

# "Newseyletter" Decatur Chapter No. 4, USCS

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### Deposit Balance: \$

## USS New Mexico Carries 1,000 Centennial First Day Covers Under the Sea

By Lt. Cmdr. Jennifer Cragg, Commander, Submarine Group 2 Public Affairs, Feb 9, 2012



LTJG Jeff Allright, USN(Ret), being up the postage stamp for a postage calculation mark.

GROTON, Conn. (NNS) — Stamp collectors looking for a unique addition to their collections will be interested in obtaining just one of 1,000 New Mexico centennial first-day covers, or cachets, recently carried under the sea aboard USS New Mexico (SSN 779). The first-day covers, or cachets, were brought back to land when USS New Mexico returned to port Feb. 7 in this special case, with the postal service's New Mexico Centennial stamp affixed on the cachets, they become essentially "submarine mail."



120206N-040342Z01 GROTON, Conn. (Feb. 6, 2012) The Virginia-class attack submarine USS New Mexico (SSN-779) returns to Naval Submarine Base Groton following their participation in the Followup 2012 exercise with the Royal Navy submarine HMS Astute (SSN 20). New Mexico and Astute performed various tracking, deterrence and attack scenarios to test and certify each respective submarine's capabilities. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Virginia K. Schaefer/Released)

"In fact, each of these first-day covers has been 'certified to test depth' on board USS New Mexico and they will truly be unique collector's items for the people that support this boat and crew so well." In order to get the cachets sent to the USS New Mexico, the New Mexico Commission worked with the Santa Fe main post office to affix 1,000 stamps to

envelopes and shipped them to the submarine prior to their underway.



"These submarine covers are souvenirs and do not actually get mailed. We see this project as another way to involve USS New Mexico in our state's centennial celebrations," said Dick Brown, chairman, USS New Mexico Commissioning Committee, who added that it was the first time the Santa Fe post office assisted with mail carried under the sea. Brown added that the commanding officer of USS New Mexico signed each envelope certifying that it was carried beneath the sea, thus becoming "submarine mail." Brown, a collector of submarine stamps, has over 400 stamps in his prized collection and thought of the idea for USS New Mexico to carry the special centennial covers. "While 43 nations are operating submarines today, more than twice that number has issued submarine stamps honoring naval submarines, deep-sea research vessels and Jules Verne's fictional submarine Nautilus. To me, they are all very special," said Brown. Brown has an impressive submarine stamp collection, many dating as far back as seven decades. "As a submarine stamp collector, I was also inspired by the world's first 'submarine mail,' carried aboard the Spanish submarine C4 in August 1938 during the Spanish Civil War," said Brown.



Brown added that the submarine C4 patrolled the area between the republican cities of Barcelona and Cartagena, and it carried mail between the Spanish mainland and the Island of Minorca. "That 'submarine mail' actually included submarine stamps which today are extremely rare, and I am most fortunate to have them in my submarine stamp collection," said Brown. **Ed Note:** Cost of covers is \$10.00 plus \$1.50 (S&H) each from the Commissioning Committee, by contacting Dick Brown at [dbrown779@aol.com](mailto:dbrown779@aol.com). The USS New Mexico commissioning committee has

tentative plans for future event covers. Article was edited so photos could be included. **Ed. Note:** DC#4 is preparing to do a First Day cover with the special USS New Mexico pictorial from Santa Fe, New Mexico

## Arctic icebreaker funded in Obama 2013 budget

Alaska Dispatch Alex DeMarban | Feb. 13, 2012

Alaska U.S. Sen. Mark Begich wants a new icebreaker built. That'd be the icebreaker President Obama supported with a multi-million-dollar proposal in the \$3.8 trillion 2013 budget he released Monday, according to a news release from Begich. "It appears this year's dramatic fuel delivery to Nome got the White House's attention because the president's budget provides the U.S. Coast Guard \$8 million to plan and design a new sorely needed icebreaker for America's Arctic," Begich said in a written statement. "I've made this proposal several times in the past three years and it looks like we're finally, but slowly, on the path toward new ships," said Begich. Demands that the U.S. build an icebreaker have multiplied in recent years as countries take advantage of new global shipping routes and eye the lucrative oil, gas and mineral resources the melting region promises. The Coast Guard operates only a medium-duty icebreaker, the USCGC Healy, which is not even home-ported in the Arctic, worrying critics who say the country isn't prepared as the race for resources ramps up in the Far North.



MV Renda brings fuel to Nome. CGC Healy breaks ice.

The Coast Guard plans to have two operational icebreakers next year — the U.S. once operated eight, according to National Defense Magazine. It also wants to build several new cutters, including one for Alaska to deal with increasing activity in the Bering Strait, according to the report.

**Correction:** When you read *USF CONSTELLATION* in last Newseyletter, think of *USF CONSTITUTION*.

**Next Chapter meeting will be 4-1-12 at PNSE in Oaks PA 1PM.**

Decatur Chapter will man a society table with the ASPP at Philadelphia National Stamp Exhibition (PNSE) Show at the Expo Center in Oaks PA. The show runs Friday, Saturday and Sunday. A chapter meeting will be held at 1PM Sunday April 1. Volunteers are needed for the society table all three days.