



USS BELKNAP Association

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Fourteen

UNANIMOUS BOARD OF DIRECTORS RESOLUTION on Behalf of 1,345 known BELKNAP sailors and BELKNAP Association members make the following

Proclamation

Let it be known to all men of the sea that the crew of the United States Ship CLAUDE V. RICKETTS DDG-5, also known as the "Big Nickel", is hereby praised for her undying actions to save fellow sailors and their ship.

On the night of November 22, 1975, while operating in the Ionian Sea off the coast of Sicily, the Big Nickel became "pure **gold**" to the men of USS BELKNAP when our ship suffered major damage during a collision with the United States Ship John F. Kennedy CV-67. As we fought fires for the survival of our ship, we were cheered by sight of RICKETTS as she appeared out of the rainy mist. This ship, filled with brave officers and men approached and received the injured and dying from our stricken ship. Unafraid of the flames and exploding ordnance, RICKETTS came alongside and lashed herself to us to render needed aid to our injured personnel and to fight our fires when we could not. On BELKNAP, RICKETTS' captain was clearly heard shouting orders to the helmsman and lee helmsman. We saw RICKETTS respond to those orders and maneuver to best aid the stricken BELKNAP with her blessed water and fire fighting supplies. Men of BELKNAP knew at that time that their ship would survive, thanks in part to the brave men of the Big Nickel.

Afterwards, many names were taken and many awards were given to the heroes of the RICKETTS. And, while we don't have any medals to give you, we hope that this presentation of heartfelt thanks from a grateful USS BELKNAP Association will rank high in your memories.

The crew and friends of USS BELKNAP are celebrating her 50th anniversary of being commissioned this year. Be it said that "Bravo Zulu" is hardly sufficient to acknowledge the acts of that night, a night the captain of the RICKETTS called "A Night to Forget, That Will Never Be Forgotten". The members of the USS BELKNAP Association hereby man the rail and salute you as you pass on your 50th anniversary.

Let it be known to all men who sail in harm's way that at any time there is a chance meeting between the sailors of the RICKETTS and the sailors of the BELKNAP that a Special Brotherhood exists that will forever be remembered. It is a brotherhood of shipmates that was started by accident, forged with steel, tempered with fire and hardened by outstanding seamanship, bravery, and service.

May God Bless You One and All!

Attest:

Mike Abbott
President

Fred "Skip" McCarroll
Treasurer/Past President

Dick Shafer
Past President

Dick Lemon
Vice President/Past President

Jim Farrow
Past President

Dick Tremain
Past President

Charles Taylor
Past President

Bob Gilhooly
Secretary