



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

**New Mexico**  
Council



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## USS New Mexico Conducts 5<sup>th</sup> Change of Command

*By Damon Runyan*

USS New Mexico (SSN-779) recently conducted its fifth change of command and received its sixth Commanding Officer. Commander Dan Reiss departed the ship and turned over command to Commander James Morrow on 01 March 2018. The ceremony was held at the Portsmouth Naval Ship Yard Auditorium in Kittery, Maine while the submarine is undergoing a two-year upkeep and technology upgrade period. Two

members of the New Mexico Council of the Navy League were on hand for the ceremony. CAPT Chuck Vaughan USN (Ret.) and LCDR Damon Runyan USN (Ret.) presented the outgoing



skipper with a letter from Governor Susanna Martinez congratulating him on his outstanding tour of our State's namesake submarine, as well as a New Mexico State Flag that the Governor had flown over the Roundhouse in late February. During his tour as skipper, CDR Reiss had the opportunity to visit New Mexico with his wife, Julie, and several crew members from the boat. He also met Governor Martinez and exchanged gifts during that visit.

The current plan has the USS NEW MEXICO completing its overhaul sometime in the Spring of 2019 and returning to Groton, CT for nine months for further upgrades before eventually entering its new homeport at Norfolk Naval Base, Virginia in 2020.

**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. Joint or renew at*

<https://www.navyleague.org/membership>

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**Greg Trapp**

*BB-40 Memorial Bell*

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## NM Nautical Quiz!

Q1: What do the submarine USS Plunger (SSN-595) and the state of New Mexico have in common?

Q2: Why don't pirates shower before they walk the plank?

(see page 5 for answers)

To contact the editor, write to Mark Schaefer at [usnanm@comcast.net](mailto:usnanm@comcast.net).



## President's Message



Chuck Vaughan  
President, New Mexico Council  
(Photo courtesy of Rick Carver)

### Greetings Navy League members and friends!

I hope you are having a good summer! It has been a busy spring for the New Mexico Council; the Council gave out 22 Navy League awards to Navy and Marine Corps Junior ROTC cadets in schools throughout New Mexico and western Texas. The Council also presented a Naval Officer's sword to a graduating Midshipmen of the Navy ROTC unit at UNM. The Marine Corps Junior ROTC cadets I met made me proud that we support the JROTC programs.

A couple of weeks ago I was talking to one of my co-workers, Shelly, about our Navy League JROTC awards. Shelly told me that her son, a high school freshman in a JROTC program, had been presented with an award at his school's spring awards ceremony. That award meant the world to him, and it was driving him to now consider a military career and to pursue admittance to one of the service academies. These Navy League awards we give out, the Theodore Roosevelt Leadership Award, can have an impact on the students and on their career choices.

I am writing this on Memorial Day 2018. Today we recognize the 1.2 million men and women who died serving our nation in time of war. I have an uncle I never met, U. S. Marine Corps Corporal Welter Vaughan, who was killed during the assault on Tarawa by the Marine Corps during November, 1943. He and 405,398 other men and women died fighting for our freedom during World War II. Today we belong to the Navy League to promote strong sea services (Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and Merchant Marine) to protect our nation and ensure that the sacrifices made by the 1.2 million men and women who died for our freedom are not in vain. For if we fight and lose a future war, the freedom these men and women fought to save will be lost.

One of the few things I can do to save that freedom is support strong sea services - the men and women who serve and the ships, submarines, aircraft and other weapons needed to preserve our freedom. Thank you for being a member of the Navy League and for supporting our strong sea services.

In September this year, Albuquerque will be celebrating another Navy Week (September 10 - 16). We anticipate having several crew members of the USS New Mexico here in Albuquerque to help us celebrate Navy Week. Please consider showing your support for our sea services by attending a dinner for the crew members of the USS New Mexico or supporting other Navy League actions during Navy Week. In the meantime, have a great summer!

Contact me any time at  
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or by mail at the Council's P.O. box.

[www.nmnavyleague.com](http://www.nmnavyleague.com)

# Namesake Ships



## Governor's Proclamation of 100 Years of USS New Mexico – May 20, 1918 to May 20, 2018

by Greg Trapp, Navy League of the United States, New Mexico Chapter



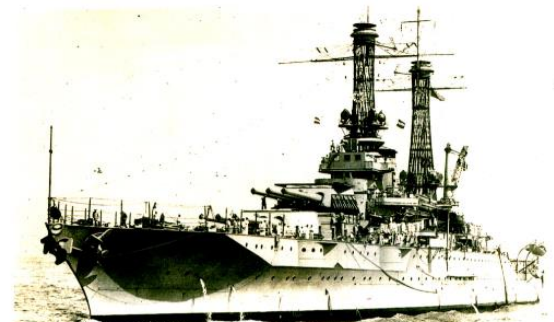
The United States Navy commissioned the battleship USS New Mexico on May 20, 1918. New Mexico, BB-40, was similar to earlier battleships such as USS Arizona, BB-39. Both battleships were 624 feet long, displaced 32,000 tons, and had twelve 14 inch main guns placed in four turrets. However, the guns on USS New Mexico were of an improved and more powerful design. Unlike Arizona which had a ram bow, New Mexico had a clipper bow that allowed for better sea keeping. New Mexico was also the first battleship to be built with a turbo-electric drive that permitted more efficient operation. The battleship was on neutrality patrol in the Atlantic on December 7, 1941, and escaped the fate of the battleships moored at Pearl Harbor. New Mexico had been modernized in the early 1930s, and with the destruction of the battleships of the Pacific Fleet, was one of the nation's most powerful battleships in the early months of the war. New Mexico spent the war in the Pacific, where she used her big guns to support the island invasions that were the hallmark of the Pacific war. New Mexico suffered two kamikaze attacks, one of which took place on January 6, 1945. The attack killed the captain and 29 others. An even more devastating kamikaze attack took place on May 12, 1945, killing 54 sailors. New Mexico was decommissioned in 1946, and scrapped in 1947.

"Our state can be rightfully proud of this historic battleship and the important part she played during World War II," said Chuck Vaughan, President of the Navy League New Mexico Council. "The Navy League very much had the legacy of the battleship USS New Mexico in mind

when we successfully worked to have a Virginia-class nuclear submarine named after the state."

"The Navy League takes a very active role in supporting the sailors who serve on the current USS New Mexico, SSN-779," Said Damon Runyan, Chairman of the USS New Mexico SSN-779 Committee. "We work hard to make sure that the sailors on New Mexico are connected with the state of New Mexico, and there are many items on the submarine that have state themes."

"When New Mexico was launched she was a technological wonder that was known as The Electric Ship," said Greg Trapp, one of four co-authors of Images of America, USS New Mexico BB-40. "Although the battleship would be obsolete by the end of World War II, the ship still played a vital role throughout the war by using her 14 inch and 5 inch guns in support of landings, including at Tarawa, the Marshall Islands, Luzon, and Okinawa," said Trapp. "There were also many famous and important men who served on the battleship, such as Admiral John S. McCain Sr, the grandfather of Senator John McCain, and Edward O'Hare, the naval aviator and namesake of Chicago's O'Hare International Airport," added Trapp.



Official U.S. Navy photograph (circa 1918-1930) showing USS New Mexico with the distinctive "cage" masts that were used to spot enemy targets and direct gunfire from the 14" guns. The cage masts were removed during a 1931-1933

# USS Santa Fe (SSN-763) Change of Command Ceremony April 13, 2018

by Ron Oleksak, USS Santa Fe Committee Chair



USS Santa Fe (SSN-763) conducted a change of command ceremony in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on April 13, 2018. After 2 and a half years of command, CDR Jacob Foret and his family are moving on to Washington DC for a posting in the Pentagon. Relieving him is CDR Chris Hedrick, who brings



experience as Executive Officer on the USS Columbia and with

Personnel Command in Tennessee. The Commander of Submarine Squadron Seven, Captain Robert Roncska read remarks from Chief of Naval Operations Admiral John M Richardson, who was unable to travel to the ceremony because of operations in the Middle East. Captain Roncska then gave his own remarks and conducted the traditional Reading of Orders.

Commander Foret had wonderful remarks about the Crew's accomplishments, the officers he was leaving behind, and took time to thank the various organizations dedicated to supporting the Crew and families including the USS Santa Fe Committee of the New Mexico Council's Navy League. Seven members of the committee traveled to Hawaii for the ceremony from Santa Fe, Los Alamos, and Albuquerque. The Committee presented Commander Foret with a state flag flown over the Roundhouse in Santa Fe along with a proclamation from Governor Susana Martinez. Representatives from Los Alamos presented the outgoing skipper with tokens of appreciation from the Lab.



The Committee had an opportunity to meet the incoming Commander Hedrick and his family and all pledged to continue the close and supporting relationship the Navy League in New Mexico has with the Officers and Crew of the improved Los Angeles-class attack submarine USS Santa Fe.



CDR Foret and USS Santa Fe Committee chairman Ron Oleksak



The Los Alamos committee presented gifts for CDR Foret

## Light Cruising Q2 1943 – Those guns work! by Ron Oleksak

Dateline April 16, 1943. Aleutian Islands, Alaska. Cruiser Division One, consisting of the US Navy Cruisers USS Richmond, USS Detroit, and newly assigned USS Santa Fe, begin bombarding Japanese army positions on occupied Attu Island. The 301st Independent Infantry Battalion of the Imperial Japanese Army had occupied the island in June of 1942 and America was bringing the war back to them. Santa Fe's 12 6-inch guns and smaller armaments were critical in softening up defenses on the island, and famed Japanese propagandist Tokyo Rose reported that Attu was "shelled by a battleship of the Santa Fe class."

Photo # 80-G-K-8160 USS Santa Fe silhouetted against the Aleutians sunset, 1943



Over the next few months, the Santa Fe and her battle group engaged submarines with depth charges, steered clear of migrating whales, and learned to navigate seemingly endless banks of Alaskan fog. The new members of the crew were eager to get into the fray against the Japanese Navy while the veterans of the battles of Midway and Coral Sea took the long, quiet hours as opportunities to pass on hard learned lessons to their fellow sailors. And unifying the entire crew was Captain Berkey's full bore commitment to a best beard competition. May the best sailor win!

NEXT QUARTER: The USS Santa Fe raids Japanese targets from Pearl Harbor.

*Light Cruising is a historical retrospective on the Cleveland-class light cruiser USS Santa Fe, CL-60. These articles are meant to commemorate the quarterly events of seventy-five years ago when the "Lucky Lady" fought in World War II.*

## USS NEW MEXICO returns historic silver platters while in the extended yard period



by Damon Runyan During to the period prior to Commissioning of the Virginia-class submarine USS NEW MEXICO (SSN-779), the New Mexico Museum of History loaned two rare silver platters to the submarine to display onboard. These two platters were part of a larger set of 24 created by Tiffany & Co. in New York in 1918 prior to the commissioning of the battleship USS NEW MEXICO (BB-40). The submarine proudly carried these two platters onboard during what was estimated to be 150,000 miles of travel. The Commanding Officer decided that during the extended overhaul period from late 2017 to mid-2019, it would be best to return these silver platters to the NM History Museum until all overhaul work and an upcoming homeport change were complete. Two attached photos

show the Chief of the Boat, Master Chief Norm Clarke turning the platters over to USS NEW MEXICO Committee Chairman Damon Runyan, during his visit to Kittery, Maine in early March. The other photo shows the engravings on the platters to be Roca del Morro – Inscription Rock and Coronado's Expedition 1540-42.

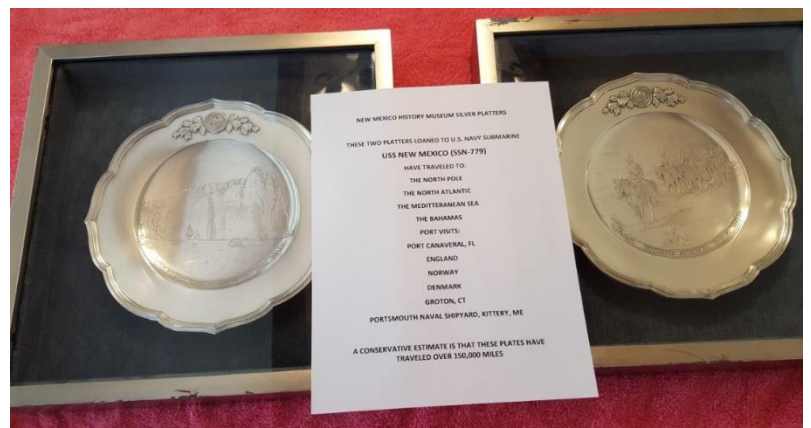
### Answers to NM Nautical Quiz

(from questions on page 2)

A1: *The USS Plunger's ship sponsor was Henrietta Anderson, wife of 4-term U.S. Senator for New Mexico, Clinton P. Anderson.*

A2: *Because they will just wash up on shore later!*

**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](http://www.nmnavyleague.com/newsletters.html)**





## Navy League New Mexico Council Presents 2018 Teddy Roosevelt Youth Awards

Here are your 2018 NJROTC and MCJROTC Teddy Roosevelt Youth Award winners from around the State of New Mexico. The Navy League New Mexico Council presents these awards each year.



The national Navy League of the United States established this Youth Medal that is awarded to **outstanding Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) cadets and Naval Sea Cadets**. The award consists of a medal, ribbon bar, certificate, and pamphlet on President Theodore Roosevelt whose visage is on the medal.

School	City	Awardee	N/MC
Laguna-Acoma H. S.	Casa Blanca, NM	Marcus Bautista	MCJROTC
La Cueva H. S.	Albuquerque, NM	Olivia Rubi	MCJROTC
Manzano H. S.	Albuquerque, NM	Andres Hadder	NJROTC
Santa Teresa H. S.	Santa Teresa, NM	Manuel Arroyo	NJROTC
Shiprock H. S.	Shiprock, NM	Gina Manygoats	MCJROTC
Onate H. S.	Las Cruces, NM	Katelyn Ashby	NJROTC
Atrisco Heritage Academy H.S.	Albuquerque, NM	Tabitha Kenton	MCJROTC
Grants H. S.	Grants, NM	Taimane Tiumalu	MCJROTC
Santa Fe H. S.	Santa Fe, NM	Jeremy Gonzales	NJROTC
Rio Rancho H. S.	Rio Rancho, NM	Zoe Lum	MCJROTC
West Mesa H. S.	Albuquerque, NM	Alexis Hunter	NJROTC
Belen H. S.	Belen, NM	Mairim Olivas	NJROTC
Cibola H. S.	Albuquerque, NM	Tysha Hopper	MCJROTC
Eldorado H.S.	Albuquerque, NM	Jacob Horne	MCJROTC
Gadsden H. S.	Anthony, NM	Marco Esparza	NJROTC



John Jones presents Navy League award to Cadet Lance Corporal Jacob Horne at Eldorado HS in Albuquerque

## 2018 United States Naval Academy Appointees from New Mexico



Appointee	School	City	BGO	STATUS
Joseph Heinlein	Valencia HS	Tome, NM	Schaefer	USNA
Gabriella Mayes	Rio Rancho HS	Rio Rancho, NM	Beno	USNA
Caleb Meyer-Hagen	Hope Christian HS	Albuquerque, NM	Scott	USNA
Ryan Ortiz	Centennial HS	Las Cruces, NM	Jackson	USNA
Brannon Purvis	NAPS	Albuquerque, NM	Beno	USNA
Sara Vianco	Albuquerque Academy	Albuquerque, NM	Hickox	USNA
Brittany Holden-Rhodes	Marion Military Academy	Placitas, NM	Gutierrez	USNA
Makayla Fernandez-Sanchez	Belen HS	Belen, NM	Schaefer	NAPS
Neil Wilkerson	Los Alamos HS	Los Alamos, NM	Swingle	NAPS



Charles Stapler steps across state lines to present Navy League award to Ismael Estupian at Canutillo High School in Texas, just north of El Paso



Damon Runyan presents West Mesa HS award to Cadet Commander Alexis Hunter



Tom Gutierrez and Rebecca Vigil present Navy sword on behalf of the NM Council to UNM Officer Candidate Brian McConnell.

# Nautical Items of Interest

NEW MEXICO  
Council



## Meet the New Mexico Council Treasurer!

By Julie M. Wright



When John Jones called to ask me if I could volunteer my time as Treasurer to support the Navy Council, I had to laugh. I told him that I wasn't in the Navy, nor have ever served time in the military. I agreed nonetheless, and so far have

enjoyed all of my interactions with the board. I am honored to be a part of the Council and am thrilled to see how dedicated the team is.

My husband and I work together at Southwest Piping Supplies, where he is the President and I am the Office Manager. We have three children, the eldest (31) works with us at our company; our daughter (28) lives in Baltimore, MD and works at the Walters Museum; and our youngest (22) works at Sandia Labs while continuing her education in Computer Science. We live in the northeast heights in Albuquerque but are in the process of building a new home in Ponderosa, NM. While our business and home consume a lot of our time, I also enjoy gardening and reading.

It is a privilege to serve the New Mexico Council.

## Meet the New Mexico Council Scholarship Coordinator! by Lori K. Harris

Lori K. Harris joined our board this past January. She is a recruit from John L. Jones and his company because he believes her work ethics and her history would be a great addition to our organization. Lori is a Native of New Mexico and a graduate from UNM Anderson School of Management. She has worked with Entranosa for over 20 years, owned her own construction firm, and has been involved in many volunteer boards, helping her community grow.

Her daughter, Jessica Self, is a Fire Controlman of the guided-missile destroyer USS Chafee (DDG 90), stationed at Pearl Harbor, Honolulu. Lori is married to husband Jim Smith, a retired school teacher and the State Representative for District 22 in NM. Together they also have a son in the Army and a daughter whose husband is in the Marines.

When asked about how she felt regarding her children serving in the military she replied "I also have a brother who served in the Air Force, so I pretty much have all the branches covered. Jokingly she added, "with that, I should rank pretty high. And, actually, I am very proud to have a family so dedicated to our country".

## New Mexico Council Honors Navy JROTC Instructor by Damon Runyan



During its annual award ceremony honoring outstanding cadets, the West Mesa Navy Junior ROTC instructor, Major Mark Hendricks, USMC (Ret.), was surprised to receive a small award himself. The award presenter, LCDR Damon Runyan, USN (Ret.), presented a commemorative plaque on behalf of the New Mexico Council to Maj. Hendricks marking his 20<sup>th</sup> year as the Senior Naval Science Instructor at that school. Maj. Hendricks has headed a strong program at West Mesa from the beginning. He has made it a goal to highlight STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) extracurricular activities with his cadets along with the traditional activities of Air Rifle Marksmanship, Drill Teams, Physical Fitness Teams, and Color Guard teams. West Mesa NJROTC has been featured in

newspaper articles for their work with Rocketry, Underwater Autonomous Vehicles, and Robotics. Maj. Hendricks indicated he plans to continue his work with Cadets for the foreseeable future.



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**2018 Upcoming Events for Navy League, New Mexico Council**

Jun 6	D-Day Commemoration
Jun 6-9	NLUS National Convention – Portland, OR
Jun 14	Flag Day – show your colors!
Jun 16	Military Coalition Luncheon hosted by Navy League – Speaker Captain Christopher D. Mitchell, USAF, Kirtland AFB Legal Office
Jul 4	Independence Day – show your patriotism!
Jul 21	Military Coalition Luncheon – Speaker Burly Cain, NM State Director, Americans for Prosperity
Sep 15	Military Coalition Luncheon – Speaker Dick Brown, Navy League, Story of a WWII Japanese Midget Submarine
Oct 6	Navy @ Air Force football, Colorado Springs, CO. 1:30 Mountain time, CBS
Dec 8	Army - Navy football, Philadelphia, PA, 1 pm Mountain time, CBS