

GEORGIA FLAG PROJECT:

The purpose of the Georgia Flag Project is to provide a mechanism that will:

1. Inform the people of Georgia that USS Georgia is returning to service with new capabilities.
2. Educate our citizens about the capabilities of this submarine and our U.S. Navy as a vital part of our national defense.
3. Demonstrate to the crew members (and others in uniform) that the people of Georgia appreciate their sacrifice and service.
4. Establish a closer kinship of our citizens with the State's namesake U.S. Navy submarine being home-ported in Georgia at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay.
5. Provide a permanent reminder to the crew and future crews by the permanent display of this special Georgia Flag aboard the submarine.

This is the basic concept for the Georgia Flag initiative:

1. Will include a short ceremonial and media event at the State Capitol Building, with Governor Perdue on the opening day of the next State Legislature, January 14, 2008.
2. Transport the Georgia State Flag in a scheduled itinerary through every county in Georgia.
3. Schedule a brief ceremonial (and where appropriate, media) event at the appropriate County Government location in each County. (Ideally, with the County Commissioner or an appropriate Representative in each county officiating). This could also be very informal, with just a signing and photo opportunity event at each county government location.
4. The Georgia Association of Regional Development Centers is participating, providing the transportation for the Flag and helping schedule ceremonial events in every county. The itinerary will efficiently preplanned with a route that will crisscross the state from Northwest to Southeast, ending in Camden County the day prior to the USS Georgia RTS Ceremony at Kings Bay on March 28, 2008.
5. Have at least one Navy and/or Navy League Representative involved in the ceremonial/media event in each county. One or more U.S. Navy Representatives will also be present in as many counties as possible. Navy Recruiting District Atlanta is assisting with scheduling Navy representatives. There may also be opportunities to coincide the Flag itinerary with a Navy Speaker scheduled for civic organization events in selected cities.
6. The Flag would not be flown in each location, but would be physically present in each county to make it unique for permanent display aboard USS Georgia.
7. A formal Logbook will be completed, with a page to be signed in each county by the County Commissioner or an appropriate representative.
8. The Flag (and the logbook) will be handed to Governor Perdue at the RTS Ceremony, and Governor Perdue will present it to the Commanding Officer, USS Georgia, for permanent display aboard the submarine.

Additional information (updated Jan 11, 2008):

To date we have completed scheduled flag events in 40 of 159 counties in Georgia. These are high profile events with the County Commissioners officiating and other influential persons attending throughout Georgia. We are having state representatives and senators invited to attend some events. In addition to our objective to make the sailors of USS Georgia feel welcomed by the citizens of Georgia, this also provides great opportunity for valuable media exposure for Navy Recruiting.

In one county (Habersham), the location was moved to a middle school and had about 300 attendees. They are using this as a teaching opportunity for civics, geography and patriotism. The County Commissioners offices are inviting and coordinating media involvement. We have had press representatives at almost every event to date, including television at some. Governor Sonny Perdue is our "Honorary Chairman" and we will have a formal ceremonial meeting with him on January 14.

As you are probably aware, our adopted USS Navy submarine, USS Georgia was a ballistic missile submarine that has been retrofitted to carry 154 cruise missiles, and special operations forces (SEAL Teams). The submarine will be officially home-ported at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Georgia. Chaired by former National Navy League President, Sheila McNeill, our committee is working on a number of projects to welcome our state's namesake submarine and its crew to Georgia. A formal Return to Service Ceremony is scheduled at Kings Bay on March 28, 2007.

At least one Navy uniformed representative is also attending each of these scheduled events. The Executive Directors of the 16 Georgia Regional Development Centers are transporting the flag and the logbook. We are working hard to have a Navy League spokesperson at each event.

The other active Navy League Councils in Georgia (all three located along the coast) will also be providing Navy League attendees in the southern part of the state.