

The Alumni Anchor

Academic Year 2011-12

Jan 2012



NROTC Unit

- CAPT Edward J. Campbell
- CDR Brandon Christensen
- Maj Jeffery Barker
- LT Jay Killen
- LT Gabriel Burgi
- LT Joseph DeCicco
- GySgt Joseph Olivas
- HR Tech Tim Hagey
- Supply Officer Dorothy Engle
- State Sec Cass Williams



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Report from the CAPT

Hello all and greetings from sometimes sunny (but not today) Corvallis. We have just completed the 1st week of our winter term and I wanted to get an update out to you as to the state of the unit, some programmatic issues, and lastly some changing faces. My last note to you concerned our rapidly depleting alumni (Taffrail) fund and I did a little groveling I must admit. But as you always have in the past, you answered the mail and bailed us out once again. Our goal was to raise six thousand dollars and we are just a little shy of that mark as I write this. I seem to spend a lot of time asking you for fiscal help, but rest assured, we are making very good use of what you send us while employing very practical and frugal business practices at the same time. We have a lot planned this year as well, and hopefully we can get enough funds together to visit some of the fleet concentration areas around the west coast. Thank you so much for your generosity and continued interest in the welfare of your Beaver Battalion.

This year we started with

the smallest freshman class that we have seen in my tenure. It is also the 1st class to have more college program students than scholarship students. There has been a pretty significant downturn in the accession numbers from big navy and the hardest hit will be the STA-21 and the MECEP program. The number of STA-21 students that will be populating NROTCs across the



nation next year have been cut nearly in half and the cut to the MECEP program was even more severe. The drivers for this are of course the exceptional retention rates we currently enjoy along with the budgetary requirements as we begin another downsizing cycle. Our current total student population stands at 120; again – the smallest in my tenure.

The better news though is that our freshman class is



CAPT Edward J. Campbell
Commanding Officer

pretty impressive. We completed New Student Orientation with the fewest number of DORs and PT drop outs that any of us have seen in the recent past. With one term in the books, this class has shown themselves to be academically sound as well so all in all, this looks like a good group. Back to the STA-21 program, I'm not sure if you were aware of this or not, but we are the 2nd largest pro-



ducers of STA-21 (Nukes) in the country. Another of our distinctions is that

of the 36 total women they have accepted into the nuclear submarine program to date, 3 have come from Oregon State.

Surprisingly I have some good news to share on the fiscal front. It appears that the stranglehold on scholarships available to our college program students is finally starting to loosen up. The class of 2013 really took it on the chin with only 1 scholarship offered to that entire class. On the navy side we're expecting to have more promising numbers for this year's freshmen and sophomores and believe there should be opportunities for advanced standing as well. On the Marine Corps side, the exceptional retention rates are making competition for the available slots very keen



and grade point averages are figuring into the equation a lot more heavily than they used to.

We have some very talented and motivated freshman and sophomores from both sides of the house that we'll be working hard to get scholarships for this year. Another note about college program scholarships is that these are now all controlled in Pensacola and I expect that to remain the standard for the foreseeable future.

This past summer we had our quadrennial assist visit from the Naval Service Training Command Inspector General's Office and I'm pleased to say that we came through with flying colors. The XO gets all the credit for pulling the many pieces of this inspection together and acting as primary liaison and host for the inspection team. The inspection team reviewed all our student records and administrative as well as instructional procedures over a 3 day evolution and at last look, we were tied with one other school for

having the least amount of "hits" during the inspection process. Several of the staff members were singled out for exceptionally well managed programs and expertise.



Coming up in the early part of the spring term will be the Northwest Navy

(NWN) competition and this year we get to host. While it is always easier on the schedule to be the host as opposed to being the ones doing the traveling (especially for Utah), there are a lot of moving pieces that will go into this evolution and it is all predominantly student run. Of course nothing in this world is free and neither is use of the university's facilities for these events. So although we don't incur the transportation and lodging bills normally associated with this event, we still run up quite a tab with the university so no breaks for the pocket book. The date for the competition will be Saturday, 14 April so if you're in town, come on by and wear your Beaver colors.



This is a bittersweet time for us here since our XO of the last three years is getting ready to leave us. CDR Mark Volpe will be officially retiring at the end of February and heading back to his roots in Southern California. This program has been very fortunate to have an officer of CDR Volpe's caliber and experience in the XO's seat and I can attest that his support of the students here has been absolutely tremendous and tireless. He really pulled some rabbits out of hats to assist some of our administratively and medically challenged students

go on to earn their commissions when others would have surrendered at the 1st negative response from the chain of command. A lot of junior officers in the Navy and Marine Corps are in his debt and we will feel the impact of this exceptional naval officer at this unit for a long time to come. Of course as one goes another one comes, and reporting on board as the new XO is CDR Brandon Christensen who is of the submarine flavor and coming in from Stuttgart, Germany with his wife Willow and their 3 children. All indications are that CDR Christensen will be a great fit and we're all looking forward to getting to know him and getting him up to speed.

The other new faces here at the Beaver Battalion are our (no so new) MOI, Maj Jeff Barker who arrived in July from a tour in Afghanistan, and our new submarine officer, LT Joe DeCicco who just reported on board this past December from the newly commissioned USS California; SSN 781. Both are great additions to the staff and are already making impacts to the battalion. I guess the next face to change from the staff will be mine as I will be retiring this coming summer.

My relief has been identified and it is CAPT Richard Wood, an E-2C Naval Flight Officer who is currently completing the last of his tour as CO of Naval Base, Guam. I'll have more to say about this when I write again for the spring newsletter, but suffice it to say, leaving here is going to hurt.

As always, if you're in the area, please feel free to drop in and pay us a visit - we would be happy to show you around, talk about the current Beaver Battalion, and hear some old sea stories. Out here for now.

CAPT Ed Campbell
Commanding Officer

XO's Comments

Alumni, Friends, Shipmates:

This message is perhaps the hardest one to write, because it will be my last. I will be turning over the duties of Executive Officer to CDR Brandon Christensen.

This academic year has been going great so far, except that the fall term went by way too quickly. Seems like just a few weeks ago we were up at the Oregon Military Academy for New Student Orientation (NSO) for the 30 members of the incoming freshman class, the six new Officer Candidates of the STA-21 program and the one Marine of the MECEP program who joined our ranks. The upper classmen, led by Sgt Dylan Casey did an exceptional job on conducting the orientation, ensuring all our new personnel got a complete, safe indoctrination into the military life. A special congratulations goes to Midshipman Patrick Long (Marine Option) for his selection as NSO Outstanding Graduate.

Over the past three years, we have had each incoming freshman class develop their own class motto, which is painted on the wall above the Quarterdeck here at the Unit. This year's incoming class has adopted as their motto "How you do anything is how you do everything". Next time you are in the area, drop by and see each class' motto and be inspired.

As I mentioned earlier, it seems like just a short time ago we were doing NSO, now, all of a sudden, the term is over. Fall term grades are in, and you should all be proud of your Beaver Battalion. Their overall GPA is up to 3.2 and 29% of the battalion were named to the Honor Roll (GPA of 3.5 or higher). Their hard work is paying off.

In just a few days, everyone will be coming back to Corvallis after the Christmas break and we are looking forward to the start of the winter term and seeing our Midshipman continue to shine.

As I mentioned in my opening sentence, I will be relieved as Executive Officer shortly. Once my duties and responsibilities are turned over to CDR Christensen, I will finish my final preparations for retirement then ride off into the sunset in late February. As I look back over the past 36 years, I can think of no other tour that has been more fulfilling and enjoyable. I can't think of a better way to apply all I have learned in the Navy then using that experience to influence the next generation of Navy and Marine Corps leadership. It has been a privilege to do my small part in helping to train and develop these fine young men and women as they prepare to enter into the service of this great nation. I can take great pride in the Officers we have commissioned and you can rest assured that the future of our service is in good hands. I will look back at this tour as the crowning achievement of my career. Thank-you

CDR Mark F. Volpe
Executive Officer

Surface Warfare Club



Greetings Oregon State University alumni, family and friends! My last letter introduced myself as the new Surface Warfare Officer here at OSU NROTC. Early February will mark my one-year anniversary of reporting to the unit; time sure flies when you are having fun!

I have recently turned over the duties as Submarine Club advisor to our newest addition to the team, Navy submarine Lieutenant Joe DeCicco. He stands ready to mentor our future Nuclear Propulsion officers and make this upcoming year a productive and fun one for our future submariners.

As the unit's recruiting officer, I have seen many new faces come and go over the past few months. Our week-long New Student Orientation was held in Monmouth, Oregon in

August and was a huge success. Although the NSO program has likely changed since some of you have been here, the end result is always a group of highly motivated freshman chomping at the bit to start their journey to becoming a commissioned officer in the Navy or Marine Corps. I'm told that this year's freshman class is one of the most competitive and highly qualified in recent history. Oregon State University NROTC continues to draw the best and brightest!

2012 will be a year of significant change for everyone here at OSU NROTC. With a new MOI, Submarine Officer, new Aviation Officer, the retirements of both the Executive Officer and the Commanding Officer, the unit staff will have experienced almost 100% turnover within 12 months! Even with such a large

change in staff members, we are truly committed to producing the best and most qualified Ensigns and Second Lieutenants of any NROTC unit.

As the year progresses, we anticipate visits from Admirals, ship Commanding Officers and other guest speakers as well as a multitude of unit activities all meant to develop the minds and characters of our future Navy and Marine Corps officers. Thank you for your continued support for our student battalion. If ever you find yourself in or around Corvallis, please stop by and say hello. For those of you family members and friends of our senior students, I look forward to meeting you at the Spring Commissioning ceremony!

LT Gabriel Burgi

MOI'S Corner

"Out with the old grouchy MOI and in with a fresh new one." - Captain Ed Campbell, CO

Major Doherty promised me (even before I checked in) that he would "teach me how to *not* smile." With his low grumbly voice, his ever-present, albeit contrived, displeasure with everything the students have done, are doing, or are going to do, I am certain that he left quite an impression on the Beaver Battalion. It is a cornerstone of Marine Corps training or perhaps even the bedrock of our training – teach them discipline and push them beyond their preconceived notions of their limitations.

In his last Alumni Anchor article, Major Doherty spoke about being able to watch our boys and girls, who show up with nothing more than brains and heart, grow into mature leaders you would "gladly serve next to on any battlefield." If you have never served in the military or in combat, you might not realize what a profound statement that is. As my previous CO was fond of saying, "words mean things." I am honored to take over a job from an officer who was so committed to the NROTC mission of molding our future naval officers and helping shape the future of our Navy and Marine Corps – an officer who, by all accounts, did a superb job! Of course, I did not bother to ask the *underclassmen* who were at the end of his "leadership whip" what they thought of him; that would probably be like asking a recruit in week six of boot camp who his "favorite" drill instructor is...

I am sure we have all heard the phrase, "If you can do, do. If you can't, teach." One of the amazing things about getting selected for the Marine Officer Instructor billets is that if you haven't "done," you don't get to "teach." I hope to be able to successfully pass on some of the knowledge and wisdom I have accumulated over the past quarter century, specifically from my most recent tour to Afghanistan. That tour was a definite high point in my career, but it sure is nice to be able to spend this holiday season with my wife and girls.

I have spent almost a third of my 24 years of active service in a classroom of some sort. MOS "A" schools, advanced schools and undergraduate and graduate study account for more than 7½ years of my time in the Corps. Education is VERY important to me. I truly believe that lifelong, voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge is the key to becoming a person of value. From this, success and happiness will inevitably follow. I am honored and humbled to be a part of the Beaver Battalion's young men and women's first step towards becoming educated and conscientious leaders. I do not think I have done a very good job at hiding my enthusiasm so far. I think the midshipmen have even seen me smile a few times. Maybe I will be "old and grouchy" before I leave here in 2014 – we'll see.

Maj Jeffery Barker



Aviation Club



Greetings! Another year down...
Time flies!

The Aviation Club has continued to increase student exposure to a myriad of new experiences. From participating in a mock-SERE evasion exercise with the NROTC Semper Fi Club to flight time with the OSU Flying Club, the Aviation Club has made great strides to educate and inform its students. This year we are going to repeat the evasion exercise as well as the familiarization flights with the OSU Flying Club. Additionally, the club is taking a trip to the Evergreen Aviation Museum in a couple of weeks in order to broaden the student's exposure to aviation history.

Due to the great success of the Aviation Club's trip to NAS Whidbey Island last fall, the club is currently raising funds for a trip to San Diego or Whidbey Island (dependent on the amount of money raised). So far the club has about 20 percent of the funds needed to make the trip to San Diego and about 40 percent of the funds needs for a trip to Whidbey Island. Wish us luck!

On a sadder note... This will be my last newsletter article. My relief, LT Andrew 'Dozer' Gaynor, is due to report mid-March and will officially relieve me in May prior to my departure for the USS EISENHOWER. It has been an immense pleasure to serve with such a great group of people here at the Beaver Battalion. I

will surely miss the staff and students alike.

Fly Navy & Go Beavs!

LT Jay "Killer" Killen



Spruce Goose @ Evergreen Aviation Museum

Introducing the new Sub Officer

Greetings to all from Oregon State University! It's a new year and as we say our farewells to 2011 we also must give a hearty "Fair Winds and Following Seas" to LT Todd (TC) Bowers, the former submarine LT assigned to Oregon State University. My name is Joseph DeCicco and I have just relieved him as the submarine Lieutenant here on campus.

I have a diverse background in the submarine force; I reported to my first boat all the way back in 2006, and have spent the last five years serving aboard two different submarines. This has made me one of the longest serving first tour submarine LTs ever in the fleet! When the time finally came for me to play the slate for shore duty, Oregon State University ROTC was my number one choice, and I could not be more excited to be here. While I have never experienced the camaraderie firsthand of a ROTC unit, I have heard great things and am looking forward to all that you will teach me over

This April the Submarine Club will continue with a time honored tradition and will attend the submarine birthday ball in Bremerton, WA. In conjunction with the ball, I hope to tour one of the submarines in the fleet. Last year we toured an Ohio class submarine and this year I hope to tour one of the Seawolf class submarines.

For those of you family members and friends of our senior students, I look forward to meeting you at the upcoming Commissioning ceremonies. To the alumni and families, thank you for your continued support for our student battalion. And finally to the students, I look forward to meeting each of you and it is my hope that you learn as much from me as I am sure I will from all of you.

"Divide and rule, a sound motto. Unite and lead, a better one."
-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

LT Joseph DeCicco~

Beaver Battalion Happenings

Competition and camaraderie fill the air of the Naval ROTC unit as students prepare for upcoming events. The current contest, Commander's Cup, will be concluded soon and Northwest Navy (NWN) is scheduled for April 13-15, 2012.

The Commander's Cup pits platoons against each other for the chance of a free pass from a 0600 PT session as well as some highly coveted bragging rights. The competition factors in platoon members' GPA as well as aptitude for drill; however, events such as dodge-ball and kick-ball are not to be taken lightly. The challenge has been

sufficient to spark friendly competition amongst the students, which may incidentally provide a good transition into team practices for the approaching Northwest Navy competition.

Within a few short weeks, the Beaver Battalion will be hosting NWN between the four northwestern NROTC units. While some members of the battalion are preparing for the organizational and logistical requirements, others are



gearing up for their respective team events. "Northwest Navy is a great opportunity for us to meet and socialize with our fellow future officers, as well as dominate them on the field of competition," said MIDN 3/C Johnson. Beavers are the reigning champions of soccer, swimming, tennis, and basketball, but many other teams are also within reach of the first place title.

Good luck, Battalion!

MIDN 2/C Jessica Krueger

Thank You NROTC Alumni and Friends

Thanks to all the NROTC alumni and friends who donated money to the NROTC student organization fund. Your donations helped defray the out of pocket travel and lodging expenses incurred by Battalion members who travel to regional NROTC events.

It is easy to donate online...

- just go to our website at <http://\nrotc.oregonstate.edu>
- click on the "Alumni" page and there is a window called "Support the Taffrail Fund"
- choose the amount of money you want to give by using the pull down arrow.
- click "Make a Gift"

- follow the directions and that's all there is to it.

You can also use "snail mail" to send a check in the mail.

Please make checks payable to **"NROTC Taffrail"** and mail to:

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