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<https://seapowermagazine.org/>



Training USS New Mexico Cooks at La Posta, Las Cruces

Story by Tom Hutchinson and Damon Runyan; Photos courtesy of La Posta de Mesilla



USS New Mexico crewmembers traveled from the submarine in Norfolk, VA to Las Cruces, NM (40 miles north of El Paso, Texas) to work hard for three days learning the secrets of New Mexican Cuisine at the world famous La Posta de Mesilla. CAPT Tom Hutchinson (back row right of center) and his wife, Jerean, own La Posta and have trained crew members for many years. Looking sharp with their SSN-779 patches on uniforms, Culinary Specialist 1st Class (CSS1) Kyle Scott, Culinary Specialist Third Class (CSS3) Nicholas Armantroutbuckler, and Culinary Specialist Seaman (CSSSN) Cole Pagels joined Tom and rest of the staff at La Posta de Mesilla. *(continued on page 5)*

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 our local active and reserve service members.

Join or renew at members.navyleague.org

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Ron Oleksak
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Interim 706 Sail Committee*

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Navy League Awards

Congratulations to the **New Mexico Council** for winning the following 2021 National Awards!

**Mackie Gold Award –
Newsletter**

**Sea Service Unit Adoption
Excellence – Small Council**

**Council Performance –
Honorable Mention**



President's Message



John L Jones
President, New Mexico Council

AHOY!

As we welcome Summer – and rain – we wish you good health, and the opportunity to be with family and friends, as well as spending some time with the New Mexico Council!

The Council Board continues to meet via Zoom, on a monthly basis – normally the 2nd Monday at 5:30 pm (July 10th). We welcome your attendance – let us know and we'll get you the link and code for the month.

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 is a former sea service member, please refer them to the Council or the National web site ... there is PLENTY to do, especially with the Sail of the 706 coming to Albuquerque.

Please consider a tax-deductible donation to the New Mexico Council in support our educational efforts for the Sea Services, our scholarship program for men and women on active duty and in the reserves, our work with crews on our namesake submarines

and our recognition programs with the Navy ROTC and Junior Navy and Marine Corps ROTC programs around the State and El Paso.

Join us on our web page (www.nmnavyleague.org) and Facebook (NavyLeagueNM) to help with our outreach, and to get information.

The Council recently received three national awards for our newsletter and programs.

Hope you enjoy this issue, with information on training Navy cooks at La Posta in Las Cruces; lists of JROTC award winners and appointments to the Naval Academy; our local scholarship award program; the SANTA FE (763) moving to San Diego and transiting the Panama Canal; evolving success in our seven year effort to bring the sail of the former ALBUQUERQUE (SSN 706) home to rest; a former ALBUQUERQUE skipper nominated for his 4th star; WW II history of namesake LSTs – CATRON COUNTY and BERNALILLO COUNTY; and Navy Week is returning to the Albuquerque area in September – coinciding with the State Fair!

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)

Local New Mexico News



Navy League New Mexico Council Presents 2022 Teddy Roosevelt Youth Awards

Here are your 2022 NJROTC and MCJROTC Teddy Roosevelt Youth Award winners from around the State of New Mexico and nearby Texas. 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.



Unit	Albuquerque/ North NM	City	Cadet Recipient
MC	La Cueva High School	Albuquerque, NM	C/Cpl Emily Schmidt
MC	Rio Rancho HS	Rio Rancho, NM	C/Jasmyn Baca
MC	Atrisco Heritage High School	Albuquerque, NM	C/Liz Beth Silva
Navy	West Mesa High School	Albuquerque, NM	C/CDR Ruby Cortez
MC	Eldorado High School	Albuquerque, NM	C/PFC Janya Carillo
MC	Grants High School	Grants, NM	C/GySgt Cameron Thompson
Navy	Manzano High School	Albuquerque, NM	C/Joseph Trussell
Navy	Santa Fe High School	Santa Fe, NM	C/PO1 Dorian Chavez
Navy	Belen High School	Belen, NM	C/SR Isabelle Jordan

Unit	Las Cruces/ South NM /Texas	City	Cadet Recipient
Navy	Gadsden H.S.	Anthony, NM	C/CPO Mirasol Martinez
Navy	Fabens HS Fabens TX	Fabens, TX	C/CDR Stephanie Meza
Navy	Santa Teresa High School	Santa Teresa, NM	C/Daniel Daly
Navy	Organ Mountain High School	Las Cruces, NM	C/Katharina Curnutt
Navy	Americas HS	El Paso, TX	C/PO1 Skylar Gutierrez



2022 Teddy Roosevelt Leadership Award presented to Cadet GySgt Cameron Thompson, Grants HS MCJROTC, by CDR Dave Williams, Vice President, NM Council

2022 United States Naval Academy Appointees - New Mexico



Appointee	School	City	Status
Thomas Fotter	La Cueva HS / Arizona State	Albuquerque	USNA
Henry Mitchell	Albuquerque Academy	Albuquerque	USNA
Kelly Wetteland	Los Alamos HS	Los Alamos	USNA
Diego Garcia	Volcano Vista HS	Albuquerque	NAPS
Diego Aragon	Mora HS	Mora	Foundation



2022 Teddy Roosevelt Leadership Award presented to Cadet Corporal Emily Schmidt, La Cueva HS MCJROTC, by LCDR Damon Runyan, Chair, USS New Mexico committee, NM Council

2022 New Mexico Council Scholarship Award

Submitted by Marilyn Smith, Scholarship Chair

Demetrios Morris has been affirmed by our council to receive a \$750 award on behalf of the Navy League of the United States, New Mexico Council for 2022. Demetrios is currently a dental student, and he intends to be commissioned as an officer upon completion of his dental education. The Council will award another scholarship later this year.

Namesake Ships



USS Santa Fe (SSN-763) Panama Canal Transit to New Homeport *by Ron Oleksak*

March 29, 2022 marked a squadron and homeport change as USS Santa Fe arrived in San Diego, CA to join SUBRON Eleven and rejoin the Pacific Fleet. After almost two years of pier side and drydock maintenance in the New England area, SSN 763 left Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, transited the Panama Canal, and pulled into San Diego - greeted by blue sky and calm seas.

The Boat will now do a series of exercises to ensure equipment and Crew are in top shape before a WestPac cruise later this year or early in 2023. As they move through these activities, life proceeds at a normal pace. Crew will leave or join the Boat, equipment will be put through its paces, and the USS Santa Fe Committee will continue to support 763!



USS Albuquerque Sail Homecoming Update *by Greg Trapp, JD, Chair, 706 Sail Committee*



The Council has exciting news to share regarding the status of the sail from the decommissioned USS Albuquerque, SSN-706. On April 5, Mayor Timothy Keller participated in a Zoom meeting of the USS Albuquerque Ad Hoc Sail Committee workgroup, and he proclaimed his enthusiastic support to bring the sail to the city to be preserved as a memorial. Mayor Keller also announced during the meeting that he was requesting city funding for the sail memorial.

The City Council was supportive of the effort, and appropriated \$700,000 to pay for the memorial project. USS Albuquerque is currently being dismantled at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton, and a portion of the funding will be used to transport the 52-ton sail from Bremerton to the city of Albuquerque. The massive weight of the sail will require the memorial to be carefully designed and built, and the majority of the \$700,000 will be used to construct the memorial. The sail, which has already been removed from the boat, will be cut into three pieces to allow for it to be transported to Albuquerque by truck. Difficult work yet remains to be done, including trucking the sail to Albuquerque, designing the memorial, and selecting a location, but the crucial first steps have been successfully completed. The USS Albuquerque served our Navy and Nation for 33 years.

Namesake Ships



Sub Grub Improvements as USS New Mexico Crew Trains at La Posta

Here are a few more photos of the crew of culinary specialists being trained by the chefs from La Posta restaurant in Las Cruces. The crew's mess of the USS New Mexico is affectionately named "La Posta baja del Mar" or La Posta under the Sea, so it is of utmost importance to national security that the crew is properly trained to make food representative of the quality we always find at La Posta here in New Mexico.



Training with La Posta's salsa specialist, and some product in process.

Culinary Specialists Scott, Armantroutbuckler, and Pagels in front of La Posta restaurant (above) and with Jerean Hutchinson, owner, at the entrance of the Inn where they stayed, called La Hacienda de Mesilla (right).



Former USS Albuquerque Skipper Makes 4th Star *extract from Stars and Stripes, June 9, 2022*



VADM Stuart Munsch

Vice Adm. Stuart Munsch was nominated by President Joe Biden for promotion to admiral and leadership of U.S. Naval Forces Europe, U.S. Naval Forces Africa and Allied Joint Forces Command, Naples. A 1985 graduate of the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., Munsch also earned bachelor's and master's degrees at Oxford University in England as a Rhodes scholar. He served as Commanding Officer of USS Albuquerque (SSN-706) from 2002-2005.

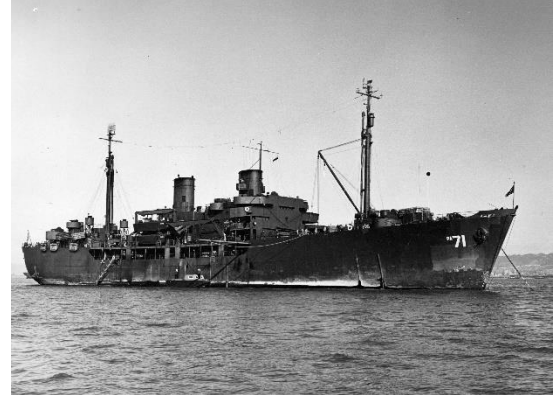




USS Catron: A WWII forerunner of Today's Modern Amphibious Assault Ship

by Greg Trapp, JD, Council Historian

This issue of New Mexico's Nautical News is published as war rages in Europe, with the Russian invasion of Ukraine the largest and most deadly European war since WWII. The war has even caused the traditionally neutral Finland and Sweden to seek membership in NATO. As a show of support to Finland and Sweden, the United States sent the Wasp-class amphibious assault ship USS Kearsarge to the port of Stockholm as a part of the Baltops military exercises. At 843 feet and 40,500 tons, USS Kearsarge and its complement of Marines and aircraft is a very potent demonstration of America's military might. Amphibious assault ships such as USS Kearsarge can trace their heritage to World War II when the Navy was faced with the urgent need to transport large numbers of troops and land them on heavily defended beaches. As a result, the Navy developed a variety of ships designed to transport and land troops and equipment, the most well-known of which is likely the LST, or Landing Ship Tank. The LST was specifically designed to transport tanks and trucks, and the LST played a crucial role in invasions in Europe and the Pacific. The Navy also developed a variety of "attack transports" that were capable of transporting larger numbers of troops. This included the Gilliam-class attack transport which could transport 800 troops. The Gilliam-class included USS Catron, APA-71, which had been named for Catron County, New Mexico.



USS Catron, a Gilliam-class attack transport named after Catron County, New Mexico. (Official U.S. Navy Photo)

The early classes of attack transports were converted merchant designs that had been heavily armed to defend against air attacks. After the loss of several large attack transports, the Navy recognized that concentrating large numbers of troops in a single ship increased the risk of catastrophic losses. The Navy therefore decided to create a class of smaller attack transports. The result was the Gilliam-class attack transport. At just 426 feet and only 4,247 tons, the Gilliam-class was shorter and half the tonnage of prior attack transports. The reduced tonnage gave the 32 ships of the Gilliam-class a shallower draft, meaning they could maneuver closer to shore. The smaller Gilliam-class could also more quickly off-load its smaller load of troops and materials. The Gilliam-class attack transports were equipped with a single 5-inch 38 caliber dual-purpose gun, and an anti-aircraft battery of four twin 40mm guns and ten 20mm guns.



LST-306, later named USS Bernalillo County (Official U.S. Navy Photo)

Built by Consolidated Steel Corporation, USS Catron was commissioned on November 28, 1944. The newly commissioned attack transport left San Pedro on January 18, 1945, headed for training in the Solomon Islands. USS Catron loaded men of the 6th Marines at Ulithi in March, and on 1 April arrived off Okinawa to participate in the invasion of Okinawa. The warship supported the invasion through the 7th of April, at which time she sailed to San Francisco. USS Catron spent the remainder of her active career transporting cargo, prisoners of war, and occupation troops.

LST-306 participated in the Normandy landings. The design of the LST made it possible for the ship to add ballast water to increase the draft for safer ocean crossings and pump out ballast water for beach landings. Over 1,000 LSTs were built during WWII. They were later named after counties and parishes. LST-306 was renamed Bernalillo County on July 1, 1955. The 328-foot LST did not see active service after being renamed.



A group of Gilliam-class attack transports at Pearl Harbor as they await their fate at Operation Crossroads. USS Catron is the second ship from the front. (Official U.S. Navy Photo)

The conclusion of the war saw USS Catron and the other Gilliam-class attack transports deemed unneeded by the Navy. The qualities that had made them valuable in war meant that they were too small and specialized to be of value to a peacetime Navy that found itself with a massive number of decommissioned warships. As a result, USS Catron and 13 other Gilliam-class attack transports were selected as target ships for Operation Crossroads, a series of two atomic tests that took place at Bikini Atoll in July of 1946. USS Catron was a part of the second Baker test on July 25, 1946, which detonated a plutonium bomb that had been suspended 90 feet beneath a Landing Ship Medium, USS LSM-60. The bombs used in Operation Crossroads had been built at Los Alamos and were the world’s fourth and fifth atomic explosions. However, the underwater Baker test caused an unexpectedly large release of radiation, contaminating all of the target ships. The heavily irradiated USS Catron could not be decontaminated and was Decommissioned on August 29, 1946. USS Catron was sunk as a target ship on May 6, 1948.

Navy Week Program Sets Sail for Albuquerque LT Joel Borrelli-Boudreau, Navy Office of Community Outreach



The U.S. Navy is preparing to bring a Navy Week to Albuquerque, N.M., during the week of September 12-18, as the 10th Navy Week of the calendar year. Albuquerque Navy Week will bring between 50 and 75 Sailors from across the nation to volunteer throughout the community and discuss why the Navy matters to Albuquerque. This will be the sixth Navy Week hosted by Albuquerque and the surrounding communities.

Albuquerque Navy Week will feature in-person demonstrations, performances, and engagements throughout the week that will include:

- Senior Navy Leaders – Flag officer and senior civilian Navy leaders with ties to the Albuquerque area.
- Namesake Sailors – Sailors serving on USS New Mexico (SSN 779), a Virginia-class fast-attack submarine.
- Navy Band Southwest - Performances and masterclasses with Navy Musicians.
- Naval History and Heritage Command – Educational presentations and lesson plans about the deep ties between New Mexico and the Navy.
- The U.S. Navy Ceremonial Guard Drill Team – Precision rifle drill demonstrations and engagements with local high school NJROTC Units.
- Navy Expeditionary Combat Command – Educational STEM presentations and fitness demonstrations by technicians, medics, and divers.
- U.S. Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command – Educational presentation on the importance of atmospheric and oceanographic science and the overall value of STEM education to the Navy.



Navy Weeks are the service’s signature outreach program, designed to allow the citizens of Albuquerque to learn about the Navy, its people, and its importance to national security and prosperity. The Navy Office of Community Outreach (NAVCO) coordinates Navy Weeks. “We are very excited to bring Navy Week to Albuquerque,” said NAVCO’s director, CDR John Fage. “Navy Weeks give us the opportunity to help connect Americans to their Navy. We are looking forward to safely and responsibly building those connections in the Albuquerque area and showing everyone why their Navy is so important.”

For more information on Albuquerque Navy Week, contact Lt. Joel Borrelli-Boudreau at (443) 223-6613 or joel.l.borrelliboudreau.mil@us.navy.mil.

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2022 Upcoming Events for Navy League, New Mexico Council

July 11	Navy League, New Mexico Council board meeting
August 8	Navy League, New Mexico Council board meeting
September TBD	Navy League, New Mexico Council board meeting
September 12-18	NAVY WEEK Albuquerque

Watch for activities coming up and support NAVY WEEK Albuquerque! September 12-18, 2022.