



NAVY LEAGUE
of the United States
"Citizens in Support of the Sea Services."

New Mexico
Council



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www.nmnavyleague.com

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Did you know that you can get the latest issues of Sea Power magazine in an App? Go to your mobile device App Store and search on "Navy League".



Christmas Aboard USS Santa Fe and USS New Mexico During World War II

Story and photos by the New Mexico Navy League's Greg Trapp, J.D.



Christmas is traditionally a time when families come together in joy-filled celebrations, and when a message of peace on Earth and good will towards men is heard during Christmas services. That tradition dramatically changed when the United States was thrust into the Second World War by the Japanese Attack on Pearl Harbor. In a White House Christmas tree lighting ceremony on December 24, 1941, Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "Against enemies who preach the principles of hate and practice them, we set our faith in human love and in God's care for us and all men everywhere. It is in that spirit,

and with particular thoughtfulness of those, our sons and brothers, who serve in our armed forces on land and sea, near and far- those who serve for us and endure for us that we light our Christmas candles now across the continent from one coast to the other on this Christmas Eve." The sons and brothers spoken of by President Roosevelt would spend three more Christmases away from their families before the "enemies who preach the principles of hate" would be defeated, and Americans would spend three more Christmases praying for peace on Earth in the hope that their fathers, sons, brothers, and daughters would soon return.

Shown above is a Christmas card from World War II. With millions of soldiers and sailors stationed overseas, this Christmas card from a child to a father is a poignant reminder of the sacrifices that families had to make. The inside says:

**Merry Christmas, Dad! I miss you.
But We'll set that part aside,**

**For, each day you spend in service
Fills my heart with deeper pride!**

(story continues on page 4)

Thank You! *When you keep your dues up to date with the Navy League national office, our New Mexico council receives a stipend for each active member. This makes a big difference in our ability to support our namesake ships, our youth, our Sea Cadets, and the local active and reserve.*

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NM Nautical Quiz!

Q1: Why doesn't the Army football team have a web site?

Q2: Where can I find past issues of the NM Nautical News (the best Navy newsletter in New Mexico)?

(see page 7 for answers)

To contact the editor, write to Mark Schaefer at usnanm@comcast.net.



President's Message



Tom Gutierrez

President, New Mexico Council

(Photo courtesy of Rebecca Vigil)

Greetings Navy League members and friends!

President's Message –

Accomplishments this year:

1. Creation of the USS NM (BB-40) Memorial Bell Committee – a team that is working to help the UNM Facilities Organization move the BB-40 bell to an appropriate location of honor on the campus;
2. Second year of the USS Los Alamos Committee – a team that is dedicated to naming the next nuclear submarine after one of our most famous communities;
3. A strong USS New Mexico (SSN-779) Committee that accomplished:
 - a. Met the submarine for homecoming at Groton, CT;
 - b. Rode the submarine the seven miles from river mouth to home base;
 - c. Helped Gold Star Mothers of NM pack 300 goodie boxes of which 70 went to the single sailors of USS New Mexico;
 - d. Shipped the Pinon Coffee donation to the ship;
 - e. Ready to hand out personal return pen-pal letters to 3

- elementary school classes from the sailors of USS New Mexico;
4. An aggressive USS Santa Fe Committee lists these items as accomplishments:
 - a. provided over 150 USS Santa Fe logo'd umbrellas to the families of the crew to celebrate homecoming;
 - b. Hosted multiple fundraisers to provide crew donations and award plaques;
 - c. Donated a host of Northern New Mexico herbs and spices that the Culinary Specialists used in the dockside Pearl Harbor "Top Chef" competition.

As we end this year, I know each of us is swamped with hundreds of requests for donations.

Here is the New Mexico Navy League end-of-year request: remember when you were an E-3 sailor or a LTJG and you did not have two dimes to rub together? Well, the members of the Navy League can help a few of our young sailors to come to New Mexico for training and awareness. A \$500 donation will pay for the major part of an airplane ticket from CT; rental car expenses for 4 or 5 sailors can be paid with a \$200 donation; meals can be paid for with a \$100 to \$500 donation. And don't forget our USS Santa Fe sailors. Since they are homeported in Pearl Harbor, their travel expenses are double that of CT.

Please think of part of our mission, "to support the Active Duty fleet." If we can reach out and touch 20 typical sailors on our named ships per year, we in New Mexico will have met our Mission. Won't you help us this year?

www.nmnavyleague.com.

Contact me any time at

tomgutierrez1970@gmail.com

or by mail at the Council's P.O. box.

Namesake Ships



USS New Mexico (SSN-779) News Update *From the Seacoastonline.com, reported by Alex Barber on October 11, 2017:*

KITTERY, Maine — A free meal to visiting sailors is the least they could do, according to Rudders Public House owners Jeff and Jackie Kilty.

Nearly 150 sailors from the USS New Mexico, a Virginia-class submarine dry docked at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, were greeted with a meal consisting of pulled-pork sandwiches, coleslaw and beans on Wednesday. Rudders served 30-40 sailors at a time while some meals were delivered to those on the submarine who couldn't attend. It's the sixth time the Kiltys have done such a meal for sailors. "It's a chance to welcome these guys to our community and thank them for what they do," Jackie Kilty said. "We're a shipyard town and a shipyard restaurant. We think it's a great idea.



Rudders Public House, which opened in May 2012, welcomed its first sailor crew in January 2013 – the USS Alexandria. Each submarine crew that has been treated to a meal has made a plaque for Rudders. Six plaques now hang on the wall beside the bar.



USS New Mexico arrived at the shipyard on Sept. 7, and has been dry docked since Oct. 2. It's scheduled for its regular 10-year maintenance and repairs for the next 22-24 months, according to Chief of the Boat Norm Clarke. Because sailors will be in Kittery for so long, Jackie Kilty said they should feel at home.

"I love it. This is my third time up at the shipyard so the community involvement that happens here is second to none," said Sonar Senior Chief Chris Chahanovich. "You're never going to find that (elsewhere). The community at the shipyard, they embrace that, they love that. The involvement from the community, you don't get that anywhere else." USS New Mexico Commander Daniel Reiss agreed.

"This is absolutely wonderful," he said of the meal at Rudders. "The reception from the town has been incredible. We've already met the town manager, police chief. It's very, very welcoming. That makes it feel like we're living here."

After the meals were served, Commander Reiss awarded a silver dolphin to MMN2(SS) Robert Graupner. According to Clarke, Graupner underwent a nine- to 10-month qualification period where he learned all the systems, how they interact with each other and how they work.

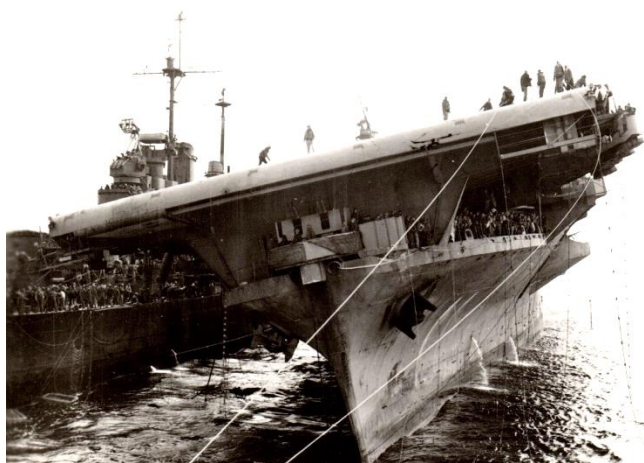
In another update from Chief of the Boat, Master Chief Norm Clarke, our USS New Mexico Committee Chair, Damon Runyan, found out that USS NEW MEXICO will return to Groton, CT after this overhaul for approximately 9 months of additional re-fit at Electric Boat. Once that period is over, the submarine will transit to Norfolk, VA in March of 2019, where it will be homeported.

This will be a challenging time for the crew and their families as they endeavor to be close during three different change of locations.

Christmas Aboard USS Santa Fe and USS New Mexico During World War II *(continued from front page)*

The separation of families and wartime rationing meant that Christmas on the home front did not have the same festiveness of prior years. To bolster morale, Hollywood cranked out patriotic movies such as “Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo,” and musicians made “V-Disc” records that contained popular songs such as “I’ll Be Home for Christmas” by Bing Crosby. The holiday song was written from the perspective of a serviceman longing to be home for the holidays, and was first released in October of 1943.

There were over 1,200 sailors serving aboard USS Santa Fe on Christmas of 1943. They spent that Christmas at Pearl Harbor, having just two weeks earlier supported aircraft carriers attacking Kwajalein. USS Santa Fe was a 610-foot Cleveland Class light cruiser, and was launched on June 10, 1942. The cruiser was sponsored by Caroline T. Chavez, the 14-year-old niece of New Mexico Senator Dennis Chavez. Commissioned on November 24, 1942, USS Santa Fe displaced 11,744 tons. Known as the Lucky Lady, the cruiser’s main armament consisted of twelve 6-inch guns. Each gun had a barrel that was 23.5 feet long, and was able to fire a 130-pound armor-piercing shell out to 14 miles.

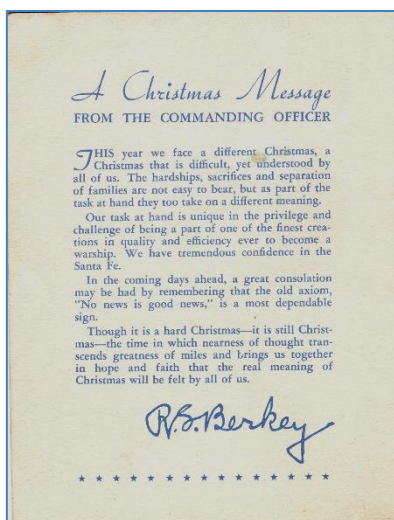
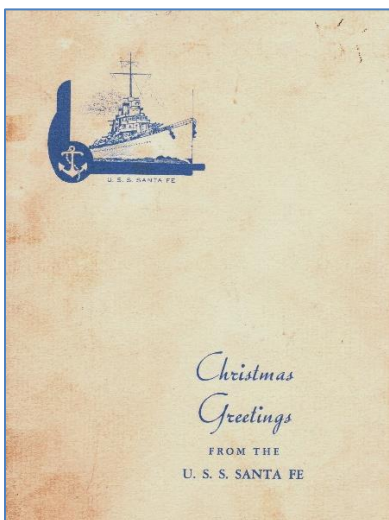


USS SANTA FE LIES ALONGSIDE THE STRICKEN FRANKLIN.

U S NAVY PHOTO 131-19

USS Santa Fe spent most of the war protecting aircraft carriers such as USS Enterprise, USS Hornet, USS Essex, and USS Franklin. In 1943 and 1944, the cruiser also provided shore bombardment in campaigns that included the Aleutians, the Gilbert Islands, and the Marshall Island. The cruiser’s most famous action took place on March 19, 1945. USS Franklin was just off the Japanese main island of Honshu, when an attacking Japanese dive bomber dropped two bombs that set the carrier on fire, igniting the carrier’s own bombs and aviation fuel. USS Santa Fe came alongside the burning carrier and rescued sailors and fought the fires that threatened the carrier, despite the risk to her own safety from the carrier’s exploding bombs and burning fuel. *(U.S. Navy Photograph March 19, 1945)*

Shown below are the front of the 1943 Christmas menu from the cruiser USS Santa Fe, CL-60 and a Christmas message from the Commanding Officer.



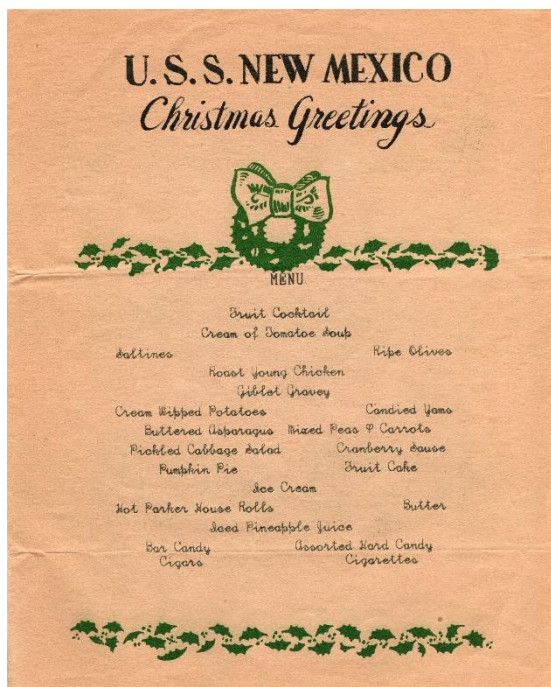
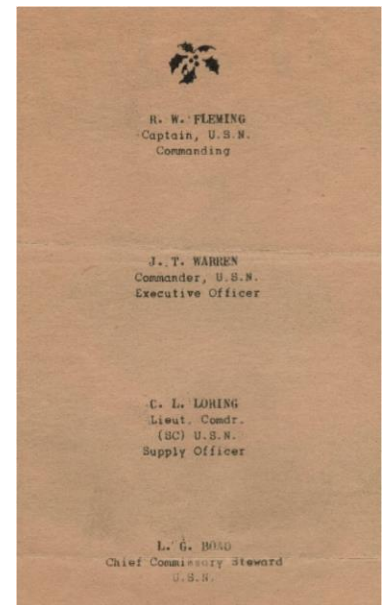
Shown at right is the inside of the 1943 Christmas menu from USS Santa Fe. The cruiser was at the Pearl Harbor naval base during Christmas of 1943, and able to provide a dinner that included more of the traditional holiday trimmings.

The final Christmas of World War II took place during one of the most dramatic times of the war. The Battle of the Bulge was raging in Europe, and General George S. Patton was pushing his Third Army to relieve the 101st Airborne Division that was besieged in Bastogne. In the Pacific, American forces were slowly fighting their way towards the Japanese home islands, including the fierce battle to recapture the Philippines. Desperate to defend their home islands, the Japanese had recently begun launching kamikaze attacks against the approaching American naval forces.

Crucial to the war in the Pacific was fire support from the big guns of an aging group of World War I battleships. One of these battleships was USS New Mexico, BB-40. Known as "The Queen," the 32,000-ton battleship was commissioned on May 20, 1918. The Queen was 624 feet long, and armed with a main battery of 12 14-inch guns. Each gun was just over 58 feet long, and able to fire a 1,400-pound shell over 20 miles. In 1943 and 1944, USS New Mexico used these big guns to support campaigns in the Aleutians, Gilberts, Marshalls, and Marianas. In December of 1944, the Queen was using her big guns in the battle to liberate the Philippines. As the 2,000 sailors of The Queen sat down for their Christmas dinner, they did not know that just 12 days later their captain and 29 of their other fellow sailors would be killed in a Kamikaze attack.



The Christmas dinner that the sailors of USS New Mexico had for that Christmas in December of 1944 lacked many of the trimmings that sailors aboard USS Santa Fe enjoyed in 1943. USS Santa Fe had been at the Pearl Harbor Naval base in December of 1943, and her sailors were able to enjoy a Christmas dinner that included a "roast Maryland turkey" and "baked spiced ham." USS Santa Fe was in the thick of the fighting late in 1944, supporting the carrier USS Essex as she conducted air strikes in the Philippines and Caroline Islands. USS New Mexico was likewise engaged in fierce fighting late in 1944. During Christmas of that year, the Queen was providing shore bombardment in support of the landings to retake the Philippines. Instead of roast Maryland turkey or baked spiced ham for their Christmas dinner, the sailors aboard USS New Mexico were served "roast young chicken."



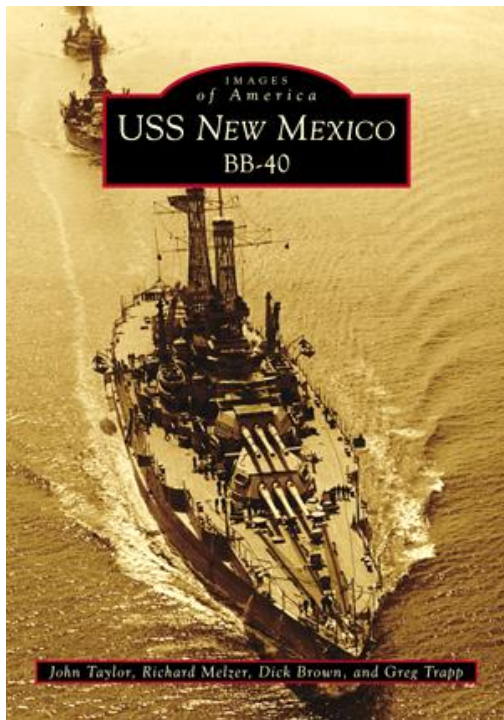
Shown at top left is the front cover of the Christmas menu of USS New Mexico from the dramatic Christmas of 1944. This menu can be dated to December of 1944 by the reference on the inside, shown at right, to Captain Fleming, who was killed in a Kamikaze attack on January 6, 1945.

Shown at lower left is the inside of the 1944 Christmas menu from the battleship New Mexico, listing the various dinner items. It is interesting to note the misspelled words. Though lacking many of the Christmas trimmings that USS Santa Fe enjoyed the year before, this menu is still better than what sailors aboard smaller ships would have been served.

As we gather with our own families this holiday season, let us remember the men and women in the sea services who are away from their own families. This includes those serving on the current USS New Mexico, SSN-779, as well as USS Santa Fe, SSN-763. **Let us also not forget the sacrifices of those who defended our nation during World War II.** Without their sacrifices, we would not have the freedoms that make it possible to enjoy this holiday season.



New Book Tells History of World War II Battleship *by Greg Trapp and Dick Brown*



Those looking for the **perfect gift** for that special someone this holiday season may want to consider a new book just released by Arcadia Publishing. The book is "USS New Mexico BB-40," and it tells the story of the first U.S. Navy warship named after the state of New Mexico. The authors are John Taylor, Richard Melzer, Dick Brown, and Greg Trapp. Damon Runyan and Rod Stewart offered assistance and encouragement early in the project. The 128-page book is a part of Arcadia's Images of America series, and retails for \$21.99. **The royalties go to the Navy League New Mexico Council**, so your purchase will be supporting a good cause. The book is available from area book stores, as well as directly from Arcadia Publishing at <https://www.arcadiapublishing.com/Products/9781467127721>

The book contains 204 black and white pictures, and begins with a stirring foreword by James "Ranny" Kennedy, a New Mexican who served aboard the battleship during World War II. At 95, Ranny is one of the very few sailors still alive who actually served on the battleship, and this book is a tribute to Ranny and the thousands of other sailors who served on the battleship. The book takes the reader from Greek

and Roman triremes to the development of dreadnought battleships such as USS New Mexico. The reader is given a taste of what it was like to serve aboard a battleship during both peacetime and wartime, and will discover the important role that USS New Mexico played in the war in the Pacific. The book concludes with a section on the current USS New Mexico, SSN-779.



At right is a photo of GM2 James R. "Ranny" Kennedy of Cedar Crest, NM signing the book with the help of his wife JoAnne Kennedy. He authored the Foreword in the book. He was aboard USS New Mexico in the Pacific Theater throughout WWII.

USS New Mexico (SSN-779) Visit Planning to New Mexico

Plans are underway for a possible crew visit to New Mexico in late January. Details still in the works. The Commanding Officer, CDR Dan Reiss, and four crewmen would like to return two silver plates loaned to SSN-779 from the New Mexico History Museum while the boat is undergoing extensive overhaul and modification. The crew also plans to raise awareness of the submarine in New Mexico by meeting with the Governor, visiting UNM NROTC, and visiting Los Alamos National Laboratory. Exact dates have not yet been set.



Nautical Items of Interest

NEW MEXICO
Council



USS Santa Fe (SSN-763) Returns from Deployment *by Submarine Force Pacific Public Affairs*

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii – The Los Angeles-class fast attack submarine USS Santa Fe (SSN 763) returned from deployment to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Aug. 15.

"It was amazing to watch this crew pull together through a challenging deployment workup and take on the challenge of sustaining the ramp-up through deployment," said Cmdr. Jake Foret, a native of New Iberia, Louisiana and Santa Fe's commanding officer. "I am proud of our crew's commitment to keeping our boat and teams ready to execute all tasking."

During the deployment, 29 enlisted Sailors and one officer earned their submarine warfare qualification. "My most memorable achievement during deployment was earning my dolphins," said Fire Control Technician 3rd Class Nicolas Tankersley, from Anna Maria Island, Florida. "Earning my dolphins was the pinnacle of all my hard work finally paying off. My dolphins enabled me to become part of an elite group known as 'submariners.'"



While deployed, Santa Fe executed two port calls to Yokosuka, Japan and hosted submariners from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) out of Sasebo, Japan for underway training. "Santa Fe was thankful to expand the U.S. Navy's partnership with the JMSDF," said Lt. Cmdr. Rob Edmonson III, from Stockton, California, and Santa Fe's executive officer. "We welcome any opportunity to work alongside our JMSDF submarine force allies."



STS2 (SS) Robert C Deboer proposes to his now fiancée after the Los Angeles-class attack submarine USS Santa Fe (SSN-763) made its homecoming arrival at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, after completing its latest deployment, Aug. 15.

Answers to NM Nautical Quiz (from questions on page 2)

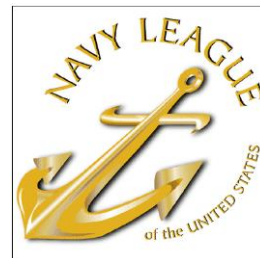
A1: Because the Army football team cannot string together three 'W's!!

A2: Past issues of the best Navy newsletter in NM can be found on the best Navy web site in NM at www.nmnavyleague.com/newsletters.html

Navy League New Mexico Council congratulates the following crew members of the USS New Mexico (SSN-779). Our Council provides wooden plaques to each of these outstanding sailors:

2017 Sailor of the Year- MMA1(SS) Jonathan Battle - Milwaukee, WI
2017 Junior Sailor of the Year- MMA2(SS) Philip Burr – Westbrook, CA
2017 Blue Jacket of the Year- STS3(SS) Anthony Fleegle – Winbur, PA
2017 Junior Officer of the Year- LT Kyle Elam – Oceanport, NJ

1Q 2018 Sailor of the Quarter- ETN1(SS) Christopher Taylor – Fort Lauderdale, FL
1Q 2018 Junior Sailor of the Quarter- MMA2(SS) Robert Cullen – Mansfield, OH
1Q 2018 Blue Jacket of the Quarter- MMAFN(SS) Daniel Donovan – Boston, MA



NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES
NEW MEXICO COUNCIL
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2017 Upcoming Events for Navy League, New Mexico Council

Dec 7	76 th anniversary of Pearl Harbor attack – Fly your U.S. flag!
Dec 9	Army - Navy football, Philadelphia, PA. 1300 Mountain time.
Dec 12	Hanukkah begins
Dec 16	New Mexico Council meeting – Gutierrez home
Dec 25	Christmas Day