



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

**NEW MEXICO**  
Council



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

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## Winter 2022 Issue

### Page 1

- Navy Week in Santa Fe

### Page 2

- President's Message:  
NM Council Updates

### Pages 3-4

- Namesake Ships  
SSN-779 Change of Command  
SSN-763 Change of Homeport  
SSN-706 New Stamp  
BB-40 Made A Miniature

### Page 5

- Local New Mexico News  
Navy Nurses in Farmington

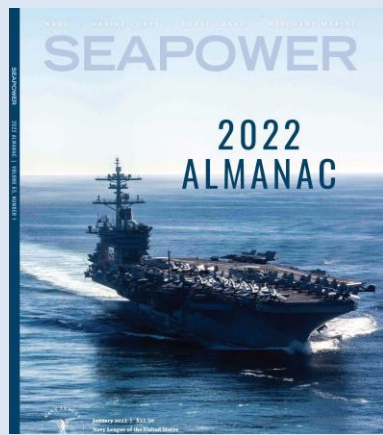
### Pages 6-7

- Nautical Items of Interest

### Page 8

- Upcoming Events

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".



## Santa Fe Salutes the Navy in 2021 Navy Week

Story by Mark Schaefer, newsletter editor; Photos and quotes courtesy of Santa Fe New Mexican

Moving from 2020's virtual Navy Week to a real Navy presence in November 2021, the city of Santa Fe and Navy personnel worked together to bring some Navy adventure to the New Mexico desert.

Sailors from the Santa Fe (SSN-763), the historical USS Constitution, the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN-69), USS Ronald Reagan (CVN-76), and several shore-based commands combined efforts to represent the Navy in a very positive way in Santa Fe. Their efforts help the Navy in recruiting and in bringing community awareness of the Navy to Santa Fe and other communities throughout the year.

Rear Admiral Chris Engdahl, commander of Expeditionary Strike Group Seven, served as the senior Navy representative. Engdahl said, "I was honored to be a part of Santa Fe's virtual Navy week last year, so it is exciting for my wife and I to travel to New Mexico and represent the Navy here in Santa Fe this year. As a namesake city of an incredible attack submarine and home to many veterans, active duty, and reserve personnel, I look forward to reconnecting this year and strengthening the Navy's partnership with the citizens and leadership in this wonderful city."

Navy week Santa Fe ran from November 8th to 12th and was one of thirteen Navy Weeks held across the nation in 2021. See more photos on page 5.



USS Santa Fe (SSN-763) sailors Pierre Delgado (navigation team) and first class yeoman Jonathan Citizen help prepare meals at Kitchen Angels for homebound residents.

**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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## President's Message



John Jones  
*President, New Mexico Council*

### Happy New Year New Mexico Council and Happy Birthday to the State of New Mexico on Wednesday January 6<sup>th</sup>!

The League will celebrate its 120<sup>th</sup> birthday this year.

All of us continue with unique challenges and the Council was not immune from that – as we improved on how we advocate for the maritime services, communicate with each other, and remain engaged in the Mission of the League... but we met those challenges and we're a better organization for it. On behalf of the officers of the Council, (Dave Williams - VP, Tom Gutierrez - Secretary, and Chuck Vaughan – Treasurer) we thank you for your support, and we are all grateful for the opportunity to serve the Mission of the League.

As is the case every year, there is plenty to do, and we'll discuss goals for 2022 at the Board meeting on Monday, January 10<sup>th</sup>. Along those lines, it is good to keep in mind 'the mission' and that the League is a nonprofit civilian, educational and advocacy organization that supports America's sea services - the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and U.S.-flag Merchant Marine. Three main tenants of the mission are:

- Enhance the morale of sea service.

- Provide a powerful voice to educate the public and Congress on the importance of our sea services to our nation's defense and economic prosperity.
- Support youth through programs, such as the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Junior ROTC and Young Marines, that expose young people to the values of our sea services.

Every effective and efficient organization needs a solid mission (we have one), an engaged membership, and sufficient funding to carry out the mission. Our funding comes from membership dues through the National organization, donations, and occasional fundraisers. If you have a neighbor or friend who served or is interested in supporting our maritime services – tell them about the Council. Additionally, please consider a tax-deductible donation to the New Mexico Council in support of programs that aid our active/reserve members and their families, our scholarship programs, our work with crews on our namesake New Mexico ships, and our recognition programs with the Navy ROTC and Junior ROTC.

In this issue, you'll find highlights on "Navy Week in Santa Fe" this past November, coverage on our work with the Namesake Ships – NEW MEXICO and SANTA FE – and their crews, and how Navy medical units are helping out in San Juan County.

We ask that you remember those who have departed us in the past 12 months, and for your support of our men and women in harm's way.

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)

## Navy Tidbits



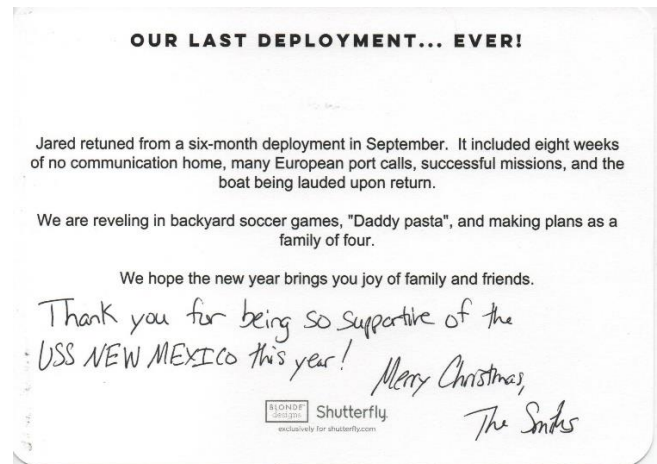
One of the Naval Submarine League's 2021 RADM Frederick B. Warder Awards, which is given to the top graduating NROTC students selected for submarines, went to Midshipman Mario Avila of UNM's NROTC unit.

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

# Namesake Ships



## Holiday Greetings from CDR Jared Smith, Commanding Officer, USS New Mexico



## USS New Mexico (SSN-779) Change of Command *by Damon Runyan, USS New Mexico Committee*



The current Commanding Officer of the USS New Mexico, CDR Jared Smith, let us know that he will be changing submarines in the very near future. CDR Smith will change commands with CDR Carlos Otero of the Pre-Commissioning Unit USS New Jersey (SSN-796) and CDR Otero will take command of the USS New Mexico. CDR Smith has served as Commanding Officer of the New Mexico since July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020, and recently completed a nearly seven-month deployment to North Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea. CDR Smith is shown holding one of the many bags of Vigil's Beef Jerky sent to the crew from the USS New Mexico Committee of the New Mexico Council of the U.S. Navy League.

The USS New Jersey is the 23<sup>rd</sup> Virginia-class submarine to be built and is considered to be a little over 80% complete. She is the first Virginia-class to be modified to house female submariners. The U.S. Navy is expected to commission the New Jersey sometime in 2022.

## USS Santa Fe (SSN-763) Updates *by Ron Olexsak (as reported in December's Navy League New Mexico Council meeting)*

1. Two officers and four sailors from the USS Santa Fe Boat attended this year's Navy Week held in Santa Fe.
2. The Boat was originally scheduled to depart for their new homeport of San Diego in early December, but that schedule has now slipped to mid-January. The Commanding Officer (CO) believes that the boat will transit the Panama Canal in mid-March. The CO was given a choice of next patrol locations and this will be his last patrol.
3. One of the Santa Fe's former culinary specialists has been transferred to the USS Texas. Ron contacted the Houston Area NL Council and give them the Culinary Specialist's name for a possible link to assist this boat similar to the way that the SF Committee supports their boat.
4. Rear Admiral Christopher Hendel, CO of the Expeditionary Service Squadron, and his wife attended the opening dinner at LaFonda Restaurant with the 763 Committee for Navy Week. There were dinners every night of the week and his committee was very active supporting these events.

# Namesake Ships



## New USS Albuquerque Submarine Stamp from Chad

by Dick Brown, New Mexico Council

USS Albuquerque (SSN-706) is now featured on a 3300-franc postage stamp just issued by a land-locked African republic. The attached souvenir sheet shows the boat with the Castle Hill Lighthouse at Newport, RI. Okay, that's cool but the rest of the image shows two relatively new boats and a humpback whale. One of the boats is Zuirya SS-505, a Japanese diesel-electric boat homeported in Yokosuka. The other is Kazan K-561, a Russian nuke armed with a boatload of cruise missiles. How's that for some Navy trivia?



## New BB-40 Miniature by Ron Olexsak

For those of you bored and needing a hobby, Warlord Games has a WW2 Naval skirmish game with miniatures. The newly announced US Navy set features USS New Mexico as part of its collection! If interested, connect to Victory at Sea US Navy Fleet by Warlord Games Ltd.



And, shown at right, is a great picture of the BB-40 battleship New Mexico that Ron Olexsak found on a facebook group. It shows the ship's 5 inch 25 caliber battery as it prepares to fire during the bombardment of Saipan on June 15, 1944. The sheer number of men it took to staff this battery is astounding, and the activity level of the crew is evident on each gun mount. This is a great photo, and it is nice to see more photos like this become visible through sharing on the social media sites.



## Navy Week Santa Fe Photos and Stories *by Mark Schaefer; Photos and quotes courtesy of Santa Fe New Mexican*

Besides the culinary support that Navy units provided to Santa Fe's Kitchen Angels organization, crew members from USS Santa Fe (SSN-763) and other units got down and dirty in the support of Habitat for Humanity, school visits, Boys and Girls Club visits, and musical performances.

CDR Matthew Pianetta, Commanding Officer of the USS Santa Fe, said "What every crew member does have is a tie to Santa Fe ... I expect the crew to walk a little taller, hold their chins a little higher when they hear about the support we receive here. At the same time, I expect the crew to care just a little bit more, to do just a little bit better."

The USS Santa Fe Committee, which is part of the Navy League New Mexico Council, welcomes USS Santa Fe sailors to the city of Santa Fe. The Committee supports the crew of the USS Santa Fe through fundraising and donations to send culinary care packages to the submarine and bring sailors to Santa Fe.



*Gunners Mate 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Sarah Frank, USS Constitution works on Habitat for Humanity home in Santa Fe*

## Navy Nurses Support San Juan Regional Medical Center *by Mark Schaefer; Photos courtesy of KOB-TV*


Dozens of US Navy nurses and medics were recently deployed to the San Juan Regional Medical Center in Farmington to help treat COVID-19 patients. Nearly 50 medical personnel from the Navy are assisting there since the patient load has been over 200% from time to time.




Twenty military teams have been deployed across the nation to help out. New Mexico is fortunate to have some of the best and brightest military medical people since after all, they are Navy!



## Congratulations are in order!

 Four new Ensigns were commissioned out of the University of New Mexico NROTC Unit on December 18th at the Domenici Health Sciences Auditorium. NLUS New Mexico Council President, John L Jones, presented a sword to the Honor Graduate, Ensign Jakeline Lopez-Mendez. The sword was sponsored by NLUS New Mexico Council member, and Albuquerque attorney, Jeff Albright, CDR, USN (ret). Ensign Lopez-Mendez will report to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam as a surface warfare officer and future Engineering Duty Officer.

 One of NSL's 2021 Literary Awards went to Dick Brown for his article "75th Anniversary of Submarine-based Deterrent Strike Force" published in the June 2021 edition of The Submarine Review.



## Submarine Squadron Two Established at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard

by Mark Schaefer; Photos and quotes courtesy of U.S. Navy

Past USS New Mexico (SSN-779) Commanding Officer Daniel J. Reiss (center front row in photo at right) took over as commanding officer of a newly reestablished Submarine Squadron Two at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine in an official ceremony on December 10, 2021.

The squadron will provide administrative, manning, logistics, training, and readiness support for the submarined undergoing maintenance and overhaul periods at the Naval shipyard.

“I’m honored and excited to help restore this storied squadron name alongside these dedicated submarine crews and the talented and hardworking team at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard,” said Reiss. “We look forward to getting these crews and their boats back in the fight, stronger and tougher than when they arrived.” CAPT Reiss served as Commanding Officer of SSN-779 from January 8, 2016 to March 2, 2018. He was the fifth Commanding Officer of the USS New Mexico.



## Navy’s Bill the Goat Survives Army-Navy Game Shenanigans

Great news! excerpts from *Navy Times* in early December

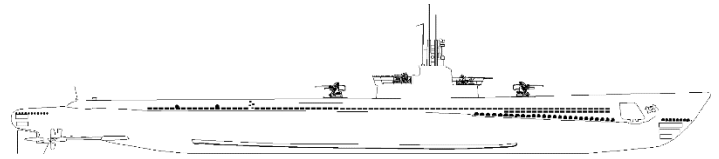
The recent cold snap along the East Coast can mean only one thing: The Army-Navy football game is afoot, and with that, the time-honored tradition of stealing the schools’ mascots, a mule and goat, respectively. The Naval Academy adopted the goat as its mascot in 1904 and all goats have since been lovingly dubbed Bill. West Point officially made the mule its mascot in 1899 without bestowing a name.

The deeply ingrained tradition of thievery has been occurring for nearly 70 years, and despite being banned in 1992 after Navy midshipmen were a little overzealous in their attempt — cutting phone lines and zip-tying six Army employees while stealing West Point’s mules — the observance of the annual heist has continued unabated, albeit unsanctioned. The first cadet theft of Bill occurred in 1953 and involved a convertible and chloroform. Since then, 10 successful (more PETA friendly) Army-conducted raids have occurred.



This year, however, the cadets fumbled their mission. Hard. According to a joint statement released by the Army and Navy in response to questions from The New York Times, the West Point raiders attempted to sneak up on Bill No. 37 as he dozed peacefully in a pasture with several other retired Bills. “The noisy assault team spooked the goats into a run, though, and when the fumbling cadets gave chase, they managed to grab only one goat — and not the right one. After a four-hour drive back to West Point, they unveiled not Bill No. 37 but Bill No. 35, an arthritic, 14-year-old retiree with only one horn.” Bill No. 35 was unharmed and safely returned by some rather sheepish Army officers.

## A Tribute to WWII Submarine Veterans: USS Bullhead Memorial by Dick Brown



We all remember Leo Davis and Charlie Brown, both combat submariners from WWII and long-standing members of our Navy League Council. About 20 years ago, Charlie gave me his collection of 124 editions of *Polaris*, the official magazine of Submarine Veterans WWII. That organization was established on July 4, 1955, was incorporated in February 1956, federally chartered in November 1981, and disbanded in September 2015. Before I turned the collection over to USSVI Bullhead Base Commander Dan Rose, I perused all editions and gleaned some juicy tidbits to remind us of our WWII submariners, rapidly dwindling in numbers, the last soon to join Leo and Charlie.



Charlie Brown and Mary

On April 7, 1979, the Sandia Chapter of SubVets WWII formally dedicated USS Bullhead Memorial Park at the south end of San Pedro. USS Bullhead (SS-332), under command of LCDR Edward Holt on her third war patrol was the last sub lost, in fact, she was lost on the day we dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan – a bomb developed here in New



Mexico. On August 6, 1945, Bullhead had just passed through Lombok Strait and entered the Java Sea when a Japanese Army plane dropped two bombs. Both were direct hits and Bullhead plunged to the bottom. To honor the officers and crew, there is a street named Bullhead on the Royal Australian Navy Base in Fremantle.

A wreath honoring the memory of Bullhead was set adrift in the Java Sea by former *Boston Globe* correspondent Martin Sheridan and Capt. Edward Beach, USN(Ret). Sheridan was on Bullhead's first patrol and has the distinction of being the only war correspondent permitted on a submarine war patrol. Capt. Beach, a WWII submariner, is the author of the submarine classic, *Run Silent, Run Deep*. Sheridan, also a book author, wrote *Overdue and Presumed Lost – the Story of the USS Bullhead*.

The Bullhead Memorial features three Mark 14 torpedoes on elevated bases designed to prevent climbing. The torpedoes were obtained by Chief Torpedoman Bill Robinson, a Navy Reserve recruiter. There are two bronze plaques, one featuring the Memorial dedication, the other, installed when Albuquerque hosted the SubVets 1986 National Convention, listing the names of 84 Bullhead shipmates on eternal patrol.



For decades, one of the regular functions of our local WWII SubVets was serving on a 6-man Honor Guard to render honors at burial ceremonies in the Santa Fe National Cemetery and other cemeteries around the state. Leo and Charlie served many times in this solemn role. It was part of their legacy in helping veterans of all service branches.

A memorial to the officers and crew of USS Bullhead was recently unveiled in Fremantle, a vital homeport to American, British and Dutch submarines in the Pacific theater. The memorial, located outside the Western Australian Maritime Museum, was dedicated August 6, 2021, the 76th anniversary of the submarine's sinking off the coast of Bali near the mouth of the Lombok Strait. American consul-general David Gainer said at the dedication ceremony that the memorial underscored the United States' unwavering commitment to Australia. "Lives aboard USS Bullhead were lost defending Australia. This memorial is a powerful symbol of their courage and the unbreakable alliance between our two countries." The man behind the memorial is Tim Baldock, author of *Fortress Fremantle: Its Lost Sub & Contributions to World War II*. He dedicated his book to the memory of the Bullhead crew. His "bucket list" goal is to visit the USS Bullhead Memorial Park in Albuquerque.

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**2022 Upcoming Events for Navy League, New Mexico Council**

January 10	Navy League, New Mexico Council board meeting via Zoom
January 17	Martin Luther King Day
February 14	Navy League, New Mexico Council board meeting via Zoom
February 21	Presidents' Day
February 22	National Margarita Day
March 14	Navy League, New Mexico Council board meeting via Zoom

Please volunteer to present awards to JROTC units in your area → contact Ron Oleksak at [Ron.O.NMNLUS@outlook.com](mailto:Ron.O.NMNLUS@outlook.com)