

[Frank Lister, FTLCM\(SS\), COB Gold Crew 67-69](#)

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NORTHWEST NAVIGATOR > SOUTH

TTF hosts unique graduation

By MC2 Eric J. Rowley
Fleet PACEN NW

The Naval Base Kitsap, Bangor Trident Training Facility (TTF) held a unique graduation ceremony for the USS Robert E. Lee (SSBN 601) class, Sept. 18.

Each apprenticeship class is named after the original "41 for Freedom" SSBN's to remind the Sailors of their submarine heritage.

Members of the USS Robert E. Lee Alumni Association attended the graduation because they happened to be having a reunion in nearby Portland Ore. and the dates coincidentally coincided with the Robert E. Lee class graduation.

Robert E. Lee class members were Electronics Technician Seaman Brett Aleckson, Electronics Technician Seaman Barry Bashaw Jr., Electronics Technician Seaman Caleb Ciacelli,

Electronics Technician Seaman Steven Frickell, Electronics Technician Seaman Robert Fuller, Electronics Technician Seaman Alejandro Reyes, and Electronics Technician Seaman Michael Nickles.

"Having the submarine veterans come and participate in this class graduation along with naming each class after the '41 for Freedom' SSBN's captures the essence of submariners," said Electronics Technician 1st Class (SS) Rocky Park, TTF instructor. "It bridges the gap between generations to truly help us have a better understanding and appreciation of our submarine heritage."

The honor graduate and "Top Gun," Bashaw, was invited to attend the Robert E. Lee reunion, all expenses paid, along with a few of his instructors. Bashaw will be presented with a plaque and check

by former Vice Adm. Joe Williams, who was the first commanding officer on the USS Robert E. Lee.

"This graduation was especially important to me, because of the support that was shown by the USS Robert E. Lee Alumni Association," said Bashaw. "It was great seeing that even though they were out of the Navy they still came to show their support to our class, coming from far distances. The ceremony wouldn't have been the same without their presence. After researching the Robert E. Lee for one of our assignments, it was breathtaking to see the men who served on that boat were actually with us to celebrate this important occasion."

One of the attendees was former Fleet Master Chief Frank Lister who presented an original print of the USS Robert E. Lee, which was given to him by his shipmates at the end of his chief of the boat tour

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aboard the USS Robert E. Lee, to the graduating class and to TTF staff.

"When I heard they named a class at TTF after the Robert E. Lee, I wanted to present this framed picture I had to them," said Lister. "I thought what better place to have it hang than in the last home port of the Robert E. Lee. Now it will hang in a place of honor for many years to come. The guys who graduated can look back at the people who went before them. Without some of the hardship we experienced, Sailors wouldn't have the opportunities available to them now."

Retired Fleet Master Chief Frank Lister, USS Robert E. Lee Alumni Association, displays an original print of the USS Robert E. Lee (SSBN 601) to Sailors, both students and staff of the Trident Training Facility.



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