The Navy and Marine Corps Birthday Ball

Staff Writer: MIDN 3/C Thomas Kleiber, USMC

On 23 October 2012, NROTC Notre Dame celebrated the 237th birthdays of the United States Navy and Marine Corps with the annual Naval Ball. At the Hilton Garden Inn adjacent to the St. Mary’s College campus, members of NROTC Notre Dame, their families, and assorted honored guests were treated to a variety of traditions and spectacles ranging from ceremonial cake cutting to the much anticipated company dance competition. It is safe to say that fun was had by all!

The guest speaker for the evening was Rear Admiral Sinclair M. Harris, USN. A graduate of James Madison University, RADM Harris went on to have an extensive career in the surface warfare community. He currently serves as the Commander of U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command and U.S. 4th Fleet. RADM Harris kept his comments brief and advocated the importance of caring for the individual members of one’s organization by highlighting important historical figures who have helped shape America and her Navy and Marine Corps. Video birthday wishes from the Chief of Naval Operations, ADM Jonathan Greenert, and a message from the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen Frank Amos, and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Michael Barrett, united those present with other Sailors and Marines worldwide who celebrate our birthdays in the same way.

At the conclusion of the official birthday wishes, attendees stood to the fanfare of each respective service song for the cake presentation ceremonies, escorted by two rows of Midshipmen with ceremonial swords. As is tradition, the oldest member of the service present cuts a piece of cake and presents it to the youngest member, symbolizing the continuation of service and the passage of wisdom and traditions. After the official ceremony, the cake is further cut and distributed among the remaining guests, putting an exclamation point on the end of an excellent meal.

For all of its pomp and circumstance (and delicious returns), the cake ceremony pales in comparison to the most anticipated event of the evening – the company dance-off! Although participation is a right of passage for freshman Midshipmen, they do benefit from the sage advice of the upperclassmen, as they choreograph their way into the halls of dance-move immortality. This year’s competition witnessed electric performances by Alpha and Bravo companies, whose tie resulted in a “mano a mano” shimmy showdown between the Company Commanders. In the end, MIDN 1/C Kearns’ Alpha Company fell to the superior skills of MIDN 1/C Pursley’s Bravo Company. The official ruling remains a point of contention between these competitive Midshipmen, and it is hoped that the passion will carry over to next year’s event.

The Navy and Marine Corps Ball is a highly anticipated event with multiple moving parts. Its success would not have been possible without the efforts of MIDN 1/C Devon Graham and her staff. MIDN Graham said “It was great to be able to coordinate my final ROTC Navy/Marine Corps Birthday Ball. Everyone who attended, and my staff who helped me throughout the organization process, truly made the night unforgettable.” One member of that staff, MIDN 3/C Heibg, was the music coordinator for the evening, and commented that he “had a great time at [the] Ball this year. As 3/C, I could actually enjoy the Ball from the start because I knew what to expect and wasn’t anxious like last year. Controlling the music gave me a behind the scenes peek on all that goes into having a successful ceremony.” As with most NROTC events, the Midshipmen are as much facilitators as they are participants, allowing them to develop important professional and organizational skills while also enjoying an evening of good food, great company, and exemplary dancing.
Happy New Year! The Fall Semester started off with Freshman Orientation at Fort Custer in Michigan. While there, the freshmen got to shoot M4’s and M9’s, do land navigation, leadership reaction courses and ultimately, they began to learn what it means to be part of this Battalion. This year’s orientation was different from previous years in that it was led by a combination of 1/C and 2/C Midshipmen. The inclusion of 2/C Midshipmen on the orientation staff was part of our effort to give the underclassmen more opportunities to lead by mentoring the incoming group of freshmen. The 1/C also did a fantastic job this semester leading and mentoring their companies, platoons, and staffs. These leadership experiences were just the beginning of much bigger things to come for us as seniors, and I have no doubt that we will be ready for the responsibilities that are only a few short months away.

We have continued to dominate any ROTC unit that challenges us on the sports field. University of Michigan’s Naval ROTC Unit travelled to South Bend for our annual flag football game, and Notre Dame won for the 7th consecutive year. Also, after a convincing win of the Commanders’ Cup last year, Naval ROTC has taken an early lead this year, beating the Notre Dame Army and Air Force Units in flag football. Other activities during the semester included a weekend full of events for Veteran’s Day, the Navy/Marine Corps Birthday Ball, and a Tri-Military run with University President Fr. Jenkins.

As BCO, I constantly heard about the amazing activities in which our Midshipmen were involved. For example, as a Battalion we had a little over 800 hours of community service this semester. That kind of involvement, in addition to the dedication in the classroom and to the Battalion, does not go unnoticed, and led to me accepting compliments on behalf of the Naval ROTC program from the many administrators I was able to meet. Keep up the amazing work and everyone is sure to continue to make progress this spring.

I want to wish MIDN 1/C McCormick and his staff the best of luck next semester! I’ll leave you with a quote: “Anyone can give up, it's the easiest thing in the world to do. But to hold it together when everyone else would understand if you fell apart, that's true strength.” - Unknown

Editor’s Note  
MIDN 1/C Charles Lee, USNR
I would like to take this opportunity to thank my staff this semester. They have done an outstanding job at providing thoughtful articles, meeting deadlines, and being flexible this semester. Bravo Zulu to my staff, and to LT Smith, our advisor!
A Message from the CO

CAPT Clarence Earl Carter, USN

CO Notre Dame Naval ROTC Unit

Shipmates,

WOW! What a Fall!

It seems like only yesterday that we were welcoming the Class of 2016 to campus for Freshman Orientation, and then, while everyone was trying to study, this amazing, undefeated regular season in football happened; what a ride! Hopefully, it was an experience that will be repeated much sooner than it last occurred on the plains of Northern Indiana (perhaps even before our current students all head for the Fleet and the Fleet Marine Forces).

It started on a beautiful, late summer day in Dublin, Ireland, and for those that were able to be a part of that once in a lifetime adventure, the Navy – Notre Dame football game, and the whole surrounding experience, reaffirmed that it represents everything that is “right” about college athletics. For those of us at NROTC Notre Dame, it represents a confluence of our present and our future, as we cheer alongside (not necessarily with) those with whom we will fight in the future. For my wife Lea and me, it was our first trip to the Emerald Isle, though we certainly hope it will not be our last.

I could not have been prouder of the contribution of our Staff and students in their direct and indirect support of this magical football season, from our own varsity football player, Senior Offensive Lineman Matt Tansey, who saw action in his final home game against Wake Forest; to the members of our Unit that are part of the marching band, which supported the Irish from Norman, OK to Miami, FL; to the members of our Color Guard, who so proudly represented our Navy and Marine Corps in displaying the national colors before home football games; to LT Mike Hood, who worked tirelessly to arrange the ever-popular flyovers for our home games…and the list goes on. Perhaps my favorite memory is of the Captains of Notre Dame’s football team celebrating with, thanking, and posing for pictures with our Midshipmen on the field—even before the alma mater was played—and just moments after they had gone undefeated at home. Make no mistake -- the Battalion of Midshipmen could not be more integral to the fabric of this University. And our relevance grows with each passing month.

But football was only one of many highlights of the Fall Semester. Academically, our students performed well in the classroom, and our culture of fitness was reflected in the strong PRT scores we saw across the Battalion. The latter was also reflected in a memorable, early morning PT challenge that our Marine Option Midshipmen enjoyed, competing alongside the National Finalist Lady Irish Women’s Basketball Team.

Professionally, our First Class, Navy Option Midshipmen all received their Service Assignments during Fall Break. Over 70% ultimately received their first choice of warfare community, and are looking forward to joining the Fleet, some as soon as four months from now.

We had the opportunity to welcome a couple of exceptional guest speakers to campus this Fall, both Surface Warriors. First, RADM Sinclair Harris, Commander Naval Forces, U.S. Southern Command and Commander, U.S. Fourth Fleet, who delivered an amazing speech at our Navy and Marine Corps Birthday Ball the first weekend in November. In early December, we welcomed a distinguished alumnus, RDML Chris Grady, back to campus. He spoke to the Battalion of Midshipmen on several occasions during his whirlwind visit from Hawaii, where he serves on the Staff of Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

After a well-deserved holiday break which, for many members of the Battalion, included a memorable (or not so) trip to the BCS National Championship Football Game, everyone is back hard at work and the Spring Semester is flying by. With Junior Parents’ Weekend later this month, followed shortly thereafter by Naval Leadership Weekend, and Spring Break next up, commissioning will be here before we know it.

As always, I could not be happier or prouder to command the best Naval ROTC Unit in the land – at least for a few more months. Well, though it’s time to brave the cold and go blow snow, again – I wouldn’t want to be any place other than Notre Dame. Go Navy, and Go Irish!

Captain Earl Carter
Commanding Officer and Professor of Naval Science
Midshipmen of Notre Dame and St. Mary’s, congratulations on a fantastic Fall semester 2012. You had a great semester and should be mightily proud of all you have accomplished. I would like to look ahead to the coming semester and share some thoughts about what lies ahead for you as Midshipmen and future naval officers.

The Spring Semester 2013 will bring many opportunities and events to challenge you physically and test you mentally, in addition to the rigorous academic regimen you are undertaking at these two fine institutions. The pace of the upcoming semester will be no different from semesters past – I have been duly impressed during my time here at the plethora of activities and opportunities that present themselves to you and the rapidity at which they arrive. These upcoming events should excite and inspire you as you continue in your professional development as naval officers. I challenge you to get involved, to embrace these training opportunities with gusto, and to make a difference in your lives and those of your shipmates and classmates.

The big-ticket events for the upcoming semester include Naval Leadership Weekend (NLW), the Presidential Pass-in-Review with Father Jenkins CSC, the annual Spring Awards Ceremony, Bengal Bouts, the Trident Naval Society “Race for the Heroes” 10K run in support of the Wounded Warrior Project, and Warrior Night, not to mention the events surrounding commencement and our commissioning ceremony. These events will be upon you before you realize it and will require different levels of planning, involvement, and commitment depending on your billet within the Battalion.

Most importantly, I want you to realize that these events and the weekly battalion drill periods exist for YOU, not for your advisors or the staff. They are YOUR events! You must get involved, take ownership, and support them wholeheartedly if they are to be successful. Do not approach them as mandatory events required by the NROTC staff; tackle them with pride and tenacity as leadership opportunities that will make you a better officer upon commissioning. You should look forward to these evolutions as you realize that their ultimate success reflects upon you and your fellow Midshipmen. They are only worthwhile if you devote yourselves to them and leave them as better citizens and warriors. They complement your university academic classes and naval science classes and will, with the proper motivation and dedication, better prepare you to eventually lead the young men and women that join our ranks as servants of the American people.

As I prepare to transition to civilian life this Summer, I must tell you how absolutely impressed I am with you and your ongoing achievements. You and your families should be so proud - you are the brightest and most motivated young patriots one could ever hope to have in an NROTC program; when you graduate and receive your commissions as officers you will continue to serve your country and your fellow citizens, both as Notre Dame Alumni and as officers in the world’s finest navy. You have embarked upon a noble path with limitless possibilities.

I would challenge you to never forget, not even for a moment, how fortunate you are to be here and how many thousands of students would trade places with you in a second to have the current and future opportunities with which you have been blessed. Never take them for granted. You are the future of our naval service - make the most of this experience!

FLY NAVY!
From the MOI’s Desk

MAJ Jackie L. Schiller II, USMC

It will most likely be the spring semester of 2013 by the time you read this. In light of that, I hope you had a good holiday break, you are proud of your fall performance, and you are recharged to continue developing physically, mentally, and morally this semester. In retrospect, I want to take this opportunity to say how impressed I am with this Battalion. It is your character and hunger for transcendence that continually stands out. You do not always hear the laudatory comments from Notre Dame staff and professionals that notice this professionalism, work ethic, dedication, and tenacity toward success. Know that it does not go unnoticed, and I challenge you to continue in this vein.

This coming semester challenge yourself to improve, incrementally, in one or more facets (physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually). The importance of this stepwise growth is evident in this quote from President Reagan, “Above all, we must realize that no arsenal, or no weapon in the arsenals of the world, is as formidable as the will and moral courage of free men and women. It is a weapon our adversaries in today’s world do not have.” Assess your will and moral courage and make it more formidable.

I commend you all on your chosen profession; you are an exceptional breed of Americans. I look forward to this coming semester with you. Remember to stay focused and do the right thing all the time - you owe that to the future young Americans and their families that you are going to lead.

Semper Fidelis.

Maj Jackie L. Schiller II / USMC

Welcome LT Smith and LT Williams

Staff Writer: MIDN 2/C Kevin Matuszewski, USNR

The Notre Dame NROTC Unit recently welcomed two new lieutenants to their staff. LT Sarah Smith and LT Christopher Williams reported this summer to replace outgoing LT Panos and LT Peters as the 1/C and 2/C MIDN advisors. When the Midshipmen returned to campus this fall they found that the Unit was still running like it had never missed a beat. Both LT Smith and LT Williams bring unique naval experiences and backgrounds as they mold our Midshipmen into future naval officers.

LT Smith grew up in Warren, Ohio and decided upon a career in the Navy during her junior year in high school. Although she originally planned to work on a flight deck, her scores on the ASVAB qualified her for an exciting career in the nuclear Navy. After serving as an enlisted Sailor from 2001-2003, LT Smith was selected by the Seaman to Admiral 21st Century (STA-21) to pursue a degree and a commission as an Officer Candidate. From 2003 to 2006, she was a member of the University of Wisconsin NROTC program and completed an Electrical Engineering degree. As a Nuclear Surface Warfare Officer, LT Smith has served in USS REUBEN JAMES, a frigate out of Pearl Harbor, HI, and in USS GEORGE WASHINGTON, the Navy’s only forward deployed nuclear aircraft carrier in Yokosuka, Japan. When choosing a shore duty, LT Smith chose our NROTC Unit in order to pursue a Master’s degree in Engineering Management, and to be reunited with her family in the Midwest. Over her time here, she has directed her infectious enthusiasm toward the surface nuclear navy, the senior class, and the freshmen’s dance moves at the Naval Birthday Ball.

LT Williams was born in Mt. Carmel, IL before he traded his Midwest life on the plains for a home under the waves by enlisting in 1997. He served as a Machinist’s Mate and Engineering Laboratory Technician in USS OHIO from 1999 to 2003. Like LT Smith, LT Williams was accepted for STA-21, and from 2003 to 2006, LT Williams returned to his native Illinois in the University of Illinois Champaign NROTC Unit, where he graduated with an economics degree. After commissioning, LT Williams served in USS PITTSBURGH and was among the first aboard the USS MISSISSIPPI. When selecting shore duty, LT Williams chose Notre Dame as an opportunity to return to his Midwestern roots and to pursue a Master’s Degree, which he is currently doing at the University of Illinois. When he is not shaping future submarine officers or advising the 2/C Midshipmen, LT Williams is an avid Cubs fan and loving husband and father of three.
Midshipmen Summer Training

Guest Writers: MIDN 3/C Kate Privateer, USNR and MIDN 3/C Daniel Gregory, USNR

While most college students spend their summers working internships, researching, volunteering, or just relaxing, Navy Midshipmen from across the country disperse around the globe for a very different summer experience.

The 3/C Midshipmen attended Career Orientation Training for Midshipmen (CORTRAMID), while 2/C and 1/C Midshipmen spent up to a month job shadowing an enlisted Sailor or junior officer from one of the communities available to Midshipmen after commissioning.

CORTRAMID is a unique, one-month experience in either San Diego, California or Norfolk, Virginia that brings hundreds of Midshipmen together to acquire military knowledge about the different naval communities: aviation, submarines, surface warfare, and the Marines. During CORTRAMID, each week had its highs and lows, but every Midshipman gained a basic understanding of each community. MIDN 3/C Hebig’s favorite week was surface week, citing the damage control trainer as one of his favorite activities of the month. MIDN Hebig said, “I really enjoyed getting to put on all of the firefighting gear and move with my fire team through different buildings.” Another group favorite was a similar exercise during submarine week, where Midshipmen practiced plugging holes in leaking pipes. MIDN 3/C Gettinger enjoyed going to the shooting range and the urban warfare (MOUT) training during Marine week at CORTRAMID East.

The weeklong exposure to each community helped many Midshipmen develop more informed opinions about what warfare community they hoped to pursue. Some had their desire to join a specific community reinforced, while others had their eyes opened to options they had previously ruled out. MIDN 3/C Halverson said of her experience, “Before I went to CORTRAMID, I was interested in the aviation community. After aviation week, there was not a doubt in my mind that aviation was the right choice for me. Even though the weather was terrible and I spent hours waiting for a twenty minute flight, that time I had behind the joystick made it quite clear that I wanted to earn a spot in Naval Aviation.” The training may have illustrated naval career options, but CORTRAMID also helped to introduce Midshipmen to other students who were also involved in NROTC across the country. MIDN 3/C Hutchinson was introduced to several Midshipmen from the University of Michigan as fellow members of her CORTRAMID company. Overall, the 3/C Midshipmen from Notre Dame had a great experience during their summer training and created memories and friendships to last a lifetime.

The rising 2/C Midshipmen go on an active-duty enlisted cruise and experience life as an enlisted member of naval units aboard a surface ship or a submarine. Midshipmen live and work alongside enlisted running mates who teach them about life aboard a ship or submarine. The Midshipmen from the Notre Dame Battalion returned from 2/C cruise with many unique experiences. For example, MIDN Catalano and MIDN Matuszewski were flown to the AUTEC (Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Center) Island in the Bahamas, where they boarded a submarine for their cruise.

Fall 2012 Irish Pennant Staff

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Editor: MIDN 1/C Charles Lee
Pennant CPO: MIDN 2/C Mitchell Lopes

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Staff Writer: MIDN 3/C Cassandra Gettinger
Staff Writer: MIDN 3/C Thomas Kleiber
Midshipmen Summer Training

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The rising 1/C Midshipmen are assigned to active-duty Navy units on surface ships, submarines, or both shore-based, and carrier-based aviation squadrons. They interact closely and live with the junior officers of their unit. The 1/C Midshipmen from the Notre Dame Battalion experienced a variety of unique cruises. For example, MIDN 1/C Graham went on a cruise with an E-6 TACAMO squadron. She joined the squadron during a training exercise where she “was able to go on multiple 10+ hour flights with the crew learning about what they do, their communications, how to fly the plane, and what would happen if nuclear war would occur.”

The rising 1/C Midshipmen also had the option of training with the foreign navies through the Foreign Exchange Training of Midshipmen (FOREX). MIDN 1/C Panikulam (pictured above) took advantage of this opportunity and spent a month with the Danish Royal Navy. “It was an amazing cruise, and I got to learn about an entirely different naval culture,” said MIDN Panikulam. “We did helicopter operations, small boat operations, search and rescue training, and fishing inspections.”

While the Navy Option Midshipmen were on cruise, the Marine Option Midshipmen spent the summer training at Mountain Warfare School or Officer Candidates School, to gain the knowledge, skills, and bearing vital to the success of a Marine Officer.

ROTC Units PT with Notre Dame President Father Jenkins, C.S.C.

Staff Writer: MIDN 3/C Cassandra Gettinger, USNR

At 0600 on the crisp morning of Tuesday, 11 September 2013, the Naval, Army, and Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps Units lined up outside of the Ricci Band Building for the annual Father Jenkins Run. This is a tradition where the President of the University of Notre Dame, Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C., leads all three branches of ROTC on a run around campus to the simultaneous resonance of cadences and the sounds of feet hitting the pavement.

As Father Jenkins explained to the Cadets and Midshipmen after the run, the military has had a long-standing presence on Notre Dame’s campus. The military has been an esteemed part of Notre Dame's history. The Navy, in particular, has a special bond to the University. During World War II, Notre Dame struggled to enroll the minimum number of students to keep the University a financially-viable institution and was on the verge of closing due to the volume of men who chose to fight overseas rather than attend college. The University offered the United States Navy the proper infrastructure to house and train future Navy Officers, which allowed Notre Dame the ability to continue to operate throughout the war while supporting the country’s military.

The traditional run is a way for the administration to show their appreciation of the Armed Services and the Midshipmen and Cadets answering the call to serve their country. Father Jenkins joined all branches of ROTC students, ran two and a half miles around campus, and expressed gratitude to the Midshipmen and Cadets for their service to come. Father Jenkins also challenged each individual to be a leader, both in and out of uniform, while attending the University of Notre Dame. Though this is a special event for all Midshipmen and Cadets, it is especially incredible for freshman because it is their first encounter of the bond between Notre Dame and the ROTC programs. This year’s Father Jenkins Run was motivating and continues to show the spirit, tradition, and commitment that the University of Notre Dame and the United States Armed Forces have for each other. God. Country. Notre Dame.
Notre Dame Football Opens Season Against Midshipmen from Naval Academy

Staff Writer: MIDN 2/C Mitchell Lopes, USNR

The Notre Dame football team kicked off the 2012 season in a unique way—taking on the Naval Academy’s Midshipmen in a memorable and hard fought contest across the pond, in Dublin, Ireland. The first matchup between the teams played outside of the U.S. was in 1996 and was also held in Dublin. True to form, the pre-season hype for Notre Dame ran rampant, despite just missing out on a preseason ranking. An optimistic fan base talked of the team’s depth in the running game, fresh talent at quarterback, and a veteran, salty defense, led by the inspirational 5th year senior linebacker Manti Te’o. Also on the table was talk of third year Irish coach Brian Kelly’s strategy to win not only the first game, but to make a stronger showing than during his first two years on the job.

While most Notre Dame students resigned themselves to watching the game on T.V. on this side of the Atlantic, some students, specifically some NROTC Midshipmen, were lucky enough to attend the game. Said MIDN 2/C Mitchell Lopes, “Having the opportunity to travel and support our team so far away from home, especially in an international spotlight, made for an awesome time and great memories.”  Lopes traveled to the game with the Notre Dame Marching Band, which sent about 30% of its members, further fueling the game’s already buzzing atmosphere.

By the end of the day, the mostly American crowd at Aviva Stadium, which is normally used for soccer and rugby events, witnessed the Irish squad sink the Mids, 50-10. This strong start to the year continued through the fall and beginning of winter months with the Irish finishing the regular season undefeated before losing to Alabama in the BCS National Championship. A special congratulations to MIDN 1/C Tansey (pictured above with a young fan in Dublin) for successfully walking on to the Irish football team two years ago and good luck in your upcoming endeavors with Naval Aviation. In addition, congratulations to all the members of the University Marching Band on their great season.

Veteran’s Day Vigil

Staff Writer: MIDN 3/C Cassandra Gettinger, USNR

Veteran’s Day is a special day in America, and the University of Notre Dame’s three ROTC branches honor all those who served the United States of America's Armed Forces in a unique way. Beginning at 1600 on Sunday, 11 November until 1600 on Monday, 12 November, 2012, a team of four Midshipmen and Cadets stood watch for the annual Veteran’s Day Vigil. For 24 hours, these Midshipmen and Cadets stood post on a side of the Clarke Peace Memorial Fountain, a fountain dedicated to members of the military who gave the ultimate sacrifice during World War II, Korea and Vietnam. It is an event that impacts the entire campus as Catherine O’Donnell, a senior at Notre Dame, said, “Watching this [the vigil] is my favorite part of the fall.” At the end of this Vigil, all three branches gathered with guests in the Carey Auditorium in the Hesburgh Library for a ceremony with speakers that included Fr. Hesburgh, Ms. Mary Anne Black (representing Congressman Joe Donnelly’s office), and Dr. Anthony Hyder. Dr. Hyder spoke to the Midshipmen and Cadets about "Duty, Honor, Country: Those three hallowed words reverently dictate what you ought to be, what you can be, what you will be," quoting a portion of General MacArthur's speech at West Point from 1962. His words will inspire the Midshipmen and Cadets to continue to work hard at the University, and take those three simple, yet powerful words to heart as they follow the many Notre Dame graduates who have served in our country's Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps before them.
Success at the Mud Run

Staff Writer: MIDN 3/C Thomas Kleiber, USMC

On 15 September 2012, crowds of people, wearing an assortment of expendable clothing and military fatigues, descended on Marian High School in Mishawaka, IN as men, women and children of all ages gathered to participate in the Marine Corps Mud Run. First envisioned in 2001 by 1st Sgt. Samuel Alameda, the Mud Run is an obstacle course of about three miles featuring walls, monkey bars, large hills, and copious amounts of mud. Aside from the obvious joys of slogging over, under, and through several miles of dirt and water, the Mud Run’s primary purpose is to help raise money for the local Toys for Tots program. To date, the Marine Mud Run has raised in excess of $25,000 and helped in the purchase some 5,000 toys.

This was the first year that the Marine Mud Run was held at Marian High School. Previously, the course was constructed on the grounds of the US Marine Corps Reserve Center in South Bend. The move to Marian HS allowed for the construction of a new, higher quality course which will permit further growth and expansion over the upcoming years and, given time, the new course is expected to exceed the previous one in both quality and quantity of obstacles, providing participants with greater challenges each year.

This event was, as always, an enjoyable outing for the Notre Dame NROTC Unit. Midshipmen and staff members alike participated in the run, posting excellent times in comparison to other groups. Perhaps the Unit can credit the efforts of MIDN 1/C Blume and his physical fitness staff for the strong showing. More important than the physical performance, however, was the charitable cause the Mud Run exists to support. Through the efforts and generosity of the South Bend community, Toys for Tots received significant charitable donations from this event.

Baraka Bouts: Fighting for Others

Staff Writer: MIDN 2/C Mitchell Lopes, USNR

For the past 10 years, Notre Dame’s Baraka Bouts have served as a stage for an organized, campus wide boxing competition—one exclusively for females. Oftentimes seen as the sister event for the men’s Bengal Bouts, Baraka Bouts donates 100% of proceeds to the Lakeview and St. Joseph’s secondary schools in Uganda, in Eastern Africa, including over $2,000 this year alone. While the finals aren’t until early November, participants begin training soon after the beginning of the school year, doing everything from endurance workouts to sparring with other participants to slowly hone their technique. Even though the event is highly competitive and recognition is given to the winners in each weight class, boxers train together, with the older girls teaching the younger ones new tricks. This season, MIDN 2/C Johnson, a native of Denver, Colorado and Science-Business major, competed in the Bouts for her first time. As a longtime swimmer and runner, she was pleasantly surprised to find that boxing is “a lot more than just learning to punch”. Johnson said she was motivated to fight by the support of friends and the adrenaline rush of stepping into the ring. By luck of the draw, MIDN Johnson was matched against one of the boxing team’s captains, and lost her first fight. However, that’s not the main takeaway for her. She recalls, “It was a great fight and I felt really accomplished, even though I lost”. Despite losing, Johnson was asked back to be one of next year’s captains. She gladly accepted and before too long will be back in the ring training for the 2013 season. Bravo Zulu from the entire Unit to MIDN Johnson for her inspiring competitive spirit!
Running for Special Olympics

Staff Writer: MIDN 2/C Kevin Matuszewski, USNR

Amidst the excitement of College Gameday on the Notre Dame campus and hundreds of fans camped out on a cold October night, there was one group with a very different goal in mind: Trident Naval Society, helped raise money for St. Joseph’s County Special Olympics through the TNS Annual 24-Hour Run. As an outward demonstration of their dedication to this noble cause, volunteers paired up in hour-long shifts to keep the run going from 1300 on October 12th until 1300 on October 13th. With tridents in hand, runners spread the word about the fundraiser to every corner of campus and thousands of spectators along the way. As a Battalion, there was no shortage of Midshipmen willing to accept the trident and the call to serve. Midshipmen of every class participated, contributing a total of 125 hours of service. Of the 70+ Midshipmen who participated in the event, there is perhaps no one more responsible for its resounding success than MIDN 2/C Patterson, the head of Trident Naval Society who organized, coordinated, and supervised the event. When asked why this fundraiser continues to be so important to the Battalion year after year, Patterson noted that “it’s a great way to give back to the community that gives so much to us.” This dedication did not go unrewarded, as the Trident Naval Society presented $1000 to St. Joseph’s County Special Olympics, which was greatly appreciated and will go towards hosting multiple events for the Special Olympics in the local area. It is events like these that show that Notre Dame NROTC and Trident Naval Society are not just university organizations, but also important parts of the South Bend community. Our Battalion continues to show its appreciation for the support of the South Bend community by actively engaging in support of causes like the Special Olympics. The 24-Hour Run means so much more than running through hundreds of fans at College Gameday with a trident; it means that a member of the South Bend community gets to run in front of hundreds of fans, friends, and family at the Special Olympics. We run so that others might run.

Concession Stand Raises Funds for Notre Dame ROTC Units

Guest Writer: MIDN 3/C Shannon, USNR

Despite sub-50 degree temperatures and not one, but two torrential downpours, Trident Naval Society held their annual concession stand this year on the Saturday of the Notre Dame vs. Michigan game. With setup in front of Decio Commons complete by 1130, the concession stand was actively providing hotdogs, hamburgers, and brats to fans of both teams until approximately one hour before kickoff at 1930. Members of the Naval, Army, and Air Force ROTC Units all contributed to the success of the stand, which made over $1700 by the day’s end.

There were, however, times when the fate of the stand seemed doomed. This was particularly evident during the two spontaneous monsoons, when the stand appeared to be perpetually understaffed. Luckily, several Midshipmen and Cadets stepped up, offering to work additional shifts and encouraging others within their Units to do the same. The money raised from the concession stand will be used to fund future ROTC and Trident Naval Society activities.
Rear Admiral Grady Returns to Notre Dame

Guest Writer: MIDN 3/C Anna Halverson, USNR

During the last drill session of the year, the Notre Dame NROTC Unit was privileged to have Rear Admiral Grady address the Battalion. Rear Admiral Grady, who is a 1984 Notre Dame graduate, is currently the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Training, and Readiness for the U.S Pacific Fleet at the Pearl Harbor Naval Base in Hawai‘i. Before addressing the Battalion as a whole, Admiral Grady took the time to talk to the 4/C Midshipmen during their “Introduction to Naval Science” lecture, familiarizing them with aspects of Fleet life.

During his discussion at drill, Admiral Grady introduced the Battalion to his favorite photograph—the USS NEW YORK eight inch gun and crew—and told the Midshipmen to look at the men in the photograph and asked if we were “ready to lead them”. He proceeded to explain that the goal of a naval officer is to set their Sailors up for success. He then offered other pieces of insight, instructing that one should always ask whether or not they are doing things for the right reason. He also stressed positive encouragement and intellectual push-back between officers and Sailors up and down the chain of command.

After Admiral Grady addressed the Battalion, he eagerly awaited, or in some cases initiated, questions from the Midshipmen. MIDN 2/C Martinez asked Admiral Grady his personal opinion on how the performance of a ship has changed following the integration of women. His response shed an incredibly positive light on women in the Fleet, stating that his integrated ships ran more effectively and efficiently with the presence of women and raised the bar by motivating those in the crew to perform better.

On this whirlwind trip to his alma mater, RDML Grady arrived at Chicago O’Hare airport before sunrise, met with university officials in the morning, took in a Women’s basketball game against reigning national champion Baylor Bears, and had dinner with members of the SWO Club at O’Rourke’s that ended six hours before he flew back to Hawai‘i! The Battalion was incredibly fortunate to have such an elite guest take the time out of his busy schedule to give such valuable insight on fleet life. His brief added to a very interesting drill period, and helped conclude yet another successful semester.

Freshman ROTC Retreat Enlightening

Guest Writer: MIDN 4/C Peter St. George, USNR

On 28 and 29 September, thirty-two Cadets and Midshipmen from the Air Force, Army, and Naval ROTC programs at the University of Notre Dame came together for the freshmen retreat at Moreau Seminary. The freshmen had the opportunity to hear several lectures on community, Christ, and “Faith and Service in the Military” given by other members of the ROTC programs and members of the unit staffs, including Mr. Wood, a prior-enlisted member of the Army ROTC staff, along with LT Smith and Maj Schiller from the NROTC staff. These guest lectures, in addition to Holy Hour, fellowship with peers, and church services allowed the Cadets and Midshipmen to, as LT Smith put it, “recharge their spiritual batteries.”.

When the freshmen first arrived at the Seminary on Friday afternoon, they introduced themselves to the retreat group and began to get to know each other. Next, they began working on skits, the subjects all involving ROTC, and performed them for their fellow Cadets and Midshipmen, the retreat staff, and Fr. Rocca, the ROTC chaplain. Following the skits, the Midshipmen and Cadets discussed how they interact in their communities currently as student and members of ROTC, and the importance of community in the life of a military officer. Concluding the discussion, the freshmen went to the chapel where Fr. Rocca led Benediction and the freshman were given an opportunity to go to confession during Holy Hour. This was the perfect opportunity to get away from the busy life that everyone leads at Notre Dame. After Holy Hour, the freshmen played games and got to know members of the other ROTC branches.

I am confident that all of the Cadets and Midshipmen present were inspired and have gained valuable advice from the words of Maj Schiller, LT Smith, and Mr. Wood. To close the retreat Fr. Rocca led the celebration of mass, and very appropriately it was the feast of the Archangels, including St. Michael, who is the patron of the military. The retreat was a very valuable experience because the freshmen had an opportunity to get to know their fellow Midshipmen and Cadets on a more personal level, spend time in prayer, and hear words of wisdom from very experienced guests. Cadet John Lake from Army ROTC remarked, “I had a lot of fun at the retreat; meeting AFROTC/NROTC students and having a solid spiritual getaway were the best parts of it for me.”
Change of Command Ceremony

Staff Editor: MIDN 1/C Charles Lee, USNR

For many students at Notre Dame, December signifies the conclusion of the semester. For NROTC Midshipmen, it also represents the end of one era of leadership and the beginning of another. The change of command ceremony is one of the most sacred and traditional evolutions in the United States Navy. The earliest change of command ceremony took place during the Civil War, and the ceremony remains roughly unchanged today. After completing the change of command ceremony, all responsibility for the unit is transferred to the newly appointed Commanding Officer.

During MIDN 1/C Hickey’s time as Battalion Commanding Officer for the duration of the Fall semester, he and his staff of MIDN 1/C Griffin (BXO) and MIDN 1/C Weller (BOPS) implemented a few new changes to the Battalion, but primarily focused on improving the proven system that was already in place. With this team of leaders at the helm, the Battalion was organized, involved, and fostered personal progress.

On 5 December 2012, MIDN 1/C Hickey once again partook in the traditional change of command ceremony, however, this time as the Midshipman being relieved. Hickey and his staff were replaced by MIDN 1/C McCormick as BCO, MIDN 1/C Andersen as BXO, and MIDN 1/C Schroff as BOPS.

The new staff has been hard at work to improve the Unit, and the Battalion eagerly awaits the semester to come. As a last note, a congratulations to MIDN Hickey and his staff, and good luck to MIDN 1/C McCormick as he begins his duties as Battalion Commanding Officer.