

THE JERSEY DINER

# USS NEW JERSEY (SSN-796)



Support Organization | Quarterly Newsletter

Q1 2026 | JERSEY HAS THE WATCH | Norfolk, VA | Virginia-Class | SSN 796

Commissioned September 14, 2024 | [submarinenj.org](http://submarinenj.org)

NJ INDUSTRY | CREW SPOTLIGHT | BB-62 VETERANS | SCHOOLS | STATE HOUSE | HISTORY | NJ CONNECTIONS | EVENTS | MERCH | HUMOR | [submarinenj.org](http://submarinenj.org)



Spring Has Sprung — USS NEW JERSEY (SSN 796) rejoins fleet operations. Video tour available at [submarinenj.org/newsletters](http://submarinenj.org/newsletters)

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

## Spring has sprung, and USS NEW JERSEY is moving ahead.

*A quarterly message to strengthen the connection between the boat, the crew, their families, and the people of New Jersey who stand behind them.*

Spring is here, and with it comes a real sense of progress for USS NEW JERSEY (SSN 796). Following a significant period in dry dock, where major upgrades were completed, the crew is moving ahead and rejoining fleet operations from the boat's home berth in Norfolk, Virginia. It is an exciting time, not only for the crew, but for everyone who cares about this boat and what she represents.

This newsletter was created with that connection in mind. Its purpose is to help bring together the boat and the State of New Jersey, the crew and their families, and the broader community of supporters who want to stay informed and involved. We want this quarterly update to serve as a steady link between those who serve aboard USS NEW JERSEY and those ashore who stand behind them.

Our organization is also working to support the crew in practical and meaningful ways. That includes projects to improve habitability in the crew's mess and in other areas of the boat, the kind of quality-of-life improvements that can make daily life just a little better for the sailors who serve aboard her.

We hope this newsletter becomes a conduit for connection, pride, and participation. We want it to lift morale, strengthen ties with the community, and create more opportunities for people to support the crew and engage with the story of USS NEW JERSEY.

Thank you for being part of that story.

**Respectfully,  
Pete Engelman**

Chairman, USS NEW JERSEY (SSN 796) Support Organization

### SSN 796 | BY THE NUMBERS

- ▶ Length: 377 feet
- ▶ Displacement: 7,800 tons
- ▶ Crew: 135 sailors
- ▶ Speed: 25+ knots
- ▶ Homeport: Norfolk Naval Station, VA
- ▶ Commissioned: September 14, 2024
- ▶ Class: Virginia | 23rd hull

### VIEW DIGITAL EDITION

Video, photo galleries, and live links at:

[submarinenj.org/newsletters](https://submarinenj.org/newsletters)

NJ INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT

# Forged in Florence. Built for the Silent Service.

*How a New Jersey manufacturer's precision work sustains America's undersea fleet.*

In Florence, New Jersey, sparks fly. Not for spectacle. For submarines.

At DC Fabricators, skilled welders, machinists, and engineers manufacture critical components that become part of U.S. Navy submarines. These are high-tolerance, mission-critical systems built to perform quietly and reliably in one of the most demanding environments on Earth.

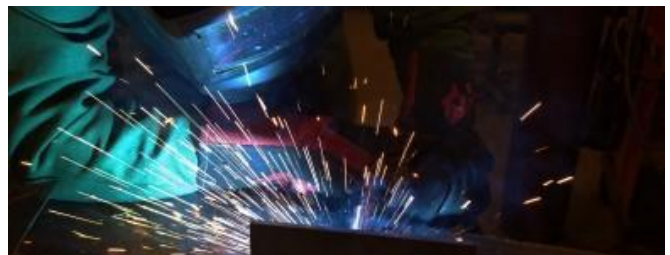
Earlier this year, members of the USS NEW JERSEY crew toured the facility. They walked the shop floor and met the team behind the work. For DC Fabricators, it was a powerful reminder that every weld has a purpose, supporting sailors who take the watch far from home.



*DC Fabricators Inc. - Florence, New Jersey*



*Precision welding operations*



*Large-diameter fabrication on the shop floor*

***“Meeting the sailors reminds us why we hold ourselves to such a high standard. You are the reason we take pride in every component.”***

- DC Fabricators Team Member, Florence, New Jersey

## WHY THIS MATTERS

- ▶ Direct link: New Jersey industry to undersea readiness.
- ▶ Shows the crew their namesake state is invested in the mission.
- ▶ Concrete example of NJ's role in the Silent Service.



*Critical submarine components — DC Fabricators, Florence, NJ*

CREW SPOTLIGHT

## A steady connection for USS New Jersey families.

*Meet Madison Adams - the ombudsman bridging the crew and families of SSN 796.*

Every submarine has a crew on board, but every boat also has a wider community standing behind it, spouses, children, parents, and loved ones who carry their own part of the journey. For USS New Jersey, SSN 796, one of the people helping strengthen that connection is the boat's ombudsman, Madison Adams.

The ombudsman role is an important one. It helps provide families with a trusted point of contact and helps keep the connection between the command and families clear, steady, and personal.

Madison brings that spirit to the role with both warmth and firsthand understanding. She knows what it means to be part of a Navy family, and she is stepping into this role with a clear desire to serve others well.



*Madison Adams with husband Lucas and their two children*

***“Hi, my name is Madison Adams and I am the ombudsman for the USS New Jersey! I'm a wife, a mom to 2 kiddos and I'm originally from eastern Pennsylvania. My husband, Lucas, has been a part of the command since June 2022, so I'm excited to spend our last year here being able to serve the New Jersey families in the best way that I can! If you have any questions or need to contact me please email [newjerseyombudsman@gmail.com](mailto:newjerseyombudsman@gmail.com).”***

- Madison Adams, Ombudsman, USS New Jersey SSN 796

VETERANS & SERVICE

# Jersey has the watch.

*The crew of SSN 796 visits the Battleship New Jersey, and a proud tradition continues.*



*Dinner in the Officers' Wardroom — CDR Ron Simmons and crew aboard BB-62, Camden Waterfront, Fall 2025*

This past fall, the Battleship New Jersey had the distinct honor of welcoming the crew of our namesake submarine, USS NEW JERSEY (SSN-796), back aboard BB-62, continuing a proud and growing tradition between our two ships.

This visit marked the first to the Battleship for the submarine's new Commanding Officer, CDR Ron Simmons, who assumed command last December. It was a pleasure to host CDR Simmons and his crew as they begin this next chapter in the life of New Jersey's newest warship.

The evening included dinner in the historic Officers' Wardroom, followed by a guided tour of the ship led by Battleship New Jersey veterans, creating a powerful connection between generations of sailors who have served under the same proud name.

In partnership with the SSN-796 Support Organization, the Battleship New Jersey remains deeply committed to supporting the boat and the extraordinary men and women who serve aboard her. The bond between BB-62 and SSN-796 is more than symbolic, it is a living continuation of the legacy, service, and spirit of New Jersey at sea.



*Crew explores BB-62 with Battleship veterans*



*Arriving at the Camden Waterfront*



*Welcome aboard BB-62*



*Pete Engelman addresses the crew*



*CDR Simmons at the Battleship*



*CDR Simmons aboard BB-62*



*On the Battleship's deck*



*Signing the USS NJ banner*



*Crew explores the historic vessel*

*Full 11-photo BB-62 gallery at [submarinenj.org/newsletters](http://submarinenj.org/newsletters)*

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

# Guinness World Record: Elizabeth students celebrate NJ's submarine legacy.

*More than 800 students made history at the birthplace of the American submarine.*

In June 2025, more than 800 students from Elizabeth Public Schools made history. They set a Guinness World Record for the largest human image of a submarine.

The formation brought submarine pride to life on the very ground where the U.S. submarine story began. Students stood shoulder to shoulder on what was once the site of the original Crescent Shipyard, where the first submarine commissioned by the U.S. Navy was built.

As USS NEW JERSEY (SSN 796) sails under the name of this great state, crews can picture this scene, a sea of students forming the shape of a submarine, just as sailors stand watch below the waves. That is New Jersey pride in action.



*800+ Elizabeth students form the Guinness World Record largest human submarine image, Elizabeth, NJ, June 4, 2025*

## RECORD DETAILS

- ▶ Date: June 4, 2025
- ▶ Location: Elizabeth, NJ — former Crescent Shipyard site
- ▶ Participants: 800+ students, Juan Pablo Duarte School 28
- ▶ Verification: Guinness World Records officials on site

STATE SUPPORT

# A painting that strengthened the connection.

*"Firepower for Freedom", presented at the New Jersey State House, Fall 2025.*



Crew of USS NEW JERSEY with the painting "Firepower for Freedom" by maritime artist James A. Flood — New Jersey State House, Fall 2025

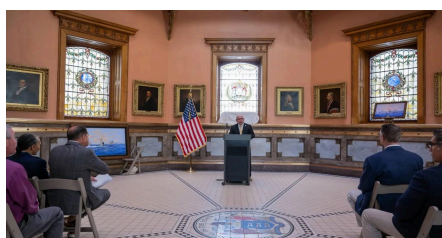
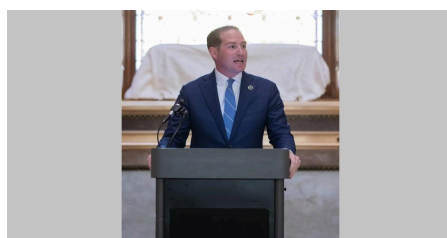
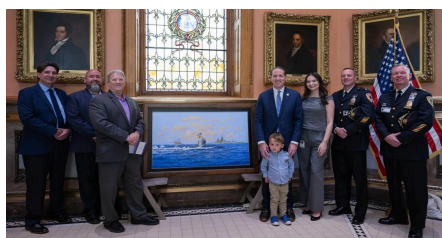
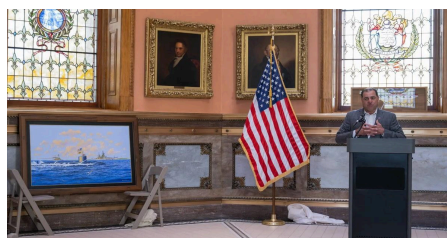
One of the meaningful moments from fall 2025 was the presentation of Firepower for Freedom at the New Jersey State House. Created by maritime artist and Battleship NEW JERSEY veteran James A. Flood, the painting brings together the three Navy ships to bear the name New Jersey and honors the legacy now carried forward by USS NEW JERSEY (SSN 796).

The event also reflected something bigger than the painting itself. With state leaders present, including Senator Paul A. Sarlo and Brigadier General Yvonne L. Mays, it became another visible sign of the bond between the boat and the State of New Jersey.

Along with recent crew visits and other community support efforts, it was one more example of how the story of USS NEW JERSEY continues to be shared not only at sea, but across the state she represents.

**SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

- ▶ Senator Paul A. Sarlo
- ▶ Assemblywoman & USMC Gold Star Mom Melinda Kane
- ▶ Brigadier General Yvonne L. Mays, Adjutant General of NJ
- ▶ Captain Kent D. Smith, CO, NWS Earle
- ▶ Former Assemblyman Julio Marengo
- ▶ CAPT Steven Halle (USN, Ret.)
- ▶ Tony Perry, Mayor of Middletown
- ▶ James A. Flood, Artist — Firepower for Freedom
- ▶ NJ State Capitol Joint Management Commission
- ▶ Office of Legislative Services



Full 14-photo State House gallery at [submarinenj.org/newsletters](http://submarinenj.org/newsletters)



HISTORY SECTION

# Before ballistic missiles: the strategic gamble of Growler.

*From Regulus missiles to Virginia Payload Tubes — the lineage from a Cold War pioneer to SSN 796.*

When visitors step aboard Growler at the Intrepid Museum, visible across the Hudson from New Jersey, they usually have the same reaction: surprise.

*"She carried nuclear missiles? Wait. She had to surface to launch them?"*

USS Growler is more than a preserved Cold War artifact. She represents a pivotal moment in naval history — a transitional technology that reshaped nuclear deterrence strategy and paved the way for today's submarine force, including fast-attack boats like USS NEW JERSEY (SSN 796).

## What made Growler unique

Commissioned in 1958, Growler was one of only five operational U.S. Navy submarines to carry the Regulus I nuclear cruise missile. Unlike modern submarines that launch from underwater, Growler had to surface to fire. The submarine would rise to the ocean surface, open missile hangars, roll out a 33-foot missile, and launch — all while exposed. The process from hangar open to ignition took 12 to 15 minutes. An eternity in combat.

But before submarine-launched ballistic missiles existed, the Regulus system offered the United States a credible sea-based nuclear deterrent. It extended strategic reach and introduced a crucial idea: nuclear deterrence could be mobile, hidden, and deployed from the sea.

### VISIT GROWLER

USS Growler is on permanent display at the Intrepid Museum in New York City, directly across the Hudson River from New Jersey.

[intrepidmuseum.org](http://intrepidmuseum.org)



*Launch of a Regulus I missile from USS Growler or Grayback*



*Regulus I missile positioned on USS Grayback*



*USS Growler (SSG 577) — broadside view, November 1958*



Growler commissioning ceremony with Regulus II visible

### From Growler to the modern fleet

USS GROWLER 1958–1964	USS NEW JERSEY SSN-796 2024–Present	Ohio-Class SSBNs 1981–Present
Regulus I nuclear cruise missile Required surfacing to launch 12-15 min launch sequence; Strategic deterrence pioneer	23rd Virginia-class fast-attack Virginia Payload Tubes (VPT) Tomahawk cruise missiles; Fully submerged launch	14 ballistic missile submarines Trident II D5 nuclear missiles Direct descendants of Growler's strategic deterrence mission

#### NEW JERSEY CONNECTIONS

## A mother, a builder, and the watch that continues.

*Remembering Jon David Kryscnski — a Middletown native whose engineering work helped build the submarine force.*

This quarter, we received a message through our website from Middletown, New Jersey. Myra Kryscnski wrote to share the story of her son, Jon David Kryscnski, a materials engineer whose work supported generations of U.S. Navy submarines.

That caught our attention right away. Middletown is not only Jon David Kryscnski's hometown and final resting place. It is also where USS NEW JERSEY (SSN 796) was commissioned. For us, that makes this story more than a remembrance.

Jon was born in Red Bank and grew up in Middletown. He earned a bachelor's degree in Materials Science and Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and a master's degree in Metallurgy from MIT. His career included work as a project engineer at General Dynamics Electric Boat; as a U.S. Navy acquisition program manager supporting the Seawolf class; and as a senior program manager with NAVSEA Team Submarine, contributing to the Virginia class and Columbia class programs.

Jon passed away in 2016. He is buried in Middletown — only minutes from Naval Weapons Station Earle, where USS NEW JERSEY was commissioned in September 2024.

When Myra shared Jon's story, it reminded us that the submarine force is sustained by more than the sailors who take a boat to sea. It also depends on the people who design,



Jon David Kryscnski  
Middletown, NJ

build, strengthen, and support these submarines long before they ever get underway. We thank Myra for sharing Jon with us. His story is now part of the larger story of USS NEW JERSEY.

### SHARE YOUR STORY

- ▶ Do you have a NJ connection to the submarine force?
- ▶ [Info@submarinenj.org](mailto:Info@submarinenj.org)

**Q2 EVENTS**

**Get involved in the submarine community.**

**April 11, 2026**

Spring Family Day — Submarine Force Museum, Groton, CT. Home of USS Nautilus. Hands-on activities for kids and families.

**April 25, 2026**

USS IDAHO (SSN 799) Commissioning — Groton, CT. 26th Virginia-class fast-attack submarine.



*USS Idaho (SSN 799) — Virginia-class sister ship*

[ussidahocommittee.org](http://ussidahocommittee.org)

**Q2 2026**

Science Saturday — Naval Undersea Museum, Keyport, WA. Family-friendly undersea science.

**Q2 2026**

Visit USS Growler — Intrepid Museum, NYC. Walk through a historic Cold War submarine.

[intrepidmuseum.org](http://intrepidmuseum.org)

**OFFICIAL MERCH**

**Support the mission. Wear the pride.**



*Official SSN 796 challenge coin*

The official USS NEW JERSEY (SSN 796) store offers apparel, challenge coins, patches, and commemorative gear. Every purchase supports crew morale.

[ussnjcc.myshopify.com](http://ussnjcc.myshopify.com)

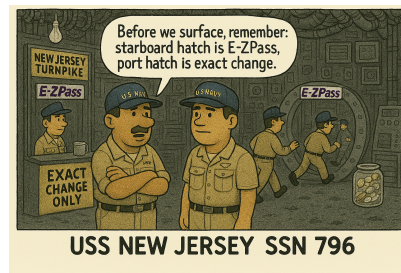
**BATTLESHIP NJ BB-62**

America's most decorated battleship. Camden Waterfront. Overnight encampments, tours, and events.

[battleshipnewjersey.org](http://battleshipnewjersey.org)

**HUMOR & CHALLENGE**

**A little Jersey humor — and a question for you.**



*"Before we surface: starboard hatch is E-ZPass, port hatch is exact change." — USS NJ SSN 796*

Humor matters too. Sometimes a quick laugh is part of what helps people stay connected.

**READER CHALLENGE**

What would you like to see in Q2 that would increase crew morale? More crew stories? Family updates? NJ connections?

[News@submarinenj.org](mailto:News@submarinenj.org)



JERSEY HAS THE WATCH

# USS NEW JERSEY (SSN-796)

Support Organization | Q1 2026 | New Jersey

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**NJ Industry:** DC Fabricators, Florence

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**Newsletter Suggestions**

## ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

The Jersey Diner is the official quarterly newsletter of the [USS NEW JERSEY \(SSN-796\) Support Organization](http://submarinenj.org). Published to strengthen the connection between the boat, the crew, their families, and

**Crew Spotlight:** Ombudsman  
Madison Adams

**Veterans:** BB-62 / SSN-796 Visit

**Schools:** Guinness World Record,  
Elizabeth

**State House:** Firepower for Freedom  
History: USS Growler & the Regulus  
Era

**NJ Connections:** Jon David  
Kryscnski

Q2 Events, Merch, Humor & Reader  
Challenge

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the people of New Jersey who stand behind them.

This docx is the PDF edition. The full interactive digital version, with video, photo galleries, and live links is available online.

[submarinenj.org/newsletters](https://submarinenj.org/newsletters)

*Q2 2026 newsletter coming this summer.*

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