. Al Singleman so motioned; Mike Lynett promptly seconded the motion: carried unanimously. Base member John Mishoe stated that Dehn’s Flowers would be proud to support this effort.

Crocker Memorial – Jim Irwin introduced a motion to transfer the proceeds from the next two months 50/50 raffle to the Crocker Memorial fund. Tom Glenn seconded the motion; motion carried.

The USSVI Creed was recited by all, following which the meeting was adjourned.

Following the base meeting, Base member Frank Dorchak made another presentation on **SMGA (Salute Military Golf Association)** – Frank is Vice President of the New York Chapter. He had made a similar computer video presentation at our March meeting.

The next regular meeting is at the **American Legion Adirondack Post 70 in Saratoga Springs, NY** on 20 July at 1900 hours.

Submitted by:

**Fritz Feldhaus –
Albany-Saratoga Base Secretary**