

20 January 2010

Hello to all our Brothers and Sisters in the Mess,

Hope this finds you all doing well.....wanted to give you an update on things going onboard our great ship. We have changed homeports to sunny San Diego, which is good: this gives us much more exposure to the fleet, which in-turn increases the demands for flag-flying onboard as well as USS CHIEF items. We flew 357 flags in honor of our retiring Chiefs and sold over 750 coins in 2009; we anticipate these numbers to go up in 2010. I wanted to get the word out again on the way we are doing business with handling flag-flying and coin-purchase requests. Though our process has gotten much better on this side in the past year, we have still noticed some discrepancies with some of the requests we receive as well as postage issues that we alone cannot fix from this end.

First off, please do not use our old "FPO AA" address anymore; it will cause serious delays in getting your flag here. CHIEF's new mailing address:
USS CHIEF (MCM 14), FPO AP 96662-1934

CHIEF is currently in the shipyard undergoing routine repairs for a few more weeks, so please allow for more sufficient time for your flag to be flown and returned. MCM CREW CONFLICT, currently onboard CHIEF, will soon be deploying for the Middle East and MCM CREW LEADER will be taking over, so there will be a slight delay (approximately 1-2 weeks) with your requests at the end of January while we're turning over. CSCS(SW) Bill Caraballo, the Command Senior Chief of LEADER, and his Mess, will carry the torch on with meeting your flag-flying, CPO Coin sales and CPO Pride needs.

When sending an ensign to be flown on the CHIEF:

1. The preferred method of delivery to us is either USPS-Priority (flat rate is best) or FEDEX / UPS. If sending this via USPS, please send a delivery conformation. We all know how accurate the US Postal System is and I can tell you we've had a few occasions of lost ensigns in the past year. The most important thing when requesting a flag to be flown here is that you have a way to track your package to and from the ship.
2. Please include a money order or certified check for return postage or the actual returned postage itself (the same amount it costs to send your package over). We do not have the money allotted to return your packages nor are we authorized to return packages to you via official mail, so return postage is very important!!
3. We will need the rate, warfare, first name, middle initial and last name of the Sailor for whom the ensign is honoring. We will send you back a Certificate of Authenticity for the honoree, so legibility and correct spellings are important too! This goes for your return address as well.

If I may also put in another shameless plug for USS CHIEF Coins: we (both LEADER in

San Diego and CONFLICT in Bahrain) have them if you'd like to purchase them. They cost \$10 a piece and we can send them to you, again utilizing the postage rules above (keep in mind the weight of coins, especially when requesting several at a time), unless you are locally in the area.

The great ship CHIEF continues the namesake for a very special group of Navy Professionals, the Chief Petty Officers of the world's finest and strongest Navy. It's been an honor for me to serve onboard our great ship! If there's anything we can do for our Brothers and Sisters in the Mess, please don't hesitate to ask! Take care and be safe out there!

All the best, VR & R,
Toby (NCCS)

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