



www.nmnavyleague.com

October 2026

Fall 2026 Issue

Page 1

Radiating Resilience: WAVES, WACS, and WASPs

Page 2

**- President's Message:
NM Council Updates**

Page 3

**- Namesake Ships
Albuquerque's Dive Logs**

Pages 4-6

**- Local NM News
Photos from WAVES exhibit
Navajo Code Talker Day**

Pages 6-7

**- From the Sea Chest
USS James K Polk sail display**

Visit Sea Power magazine,
the official Publication of the
Navy League of the United States.
<https://seapowermagazine.org/>

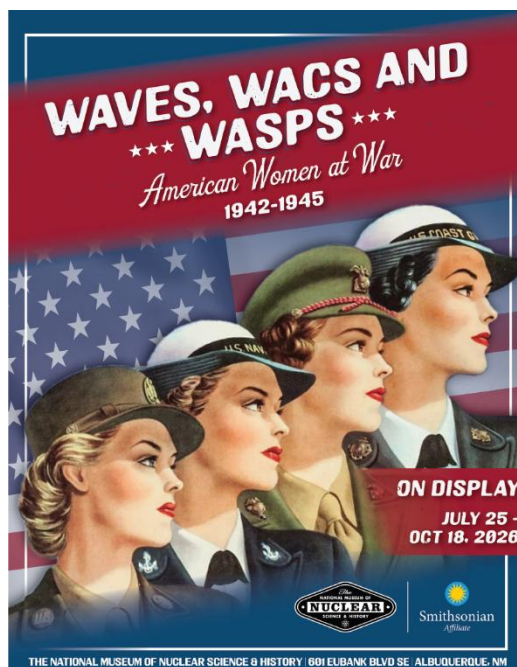


Radiating Resilience: Nuclear History Museum Hosts Women in World War II Exhibit *by Greg Trapp, JD*

The National Museum of Nuclear Science & History is hosting an exhibit showcasing the contributions made by women during World War II. The exhibit is titled, "WAVES, WACS and WASPS: Women in World War II, 1942-1945." Over 350,000 women served in the military during World War II. Millions more worked in defense factories, including assembling airplanes as Rosie Riveters and working in shipyards as Wendy Welders. Of the 350,000 who served in the military, more than 100,000 women served in the Navy as WAVES, or Women

Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service. One of those WAVES was Dorothy Jensen Blanchard, and the exhibit includes items on loan from the Blanchard family.

The exhibit also highlights the more than 11,000 women who served in the Navy Nurse Corps, the 12,846 women who served in the Coast Guard as SPARS, and the 23,145 women who served in the Marine Corps Women's Reserve. One of the women who served in the Marines was Bernice Frankel, who as actress Bea Arthur became known to millions of Americans in the 1970s as Maude, and later as Dorothy Zbornak in The Golden Girls.



The WAVES, WACS and WASPS exhibit runs through October 18. The National Museum of Nuclear Science & History is located at 601 Eubank Blvd SE. The exhibit times and admission fees can be found at www.nuclearmuseum.org.

(see some photos of exhibits and their descriptions in the Local New Mexico News section on page 4)

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 help support our namesake ships, our youth, our Sea Cadets, and the local active and reserve.
Join or renew at members.navyleague.org

2026 COUNCIL OFFICERS

John L Jones

President

David F Williams

Vice President

Chuck Vaughan

Treasurer

David Minster

Secretary

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Damon Runyan

USS New Mexico SSN-779

Ron Oleksak

USS Santa Fe SSN-763

Lawrence Edwards

Albuquerque SSN-706

Sail Committee

Greg Trapp

Historian

LTJG Patrick Williams

Reserve Liaison

Rebecca Vigil

Public Affairs

Ed Nava

Website Editor

NAVY LEAGUE
NEW MEXICO COUNCIL

P.O. Box 91554

Albuquerque, NM 87199

Mark Schaefer

Newsletter Editor

usnanm@comcast.net



President's Message



John Jones

President, New Mexico Council

AHOY!

Thankfully, the monsoon has FINALLY arrived, and it promises to be a cold, wet winter. One can hope. The Council Board continues to meet via Zoom on the 2nd Monday of each month at 6:00 PM. If you'd like to participate, let us know via the contact information in this newsletter.

Hope you enjoy the articles in our newsletter, which is focused on Women in World War II and the Nuclear Museum exhibit that includes New Mexico women; the dive logs from USS ALBUQUERQUE (SSN 706) that are available for your review; and acknowledge Navajo Code Talkers Day (this past August).

One of our namesake submarines, USS NEW MEXICO, is in overhaul at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and USS SANTA FE is underway.

We've adopted the Albuquerque Sea Cadet Battalion. Bill Tutunjian heads that committee – AND the Battalion. Should you wish to help with the Battalion, or support their activities, please contact me by email.

Welcome aboard to Captain Darren Dugan, commanding officer of the UNM NROTC Unit. The Captain is a nuclear trained Surface Warfare Officer and is an excellent fit to prepare Navy and

Marine Officers for commissioned service.

The Navy Ball, celebrating the 251st birthday of the Navy and the 250th birthday of the United States, will be held at Isleta Resort and Casino on Saturday, October 17th. Jessica Garate, KRQE Anchor and Navy spouse, will MC the event again. Our keynote speaker is Rear Admiral John "Chris" Sadler, USNR Ret, and we'll honor WWII Navy veteran John Nagle II. A link to sign up for tickets is on our website (www.nmnavyleague.com).

On September 9th, members of the Council had dinner with Captain Robert Coats, commanding officer of the Navy Band – also a graduate of Eldorado High School and UNM. He was here as part of the Navy Community Outreach (NAVCO) program.

Our annual meeting will be held at Seasons 52, 6600 Menaul Blvd NE (Coronado Center) in Albuquerque. RSVPs will be required, so keep an eye out for the announcement in early November.

That said, if you support what we're doing, consider supporting one of our committees, and providing a tax-deductible donation to the New Mexico Council. Our supported units, JROTC Units, the Sea Cadets and scholarship recipients will benefit.

John L Jones, CDR SC USN (ret)

Stay in touch, tell us what you think ...

Contact me any time at
JohnLJonesNM@gmail.com,
or by mail through the
Council's Post Office Box.

Not for Self, but Country.
Semper Fortis.



*The sail of the USS James K. Polk is displayed at the National Museum of Nuclear Science & History on Eubank Blvd in Albuquerque.
(Photo by Shelley Takeuchi).*

Namesake Ships



USS Albuquerque (SSN-706) Dive Logs Available to Browse! *story by Mark Schaefer*

The Dive Logs of a submarine are something special to see. You, too, can now take a look and browse through all 1075 dives and surfaces of the USS Albuquerque over its nearly 33-year active life.

Painstakingly collected data from the ship's crew, as the submarine action unfolded in real time, recorded the submerge date and time, the surface date and time, and the duration of every submergence event. You can imagine the activity in the Operations Compartment of the submarine as these dives and surfaces took place with ballast air being released or added to the main ballast tanks with blower motors. Picture also the ship's dive team of helmsman and planesman at the Ship's Control Panel, and the Chief of the Watch working the controls at the Ballast Control Panel. At the same time, somebody on the navigation team was recording the precise date and time of all of this activity for the dive logs!



Chief Flores at the Ballast Control Panel on board USS Albuquerque on its final voyage before decommissioning in October 2015



Overlooking the bow of USS Albuquerque from the top of the sail in October 2015

In our Summer 2026 issue, we had a story about the treasure trove of digital photos and documents of USS Albuquerque. These are preserved in a New Mexico Council-funded Dropbox site that is linked to our web page at nmnavyleague.com in the "Documents Repository Link". The dive logs are also available now on our Dropbox site. Go ahead and take a look at the Albuquerque's dive logs. You will get a sense for the meticulous crew, which ones were neat, which ones might have been in a hurry with line outs and sloppier writing, and the overall data-driven precision of submariners.

The digital photos, in addition to being on our Dropbox site, were shared with the Albuquerque Museum of Art and History. The museum is currently cataloging them for the public. The museum works closely with the City of Albuquerque Special Collections Library.

Local submarine veterans Terry Owen and Mark Schaefer met with Teri Reynoso at the Special Collections Library on September 10th. All non-digital material (essentially all hard copy material) from SSN-706 was accepted by the Library and will be part of their permanent collection. An acknowledgement letter told us, "The 1980s and the military are a hole in our collection that this archive will fill."

Additional items, including presentations about USS Albuquerque and more photos, will be added to the Dropbox over the next few months.

1983

DECOMMISSIONING NO. 1
FEB 1 1983

DIVE NO.	DATE	TIME (S)	SUBMERGED	DATE	TIME (S)	DECOMMISSION
1	27 Feb 83	2017	XXXXXX	20 Feb	1429	0/17/52
2	1 Mar	0401	XXXXXX	1 Mar	1147	0/7/46
3	10 Mar	1527	XXXXXX	8 Mar	0811	2/6/44
4	4 Mar	0156	XXXXXX	4 Mar	0754	0/5/58
5	4 Mar	1810	XXXXXX	5 Mar	2217	1/4/07
6	5 Mar	2334	XXXXXX	6 Mar	1652	0/17/38
7	7 Mar	0920	XXXXXX	5 Mar	1836	1/9/16
8	8 Mar	2341	XXXXXX	9 Mar	1258	0/13/17
9	24 Mar	1946	XXXXXX	26 Mar	0502	3/9/16
10	27 Mar	2312	XXXXXX	27 Mar	1154	1/13/41
11	7 Apr	1828	XXXXXX	8 Apr	1233	0/18/05
12	20 Apr	2352	XXXXXX	21 Apr	1304	0/12/12

8/170/142
+13/15/42

Pamphlets, Family Grams, and now the ship's dive logs are available to view at the link called "Documents Repository Link" on nmnavyleague.com and the hard copies of the same will soon be available at the City of Albuquerque Special Collections Library.



Radiating Resilience: Nuclear History Museum Hosts Women in World War II Exhibit

(continued from front page)

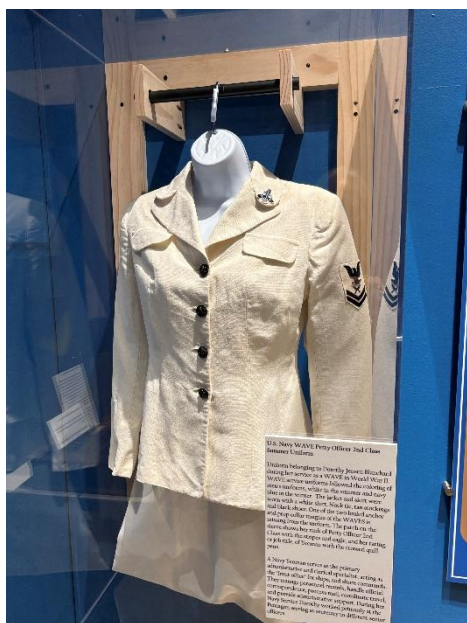
These photos show a small sample of the items on exhibit for the WAVES, WACS, and WASPS display at the National Museum of Nuclear Science & History. The photos are provided by Shelley Takeuchi and the captions are provided by Chapter Historian Greg Trapp.



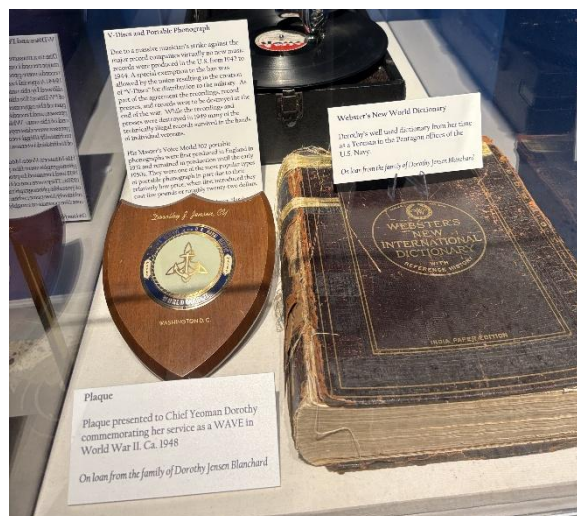
Shown here is a uniform cap worn by Dorothy Jensen Blanchard, currently on display at the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History. (Photo by Shelley Takeuchi)



The women who served during the war were a force for change, including in the area of racial integration. President Roosevelt authorized black women to serve as WAVES on October 19, 1944. This photo is of Jane Freeman, 22, taking the oath as one of the first enlisted black WAVES on November 13, 1944. A total of 72 Black women had become WAVES by the end of the war on September 2, 1945. (Photo by Shelley Takeuchi)



Shown here is a stylish WAVES uniform that was worn by Dorothy Jensen Blanchard. Blanchard served as private secretary to Admiral Arleigh Burke during World War II. (Photo by Shelley Takeuchi)



Dorothy's well-used Webster's Dictionary from her time as a Yeoman in the Pentagon offices of the U.S. Navy. (Photo by Shelley Takeuchi)



"The language they were forbidden to speak is the same language that saved the nation."

On July 28, 1982, President Ronald Reagan signed a proclamation designating August 14 as National Navajo Code Talkers Day. The day is of special significance to the Navajo Nation, which uses the day to honor the more than 400 Navajo Code Talkers who served during World War II.

The Navajo Code Talker program began with an original group of 29 Navajo Marines who used their Diné language to create an unbreakable code. Navajo Code Talkers transmitted vital information in battles throughout the Pacific War, and their contributions were especially critical during the Battle of Iwo Jima and the Battle of Okinawa. Of the more than 400 Navajo Code Talkers, there are only two Code Talkers who are still alive to tell the story. However, August 14 will continue to serve to honor their lasting sacrifice and contributions to the ultimate victory in the Pacific.



At left is Michael Smith who is dressed in his Marine uniform. He was a speaker at the Code Talker Celebration on August 14, 2026. Michael's father was a Code Talker.

At right is a photo of Lloyd Oliver, born on the Navajo Nation in 1923. He served three years as a Code Talker in the Pacific, returned home, and passed away in 2011. He received the Congressional Gold Medal from President George W. Bush in 2001.



From the Sea Chest — by Greg Trapp, JD, Chapter Historian

53 Tons of American Freedom *by Greg Trapp, JD*

The sail from USS James K. Polk today rests silently in Heritage Park at the National Museum of Nuclear Science & History. The sail weighs 53 tons, stands 30 feet tall, and is nine feet wide. When viewed from the right angle, the sail can be imagined to appear as it looked at sea during the height of the Cold War. When the sail is viewed from other angles, a dramatic panorama of Cold War history looms into view. The panorama includes a massive missile hatch that once stood atop one of the Polk's 16 Polaris missile tubes, and also nearby is the first and second stages of a Polaris missile. Viewing the sail from other angles reveals some of the most iconic artifacts of the atomic age, including a B-47 Stratojet, a B-52 Stratofortress, and a U-2 Dragon Lady.



The sail from USS James K. Polk (SSBN-645) is on display at the National Museum of Nuclear Science & History in Albuquerque. The sail has been on display since 2014 and is showing the inescapable effects of the desert climate. Donations may be made to the museum to help preserve the sail. (photo by Shelley Takeuchi)



When the sail is viewed from different angles, other artifacts of the Cold War come into view. This photo shows a B-52 Stratofortress in the background and the first and second stages of an A-3 Polaris missile in the foreground. The Polaris missile was 32 feet 4 inches high and had a diameter of 4 feet 6 inches. The Polk sail is just visible on the left edge of the photo. (photo by Shelley Takeuchi)

was launched on September 22, 1965. The Polk was 425 feet long, had a beam of 33 feet, a draft of 31 feet, and a submerged displacement of 8,200 tons. The Polk was powered by an SW5 reactor that drove the main propulsion turbine. The Polk could reach speeds in excess of 20 knots, and it had a test depth of 1,300 feet. The Polk was commissioned on April 16, 1966, and had blue and gold crews. Each crew consisted of 14 officers and 129 enlisted men.

The keel laying ceremony for USS James K. Polk took place on November 23, 1963, and the Polk



A unique perspective in this photo shows the underside of the bow planes attached to the sail. (Photo by Shelley Takeuchi)



Shown here is one of USS James K. Polk's 16 missile hatches. The hatch is on display, and a B-52 is visible in the background. Museum Curator James Stemm and Historian Greg Trapp are standing behind the hatch. (photo by Shelley Takeuchi)

USS James K. Polk conducted her first strategic Deterrent patrol in September of 1966. The Polk initially carried 16 A-3 Polaris missiles in tubes housed aft of the submarine's sail. The Polaris missile had limited accuracy, so to compensate each A-3 Polaris missile had three Multiple Reentry Vehicles (MRVs) that would land in a cluster around a single target. Each MRV was armed with one W58 200 kiloton thermonuclear warhead, giving the Polk a total of 48 nuclear warheads and the ability to strike 16 targets. The Polk underwent an overhaul starting in July of 1971. The overhaul was completed late in 1972, and the 16 Polaris missiles were replaced with an equal number of Poseidon C-3 missiles. The Poseidon C-3 missiles had either 10 or 14 Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicles (MIRVs), and each MIRV carried a 40 kiloton W68 warhead. The Poseidon had twice the accuracy of the Polaris, and the upgrade to the Poseidon C-3 missiles gave the Polk the potential to accurately strike 160 different targets.

USS James K. Polk completed her 66th and final strategic deterrent patrol in August of 1991. By this time, increasing numbers of Trident-armed Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines were entering the fleet, and the Polk was converted to an attack submarine. The conversion process included the deactivation of the Polk's 16 missile tubes in compliance with the provisions of the SALT II arms control treaty. The conversion also included the addition of dry deck shelters to enable Polk to support special warfare operations. USS James K Polk emerged from the conversion in March of 1994, and was redesignated SSN-645 and began her second career as an attack submarine. The Polk was deactivated on January 9, 1999, and was decommissioned at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard on July 8, 1999. The Polk's sail was transported from Bremerton, Washington on three flatbed trucks to the National Museum of Nuclear Science & History later that same year. The National Museum of Nuclear Science & History moved to its current location in April of 2009, and the sail restoration was completed in November of 2014. The James K. Polk Veterans Association held a sail dedication ceremony at the museum on October 1, 2015.



Pictured here is USS James K. Polk at sea. The Polk completed her 49th deterrent patrol on June 27, 1981. The event was noteworthy because it marked the 2000th patrol by a U.S. Navy ballistic missile submarine (official U.S. Navy Photo).

Shown here is a USS James K. Polk patch. The burst of sun in the western sky and the eagle in flight represent the platform on which James K. Polk ran for President in 1844. The four stars represent the four major land areas acquired during the administration of President Polk (which included the New Mexico Territory). The gold edge surrounding the field of blue reflects the foundation of a formal course of education and preparation for Naval officers at the United States Naval Academy founded in 1845 (G. Trapp collection, photo by Shelley Takeuchi).



Note: You can read more about the USS James K. Polk sail dedication ceremony in the Winter 2016 issue of New Mexico Nautical News. Donations may be made to help preserve the Sail of USS James K. Polk by going to the web page of the National Museum of Nuclear Science & History: <https://www.nuclearmuseum.org/visit/exhibits/operation-preservation>

NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES
NEW MEXICO COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 91554
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87199
Return Service Requested

The Navy League New Mexico Council thanks

ABQ Grafix

*for their continued service to country
via discounted printing of the NM Nautical News!*

**3700 Osuna Rd. NE, #501
Albuquerque, NM 87109**



iprint@abqgrafix.com



Navy League of the United States New Mexico Council, P.O. Box 91554, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87199-1554. The Navy League is classified by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and your donation is tax-deductible.

2026 Upcoming Events for Navy League, New Mexico Council

October 12 @1800	Navy League, New Mexico Council board meeting via Zoom
October 17 @1800	Navy Birthday Ball 2026 – Isleta Resort & Casino; sign up and pay on our website
November 9 @1800	Navy League, New Mexico Council board meeting via Zoom
December 6 @1130	Annual Meeting - Navy League of the United States, New Mexico Chapter – Seasons 52 in Albuquerque Coronado Center
December 12 @1300	Army-Navy football – East Rutherford, NJ; watch party at Albuquerque Craft Republic