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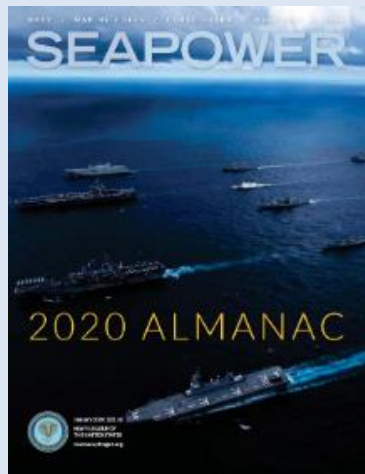
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New Mexico Senate Honors William Payne: Passes Senate Memorial 20

By Greg Trapp, JD; Photo sent by William Payne

On February 17, 2020, the New Mexico Senate honored Senator William H. Payne, and at the same time passed Senate Memorial 20 (SM20). The memorial creates a task force that will study and make recommendations on how to display the two historic bells from the battleship USS New Mexico (BB-40). The Sponsor of the memorial was Senator William "Bill" Payne, who we in the Navy League know as "Admiral" Payne.

A native of Albuquerque and graduate of the University of New Mexico, Senator Payne entered the Navy in 1975. After he was commissioned in 1976, he reported to Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) training. He completed duties with Underwater Demolition Team 11 and SEAL Team One, including independent duty with Foreign Special Forces. Payne's flag assignments include being deputy commander Naval Special Warfare Command, Coronado, California. Payne earned his JD from the University of New Mexico School of Law in 1990. Payne was recalled to active duty during Operation Desert Storm for service with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Payne later returned to Coronado in 1993 as joint operations coordinator for NR-Naval Special Warfare Command, serving as commanding officer NR-SEAL Team 5.

Admiral Payne was elected to the New Mexico Senate in 1997. He is currently the Senate Republican Minority Whip. After serving in the Senate for 23 years, he decided to not seek another term. Payne's service to the state and nation was recognized on February 17, when the Senate passed a special certificate honoring him for his service. In a sign of the sincere respect in which Senator Payne is genuinely held by his peers on both sides of the aisle, the Senate played a practical joke on the Admiral, first voting down his Senate Memorial 20, and then bringing it back up on a procedural maneuver and passing it by a vote of 43 to 0.



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, and the local active and reserve. Joint or renew at <https://www.navyleague.org/membership>*

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President's Message



John Jones
President, New Mexico Council

Spring is here – we are ALL in a different situation than we were at the start of the year, and focusing on different things.

The obvious differences are the coronavirus, the absence of toilet paper in the stores, the price of oil, and the stock market – it is a different world, and everyone is working to adapt. Stay in touch with family, neighbors and other Council members.

The next board meeting will be held on Monday, April 13th – by phone. If you'd like to listen in – let me know. Since the start of the year we've passed the budget and published goals – most of which center on supporting the NLUS mission locally.

State Senator (Rear Admiral) Bill Payne is retiring from the legislature at the end of this year, and his final bill in the Senate was a memorial to establish a committee to determine the best and highest uses of the two bells from USS NEW MEXICO (BB-40), and where to display them. Thank you, Senator!

In this issue you'll see an article by Greg Trapp about the Senate memorial.

We are sad to report that the charter for the Sea Cadet Triton Battalion has been rescinded due to low numbers. The

Battalion has valiantly worked at increasing membership in the absence of a relationship with a school, but it just didn't work. Thank you to Joe Lukas-Drouillard for his leadership, hard work, and for being a positive influence on young lives. BZ Joe.

The annual awards process for the Junior ROTC units has begun, coordinated by Ron Olesak in Santa Fe. As a reminder, we support over 20 units across the State and in El Paso – these awards have greater impact if presented, personally, by a Council member at an awards ceremony. We can easily cover the units in Santa Fe and Albuquerque, but have difficulty south of I40, along the east and west borders, and San Juan County. If you'd like to help impact the life of a young cadet, please volunteer to help.

Our funding comes from membership dues through the National organization, and from donations. Please consider a tax-deductible donation to the New Mexico Council in support our scholarship program, our work with crews on our namesake New Mexico ships, and our recognition programs with the Navy ROTC at UNM, and Junior Navy and Marine Corps ROTC programs around the State. A contribution of any size will be beneficial.

Among the most important lessons of life are those Mom taught – including washing your hands. Stay well, and safe. Tell us what you think - Not for Self but Country. You can reach us by mail at the Council PO Box, or you can email me, directly, at entranosa@aol.com.

John L Jones
CDR SC USN (ret)

Contact me any time at
entranosa@aol.com

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

NM Nautical Quiz!

Q1: How good of grades do you need to join the Navy?

Q2: Why is Army thinking about changing its football team name from the Black Knights to the Opossums?

(see page 6 for answers)

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

Namesake Ships



Editor's Note: The following article, contributed by Greg Trapp, JD, is the result of Greg's in-depth research on two of our namesake ships. The photos are from Greg's personal collection. Thank you, Greg, for sharing this story with us in the New Mexico Navy League.

Born of a Nation at War: The WWII Story of USS Albuquerque and USS Gallup by Greg Trapp, JD

The story of USS Albuquerque and USS Gallup is in many ways the story of America's efforts on the home front during World War II. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor had strongly galvanized public support behind the war effort, enabling the United States to mobilize all of its industrial and military might. Civilian manufacturing was quickly converted to military production, and critical resources were redirected to aid the war effort. Vital materials such as rubber and metal were rationed by the War Production Board, and food, tires, and gasoline were rationed by the Office of Price Administration. The entertainment industry produced patriotic movies, cartoons, and music, all overseen by the Office of War Information. Sixteen million Americans also served in the armed forces, and the president of Coca-Cola promised that every American in uniform could get a Coke for 5 cents. More than 400,000 of those Americans in uniform were women, with 86,000 of those serving as WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) in the Navy Women's Reserve. Another 11,000 were serving in the Coast Guard Women's Reserve as SPARs (Semper Paratus- Always ready). Millions of women also entered the workforce. Women made M1 Carbines at General Motors, P-51 Mustangs at North American Aviation, and B-24 Liberators at Ford Motor Company. Women also worked as "Wendy the Welders" at Kaiser Shipyards. One of the ships they helped build was USS Albuquerque (PF-7), a Tacoma-class patrol frigate. In total, 96 Tacoma-class patrol frigates were built during the war. Of the 96 patrol frigates, 21 went to the United Kingdom. The remaining 75 patrol frigates went to the United States Navy.



The Tacoma-class of patrol frigates were conceived in 1942, a time when the Allies were in a desperate struggle to win the Battle of the Atlantic. Allied merchant ships were being sunk by German U-boats at an unsustainable rate, and the United States needed to find a way to quickly produce greater numbers of escort vessels. One solution was to use commercial shipyards to build escort vessels to mercantile standards, and to man those ships with a Coast Guard crew. The result was the Tacoma-class patrol frigates, which were built by eight different commercial shipyards from 1943 to 1944.

The patrol frigates had a crew of 190, were 303 feet long, displaced 1,430 tons, and had a top speed of just over 20 knots. They were armed with three 3-inch/50 caliber dual purpose guns, two twin 40mm guns, and nine 20mm guns. They were also armed with two depth charge tracks, eight depth charge projectors, and a hedgehog anti-submarine mortar. Although the patrol frigates were similar in size, speed, and armament to the more numerous destroyer escorts,

Shown here is a photo of USS Albuquerque. Armed with three dual-purpose 3-inch/50 caliber guns, Albuquerque performed escort duties in the Aleutians during World War II. The ship was recommissioned in 1950, and went on to earn three battle stars during the Korean War.

Albuquerque was transferred to Japan in February of 1953, and renamed Tochi. Photo Credit National Archives 19-N-65097.

the patrol frigates were constructed to mercantile standards and lacked the survivability of the destroyer escorts. The exception were the eighteen patrol frigates built by the Consolidated Steel Corporation, which the Navy considered to be more reliable than the patrol frigates built by other shipyards. Accordingly, all of the Consolidated Steel patrol frigates were sent to the Pacific War Zone. Amongst those was USS Gallup (PF-47). *(story continues next page)*

Namesake Ships



Born of a Nation at War *(continued from previous page) by Greg Trapp, JD*

USS Gallup was launched on September 17, 1943. The ship was sponsored by a Navy nurse, Ensign Helen McMahon. Her maid of honor was another Navy nurse, Betty McCormick, who was from Belen, New Mexico. Gallup was commissioned on February 29, 1944. Placed under the command of Lieutenant Commander Clayton M. Pop, USCG, the "Gallant Gallup" left San Pedro for New Caledonia on June 1, 1944. Gallup joined Escort Division 43 and provided escort and patrol service in the waters of New Caledonia, New Guinea, Australia, and the Philippines. Gallup shelled enemy positions on Biak Island on August 17 and 25, supporting landings of the 41st Infantry Division. Leaving New Guinea on October 12, Gallup supported the landings at Leyte in the Philippines. This included shelling Dinagat on October 17. After performing a variety of support and escort duties, Gallup left for the West Coast on December 3, 1944. Gallup arrived at San Francisco on December 25, 1944, and spent the next six months performing escort duties in the Aleutian Islands as a part of Escort Division 27.



Shown here is USS Gallup in camouflage paint. Gallup earned two battle stars during World War II. Gallup was transferred to Russia in August of 1945, and returned to the United States in 1949. Gallup was recommissioned in 1950, and earned three battle stars during the Korean War. Transferred to Thailand in 1951, Gallup was renamed HTMS Prasae. Decommissioned on June 22, 2000, Prasae is now a static museum ship. Photo Credit National Archives 19-LCM-PF-421.

USS Albuquerque (PF-7) was built by Kaiser Shipyard in Richmond, California, and was launched on September 14, 1943. Albuquerque Mayor Clyde Tingley selected Moran Livingstone to sponsor the city's namesake ship. She was the wife of Barney Livingstone, who was the Albuquerque Associated Press Bureau Chief before he enlisted in the Navy. According to the June 30 edition of the Carlsbad Current-Argus, "Mayor Tingley said it was fitting that an Albuquerquean should christen the ship and even more fitting that the sponsor should be the wife of a naval lieutenant." Moran Livingstone was also a close confidant of war correspondent Ernie Pyle.

USS Albuquerque was commissioned on December 20, 1943, and placed under the command of Lieutenant Commander Wayne L. Goff, USCG. Albuquerque completed shakedown training in March of 1944, and sailed for the Aleutian Islands for convoy duty on the 24th of that same month. Assigned to Escort Division 27, Albuquerque would spend the rest of 1944 and the first half of 1945 escorting ships and convoys in the stormy waters of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands.

One of the Coast Guard sailors serving on USS Albuquerque was David Hendrickson, author of "The Patrol Frigate Story - The Tacoma-class Frigates in World War II and the Korean War 1943-1953." Writing in the Winter 2011 edition of the Quarterdeck Log in an article titled "Cold Sea, Lonely Sea - Aboard USS Albuquerque," Hendrickson described the difficult service on Albuquerque in the Aleutians: "The duty was recognized as a war of loneliness - single ship patrols, single ship responses to distress calls, convoys of seldom more than two escorts herding an ancient Navy oiler and a Liberty ship plowing along at less than ten knots, and more often than not an overwhelming feeling of isolation accentuated by the enclosing qualities of ever-enduring bad weather."



Shown here is a photo of USS Albuquerque, taken at Mare Island on March 20, 1944. This photo was taken after Albuquerque completed shakedown training, and just before leaving for the Aleutian Islands for convoy duty. Official U.S. Navy Photo.

Albuquerque responded to a distress call on the 19th of April, 1944. The Liberty ship John Straub had been attacked, possibly torpedoed by the Japanese Submarine I-180. Albuquerque arrived on the scene in time to see the bow section explode and quickly sink, taking 55 sailors beneath the surface of the cold Aleutian waters. On the 8th of October, 1945, Albuquerque was escorting the tanker John Altgeld out of Kodiak. Sailing in a storm with 60 knot winds, the tanker signaled that she was cracking aft of the superstructure. Albuquerque moved in close and trained her searchlights on the tanker, and remained with the crippled ship until the storm subsided and the tanker had returned safely to Kodiak. As Hendrickson recounted it, one of the sailors from John Altgeld later said: "Albuquerque miraculously appeared as Jesus Christ walking on water prepared to take each seaman by hand had the tanker broken up."

The World War II service of USS Albuquerque and USS Gallup ended when both ships were transferred to the Soviet Union in August of 1945. Although the contributions of the patrol frigates were a relatively minor part of the overall war effort, the ships and the

15,000 Coast Guard sailors who manned them still made a vital contribution towards helping to win World War II. Likewise, the 11,000 women who served in the Coast Guard as SPARS helped those ships to be crewed, providing their own vital contribution to the war effort. USS Albuquerque and USS Gallup could not have been built and crewed without the total commitment on the home front to win the war. It was that total commitment of the home front that was ultimately the decisive factor in defeating Germany and Japan.

Namesake Ship Submarine Updates *By Dick Brown*

Ex-USS Albuquerque (SSN-706) After defueling, Ex-Albuquerque was decommissioned on February 27, 2017. Per NAVSEA, she is scheduled to dock for her hull recycling availability on August 25, 2022.



USS Santa Fe (SSN-763) is now in drydock at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine for planned maintenance and system certifications.

USS New Mexico (SSN-779) left Kittery after her two-year overhaul and changed homeport to Naval Station Norfolk where she was commissioned 10 years ago (she joined the fleet on March 27, 2010).



Instead of honoring Los Alamos with a new Virginia-class boat, as our late Jim Nesmith had so long advocated, Acting SECNAV Thomas B. Modly named USS Oklahoma (SSN-802) and USS Arizona (SSN-803), recycling the names of two famous battleships. Both new subs were authorized for construction on December 2, 2019, just ahead of Pearl Harbor Day. Incidentally, six weeks after Pearl Harbor Day, SECNAV named CVN-81 after Navy Cross recipient Dory Miller who manned one of West Virginia's .50-cal AA guns during the attack.



New Mexico Council Welcomes YOU: Spotlight on Ernesto Valenzuela *By Chuck Vaughan*

Navy League and New Mexico Council member Ernesto Valenzuela is a retired Captain, U. S. Navy, who served as a surface warfare officer in the Navy. Prior to serving in the Navy, seaman Valenzuela joined the U. S. Maritime Service in 1946 and served with the Maritime Service until November 1954. In the Maritime Service he served aboard several Merchant Marine U. S. Army transports, such as freighters and C-4 type vessels, serving as a seaman and boatswain Chief Petty Officer. He was present during the invasion of Inchon, Hungnam, and Wonsan, Korea in 1950. While serving in the Marine Service he attended and graduated from the United States Maritime School in Sheepshead Bay, New York in 1951. He was commissioned as an Ensign in the United States Naval Reserve on October 14, 1952.

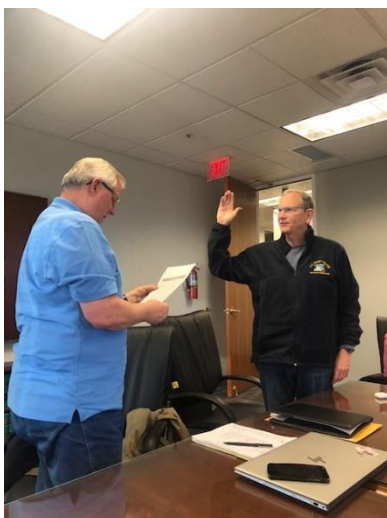
During the early 1950s Ernesto served on various freighter passenger ships with the Moore McCormack Shipping Lines as a 3rd and 2nd Mate Officer. The Shipping Lines provided arms and munitions to the French in Vietnam from during 1953 and 1954.

Ernesto was born in El Paso, Texas and missed his home, so he left the Moore McCormack Shipping Lines and returned to El Paso, Texas. He joined the United States Naval Reserve on January 1, 1955 at the Naval and Marine Corps Reserve Readiness Center in El Paso. In the Naval Reserve he served in many positions, serving as a Training Officer, Administrative Officer, Executive Officer and Commanding Officer of three different commands. He also served as the Commandant Readiness Representative, as the Deputy Inspector General, and as the El Paso and RDAC Recruiting District Council Chairman – Southwest.

Like most Naval Reservists I have known, Captain Valenzuela also held down a full-time job while serving in the Naval Reserve. While serving in the Naval Reserve he was employed at the Terk Distributing Company, Inc., for 28 years, working his way up the ladder to Vice-President. During this time, he also served on several boards and committees including the El Paso Convention Tourist Bureau Board, the El Paso Employers Association, the El Paso Beer Wholesalers Board, the El Paso UTEP/Civic Opera Guild Board, and on the Civil Service Commission City Board.

Captain Valenzuela is married to Hilda M. Valenzuela and they have four children: Patricia, Ernesto, Jr., Hilda Jeannette, and Victor Hugo and even some great grandchildren. Captain Valenzuela lives in El Paso and became a member of the New Mexico Council when the El Paso Council disbanded a few years ago.

New Mexico Council President Swears in Dave Williams as Vice President *Photo by Rebecca Vigil*



At our March 2020 meeting of the New Mexico Council of the Navy League of the United States, new Vice President, Dave Williams, was sworn in by 2020 President John Jones.

We are looking forward to all the great things that this new leadership team will bring to the New Mexico Council.

Welcome Dave!

Past issues of the NM Nautical News can be found at
www.nmnavyleague.com/newsletters.html

Answers to NM Nautical Quiz (from page 2)
A1: Just 7 C's.
A2: Because they play dead at home and get killed on the road! Go Navy!

USNS Comfort and USNS Mercy Assist in a Crisis in New York and Los Angeles

By Mark Schaefer; Photo by Getty Images/Jim Watson

We can be amazingly proud that our Naval forces have at our disposal these two fantastic ships, ready to assist the nation in a crisis, and ready to move into place wherever they are needed.

The USNS prefix identifies these hospital ships as non-commissioned ships that are owned by the U.S. Navy and operated by the Military Sealift Command. Staffing for over 1000 beds is filled by Navy Medical Corps, Dental Corps, Nurse Corps, Chaplain Corps, and Hospital Corpsmen alongside the regular ship's crew and helicopter support personnel.



As President Trump stated when the USNS Comfort left Norfolk Naval Shipyard on its way to duty in New York, “This great ship behind me is a 70,000 ton message of hope and solidarity to the incredible people of New York – a place I know well, a place I love... it will be ready to address any life-threatening medical emergency. It is stocked. It’s stocked to the brim with equipment and medicines and everything you can think of”.

The Comfort is fully loaded with 12 operating rooms, a medical laboratory, a pharmacy, an optometry lab, digital radiology, CAT scan equipment, two oxygen plants, and a helicopter deck.

USNS Mercy, a sister ship to USNS Comfort arrived in Los Angeles as well this week to provide additional capability to hospital staffs in Southern California.

Both ships were originally built as San Clemente-class oil tankers in 1976 by the National Steel and Shipbuilding Company. Launching was in San Diego, California. Previously, these ships served in the Persian Gulf War, positioned in proximity to Kuwait in 1991, in migrant processing for Haitian migrants in 1994, in Operation Nobel Eagle after the World Trade Center bombing in 2001, in the Iraq War in the Persian Gulf in 2003, in Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and in many other national emergencies.



The “Medical Treatment Facility” or hospital on the ship, is commanded by a captain of either the Navy Medical Corps or the Navy Nurse Corps.

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2020 Upcoming Events for Navy League, New Mexico Council

Apr 13	Board meeting by telephone conference – email John Jones if you want to listen in
tbd	Submarine Crew visits – postponed
May 11	Board meeting – location tbd or by telephone conference
June 8	Board meeting – location tbd or by telephone conference
April to May	Please volunteer to present awards to JROTC units in your area → contact Ron Oleksak at Ron.O.NMNLUS@outlook.com