



USS Colorado Bill Signed

On Tuesday evening May 9, the day before the close of the legislative session, the House passed Senate Bill 17-183, Support for USS Colorado Commissioning. It appropriates \$100,000 to the Department of Military and Veteran Affairs to make grants for the purpose paying for expenses related to the commissioning of USS Colorado, promoting awareness of USS Colorado within the state; and to support the crew.

The bill was introduced in February by Senator Bob Gardner of Colorado Springs and had been with the Senate Appropriations Committee since that time. The Appropriations Committee acted on the legislation on Friday May 5th and it moved quickly through the rest of the Senate on Monday the 8th. Representative Pete Lee, also of Colorado Springs, joined as co-sponsor and the bill moved through the committees in the House, with final passage in the House in the evening of Tuesday May 9th. The final vote in the Senate was 29 to 6 and in the House 55 to 10.



On June 5th Governor Hickenlooper signed the bill into law. Twelve members of the committee and six sailors from the local Navy Recruiting District office. One of those, MMN1 Scott Gold, currently has orders to report to USS Colorado in September as a permanent member of the crew.

Those attending included Sandie Bourassa, daughter of recently deceased WWII submarine Veteran Andy Palenchar.

Andy was the sailor who pulled LTJG George H. W. Bush from the Pacific after the future President was shot down. Andy went on to serve as an officer in the Army, serving in Korea and two tours in Vietnam retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel. He was an active participant in USS Colorado events here.

Also on display at the signing was the ship's bell that will be on USS Colorado. The bell is a gift from the USS Colorado Battleship (BB45) Association to the submarine and cast by noted Colorado sculptor George Lundeen. The bell was rung in celebration upon the signing of the bill.

While this grant means that we have met our fundraising goal, we are still accepting donations. Money raised in excess of our obligations will go to a scholarship fund for crew's families administered by the Dolphin Scholarship Foundation and will also help fund future crew visits to the state after commissioning.

Preparations for Commissioning / Ship's Schedule

Several members of the Committee visited Groton on May 30 and 31 to begin discussions for the detailed planning for Commissioning week with the Marriott Hotel and the Submarine Base. They met with the Commanding Officer and Executive Officer as well as Submarine Force Protocol Officer, representatives from Submarine Base and the Marriott. They discussed several of the proposed events and are looking to getting firm price quotes. Some of the decisions regarding the events will be dependent on the final date and the weather.



The boat's construction proceeds towards completion. On

USS Colorado (SSN 788) Commissioning Committee
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April 20 the crew started up the reactor for the first time and are now involved in a series of tests in the engineering plant to make sure all the components are working properly. Work is also proceeding on the rest of the boat. The crew will soon be undergoing a Crew Certification examination to verify that they have the operational skills to take the boat to sea for the first time. Sea Trials will start in July or August.

There have been several minor delays in the testing program which could put the target date of October 21 in jeopardy. Several parties are predicting a three to six week delay. Nothing is fixed at this point. We are not sure when the final decision on the date will be made, but will advise everyone through this email list as well as on our web site and Facebook page. We have been informed that the Navy generally does not set the date until about two months before the event.



Commissioning Invitations

We have recently posted a form on our web site for those interested in receiving an invitation to the Commissioning ceremony. This will occur on the Submarine Base around 11:00 AM on Commissioning day, rain or shine. The commissioning ceremony is an official U. S. Navy event for which there is no admission fee, however, due to security reasons and limited seating, admission is by invitation only. The Navy will send out the invitations to the ceremony and you will need to respond to that invitation to receive your tickets to the event. There will be a reception on the pier immediately following for all attending the ceremony.

The link to this form is at:

usscoloradocommittee.org/sign-commissioning-invitation/

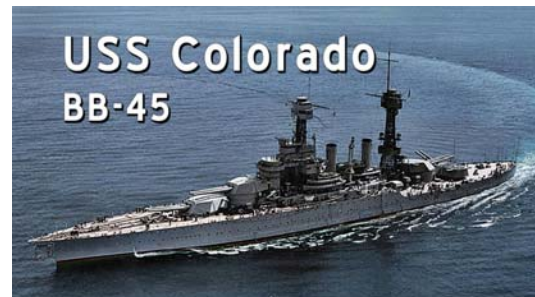
For our Corporate sponsors, the Committee will be contacting you for your attendees. If you are a contributor at the Long's Peak Level or above you will also receive invitations from the Commissioning Committee for the other committee organized events. This will include the Chairman's reception on Friday evening, and the Platform Briefing event on Saturday morning before the Commissioning ceremony. We will be reaching out to all in this group regarding these events.

Travel packages will be available through AAA once the date of the commissioning has been set.

BB45 Video Released

In addition to the video discussed in newsletter #17, the Committee has recently released a new video which focuses on the connection to Battleship Colorado (BB-45) and includes interviews with several of the crew members. The video was produced by Steffan Tubbs' Mountain Time Media production company. You can see the video on our web site or directly at the link here

<https://youtu.be/e1PyGXowKJg>



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