Morning Quarters

For Muster, Inspection and Instruction

01/2009

A Fleet venue for getting History, Heritage and Culture information to our Sailors on a continual basis.

To have a thorough understanding of naval customs and traditions; To proactively integrate naval traditions, customs, and practices into decision making processes, training and daily leadership; and to consistently use naval history to demonstrate who we are as a service.

Quarters, for Muster, Inspection and Instruction

As it is officially known, is at the root of our heritage as well as a pillar of deckplate leadership. Holding quarters simply means taking the time to communicate face-to-face in a daily meeting to ensure all Sailors are where they are supposed to be, to conduct routine inspections, to recognize good performance, to impart information on the days events and other information relevant to the Sailors under your charge. Muster ensures all Sailors are accounted for from the previous day. Inspections ensure Sailors are in squared-away uniforms and personal hygiene is up to standards -- to include haircuts and shaves if applicable. It also ensures Sailors are not incapacitated to perform the days duties and tasks. Instruction provides our Sailors to be informed and educated on all matters as well as breeds trust and respect. And, as the old cliché says, a Sailor who knows what’s going on is a better Sailor. If it’s true that we fight the way we train, the same can be true to say we’ll lead like we’ve been lead. The Chief’s and LPO’s presence at quarters is something that will be duplicated as Sailors move up in rank.

Scuttlebutt

Today’s scuttlebutt aboard ship is a far cry from its namesake of yesteryear. In those days of sail, a drinking fountain was nothing more than the name scuttlebutt implied, a cask or butt with a hole or scuttle for drawing drinking water. After several weeks at sea the water in the casks became so foul it took a man with a cast iron stomach to drink it. The microscopic flora and fauna which seemed to thrive in it did nothing to improve its flavor. Now you need only to push a button on modern drinking fountains for cold, clear water, even on the hottest climes. Since it was the custom of sailors to spin yarns whenever they met, the term scuttlebutt was also given to any story or rumor told while the men were drinking. So remember: you hear scuttlebutt, take it with a drink of water.

Frocking

In the days of sail, when the word of a promotion was heard, the Petty Officers of the day would gather. Due to limited access and availability of new uniforms or rating devices, the Petty Officers would offer pieces from their personal wardrobe to help put together a proper uniform for their soon to be fellow Petty Officer. Additionally, out of a show of respect, if they felt the individual was deserving of such promotion they would each take turn at placing a stitch in the New Crow, i.e. "Tacking on the Crow."