THE IRISH PENNANT

Fall 2017
A Message From the CO

My first Irish Pennant as Commanding Officer – it seems like just yesterday I was helping with articles for the fall 1986 Irish Pennant (my first as a Midshipman). First, let me start out by saying how thrilled I am to be back here at Notre Dame. You all know by now that I graduated from Notre Dame and earned my Commission through the NROTC program here. The experiences here at Our Lady’s University definitely guided me in my successful career thus far.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge and wish Fair Winds and Following Seas to Captain John Carter and wish him and his family success in retirement from active duty. Captain Carter turned over a well-run unit ready to tackle any challenge.

In my short time on board, I cannot overstate how impressed I am with the Midshipmen in this unit. Whether it is volunteering at a local food bank, participating in extracurricular activities, or the insightful questions I field during drill periods, it is clear this group is a cut above. I encourage all Midshipmen regardless of class to make the most out of their time here – it will fly by faster than you know. Remember – honor, courage, commitment. Go Irish! Go Navy!

The XO’s Corner

Greetings from the Golden Dome. Harry S. Truman once said, “Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better.” This semester’s midshipmen leadership truly embodied this statement. I continue to be impressed with the amazing accomplishments of our Fighting Irish and Belles throughout this past semester, which included a wide array of areas such as academics, physical fitness, local community service, extracurricular activities, and philanthropy projects. Readers of this Irish Pennant can be rest assured that the Fleet is receiving superb, well-rounded, quality Naval Officers from South Bend who are ready to serve our country and lead our sailors and marines with honor and integrity. HooYah!

Our Naval ROTC Unit is fortunate to receive one-time as well as reoccurring contributions from our alumni and other generous supporters. These monetary donations help offset tuition and living costs associated with higher education; pay for next semester’s Irish Wake; procure Navy and Marine Corps swords to our top graduating midshipmen; and refresh battalion equipment such as the Color Guard’s harnesses, belts, flags, and ceremonial stands. We sincerely appreciate and thank each one of you for extending your kindness and support to our midshipmen.

As the fall 2017 semester nears completion, I would be remiss, as the Executive Officer, not to give one last pitch encouraging each of our midshipmen to concentrate on their academics – keep up the ‘full-court press’ and finish all your classes strong. As you enjoy your winter break with family and friends, please set aside some time to reflect upon your performance to date. Challenge yourself, see where you can improve upon as a leader, make goals for next semester, and return safely back to campus ready to crush the Spring 2017 semester.
From the MOI’s Desk

As the semester comes to a close, I am honored for the opportunity to share a few words with you. I volunteered for this assignment as my top choice; as thrilled as I was upon hearing I had been selected, I am even more excited now, having seen what this battalion is capable of.

Over the past 11 years, I have served with Marines and Sailors in several climes and places. During that time, I have consistently noted that whether in the most mundane of garrison environments, or the most complex of deployed operations, these men and women demand leadership of their officers. That is not to say that they are incapable of executing without it – small-unit leadership excels even in the absence of orders – but they deserve it. They deserve to be cared for, to be challenged, and to be employed in accordance with their capabilities. They are waiting for each of you, as you are preparing to fill that role.

You are in a unique position. In addition to your duties as a student within a rigorous academic environment, you are being introduced into the profession of arms. I would ask that as you enjoy the holiday break, you maintain the same mindset at home as you do aboard campus. Keep one eye focused on the hard work and reputation that you have earned as a student of Notre Dame or St. Mary’s, and one eye on your future as a commissioned leader of men and women. Whether or not you realize it, you are building the foundation of your leadership style right now, by your attitude and preparedness. From the tree-line of Ft. Custer, to the 30th floor of Nakatomi Plaza, your actions are dictated by your habits.

You have performed exceptionally well this semester. I have seen upperclassmen embody our Core Values during New Student Orientation; I have seen midshipmen volunteer what little free time they have for the community, both home and abroad; and I have seen Navy-Options attend Marine-Option events for no other reason than to better themselves. Lastly, I have seen the battalion leadership exceed every expectation, raising the standard for those filling billets next semester and beyond.

I routinely get emails from the operating forces, and happy to report that our Navy and beloved Corps will continue to be in the best of hands.

Semper Fidelis!
Capt Brockelmeyer, USMC
BCO’s Words of Wisdom

To every member of this Battalion I would like to extend a sincere thank you for the tremendous work you have all put in this semester, making it such a success. From New Student Orientation in August to the planning of the Navy and Marine Corps Ball, this Battalion has shown tremendous attention to detail, discipline, and tenacity in overcoming challenges in order to surpass the high standards we set for ourselves. Each member of the Battalion should take pride in what they have done through the duration of this semester.

Reflecting on the past seven semesters I’ve had here and looking forward to my last semester at this amazing institution there are two pieces of advice I would put forward to the Battalion. These are: make everyday here count and do not forget the profession you are entering when you leave here. Our days at Notre Dame are finite. For some of us we have a mere six months left for others they still have three and half years left. Whether you are a 4/C just embarking on your Notre Dame experience or you are a 1/C entering the twilight of your time here ensure that everyday you challenge yourself to grow physically, mentally, and spiritually. This place has a limitless amount of opportunities to grow in every way imaginable. Do not waste what precious little time you have here, believe me it goes faster than you can imagine. Appreciate the late nights of studying and the early mornings of PT. They are opportunities that some people never get the chance experience. We are extremely fortunate to be at this university and to be a part of the NROTC organization, never forget that.

Additionally, never lose sight of the end goal. When we leave here we will enter into the service of our country. Make sure that you take steps everyday to ensure that when you will leave here you will be prepared to dominate the challenges that you will face. Constantly evaluate if your actions align with your goals. If they do not then make the changes you need to in order to ensure you are working towards the success of our team.

It has been a very humbling experience working for the members of the Battalion as BCO. Everyday I am amazed at the passion that is present within our ranks. Keep up the good work and we will be successful in everything we do. Keep on crushing it.

MIDN 1/C Greg Bombara
Battalion Commanding Officer
New Student Orientation

On the morning of 13 AUG 2017, 16 students hugged their parents good-bye and began their journey towards becoming naval officers. The morning was filled with administrative work, urinalysis, and uniform issuing. The young men and women were then sworn in by the unit Commanding Officer, Captain Mark A. Prokopius, USN. Once the brief ceremony was complete, the new midshipmen were ready to begin their training and filed onto a bus headed to Fort Custer.

Once arriving at Fort Custer, the Midshipmen were thrust into a military culture. Gunnery Sergeant Cammiato and the cadre instilled the importance of speed and intensity in every task the 4/C midshipmen performed. The midshipmen learned basic close order marching and how to properly wear uniforms with an emphasis on attention to detail. Throughout the week, the midshipmen were also tasked with studying their knowledge books that contained information regarding the basic organization and components of the Navy and Marine Corps.

The week consisted of many evolutions geared towards team building, such as the Land Navigation Course and the Leadership Reaction Course (LRC). During Land Nav, buddy pairs were tasked with finding specific coordinates, often having to walk through thick brush to get to them. While not all teams found the assigned coordinates, but the midshipmen learned the value of working as a team to overcome challenges. Similarly, no squad successfully completed one of the LRC obstacles, the midshipmen got an opportunity to develop their leadership skills in a time crunch. A squad lead by MIDN 4/C Yusko almost completed one course, but the team failed to realize one error. The last member of the squad to cross the, MIDN 4/C Krivda, fell into the water as the boards he was standing on collapsed beneath him. MIDN 4/C Donnelly, another midshipmen to fall in the water, exclaimed, “Fortune favors the bold, but dang that LRC water is cold.” These tasks, while difficult provided squads a chance to develop a sense of teamwork. As MIDN 4/C Tanaka put it, “The experiences we received at NSO were some that midshipmen across the country don’t get to have. Some of them might have been hard. We failed a lot, but how could you not we not enjoy it?”

One highlight of the week was when the midshipmen were given the opportunity to fire M16-A4 rifles. The 4/C soon found out that the beginning shooters were often better because they had not developed any bad habits prior to NSO. The 4/C quickly applied the guidance of MOI and ultimately all the midshipmen improved their skills. Hitting 38/40 targets, MIDN 4/C Leeker was the top shooter of all the 4/C Midshipmen.

As MIDN 4/C Siegel said, “A big turning point in the week was the last cold MRE we ate.” The 4/C midshipmen had been transformed from 16 young men and women into one team that was prepared to enter in to battalion and ready for the academic year ahead. The week ended with the midshipmen taking on the confidence course by squad. The squad members motivated each other to overcome the obstacles presented. The challenges faced in the confidence course as well as all events throughout the week allowed the squads to develop as a team in order to accomplish a goal. Overall, New Student Orientation prepared the 4/C midshipmen well for life in the battalion and life at college.

-MIDN 4/C Spencer Bindel, USNR
As fellow students finish off their academic year at Notre Dame, most go home for the summer to work internships and summer jobs, study abroad, and take summer classes. While all of these opportunities are afforded to midshipmen, they also get the chance to embark on a sort of ‘internship’ with the Navy. Third, second, and first class midshipmen are sent across the country and world to learn what the Navy and Marine Corps have to offer and what will be expected of young officers upon commissioning. Every summer, the rising sophomore (3/C) midshipmen go on CORTRAMID, an acronym meaning Career Orientation and Training for Midshipmen; some are sent to the west coast around San Diego and others are sent to the east coast to Norfolk, Kings Bay, and Camp Lejeune. The experience, which lasts four weeks, is split up into a week spend with the different warfare communities, including Submarine Warfare, Surface Warfare, Aviation, and the Marine Corps. The following is a recap of the experiences of midshipmen who went to CORTRAMID East.

The first week of CORTRAMID was submarine week. After a few days of briefs and physical and medical testing in Norfolk, the Notre Dame midshipmen were flown down to Jacksonville NAS and then bussed up to Kings Bay, Georgia. The week began on land with submarine demonstrations including a driving simulator that let midshipmen see and experience the diving and tilting that would happen in a real submarine. Another simulator was a wet trainer that teaches submariners how to repair casualties in a high stress environment as the water level is rising. The climax of the week though was a 48 hour underway period aboard the USS West Virginia. While there were planned events during the time aboard, midshipmen were given much free time to explore just about every area onboard the boat. Highlights on the West Virginia included driving the boat, eating in the Crew Mess and Wardroom, going up to the bridge at night, and the steel beach at sunset. Overall the week was extremely informative and changed the minds of many on service selecting the submarine community.

The second week of CORTRAMID was aviation week. During this week, midshipmen gained exposure to nearly all of the platforms in the Navy. Day 1 revolved around exposure to the communities of the E-2 Hawkeye and C-2 Greyhound. The day consisted of briefs, static displays, and simulator time. The next day was all about the Navy helicopter platforms. The day began with briefs and static displays of the MH-53 Sea Dragon and ended with one hour of flight time on a MH-60S Seahawk. Day 3 consisted of briefs regarding flight physiology and an aviation swim physical test that was conducted in a full flight suit and boots. This preparation was rewarded with flight and stick time during Day 4 in a T-34 propeller trainer plane. The day ended with a tour of VFA-106, a F/A-18 Super Hornet Squadron, and Strike Fighter Weapons School Atlantic along with a Super Hornet simulator. The final day of the week revolved around the maritime patrol community, so midshipmen got the chance to tour a P-8 Poseidon. Overall, the week was an informative chance to learn all about Naval aviation and to get the chance to interact with many junior officers and hear why their community is the best. (cont. on next page)
The third week of CORTRAMID was Marine week. The day of arrival at Camp Lejeune was very similar to NSO: yelling and moving fast were the norms. As the week progressed, the enlisted staff consisting of four gunnery sergeants from various units got more relaxed, but the fast pace and sounding off never stopped. The week gave both Navy and Marine options a great exposure to life in the Marine Corps and different MOSs. Events during the week included the Confidence Course, O Course, and CFT, pugil stick fighting, a combat engineer demo and MRAP static display, a ride in an AAV, a night in the field, a room clearing simulation in a MOUT town, a ride in an MH-53 and helo flight simulators, live fire of M-4s, M-9s, and M-240s, static displays of an M1A1 Abrams tank and a M777 Howitzer, a trip to the Officers’ Club, and nightly fire watch in the barracks. Clearly the week was fast paced and jammed with information, but, in the end, this was the best way for everyone to gain ample exposure.

The fourth and final week of CORTRAMID was surface week. The beginning of surface week revolved around getting Skipper B sail qualified at Old Dominion University. After moving on from little sailboats, the midshipmen got to experience big boats in the Navy firsthand. During the week midshipmen got the chance to interact with an admiral, tour a CG and LPD, visit JEB Little Creek to learn about LCACs and other amphibious ships, do ship driving simulators, patch pipes and compete in the Damage Control Olympics, and tour the battleship USS Wisconsin. The highlight of the week was supposed to be a day onboard a destroyer, but rain and big waves cancelled any hope of transfer from small boats onto the destroyer. While midshipmen were left wet and cold that morning, we were still able to leave at the end of the week with a good idea of what the surface community in the Navy is all about.

The exposure to the Navy gained during CORTRAMID was invaluable to 3/C midshipmen as they make service selection decisions in just a few years. MIDN 3/C Peterson said, “The month was the experience of a lifetime. It fully served its purpose in helping me make decisions in regards to my service selection.” The times spent together with Notre Dame midshipmen and midshipmen of other units in Bravo company bonded the group and got everyone excited to see each other again upon entering the fleet.

-MIDN 3/C Culligan, USNR
Father Jenkins Run

On Tuesday, 12 September 2017, the three ROTC branches at Notre Dame held the annual Father Jenkins Run. President of the University of Notre Dame since 2005, Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C., strongly supports all three units and recognizes their importance at Notre Dame, both past and present.

The United States military and Notre Dame have a longstanding relationship in many ways. In particular, the Navy and the university share an important history. During WWII, when attendance at Notre Dame greatly decreased, the Navy began using campus as a training ground for naval officers, commissioning thousands by the end of the war. The Army and Air Force units have also been on campus for many years, contributing much to the Notre Dame community.

In order to show his support for the units, Father Jenkins annually leads the midshipmen, cadets, and their commanding officers in a run around campus, followed by a quick speech. After forming up at 0545, the color guard and Father Jenkins led the entire tri-mil ROTC at a brisk pace, beginning and ending near Rolfs Sports Center. Although there were “a few scrapes along the way,” the run was “quick and motivating,” according to MIDN 3/C Breslin and Lovejoy.

Midshipmen and cadets held various roles throughout the duration of the morning. Several ran with flags at the front of the formation as members of the color guard, while others participated as road guards or called cadences.

After the run, Father Jenkins spoke to the students of the three units. He acknowledged the increased responsibilities being a member of ROTC brings, making each midshipman and/or cadet an example for their nonmilitary peers. He commended all for their commitment to academics, physical fitness, and future service. Overall, the morning was a memorable PT for all present, allowing the students a personal connection with Notre Dame’s president and an opportunity to unify all of the ROTC units.

--MIDN 3/C Bartlett, USNR
WWII Outreach Event

On 22 October 2017, several Notre Dame midshipmen attended a WWII reunion event as an opportunity to honor those who served before us and to outreach in the South Bend community. In attendance at the event were many family members, Marines from the South Bend Reserve Unit, and Marine Options and color guard team members from Notre Dame NROTC.

The evening, which consisted of a dinner and speeches, was the 33rd reunion for the Marine Corps 7th Field Depot. During the war, the depot was made up of a Headquarters, Military Police, Engineering, Ordnance, Signal, and Motor Company. From their activation date of 22 DEC 1943 to their return date of 31 OCT 1945, the Depot served in combat areas like Saipan, Tinian, North China, and Okinawa. The lone surviving Marine from the 7th Field Depot at the event was Larry Trienen along with three now widowed wives in attendance (Ruby Miller, Merel Kilcullen, and Glenna Rancloes).

During a short speech given by Mr. Trienen, he emphasized that each generation that volunteers themselves up for services is a new ‘greatest generation’ of junior Marines that carries on the legacy of the Marine Corps. Along with this, he said that events like this are important to honor all of those that have served in wars, especially those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

-MIDN 3/C Culligan, USNR
3 For 3 Triathlon

On 4 September 2017, midshipmen from Notre Dame volunteered at the Michiana 3 for 3 triathlon. This event, hosted by the Riverview Family YMCA, involves single competitors or teams of two to three completing a triathlon involving, for ages 12 and up, a 200 yard swim, an 8 mile bike ride, and finally a two and a half mile run. There were also teen and youth age groups that both completed 3 miles by bike, half a mile on foot, and 100 or 50 yards swimming. Benefits from this event go to LIVESTRONG at the YMCA program for adult cancer survivors. This free program helps survivors recover from their cancer diagnosis and treatments by working to improve their overall strength, endurance, balance and flexibility through a supportive group environment.

The large list of MIDN from Notre Dame assisting with the event included MIDN Bolton, Cahill, Cameron, Goitz, Jennings, M. Lee, Leeker, Miskimon, O’Connor, Ralph, Tanaka, and Terranova. These MIDN assisted in the running of the event and ensured its smooth set-up, operation, and take-down. These MIDN taking time out of their busy schedules to assist at this event not only offers a deeper connection between the battalion and the local community, but also furthers an amazing cause and as such gives the unit at Notre Dame much pride. These MIDN showed much honor in their willingness to aid in such a worthy cause and showed great commitment to their fellow peers in the local South Bend area. These two virtues displayed by these exemplary students make up two of the core values of honor, courage, and commitment that the Unit, and the Navy as a whole, holds in the highest regard.

-MIDN 2/C M. Lillie USNR
On 6 October 2017, the freshmen from the Army, Navy, and Air Force ROTC units at the University gathered at the grotto for a 24-hour retreat. The retreat took place on the north side of St. Joseph’s lake at Moreau seminary. The short retreat was a quick reprieve from studying for midterms and allowed the freshmen to grow closer to each other and to God. The ROTC chaplain, Fr. Rocca, headed up the retreat along with the leadership of upperclassmen in each of the ROTC units.

Friday night began with freshmen playing icebreakers, allowing everyone to meet people from other branches. Then, they planned and performed skits based on some common experiences they had experienced in their first few months in college. The favorite skit depicted the first PT session of each unit. The Navy midshipmen depicted Air force push-ups - laying on your back and pushing up into the air - while the Army cadets showed Navy PT by running in circles for the entire skit. Lastly, the Air Force cadets depicted Army as only being able to do a minimal amount of push-ups and only playing sports for PT. Overall, the skits allowed all of the freshmen to bond over the shared experiences they have had and laugh at the same time.

Friday night the 4/C concluded with some prayer and small group time. Saturday morning began with breakfast and morning prayer at the Grotto. The freshman heard talks from upperclassmen throughout the morning and had the opportunity to discuss their faith within their small groups before breaking for some games. The freshmen competed in a semi-professional dodgeball game against the other branches. The Navy midshipmen won two out of the three games against Army and Air Force, marking yet another year of Navy’s domination in the dodgeball game.

The most influential point of the weekend for most of the participants was a panel discussion with some of the active duty staff and retired officers. These officers discussed what it means to incorporate faith into the role of young officers in our nation’s military. They discussed different situations in which their faith grew and how having faith while serving helped them throughout their career. The freshmen learned lots through this panel discussion, then celebrated mass together and had time to reflect on the day.

Ultimately, the retreat served as a great opportunity to grow spiritually. The freshman especially were able to grow in their faith with the focus on faith in a career in the military. MIDN 4/C Casamassima said he “felt a lot closer to his other midshipmen because we were able to talk about our faith, which is a lot more intimate than our typical conversation.” The weekend concluded as retreaters and leaders watched the Notre Dame football team beat North Carolina before heading back to campus.

-MIDN 4/C Spencer Bindel, USNR
Amidst all of the busyness of a football weekend at Notre Dame, the Naval ROTC unit was held an event to benefit St. Joseph County Special Olympics. Once again this year, the unit conducted the Trident Naval Society 24 Hour Run which was coordinated by MIDN 2/C Bartilotti and the rest of TNS Squad. The charity event occurred during the Miami (Ohio) football weekend from 1600 on 29 September to 1600 on 30 September. For this 24 hour period, a midshipman in a shark costume and another midshipman carrying a trident could be found running around campus spreading news of the booth located near the Clarke Memorial Fountain where donations were being collected for St. Joseph County Special Olympics. Midshipmen volunteered for one hour shifts in running and booth positions to make up the 24 total hours of the event. Most midshipmen took multiple shifts, with some taking two running shifts and even more booth shifts in a row. The runners would solicit people all around campus, including at gameday events, like Trumpets Under the Dome, a women’s volleyball game, Midnight Drummer’s Circle, and tailgates. Along with this, the people volunteering at the booth would try and get donations from people in the vicinity of the booth.

New this year was the ability to accept donations through PayPal. TNS squad worked hard to make this possible so that even people who were not carrying cash could donate. Once again this year, the top earners of donations while on running shift were MIDN 1/C Cannon and MIDN 2/C Dale. With their charisma and enthusiasm for the cause, they raised nearly $400 while running around campus and tailgates. In total, almost $4200 total was raised to benefit the St. Joseph County Special Olympics, surpassing last year’s total by about $200. After leading the event, MIDN Bartilotti said, “It is rewarding for the entire battalion to come together and support a common goal. The Special Olympics is an amazing organization to support because of all those that it impacts.” Bravo Zulu to TNS Squad and all those who volunteered their time to benefit others in the community.

-MIDN 3/C Culligan, USNR
Tri-Mil Football

On a rainy yet warm October morning, Navy ROTC’s football team started their two game season against the last ranked Air Force ROTC football team. Air Force thought they could even the playing field early in the morning by electing to move the game to an indoor location – Loftus Sports Center. Despite bringing the game inside and out of the elements, each team’s passing game did not benefit from the temperate conditions. Thus, the game became a defensive battle.

Air Force came out hard with a much more organized team than Navy, but nonetheless, Navy’s talent and grit prevailed and crushed any hope for Air Force to obtain more than just a couple first downs. MIDN 3/C Madison “The Rock” Lee stood out at the linebacker position when, despite the two-hand-touch rules, she laid her body on the line to force the running back out of bounds. Her efforts placed Air Force into a 4th down situation where they punted the ball back to Navy’s offense.

The offense was lead by MIDN 3/C Andrew “Slinging” Slattery who earned the start for Navy in week one. His quick feet and strong arm persevered through the early difficulties to eventually find open receivers and open space to develop sustained drives deep into Air Force’s territory. In the second half, “Slinging” Slattery connected with Kayla “Star MIDN” Savage for the only score of the game. In a post game interview, Savage said she was ecstatic to make the game winning catch to beat “Chair Force” and in efforts to assist Navy in obtaining more Commanders’ Cup points.

After a fall break bye week, Navy was back in action in the second and final week of the season. The game has commonly been referred to as the league’s most intense rivalry: Navy vs. Army. The competition was stiff again this year as it turned into a back-and-forth game that could not produce any scores until late. Army could not break through the tough Navy defense, but the Navy’s offense struggled to put together a package that could consistently get yards without turning the ball over on downs.

Army’s dynamic quarter back, Tyler Belin, was shut down by both fronts of the Navy’s defense. MIDN Derek Meyer led the way at the middle linebacker position in coverage and in tracking down Belin every time he tried to escape the backfield.

As most tight games go, it was a matter of time before one team made a mistake and opened up a grand opportunity for the other team. Unfortunately in the last five minutes of the game, Navy hit that breaking point. Throwing an interception on their own 25-yard line, Navy handed Army a chance to take over the game. And again a few minutes later, Navy in desperation mode, could not convert a fourth down deep in their own territory. Army’s passing offense came alive again to get the ball into the end zone for a second touchdown. The final score was two touchdowns to zero with Army taking the win. Army swept the football portion of the Commanders’ Cup, but with a 1-1 record, Navy will be gunning for them in the soccer competition come the spring semester.

-MIDN 1/C Althoff, USNR
Veteran’s Day Vigil

At 1630 on 6 November 2017, midshipmen and cadets from Notre Dame’s Tri-Military ROTC units began a 24-hour memorial in honor of all veterans who have served or are currently serving in our armed forces. Midshipmen and cadets stood watch in front of the Clarke Memorial Fountain from 1630 6 Nov until 1630 7 Nov, and were relieved on 30 minute increments throughout the day. Regardless of the chilling November cold or scattered showers in the night, midshipmen maintained their bearing out of respect for those who have sacrificed so much for our country. The Clarke Memorial Fountain was originally dedicated in 1986 to those who served in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, but the Tri-Military ROTC units honored all veterans through the vigil. Overall, standing watch served as a visual reminder that encouraged students, faculty, and staff of the university to honor those who have served and promoted a greater sense of patriotism in the days leading up to Veteran’s Day.

At the conclusion of the vigil, the Tri-Military ROTC units held a Veteran’s Day ceremony for the entire university to honor those who have served. The ceremony featured speaker Major Patrick Gibbons, USMC (Ret) who illustrated the reverence deserved by all members of the military past or present and offered advice for future leaders in the US Armed Forces. The ceremony ended with Fr. Rocca, C.S.C, giving a brief benediction and the playing of Taps out of respect for all those who have given the ultimate sacrifice for our nation. As MIDN 4/C Roche stated, “The vigil and ceremony served as a reminder of the dangerous career we are entering, and it gave me the ability to participate in honoring those who have given so much in service of others.” MIDN 4/C Mountford offered more insight into the ceremony when she said, “The ceremony was only a fraction of the honor Veterans deserve. However, it was able to give all students at the university a greater idea of the cost of freedom and respect for veterans, and this will hopefully continue to grow throughout their entire lives.”

- MIDN 4/C Bindel, USNR
Navy Ball

The Navy and Marine Corps’ birthdays were celebrated in high fashion this year with the staff, midshipmen, family, and guests all in stunning attire. The setting was ideal since South Bend was crawling with both Notre Dame and Naval Academy fans awaiting the big game as the Irish took on the Midshipmen the following day in Notre Dame Stadium. Many distinguished guests were in attendance for the ball because of the football game including ADM Bill Moran, Naval Academy alum and Vice Chief of Naval Operations, and VADM Mat Winter, Notre Dame alum and Deputy Executive Officer of the F-35 Lightning II Joint Program Office. Additionally, the Century Center proved to be an excellent venue for this year’s ball as it provided a dramatic scene overlooking the rushing St. Joseph River.

Since ADM Moran was in attendance, he graciously accepted the offer to be the keynote speaker for this year’s birthday ball. Though he gave the audience grief about the Irish football team’s luck against the Academy in their meetings the past few years, ADM Moran discussed the historic relationship between Notre Dame and the Navy to great detail. Ultimately, he admired the great respect that both institutions have for each other and called on each of the officers and future officers to remember the roots of the Notre Dame NROTC Battalion including the efforts of Father Corby, Father Walsh, and Father O’Donnell. The outstanding keynote address connected the history we were celebrating that night to the future work that leaders in the Navy and Marine Corps will face.

The evening concluded with the highly anticipated company dance off between Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie companies. Traditionally, the 4/C have had to choreograph and learn a dance to present at the Navy Ball for the battalion’s CO, XO, and OPS. This year’s efforts were clearly unparalleled since there was an official three-way tie between the dances. Unfortunately, the tiebreaker was an abysmal dance-off between the three company commanders. Eventually, the overall winner was determined to be Charlie Company with their unique take of classic dances such as Grease Lightning.

As always the event was a huge success and everyone enjoyed the formal evening filled with ceremony, comraderie, and dancing. MIDN 1/C Fisk and MIDN 1/C Villandre and their staff carried out a flawless execution of the highly anticipated event.

–MIDN 1/C Althoff, USNR
Military Appreciation Game

On the rainy, cold morning of 18 November 2017, Navy met Notre Dame for an infamous matchup. Before the outcome was decided, Notre Dame fans and students awoke hopeful and ready for Notre Dame to rise victorious in the beloved rivalry game. The game began, but was off to a slow start for the Irish, and the game was closer than it probably should have been. However, this gloomy day would become a little better for Notre Dame as the Irish win became present.

The halftime show was a time to highlight the military and its members. It was a time for all branches to be recognized by the playing of an armed forces medley by the Band of the Fighting Irish. Each ROTC branch had the opportunity to pay respect by providing a color guard detail, and allowing midshipmen and cadets to participate in the unfurling of the flag. There was also a scheduled flyover, which unfortunately had to be cancelled due to the weather. This event was tragically not available for this years’ military appreciation game, but that would not set the Irish back.

After halftime, the midshipmen and cadets returned to their prime location on the field to continue to cheer on the Irish in hopes of continuing their successful season. Notre Dame eventually came out victorious over Navy with a final score of 24-17. After the conclusion of the game, the teams first gathered in front of the Navy section to join their opponents in their alma mater before running over and celebrating with the ND student section. The midshipmen and cadets joined the players and cheerleaders for the post game tradition of singing the alma mater, which was made all the more special this week, the last of the 2017 season in Notre Dame stadium.
Change of Command

The roles and duties of the Notre Dame Naval Battalion were turned over on the afternoon of 6 December 2017. This change of command ceremony included MIDN 1/C Maloney Foster relieving MDN 1/C Gregory Bombara as Battalion Commanding Officer. Captain Mark A. Prokopius presided over the event and facilitated the ceremony that followed years of naval tradition. This tradition included the parading of both previous and incoming leadership and the transition of the battalion colors from the previous to the incoming BCO. This passing of the colors signified the change in command.

Before the turnover was officially completed, Captain Prokopius praised the fall semester’s leadership in its ability to lead the unit and for the success it faced. MIDN 1/C Bombara’s leadership was able to bring about a positive change for the battalion. The combination of the new battalion leadership and new unit leadership, led to a successful fall 2017 semester.

Relieved BCO, MIDN 1/C Bombara, gave his address to the battalion. He talked of accomplishments he believed he had made in the entirety of the semester. With the help of the other members of the big six, success in the battalion became prominent. Incoming BCO, MIDN 1/C Foster, relieved MIDN 1/C Bombara, and after gave remarks and expectations for the upcoming semester. Goals were outlined and focused on following the mission of ROTC, of commissioning able and ready Naval officers.

- MIDN 3/C Katherine Cameron USNR
Contributors:

Staff Writer - MIDN 1/C Isaac Althoff
Staff Writer - MIDN 2/C Matt Lillie
Staff Writer - MIDN 3/C Katherine Cameron
Staff Writer - MIDN 3/C Jack Culligan
Staff Writer - MIDN 4/C Spencer Bindel
Editor-in-Chief - MIDN 3/C Lauren Bartlett

Acknowledgements:

Alpha Company CO - MIDN 1/C Patrick Colley
Alpha Company Advisor - LT Brett Williams