

HII Hosts Keel Laying of Virginia-Class Attack Submarine Barb (SSN 804)



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NEWPORT NEWS, Va., Dec. 09, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII’s (NYSE: HII) Newport News Shipbuilding (NNS) division hosted the keel laying ceremony today for *Virginia*-class attack submarine Barb (SSN 804).

“Our reason to come together this morning represents not only the laying down of our next submarine keel, but a solemn commitment we are making to our country,” NNS President Kari Wilkinson said. “It marks the beginning of a construction journey, and while it is a journey measured in inches of weld, amount of pipe, and amount of cable pulled, it is fueled by the strength and determination of shipbuilders and our partners working together toward a common objective.”

SSN 804 will be the third U.S. Navy submarine to carry the name Barb. The first, SS 220, was commissioned in 1942. During

World War II, the submarine conducted missions under the command of Eugene "Lucky" Fluckey, earning the submarine four Presidential Citations, a Navy Unit Commendation and eight battle stars for outstanding service. The second, SSN 596, was a nuclear-powered submarine commissioned in 1963. It was sponsored by Marjorie Fluckey, the wife of Rear Adm. Fluckey. The submarine took part in special operations during the Vietnam War.

Pamela Bove serves as ship's sponsor for the newest *Barb*. Bove began her analytical career working as a civilian within the submarine division at the Navy Operational Intelligence Center. She later accepted a position with a defense company where she met her husband Thomas "Tom" Bove, grandson of Rear Adm. Fluckey.

"It is an honor to serve as sponsor for Barb and see the legacy of this historic submarine carried forward to a new generation," Bove said. "I am humbled knowing that the third Barb and her crew will soon serve silently in the depths of the world's oceans and seas protecting this great nation of ours. I am grateful for the shipbuilders who are working diligently to construct this mighty vessel and all the sailors who will selflessly serve aboard her for decades to come."

During Tuesday's ceremony, NNS welder Andrew Kahler etched Bove's initials onto a metal plate, signifying the keel of SSN 804 as being "truly and fairly laid." The metal plate will remain affixed to the submarine throughout its life.

Barb is the 31st Virginia-class fast attack submarine and will be the 15th delivered by NNS.

The advanced capabilities of Virginia-class submarines increase firepower, maneuverability and stealth.