



## USS Colorado (SSN 788) Submarine Association Newsletter March 2020

### Happy Birthday USS Colorado

March 17th, St. Patrick's Day, marks the 2nd Anniversary of USS Colorado being placed in Commission. Ceremonies were held that day in 2018 at Pier 6 at the Naval Submarine Base. About 2,000 persons attend on a brisk but sunny day. The principal speaker was Senator Corey Gardner of Colorado and the ceremony was attended by then Governor John Hickenlooper and Senator Michael Bennet. Ken Jones, a WWII veteran of Battleship Colorado (BB45), passed the traditional long glass to the oncoming watch. Five others of his shipmates were in attendance. Retired Colonel Andy Mevenden, former Chaplain of Colorado National Guard, gave the Invocation and Benediction. The color guard was from the Widefield High School NJROTC unit in Colorado Springs. The ship was placed in Commission by ADM Frank Caldwell, Director of Navy Nuclear Reactors, and Ship's Sponsor, Annie Mabus.



### USS Colorado Awards Ceremony

Eight members of the Association travelled to Groton on March 5th to attend a USS Colorado awards ceremony in Dealey Center Theater on the Submarine Base. The submarine had been recognized by Commander Submarine Forces Atlantic for a superb maiden deployment and superb execution of missions in the U.S. European Command Area of Operation. He commended their preparations for deployment on the shortest timeline from Post Shakedown Availability to deployment in recent history and that their ability to respond to short notice tasking with flawless execution was the hallmark of a well prepared, high performance warship.



At the ceremony the Commanding Officer, Captain Jason Geddes awarded many individual crew members for their contributions and accomplishments for the six-month de-

### CNO Visits USS Colorado

Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Mike Gilday and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Russ Smith toured the Colorado during a visit to Naval Submarine Base (SUBASE) New London on February 24th. They viewed the boat and met with the officers and crew. The following picture shows the CNO with Torpedoman's Mate 1st Class Ian Layton, a native of Woodland Park, Colorado. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Tristan Lotz)





**USS Colorado (SSN 788) Submarine Association**  
[usscoloradosubassoc.org](http://usscoloradosubassoc.org)

ployment and the preparations leading up to it. Association President Don Price presented a letter of congratulations signed by Governor Polis and the entire Colorado Congressional delegation. Captain Geddes presented the Association with a plaque in appreciation for their support. The Association members in attendance presented each member of the crew with the gift of a special coin commemorating the boat's maiden deployment.

COLORADO arrived home two weeks earlier, having left last August. They spent Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years at sea. During the deployment they visited Faslane, Scotland and Haakensvern, Norway. Six officers and eighteen crew earned their submarine dolphins during this period.

In the afternoon, the Chief of the Boat, ETCM Chip Alger, hosted a party for the crew at a local establishment.



In the evening Association members had dinner with Captain Geddes and his wife Jodi, the Prospective Commanding Officer, Commander Garth Storz and his wife Jeanne, former Commanding Officer, Commander Reed Koepp and his wife Aimee, and the Executive Officer, Lieutenant Commander Kenny Kirkwood and his wife Christen.



**USS Colorado Change of Command**

On March 6th, Captain Jason Geddes was relieved by Commander Garth Storz as Commanding Officer of USS Colorado (SSN 788) in a ceremony in Dealey Center Theater at Naval Submarine Base New London in Groton, Connecticut.

CAPT Geddes, a native of Indianapolis, Indiana, enlisted in the Navy in 1990. After selection for the Nuclear Enlisted Commissioning Program, he was commissioned after graduating Summa Cum Laude from North Carolina State University in 1997. He previously commanded USS NEBRASKA (SSBN 739) from October 2014 to August 2018, completing an Engineered Refueling Overhaul, Demonstration and Shakedown Operations and the ship's first post-overhaul strategic deterrent patrol.



Commander Storz was born in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He enlisted in the Navy in 1997 and was commissioned in 2002 after graduating from Penn State University. His previous at-sea assignments included tours on USS MEMPHIS, USS NEW HAMPSHIRE, and USS DALLAS. He reports to COLORADO from Undersea Warfighting Development Center's Tactical Analysis Group.

Captain Andrew Miller, Commander, Submarine Squadron Four (CSS 4) was the principal speaker at the ceremony and presented Captain Geddes the Legion of Merit for his exceptionally meritorious service as Commanding Officer of COLORADO. Captain Geddes will transfer to the Undersea Warfighting Development Center (UWDC) in Groton.

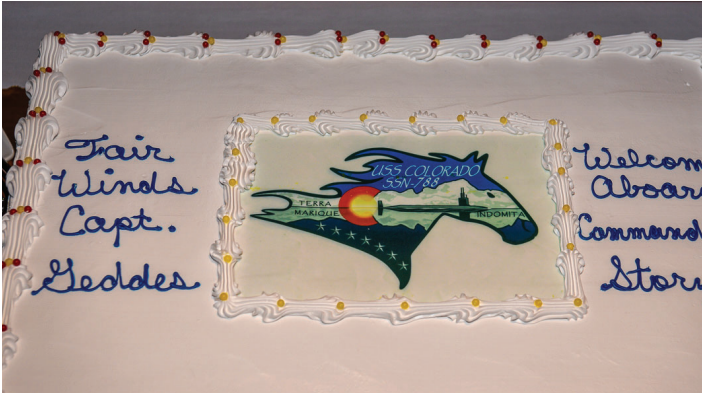


**USS Colorado (SSN 788) Submarine Association**  
[usscoloradosubassoc.org](http://usscoloradosubassoc.org)



## USS Colorado (SSN 788) Submarine Association

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



After the ceremony a reception was held at the nearby Re-unions Pub. In the afternoon members of the Association cooked evening meal for the duty section on the boat.



The members of the USS Colorado Submarine Association attending the ceremony were extremely proud to represent the state and show support for the crew and families of our namesake submarine and thoroughly enjoyed all the activities. It is always a pleasure for Association members to connect with individual crew members whom they have gotten to know over time. They were welcomed warmly by the COLORADO family and were grateful to be included in their events and appreciative of the hospitality extended.



## USS Colorado (SSN 788) Submarine Association

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