



USS Colorado (SSN 788)
Commissioning Committee
Newsletter # 24
November 2017



Commissioning Date Official!

The information we have been waiting for has finally arrived! The Secretary of the Navy has approved March 17th, 2018 as the date for the Commissioning of USS Colorado (SSN 788)! We are working with the Mystic Marriott to determine the room rates for our group. As soon as those rates are determined, we will send out that information to this list. Also we will be working with AAA to arrange for travel packages for our group and that information will be sent out as well.

Commissioning Week Schedule of Events

We are working on finalizing the activities surrounding Commissioning. For the general public the Commissioning Ceremony will be at 11 AM on Saturday March 17th at Naval Submarine Base in Groton, CT. Instructions for parking will follow with your tickets after you have accepted the invitations, which should be sent about the beginning of February.

- After the ceremony there will be a reception for all at the head of the pier. We intend to feature Colorado food and beverage products.
- The boat will be open for tours until about 4 PM.
- In the evening there will be a no host dinner at the Marriott.
- If you are arriving early there are a number of interesting places to see in the area. More will be posted on our web site as we get closer.
- For donors at the Long's Peak Level and above, there will be several events on Friday starting in the morning about 10 AM.
- There will be party for the crew and their families on Thursday.

For more information about Commissioning week events please see our web site.

Change of Command

It was a beautiful day in Groton on November 3rd as CDR

Reed Koepp relieved CDR Ken Franklin as Commanding Officer, PCU Colorado (SSN 788) in the Navy's traditional ceremony at the Naval Submarine Base.

Commander Franklin is the first Commanding Officer of Colorado, having reported with the first major increment of the crew in the fall of 2014 when the boat was just parts. He has seen the boat all through construction, sea trials and delivery to the Navy. He and his wife Toni will move to Naples, Italy where Commander Franklin will report as Deputy Commander of Task Force 69, which is responsible for all US submarine operations in the Mediterranean. Commander Franklin is a native of Plant City, Florida. He enlisted in the Navy in 1989 and was selected for the Enlisted Commissioning and, after graduation from Florida State University, was Commissioned in 1996. He has been selected for promotion to the rank of Captain.

Ship's Sponsor, Annie Mabus was present at the ceremony and gave some heartfelt remarks. She praised Commander Franklin for his tour and for making her feel welcome as a part of the the Colorado family. She welcomed fellow Mississippian Commander Koepp as the new Commanding Officer. The principal speaker at the ceremony was Captain John Tolliver, Deputy Director of the Navy's Strategic Systems Programs. Captain Tolliver has been a mentor to Commander Franklin for many years of his naval career.

In his remarks Commander Franklin thanked the crew for their hard work and dedication in building the boat from scratch and welcomed Commander Koepp and his wife, Aimee, to Colorado. For his tour aboard Colorado, Command-



USS Colorado (SSN 788) Commissioning Committee
usscoloradocommittee.org

er Franklin was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal by Commodore of Submarine Squadron 4, Captain Brian Sitlow.

After the ceremony the boat was open for visiting. A reception was held at the Officer's Club on the base with a cake decorated with the Ship's Crest. Commander Franklin described the story of the ship's crest contest and how it was won by one of the officers now on board, Lieutenant Mike Nielsen.

Commander Koepp reports to Colorado from Executive Officer of Nuclear Power Training Unit, Charleston, South Carolina and is a graduate of Louisiana State University.



Photos by Seth Bendfelt

Battleship Colorado Veterans Visit CU for Veterans Day

At their annual Veteran's Day Program held this year on November 10th, the University of Colorado Boulder hosted two of the veterans who served aboard the battleship USS Colorado (BB 45) during World War II. Ken Jones and Jack Paris and their families visited to see the unveiling of additional artifacts from the battleship that are now on display in the University Memorial Center (UMC). The display includes the ship's foghorn, uniforms, logbooks and the sewing machine of Clem the Cobbler. Elton Clem was a crew member for over 20 years. Also in attendance was Elton's daughter Melinda Cooper and her family. Ken and Dorothy Jones traveled from Texas and Jack and Jean Paris came from California to be part of this event.

In addition to the artifacts at the UMC, a special plaque that will be mounted on the new USS Colorado was unveiled.

The plaque contains the words of Ken Jones' challenge to the submarine crew to carry on the traditions of the battleship. The plaque was created and donated by the SMART (Sheet Metal | Air | Rail | Transportation) Local #9 in conjunction with Kloppenberg & Co. and Omni Elite Sheet Metal. In the picture, John Fleck, Director of SMART's Apprenticeship and Training Institute, and Robert Ziegler of Omni Elite and his wife Shannon present the plaque to Ken and Dorothy Jones.

That evening the veterans and their families had dinner with Andrea Zelinko and Jimmy Baker of the UMC and George Lundeen. George is the renowned sculptor who is creating a special ship's bell as a gift as a present to the submarine from the Battleship Association. The bell had to be recast with the year 2018 after the Commissioning was rescheduled. He presented a second copy of the bell that will reside in the Veteran's Memorial Lounge at the UMC alongside the bells that served on the previous three USS Colorado's.

The veterans were also invited to attend the CU - USC football game on Saturday.



USS Colorado (SSN 788) Commissioning Committee
P. O. Box 630463
Littleton, CO 80163-0463