

NM NAUTICAL NEWS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
NEW MEXICO COUNCIL
NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES



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".



Mess Deck Photos from USS New Mexico (SSN-779)

Story by Mark Schaefer, newsletter editor; Photos by USS New Mexico crew via Damon Runyan

From the earliest days of USS New Mexico, right after its commissioning, the citizens of the State of New Mexico and our New Mexico Council have been honored to outfit the submarine's mess decks with some fantastic décor. This type of look is unique in the submarine fleet.

Feedback from the crew has been fantastic, and they are happy to show



off their mess decks to others. We began with balloon prints on Navy-approved thick laminate. The next iteration seen above shows other scenes from New Mexico, including Shiprock, the Very Large Array by Magdalena, and Route 66 logos and, of course, balloons. All of the photo graphics and printing were done locally at a discounted price by FAST SIGNS on Eubank in Albuquerque.

Crew members at the back of the crew's mess are holding up big bags of New Mexico Pinon coffee. Many thanks to this company for its donations to all of our namesake submarine crews!

Also seen at the higher levels in the crew's mess photo are some of the hand-drawn pictures and thank you cards from several of our local schools. Students write these cards and letters, and the crew responds in a pen pal type of program. This is a win-win for both New Mexico schools and our crew, whom we are very proud of and thankful for protecting our nation!

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. Join or renew at

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

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NAVY LEAGUE
NEW MEXICO COUNCIL
P.O. Box 91554
Albuquerque, NM 87199

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Newsletter Editor

Wreaths Across America Visits ABQ

The
Wreaths
Across
America



Mobile Education Exhibit will be in Albuquerque on Friday April 9 from 10 AM to 4 PM at the NM Veterans Memorial, 1100 Louisiana Blvd SE.

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



President's Message



John Jones
President, New Mexico Council

AHOY!

As we welcome Spring to 2021 and the State starts to ease COVID restrictions, we wish you good health, and the opportunity to reconnect with family and friends and the Navy League.

The Council Board continues to meet via Zoom monthly – normally the 2nd Monday at 530 pm – but it'll be the 3rd Monday in April due to schedule conflicts. We welcome your attendance – let us know and we will get you the link and code for the month.



I'm honored to report that we awarded a \$1500 scholarship in February to ETN1 (and Midshipman) Emilio Montano. He is a native New Mexican attending

UNM on the Sailor to Admiral program. His past achievements, scholastics and stellar application made a STRONG impression on our Scholarship Committee. We will be accepting applications for the Fall Semester in June.

Our JROTC Theodore Roosevelt Awards are starting up in a limited fashion

as the units across the State take form again after the COVID hiatus on educational programs. We've received several exciting applications from units and we're pushing to restore the program to 23 units.

As a change of pace, and for our members of the Philatelic Society, there is ample reading in this issue about submarine-themed stamps and covers for namesake ships.

A goal of the Council this year is to increase our membership – if you have a friend interested in the maritime support mission of the League or know someone who is a former sea service member, please refer them to the Council or the National web site ... there is PLENTY to do!

Please consider a tax-deductible donation to the New Mexico Council in support our educational efforts with the Sea Services, our scholarship program for men and women on active duty and in the reserves, our work with crews on our namesake New Mexico ships, and our recognition programs with the Navy ROTC and Junior Navy and Marine Corps ROTC programs around the State and El Paso.

The Navy recently announced that it would return to Santa Fe and New Mexico with a Navy Week, again, this year. We will have more information in our next issue.

Stay in touch, tell us what you think.

Contact me any time at
JohnLJonesNM@gmail.com

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

Not for Self, but Country.
Semper Fortis.

John L Jones, CDR SC USN (ret)

Special Philatelic Edition!!

Submarine Stamps Surfacing Around the World *by Dick Brown, New Mexico Council*



Peruvian Submarine Fleet



Rig for Red!

Nations around the world, whether land-locked or not, whether they have a navy or not, have been issuing postage stamps featuring naval submarines for nearly nine decades. Surprisingly, 116 countries have dived into submarine postage stamps and collectively that amounts to 1,178 individual stamps surfacing in philatelic collections everywhere.

Over the past 20 years, many African nations and many island nations have been issuing colorful postage stamps, including submarine topicals. For example, Guinea-Bissau, a tiny coastal country in west Africa, does not produce their own postage stamps but has authorized an agency to print on their behalf. The agency pays the country and gives them 20% of the stock for use as postage. Guinea-Bissau and its neighbor Guinea together have over 100 submarine stamps.

There are many African nations which have nothing to do with submarines, but they have large fleets of submarine stamps, for example, Somalia – a fleet of 80, Djibouti – 77, Chad – 63, Togo – 47, Sierra Leone – 44, Central Africa – 43, Congo – 35, and Mozambique – 35.

Companies that produce topical stamps have signed contracts with various countries and each may have a different level of involvement in the process. Some countries want the right to review and approve or reject designs. Some don't. Some offer their stamps for sale in their country. Some don't. But almost in all cases, the stamps are primarily produced for collectors.

Many island nations, which could be visited by submarines, have submarine stamps, including the Solomons, Pitcairn and Kiribati in the South Pacific; Palau in the Philippine Sea; Ascension and St. Helena in the South Atlantic; Comoros in the Indian Ocean; the Maldives in the Arabian Sea; Gibraltar and Malta in the Mediterranean; Bermuda and the Bahamas in the North Atlantic; and the Caymans, Trinidad, Aruba, Barbados, Antigua, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and St. Kitts in the Caribbean.

St. Kitts, also known as St. Christopher Island, honored *USS Albuquerque* in 2005 with a \$5 postage stamp. Christopher Columbus first spotted the island during his second voyage in 1493. Ironically, our city namesake boat was operating in St. Kitts waters when the stamp was issued. The image used on the stamp dates back to the submarine departing on sea trials.

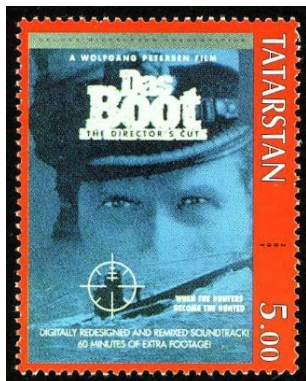


USS Albuquerque, now decommissioned, was again honored in 2014 by the land-locked nation of Chad, which has no involvement in submarines except to feature them on postage stamps as a revenue source for the republic. Our city namesake is shown surfacing off Morocco in September 2004 during the NATO exercise Operation Majestic Eagle.



Submarine Stamps Surfacing Around the World (continued) by Dick Brown, New Mexico Council

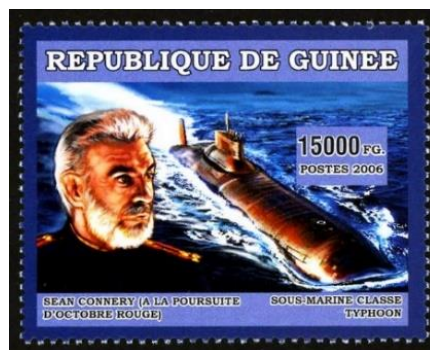
Morocco hosted the multinational exercise which involved two carrier strike groups. At the time, CDR Stuart Munsch was in command of *Albuquerque*. Now as Vice Admiral, Stuart is the Director for Operational Plans and Joint Force Development (J7). Exercises such as Majestic Eagle demonstrate a unique spirit of cooperation among allied forces while strengthening diplomatic relationships, fostering cooperation in keeping sea lanes open for global trade, and testing joint-force interoperability.



Submarine skipper played by
German-born Jurgen Prochnow

Submarine movies have also been featured on stamps; of note is *Das Boot*. Wolfgang Petersen's gritty 1982 Academy Award-winning classic is deemed by undersea warriors as the best submarine movie ever.

The 1990 Cold War submarine thriller, *The Hunt for Red October*, based on Tom Clancy's novel, is another classic. While some in the Navy feared *Red October* might divulge some secret technologies, several admirals concluded the film would do for submariners what *Top Gun* did for fighter pilots.



Capt. Marko Ramius played by
the late Sean Connery

Today, we have submarine mini-sheets—330 beautiful miniature works of art. In the last few years, they have grown more expensive, approaching \$20 for some sheets. These souvenir sheets (SS) first surfaced in Spain in 1938 but the real surge kicked off with submarine force centennial celebrations in the early 2000s. They are often issued in pairs, one with a single stamp, the other with a block of four different stamps. This wildly popular SS production has greatly increased the submarine stamp count. Beyond that, Djibouti issued two sheets of 12 different submarine stamps in 2011, North Korea two sheets of 12 in 2012, and Congo one sheet of 16 in 2017.



Submarine Stamps Surfacing Around the World (continued) *by Dick Brown, New Mexico Council*

Submarine stamps have been launched in a variety of shapes, not just squares and rectangles, but hexagons, circles and triangles. As for the shape of things to come, submarine stamps continue to surface in our planet's seas and oceans. For the serious submarine philatelists, their collections are rapidly approaching a fleet of 1,200.



Putting a Stamp on History *by Greg Trapp, JD*

The collection of postal covers has long been a part of stamp collecting, or philately. The hobby includes a wide variety of covers, such as first day covers, first flight covers, event covers, railroad covers, military covers, and Naval covers. The collection of Naval covers became popular after 1908 when Congress authorized the establishment of post offices aboard Navy ships. There are a great variety and types of Naval covers, such as event covers that celebrate a ship launching or anniversary, covers from a particular ship, covers from a specific class or type of ships, covers that include a cachet or design on the envelope, covers issued on a historical date, or covers issued from a particular location.

The collection of Naval covers can be a fascinating and educational hobby, and one that can easily fit every budget. Enthusiasts can even join the Universal Ship Cancellation Society, which is an organization of collectors of Naval and maritime covers. There is a nearly inexhaustible variety of covers that can be collected, or the collector can focus on a specialty area such as ships from World War II that are named after the state of New Mexico. What follows are examples of some of the more interesting or rare covers from my own collection that come from ships named after the state of New Mexico.

Shown at right is a rare event cover from USS New Mexico, BB-40. The cover features a cachet commemorating "admission Day," which was the anniversary of New Mexico statehood. The cover was canceled on January 6, 1937, the actual day of the 25th anniversary of statehood. The cachet depicts the Great Seal of the State of New Mexico, and it also celebrates the connection between the state of New Mexico and its namesake battleship.



Putting a Stamp on History (continued) *by Greg Trapp, JD*

Shown at right is an especially collectable and rare event cover from USS New Mexico, BB-40. The cover includes a cachet depicting the battleship in front of Mount Fujiyama, and it commemorates the VJ Day surrender of Japan in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945. The cover was actually canceled on September 2, making this cover especially collectable. Another aspect making this cover more desirable is that USS New Mexico was one of the 280 allied ships present in Tokyo Bay for the surrender ceremony that took place on the 2nd of September. Another interesting aspect of this cover is the upside down stamp, which was a common way of expressing love between the sender and the recipient.



Shown at left is an event cover from the patrol frigate USS Gallup, PF-47. The cover was canceled on May 4, 1951. USS Gallup had served with the US Navy during World War II, but was transferred to the Soviet Union in August of 1945 as a part of Lend-Lease. USS Gallup was returned to the United States in 1949, and was recommissioned into the US Navy for service during the Korean War.

Shown below are two more recent event covers marking the christening of the nuclear submarine USS New Mexico (SSN-779) and the State of New Mexico Centennial. The christening cover includes an elaborate cachet of the submarine and its crest, and was canceled December 13, 2008, the day of the christening. The New Mexico Centennial cover includes the unique stamp commemorating the 100 years since Statehood, and it was signed by the Commanding Officer at the time, CDR George Perez, and was certified as having traveled to test depth of the submarine.





Gadsden High School Named Most Outstanding Unit *by Damon Runyan*



Gadsden High School Navy Junior ROTC in Anthony, NM, was recently named the Area 9 Most Outstanding Unit for the 2019-2020 School year. Area 9, one of 11 NJROTC areas in the U.S., Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Hawaii, Italy, Spain, Guam, and Japan, encompasses West Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, and Tennessee. There are currently 600 NJROTC Units worldwide and this award singles out the Top 11 units.



The Gadsden High School NJROTC program New Mexico was established in 1982. Currently, the program and its 115 cadets is managed and led by LCDR Mark Morrell (USN Ret) and GSMC (SW) Jesus Escudero (USN Ret). Both originally met on active duty while working together on USS Pinckney (DDG 91) as part of the commissioning crew during 1992-94. Mark was the Pinckney's first Chief Engineer and Jesus, his main space leading petty officer. They were reunited in 2014 following their respective retirements when they took over the Gadsden NJROTC program. After their first year, they received the Most Improved Unit in Area 9 followed by selection as Distinguished Unit five years in a row and most recently selected Most Outstanding Unit in Area 9 for school year 2019-20. The Gadsden NJROTC program continues to enjoy great success preparing young men and women to succeed in the military, college and life as good citizens and future leaders in the communities they serve.



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2021 Upcoming Events for Navy League, New Mexico Council

April 4	Easter
April 5	Gold Star Spouses Day
April 9	Wreaths Across America 10 am to 4 pm at NM Veterans Memorial, ABQ
May 6-12	National Nurses Week
May 8	VE Day
May 31	Memorial Day
June 11-13	Navy League National Meeting – St. Louis, MO

Please volunteer to present awards to JROTC units in your area → contact Ron Oleksak at Ron.O.NMNLUS@outlook.com