



**USSVI**  
**Public Relations**  
**Media & Recruiting**  
**Guide**  
**2022 Revision**

Written and Maintained by numerous people. All comments, recommendations and feedback please send to PR and Future Planning Committee.

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## Public Relations Defined

Public Relations? What is it really? How is your relationship with your public? Who is your public? How do they see you, your base and USSVI? Is it an accurate and deserved reputation you have? Why does your bases reputation really matter?

Public Relations is defined by the Public Relations Society of America as a “Strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics.” So, there you have it, but wait, who actually is the organization we are talking about and who is the public?

Well, the organization is simple, right? It is my base. It is how my base is perceived in my community, and this is correct. But even more importantly, how does your base reflect on the USSVI and how does your community see USSVI? How do we all relate to each other?

How about the public? Who is your public? We have many publics we need to relate to, and these can include:

- Our Members
- Our Potential Members
- The Media
- The General Public
- Local Officials
- Donors and Potential Donors

So, as you can see HOW we relate to our public depends a lot on which public it is and what the message is.

As stated in the American Legion’s Public Relations Guide, “Public Relations is primarily about IMAGE. And every member plays a role in communicating our image to the various publics to which we relate. The positive and negative things seen and heard at every level of the organization affect peoples’ perceptions of USSVI. Perception is reality for most people. Nobody wants to join an organization they do not feel positive about.”

So, what is the public's perception of USSVI. How do they see our "BRAND"? Our brand is important and needs to be protected. We have heard it all before a million times and know it to be true, you can do many things right but just one small mistake and that seems to be how things are remembered. This is important to remember as you go about your business representing your base and the USSVI.

USSVI understands that Bases may not yet have media expertise to help them promote themselves in a professional and effective manner. This PR Guide will offer you some ideas, tips, and templates to help you with your Public Relations Plan allowing you to get your bases and the USSVI "Brand" out there to your public.

### **The Military Public Relations Model**

Many of you may remember from your time on active duty seeing or hearing of the commands Public Affairs (Relations) Officer. As stated in the American Legion PR Guide for many years the US military has used a 3-tiered program. This includes:

**Media Relations** are critical in ensuring you have an outlet to get your message out to your community. It is important for you to identify the various media sources in your community and try to have a good working relationship with them. You want them to contact you when they want to run a story on veterans' issues and likewise when you want them to run a story promoting your base or event. A pre-established relationship is important in getting this done. Building these relationships will take real time and effort, but it will pay off.

**Internal Information** is how we keep our members informed of what is going on at the base as well as passing on national policy and programs of importance to all members. This includes newsletters, the internet, email, and social media. Keeping our members informed is critical to keeping our members, and it is important to understand that all of our members do not respond the same to all types of media. Some still do not use email, some won't read print articles, and so on. Try to meet all your members needs as informed members are much more likely to continue their membership than those who don't hear from us.

**Community/External Relations** Whether you are conducting a recruiting drive, blood drive or any event that you need to get the word out to your community we will need to reach people who are not members of your base or USSVI. This will not only involve coordination with local mass media, but other parts of your community which could include elected officials, schools, businesses, along with civic and religious organizations. As citizens of our communities, we should ask to be represented at various civic meetings and functions. Let your community get to know you and who you and your base are.

## Various Types of Media

We will be looking at 3 main types of media in this PR Guide to help your base in its mission to reach it's Public. These 3 types are Internal Media, External Media, and Social Media. All 3 of these types of media are inter-related and a good program will use all of them to help get your message out.

**Internal media** as it sounds is primarily designed to get the message out to your members and can include a base newspaper or newsletters. It can also include a base website. Having a good website is an especially important step in attracting new members today. Along with a base website various forms of social media are also excellent ways to pass out and handle internal media. These could include a Facebook Group/Page or maybe an Instagram Page or whatever the next thing to come along is. More on Social Media later though.

**External Media** is any type of media you would use to reach an audience outside your membership. It could include newspapers, tv or radio ads and again social media is used for you external communications. It is important to think about your target audience and what the message is and plan accordingly and act in a timely manner. Advance notice to media outlets is critical as they have limited space and plan their publications, etc. far in advance. Also, it is a good reason to have that pre-established relationship we talked about earlier. More details follow on external media later in this guide.

**Social Media** is quickly becoming one of the primary forms of communication not only for individuals but for companies and organizations. There is truly little if any cost involved, and it is relatively easy for anyone with a smartphone, tablet or PC to get started. It is an immensely powerful tool and can provide lots of great opportunities to help you communicate your message. Done properly there can be great rewards but also remember it is quite easy to cause harm too with the simple click or 2. This is not meant to scare you away from this form of media but make you think about what you are saying and to who before you put it out there. Social media is actually a particularly good way to reach our members, potential members, and the community. More on social media later in this guide.

## Recruiting and Retention

**Recruiting** new members is critical to the continued success of our organization. It is also one of the areas in which there are many questions and discussions on how we do this. Like everything else we have discussed so far there is no simple answer. It takes a program including various parts of everything we have discussed so far, and it needs to be maintained. There needs to be an active focus on this by all of our members but that being said it should not be the sole focus of your base. If we are doing things right our Shipmates will automatically be drawn to us and want to join. We will discuss more of this in the Recruiting section of this manual.

**Retention** is just as important as recruiting and possibly more so. Retention tells us how well we are doing. If we are losing members due to non-renewal as fast as they come, then maybe we are doing something wrong. We all will have some members who decide they want to step away for various reasons, but we need to try to minimize these numbers. We will also discuss some thoughts and ideas in this area later.

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**Appendix A**  
**EXTERNAL MEDIA**



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### **External/Mass Media:**

News is delivered in many forms today: newspapers, radio stations, TVs, personal computers, laptops, electronic tablets, and smart phones.

This list is growing in popularity thanks to hundreds of independent online news sites, and a peripheral of blogs, Facebook pages, Tweets, and Instagram messages--all vying for the attention of our audiences.

Before we disregard “old” media options, however, know that newspapers are struggling to reinvent themselves. In doing so, they are finding success on the Internet through online editions, website development and targeted email marketing.

### **Newspapers and other Print resources.**

1. In rural communities, as well as urban suburbs, there is a vast growth in small “local” newspapers that cater to the communities they serve. These papers are delivered door to door with the mail, or in area “take one” newsstands. In these smaller communities these publications have high cover-to-cover readership.
2. Because many newspapers have only a few reporters, editors eagerly welcome news releases and leads from the community. They also offer you free community service announcements/calendars opportunities, as well as low-cost advertising.
3. Get into the habit of writing at least six releases a year—don’t let the media forget you. It costs you nothing!

### **Do your Research—Don’t assume you know.**

1. Some people believe newspapers are a dying communication medium, but don’t be fooled. Readership is still high, whether it is viewed by someone sitting at home or while on public transportation flipping pages or by scanning news feeds using home computers/laptops, smart phones, and electronic tablets. News is “News”—it is the distribution method that is changing. Remember, checking for news has become a public past-time.

2. Public media (newspapers) work best for reaching potential members, or for community awareness. Research your community's local newspaper options. Ask? Do they have online editions of their papers? Space limitations may not allow the paper to print your release in its printed edition, but there is a high probability that it will be posted on their online edition.
3. Do you have free "shopper" newspapers in your communities? This type of newspaper begs for local news items and photographs and has strong local school coverage, which gives them high readership for young families . . . and don't laugh--seniors scan local obituaries. These publications are very common in rural and smaller suburbs, but many larger urban newspapers have developed shopper editions to increase their advertising revenue.
4. If you are new to submitting news releases. Get to know the editors and/or newspaper submission desks. Introduce yourself and your association (drop off a FAQ Sheet about your Base. (*See sample Base Fact Sheet Encl. (2)*). If you don't know the names of all the local papers, ask your neighbors and friends. If you are not familiar with an area, ask a waitress or local store clerk what newspapers they receive at their home?

Once you have all the publication names in your area, visit their editorial offices, and get to know them personally. Ask them these questions:

- a) What is their publication date?
- b) When is their deadline for article submission?
- c) How do they want articles submitted? Typed double-spaced? Mailed, emailed, dropped off at an office, or downloaded on their website?
- d) If you were to submit a photograph, what format do they require?
- e) Does the paper have a weekly community calendar? If so, ask what day it prints, and ask about their submission requirements. Use the community calendar to announce upcoming meetings—making sure that you invite potential submariners and enthusiasts to the meeting. Short and informative is the key.

**\*Don't assume** because you sent your community event info once that they will run it every month? Send them a notice or request every month with the date and time of the meeting noted. Send the notice ahead of time so it arrives at the submission desk at least one week before your meeting/event. Ask for their submission deadline for calendar events and mark this date on your “to-do” list and note it on your Media Contact List

- f) Get a copy of each newspaper in your area to review its writing style and format. What is the general length of articles? How do they structure their community calendar? How much detail is allowed on their printed and online community calendar? These differ greatly between papers.

## **How to Write a News Release**

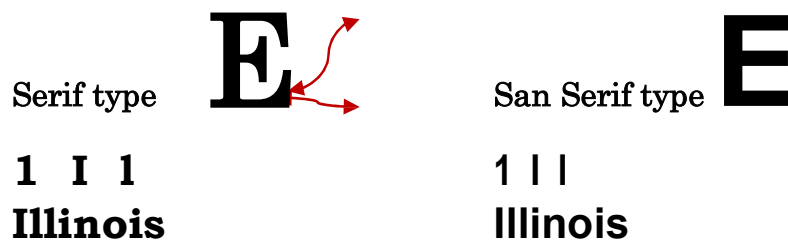
The frame of a good News Release has not changed. News is written in a format that records the most important information down to the least important. Since space in newspapers, radio, internet blogs, or other news media is limited, editors will often shorten a story, deleting information from the bottom up. Ask yourself this question? Does your news article effectively tell your story in the first two paragraphs? Here is how you get started:

1. **Design a template.** Develop a distinctive News Release format for your Base. *Encl. (4-6)* are sample news releases in a commonly accepted format. Notice the similarity in design—your organization name and/or logo is prominent, as is the release date and contact information.
2. **Double-Space.** News editors want their job to be as easy as possible. Your news release should be typed double-spaced (one-side only) for easy reading in case the editor has to manually retype your article into their own format. Also, it allows space for editors to make corrections, and/or additions in your copy.
3. **Word Processing TIP for electronic submissions.** Find out what type of software the publisher prefers if you plan to submit the article electronically. While Microsoft® Word, or a compatible program, is a common word processing system, online submissions often tell you not to paste a “Word” formatted document into their submission box. This is important because most online (electronic) submission platforms require you “cut” and “paste” your article into their online submission box. Frequently, you will be asked to save it in a “Text” or “Rich Text” format before you send it electronically. They may also recommend a specific font (type style) or format. Ask the paper what format it prefers. If this is your first time submitting an article online, don't be afraid to ask them for help.

The less work (editing/reformatting) the paper has to do, the better your chance of having your release published.

4. **Font Style TIP**—Type your release using a common Serif type font (i.e. Times Roman, Century Book, or similar.) Do not use San Serif fonts (such as Arial, Gothic, or Helvetica). Serif fonts, which have small projections at the top and bottom of characters, are easier to read. (San-Serif is a French word that means “without” serif.)

Why does this matter? See below sample. In a San-Serif font, the number 1, upper case I’s and lower-case L’s all look alike. The end characters in a Serif-type font make the font easier to read.



If an editor has trouble reading your news release, it will be tossed aside, or your information may be printed incorrectly.

5. **Paper.** Type your release doubled-spaced on 8-1/2x11”, plain-white paper, (one-side only).
6. **Slug Line.** Type a “slug” line/title above your lead paragraph that helps identify your news article. (i.e. an article about a recent Holland Club Ceremony would be something like: Submarine Veteran Earns Award)
7. **Lead Paragraph.** Begin the release with a solid Lead Paragraph--answering “Who” “What” “When”, “Where”, and sometimes “Why” and “How”. They all may not be answered in the first paragraph, but you must include them in the story—don’t leave readers with questions.

Your most important paragraph is your Lead. Leads may run up to 40 words when necessary, but shorter is best. Other sentences, which expand on the basic facts addressed in the Lead should be 15 words or less.

Place the most important facts at the top. The simplest and most effective lead is a Summary Lead, which tells the most important information in the article. They can also begin with a question, or an exact quote. A lead may have just one sentence or may carry over into two paragraphs. For example:

a) Summary Lead:

Join area veterans and their friends for a “Musical Tribute to the Troops” on November 10, at the Veteran’s Memorial Hall in Hometown,Ill., from 2 to 4 p.m.

b) Question Lead with follow up second paragraph:

Do flags and patriotic music brighten your day?

If so, join area veterans and their friends for a “Musical Tribute to the Troops” on November 10, at the Veteran’s Memorial Hall in Hometown,Ill., from 2 to 4 p.m.

c) Exact Quote:

“As a young boy, I lost my father during Vietnam,” states Jim Morrison,local retired submarine veteran. “He loved patriotic music, and so do I!”

Join Jim and his friends for a “Musical Tribute to the Troops”, Nov. 10,at the Veteran’s Memorial Hall in Hometown, Ill., from 2 to 4 p.m. The hosts are the USS Hometown Base of the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. (USSVI).

**EXTRA TIP--** The key is to be brief—small, simple words; short sentences; and simple paragraph construction makes a news article easier to read. If you have a long sentence, break it at the conjunction and add a period. Above all, avoid jargon.

8. **Paragraph Structure**. A general rule is to keep paragraphs short--no more than two sentences if possible. It is not like writing an essay--forget the topic sentence rule you learned in school.

**EXTRA TIP--** Take time to look at your daily newspapers for their paragraph and sentence structure—it will help you understand their writing style.

9. **Secondary Facts**. The paragraphs following the lead include secondary details. These paragraphs should be written in a descending order of value.
10. **Continuation to a second page**. If your story is carrying over to another page, center the word (MORE) at the end of the first page. End this page on a paragraph ending.

11. **Continued page numbering.** At the top of the second page of a continued story, type the page number and the article’s “slug” line in the top left-hand corner in the format shown below: This is important in case your pages get separated. The below sample is a release about an upcoming Base picnic.

2-2-2-2

Hometown Base Annual Picnic

Return a couple of spaces below this continuation heading to type the remainder of your copy.

12. **Ending Mark.** At the end of your news release, space down a couple of lines, and in the center of the line type two “pound signs/hash marks”: Note this tells the editor there are no more pages—the story has ended.

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13. **Boiler Plate Copy.** At the bottom of the last page of the news release, you can add a “small font size, “italicized” paragraph that describes your organization and purpose (called a Boiler Plate). (*See sample news releases, Encl 4-6*) Keep it brief, and remember to include it on every news release you send—if the editor or reporter wants to know who you are, this will answer some their questions quickly.

## How to Create a Media/Press Kit

Media Kits will be your best friend in gaining local media recognition.

1. Purchase some 2 pocket folders, with business card slots. Place information documents that will help you explain who you are. You want to make a good impression – keep it clean, clutter free, and professional. Blue portfolios are always good for Navy – just don't use white folders as they get lost on people's desks
2. Buy some white shipping labels (4" x 3-1/2") from a stationery store. On a computer, print your Base Name and a clean base logo or USSVI logo on the label. Affix this label on the front of the pocket folder. **TIP** -Avery 8164 sheets come with 6 labels per page. Print a whole page because you will use the other labels at a future date
3. Prepare your New Release about an upcoming meeting or event in which you are participating, or an "New Base Introduction" release, if you are a newly chartered).
4. Prepare a Base specific Fact Sheet (*sample template Encl (2)*). If you have a National or District/Regional Officer on a media visit with you, also include a USSVI Fact Sheet (*sample template Encl. (3)*)
5. Include, if available, a high-resolution photograph that relates to your news release (i.e. past event photo—you want happy faces showing.) Also, add a short photo caption on a separate sheet that identifies the people and event.
6. Include any special Base-specific brochures you might have. USSVI's National Office has some general brochures available for Base distribution. Contact them for details and samples. Some Bases have created their own.
7. Don't forget to put in your Business Card! If your Base doesn't have business cards, you may consider ordering some generic cards.
8. Now you have your documents. Place your news release on top in the right-hand side of the open portfolio. With any flyers or other information that relates to the news release behind it. On the left-hand side, place your Base Fact Sheet on top, followed by other Base Information. Make your kit simple—don't clutter it up with non-essential information.
9. You are now ready to head out for your Media Tour. Make sure you and any other Base members have their own copy of the Media Kit.



10. You are almost there! Call and make an appointment to visit with the editor, publisher, senior reporter, news director, or other specific individual (possibly one who handle's military and/or veterans' programs). Let them know you only need a couple minutes of their time. During the meeting get his/her business card. Do not mail or just leave a Media Kit at the front desk—you want to make sure it gets into the right hands. Your purpose is to speak with a news representative in person.

**TIP**—If you are a new Base, include a New Release about USSVI and your new Base. Make sure you invite members of the news media (Newspaper / TV station / Radio / or local blogger) to attend your meeting/event.

## Develop a Media Contact List

1. Research is the key to a Media Contact list. Look up on the Internet for the names of local newspapers, radio and TV stations in your area. Look beyond just the daily papers. Don't forget to include Public Radio stations too. Review this list annually, and make sure you pass it on if your Base's communication duties change hands.
2. A good resource for Newspapers in your area is: the American Society of Newspaper Editors' website at <https://www.asne.org/resources-associatons>. You will find a list of newspapers by State. Also look at your state's Press Association websites—they often list newspapers by daily or weekly editions.
3. For radio stations by state, look at <https://radio-locator.com/>. Find addresses, contact names, and phone numbers by visiting the media's website. It takes a little time to gather this information, but the time will be well worth it.
4. Ask your members, friends and family members what newspapers are distributed in their specific area. It is amazing how many business offices you frequent have local publications in sight—start being observant—and, jot down their names and publishers information.
5. Many newspaper publishers print multiple papers, under different names, throughout their region. When searching their website, look for these different publication names. This is important when you have a news release going out about your members--you can steer your release specifically to their hometown/community.
6. Now you have names, go online to the Paper's, Radio's, or TV's website, and find out the names of Editors, News Directors, etc. Get their names, phone numbers, and addresses. Document if it has a weekly or daily distribution and note its submission practices/rules.

## Go on a Media Tour—What to expect

7. **Media Tour TIPS**– It is important that the Base Commander, District, Regional, or National Officer accompany you on a media tour (if they are available). Here are some ideas that may warrant a Media Tour:
  - New Base officers elected.
  - District, Regional or National meeting being held in your area.
  - Member and/or Base receives a special recognition.
  - Special upcoming fundraising event for memorials and/or other community service activities.
  - New Base chartered.
  - Before Veterans Day and/or Submarine Birthday. Share a news tip (with contact information) about some of your colorful/memorable members—their military service and/or service to their family and community. Remind them there are submarine veterans within their community.
  - When a new publisher/editor comes to the paper or station, or when your normal contact person has been replaced, you should schedule a revisit for a re-introduction.
  - Make a list of your own noteworthy events that would merit exposure – there are many more ideas!
  
8. **What should I do and say during a Media Tour?**
  - a. Always call beforehand and make an appointment.
  - b. Dress professionally on these visits and proudly wear your vests and USSVI hats. Show your pride in being a member of a recognized national association. Remember, you are representing USSVI, as well as your own Base.
  - c. Be polite. “Thank” the editor/reporter upfront for taking time to speak with you.
  - d. Your job is to educate the public and news media during this routine communications process, so in the future, they think of you as an expert on submarine life, and on veteran’s needs. You want the media to come to you for quotes, and not just the American Legion, VFW, etc. You gain this trust by fostering the relationships you build.

- e. Avoid submarine jargon. As in your news release, keep your messages simple—but don't oversimplify.
- f. Illustrate "hard to understand" technical concepts. Emphasize and repeat key points. If it is necessary to use a technical term, and the reporter looks puzzled, stop, and explain it, or provide a glossary of technical words used in the world of submarines.
- g. Be prepared to answer questions on your personal reaction to news events. Remember you are seated before a member of the media as a member of an Association, think before you speak. The best advice is to keep on track. Avoid political rhetoric and confrontations. Be prepared with names and contact information for National Officers for Association-related questions.
- h. Do not over promise. Admit if you don't have an answer, but state, "I can connect you with the people who can answer that for you." Don't overlook the vast resources and expertise within your Base and USSVI—don't be afraid to ask for help.
- i. When leaving, shake their hands, and thank them again for their time. You want to leave on a positive note.

### **Even more exposure for your Base?**

#### **Here's a few suggestions:**

- a) Add a "Press Kit" link to your website's home page and/or Facebook page. You might also name the link: "Press Info." Press Info pages generally have the following items. Media representatives look for this type of link.
  - "About us" link – something that directs the reader to your Base's history/story.
  - Base or/or National Fact Sheet.
  - Base Media Contact (persons reporters can call for more information).
  - List of Base officers with contact info (email addresses/phone number).
  - Copies of Base Press Releases (links to PDF files).
- b) Visit other local veteran groups (American Legion, AMVETS, Navy Clubs, VFW, etc.) throughout your region and post information about USSVI and your Base. Many stores and other public locations allow you to post information about "not-for-profit" organizations. Ask if you can post a small poster. (*See Encl (7) – (9) for 8-1/2" x 11" posters*), print them and write in your Base's contact information if using poster #1– don't forget to add your website or Facebook page in your contact field.

- c) Gather the names and addresses of all the public libraries in your Base's Region. Consider purchasing a subscription of *American Submariner* from National through the Boat Sponsorship Program and have a copy of the magazine sent to each library. Don't forget the various ROTC programs in your local high schools and colleges—they would enjoy reading our national magazine.

**TIP:** Personalize this further by having the magazine(s) sent to you, where you can add a Base information label at the bottom of the cover with your Logo, Base Name, and Website. Hand-deliver the magazine to your libraries or ROTC units.

- d) VOLUNTEER within your community. The news media follows major community events. The more they see you with your USSVI gear/hats, the more people will see USSVI as a valued community member. If you are pictured in a local paper or on TV—it is called free advertising.
- e) Add your name to a Speakers Bureau. It is not that far-fetched to do. Identify the Service Clubs in your area (i.e. Rotary, Lions Club, Moose, Elks, Navy League, and even other local veteran groups). Identify one or two spokesmen in your Base who can share a story about life aboard a submarine. Write a letter to each and offer your Base's services to provide a meeting speaker. Presentation resources are available:
- 1) Check with USSVI's National Office about films/videos availability.
  - 2) A number of good You Tube videos are available online.
  - 3) One of your members may have the skills necessary to compile photographs into a PowerPoint presentation.

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**INTERNAL MEDIA**



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## Internal Media

As mentioned briefly in the intro, Internal Media is what we use to reach members of our organization. You may think why we would need to do this as they are already part of our base but many of our members do not or cannot attend our meetings and really have no other way to learn what is happening and going on other than the various methods your base uses for getting the word out. If we do not keep our members informed and give them opportunities to be engaged, then we run a very high likelihood of losing them and also not getting any new members from Submariners they may run across. Internal media is your base newsletter or newspaper. It could be your base Web Page, Facebook, Instagram or other social media program. It can be any one or a combination of all of these.

Thanks to a wealth of user-friendly software programs, you do not need to be a publishing expert to produce effective internal media. If done well, your internal mediums like your newsletter or web page can be an incentive for your members to renew or join. This section will focus on a few of these basic communication tools we call Internal Media.

### Newsletter/Newspaper

Every base needs to have a newsletter. There are always going to be base members who do not attend your meetings or other events for various reasons. Other than reading the American Submariner magazine this may be the only way you have to connect with them and other potential members. How often should you publish your newsletter is going to be different for each base. Larger bases and bases that have a lot of activity should probably have a monthly newsletter whereas smaller bases may not need to publish a newsletter more than quarterly, but all bases should have a newsletter and publish it regularly so that your member can stay informed.



The base newsletter should be entertaining, informative and positive. Stay away from politics and do not publish gossip or rumors and do not publish anything that may embarrass members. It should be well-written, timely and accurate.

Your newsletter should always be written with the intent of selling the USSVI. Maybe consider a regular column listing various reasons for belonging and benefits of being a member has. Keep in mind that even though your newsletter is for your members many outside the organization will likely get their hands on a copy through your web page or from one of your members.

The size of your newsletter will again depend on the size of your base and material you have to put in it. It may simply be a one-page Word document to a multi-page document with various sections. Make it work for you. Another item to note here is that due to the importance USSVI places on newsletters we award 4 prizes (based on your base's size) each year for newsletter of the year. Details on this are in the USSVI Awards manual.

Here are some tips to make your newsletter work:

- a) Have more than one person to provide content. Ask the base officers to contribute columns. Make sure to include an invitation and point of contact in each issue for readers to submit announcements or articles.
- b) Publish items that are only relevant to your base or USSVI.
- c) Make it visually pleasing. If using a photograph, it is far better and more appealing to use candid shot rather than the staged "grip and grin" pictures. Show the diversity of your membership by varying the pictures by war era, ethnicities and gender.
- d) Text should be clear concise, correct, consistent, and comprehensible.
- e) Proofread and then proofread again! Remember that spellcheck is your friend but not always going to catch everything. Ask for someone to proofread before publishing.
- f) Review other bases and organizations newsletters for ideas.
- g) Invest in an inexpensive writing guide. Many bookstores have these second hand for very reasonable prices.

- h) Even though a simple Word document may be more than satisfactory for your newsletter consider using publishing software of which some of the more popular programs include Microsoft Publisher and Apple Pages. There are many choices out there and some are even free. Use the tools that work best for you.

## **Website**

\*Note that at the time of this writing USSVI is still working on developing the new National Web page and it is expected to be available soon. When this happens and the capabilities are known this section will be further updated.

Most long time USSVI members are aware of the existing USSVI web page and associated TOOLS Database. When this first came out it was ahead of its time and especially useful. Through this web page all bases could have their own bases web page through the entry of a few details, and this was more than sufficient for our needs. Time has changed and though it is still functional and useful it is now rather outdated and not really the face we want our users (both members and potential members) to see. Additionally, upon roll out of the new National Web Page the ability for bases to have their own page through the National Page is doubtful. Your base needs a web page, and it should be visually appealing, easy to navigate to find basic information such as how to contact the base and join USSVI.

## **Where to Start?**

Building a website sounds like a daunting task or expensive to have someone else do it for you but it does not need to be so. There are numerous tools available to you to easily create and maintain a simple web page. There are also many web developers out there that for a reasonable charge can build you a basic web page and provide you tools to update it as the need arises. It is beyond the scope of this manual to provide recommendations on what services to use, how to develop your web page or what companies you may want to work with. We hope to give you some basics and provide you some things to think about so that you can start down the path to your base's web page.

## **Determine your Needs.**

Understand what kind of web presence you want and how do you plan to fund it before starting the creation of your website. Make a Plan! By doing so this will ultimately save you a lot of time and make your job easier as you go along.

- 1) What is the purpose of having your web site?
- 2) What resources are available to you and which will you use? Maybe you have someone in your base that is capable and willing to help build and maintain your site. What is their knowledge and skill level? Can they do this from scratch, have some knowledge or know absolutely nothing? Regardless of the situation there are solutions and resources available for each of these situations.
- 3) How will your site look and feel? Think about any media you currently use such as your newsletter, brochures, etc. and consider how to make the website compliment these items. Consider fonts, colors, and overall design.

## **Register a Domain Name**

If you do not already have a registered domain name (your web page address), even if you are not ready to build your site it is important to sign up for one. Most nonprofits choose to end their domain names with .org but it is your choice to pick what works best for you. Some choices will save you a couple of dollars but in the grand scheme of things is it really worth it. Also consider if you can afford it to register your domain with .com and .net also.

Determine what you want to name your page. USSVI recommends simply naming your page with your base name spelled out, for example bonefishbase.org or centraltexasbase.org. We recommend staying away from abbreviations. Make your domain name something that is easily recognizable. When people go to search for your base on the web they will likely type in the base name and search that first. Make it easy for them to find you.

There are numerous domain registrars out there that you can use to register your name. You will recognize some of these such as GoDaddy, HostGator, Namecheap and many more. Use the one you want and get your domain name registered so it is available when you want to use it. Your cost for this will likely be \$10-\$15 per year and in no case should it be over \$20. Many times, there are multiyear options available that will save you some money. Make sure you know when the domain will come up for renewal and are proactive in ensuring it gets renewed on time.

### **Determine a Web-Development Tool and Hosting Platform**

If you have any experienced web developers in your base this will be a much easier task as it makes sense to use the tools they are familiar with. There are many various web development tools out there and it is again your personal decision to use what works best for your needs. Some of these you may have heard of before such as Wix, Squarespace, WordPress and many more. Almost all of these tools are free to use with a caveat. Your web page needs to reside somewhere, have a host. The host is who you pay for the use of their servers to store and operate your web page. Some of the names of the hosting companies out there are HostGator, GoDaddy, Bluehost and many more. These hosts all cost money and depending on the host you chose to use many of them offer a lot of the various web development tools/programs out there. Again, there are multiyear plans and many of these hosts offer introductory rates. After your introductory rate run out hosting will cost you somewhere around \$100/year.

Your other option is to find a web developer that will work for/with you to build and maintain your webpage for you. There is more cost involved here but it does not need to be cost prohibitive. There are many reasonable web developers out there. Talk to them, don't take the first one that comes along, ask for veteran's discounts. You can find one that is reasonable and that will work for you. Something to think about when hiring a developer is who is going to maintain the page. Will they give you the tools to update information as needed or will you need to get them to do this. What is the cost for updates and maintenance down the road? Get it in writing, a contract.

## **Website Content**

### **Make your Site Media Friendly**

Your local media will be looking at your website. Make it friendly to them. The more friendly it is the more likely they are to come back and visit it more and tell their colleagues about it. This will aid you in getting the attention you desire from journalists, bloggers, and anyone else who may help promote your base.

### **Make it easy for journalists to find information.**

1. Include the names of your base officers and contact information for them.
2. Consider a downloadable media kit that has what your print media kit has.
3. Offer downloadable images (hi resolution and web ready) such as your base logo.
4. Have an easy-to-use contact form where visitors to your page can easily contact you with questions.

### **Make your Site Volunteer-Friendly**

1. Make it easy for visitors to your site to find information on how they can get involved.
2. Provide detailed information about volunteering and the person to contact and how to do so.
3. Have a base calendar listing all upcoming events for the next 6-12 months. Further out if you know them and keep it updated.

### **Make sure the Mission is Immediately Obvious to the Visitor.**

When someone comes to your website the page should load relatively quickly and when it comes up it should be obvious as to your mission without requiring the user to scroll or click anywhere. People today want the information quickly and in small bite size pieces. Consider placing the USSVI mission statement or an abbreviated one (with link to full statement) on the home page. There should also be a join now link on this page.

### **Make Sure Your Content is the Focal Point**

The design and appearance of your site is important, but it should not come at the expense of good accurate content. You want people to know what your mission is and who you are. You can design all sorts of fancy pop up and have various things scrolling in and out (think of the banner on your existing USSVI web page) but is this really helping getting your message out or being a distraction. Likely the latter.

### **Always Proofread**

This is self-explanatory. Mistakes give a negative impression. Remember, throughout your website you should always be telling USSVI and your base's story. If it is well told people will want to join.



**USSVI**  
**Public Relations**  
**Media And Recruiting**  
**Guide**  
**Appendix C**  
**SOCIAL MEDIA**



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## Social Media?

Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines it: *“as forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos)”*

Building a successful Social Media network for any organization can no longer be a “we’ll think about it” topic. Today, it is a MUST DO for all nonprofit organizations, including United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. (USSVI) and its Bases. It is critical if you want to expand your membership growth and communicate your unique mission story in an effective and cost-effective manner.

Social media platforms are not new. They have been around for a while and are now accepted by a large user base. Nonprofits, including several USSVI Bases, are finding Social Media helps them to reach various groups who care about Submariners, to increase their brand awareness, to find and connect with potential members, and to help with their local fundraising efforts.

### **Why should we use Social Media?**

The reality is, if we do not invest in Social Media as an organization, we will be left behind. Times are not only changing, but they HAVE changed, and we all must come out of our comfort zone and accept it if we plan to be here a decade from now. It means we must embrace the Internet and Social Media platforms which Submariners of all ages are using.

Humans by nature have been programmed to be socially active to a certain extent. Some people are more active, while others are less so. But we know submarine sailors are “social beasts,” who thrive on camaraderie--Just put two sub sailors in a closed room together and watch the sea stories fly!

Today’s digital world helps us extend this camaraderie through “no cost” Social Media platforms. It is time for Bases to take advantage of this growing communication network. What can you gain by taking this important step? **If done in a professional and business-like manner social media can add positive exposure to your Base’s mission and future success.** You may also find you can attract younger blood to your ranks when you reach out to a broader digital audience. Do not forget--USSVI’s future requires that we continually seek and retain younger members. We need to embrace today’s technology if we hope to reach potential members.



## Various Forms of Social Media Platforms

- 1. Facebook:** This is by far the most widely used social media platform today and is one of the best platforms for nonprofits, such as USSVI and its Bases, to get word out about its mission/purpose. You can share text posts, photographs/images, videos and links. You can set up either a Facebook Page or Group. USSVI believes that Facebook is the best social media tool we have to use currently out there and highly recommends all bases set up and use a Base Facebook page and consider using a group page for your members. More on that later.

### Who uses Facebook? (source--*Sprout Social*, in Chicago)

- Average age of users: 40.
  - 74% of users visit the site on daily basis.
  - Demographic breakdown of users by age:
    - 76% of 18-24 years old.
    - 84% of 25-30 years old.
    - 79% of 30-49 years old.
    - 68% of 50-64 years old.
    - 46% of 65+ years old.
  - Basically, almost everyone who uses the internet.
- 2. Instagram:** This is the fastest growing platform with 65 % between the age of 18 and 34. It is owned by Facebook. Though Instagram can be used from a PC it is designed primarily for use through mobile devices. Instagram is a highly visual platform that accepts images and videos. Think of the adage a picture is worth 1000 words. That is Instagram. Users post pictures and can add a very brief description or banner and send it out for their followers. As we hear more and more about Instagram, we are seeing numbers increase for those over the age of 34. USSVI believes that Instagram can be a good compliment to your bases social media toolbox but not the primary tool you use.

- 3. Twitter:** This platform is a microblogging (on-line broadcast medium that consists of short statements) where people interact with messages called tweets. A tweet is limited to 280 characters. Users can both actively tweet out to your followers and chose people to follow and be notified when they tweet something. We hear about “tweets” people make daily and many are used as a source for various news stories. Twitter has become known more for its political and “outrage culture” that is popular in the world today. Based on this it is very easy to offend someone and you will offend someone. As in all social media platforms Twitter could possibly be used effectively for your base but at this time USSVI does not recommend using twitter for promoting your base.
- 4. LinkedIn:** Social media experts differ on the number of users for this social media site for professionals. There estimates range from 310 million to more than 600 million. Members can search and apply for jobs, post their portfolios, share professional expertise, and publish their blogs about business specific topics. Do not just discard this social media platform for your Base. Check with Base members who might be on LinkedIn and discuss the possibilities of them sharing information about your Base.
- 5. Snapchat:** Younger users gravitate to this form of social media; they call it “Snaps” for its highly visual media platform. It is marketed as a “new type of camera” that allows users to add filters, and other special effects common in cameras. Photos/Videos on Snapchat are designed to disappear after they have been viewed. USSVI does not recommend Snapchat to be your main choice of social media, but it is one you should recognize as an option in certain circumstances.
- 6. Pinterest:** Think of Pinterest as a highly visual scrapbooking social media site. While this platform contains “themed boards,” The growth of Pinterest is attributed to its universal appeal across different age groups, while Snapchat caters primarily to a younger audience. Pinterest captures approximately 60% of women in the US. Do not think of Pinterest as just a site to seek creative ideas, it is also an excellent tool to help increase links back to your website. In fact, “it is more effective at steering traffic back to a website than any other social media source. Search submarines on Pinterest and you would be surprised at what you find.
- 7. Reddit:** This site allows users to engage with each other over relevant topics, normally sharing items from the news that they have read in other sources. It has a system where users can rate this news with an “up vote or down vote” and comment on it. It is most popular with American users, followed by those folks in the United Kingdom. Currently USSVI does not see Reddit as a good platform for a base to use to promote your base but worth looking into to keep up with topics that interest you related to submarines or whatever.

8. **You Tube:** You cannot search the Internet and not be exposed to *You Tube*. Users spend an average of 40 minutes watching videos on this platform. YouTube is an American video-sharing platform headquartered in California. Three former PayPal employees created the service in February 2005. Google bought the site in November 2006 for \$1.65 billion. YouTube now operates as one of Google's subsidiaries.

This site's popularity is the freedom and control it gives you to do anything you want with your content (within guidelines). It would be a perfect medium to introduce the mission of USSVI and your Base, to share a special event or Base/National memorial, or to develop a "how-to-do" navigation about your website or Facebook Page. The purposes are endless. Once you have a video on You Tube you can provide that link in various forms of social media for people to "click" on and watch the video and from there link to your base website.

A simple tip: Find a smiling narrator (preferably one of your younger members), if you want to attract a growing, younger membership. Make sure your script appeals to the camaraderie among submarine veterans and their families. You may find that different topics will require different narrators.

### **Final Thoughts**

The mistake by many veterans today is having the mindset that young people would not be interested in joining a veteran organization. You cannot assume this is true: It all depends on what the organization can offer them. The average age of a submariner is 22. If we want to reach out to them, begin when they finish their 2, 4 or 6-year stint in the submarine service—at least let them leave the Navy knowing that a submarine veteran's organization exists for them. The biggest complaint from young new/prospective USSVI members is: "We weren't told about USSVI when we were processed out of the Navy." Social Media can help us get this word out.

As for what type of social media to use that is not a one size fits all answer. USSVI highly recommends that all bases have a Facebook Page for their base. Facebook is still the most popular platform out there and a relatively easy way to provide information about your base. Consider using Instagram or other types of social media to complement each other but also remember that Quality is far more important than Quantity. There is nothing that will turn off people from our organization more than coming across an account that has not been active, updated or used in years indicating a lack of concern and especially accounts that are improperly ran and are used to post political views, items of sexual nature, etc. Social Media can be a great tool to help grow and promote your base. Used improperly like any tool it can do a lot of damage also.

## **USSVI's Presence on Social Media**

Currently there are numerous Facebook Pages and Groups out there that represent different components of our organization. Quite a few bases have taken stabs at creating Facebook Pages and/or Groups and there are some good ones out there. There are also some bad ones that have not been updated for years or contain material that does not represent the best interest of our organization.

USSVI started a fresh Facebook page shortly before the writing of this guide. There are currently a few pages out there that indicate they are National Level pages. Ultimately many of these will be merged into 1 Facebook Page. The name of the National Facebook page is: United States Submarine Veterans and the username is @USSVI. The goal of this page is to provide National level information about the organization, promote traffic to our website, aid in recruiting and overall promotion of our organization. If your base has an event, you would like the rest of the world to know about let us know either by FB Message, Sharing the event via FB, or email to the listed email address on the USSVI FB Page and we will publish and advertise it.

We would love to have some pictures and descriptions to post and share throughout our membership and potential members.

The National Page will also "like" and "follow" all other USSVI Pages out there that are current and follow basic guidelines whether you are a Region, District, or Base. This should help in allowing everyone to find and see what our shipmates are doing more easily. More importantly it will let other prospective members see who we are and what we are. We recommend each of the above start and maintain your own FB Page. This guide will help provide you some starting points if you are not familiar with Facebook.

Again, the goal of USSVI on social media is to help promote the organization and give people real time information and another means of recruiting. There are numerous Submarine groups out there with 1000's of members. Our intent is not to become another user group and compete with them, but to show the value in our organization and help it grow. Occasionally we will share significant posts on some of these groups that may be something they are interested in, but we do not want to compete with them. We should complement them as we do all our other base's FB Pages. Those groups by the way are a great way to discover potential members in your area to reach out to about joining USSVI.

## **Facebook Basics**

The intent of this guide is to help you figure out what kind of presence you want to maintain on Facebook, a Page, Group, or hopefully both. We will give some guidance on representing USSVI and provide basics on getting started. There are many tools and options available that we will not discuss here as you can easily get more information through the help guides and other sources. The platform is constantly updating and changing so this guide will not be all inclusive. Every Base, District, Region or whatever will have their own ideas of what best represents them and need to tailor their Page to fit them. This is just a basic guide with recommendations and guidance to get you started.

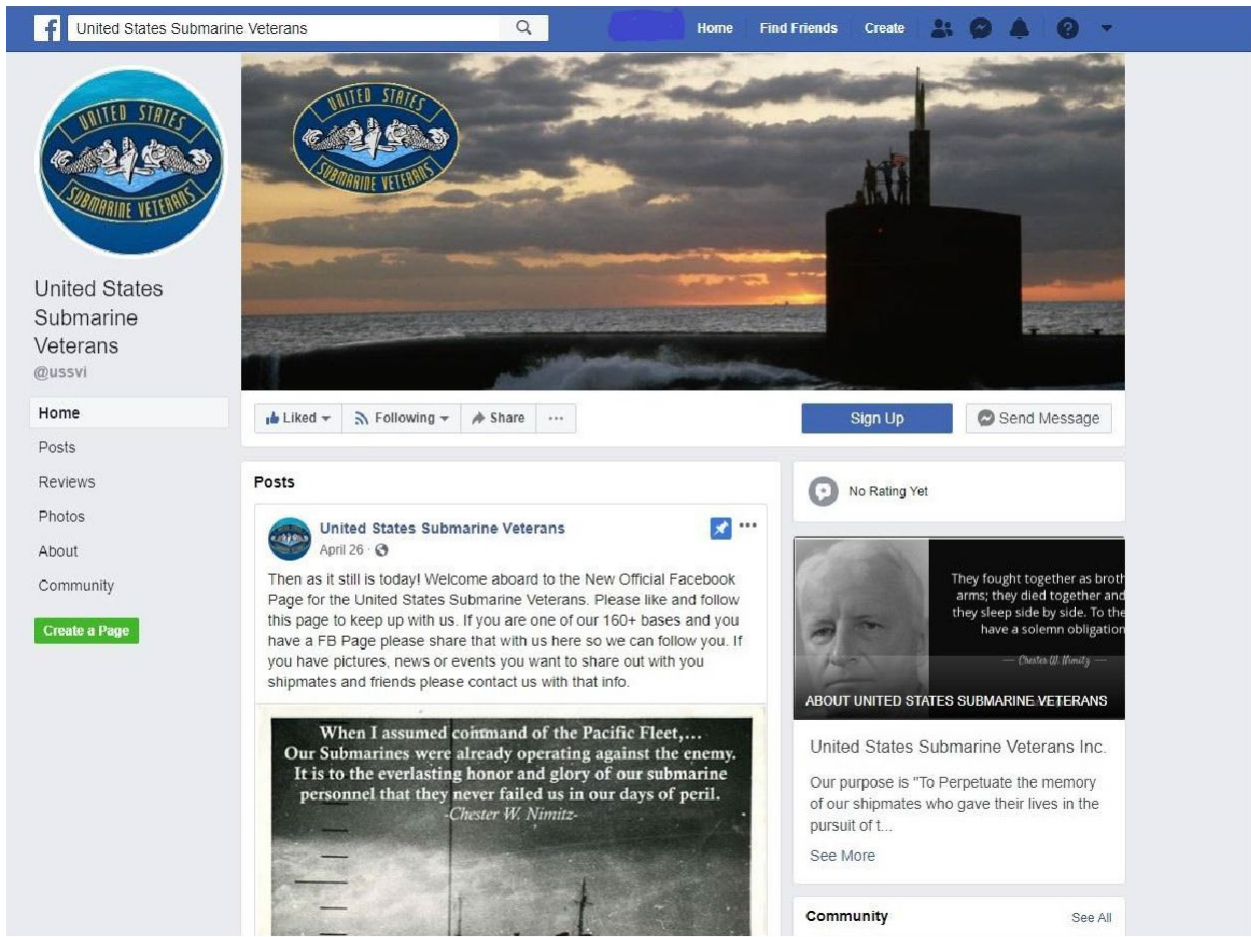
### **Page or Group?**

There is a difference between a Facebook Page and a Facebook Group and the uses of each are different. Both can be extremely helpful to your base but are used completely differently. With just a little thought and planning you can leverage both to help you both promote your base to the public, potential supporters, and new members along with giving a new and real time means of communication to your base members or any defined group of people you choose.

### **Pages**

Pages are basically a “Non-Personal” profile page. Most companies, organizations, even public figures have a Facebook Page. USSVI believes that all bases should strongly consider establishing a Facebook Page for your base. Think of a Facebook Page as like a business web site. It is an easy way to display important and interesting information about your base to everyone on the internet. Everything you put on your page is visible to anyone on the internet. Your page can and should be run by multiple people.

Here is an example of a Facebook Page:



(Fig. 1) Typical view of a Facebook Page using USSVI's Facebook Page

## Groups

Facebook Groups are a place for group conversation. A Facebook group will have a similar look to a Facebook Page, but it is designed as a tool for conversation among users with a similar interest. In this case it would be your base, district, region, etc. A group can be set up to be either private (only seen by members) or public (all visible on the internet). The group can dictate a set of rules and establish Administrators and Moderators for the group. You can control who joins and who cannot. A group is a great way for your base members or whoever you chose to be allowing the group to communicate with each other. Many bases already are using this feature and there are also numerous Submarine related groups out there with 1000's of users. Some are mild while others are very much like you used to remember back in the day on the boats. It's up to the admin to decide the rules and enforce them. How to set up a group is discussed on page 54.

## **Templates and Tabs**

There are numerous templates that you can choose from when you set up your base's Facebook page. These will determine the overall look of your page and the default position and items included on your page such as the tabs. Probably one of the more popular templates used among USSVI bases is the Non-Profit template. There is no right or wrong choice here and template selection will be discussed further in the section about setting up your page. You can change your template at any time. Tabs are initially selected based on the template you chose. Tabs are listed on the left-hand side of your page and will take the user directly to that section. Tabs also can be rearranged as the order in which they are listed on the page are the order of the contents of your page.

## **Call to Action Buttons**

Another default that comes when you select your template is what Buttons display on your page. A call-to-action Button is just that. It is a button that the page visitor clicks on to do something specific such as Learn More, Send a Message, Donate, Etc. These buttons are located just below the cover photo and there can be more than one and they can be modified to suit your needs. See the example Page 38 (Fig. 1) for an example of what a button is. There are 2 of them on the USSVI FB Page. The Sign-Up button takes the visitor directly to a membership application and the message button allows the visitor to send a message to USSVI. These buttons can be especially useful if used properly. Setting them up and usage will be discussed later on page 47.

## **Posts**

A post is an entry on your page letting your visitors know something. You can use Text, attach photos, videos and links to other FB Pages or web sites. Posts are information you want your visitors and followers to see. There are many schools of thought out there on what constitutes a good post but that is going to be different for everyone in some ways. You can see an example of a post on the Page in (Fig. 1) This post was made to welcome visitors to the new page and ask them to do something, Like and Follow USSVI. Liking and Following is like friending someone on a personal page. Posts will appear in the order you make them with the most recent on top. You can set them to expire or be there forever. You can also pin a post to the top of the page, so it stays there and is the first thing always seen by a visitor. In the example in (Fig. 1) you can see the blue pin indicating this post is pinned to the top of the page. Posts can be typed directly in and displayed immediately or written as a draft or a scheduled post. We recommend all posts are originally created as a draft or scheduled post. This is to allow review and checking prior to the post being displayed to the world. There are ways to edit your post after it displays but why take the chance when there are built in tools to help you.

## Events

Facebook allows you to create events. This is basically your bases calendar, and it is a very under-utilized feature. You can use events to send invitations to people, provide event details, get RSVPs, help you figure attendance and more. Much like many calendar applications you can name the event, set date and time, assign categories, and much more. Your followers can click on the event tab and will see a list in chronological order of all events coming up just like going to a calendar on a web page. Using events is explained further on page 53.

## Page and Usernames

The name of your page and your username are not the same things. The Page Name is what is displayed at the top of the page and what your page can be searched by. The Username is the name listed below the Page Name and is preceded by an @ symbol. You can see on the example page shown in (Fig.1) that United States Submarine Veterans is the page name, our most common name. This is what you want so that people can find you. USSVI recommend all bases, districts or regions follow a naming convention like: USSVI – Your Base’s Name. An example of this would be USSVI – Bowfin Base or USSVI – Western Region. If you already have a Facebook page and a name different than this naming convention, please consider changing it to match. It will only help other USSVI members find you.

The username is used in the web address for your Facebook Page. All Facebook pages start out with the URL: <https://www.facebook.com/> the next part of that will be whatever you chose for your username. As you can see in the example for the USSVI National Page it will be <https://www.facebook.com/ussvi> . USSVI recommends you use a simple, possibly abbreviated name of you base for your user name. This is not as critical as the Page Name but there should be some thought put into it to make sure it is like what your shipmates are doing in other base and makes sense.



## **Page Basics**

The intent of this next section is to give you a basic idea of what is involved in setting up a Facebook Page for your base. It is not meant to be an all-inclusive guide but just some general thoughts and recommendations we hope you will use. Facebook is constantly upgrading the way the program works so some of this information may possibly be a little different than what you see on your screen, but it will be awfully close. We intend to re-visit and update this guide annually. USSVI recommends you use the help section available on Facebook and consider You Tube as a source of great how-to videos from users across the world. Also, the device you are using will affect what you see and can do. Things look different on a PC, Cell Phone, Tablet, etc. but it is basically all the same.

## **Naming Your Page**

The very first thing you should consider when setting up your Facebook Page is what the name of the page will be. The name is important as it is what people will search for your base and what your base is known by. USSVI strongly recommends that your base name is in the format of: USSVI – Base Name. By starting it out with USSVI users out there can search USSVI on Facebook and your page should come up displayed along with all the other USSVI pages. It makes it easier for people to find you. The Base Name should be listed by the official name of your base as much as possible. There are some bases that have long names and consideration should be given to possible abbreviations, etc. but a long name is not usually that big of a hindrance in Facebook. Additionally, just write the name as you usually would, spaces between words, capitalized appropriately, no fancy underscores, etc. are needed. Here are a couple of examples of page names of existing Facebook pages out there that follow this naming convention:

USSVI-Bremerton Base

USSVI-Central Texas Base

And there are others out there and they are particularly good Facebook pages that spell out United States Submarine Veterans Inc. then base name and this is perfectly acceptable if you chose that, it's just more typing. Here is an example:

United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. Snug Harbor Base

United States Submarine Veterans Inc. – Charleston Base

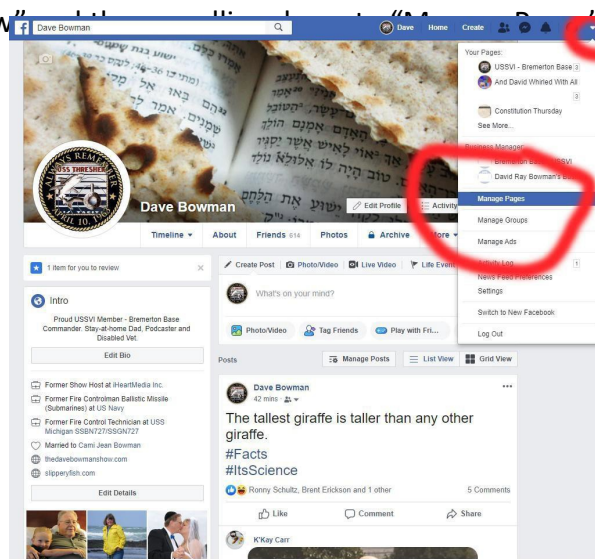
This is not an all-inclusive list of bases that have Facebook pages just a couple of examples for you to see and consider when deciding on your name. Whatever your choice we would like all bases to start with USSVI or United States Submarine Veterans Inc as an identifier of our brand. Your Facebook page should be and is individual to your base, district or whatever but they all represent the brand United States Submarine Veterans Inc and should do so properly.

## Create Your Page

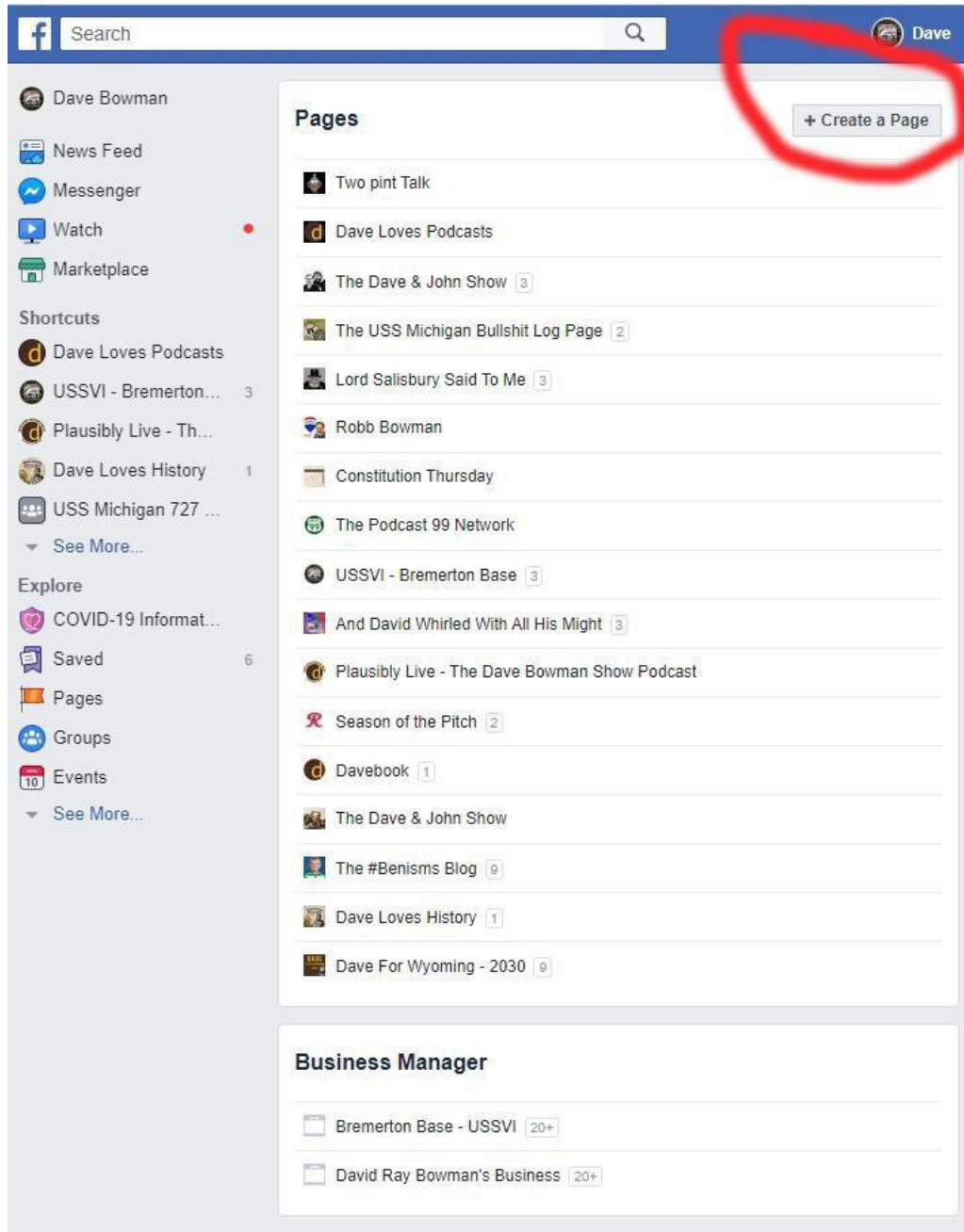
There are 2 different ways to create your base page and that is either through Facebook Business Manager or creating a managed page from your personal profile. At the present time we will be going over creating a managed page from your personal profile as that is the more common way currently for many of us. Future updates to this manual will include more information on Business Manager.

It is also important to realize that to create and manage a Facebook page for your base you need to have a personal Facebook account and login. If you do not have an account, you will need to create one or find someone in your organization that has one and see if they will manage this for you. We will discuss this in other sections but here is a good place to remind you that you are creating a page for your Base, not you. Your personal opinions, beliefs, values, etc. really should not be here. It should remain professional and reflect the values of USSVI and your base.

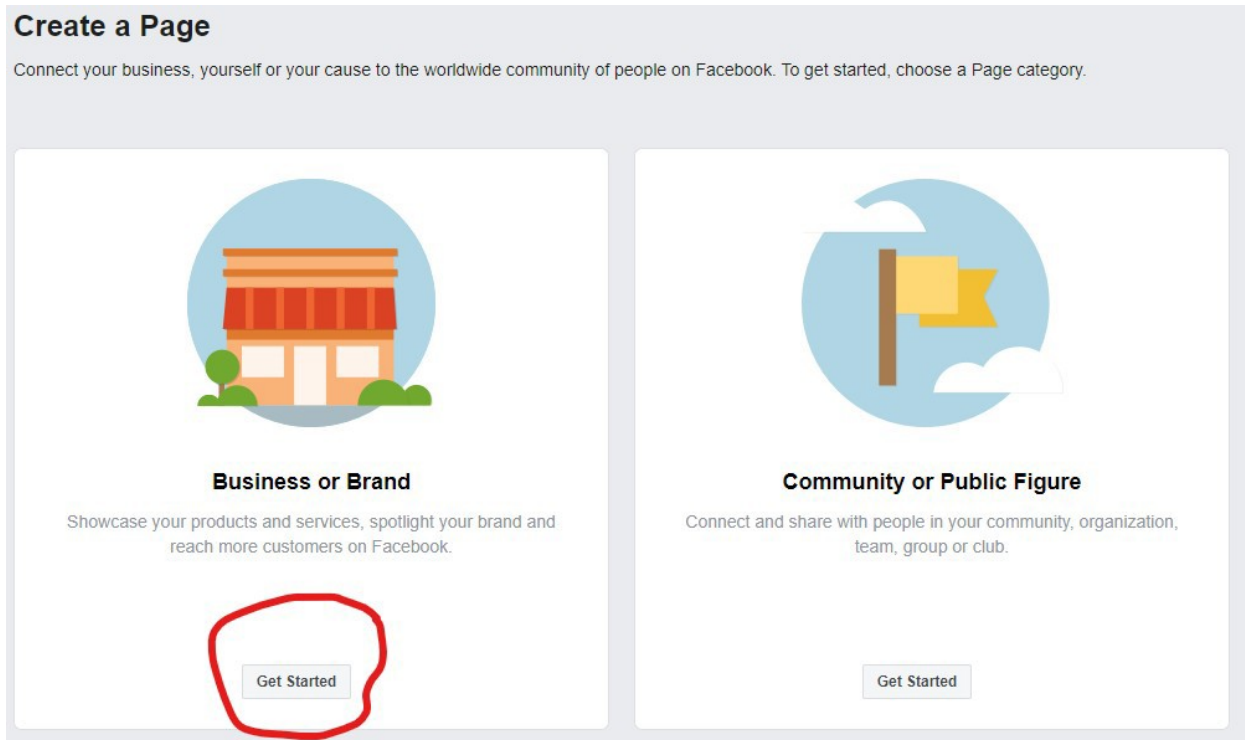
So let's create your page. You do this by going to the upper right of your personal page, clicking the "Down Arrow"



Next, in the upper right, you will see a tab to “+Create a Page.” Click on that and you are on your way!



You will then need to select either Business or Community and you should select business. Click on “Get Started”



And the following will come up where you can put in your name and define your organization. We recommend you use Nonprofit Organization as shown here. This is common for many of our bases and provides a good basic page layout for your base. ClickContinue and you are on your way.

**Business or Brand**  
Connect with customers, grow your audience and showcase your products with a free business Page.

Page name  
USSVI - Your Base Name

Category  
Nonprofit Organization

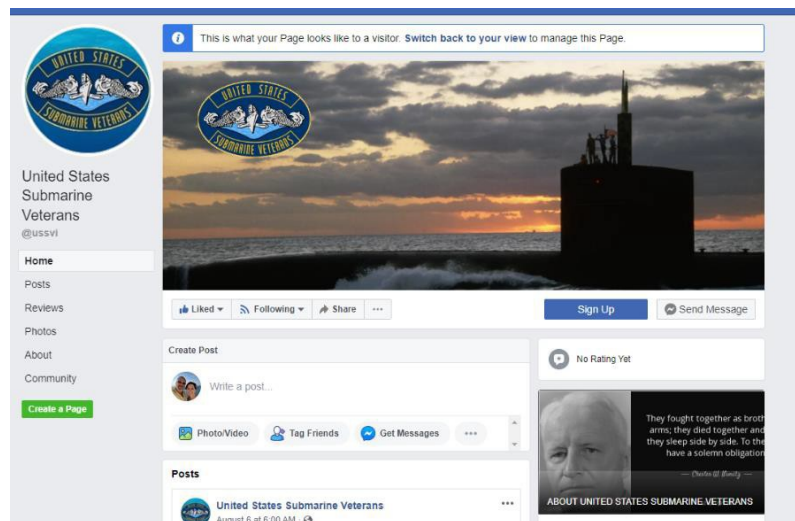
When you create a Page on Facebook the Pages, Groups and Events Policies apply.

[Continue](#)

## Add your Profile and Cover Pictures

Now that your page is created and named you are going to want to add your cover and profile pictures. The cover picture is the rectangular one that displays at the top of your Facebook page.

The size of this picture is roughly 800 x 350 pixels. The Profile Picture is the circular image that displays on the upper left of your page and also is the image that displays in other areas whenever your page is mentioned (tagged).



## Profile Pictures

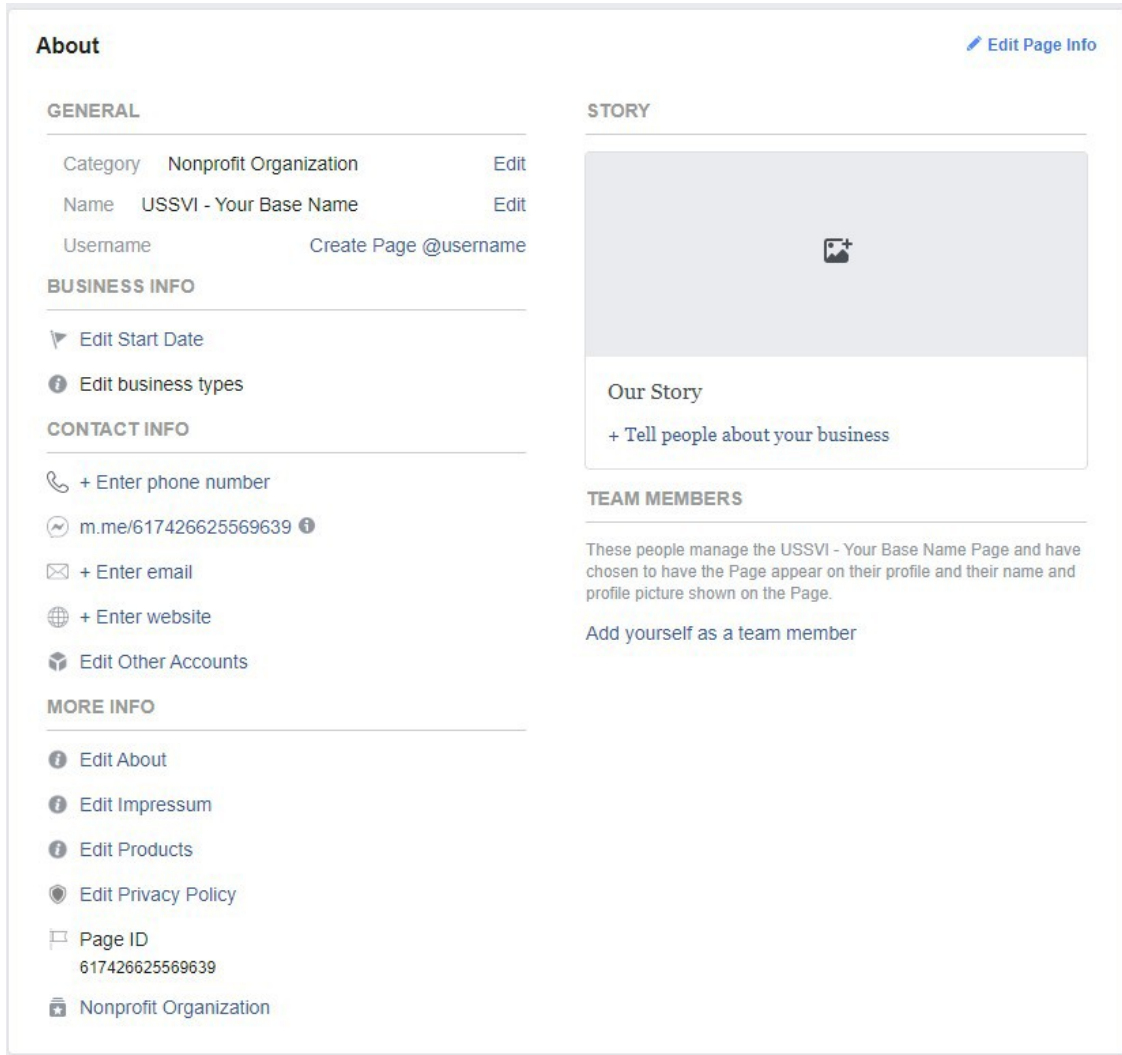
As stated above the profile picture is a circular picture that is displayed anytime your Facebook page is mentioned. One of the best options here especially if your base has a circular patch is the base patch image. Whatever you chose you will be able to change and modify it later to suit your needs. After setting your first profile picture go to your page and look at it and if it is what you like, if not then you can hover over it and click on update and go through the process to change it. You may need to play with where to place the circle to get the image you want, maybe increase or decrease your original picture size to make it fit. On the USSVI Facebook page due to the USSVI patch being oval we needed to shrink it and place it on another image then cut it out to get what we were looking for. It's your page, be creative and come up with something that fits your base.

## Cover Pictures

Think about what you want to display when visitors first come to your page. Of course it should be related to your base in some way. Some of the favorites are group pics of base members, Base floats, and submarine pictures, especially namesake submarines. Pick the pictures you want to try and make sure you have them downloaded onto your PC in an area that is easy to find. The cover picture is easier to work with than the profile but keep in mind the size. You will need to work with this one the same as your profile picture. It can be changed anytime.

## Add your Details.

One of the most overlooked parts of setting up a Facebook page is accurately filling in the about section. You can click on the about tab and you will get to a page that looks like this. Click on edit page info in the top right and it will let you fill in and enter any of this information. Make sure if you are listing a phone number or email that it is monitored and whoever is on thereceiving end of that knows this is being listed. If you have a base website, you will want to enter the URL here also.



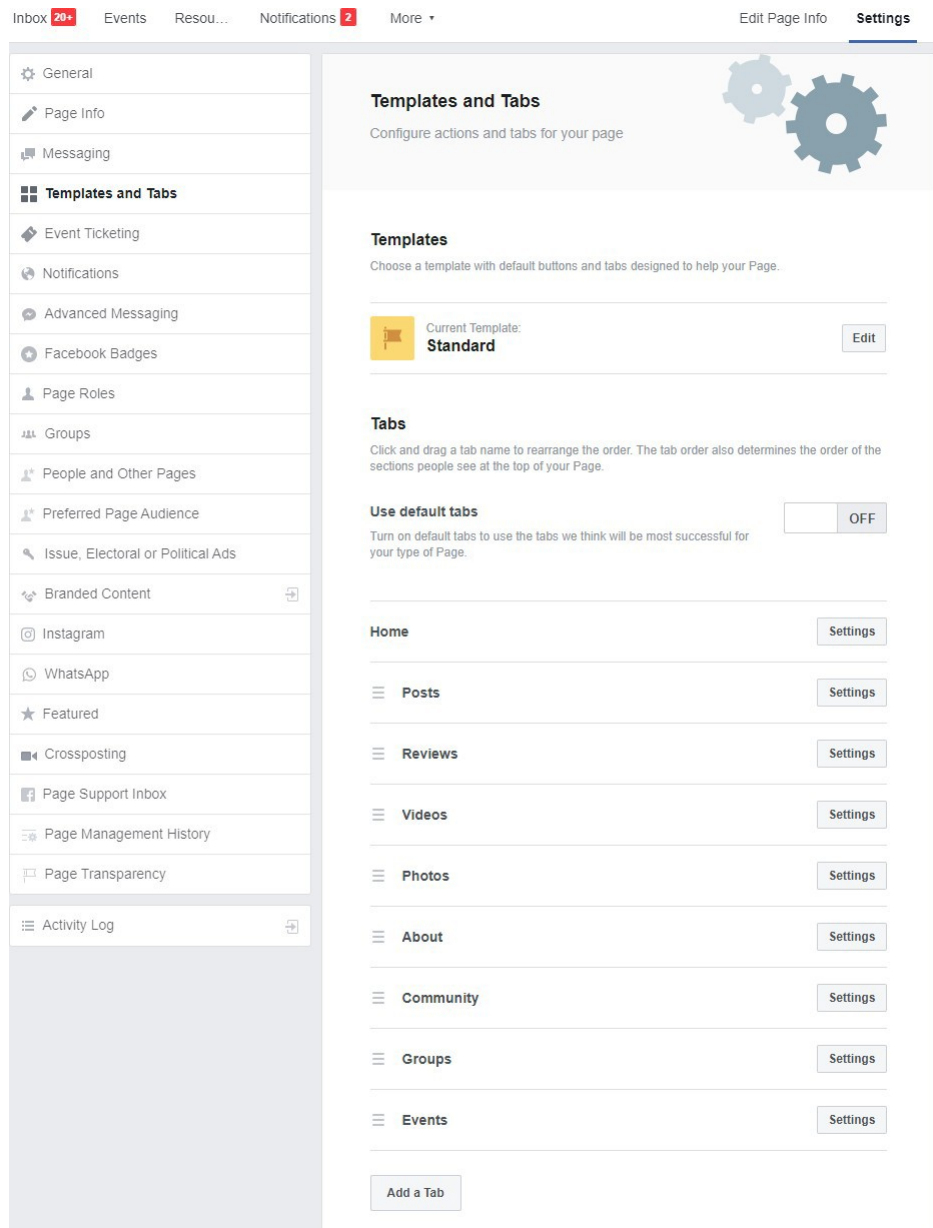
The screenshot shows the 'About' page for a Facebook page. The page is titled 'About' and has an 'Edit Page Info' link in the top right corner. The page is divided into several sections:

- GENERAL**:
  - Category: Nonprofit Organization (Edit)
  - Name: USSVI - Your Base Name (Edit)
  - Username: Create Page @username
- BUSINESS INFO**:
  - Edit Start Date
  - Edit business types
- CONTACT INFO**:
  - + Enter phone number
  - m.me/617426625569639 (Info)
  - + Enter email
  - + Enter website
  - Edit Other Accounts
- MORE INFO**:
  - Edit About
  - Edit Impressum
  - Edit Products
  - Edit Privacy Policy
  - Page ID: 617426625569639
  - Nonprofit Organization
- STORY**:
  - Our Story
  - + Tell people about your business
- TEAM MEMBERS**:
  - These people manage the USSVI - Your Base Name Page and have chosen to have the Page appear on their profile and their name and profile picture shown on the Page.
  - Add yourself as a team member

Make sure to add a picture and description in the Our Story section, This appears to visitors on the right side of the page. Maybe it is your base's history or maybe the purpose of USSVI but fill it in with good information and find a good picture to use here. It reflects on you and your base along with the organization.

## Tabs and Buttons

On your home page there is an assortment of tabs on the left hand side. You can select which tabs display here and in which order. You should take a look at what's here and what is available and set yours up to suit your needs. To do this click on the setting at the top of your page and then click on the Template and Tabs on the left hand side of the page that comes up. It will look something like this:



The screenshot shows the Facebook Page Settings interface for 'Templates and Tabs'. On the left is a navigation menu with options like General, Page Info, Messaging, and Templates and Tabs (which is selected). The main content area is titled 'Templates and Tabs' and includes a sub-header 'Configure actions and tabs for your page'. Under 'Templates', it shows the current template is 'Standard' with an 'Edit' button. Under 'Tabs', there is a toggle for 'Use default tabs' which is currently turned 'OFF'. Below this is a list of tabs: Home, Posts, Reviews, Videos, Photos, About, Community, Groups, and Events. Each tab has a 'Settings' button next to it. At the bottom of the list is an 'Add a Tab' button.

Follow the directions to add, delete and change the order of the tabs to what you desire.



There are also “Call to Action Buttons” or just Buttons just below your cover picture. These are very useful in directing people to your web page or allowing them to contact you via FB Messenger. You can set these up to link to most anything you want. Maybe a membership form like on the USSVI FB Page. In the example below there are 2 buttons. On the “Learn More” it takes the visitor to the base’s web page and the “Send Message” button sends a message to the page admin.



On your page click on the “Learn More” button and it will allow you to edit as needed and add more buttons as you desire.

### **Page Roles**

Depending on how you set up your page you were likely asked at one time to set up page roles. As the page owner you are set as the “Page Admin” which means you have full editing privileges on this page. Other people who are on Facebook can be added as administrators or editors. We recommend that you have at least one other administrator for your page. If something happens to you, you would need to have somebody to make changes and access the page. Remember administrators essentially “own” the page so makes sure it is somebody you trust.

### **Making Posts**

At this point you now have your page pretty much set up and it’s time for you to start making posts. Making a post is simply sending out some sort of message and it can include text, pictures, videos, and links to other thing on the internet. It is how you communicate with your followers. The next section will describe various aspects of making a post and give recommendations on what to and what not to do.



## **Posting**

### **Never Post in Haste**

When you make a post, you have the choice of making a post directly on your page and publishing it immediately or writing it in a draft or writing a scheduled post for later. We always recommend using draft or scheduled posts. By doing this it will help cut down on any mistakes such as spelling errors or maybe you put out something you wish you had not worded in a particular way. It allows you to review what you typed and how it will look including pictures, etc. on other platforms such as PC and mobile devices.

### **Leave out the Politics, Opinions, and Controversial Topics**

We understand that most bases are made up of Sub Sailors and none of them really have opinions or thoughts that are generally controversial, but it is important that you realize that this page represents your base and the USSVI organization. Politics, Sex, and other controversial items need to be left off here. Leave that stuff to your personal page or maybe even a private group discussed later on page 54. This page is meant to promote your base to the community, keep your followers informed of various news items and events happening and hopefully recruit new members. It should reflect the values of our organization not your individual thoughts and beliefs.

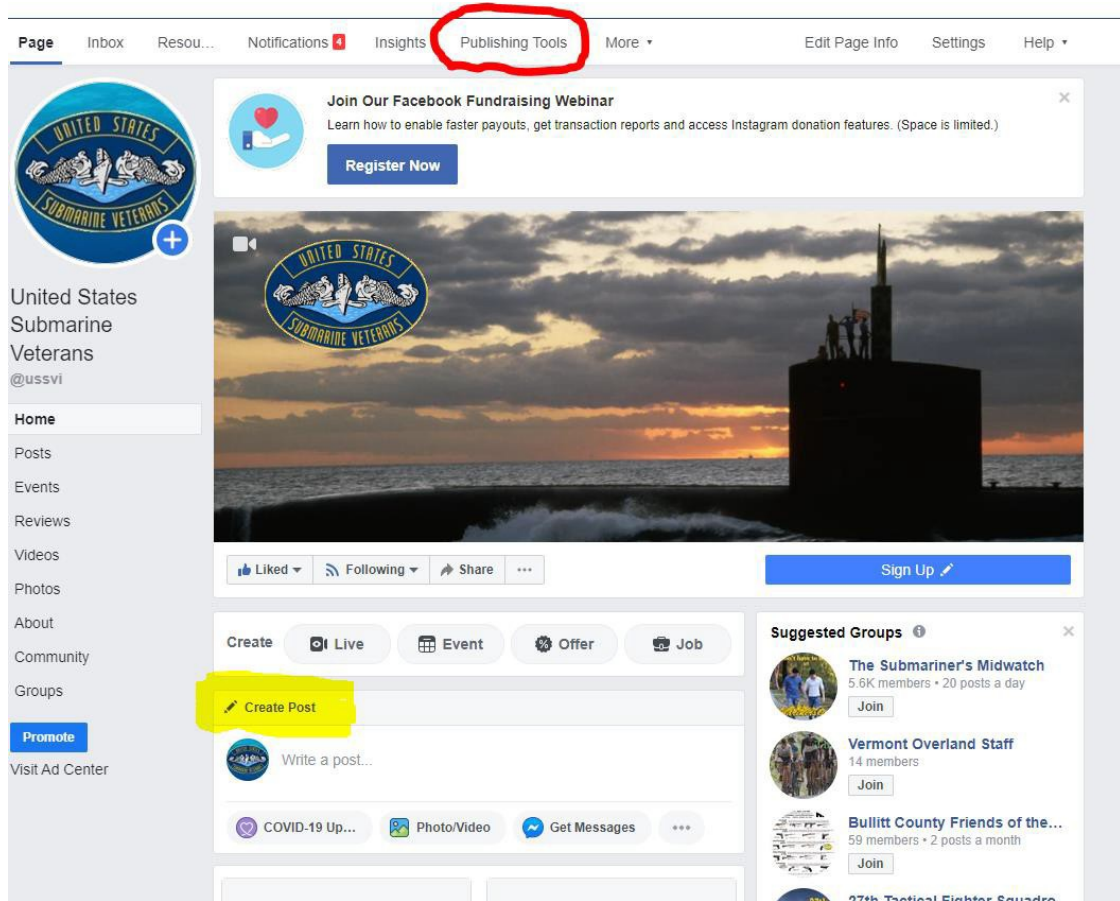
### **What to Post and How Often?**

Posts should always be Base related or at least submarine related. Pictures are good, especially of members participating in various events. Long posts are not always read so try to keep your post text to as few characters as possible but make sure the message is clear. There are many various submarine groups out there posting all sorts of submarine stuff and it's up to your base if you want to repeat this stuff or just use original items. You want to make posts frequently enough to keep people interested in your page but you also want to make your posts something people want to see. There is no right answer here as some people feel you need to post daily to keep up the traffic where others feel less more meaningful posts are the way to go. There is no true right or wrong strategy here but you certainly do not want to let your page go without posting for long periods of time. You also never want to post something controversial or things that can upset people. This is basic PR stuff. Save the opinions for your personal page or better yet personal conversations.

*\*Also keep in mind on your personal profile you may have if you represent a National Position, and it is listed in your profile or have your profile picture in your vest by default you are representing USSVI. Keep it professional in this case or remove the description of your USSVI roles and picture of you in your vest.*

## How to Make a Post

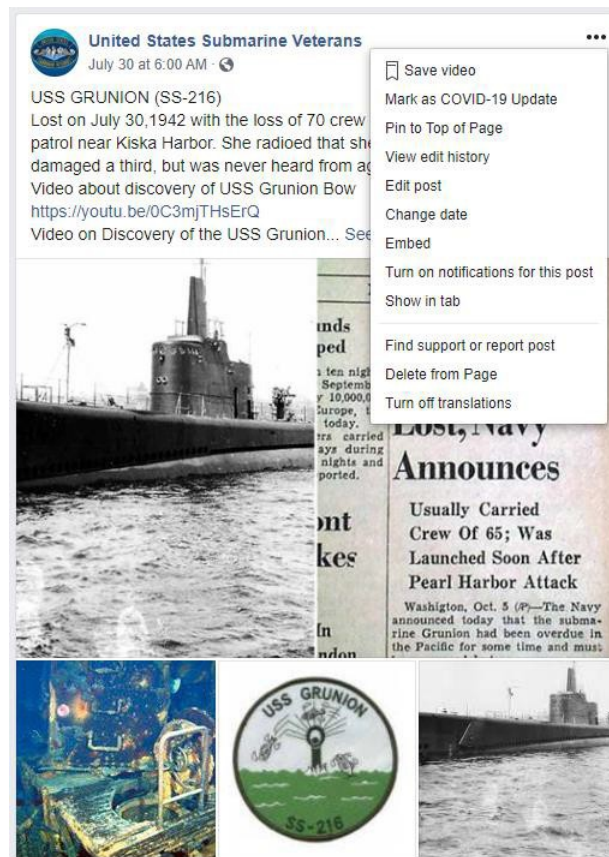
Making a post is easy. Type, add pictures and click on publish. Here are a few details.



On your page you will see an area labeled Create Post (highlighted in yellow above). If you want to send an immediate post simply click in the area named write a post and type and add pictures as desired and click on publish. As stated earlier we recommend not posting this way and using drafts or scheduling your posts. It forces you to take a little more time to think through what you are writing. To do this click on Publishing Tools (circled in Red above) This will take you to a page where you will have a lot more tools available to you. On the left you will see draft and scheduled post. Click on either, scheduled is better in our opinion and then you will be able to create your post. Notice that when you are creating your post there is a button near the bottom that says preview post. We highly recommend using that to view what your published post will look like both on a desktop and a mobile device. If you like what you have you can schedule it for publishing.

## Editing or Deleting a Post

It will happen sometime that you make a post and see that you made a mistake and want to edit it or even just delete it. This is not difficult to do and you need to know how to do this so that you can fix whatever error you made quickly before too many people see it. Simply click on the 3 horizontal dots in the top right corner of the post and the box shown below pops up. You can see the options you have such as edit or delete from page.



## Pinning a Post

Posts appear on your timeline in the order you post them, most recent on top. Sometimes you may make a post that you think is important and want pinned to the top of your timeline so that it is always the first post people see when they visit your page. You can unpin it anytime by following the same procedure. You will know if a post is pinned by the pushpin symbol that appears.

## Tagging Someone or Something

Tagging is simply identifying someone or something in your post and attaching a clickable name to their Facebook Page. This is helpful in spreading the word and also notifying the person, business, etc. that you mentioned them. This will help increase the views of your post and after all that is what we are trying to do. To tag someone they need to be Facebook users and have that option allowed. Here is an example of a post with a tag in it.

**USSVI Central Texas Base**  
July 17 at 4:46 PM · 🌐

As a USSVI member or follower of the Central Texas Base if you are seeing this post you realize that Nationally the USSVI awards scholarships annually and this year we awarded 52 scholarships out of 81 applicants. Frank and Charles Hood have written 3 books which the proceeds go directly to supporting the USSVI Charitable Foundation for this purpose. They have also written "Poopie Suits and Cowboy Boots" and "Sub Tales - Stories that Seldom Surface" Check out the link below and their FB Page: Poopie Suits & Cowboy Boots  
<http://thesilentervicespeaks.net/>

**VOLUME 1**

THESILENTSERVICESPEAKS.NET  
**The Silent Service Speaks – True Stories by Submariner Authors**

42 People Reached      9 Engagements      **Boost Post**

👍 5      1 Comment

👍 Like      💬 Comment      ➦ Share      🗨️

Most Relevant ▾

Comment as USSVI Central Texas Base      😊 📷 📷 📷

**Poopie Suits & Cowboy Boots** Thanks for posting this excellent Review. Much appreciated. Fraternally, Frank

Notice that Poopie Suits and Cowboy Boots is highlighted there. They were tagged and you can see by the comments that they were notified and responded positively. It is a good way to increase traffic. To tag someone or something simply type @name of who or whatever and it will pop up if tagging is allowed and click on it when you see what you want.

## Using Events

You should consider using events to list things your base is doing such as meeting, parade, Kaps for Kids events, etc. You can create an event by clicking on the event tab on the left hand side of the page and following the prompts provided. This is basically a way to publish your calendar on Facebook. You can also invite other Facebook users to the event which means they get a direct invitation and an opportunity to say whether they are attending. This helps in planning and also in getting the word out and driving up attendance.

## Summary of your Base Facebook Page

So you have just been taken through a very basic description of setting up a Facebook Page for your base. There are many other things you can do with Facebook and will learn them the more you use them. As stated earlier we highly recommend using the online help provided by Facebook and You Tube as a good source of information. There are many good sites out there that can help you also and then of course many of your base's members likely use Facebook. Get them to help you. Here are a few take aways:

- a. Your base needs an active Facebook presence
- b. This is a Base Facebook Page not your personal Page**
- c. **Leave out the Politics**, content of sexual nature and other controversial items.
- d. Keep it professional and in line with USSVI core values.
- e. Have more than 1 admin.
- f. Pictures, videos and web links are good. They create interest.
- g. Longer posts don't always get read.
- h. Tag as much as possible to help create interactions.
- i. There are basic analytics of your posts available. Use them to see specifics of what gets the most engagement. It will also show you good times to post.
- j. Facebook along with other social media platforms are great tools to help you promote your base, keep interest up and attract new members. Like any tool though, improperly used, it can be detrimental. Common sense and discretion will prevent those misuses and you should find that this helps your base grow.

## Facebook Groups

A Facebook group is similar to a chat room. There are many Submarine related Facebook Groups out there. Many of them have 1000's of members (many of which are not USSVI members). Some of these group are public, meaning everything they say and do is visible to the public and there are private groups meaning only member cans see what is posted. When you create a group you decide whether it will be public or private and what the requirements are for joining and rules for posting. You can assign other admins, moderators, etc. to help you keep up with the group. Setting up a group is similar to setting up a Facebook page. You may want to set up a group for your base if there is not one already. This is where if you feel the need you can be a little freer with your comments and opinions especially if it is a private group as this is coming from you as an individual. We do feel though that if you think it's something you should keep to yourself then probably putting it on the internet in any fashion should be avoided as nothing is truly private. Set up a group and give it a shot. Encourage your members to become part of it. Look for other groups to join and help spread the word about USSVI.

## Closing

This guide was not meant to be a how to manual but for the sake of many of our members who may not have the experience yet of using Facebook we wanted to get out some of the basics to hopefully encourage them to Dive in. Throughout the guide there are comments about proper etiquette and how to represent the USSVI brand. This is what we hope you take away most from this. Please remember the page you set up may be your page but the organization you are representing is much bigger and please do no harm.

At the time of the writing of this guide it is unknown the exact number of bases that have Facebook pages but there are many out there that do. Many are well kept, professional and up to date. There are also some out there that have not been used in years and some that seem to have represented a base at one time but now make posts that are of a personal nature. These pages either need to be taken down, deleted or cleaned up. We ask that you take a hard look at what you are doing and please keep it in line with our Guidelines.

This guide will be updated at least annually for the current time, and more frequently as the need arises as we learn more and add any policy.



**USSVI**  
**Public Relations**  
**Media & Recruiting**  
**Guide**  
**Appendix D**  
**Recruiting and Retention**



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## PR as it relates to Membership

Public Relations has a big impact on your membership team and it greatly affects your ability to recruit and retain your members. While growth is not and should never be the primary purpose of our organization, without growth, we cannot continue to effectively pursue our stated purposes. So, whether at the base, district, region, or national level we should have the goal to continually increase our membership.

Even though we add on average (Over the past 3 years 2019-2021) about 700 new members per year our overall membership has slowly been dropping. We lose on average about 1200 members per year. Part of these losses we can do very little about as it is our members departing on their Eternal Patrol. The other half though we do have some control over, and these are losses due to non-renewal of dues. There is some good news though and that is over the short term the numbers we are losing is starting to trend down slightly.

The purpose of this volume of the Public Relations Guide is to help you in your efforts in both, Recruiting new members and then even more importantly, Retaining our current members. There is no one magic silver bullet we can use here as what works well for one base may not work well for another, but we will provide some ideas to help you along. As in the other areas of this guide we will provide frequent updates and look for your feedback on what is and isn't working for your base.

## Recruiting

Recruiting is simply finding eligible men and women and convincing them that the USSVI is an organization worth their time, money and effort and getting them to join. Depending on the individual you are talking to this is different for everyone. It will be up to you and your members to figure this out and show them how USSVI and them fit together.

**Identify the Target Population** This means finding your potential members/applicants. We need to identify sources for finding our members of which include both Regular members and Associate members. Both are vital to the success of our organization.



\*Regular Membership is restricted to current and former U.S. Military personnel, who have been designated "Qualified in Submarines" by authorized U.S. Navy Command authority or were regular members of the U.S Submarine Veterans of World War II.

\*Associate membership is open to a person who is not eligible for regular membership but is sponsored by a Regular member and meets one of the following requirements:

-A family member up to two degrees of consanguinity (blood line relationship) of a Regular member, including adoptive children of the Regular member.

-A non-family member who has demonstrated a strong interest and support of the U.S. Submarine Service by their deeds or actions and is at least 16 years of age, subject to prior approval by the National Membership Chairman.

-A non-family U.S. Military service member, Active or Veteran, who has demonstrated a strong interest and support of the U.S. Submarine Service by their deeds or actions, subject to approval by the National Membership Chairman. If separated from the service, it must have been under honorable conditions.

So now how do you identify these people? The biggest thing to remember is that usually they are not going to come knock on our doors and ask to join. Some will and that is largely reflective of how well your local PR campaign is run. But unless you are one of our bases fortunate to be located near a US Navy Submarine Base such as Groton, Kings Bay, San Diego, etc., you will need to go out and find these men and women and they are out there all around us.

Think back to when you first found out about USSVI. Many of us also either did not know about or just were not interested in joining USSVI when we first got out of the Navy. Many of us joined after meeting another USSVI member and seeing their ballcap, vest or anything indicating they were a Submariner and then striking up a conversation. Many of these conversations lead to our filling out an application and joining. Same thing will still work, we just need to get in front of these people wherever they are. One of the easiest things to do then is show the brand (Dolphins, USSVI Logo, etc.) while out in public. If you wear ball caps make it a Submarine ball cap, maybe a shirt or jacket with the USSVI logo but let people see you are a Submariner and part of USSVI. Be ready to talk and show interest in the potential member as an individual, as a Submariner, not just a potential recruit. There are many other ways to get the brand out there also:

-The **Boat Sponsorship Program** is something many of us have heard of where you can sponsor a boat and have copies of the American Submariner magazine sent to the boat on behalf of you base. How about sponsoring your local N(J)ROTC unit or maybe there are some other veteran organizations you might want to have a copy to put out for potential members to see. Make a stamp and put the bases contact info in there. Each Base Commander or POC gets a few extra print copies of the magazine each printing for promotional purposes. Get them out there.

-How about our **Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS)** program. Are you going to recruit these young children, of course not but besides this being just a great opportunity to make some kids and their parents smile for a bit it gets exposure to the organization? The nurses, hospital staff, other individuals who are at the hospital and even media at times see this and are impressed with what you do and they will remember about “those Submariners” and tell someone who tells someone and so on. Someday they will tell one of your potential new members. We also have an **Eagle Scout** recognition program that can work in the same way. Both of these programs are outlined and discussed in more detail in other manuals. The big thing here is community outreach, find a need or cause that you are interested in and find a way to have your local base get involved. Doing good for the community will always reflect positively back on your base and the organization and ultimately lead to new members.

-Elsewhere in this manual we have already discussed the various media outlets that are out there and ways to get your message out, but you need to proactively seek out and request exposure through the local media. Many times, some of your local media outlets will provide a free community service announcement. Look at the local newspapers and various print media and have your base meetings placed in them. Many small-town papers print information like this free. Learn how to use these media outlets.

-**Social Media** also is a great way to find potential members along with promoting your base. In Facebook alone there many groups out there that are specifically for Submariners and there are literally 1000's of members of these groups who have never heard of or are not part of USSVI. This is not to say to get on board and start blasting 1MC announcements all over but get involved and at the right time and place share about your experience with USSVI. Keep in mind though saying or doing the wrong thing here can also have a very negative impact. Learn the tools and how to use them correctly. There are many pros and cons to the various social media platforms, but they are here to stay and not going away anytime soon. The platforms may change and evolve but they are here, and they are very popular and effective in getting out your message. This is discussed in detail in *Appendix 3* of this manual.

-**Posters** placed in conspicuous locations may help draw attention to your base. We have included a couple of examples in the back of this guide for you to use. Whatever you decide to place out there make sure it is professional and has contact information listed for your base. We do not recommend the pull tab styles as that looks unprofessional after a while. Just list your bases info on the poster. Additionally keep track of where you have placed these posters and check back on them and make sure they are kept in good shape and not forgotten about and left in a faded, worn out, condition. This is not the message you want to be out there for your base.

-Your base probably has one or 2 members who are good speakers and able to stand in front of a group of people and talk about Submarines and their stories. Get them listed with your local Chamber of Commerce as options for speakers for the various organizations in your community. Organizations such as LIONS, Rotary, Etc. They are always looking for speakers for their meetings and are a great way to get exposure for the base.

-Other **Veterans Organizations** are also a great place to find potential members. They are the long established and very large organizations such as the VFW, American Legion, AMVETS, Marine Corp League, MOWW. Work closely with them to promote your base and support them also. Also, Veterans orgs are having similar issues recruiting new members.

-**Parades.** Get in as many parades as you can stand and make sure you have flyers, business cards, etc. that you can hand out to anyone who might be interested. Make sure they have contact info on them and information about your base.

These are just a few ideas about how to get out and find potential members. This may get you in front of them but what to do then? As we started at the beginning of this volume find out about them. Ask about them, who they are, they're families when did they serve, where did they serve. Tell them about yourself when they ask. Somewhere in your conversation see if they will share their contact information with you so you or a member of your base can reach out to them later. Of course, share your info with them too but the best thing to do is to get their information and then follow up with them.

We hear a lot of the time that our younger generation just are not "joiners" and do not want to be part of organizations anymore. We believe this is not true though because if you look out there you will find many new Veterans groups out there that have exploding memberships and they are full of younger people. What is the difference is what we need to be asking ourselves? What we believe is they all have answered the question of What's In it For Me (WIFM). That sounds selfish but it's not and it's a good question. What do we offer that they would want to spend their time, energy and money supporting? Well for starters look at our Purpose, Know our Purpose and be able to talk about it knowledgeably and give examples of what your base does to support it. Know our history and be able to talk about it. Besides that, what does your base do to support local veterans and the community. Today, support for the military and Veterans has never been stronger and volunteerism is at all-time highs. We just need to answer a couple of easy questions and show that there is a reason for people to give of their time, effort, and money to be part of the USSVI. Show them their WIFM and you will be rewarded with a new member.

## Retention

OK, now your base is growing, and you have many new members, or maybe its not, but you want to keep your existing members, so we need to worry about retaining our members. Remember at the beginning of this volume we said we lose almost as many members due to non-renewal as we gain each year as new members. Why is that? Why would someone take the time and effort to fill out an application and give of their money just to not re-new. Why did they not find one connection that was worth the small financial investment to remain a member? After all they get the American Submariner, isn't that worth it? Actually, that is probably what some of our members think and maybe for a small percentage it might be enough but probably not for most.

Retention is probably the hardest part in maintaining your membership numbers. A good public relations team and plan can help make this an easier task. Using both Internal and External media you can help make your members more aware of both their value to the organization and the organizations value to the community. This will help answer the two main questions almost all of our new members tend to ask along with many of our old timers, what's in it for me and what do we do to help veterans?

We think it's important here before we go on to remind everyone about what USSVI's purpose and creed state. And our purpose is 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 may be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments, and pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution.*

*-In addition to perpetuating the memory of departed shipmates, USSVI shall provide a way for all submariners to gather for their mutual benefit and enjoyment. Our common heritage as submariners shall be strengthened by camaraderie, The USSVI supports a strong U.S. Submarine Force.*

*-The organization will engage in various projects and deeds that will bring about the perpetual remembrance of those shipmates who have given the supreme sacrifice. The organization will also endeavor to educate all third parties it comes in contact with about the services our submarine brothers performed and how their sacrifices made possible the freedom and lifestyle we enjoy today.*

In order to do the above we need people to do so. To get the people who will help do this we need to make them feel welcome and valued and give them reasons to give up their time and money. We need to form relationships with each other just like we did on the boats. We weren't always the best of friends, but we looked out for each other, and we can and should do the same now. Here's a few ideas for starters.

**New Member Welcome Letter** Many times or let's say most of the time when we get a new member, we make a lot of assumptions about them in that they know and understand what they are getting involved in and should be able to fill out the form, send in a check and come to our next meeting and be happy to do so. Maybe you are correct, but we believe in almost all cases we need to be more welcoming and show interest in our new people and make them feel valued because they are. This is where you can use some of the Internal Media resources we discuss elsewhere in this manual. Develop a standard welcome letter which lists basics about USSVI and your local base. Make sure to include meeting dates, times and locations and list the events outside of the meeting your base is involved in such as Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) or Scouting or whatever it is you do. List names and how to get in touch with people who run these events and make sure your new members know they are welcome to be an active participant.

**Base Welcome Packet** Once you have a Welcome Letter made why not go the extra step and create a standard, professional-looking Welcome Packet designed specifically for a new member. Keep it professional looking and informative, as you are representing a national organization with 12,000+ members.

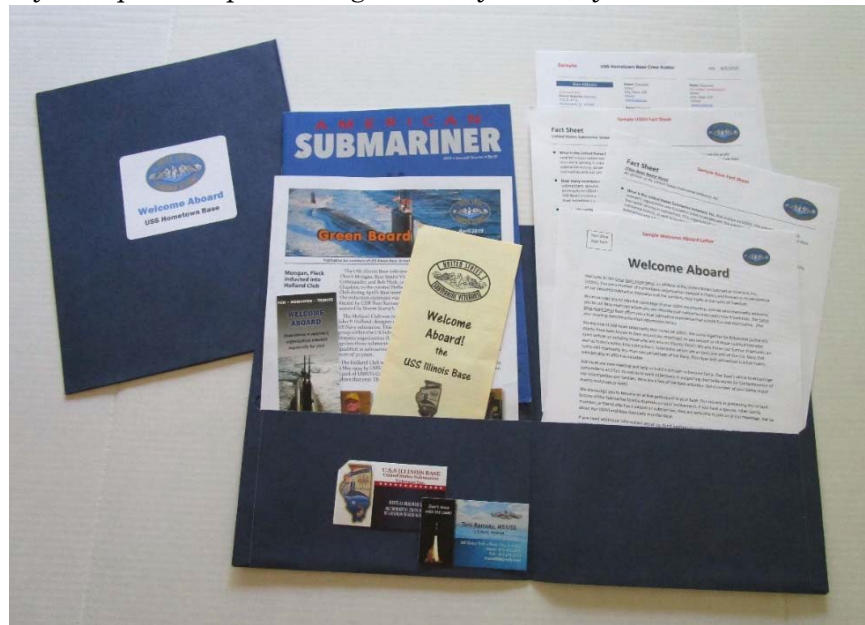
- Create a standard, professional-looking Welcome Packet designed specifically for a "new member." Keep it professional-looking and informative, as you are representing a national association with 12,200+ members.
- Purchase some two-pocket folders, with business card slots. You can buy shipping labels (such as Avery Shipping Labels #8164) at a stationery store, and print a label for the front of your folder with something such as shown below:



- Purchase 9x12 envelopes to mail your Welcome Packet to your new member after their application has been completed. Don't just hand it to them at the meeting— make them feel important and wanted by mailing it to them at their home after the meeting. This helps keep your connection open between meetings.

• **Member Welcome Packet\* should include:**

- 1) Welcome letter signed by the Base Commander. Create your letterhead with both the Base and USSVI logos. (*Welcome Letter template Encl (1)*)
- 2) Base and USSVI Fact Sheets. (*See Encl. (2) and (3)*)
- 3) Add any Base Brochure(s) if available. It is important to have something “Base” related. For example, the USS Illinois Base created its own colored 8-1/2” x 11” tri-fold brochure. However, to save money, it was printed in one color (black) on a cream-colored paper. (*Example on Encl. (10)*)
- 4) USSVI Brochure, if available. They can be ordered through the National Office Manager. Or, you can add a USSVI Fact Sheet.
- 5) Base Contact Sheet/Roster.
- 6) Copy of your current Base Newsletter.
- 7) Copy of last *American Submariner* magazine. (Note: Base Commanders receive three extra copies per issue for just this purpose.)
- 8) Base Business Card for your Commander and Ambassador. If you don’t have Base Business Cards, you should consider developing a card, with a location on the back of the card for you to put your personal contact information. They are quick to pass along and easy to carry.



Left Side above	Right Side above
Informational brochures about your Base/USSVI	Welcome Aboard Letter
Recent Base Newsletter	Your Base’s Fact Sheet
Recent Issue of <i>American Submariner</i>	USSVI Fact Sheet (if applicable)
Base and/or Base Commander Business Card	Member Roster/Contact Info

**New Member Announcement** When we have a new member join our base let your other members know. Introduce them at the meeting and give them a chance to share about themselves. Send out an email to the base welcoming the new member and share a picture and a short bio. Consider making a post on your base's social media outlets or on your base web page. Let others know about the new member and make them feel appreciated and valued.

**Conduct Surveys** By surveying members on a regular basis the base can learn what it is doing well and where it needs to improve in its members eyes. Surveys can be all inclusive or focus on a certain area. You can have your members rate various items and provide areas for them to provide comments and recommendations for change and improvement. We need to realize that we are all different and see things differently and be open to any and all feedback given and provide meaningful and thoughtful responses. Hopefully through this process your members will see you do listen to them and care enough to make changes for the better.

**Get out in the Community** Maybe there is a local Food Bank, maybe you base wants to take part in the Adopt A Highway Program, Volunteer at a local veteran's home or hospital. Anything where you can get out and do good, people will see a group of Submariners out there. A lot of this news will spread simply by word of mouth but do not hesitate to send News releases to local media outlets showing what you will be or have done. Make a tasteful Social Media post. This can and should be done and if done in a tasteful manner with humility can go a long way towards our stated purposes in that the public see our Submariners, other submariners want to join in and the public gets a chance to talk to and ask questions of our members. A win for everyone and this also goes a long way towards giving a real answer to your members in how I am helping veterans and the community and giving them purpose.

**Start a Shipmate Check Program** We depend a lot on members attending our meetings to share information and hear from them yet the average attendance at most of our meetings runs probably about 33% or less. That leaves 2/3's of our members out there who we are missing seeing and talking to regularly so how do we know how they are doing, their interest in the base and so on? How can we best know how to take care of each other if we don't see or talk to each other? One of the best ways to do this is to talk to them but for most bases the numbers make it difficult for the Base Commander or Chaplain to do this themselves. We strongly suggest organizing a program to reach out to all your members periodically and see how they are doing. The following information comes directly from the American Legions Buddy Check Program and has been modified to suit USSVI. Think of it as a sort of a phone tree like many of us were familiar with when we were serving. Many of our bases are doing this already and having great success in doing so.

## **Organize a Shipmate Check Program**

**Gather up a team** to call or, if possible, personally visit members and former members of your base. It is suggested to keep the ratio to less than 1 team member/10 base members.

**Gather up Contact Information** from the various sources available to you such as the membership roles on the web or your bases records. List the names, addresses, phone numbers, and any other information that may be helpful in your team reaching out to them. Make sure the information is recorded on a spreadsheet or document and easily readable.

**Divide the names up into lists** for the team members to use. Consider any personal relationships that may already be in place. Also consider other things such as geographical location to each other. Many of our bases are spread throughout a very large area and it would be helpful to have the group for one individual in a certain area if possible.

**Make a list of resources both** local and National that are available to help veterans. Things like financial aid, employment opportunities, veterans' services, home and auto repair, caregiver services, and so on. Having this list of resources at your fingertips will help give the caller confidence to address any needs that may come up, whatever they may be. Of course, if a need arises where there is no known solution or resource at the time make sure to assure them you will check with base leadership and get back with them asap.

**Start Calling (or visiting)** to see how your members are doing. Ask if they need anything and invite them to any base event or activity coming up on the base calendar. During the Fall of the year one of the items to discuss and remind people about is the dues renewal process and their options to do so including multiyear options. Have a sample script available to help guide you through the call and give things to talk about. Always remember to thank your shipmate both at the beginning and end of your call. Also please no texts or emails for this. It should be personal at least to the level of a phone call. Following up using text or email is certainly fine but talk to your shipmates. Make sure to always leave your contact information in case your shipmate ever needs anything or has any questions.

**Record Information** including when an attempt to call was made, messages left and results of the call. Please make sure to keep the privacy of your members in mind and do not share this information with anyone outside the team unless specifically given permission to do so.



We wish there was a simple black and white checklist on what to do which would result in 100% retention or ensure you recruit “x” number of new members annually but there isn’t. All of our base’s are located in different areas and have many different challenges. But we also have unique opportunities. It is up to you and your base to figure out what works best. Maybe you will discover something that others can use. Biggest take away here is that we are all human beings, we all have families and jobs and many things that draw on our valuable time. Let’s find something that makes it worth our members time and efforts to be part of our team. We also all have a common bond of being “Qualified”. Yes we all qualified at different times on different boats but remember, none of us control when we were born, we all volunteered for submarine service and very few if any of us had final say in where we served and what boats we served on. We all went where we were told and did what was expected of us and performed our duties to the best of our abilities. Remember this and develop relationships with each other, find out what each of us values and respond accordingly. It will pay off in the end with new members and members who decide to stick with us.

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Your Base  
logo here

## ENCLOSURE 1:Welcome Aboard Letter



# Welcome Aboard

Welcome to the *(your Base name here)*, an affiliate of the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. (USSVI). You are a member of a prestigious organization steeped in history and formed in remembrance of our departed submarine shipmates and the sacrifices they made in the name of freedom.

We encourage you to take full advantage of your USSVI membership, and we wholeheartedly welcome you to our Base meetings where you can rekindle past memories and create new friendships. The *(your Base name here)* Base offers you a true submarine experience that is both fun and informative. *(Put your meeting date/time/location information here.)*

We are one of 168 bases nationwide that comprise USSVI. We come together for fellowship *(a few sea stories have been known to float around our meetings)*, to pay respect to all those submariners who came before us including those who are now on Eternal Patrol. We also honor our former shipmates, as well as today's active-duty submariners. Submarine sailors are an exclusive arm of the U.S. Navy that today still represents less than two percentage of the Navy. This close-knit connection is what makes membership in USSVI so valuable.

Join us at our next meeting and help us build a stronger submarine force. Our Base's aim is to encourage camaraderie and fun, as well as to work collectively in supporting charitable works for the betterment of our communities and families. Here are a few of the Base activities: *(list a number of your bases major events and projects here)*.

We encourage you to become an active participant in your Base. Our success in preserving the unique history of the Submarine Service depends on your involvement. If you have a spouse, other family member, or friend who has a passion in submarines, they are welcome to join us at our meetings. Ask us about our USSVI and Base Associate memberships.

If you need additional information about us, don't hesitate to contact me at *(Base CDR name here and contact info here)*. You can also reach us at *(website link)* or find us on Facebook at *(Facebook link)*.

Sincerely,

*(Base CDR name here)*, Base Commander  
*(Your Base Name here)*

Enclosures

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## ENCLOSURE 2: Sample Base Fact Sheet



### Fact Sheet

**(Your Base Name Here)**

*An affiliate of the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.*

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- **What is the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.** Also known as USSVI, this premier not-for-profit veteran's organization was formed in 1964 to perpetuate the memory of those submariners who lost their lives while serving in submarines. This organization continues today to maintain our country's rich submarine history, as well as to strengthen public awareness regarding the vital roles played by both submarines and sub sailors, both in years past and today.
- **How many members are associated with USSVI?** Membership is open to submarine veterans, active-duty submariners, spouses, friends, and fans of submarines. There are more than 12,230 members who participate in USSVI through local Bases, Internet bases, or as members-at-large.
- **What is the (Your Base Name here) Base?** The strength and backbone of USSVI is its Base structure. Our Base, one of approximately 168 USSVI Bases organized throughout the country, meets *(monthly, semi-monthly, quarterly, etc.)* for our mutual benefit and camaraderie. Our Base membership welcomes active-duty submariners and veterans, their families, and all submarine enthusiasts.
- **How did you get your Base name? (Add a brief description of how your Base got its name).** *(For example: The USS Illinois Base was formed in 2016, and named after one of the Navy's newest submarines, the USS Illinois SSN-786. Our Base membership area welcomes submarine veterans, their families, and submarine enthusiasts throughout Northwest Illinois and Southern Wisconsin.)*
- **How do you get involved in the community?** *(List your involvement here, such as: Submarine Memorials you volunteer for and/or support monetarily; local veteran events in which you participate; Kaps 4 Kids or other youth programs such as Special Olympics and Scouting programs; Scholarships; Veteran support activities; family activities/events. Etc. — Blow your horns here. Tell your story. You don't need to give full details--the press or potential members will ask.)*
- **What differentiates (Your base name here) from other Veteran Organizations?** Submarine Sailors serve their country in a unique way. Due to the high-risk nature of the job, Submarine Service is a fully-volunteer branch of the U.S. Navy. Submarine sailors represent fewer than 2% of the entire U.S. Navy's personnel. Living in close quarters over many days and months in a readiness environment, submarine sailors seek out and enjoy mutual friendships with others who understood their service. Many USSVI members also belong to other local Veteran organizations, but USSVI holds a special lure to those of us who lived beneath the sea.
- **Where do you meet?** *(Note your regular meeting date and time. i.e. We meet monthly on the first Saturday of the month at 11 a.m. at the Civic Center in Hometown, IL).*
- **How can I find out more information?** Visit our website at *(put Base website here)*. We are also located on Facebook. You can also visit USSVI's website at [www.ussvi.org](http://www.ussvi.org) to find a Base located near you. *(Put other contact information for your Base here: i.e. Commander's name, phone and email address. Facebook, Tweeter accounts. Make it easy for the reader to connect with you.)*

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# Fact Sheet

## United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. (USSVI)



- **What is the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.** Also known as USSVI, this premier not-for-profit veteran’s organization was formed in 1964 to perpetuate the memory of those submariners who lost their lives while serving in submarines. This organization continues today to maintain our country’s rich submarine history, as well as to strengthen public awareness regarding the vital roles played by both submarines and sub sailors, both in years past and today.
- **How many members are associated with USSVI?** Membership is open to submarine veterans, active duty submariners, spouses, friends, and fans of submarines. There are more than 12,232 members who participate in USSVI through local Bases, Internet Bases, or as members-at-large. USSVI has approximately 168 Bases located around the country, where members meet and gather for fellowship, and for service to their hometowns and to the overall submarine community. USSVI’s strength rests in its Base structure.
- **What differentiates USSVI from other Veteran Organizations?** Submarine Sailors serve their country in a unique way. Due to the high-risk nature of the job, Submarine Service is a fully-volunteer branch of the U.S. Navy. Submarine sailors represent fewer than 2% of the entire U.S. Navy’s personnel. Living in close quarters over many days and months in a readiness environment, submarine sailors seek out and enjoy mutual friendships with others who understood their service. Many USSVI members also belong to other Veteran organizations, but USSVI holds a special lure to those who lived beneath the sea.
- **What type of community outreach programs does USSVI support?** USSVI and its Charitable Foundation support programs and memorials as well as community outreach programs administered through its local Bases. USSVI’s Charitable Foundation provides support to Submarine Museums and Memorials throughout the nation, as well as Scholarship Funds for family members, disbursements for disaster relief, Sailor of the Year Awards for sailors currently serving in the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets, and other special need request from local Bases. The premier outreach program through USSVI, is the “Kaps(SS) 4 Kids(SS)” program that brings comfort and joy to children battling challenging medical conditions.
- **Where is the USSVI headquarters located?** USSVI’s National Office, the administrative support arm of USSVI’s Board and membership, is located in Silverdale, Washington, a few miles from the Bremerton Submarine Base. The National Office Manager, who supervises this office, serves on a paid, part-time basis, and oversees approximately six part-time volunteers. Much of the work of the association is completed on the National Board, District, Regional, and Base levels.
- **How is USSVI structured?** USSVI is governed by its National Board of Directors voted into place by the membership. Officers include the National Commander, National Senior Vice Commander, National Junior Vice Commander, National Secretary, and National Treasurer. There are four Regional Directors (Northeast, Southeast, Central, and Western) who all serve on the USSVI Board. Reporting to the Regional Directors are 23 District Commanders, who represent the Bases within their region. District Commanders serve on the Board as non-voting members.
- **How can I find out more information?** Visit our national USSVI website at [www.ussvi.org](http://www.ussvi.org) for more information. Find a Base located near you by clicking on the “Find a Base” button on the left side of the screen. Or, send an email to our National Office at [office@ussvi.org](mailto:office@ussvi.org). For a list of current national officers, and their contact information, visit the USSVI website noted above.

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## SAMPLE : New Base General Release



### **For additional info contact:**

Your Name Here, Title  
Base Name  
Phone: (XXX) XXX-XXXX  
Email: (your email address)  
Date: (release created)

## **NEWS RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release:*

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*Hometown, Illinois* – The (*USS Hometown Base*) invites you to its first meeting next month on (*date/time*) at (*meeting location here*), where the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. (USSVI) will present its newest Base with its Organizational Charter.

The meeting is open to all submariners (veteran and active duty), their families, and other interested submarine enthusiasts.

USSVI, dedicated to the perpetuation of the memory of those submariners who lost their lives while serving in submarines. This association is the premier organization for submarine sailors and has 165 affiliated Bases serving more than 12,100 members. Membership is open to both veteran and active duty “qualified” submariners. Others can join as associate members.

Submarine sailors have a special bond that is intertwined with sea stories and memories of unforgettable service to their country. They represent only 2% of the entire Navy. We invite you to explore the benefits and camaraderie of membership in USSVI and the friendship available to you at the (*USS Hometown Base*).

If you need additional information, contact (*Hometown Base*) Commander, (*name here*), at XXX-XXX-XXXX.

##

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*The USS Illinois Based chartered in August 2015 was named in honor of the newly commissioned Virginia Class submarine, the USS Illinois (SSN 786). The USS Illinois Base, one of 165 bases affiliated with the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. (USSVI), is a not-for-profit veteran organization. Membership is open to men or women who have qualified on submarines. Associate memberships are open to wives and others who have a passion for the submarine service. The USS Illinois Base has members throughout Northwest Illinois and Southern Wisconsin.*

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## SAMPLE : Event News Release (1-page)



### NEWS RELEASE

*For Release on Wednesday, November*

***For additional info contact:***

Your Name Here, Title Base

Name Phone: (XXX) XXX-XXXX

Email: *(your email address)*

Date: *(release created)*

*(NOTE: If there is not a specific release date needed state: For Immediate Release:)*

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### Local veterans to host Musical Tribute

*Hometown, Illinois* – Join area veterans and their friends for a “Musical Tribute to the Troops” on Sunday, November 10, at the Veteran’s Memorial Hall in Hometown, Ill., from 2 to 4 p.m.

The event, hosted by the USS Hometown Base, is open to the community. The USS Hometown Base, an affiliate of the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., serves members in Northwest Illinois and Southern Wisconsin.

The “Musical Tribute to the Troops” will showcase a favorite local band, *The Bubbleheads*, who will accompany award-winning vocalist Jade Tobler, for an up-beat afternoon of patriotic music from the 40’s to current date.

While there is no cost to attend this event, free-will donations are welcomed to help support the charitable community and veteran projects of the USS Hometown Base.

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## **SAMPLE : Base Meeting Notice (2-page)**

*Have something special planned at your next meeting? Consider a short news release like this.*



### **NEWS RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release:*

***For additional info contact:***

Your Name Here, Title

Base Name

Phone: (XXX) XXX-XXXX

Email: (your email address)

Date: (release created)

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*Hometown, Illinois* – The USS Hometown Base invites submarine sailors and sub enthusiasts to its April 1 meeting. The guest speaker will be BM2 Hank Finn (SS), a crew member of the USS Mark Twain SSN 884, and 2017 graduate of Hometown High.

The meeting will be at the T. Sawyer American Legion Hall, on 123 Mississippi St. at 11:30 a.m. Lunch will be provided at the meeting for a \$5 donation.

Finn, son of Jim and Martha Finn, of Hometown, Ill., joined the Navy after high school and volunteered for submarine duty, where he found his career path as a boatswain mate. Today, he serves aboard the USS Mark Twain where he is in charge of topside gear and maintenance.

The USS Hometown Base is one of 165 Bases affiliated with the United States Veterans Association, Inc. (USSVI). Membership is open to both veteran and active duty “qualified” submariners. Others can join as associate members.

-MORE-

2-2-2-2

**Hank Finn to speak to area submariners**

We invite you to explore the benefits and camaraderie of membership in USSVI and the friendship available to you at the *(USS Hometown Base)*. For reservations *(contact information here)*.

**##**

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*The USS Illinois Based chartered in August 2015 was named in honor of the newly commissioned Virginia Class submarine, the USS Illinois (SSN 786). The USS Illinois Base, one of 165 bases affiliated with the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. (USSVI), is a not-for-profit veteran organization. Membership is open to men or women who have qualified on submarines. Associate memberships are open to wives and others who have a passion for the submarine service. The USS Illinois Base has members throughout Northwest Illinois and Southern Wisconsin.*



# Did you earn your Dolphins?



**Reconnect with your shipmates and help preserve the memories.**

Are you a submarine veteran?

An active duty submariner?

Have a loved one who's on submarine duty?

Or, simply someone with a passion for submarines?

If so, join us as a member or associate member of the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. (USSVI). We invite you to explore the benefits and camaraderie of membership in USSVI and experience the friendship available at your local affiliated USSVI Base.



**National Contact:**

United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.  
PO Box 3870  
Silverdale, WA 98383  
1 877-542-DIVE  
email: [office@ussvi.org](mailto:office@ussvi.org)  
[www.ussvi.org](http://www.ussvi.org)

**For Local Information Contact:**

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\_\_\_\_\_

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“Tell me a sea story  
Pappy...”

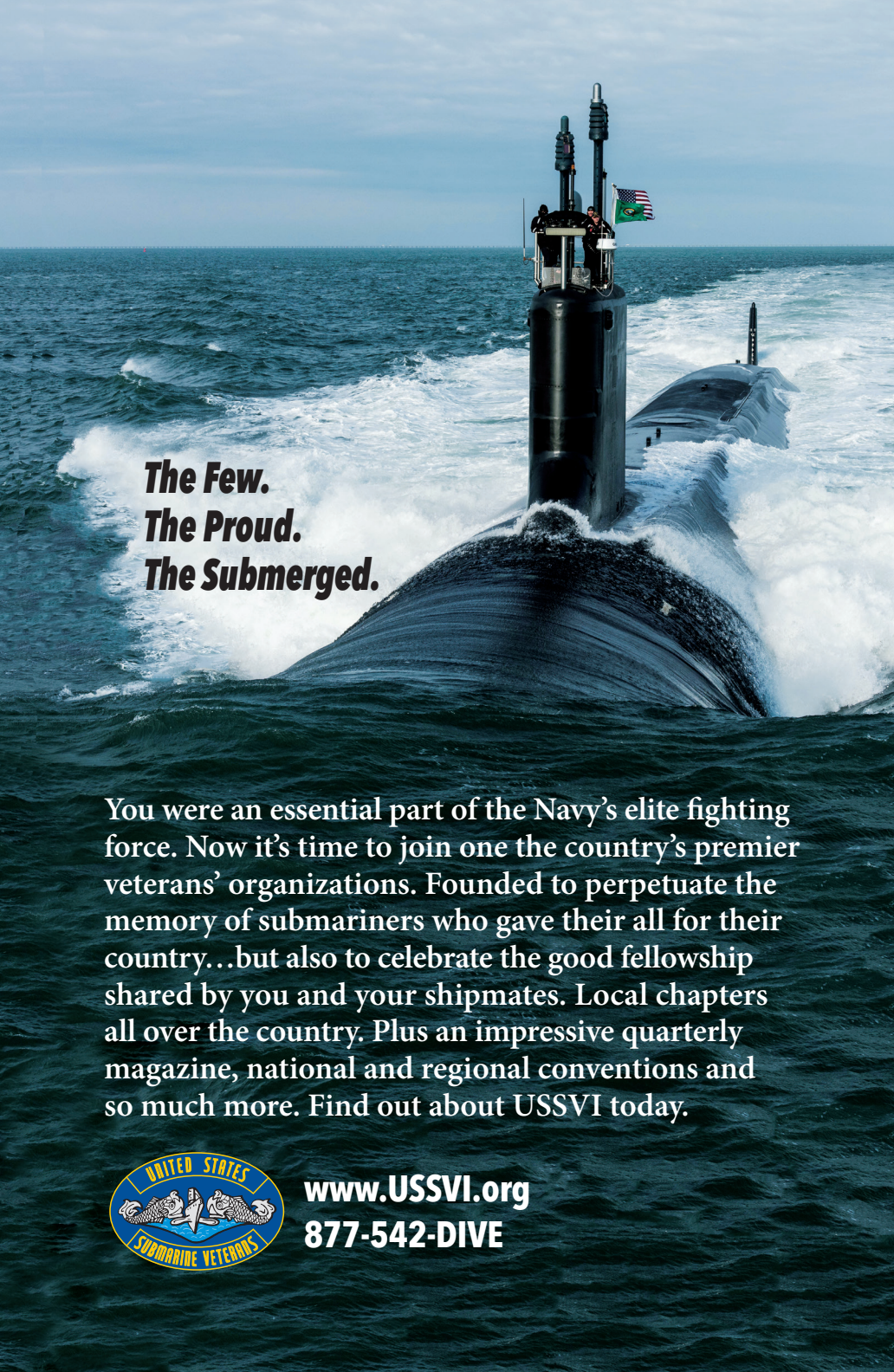
Miss your old shipmates? Join USSVI and reconnect! Local chapters across the country and a quarterly magazine with enough salty sea stories to flood your bilges. What are you waiting for, bubblehead?

[www.USSVI.org](http://www.USSVI.org)  
877-542-DIVE



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***The Few.  
The Proud.  
The Submerged.***

You were an essential part of the Navy's elite fighting force. Now it's time to join one the country's premier veterans' organizations. Founded to perpetuate the memory of submariners who gave their all for their country...but also to celebrate the good fellowship shared by you and your shipmates. Local chapters all over the country. Plus an impressive quarterly magazine, national and regional conventions and so much more. Find out about USSVI today.



**[www.USSVI.org](http://www.USSVI.org)  
877-542-DIVE**

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## Known for our deeds

A Submariners' love may rest beneath the sea, but they wear their hearts on the surface. The USS Illinois Base, while a relatively new USSVI Base, takes pride in its work throughout our communities.

Below are just a few events in which we join other local veterans organizations:

- **Christmas for Vets Program** in which members help gather and deliver packages to veterans living in rest homes. The gifts of socks, blankets, cookies and fellowship with another veteran brightens the holiday season.
- **USS Cobia (SS-245)** restoration work. This is a job of true love. We are fortunate to have such a unique piece of submarine history within easy driving distance. Our members travel to the boat several times a year to chip and paint, and to help with repairs. We also join in Manitowoc's Annual SubFest serving as volunteer tour guides aboard this museum quality boat.
- **Monetary support of other submarine memorial projects.**
- **Supporters of Scouting Programs.** The leaders of tomorrow often come out of Scouting programs. Upon request, we present special certificates and patches at Eagle Scout Honor Ceremonies.
- **Supporters for Homeless Veteran** programs, community events honoring veterans and their families, and as proud participants in area parades.



Join us today!

Are you a submarine veteran? An active duty submariner? Have a loved one who's done submarine duty? If so, join us by becoming a member or associate member of the USSVI.

We invite you to explore the benefits and camaraderie of membership in USSVI and experience the friendship available at the USS Illinois Base.

Join us at one of our monthly Base meetings. We meet in South Beloit, IL, at noon the first Saturday of the month. Visit our website below for more specific information about



Contact us

For more information about the USS Illinois Base visit our website:

[www.ussillinoisbase.org](http://www.ussillinoisbase.org)

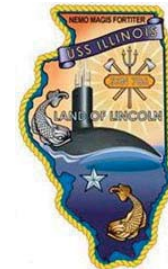
Email: [subvetsillinoisbase@gmail.com](mailto:subvetsillinoisbase@gmail.com)

**ATTACHMENT E:  
Sample Brochure**



Welcome  
Aboard!

the  
USS Illinois Base



**Proudly serving Submarine Veterans  
and submarine enthusiasts  
throughout Northwest Illinois  
and Southern Wisconsin.**



## Who are we?

The USS Illinois Base, one of 165 bases affiliated with the United Submarine Veterans, Inc. (USSVI), has welcomed submarine veterans since its founding in 1963. The USS Illinois Base was formed in 2014 to serve submarine veterans in Northwest Illinois and Southern Wisconsin.

USSVI is dedicated to the “Perpetuation of the Memory of those Submariners who lost their lives while serving in submarines.” It also offers submarine veterans, their families, and submarine enthusiasts the opportunity to meet with other submariner shipmates from various eras for mutual benefit and enjoyment. This cross-generational camaraderie strengthens our common heritage as Submariners.

You will find submarine sailors to have a special bond that is intertwined with sea stories and memories of unforgettable service to their country. We invite you to explore the benefits and camaraderie of membership in USSVI and the friendship available to you at the USS Illinois Base.

## Service. Honor. Pride.

USSVI and its affiliated Bases take pride in their service to country, in their rich heritage, and in their own communities.

USSVI has a strong charities program that is built on **REMEMBRANCE, BENEVOLENCE, and BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE.** Individual bases exemplify these unique qualities and adapt their service programs to local needs.

### Memorials

- **USSVI’s Foundation**, a not-for-profit entity, supports the various memorial submarines on exhibit throughout the United States. All Foundation Board Members serve in a volunteer capacity.

The USS Illinois Base participates in fundraising benefits for these memorials, plus donates many volunteer man-hours to help in the **restoration and upkeep of the USS Cobia (SS-245)**, a WWII sub, moored at the Wisconsin Maritime Museum in Manitowoc, Wi.

- **Tolling of the Bells** is a living, time-honored, memorial conducted at Base meetings, USSVI Annual Meetings, and other memorial events. USS Illinois Base takes a few minutes at monthly meetings to conduct a solemn ceremony to honor the men and boats who were lost, by reading the boat’s name and number of crew members lost, followed by a ringing of a bell.

### Foundation Charitable Activities

- **USSVI Scholarship Fund.** Designed to benefit USSVI member’s children and grandchildren with educational grants.
- **Brotherhood Fund.** Support network for both active duty service submarines and Sub Vets as special needs arise.
- **Kap(SS) 4 Kids(SS).** This program brings comfort and joy to children with challenging medical conditions anywhere they are being treated. Many Sub Vets voluntarily give these children caring attention, Honorary Submariner caps, certificates, and submarine related items during these visits.

