



THE IRISH PENNANT



NAVAL ROTC

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

FALL 2009

Freshmen Get Their First Introduction to NROTC at O-Week

MIDN 4/C Elizabeth Schroff, USNR

At 0800 on Saturday, 15 August, thirty-four soon-to-be midshipmen gathered on the first floor of the Pasquerilla Center. Surrounded by parents and getting acquainted with one another, the midshipman candidates enjoyed a relaxed atmosphere; this setting would not last long, however. Following uniform fitting, document signing, and a short swearing-in ceremony, the new 4/C midshipmen said their goodbyes to their families and boarded the bus for training at Ft. Custer, Michigan. It would be a week that these midshipmen certainly wouldn't forget.

The relaxation of the bus ride soon turned into a frenzy as everyone was hurried off the bus, gear in tow, to the male and female berthing. They quickly shoved their belongings into lockers, made their racks, and threw on their BDUs. After some chow, the midshipmen were introduced to drill for the first time. The night concluded with hygiene and the set-up for fire watch, with PT in store for the morning.

Following the early morning wakeup call, which MIDN 4/C Kilpatrick considered the most challenging part of the week, the midshipmen went "from a lot of sleep during the summer to the few hours provided during the days at Ft. Custer," with a morning routine consisting of an introduction to the many joys of CrossFit. Next, the midshipmen were bused to a wooded area of Ft. Custer to carry-out the land navigation course that they had prepared for. Split into groups of three or four with a staff member supervising, they made their way into the dense forest to try and locate the boxes indicated on their maps. Each midshipman took turns pace-counting, identifying terrain, and shooting azimuths with the compass, among other navigation methods. Slow-moving progress seemed to be consensual, only made more difficult by the downpour that ensued early in the two hour span of navigation. Cold and wet after their trek, everyone made their way back to the barracks to change into some dry BDUs for more drill. A drill competition was scheduled for the last day of O-Week.



Tuesday consisted of perhaps the most grueling of the week's events during O-week: the hump. Wearing their flak jackets and carrying their M-4 rifles, the midshipmen filed into their platoons for the 4-mile hike led by MAJ Hart. Though the day was hot and humid and the midshipmen were already tired from the week's demanding schedule, they pushed through in order to complete the evolution. Each 4/C encouraged the others to keep going and finish strong, making for an accomplished and sweaty group of freshmen by the hike's end. Now came, for many, the most exciting event of the week: M-4 rifle shooting. MIDN 4/C Rascon noted that, "Not a lot of people get an opportunity like that, especially at a young age. The beauty of getting to shoot live fire and not off an Xbox is pretty exhilarating." (continued on page 12)

Patriot's Day Ceremony

MIDN 2/C Jonathan Asbury, USNR

The Cadets and Midshipmen of Notre Dame held a ceremony to honor both those who died on September 11th, 2001 in the despicable terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and those who still defend the United States today. Father Peter Rocca C.S.C., the rector of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, gave the address and prayer. He began his address by saying, "As we honor the flag today, we remember those whose lives were tragically cut short by evil men." Father Rocca also called to mind the University of Notre Dame's many graduates of ROTC who have paid the ultimate price for their country, "In the course of our history, countless men and women have given their lives to defend this flag and help rid the world of oppression and injustice. We remember them in this ceremony, including the almost 500 fallen and deceased alumni of Notre Dame." He brought the ceremony to a more personal level when he mentioned various alumni and friends of the Holy Cross congregation and the University of Notre Dame who perished on 11 September. He called to mind the fact that the event is so important for Americans that "you all remember where you were the morning of that fateful day. It is estimated that almost 20 percent of Americans knew someone who was hurt or killed that day. It goes without saying that all of us have been affected by this wanton act of evil."



In addition to Father Rocca, the battalion commanders from both the Army and Naval ROTC contingents offered their comments. After the official ceremony was over, Midshipman 1/C Towne, USMCR, expounded on the special significance that the event has for the members of ROTC and their officers: "for most people it's about remembrance or reminding people, for us, as military personnel or future military personnel, it's really looking at the people who have gone before us and sacrificed their lives. For us, thinking about the sacrifices that we might have to make, it's a good feeling."



Cadet Scott Vitter, the Battalion Commanding Officer of the Army ROTC unit, commented on the way September 11th, 2001 changed the military and the expectations of members of ROTC, "It is really important because it definitely changes the nature of the program. Entering ROTC these days, you do it with the understanding that you'll probably see deployment overseas. That is directly traceable to the events of September 11th, 2001." The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq that the Midshipmen and Cadets will be taking part in are the centerpiece of the Global War on Terror which was instituted under President Bush and continues to this day.

Solemn honors were rendered as Cadets from the Army ROTC battalion raised the colors. Although attendance at the ceremony was optional, there was a near unanimous turnout. Father Rocca's closing words speak profoundly for American goals in the difficult war against terrorists, "We are confident that in the end, trusting in God, the power of good will be stronger than the power of evil."

A Message from the CO

CAPT Dale Nees, USN

As we approach the end of the Fall Semester 2009 (the last fall semester for the Class of 2010) and you cry, excuse me, try to put another Navy win over Notre Dame behind you (probably not the last one of those), I want to reflect on your accomplishments so far this year. Both CDR Teuscher and MAJ Hart in the articles to follow, praise your quality and efforts, I can only do the same. As your Commanding Officer, I take great pride in your accomplishments and echo them every opportunity I get. There are no finer men and women at Notre Dame and Saint Mary's than those in the ROTC programs, and we are reminded of this fact daily. Just last week I addressed the Military Officers Association of America and sang your praise. As an example, we award more NROTC scholarships each year than any other unit in the country. In the last year we were able to secure five additional scholarships for members of the battalion, that's in addition to those with 4-year scholarships. We hope to have 115 midshipmen on scholarship by start of next semester, over 97 percent of the battalion - that's due to the quality of students and leaders in our unit.



Reflecting on this semester, I'm first reminded of how the unit chose a new location and format for NROTC Freshman Orientation. I observed firsthand the planning and execution that went into the training at Fort Custer and couldn't be more satisfied with the leadership demonstrated by the seniors. The event was very well received by all who participated. As a result, I expect to do the same next summer, so our juniors should get ready to step up and continue this fine new tradition.

I can't help but be impressed with the efforts that went into this year's Navy and Marine Corps combined birthday ball. In years past we've typically had 225-250 attend the ball. This year that number soared closer to 450 in attendance. That really does equate to more than twice the effort when you have to manage RSVP's, collection of funds, meals, seating, and last minute changes to guest speakers. This year's ball coordinator, MIDN 1/C Hussein, did an unbelievable job. She and her staff deserve a big Bravo Zulu. Yes, we were expecting the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who right up until 3 hours before the ball was still trying to make the trip. Unfortunately, the tragic events the day before at Ft Hood, Texas required his presence elsewhere to support the families of the fallen, a situation we all understood as our prayers also went out to those families. With all that going on, it was an honor to the unit for him to take the time to record a 5 minute personal message to the Battalion.

I also want to acknowledge the efforts of some of our lady warriors (boxers) in this year's *Baraka Bouts*. Although our ND women midshipmen represent less than 1 percent (more like ½ a percent) of the female student population, they fought in nearly 10 percent of the bouts, and won three of them. The nuke in me says therefore, that our girls are 50 times tougher than the rest. If anyone wants to dispute that then they should take it up with them. I could go on for more pages than anyone would care to read, but let me just close by saying the Battalion has excelled this semester under the leadership of MIDNs 1/C Towne, Huff and Malherek (the "Big Three"). They will be turning over shortly, and the next "Big Three" will have "big" shoes to fill. I'm sure they are up to it.

You are the brightest young men and women our country has to offer, citizens who put the ideals of liberty and freedom above yourselves. You chose to mature well ahead of your peers and take on the challenges which will set you apart as future leaders not only in the military, but in government, industry, education, business, and beyond. I'm reminded of this fact every time I get the opportunity to meet with you and observe your performance. I'm proud of each of you. Keep charging!

XO's CornerCDR Fritz Teuscher, USN

I would like to take this opportunity to emphatically say how absolutely thrilled I am to be the newly reported Executive Officer (XO) of the NROTC Unit at the University of Notre Dame. Although I am not a "domer", I have been warmly welcomed by the NROTC staff and the Battalion of Midshipmen since reporting in August. Likewise, my wife and my two children have easily adjusted to their new surroundings and have made countless new friends in Michiana. We are all delighted to be a part of the Notre Dame NROTC family and firmly believe that this will be the most memorable assignment of my career.

I have met a majority of you during my four months at the unit. I have enjoyed interacting with every one of you and look forward to introducing myself to those of you whom I've not yet met. My background is aviation. I have been fortunate in that I've been in operational flying billets for almost my entire career flying from, and "bagging" hundreds of "traps" on, aircraft carriers. I've been lucky. I tell you this because, as the lone aviator on the staff, I am the unit's aviation "representative" for all of you prospective brown shoes. If you have questions or need information about naval aviation I would be delighted to talk with you. Fly Navy!

I do have an important message for you, the Midshipmen of Notre Dame and Saint Mary's. As I've met you and observed battalion operations, I must tell you how absolutely impressed I am with you and your ongoing achievements. You and your families should be so proud - the overwhelming majority of you have earned full scholarships to two of the finest (and most academically challenging) universities in the country. 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 and Saint Mary's 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 millions of students would trade places with you in a second to have the current and future opportunities with which you've been blessed. Never take them for granted. You are the future of our naval service - as the torch of knowledge and experience is passed to you grab it and push forward with all you've got. Make the most of this experience! Once again, I am ecstatic to be here among you, and I look forward to working with each of you over the next few years.

GO NAVY! GO IRISH!



Congratulations MIDN Galiyas!

MIDN 3/C Kaitlin Kleiber, USMCR

On 16 September 2009, MIDN 2/C David Galiyas, USNR, was presented a scholarship award by Mr. Bob Baker, USN (Ret) and the USS Little Rock Association. MIDN Galiyas was one of two midshipmen to receive the award this year; the other was a Staff Sergeant from the University of Missouri.

During the presentation, Mr. Baker praised MIDN Galiyas' numerous accomplishments and achievements while at Notre Dame. He called MIDN Galiyas an "outstanding leader" both in and out of the battalion. MIDN Galiyas currently maintains a 3.93 GPA, ranking first in his class academically, and has been a member of the NROTC battalion's Irish Wake staff. He has also received other awards recognizing his abilities and potential as an officer including the Professor of Naval Science Outstanding Midshipman Award, Academic Excellence ribbon and the Physical Fitness ribbon.



As part of the award from the USS Little Rock Association, MIDN Galiyas received a \$1000 scholarship this academic school year and will receive a second scholarship of the same value next year. He also has been granted honorary membership in the USS Little Rock Association and was invited to attend the association's annual reunion in July 2010.

In addition to presenting MIDN Galiyas' award, Mr. Baker gave a brief background and history of the USS Little Rock Association. Members of the association consist of former crew members, officers, family, and friends of the USS Little Rock. She was built in Philadelphia in 1945 and served 4 years in the Atlantic fleet as a gun cruiser before being decommissioned in 1949. In 1957, USS Little Rock was converted to a missile cruiser and deployed numerous times to the Mediterranean before decommissioning again in 1976. The Buffalo and Erie County Naval and Military Park saved USS Little Rock from scrapping and turned her into a museum ship in 1977. Members of the USS Little Rock Association have held annual reunions since 1991, and the Association currently has over 900 members.

Acknowledgements from the Editor

MIDN 1/C Colin Ryan, USNR

I would like to give a big *Bravo Zulu* to all those who contributed to the compilation of this newspaper. Every member of the staff demonstrated a great deal of personal responsibility in writing the articles and taking the pictures. The members of the staff are:

MIDN 2/C Anthony Sierawski, USMCR; MIDN 2/C Jonathan Asbury, USNR; MIDN 3/C Davin Sakamoto, USNR; MIDN 3/C Nicholas Raic, USNR; MIDN 3/C Kaitlin Kleiber, USMCR; MIDN 3/C David Ulery, USNR; and MIDN 4/C Elizabeth Schroff, USNR

I hope you enjoy this semester's edition of the *Irish Pennant*. GO NAVY! GO IRISH!

From the MOI's Desk

MAJ David Hart, USMC

Midshipmen of Notre Dame and St. Mary's, you continue to impress me with your professionalism, dedication to duty, and tenacity to succeed. A case in point is the critical role that this year's seniors played in the Freshman Orientation. This year's Freshman Orientation was conducted off site at the Fort Custer Army National Guard Base in Augusta, Michigan. There was a considerable amount of prior planning associated with the Fort Custer Freshman Orientation, primarily due to the aggressive training plan that the senior class proposed (M4 live-fire, Leadership Reaction Course, cross fit workouts, land navigation, and a five mile conditioning hike). Fort Custer provided the optimum environment in which to introduce the incoming freshman to the Naval ROTC Unit at Notre Dame, and the seniors provided some of the most mature, professional, and inspiring leadership that I have witnessed in my career. The manner that the seniors led, trained, coached, mentored, and cared for the freshman was indicative of the finest martial culture in the world, the Navy/Marine Corps team. Navy and Marine Option seniors fully integrated as instructor cadre, effectively synchronizing their efforts with one desired end state, prepare the freshman to be successful members of Notre Dame's Naval ROTC unit's Navy/Marine Corps team. It was obvious that the seniors put in a significant amount of time and ensured that they were well prepared to instruct the freshman class. This year's freshman class is set up for success. Seniors, you should be justifiably proud of the hard work and superb job you did during the Freshman Orientation.

As we get ready for the well deserved Christmas break I would ask you to reflect on this past semester and conduct a self evaluation. No doubt you are all some of the finest Americans that this country has produced, you would not be part of this unit if you were not. That being said, we all have areas that we can improve upon. Now is the time to conduct your individual "prep for combat"(based on your self evaluation deficiencies). Right now you are only responsible for yourself - in the not so distant future, you will be responsible for this country's most prized assets, her enlisted Sailors and Marines. Your prep for combat should focus on getting yourself as prepared as you can physically, mentally, and spiritually to lead in the next fight. Being a member of the Navy or Marine Corps is not a job, it is a lifestyle, a lifestyle that requires you to live to a standard in which most people do not understand and to effectively operate in environments that very few can succeed in. I challenge you to dedicate time daily to physically prepare your body, develop your mind by studying your trade, and do something spiritually to add balance. This will prepare you well for what is ahead of you. The Marines and Sailors that you will be so privileged to serve and lead do not have a choice on who their Platoon Commander or Division Officer is; they have you. You are it for them, and those fine Americans and their families deserve the best. You should feel morally obligated to be the best that you can be. Much like the seniors did at Fort Custer during Freshman Orientation, lead by your example. Do not down play your role in the Navy/Marine Corps team. I would argue that no infantry man ever was able to successfully close the distance and kill the enemy without everyone doing their part, from the surface warfare officer who played a role in getting the Marines on the beach, to the aviator whose ordnance the infantry man used to shape the fight. Every one of you (regardless of service and specialty) plays a critical role and are all essential to the future success of our great nation.

I commend you on your chosen profession; you are an exceptional breed. I look forward to serving with you again next semester, and remember to stay focused. You owe that to the future young Americans and their families that you are going to serve.

Semper Fidelis.



The Navy/Marine Corps Birthday Ball

MIDN 3/C Davin Sakamoto, USNR

The University of Notre Dame Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) unit held its annual Navy and Marine Corps Birthday Ball on Nov. 6. More than 450 guests, including the Battalion of Midshipmen and their families, active duty and retired Navy and Marine Corps service members, cadets from Notre Dame's Army and Air Force ROTC units, university officials and friends of the unit, gathered at the birthday ball. Each came to celebrate 234 years of rich naval tradition, pay tribute to the histories of both services, and honor the long-held customs of the Navy and Marine Corps. There was a sense of joy in the air as the ball gave an opportunity for everyone to relax and enjoy themselves.

"I'm really looking forward to it," Midshipman 2nd Class Joseph Soley said before the event. "I'll enjoy getting to experience the pageantry, the tradition, and spending the night with a beautiful date." The Most Reverend Joseph W. Estabrook, D.D., auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese for the Military Services USA and a retired Navy chaplain of 27 years, served as the guest speaker. He talked about the importance of the midshipmen maintaining a high sense of morality and ethics, and the need to put aside their own self-interests as they become officers. "Constantly strive to become people concerned for others," Estabrook said. "His speech was motivational," Midshipman 3rd Class Kirsten Thornton said. "It was great that we got to see his perspective as a chaplain in the military."



Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh, Notre Dame's 15th president, also attended the event and spoke about the Navy's historical relationship with Notre Dame over the past six decades. Recalling personal memories from the Notre Dame Midshipman Training Program during World War II, to his time spent on commissioned ships and submarines, he emphasized the profound effect that discipline and hard work has on the men and women serving in today's military.

The highlight of the ball was the cake cutting ceremony. The oldest Navy and Marine Corps officers present received the first slice of cake and handed the second slice of cake to the youngest midshipmen of their respective service. This signified the transfer of knowledge and experience of one generation of officers to the next.

After the cake cutting ceremony, the three companies of the battalion engaged in a dance competition in their quest to become "Honor Company". Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie Company dazzled the audience with their brilliant choreography and impeccable movements. "These dances were the best I've seen in my 4 years here," remarked Battalion Operations Officer Jennifer Malherek. In the end, Alpha Company came out as the winner with their routine to "Jai Ho! (You Are My Destiny)" choreographed by Midshipman 4/C Leslie Aberli. After the competition, all the attendees hit the dance floor for some fun.

Overall, the Navy and Marine Corps Birthday Ball proved to be a smashing success with everyone partaking in a night of entertainment and excitement.

A Football Game Worth Watching

MIDN 2/C Anthony Sierawski, USMCR

As the 2009 football season comes to a close, with the end of Charlie Weis' coaching career seemingly upon us, we look back over the season to highlight some noteworthy accomplishments. In the NROTC unit, there is one such moment. Once again, the stellar performance of the Notre Dame NROTC flag football team proved too much for the squad from the University of Michigan.

The Irish Midshipmen entered Ann Arbor with high hopes that they would come home for the fourth straight year as victors against the "victors." This year was the first time the game would be played on artificial turf, at the University of Michigan football team's indoor practice facility. It was played, as always, on the Friday night before the two Division I university teams would clash and was thought by many to be an even more impressive spectacle. The Irish arrived with good numbers, a problem which typically plagues the away team as it is often hard to recruit both players and drivers to make the trip. A number of stars attended including Tom Smith, Matt Gray, and Alex Lough. None received boos from the home fans like Dave Galiyas, who had transferred from Michigan his sophomore year.



The Michigan fans came out to support their team well. The far sideline was a spectacle of Maize and Blue, and the fans were often heckling and yelling the names of the Irish Midshipmen. Another favorite target of their jeers was junior Tony Sierawski whose twin brother Patrick was the star quarterback of the Michigan squad. The Irish Sierawski could often hear his name called from the opposing sidelines, often from people he knew quite well through his brother. The game was a splendid one. It

was an epic struggle of wills that saw many ebbs of emotion from both sides. The true player of the game, was young Kevin Hickey who played quarterback for the Irish and had a phenomenal game. In the end, the young quarterback and stifling defense was too much for the Midshipmen from Michigan as the Irish prevailed 35-17.

While the passion on the field was heated, the true feeling of camaraderie took over as soon as the final horn blew. The midshipmen shook hands as a group knowing they would be fighting on the same team in the years to come and that this petty rivalry was a fun way to stay in touch with students from other schools.

The evening was capped off with a barbeque at the house of one of the senior Michigan Midshipmen. All were invited to attend and the trash talk for the real game the following day began. This reporter has a tough time remembering the outcome...



Fr. Jenkins' Annual Tri-Military Run

MIDN 3/C David Ulery, USNR

Not even biting winds, forty-degree temperatures, and rain held back President Father John Jenkins in the annual Tri-Military run this year. This was the “fastest pace we have ever taken, as well as the longest distance,” President Jenkins said as he addressed members of Notre Dame’s ROTC units after the run. The Tri-Military run has taken place annually since the time Father “Monk” Malloy was in office as president of the university. Midshipmen and cadets from the Navy, Marine Corps, Army, and Air Force participated in a brisk jog beginning at 6:45 am with the president of the university.

The run serves not only as a way for the units to get in an extra PT session, but it also exposes them to the university administration and is a means for Father Jenkins to express his gratitude and appreciation towards each individual and the commitments they have taken. “You are always in my prayers, and I deeply admire all of you for the service and commitment you have made to Notre Dame and this country,” said President Jenkins after the run.

Running with the president also helps to maintain the military environment and warrior spirit embodied by ROTC members. Physical fitness is an integral part of the military, and being able to share in that ideal and value with the president of the university is a very constructive experience. A “real sense of discipline” is very apparent according to Father Jenkins, and he “respects the seriousness of your commitment,” speaking once again to the midshipmen and cadets.

Seeing the university president actively participating with the students and members of ROTC is a great boost of confidence in what each one of them is doing. It serves as an immeasurable way for the university to show its support towards ROTC and the work and life to which each member is committed. Showing respect is something the university has made a commitment to and prides itself on. Going back to the days of President Emeritus Theodore Hesburgh, the university has gone out of its way on numerous occasions to show its appreciation and support for the ROTC programs.



During WWII, Notre Dame served as a training camp for many enlistees and officers preparing to go to war. This shared responsibility in teaching students and preparing sailors and soldiers is continued today. Father Jenkins expressed that he understands the places they are going and the war environments in which they will be serving. He clearly noted that a complete display of support, respect, and trust in each individual is of absolute importance.

Remembering Our Veterans

MIDN 3/C Nicholas Raic, USNR

It was a cool, overcast Wednesday afternoon as the ROTC Battalions of the University of Notre Dame stood in formation on the north edge of what is formally known as the Clarke Memorial Fountain. It is commonly referred to as "Stonehenge." Chairs and a podium were arranged at the base of the memorial for the guest speakers and Commanding Officers of the ROTC units. The Cadets and Midshipmen stood in silence awaiting the invocation by Father Richard Warner.



Twenty-Four hours prior to the ceremony, the first watch took their post on the four sides of Stonehenge and proceeded to stand guard on the Memorial. This marked the beginning the 24-Hour Vigil. The vigil consists of one Naval Midshipman, Army Cadet, Air Force Cadet and a fourth member from any of the three branches. The four members stand watch, rotating after every five minutes. After standing watch for thirty minutes, the watch is relieved by another group of four midshipmen and cadets and the process continues for Twenty-Four hours up until the beginning of the Tri-Military Veteran's Day Ceremony.

After an invocation from Father Warner, C.S.C., there was a moment of silence for those soldiers who tragically lost their lives at Ft. Hood. Then, the guest speaker and other guests of honor spoke to the Midshipmen, Cadets, and the rest of the audience. The guest speaker this year was COL Howard Hanson (USAF Ret). With the understood intention to motivate the midshipmen and cadets, COL Hanson remembered graduates from the ROTC units at Notre Dame – specifically those who have paid the ultimate price for the freedom of our nation. After the Colonel's speech, a wave of respect and reverence seemed to pass over the audience.

Father Theodore Hesburgh, C.S.C., made a much appreciated appearance at the ceremony. He expressed his deep gratitude and respect for the Midshipmen and Cadets of the ROTC units at Notre Dame and wished them all the best of luck saying, "You are all always in my prayers."

The Representative of the 2nd District of Indiana, Congressman Joe Donnelly, shared a few commendations for the members of the ROTC Units at Notre Dame in a brief, charismatic address. "We're incredibly proud of all of you," he said. "To all of you, we wish Godspeed and safety."

Professor Tom Gresik, the Executive Officer of the Faculty Senate, read a resolution from the Faculty Senate to the attendees of the ceremony. It states: "In recognition of the sacrifices made by all members of our nation's military and their families in the defense of our country, the Faculty Senate of the University of Notre Dame expresses its deep appreciation to all Notre Dame students, alumni, faculty and staff who have served honorably in our armed forces; commends the faculty, staff, midshipmen, and cadets of the Notre Dame ROTC programs for their commitment and preparation to defend the ideals of democracy; and prays for the safety and security of all the men and women who serve in our nation's military."

After the speakers had finished, Father Warner delivered the benediction and concluded the ceremony. Once everyone was dismissed, a certain tranquility enshrouded the memorial, retaining the reverent nature of the holiday.

A Word From BCO

MIDN 1/C William Towne, USMCR



Freshmen, I hope your first semester has been fulfilling. Ask anyone and they will tell you, freshman year is the toughest. It may not be the most rigorous academically (hate to break it to you), but it will be your first introduction to balancing more commitments than you ever thought possible. I know that NROTC is a big factor in those commitments.

You have handled it well. I really appreciate your effort this semester and can see that you have learned a lot from those first days of Orientation Week. Keep up the good work. I hope you all stay with the program and decide to make military service your future.

Sophomores, congratulations. You have signed up. You have made the decision that the Navy or Marine Corps will be a major part of your life, at least for the next six years. Now, give it all you have. In everything you do, the way to make a difference is to put forth your best effort, always and in everything. One quote that I found my sophomore year, and have it on my desk still, is by Edmund Burke, "Nobody makes a greater mistake than he who does nothing because he can only do a little." If you push yourself to excel here in college – in your classes, extracurriculars, NROTC events – you will have so many options in the future.

Juniors, the future is in your hands. You are the up-and-coming class in this battalion, and you are the ones who will shape its future. I encourage you all to be cognizant of what is happening now. Ask yourself, what is my role? What do I want it to be? Where do I want to be? Then, make it happen. I don't want to sound corny, but do your best to live out your dreams. Make the most of your summer cruise this year (especially at OCS, Marine Options). Challenge your NROTC class advisors with your questions and concerns. Only you can decide where your life will go.

Seniors, we're almost there. While our numbers have dwindled down over the years, I can see that our motivation and spirit have come way up. After having worked with you all this year as department heads, organizers, and leaders, I realized how far we have come since three years ago, and I am excited to be a part of this graduating, and commissioning, class. Seniors, we really have something to offer when we get out to the Navy and Marine Corps as Ensigns and Second Lieutenants. In the fleet, we will really be leading young Sailors and Marines. I hope you all remember your time in NROTC fondly. For now, let's make the final push - we're almost there.

While you're a college student in the NROTC Battalion, I encourage you to make the most of your position. The staff here is second-to-none. Everyone, from the CO to the AMOI, genuinely cares about your well-being and professional development. If you have questions, ask. If you have concerns, bring them up. Now is the time to learn from mistakes (but don't make them on purpose!). I hope you all make the effort to have as much interaction with the unit staff as I have gotten – this is your time to learn and to prepare yourselves for the future. When you graduate from this community, you will be responsible for people's lives. This is a great responsibility, and I am so glad we have you, the great Americans who sign up. Thank you.

(O-Week, continued from page 1)

After a demonstration by the senior midshipmen, the 4/C got their chance to shoot— first at prone targets, then on human-size targets. As were most of the events this week, this event was a competition between 1st and 2nd platoon; this time, 2nd platoon emerged victorious.

On the final day of O-week, the last big event before the drill competition was the Leadership Reaction Course, another favorite event among the 4/C. Each midshipman was given the chance to take a leadership role at a number of stations, all of which involved moats of cold, nasty looking water (into which a number of midshipmen reluctantly took a plunge).

The week proved to be one of both high and low points, challenges and accomplishments, bonding and learning. Many of the midshipmen alluded to the times in which they were reminded of the importance of accountability. Others cited the military knowledge and etiquette taught by the senior midshipmen and cadre. Still others recalled the times in which they had to push themselves through the challenges and strive to exemplify real self-discipline. MIDN 4/C Pursley summed it up nicely: “I learned that integrity and dependability are two vital attributes of a leader who can lead his or her men through real challenges. And I also learned that I definitely cannot rap.”



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