



SBNL Attends Commissioning of USS CALIFORNIA (SSN 781)

November 4, 2011

Santa Barbara – Several members of the Santa Barbara Navy League attended the commissioning of USS CALIFORNIA (SSN 781) in Norfolk, Virginia last week. The commissioning festivities began with the Chairman’s Reception at the Half Moon Cruise and Reception pavilion in down town Norfolk in which the commanding officer, Cdr. Dana Nelson, USN received a variety of gifts from veterans, representatives of the ship building industry and the ship’s sponsor, Mrs. Donna Willard, spouse of Adm. Robert Willard, USN, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command.

The commissioning, a Navy time honored tradition in which the crew brings a ship to life took place at Naval Station Norfolk on October 29, 2011. There were approximately 2000 attendees at this event who were treated to a variety of commendable speeches by several distinguished guests on the podium. One notable speaker, Adm. John Richardson, USN, Commander of Submarine Forces stated, “there have been a lot of people waiting for this day and for you.”

USS CALIFORNIA (SSN 781) is the Navy’s newest, Virginia class, nuclear powered submarine. This vessel can operate at more shallow depths and is better able to support Special Forces. CALIFORNIA was delivered 8 months ahead of schedule at a cost of \$2.3 billion. The ship is 377 feet long, weighs 7800 tons, has a depth range of greater than 800 feet and can run at a speed in excess of 25 knots when submerged. CALIFORNIA is equipped with a nuclear reactor plant that will eliminate the need for refueling over the life of the ship.

Cdr. Dana Nelson, USN, Commanding Officer of USS CALIFORNIA (SSN 781) spoke highly of his crew and honored their families for all the sacrifices they made so this day could be possible.

The Santa Barbara Council of the Navy League is dedicated to the support of the US Navy service members and other services, including adoption of 15 units from all sections of the armed forces and the crews aboard the USS RONALD REAGAN (CVN76), the USS STOCKDALE (DDG106), and the USS CALIFORNIA (SSN 781).

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References

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