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## Navy League, base score with Stockdale

Written by Pacific Coast Business Times

Sunday, 19 April 2009

When the Navy League's Santa Barbara Council agreed to adopt the destroyer USS Stockdale last year, it did not know that the Arleigh Burke class of fighting ships would make worldwide headlines six months later.

But the Stockdale's sister ship, the USS Bainbridge, was in the news 24/7 over Easter weekend, garnering worldwide kudos for its role in rescuing Capt. Richard Phillips from Somali pirates.

As the three pirates were being shot dead by Navy seals from the Bainbridge's fantail, the Stockdale was being readied for its official commissioning at Naval Base Ventura County's Port Hueneme station.

The volunteer effort by the Navy League group is seeking to raise \$1 million to support enlisted personnel and officers who will serve on the ship during the coming years. It also is serving in support of the April 18 commissioning ceremony where honorary Chair H. Ross Perot was expected to be the keynote speaker.

Here are a few things you need to know:

First and foremost the arrival of the Stockdale comes as Naval Base Ventura County is on a roll. Under commanders Brad "Brick" Conner and his replacement Capt. Jim McHugh, Ventura County's largest employer has reached out to the local business community, undertaken multiple missions successfully and greatly improved its energy operating efficiency. No longer is there talk about moving operations to China Lake — the Navy's warfare testing centers and its center for asymmetrical warfare are at the heart of the reinvented military being championed by Defense Secretary Robert Gates.

Second, the Navy League Santa Barbara Council, under the watchful effort of Doug Crawford, has persevered through a difficult economy and forged new alliances. The partnership with the Naval Base on the commissioning ceremony is a prime example of how Santa Barbara, which lacks a deep water port, and the Ventura County facility can work together.

Finally, a word about the Stockdale. It was named for Vice Admiral James Stockdale, who became a hero as a captured serviceman during the Vietnam War and was awarded the Medal of Honor. He ran with industrialist Perot as the candidate for vice president on the Reform Party ticket in 1992.

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