

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

THE USS GEORGIA (SSGN 729) IS COMING HOME

ST MARYS, GA 23 Nov 2007 / - Sheila McNeill, USS GEORGIA Return to Service Committee Chair, announced that following a long, intense campaign to save it, the Peach State's namesake Trident submarine is scheduled to make Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Ga. its homeport.

"Bring the USS GEORGIA home" has echoed throughout the state for more than 14 years.

The submarine's future was jeopardized in 1994 when the Nuclear Posture Review determined that the U.S. military had a surplus of their 18 Trident Submarines (SSBN) – 10 on the East Coast at Kings Bay and eight on the West Coast at Bangor, WA. The Nuclear Posture Review committee made a decision that the initial four of the 18 SSBNs would be eliminated.

This sparked a vision by the U.S. Navy to keep in service the four submarines and convert them from strategic deterrence SSBN submarines to a precision strike and special operation force capable SSGN submarines.

The four submarines are the USS OHIO (SSGN726), USS MICHIGAN (SSGN 727), USS FLORIDA (SSGN 728) and USS GEORGIA (SSGN 729), which collectively had 80 years of hull life left. THE SSGN (guided missile submarine) was created by designing a submarine with 154 Tomahawk missiles and the ability to carry and launch special operation forces through lockout chambers.

USS GEORGIA is 560 feet in length and can carry a crew of 15 officers, 139 enlisted crewmembers and up to 66 Special Operations Forces for a sustained, long-endurance deployment.

After a two-year conversion at the shipyard in Norfolk, the USS GEORGIA will observe its formal return to service in a ceremony March 28, 2008, thanks to a dedicated and hard-working USS GEORIGA (SSGN 729) Return to Service Committee that includes citizens from across the state.

Civilian chair of the events and committee is Sheila M McNeill, past national president of the Navy League of the U.S. and chairman of the "Support the SSGN" committee.

Co-Chairman for logistics is Keith Post, president of the Camden Kings Bay Navy League and Co-Chairman for development is Marty Klumpp, executive director of The Camden Partnership.

Honorary chairman of the committee is Gov. Sonny Perdue. Serving on the honorary committee are Sen. Saxby Chambliss, Sen. Johnny Isakson and Congressman Jack Kingston; along with former governors Jimmy Carter, Roy

Barnes, Zell Miller, Joe Frank Harris and Carl Sanders; former senators Sam Nunn, Max Cleland, Mack Mattingly, Wyche Fowler, and Mrs. Nancy Coverdell for her husband the late Senator Paul Coverdell; and former congressman Lindsay Thomas.

Representing Georgia Navy League councils:

Walt Natzic, Past President, Camden Kings Bay Navy League. Walt can be reached at: wnatzic@tds.net

Harley Jones, Past President, Atlanta Metropolitan Navy League. Harley can be reached at hjones@mindspring.com

Bob Morrison, President, Golden Isles Council. Bob can be reached at morrisonbob@bellsouth.net

Gary Johnson, President, Savannah Council Navy League. Gary can be reached at gary.john@comcast.net

We are expecting 3,000 to 4,000 attendees for the ceremony," McNeill said. "It will be a great day of celebration and an event this community has planned and worked toward for over 10 years."

If you'd like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview with Sheila McNeill, please call her at **912/223-3588** or e-mail Smcneill04@aol.com

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