



**NKY CHAPTER 5 – BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA, INC
 JULY 2007 NEWSLETTER**



Chapter 5 has certainly been a bunch of busy little bees.....we marched in the City of Florence Memorial Day parade; participated in the Flag Day Ceremony, June 14, 2007; attended a benefit with all the proceeds being donated to offset the cost of shipping goodies boxes to our Troops; and lastly the joy and fun of packing and labeling 161 boxes to be mailed out to our Troops on July 3rd..... Our love, our hopes, our prayers and yes, even our tears were packed inside every box that was mailed out to "Our Heroes". With the love and help of so many we have been able to see first hand the goodness and love that is in so many people and that the support of "Our Troops" will not falter.

There are more little articles and pictures of these events throughout the newsletter....I hope you enjoy each one.



A tip of the halo to Mr. Gordon W. Fullerton for donating his own "Seabees flag" to be flown along side our other flags from the different branches of the military. Mr. Fullerton is from Florence, KY and the owner of 'Standard "Twin" Garden Tractor" (established 1939)
GWF344@aol.com

NKY Chapter 5 is very proud to announce the forming of our very own "Honor Guards"

- America Flag – Anna Judd
- Blue Star Banner – Michelle Roberts / Lori Mills
- Air Force – Cindy Kohrs
- Army – Wanda McNeas
- Coast Guard – TBD
- Marines – Colleen Gagliardi
- Navy – Linda Hanley
- Seabees – Sherri Roesel

Volunteers are needed for helping put our Fall Dance together.....please see Vicky and share your talents in making our dance another Chapter 5 success.

Please inform the secretary of the mailing addresses of your military Sons and Daughters, as well as the dates of their (Birthdays, engagements, marriages, sickness, etc).....so we can send them a card from our group on a regular basis.

Orders are still being accepted for the BS white blouses with our logo. Sign up sheets will be displayed at the monthly business meeting or see Lorene.

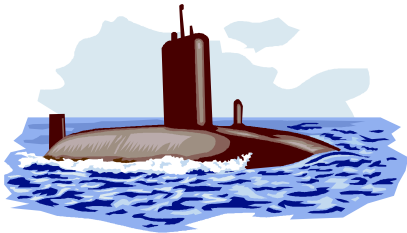
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NEWS FROM ONE OF OUR KIDS.....



This is an article sent to me by the parents of one of our "own military sons", [Tim Hanley, serving aboard the USS Albuquerque](#). Thanks, Gene and Linda for sharing this with us.



Albuquerque Journal-->By Leslie Linthicum Copyright © 2007 Albuquerque Journal; Journal Staff Writer
Editor's note: Journal staff writer Leslie Linthicum recently took a ride on the submarine **USS Albuquerque** as part of the 24th anniversary of its commissioning.

Ride Along as the Sleek USS Albuquerque Slides into the deep, green Atlantic Ocean. About two miles off the Florida coast, the Navy's USS Albuquerque submarine is bobbing like a cork in glassy green seas. She glided out of port like a steel whale with only her sleek black back visible above the surface. Now it is time for the boat to slip under the water and do what it does best. Disappear!!

The Albuquerque, all 6,900 tons of her, stays afloat due to big ballast tanks filled with air. To go below the surface, the boat pumps out the air, allowing water to fill the tanks. Take on water and just like a bathtub toy. She sinks.

In the Albuquerque's cramped and dim control room, crew members looking at sonar, radar and computer screens confirm that the boat is in a part of the ocean it has permission to be in and that there is nothing lurking in the water below.

Hatches closed? Hatches closed!
Hatches sealed? Hatches sealed!

At high noon, pumps begin pushing water from the ballast tanks and just like in the movies a command rings throughout the boat on the intercom: "Dive! Dive!"

The view from the periscope shows the boat's dark tail disappearing under choppy water and then, glub, glub, glub; the periscope screen darkens and switches to a dreamy aquarium view.

We're 150-feet deep in the sea, slicing along at 17 mph. When we're 25 miles from shore, we take a steep dive, the kind that pushes 180- pound men against the wall. Within seconds we're at 600 feet, suspended halfway between the ocean's dark floor and the sparkling water's surface.

Dark and silent....To travel by submarine is to float, silently, in the dark. A boat bobs on the ocean's top, a topsy-turvy ride that even in calm water leaves no doubt you're walking on sea legs.

The ride on a submerged sub is smooth and with no portholes to remind you, it's easy to forget you're under the sea. Except that everything around you looks vaguely familiar.

You've seen all this in "Crimson Tide," "The Hunt for Red October," "Das Boot," even cheesy old "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea"? The periscopes, the ladders and hatches, the dark rooms with impenetrable dials and gauges. But in a real submarine, like the Los Angeles- class fast-attack USS Albuquerque; everything is smaller and more cramped than in the movies. The boat is 360-feet long. About the length of a football field, and 33-feet across. A little more snug than a three-car garage. Inside that space, on three floors, is a nuclear reactor, a water desalinization plant, room for a few dozen torpedoes, 90 beds, a 24-seat dining room, diesel engines, showers, toilets, exercise equipment, sophisticated electronics and surveillance gear, refrigerators, freezers and about 130 crewmen. Last Monday, the USS Albuquerque was a little more crowded than usual. The boat took a birthday cruise out of Port Canaveral on Florida's east coast to mark the 24th anniversary of the boat's commissioning.

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The rare public trip allowed a dozen Albuquerqueans and friends and family of the boat's crew to see the sub in action. Diving and surfacing, firing unarmed torpedoes, cooking and serving meals during an eight-hour tour.

Since it's commissioning at its home port in Groton, Conn., on May 21, 1983 an event attended by Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., and then-Albuquerque Mayor Harry Kinney the Albuquerque has stayed in touch with its namesake city. From time to time, the boat has had crew members from New Mexico, but none of the current crew has New Mexico ties. The Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce hosts the commanding officer and some crewmen at the annual Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta and the submarine reciprocates by inviting some chamber members on a ride whenever time allows. Commander Robert Douglass said the Albuquerque rarely has an open day to accommodate visitors, the last tour for Albuquerque visitors was four years ago but loves to show off the boat. "Our operations are very clandestine," Douglass said. "We can't talk about the missions we do except to say that we do them well and we gather information and that it's valuable to the boss."

"We're Stealthy" The job of the USS Albuquerque is to hide, lurk, watch and spy and sometimes to blow things up. "We're stealthy," says Kevin Lessmann, a 26-year-old lieutenant junior grade. "We disappear." A fast-attack nuclear submarine top speed more than 29 mph makes its own power so it doesn't need to go into port to refuel and it makes its own water and cleans and recycles its own air. It goes out to sea for nearly a year at a time and can stay under water for four to six months or as long as the food holds out. There are no days off on a submarine where would you go and the crew works in 18-hour days organized in three shifts: six hours on the job, six hours of sleep and six hours training, cleaning, and maintaining the boat, exercising or relaxing.

The boat's job is to be quieter than anything else in the ocean, so crew members talk quietly, close doors gently. Those precautions might seem silly in a big ocean, but the men who man the sonar room around the clock say the tiniest noise; a shrimp's chatter, the slow turning of a bolt on a freighter can be picked up. Much of the time, the men on board have only the most general idea where they are and they almost never know why. The boat took a birthday cruise out of Port Canaveral on Florida's east coast to mark the 24th anniversary of the boat's commissioning.

Chief Petty Officer John C. Wiley, a 32-year-old, who controls the Nuclear reactor on board has been around the world under water several times. His longest deployment lasted 10 months. "I was rarely privy to why," Wiley said. "We sometimes get told the basic premise of our mission but often we don't." Danny Calderon, a machinist's mate from Chicago, climbs onto the bridge of the sub when it surfaces and stands with gunner Fred Buckley watching for possible trouble; Other ships veering too close to the sub, terrorists in a speed boat. It's the best part of the job, he says, but he's often surprised to see land on the horizon and discover only then in which port he'll enjoy shore leave.

A special crew... No one gets placed on a submarine; you have to request the duty. It takes a special person to live for months without sunshine, confined to narrow corridors, ducking down almost constantly, sleeping in tiny bunks stacked three-high or squeezed in over torpedoes. The first time Calderon came home after a deployment, his mother said, "Mijo! You're so pale!"

Depending on where in the ocean they are, crew members may get e-mail, but there are no phone to calls home, and on a long deployment the boat's scale, designed for an average height of 5'10", becomes even more cramped. Cans of food that will last the crew for months are stacked on the floor, effectively raising the floor by a foot and a half. As they eat their way through the weeks, the floor lowers and head space is regained.

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Almost none of the crew members are shrimps and a lot of tall guys stoop their way through the corridors. The bunks are only 6-feet-2-inches long and so narrowly stacked that turning the pages of a book takes some maneuvering. Because of the close quarters and lack of privacy, the Navy does not allow women to serve aboard subs and has a height limit for submariners.

"I'm the limit," says 6-foot-6 Tim Hanley, a 23-year-old torpedo man. Hanley works in the torpedo room, where a couple dozen 46-foot-long projectiles filled with explosives are stacked like fire wood. If he slept in a bunk called a "rack" in submarine slang, Hanley's feet would dangle over a missile capable of blowing up a ship. So he has special permission to rig a hammock in a narrow slot just beyond the control panel, where a series of buttons controls the firing of a torpedo or a Tomahawk missile. Hanley is ready to fire when ordered to, but he'll never know until it's over what his missile was aimed at or why. "I'll know when I have to shoot something," Hanley said, "but I've never had to do that for real."

The Albuquerque just finished a week long war games exercise in the Bahamas where the boat fired 22 unarmed torpedoes. Submarines generally lurk in the ocean or off coasts collecting sensitive data that helps the Pentagon understand current or future enemies.

In the intelligence game, secrecy is the key, and the Albuquerque's second in command, Executive Officer George Arnold, will speak of the Albuquerque's missions in only the most general terms. "We can go anywhere that's near water and we can sit there for months watching and gathering information," Arnold says. "We can do that without anyone knowing we're there."

Between June and December of last year, the Albuquerque was in the Strait of Gibraltar, the Suez Canal, the Red Sea and the Strait of Hormuz.

It traveled 30,000 miles and came to port in Spain, Italy, France and the United Arab Emirates.

The crew conducted two missions "vital to national security," Arnold said. "I really can't say more than that we did them."

All of that secrecy means the friends and families of the Albuquerque's crew don't know where the boat is going when it pulls out of Groton. Sometimes, its training and gathering intelligence and drinking wine in Italy and swimming in the Bahamas. Other times, the boat is in the thick of things. Wiley deployed during Desert Storm and says, "I can't tell you what happened, but I can say I was worried about not coming home."

Impressive safety record despite their mission, the miles they put on deep in the sea and the fact that they carry a nuclear Reactor around, Navy submarines have an impressive safety record. There has never been a nuclear accident on board a sub and the Navy hasn't lost a nuclear submarine in nearly 40 years, since the USS Scorpion sank in an apparent accident off the coast of Spain in 1968. Prowling the Atlantic at about 600 feet below surface, the USS Albuquerque entertains her guests by doing a quick climb that throws people against the walls. Then she turns and heads back to shore, surfacing several miles from land. Surfacing is a tense operation. The submarine loses its advantage of invisibility and the Albuquerque's periscopes swing full circle to scan the waters. The coast is clear, the sub floats higher and hatches open to allow Commander Douglass, Lieutenant junior grade Doug Szukics, other crewmen and gunners to climb onto the bridge for the sunny and breezy ride into port.

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U.S. Coast Guard vessels with machine guns greet the boat and escort her to port while Douglass scans the horizon with binoculars and listens intently for the engines of approaching pleasure craft, anything all the eyes scanning above and below deck might have missed.

Come too close to the Albuquerque, and you'll hear Douglass' voice on your radio, warning you to change course.

The Albuquerque has never had an accident or failed to complete a mission on time, and Douglass, who will help move the boat's base from Connecticut to San Diego next year, wants to keep her record clean.

At the end of the day, the Albuquerque is rocking gently against a dock in Port Canaveral, waiting for her next mission.

"It's just like an airplane, only safer," Douglass likes to say.

"There are no submarines in the sky but plenty of airplanes in the ocean."



Dates to remember during July & August

July 18, 2007 – Chapter 5 regular business meeting

**August 25, 2007 – Pioneer Park, Covington, KY
The USS Forrestal CVA/CV/AVT-59
Association "The Moving Wall".**



HAPPY JULY BIRTHDAYS



JUNE 22 – JULY 22

M/GUNNERY SGT FREDDIE COX, JR.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

- www.dogbarneyproductions.com
- www.prayercentral.net – Daily Prayer
- www.bluestarmoms.org – Lowest Airfare

IF YOU HAPPEN TO RUN ACROSS A WEBSITE THAT WOULD BE OF INTEREST TO OUR CHAPTER... PLEASE SEND IT TO ME AND I WILL ADD IT TO THE LIST.

THE SAME APPLIES FOR ANY TIDBIT YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD TO OUR NEWSLETTER EACH MONTH.



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UNTIL THEY COME HOME