

15 April 2021



**Gilbert E. Beyer, ETR3, President/Historian, [ddr6063@gmail.com](mailto:ddr6063@gmail.com)**

The more things change, the more they stay the same. It has now been a year since Sherry and I first entered quarantine in Mexico because of COVID 19. Now we're back in Mexico and safer than we were at home in northern Idaho but still socially isolated and wearing a mask as required by the government.

Some residents of northern Idaho saw mask wearing as an infringement on their personal freedoms. I see wearing them as a prudent precaution against dying. But I digress. This past year has seen many changes – some good, some bad. I see the increase in Zoom meetings as a good thing to overcome the isolation associated with the pandemic.

We had Zoom meetings in February and March for the Officers to try and work the bugs out. It was a success and we will schedule more. It was nice to actually “see” the people of our Association that I hadn't seen since September 2019.

We had a good talk about the possibilities and/or feasibility of having a virtual Reunion. The other option is to join in with some other ships the Fiske was with over the years. The discussions are ongoing and we want our Shipmates to join in the process. Check out the website for info on how to connect on Zoom.

We haven't forgotten you. We're still trying to figure out how best to get us together. Until then, stay safe, take care and as always have fair winds and following seas.

**Peter Brotschul, BT2, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP & Ship's Store Clerk**

Hello to all my shipmates far and wide. As 2021 continues to show improvement, I send my best wishes for your good health. As the Ship's Store continues to be open for business, you can check out our website for all your Fiske items. I am here to assist in any way I can if your item is not in stock. As we begin the springtime, we are still hopeful for a Reunion of some sort in the future. The pandemic is NOT allowing us to plan too much at this time. Our main objective is a SAFE environment for all Shipmates and their families to gather together and enjoy one another's company. As previously noted by others, we have started Zoom meetings and are working on solutions for us to get together when the time is right.

Thanks from this “Old Boiler Tech” and stay safe. Know that YOU are in my thoughts ALWAYS!



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Gilbert E. Beyer, President – Sandra E. Siciliano, First Vice President and Editor – Peter Brotschul, Second Vice President and Ship's Store Keeper, Jeffrey F. Kovite, Secretary – James R. Rapson, Treasurer  
W. Frank Stancil – Chaplain, John B. Degnan Jr., Master-at-Arms - Gilbert E. Beyer - Historian  
Stephen A. Gilbert – Webmaster



**Jeffrey Kovite, SOG2, Secretary, [jkovite@juno.com](mailto:jkovite@juno.com)**

Hello Shipmates. In these difficult times I find it comforting that I still have so many friends from my tour aboard the Fiske and I can call any one of them and reminisce about the “good old days”. So, call an old shipmate – have a chat, talk about liberty ports, big waves and dark nights on the bridge. Hurry, we are not getting any younger. Some of our shipmates have already departed – Carl McDaniel, TM3, 1965-66, passed away on 7 February 2021 and Art Stafford, SOG3, 1960-62 on 4 February 2021. I didn’t know Carl but I did know Art and I shall miss him.

Fair winds and following seas Shipmates.

**James R. Rapson, LTjg, Treasurer, [jrrapson@cox.net](mailto:jrrapson@cox.net)**

**NOW HEAR THIS!!!** Thanks to all Shipmates who responded to the November 2020 newsletter with their Dues and Dues Contributions. Your support helps all Shipmates by keeping the USS Fiske Association in strong financial shape. Please keep up the good work. Anyone wishing to have a copy of the monthly financial report(s) just needs to send me a quick email.

We have added a new feature to reach out to you – we now have the ability to conduct Zoom meetings – welcome to the electronic age! A Zoom meeting starts with you sending me an email (which also helps to verify your email address) and saying you would like to join in. Once I have a group, I will send you an email with the link for the meeting date and time. You simply click on the link just before the meeting time (10-15 minutes) and you will be connected. We have already done this with the Officers and it has worked well for us. Stay safe and be well until we can meet again, either in person or by Zoom. Fair winds and following seas to all.

**W. Frank Stancil, GMG3, Chaplain, [fandjstancil1962@att.net](mailto:fandjstancil1962@att.net)**

As the Chaplain of the Association, I would like to encourage each and every one of you to pray for comfort and wisdom during these unusual times in our country and world. Philippians 4:6-7 says “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with Thanksgiving let your requests be known to God”. Should we attempt life’s waters without a Captain or a navigation system, we could find ourselves on an unprofitable trip hoping to find peace but are never satisfied. Imagine taking a wooden raft into the ocean and trying to get across the waves. You would most likely be capsized and your raft would be ruined. The Psalmist asked God to direct his steps and we must ask God to be the Captain of our Ship when we travel life’s waters. Only God and his word can direct us on how to stand firm when the winds blow strong. So our prayer should be: “Dear Lord thank you for the direction that is found in Your word. I submit to your control of my life. I trust You as Captain of my ship. Thank you for caring about me and having a special plan for my life. By God’s Grace. Amen”.

The USS Fiske Association would like to stay in contact with its members during these uncertain times with virtual Zoom meetings in the future. This request goes to all members that have the computer/phone capability of joining in on Zoom meetings. If you, as a member, have this capability please be in contact with the Association Treasurer, James R. Rapson at email [jrrapson@cox.net](mailto:jrrapson@cox.net). If we can assist you in any other way, please do not hesitate to make contact with either one of the Officers. Thank you in advance. God Bless each and every one of you.



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**Sandie E. Siciliano, ETN2, 1<sup>st</sup> VP and Newsletter Editor, [tampasandie@gmail.com](mailto:tampasandie@gmail.com)**

Like it or not, we old salts are being forced into a digital society. We need passwords for everything - text messages, emails, Instagram, Face book and more – applications that did not exist in our youth. I don't know about you but I really long for “yesterday” when we had real communication and social interaction. When we were younger, new technology was easy – now – it can be overwhelming. Today there is less and less personal contact. For example: How many of you have been caught in a loop on the telephone by Artificial Intelligence? It's exasperating! My suggestion is to look for senior centers and services in your community who can help you learn how to use them.

The second overwhelming challenge today is the pandemic. With that, we are left with two choices: We can try to cope by being positive, or we can allow ourselves to become depressed because it's all too much to handle emotionally. The challenges we collectively face are not minor: In some cases, we (the most vulnerable) have been denied the love and compassion of being with a loved one before they pass or to celebrate the joy of a new grandchild. Many of us are virtually confined to home out of fear and caution. Speaking personally, I only venture out once a week, with my mask, to do errands, get groceries and keep medical appointments for my husband and myself.

What can we do to cope under these sad circumstances? My thoughts are to keep busy at home and make the time meaningful. Write a real letter to someone or make a phone call to an old friend. In-between time, finish that task of sorting photos, identifying people in them or complete a scrapbook of your trips, vacations and adventures from the past. *Here's the kicker: Our Association has hundreds of members – we are SHIPMATES – and we should remember that we are not alone.* Look at the current roster and reconnect with someone you served with on that MED Cruise or go to our wonderful website skillfully maintained by Shipmate Steve Gilbert. You're bound to find some joy and happiness in reading stories and articles in some of the old newsletters, all of which I thoroughly enjoyed producing. Don't have a Roster – send an email to the Treasurer for the latest copy.

Above all else, keep the faith! Here's wishing you following seas and fair winds as you navigate through this new reality.

**James R. Rapson, LTjg, COMM/Dash 1964-67**

As President Gil Beyer has always said “If it's not written down or recorded – then it never happened!” I had an opportunity last November to participate with the USS Joseph P. Kennedy (DD-850) Association in conjunction with the DESVETS (formerly Tin Can Sailors) to complete a video for “Veterans Voices Oral History”. They have completed many interviews so please visit the Kennedy web site and find my video there. You may have to do some searching to find the interviews.

If you think you may be able to do this yourself, check with your local Veteran's Organizations or any other source – don't let YOUR history go un-recorded! Please enjoy my 40 minutes of fame.



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**John B. Degnan, Jr., SOG3, Master-At-Arms, [jbd@dolphin@aol.com](mailto:jbd@dolphin@aol.com)**  
(or: proviedegnan@aol.com)

Dear Fiske Shipmates and Families,

I hope that all of you have survived this terrible pandemic in good health. My condolences go out to those who may have had a dear one who succumbed to this disease or any other malady. Yes, it's been a very long year with staying at home and having no physical contact with family and friends. And wearing that mask!!! Ugh!!! But it was necessary and it helped me and my wife, Provie, from getting this dread disease. Both of us were lucky to receive our Covid vaccine shots and I hope the light at the end of the tunnel is near. Please have patience and continue to follow the guidelines to keep us safe and healthy. May all of our Shipmates have a safe and healthy Spring and Summer in 2021 with lots of fun. Provie and I look forward to another Reunion where we can all meet again.

Love to you all,  
John and Provie Degnan.

### **HEARD OVER THE 1MC**

**NOW HEAR THIS! NOW HEAR THIS! NOW HEAR THIS!**

#### **THIS IS THE CAPTAIN SPEAKING:**

Now that you have read this far, did you know that this space could be yours for the next newsletter? Please send me an email to be included. It can be just a "Hello Shipmates" with your name, rank/rate and years of service. The space available will vary depending upon how wordy the Officers get. But don't worry the Editor always has the last say in the presentation.

Will I hear from you? Your input is very valuable to the Association and **EVERY** Shipmate deserves a chance to be heard. Let's fill up the blank space in these newsletters.



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