

Steel Valley Dolphins

September 2020



The official newsletter of the
USS Requin Base of the USSVI
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

USSVI Creed:

"To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of 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."



Meetings held on the second Saturday of the month normally
in Baden at the American Legion Post
and quarterly meetings held around our membership area.

- **Make a difference, get to a meeting!**

----- Pride Runs Deep -----

Next Meeting: Baden PA at 1230 hours on October 10, 2020.

Base Officers

Base Commander - Huey Dietrich	412 -486-2635	hueyfromglenshaw@aol.com
1st Vice - Carl Stigers	412 -995-8028	carstenstigers@verizon.net
2nd Vice - Rick Elster	412 -751-7967	relster565@comcast.net
Secretary - Jeff Simon	724 -502-4505	jeffsimon@zoominternet.net
Treasurer - Lee Bookwalter	412- 795-8337	booky143@verizon.net
Storekeeper - Frank Nicotra	412- 835-6540	nicotrafrank@gmail.com
Chaplain - Carl Stigers (National)	412 - 995-8028	carstenstigers@verizon.net
Past Base Commander - Joe Campisi	412 - 995-3201	icampisil@comcast.net
Newsletter Editor - Jack Sutherin	330 - 420-8064	jack.sutherin@comcast.net
Webmaster - Lee Bookwalter	412 - 795-8337	booky143@verizon.net
COB/Historian - Chad Underkoffler	724 - 809-6830	candj981@verizon.net
Photographer - OPEN		
SVD Hard Copy - Rick Elster	412 - 751-7967	rester565@comcast.net
Holland Club Chair - Joe Campisi	412 - 995-8028	icampisil@comcast.net
Asst. Holland Club - Dick Geyer	724 - 637-2995	dgdiving@gmail.com
Technology-Chair - Lou Hamill	412 - 445-3998	itgeek8088@gmail.com
Eagle Scout Chair - Vince Metz	412 - 613-5554	vincemetz007@hotmail.com

COMMANDERS CORNER:

SWABS: The September base meeting was just great. It has been two months since our last base meeting and I hope that will never happen again. We had around thirteen shipmates in attendance, along with three on ZOOM! Jeff Simon put the program all together and tied in with Booky at the Legion, which made for a great product to share with our home bound members.

Thanks go out to shipmate, Bat Masterson and his first mate, Kim for making the wonderful sandwiches and supplying the many bags of goodies – KUDOS U-2!

We received an award from the Canonsburg parade committee for their fourth of July parade. They informed us that we had won the best float award in the 2019 parade. Wow, that was the first time that received such an honor, along with a check! Many thanks to Gary Ireland and his crew on the construction of the Nautilus! <https://mailchi.mp/d95de9e17312/2019-fourth-of-july-parade-winner>

I was shocked and humbled to be notified by USSVI that I won the Meritorious Service Award for 2020, along with a plaque and patch. Thanks to Dick Geyer for submitting my name! He wrote a wonderful letter – I'm sure that helped!

We sent a special gift to Jason Deichler on his promotion to Captain. The gift was two sets of engraved glasses for his entertainment get-togethers with family and friends. Being an Officer and Gentleman, Jason sent us a pictorial album of our trips and get together with the Skipper and the Pittsburgh, as a thank you for the glassware. It is a treasured keep sake and memory of our times with him and the crew.

I received an e-mail from Jason, informing me that his last COB on the Pittsburgh, David Pope will be reaching out to me so that REQUIN sub vets can potentially adopt the IDAHO as our new submarine. I talked to Dave and it was wonderful to hear the kind words that he had to say about the crew of the Requin. His offer for us to support the Idaho was brought up at the base meeting and it was voted on 100% to support the Idaho. I will be talking to Chief Pope and let him know that we are privileged to except his kind offer.

All I heard from the base members was, “road trip, road trip, road trip.” We are like a bunch of kids in a candy store. It will be awesome to support the Idaho thru

New Construction, Commissioning, Seal Trials and on to Patrols. Hope all is going well with her and the new crew.

Speaking of the COB here are some pictures of him making Master Chief.



If these shirts are not your size, please order! 15- xxxLar - (15.75)each

BIRTHDAYS

ANNIVERSARIES

Member	First Mates	
Jim Biel 10-26-67	Noreen Biel 10-21	Larry-Barbara Boutelle 10-22
Eric Bookmiller 10-02-54	Kathy Dolgos 10-15	Jon-Connie Bruce 10-21
Jon Bruce 10-04-50	Kelly Gasprovic 10-25	Tom-Kathy Clark 10-15
Jason Deichler 10-31-77	Ruth Johnson 10-06	Rick-Judy Elster 10-09
John Ewalt 10-30-57	Ginny Lukasik 10-30	Rick-Mary Beth Flaugh 10-24
Rick Flaugh 10-18-60	Michelle Mears 10-25	Gerry-Linda Gaylor 10-08
Ron Horton 10-22-43	Kathy Schmidt 10-19	Chris-Peggy Gibson 10-28
Chuck Loskoch 10-29-46	Lisa Thompson 10-19	Eric-Danielle Greenwald 10-17
Shawn McGinty 10-30-69		Jim-Janice Johnston 10-24
Paul McKinsey 10-06-46		Kyle-Beth Klebache Lacey10-20
Ed Perlowitz 10-31-63		Allen-Karen McGee 10-21
Clyde Porter 10-01-54		James-Michael Mears 10-26
Carl Stigers 10-11-57		Bob-Jean Moore 10-19
James Wendell 11-24-45		Jeff-Lisa Thompson 10-01
		Tom -Jennifer Weible 10-26
		Huey-Edie Dietrich 10-15

NEW MEMBERS:

ADMIRAL RICHARD SEIF qualified in 1994 on the USS NEWPORT NEWS SSN750 as a LT. He is on active duty. He lives in Groton with his first mate Erin. The Admiral was recruited by shipmate Jim Phelan. The Admiral was his Pittsburgh Press paper boy in Murrysville, Pa. When asked if he wanted to join the Requin Base, he responded that he would be proud and honored to join the Pittsburgh Sub-Vets.

ENSIGN BRADLEY DAVIS qualified in 2011 on the USS LOUISIANA SSBN743 as a TM1(SS). He is on active duty. He was promoted to Ensign around August 1st. Brad is from Monaca, Pa. He is living in Newport R.I. and on the Admiral's staff. Brad was recruited by his Dad, Arthur, who will become a member of the base on Oct 1st as an associate member.

These two shipmates bring the base total of members up to 198. On Oct 1, we will process three more new members. That will bring the base to 201 members.

100% - WW2 shipmates, base officers and committee persons, who are eligible, have purchased Pa Submarine Veterans license plates, become life members of both USSVI and Requin Base – KUDOS shipmates.

I am waiting to hear from the national storekeeper when the 2021 calendars will be available along with cost of the calendars and shipping cost.

OUR NEST BASE MEETING WILL BE HELD ON OCTOBER 10, 2020, AT THE AMERICAN LEGION IN BADEN, PA., AT 12:30 HOURS.

Requin Base Meeting Minutes

September 12, 2020

Baden, PA

Base Commander Huey Dietrich called the meeting to order.

Attendees: Mike Allen, Eric Bookmiller, Lee Bookwalter, Joel Campisi, Huey Dietrich, Rick Elster, Dick Geyer, Lou Hamill, Bat Masterson, Mike Pellegrino, Jeff Simon, Carl Stigers, Jack Sutherin, John Swords, Chad Underkoffler, Mike Wyckoff

Base Commander Huey Dietrich gave the quote of the day: "Good ideas are not adopted automatically. They must be driven into practice with courageous impatience"

Requin History: September 18, 1945 Requin arrived at Staten Island, New York, to begin what would be in the words of Commander Cutter, "a dull and boring assignment" essentially becoming a target for sonar school ships. September 30, 1963 Requin completed her 5000th dive. September 4, 1990 Requin arrived at the Carnegie Science Center, Pittsburgh, PA

Base Commander Huey Dietrich: Let us at this time, with a moment of silent prayer, remember our Shipmates who made the supreme sacrifice that we may gather here in Peace. We dedicate this meeting to our Shipmates on Eternal Patrol, to perpetuate their memories in our lives and to honor our Shipmates on active duty in the service of the first line of defense of our Nation.

Boats Lost:

USS S-5 (SS 110) September 1, 1920

USS GRAYLING (SS 209) September 9, 1943

USS S-51 (SS 162) September 25, 1925

USS CISCO (SS 290) September 28, 1943

We also wish to remember our shipmate of the Requin Base, Donald Miller, Marion Irons, Don Lennox, and Monty Silvers. Finally, we honor remember all the brave submariners who died performing their duties aboard submarines, some individually and some in groups, but where the submarine itself was not lost.

Chaplain Carl Stigers gave the Invocation.

Members introduced themselves and the boats they qualified on.

Base Secretary Jeff Simon reported that Minutes of the previous base meeting were published in the SVD and on the Requin Base website. With no objections, the minutes were approved as published.

Treasurer Lee Bookwalter gave an accounting of base assets, expenditures, and deposits are available upon request. With no objections, the report was approved.

Other Reports:

Binnacle List: John Algee, Edie Dietrich, Floyd Underkoffler, Beverly Geyer

Membership stands at 198

Eternal Patrol: None

Shipmate Eric Bookmiller reported on Eagle Scouts presentations

Memorial And Ceremonies

All parades and ceremonies, including the Navy Ball, have been cancelled for the time being.

Old Business:

The Requin Base was presented with a certificate and check for \$200 as the best float in the Canonsburg 4th of July parade in 2019.

New Business:

The 2020 USSVI Meritorious Award was presented to Base Commander Huey Dietrich. Thanks to Dick Geyer who submitted the nomination to the Award Committee

For The Good Of The Order:

The Base sent a gift of special drinking glasses to Captain Jason Deichler on his promotion to CAPTAIN. He was promoted around September 1st and his family was in attendance.

Communications with COB of the USS Pittsburgh, Dave Pope who is now on the USS Idaho, was discussed. A motion to investigate the Base sponsoring the USS Idaho was approved. A motion to earmark \$1000 to this sponsorship effort was approved.

Our yearly gift of steaks was sent to Gary Ireland for his construction of our Nautilus parade float. A motion to pay for Gary's associate membership fees was approved.

Chaplain Carl Stigers gave the Benediction and blessing of today's meal.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned.

Next meeting: Baden PA at 1230 hours on October 10, 2019

AIRLINE CAPTAIN - You will not regret reading this one. I Promise

My lead flight attendant came to me and said, "We have an H.R. on this flight." (H.R. stands for Human Remains.)

"Are they military?" I asked.

Yes', she said.

'Is there an escort?' I asked.

'Yes, I've already assigned him a seat'.

'Would you please tell him to come to the Flight Deck. You can board him early," I said...

A short while later a young army sergeant entered the flight deck. He was the image of the perfectly dressed soldier. He introduced himself and I asked him about his soldier.

The escorts of these fallen soldiers talk about them as if they are still alive and still with us. 'My soldier is on his way back to Virginia,' he said. He proceeded to answer my questions, but offered no words.

I asked him if there was anything I could do for him and he said no.

I told him that he had the toughest job in the military, and that I appreciated the work that he does for the families of our fallen soldiers. The first officer and I got up out of our seats to shake his hand. He left the Flight Deck to find his seat.

We completed our preflight checks, pushed back and performed an uneventful departure. About 30 minutes into our flight, I received a call from the lead flight attendant in the cabin.

'I just found out the family of the soldier we are carrying, is also on board', she said. She then proceeded to tell me that the father, mother, wife and 2-year old daughter were escorting their son, husband, and father home. The family was upset because they were unable to see the container that the soldier was in before we left.

We were on our way to a major hub at which the family was going to wait four hours for the connecting flight home to Virginia. The father of the soldier told the flight attendant that knowing his son was below him in the cargo compartment and being unable to see him was too much for him and the family to bear. He had asked the flight attendant if there was anything that could be done to allow them to see him upon our arrival. The family wanted to be outside by the cargo door to watch the soldier being taken off the airplane.

I could hear the desperation in the flight attendants voice when she asked me if there was anything I could do. 'I'm on it', I said. I told her that I would get back to her.

Airborne communication with my company normally occurs in the form of e-mail like messages. I decided to bypass this system and contact my flight dispatcher directly on a secondary radio. There is a radio operator in the operations control center who connects you to the telephone of the dispatcher. I was in direct contact with the dispatcher. I explained the situation I had on board with the family and what it was the family wanted. He said he understood and that he would get back to me.

Two hours went by and I had not heard from the dispatcher. We were going to get busy soon and I needed to know what to tell the family. I sent a text message asking for an update. I saved the return message from the dispatcher and the following is the text:

'Captain, sorry it has taken so long to get back to you. There is policy on this now, and I had to check on a few things. Upon your arrival a dedicated escort team will meet the aircraft. The team will escort the family to the ramp and plane side. A van will be used to load the remains with a secondary van for the family.'

The family will be taken to their departure area and escorted into the terminal, where the remains can be seen on the ramp. It is a private area for the family only. When the connecting aircraft arrives, the family will be escorted onto the ramp and plane side to watch the remains being loaded for the final leg home.

Captain, most of us here in flight control are veterans. Please pass our condolences on to the family. Thanks.

I sent a message back, telling flight control thanks for a good job. I printed out the message and gave it to the lead flight attendant to pass on to the father. The lead flight attendant was very thankful and told me, 'You have no idea how much this will mean to them.'

Things started getting busy for the descent, approach and landing. After landing, we cleared the runway and taxied to the ramp area. The ramp is huge with 15 gates on either side of the alleyway. It is always a busy area with aircraft maneuvering every which way to enter and exit. When we entered the ramp and checked in with the ramp controller, we were told that all traffic was being held for us.

'There is a team in place to meet the aircraft', we were told. It looked like it was all coming together, then I realized that once we turned the seat belt sign off, everyone would stand up at once and delay the family from getting off the airplane. As we approached our gate, I asked the copilot to tell the ramp controller, we were going to stop short of the gate to make an announcement to the passengers. He did that and the ramp controller said, 'Take your time.'

I stopped the aircraft and set the parking brake. I pushed the public address button and said: 'Ladies and gentleman, this is your Captain speaking: I have stopped short of our gate to make a special announcement. We have a passenger on board who deserves our honor and respect. His name is Private XXXXXX, a soldier who recently lost his life. Private XXXXXX s under your feet in the cargo hold. Escorting him today is Army Sergeant XXXXXX. Also, on board are his father, mother, wife, and daughter. Your entire flight crew is asking for all passengers to remain in their seats to allow the family to exit the aircraft first. Thank you.'

We continued the turn to the gate, came to a stop and started our shutdown procedures. A couple of minutes later I opened the cockpit door. I found the two forward flight attendants crying, something you just do not see. I was told that after we came to a stop, every passenger on the aircraft stayed in their seats, waiting for the family to exit the aircraft.

When the family got up and gathered their things, a passenger slowly started to clap his hands. Moments later, more passengers joined in and soon the entire aircraft was clapping. Words of 'God Bless You', 'I'm sorry, thank you, be proud, and other kind words were uttered to the family as they made their way down the aisle and out of the airplane. They were escorted down to the ramp to finally be with their loved one.

Many of the passengers disembarking thanked me for the announcement I had made. They were just words, I told them, I could say them over and over again, but nothing I say will bring back that brave soldier.

I respectfully ask that all of you reflect on this event and the sacrifices that millions of our men and women have made to ensure our freedom and safety in these United States of AMERICA.

Foot note:

I know everyone who reads this will have tears in their eyes, including me. Prayer chain for our Military.. Don't break it! Please send this on after a short prayer for our service men and women.

Don't break it!

They die for me and mine and you and yours and deserve our honor and respect..

Prayer Request: When you receive this, please stop for a moment and say a prayer for our troops around the world... There is nothing attached. Just send this to people in your address book. Do not let it stop with you. Of all the gifts you could give a Marine, Soldier, Sailor, Airman, and others deployed in harm's way, prayer is the very best one.

GOD BLESS YOU!!!

Thank you all who have served, or are serving. We will not forget!!!!

MERITORIOUS AWARD 2020 - HUEY DIETRICH - REQUIN BASE COMMANDER

I am pleased to submit a special Meritorious Award on behalf of Huey Dietrich, Commander of the Requin Base, Pittsburgh, Pa. Our “Requin Base” operates its monthly meetings from the American Legion Post 641 at Baden, PA. The Base is also the proud sponsor of the USS Requin SS-481/SRS-481 located at the Carnegie Science Center (Pittsburgh), adjacent to the north shore on the Ohio River.

Huey Dietrich is recognized for performing his Commander duties above and beyond the call of expectations. His actions and words exemplify our National Creed with the motto of “Pride Runs Deep”. The Requin Base membership currently stands at 195 Shipmates, with about 50-members normally active for each monthly meeting, a daunting task for Huey in its own right, to keep organized with such an intensity of activity.

Requin Base meetings provide an interesting and informative format that supports our shipmates, in not only routine structured actions, but adds exciting presentations from knowledgeable speakers. After the opening minutes, each Base member has the opportunity to provide personal details of their submarine credentials, and allows new members to be introduced, and welcomed.

During each monthly meeting, Huey provides for our First Mates (wives and ladies) to be 100% integrated and encouraged, as the ladies are involved with their Shipmate’s experiences.

Because the Requin Base is large in numbers, with Shipmates dispersed from a wide geographical area, Huey has thoughtfully provided for quarterly meetings where a different location which is selected to allow participation from all outlying regions. This is a satisfying opportunity for many to attend periodic meetings who normally can’t participate because of travel concerns.

In September 10th-17th, 2015, the Requin Base hosted the USSVI 2015 National Convention, Pittsburgh. Huey Dietrich was at the helm, promoted and orchestrated this effort, along with his core of capable shipmates, to provide a highly successful convention.

On September 7th, 2019, with Huey’s capable guidance, the USS Requin celebrate its 25th Birthday Anniversary at the Springdale (PA) Veterans Association. This too was a huge success with Shipmates, First Mates and supporters enjoying a significant milestone.

On January 17rd, 2020 once again had Huey assembling a contingence of shipmates traveling to Bremerton, Washington for the USS Pittsburgh (SSN-720) inactivation ceremony, referred to as the “Decommissioning” event. At this ceremony, the U.S. Naval Undersea Museum at Keyport recognized the USS Pittsburgh’s 35 years of active service.

Huey sets an ambitious schedule for annual parades, targeting those activities that are traditional events such as Memorial Day, July Fourth, Labor Day, and Veterans Day. Our Base transports its own float during these parades, using the faithful, 1/10 scale, likeness of the USS Nautilus to capture the attention to the parading public. In addition, many of the holiday celebrations are multiple events where the parade occurs two or three time in that same day. Again, Huey’s strategic planning and efforts continues to keep our Base visible in the public’s eye.

The Requin Base has nine (9) current WWII submariner veterans. We pay close attention to these special Shipmates. As these few “rest their oar” in loss, with Huey’s guidance, an Honor Guard observance is provided for, in a unique funeral event, which includes a United States “Flag Presentation” ceremony.

There is so much more that can be added in submitting this Meritorious Award for Huey Dietrich. He is a special, and quality, Shipmate who is gracious in his abilities and compassion.

Thank you for this opportunity to consider Huey Dietrich’s prestigious award.

Thoughtfully submitted,

16 April 2020

Richard H. (Dick) Geyer, QM3 SS/DV

USSVI Life Member

USS Toro SS-422 (Diesel Boat Sailor)

USS John Marshall SSBN-611 (Plank Owner)