

The Alumni Anchor

Academic Year 2012-13

Jan 2013



NROTC Unit

- CAPT Richard K. Wood II
- CDR Brandon Christensen
- Maj Jeffery Barker
- LT Gabriel Burgi
- LT Joseph DeCicco
- LT Andrew Gaynor
- GySgt Joseph Olivas
- HR Tech Tim Hagey
- Supply Officer Dorothy Engle
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Inside this issue:

<i>Report from the CAPT</i>	1-2
<i>XO's Comments</i>	3
<i>Sub Club Happenings</i>	3
<i>Surface Warfare Office</i>	3
<i>MOI's Corner</i>	4
<i>Aviation Club</i>	4
<i>New Ensign Perspective</i>	5
<i>Thanks Alumni</i>	5

Report from the CAPT

Season's greetings from the Oregon State University Naval ROTC Unit

As I write this, the fall term is complete, grades have been submitted, and many of the students have departed for home. It sure is quiet around here without 110 midshipmen, officer candidates, and Marines busy with classes, physical fitness training, and NROTC activities.

For those who missed it, our change of command ceremony was 17 August when I relieved Captain Ed Campbell. The battalion truly excelled under Captain Campbell's leadership and he left behind some pretty big shoes to fill.



Ed and his wife, Karen, made a significant impact on the lives of our midshipmen and officer candidates and they will be missed.

Reporting to Oregon State University and assuming the role of Commanding Officer



and Professor of Naval Science is a highlight of my career. My wife, Betsy, and I truly enjoy the university, the town of Corvallis, and the Pacific Northwest. However, the best part of the job is having the opportunity to work with some of the future junior officers who will be leading our Sailors and Marines in the future. We have some truly outstanding young men and women in the program and it is a lot of fun to see them excel and prepare for their future roles as division officers and platoon leaders in the fleet. It is also a true pleasure to work with our superb staff members, both mil-



CAPT Rich Wood
Commanding Officer

itary and civilian, who guide the battalion. Sadly, we will say farewell to our current Marine Officer Instructor (MOI), Major Jef Barker, who will retire after 25 years of service in the Marine Corps. We will miss Jef, Shannon, and the girls. At the same time, we will be welcoming our new MOI, Captain Jeff Price, along with his wife Sarah, and their two children to Corvallis. Captain Price is a graduate of the San Diego University NROTC program following approximately ten years of enlisted service in the Marines and will



be a great addition to our staff.

The fall term was very busy for the Beaver Battalion. While the summer was quiet, as many of the students were busy with summer cruise, summer school, or summer jobs, we still conducted two commissioning ceremonies for the



summer term, commissioning five new ensigns and second lieutenants, in addition to the change of command ceremony. This followed a great spring



commissioning ceremony when we commissioned 18 new junior officers. On 17 September we welcomed our new freshman class, which now numbers 28, to New Student Orientation where they



great! Of note, there were no active duty Navy officer candidates or Marines in the class. Of the 28, six are pursuing a commission in the Marine Corps and seven are

female midshipmen. I am very pleased with their progress so far. Fall grades will be out soon and some of them will not be happy with their progress, as happens



every year with the freshman class, but I anticipate great things from this group of talented young men and women.

The battalion has been busy this fall with drill and lab, physical training, home football game tailgates, fundraising activities, and ceremonies including the Navy Birthday, the Marine Corps Birthday, and Veteran's Day. The term ended last Friday when we commissioned two new ensigns and a



second lieutenant. The highlight of the term for me was the Navy Fall Ball. Our guest speaker was Captain Jim Haggart, USN (Ret). Captain Haggart served as the CO and Professor of Naval Science in 2000-2003 and retired in the area. His thoughts about service before self were very inspiring and it was a true honor to have him as our keynote speaker. Another highlight of the fall term was the comeback victory by the Navy ROTC flag football team over the Army ROTC flag football team. After falling behind early,

the Mids rallied for a close victory.

It will not be long before the break is over and the students are back in class and it will again be a very busy time for the members of the Beaver Battalion. I look forward to beginning the new term be-



cause those future officers are what make this job fun. After the break, please feel free to vis-

it the unit any time you are in town. Whether a parent, alumnus, or supporter of the battalion, you are always welcome at the Naval Armory. You can also follow our activities via our website, <http://nrotc.oregonstate.edu>.

I hope that you will continue to support the battalion in whatever way you can. If you wish to provide financial support to the members of the battalion via a gift to either the Taffrail Fund to support student activities or the Alumni Scholarship Fund, you may do so via the secure link on the right side of our website homepage. Thanks in advance for your support.

Best wishes for a wonderful and restful holiday and a Happy New Year!

CAPT Richard K. Wood II
Commanding Officer



XO's Comments

CDR Brandon Christensen

Alumni, Friends, Shipmates:

My tour of duty here at the unit began during Winter Term 2012 so this is my "first" of several events this Fall Term. First football season, first New Student Orientation, first Fall Ball, first Navy Birthday Cake Cutting and many more new adventures! I am excited to be a part of guiding and developing the next generation of Sailors and Marines in addition to meeting several Beaver Battalion alumni throughout the year at some of the events mentioned above. My biography is on our website so take a look and see if we have any shared past experiences then stop on by to talk about your visit to Pusan, South Korea or Cape Town, South Africa "back in the day". Even if you don't see anything directly related stop by anyway and talk about current events in today's Navy, my door is always open.



The new school year is upon us at Oregon State and like our beloved Beaver football team the Beaver battalion, especially the submarine/nuclear power club, is operating at the highest level. With service assignment behind us, we are busy preparing for technical interviews with the newest head of Naval Reactors ADM Richardson.

Sub CLUB Happenings

This Fall we were excited to host two submarine Captains; the first visit was from CAPT Moiser, OD-1 in Pensacola and shortly after his visit the CO of USS OHIO GOLD joined us with ETCM Davenport and LTJG Kriesch, an alumnus of OSU NROTC, before flying to Guam to take control of the ship.

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 the USS CONNECTICUT, and this year I hope to tour one of the SSBNs.

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. GO BEAVS!

LT DeCicco

From Surface Warfare Office



Greetings Oregon State University alumni, family and friends! If you are keeping track, I have already entered my last year here as the Surface Warfare Officer here at OSU NROTC. I'll be picking orders to my next ship in the next few months, and while it may be a bit premature, I am confident in saying that this tour has been extremely rewarding!

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 again held in Monmouth, Oregon in August and was a huge success. The event is entirely student-run, and seems to get better every year. 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 eager to start their journey to becoming a commissioned officer in the Navy or Marine Corps. Oregon State University NROTC continues to draw the best and brightest!

2012 has been a year of significant change for everyone

here at OSU NROTC. We have experienced a turnover with nearly every military staff member, and will soon be losing the Marine Officer Instructor and the Assistant Marine Officer Instructor to retirement and PCS, respectively. Such is life in the military, and we will continue to adapt to our ever-changing environment as we prepare our nation's future leaders for commitment to service.

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!

LT Gabriel Burgi

MOI'S Corner



The Marine Corps is decreasing its force structure by some 5,000 Marines and officers per year for the next four years. That is a future Corps of roughly 10% fewer Marines by 2016. As we cut back to pre-9/11 strength (about 180,000 active duty Marines) some of us may be concerned about our future ability to “accomplish the mission.” I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that since our inception, our institutional mindset has been – do more with less.

There are a couple of ways that we are going to trim the fat off our already lean force; 1) reduce the number of new enlistees and officer accessions and 2) make reenlistment and career designation (or in the old-school vernacular “augmentation”) more competitive. So, what is the impact of this on the Beaver Battalion? Well, as with most things there is a good and bad side.

While we have fewer Marine Corps scholarship underclassmen and half the number of MECEP students than we have in recent years, the quality of the new students is beyond reproach. With fewer new recruits and fewer officer accessions, the Corps can be more selective in whom we let in and in whom we keep in. 99.8% of new Marine recruits are high school graduates, compared with the DoD standard of 90% and the number of recruiting waivers and boot camp/follow-on training dropouts has plummeted by over 50%. I fully expect this trend to be mirrored in our officer corps and specifically with the future second lieutenants of the Beaver Battalion.

It is an exciting time to be in the Corps. I feel absolutely none of the misgivings echoed by some in the media regarding the size of the Marine Corps or certain future budget constraints. Marines are aggressive by nature and by nurture. As I counsel our future officers about how competitive future promotions and even retention will be, I urge them to embrace this. The Marine Corps will become even more intelligent, well-educated, more physically fit because we will only let in the best and brightest and we will only allow the best of that select group the privilege of becoming career Marines. Budget constraints will force us to become even more efficient with our weapons systems and to continue to develop 21st century doctrine that will allow us to “do more with less.”

As I complete a quarter century of active duty service and as many years studying the history of our Corps, I look back on the ebbs and flows of force strength and budgets confident of the fact that we are on track to becoming an even more efficient and well-trained force. We are full-speed down the path of getting back to our amphibious roots and to our newer mission of being the nation’s 911, force in readiness.

I envy our young midshipmen and future mustangs. As you well know, they are about to embark on a journey that will change them forever. They will make friends they will never forget and they will see places and experience things that most Americans only dream of. On behalf of all of our students, I thank you all for your support whether in the form of words, deeds or spirit.

Maj Jeffery Barker

Aviation Club



The past year has been very productive for the NROTC Aviation Club. The club ran two creative fundraisers and attended three aviation-related activities. Each term the club was able to either organize a fundraising activity or go on an aviation trip.

Aviation Club kicked off the year with a bake sale during the fall. The baked goods sold during the sale were made by club members and sold in the Memorial Union quad over the following two weeks. The bake sale was an astounding success and everything that was baked was sold.

During winter term the club was fortunate enough to have a C-2 Greyhound crew fly in and speak to the

battalion. The club received a hands on tour of the C-2 and a glimpse into



the life of a Greyhound pilot. Near the end of winter

term the club took a trip to the Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum. This allowed the club to tour the rocket and the aviation building. Was definitely a sight to see.

The spring term brought more fundraisers and trips. The aviation club hosted the 5K ‘Top Gun’ run to raise

funds for the club. The prizes for the run were all donated from local restaurants and businesses. Aviation Club rounded out the year with a trip to Naval Air Station Whidbey Island; saving the best for last. Over the weekend the club members flew an E/A-18G Growler, E/A-6B Prowler, and P-3C Orion simulator. They also received a hands on brief and static display of a MH-60S by the NAS Whidbey Island Search and Rescue (SAR) helicopter detachment. What a great way to end the year!

LT Gaynor

Looking Forward to Life Outside the Unit by: ENS CJ Wynar and ENS Joshua Lamb — Commissioned 07 Dec 12

Ensign Lamb and myself, Ensign Wynar, each come from different backgrounds. Ensign Lamb comes from a military and more specifically, a Navy family; his step-father retired as a petty officer first class. I do not come from a military family, so the OSU NROTC unit was my first dose of the military lifestyle. There was a significant gap in the level of culture shock between us. Lamb was familiar with a variety of Navy customs and courtesies; he also participated in his high school's JROTC. The early morning physical training (PT) and drill didn't quite phase him as much as it did myself. However, after the indoctrination during new student orientation (NSO) and completing freshman year we were both on par with anyone else at any other unit.

In my opinion, freshman year was probably the most crucial part of the training received here. Every morning at zero dark thirty about 35 4/C midshipman, would wake up and head down to the unit for either drill or PT. This instilled discipline in each of us. As one can imagine adapting to college life alone is difficult for most. Not being under the wings of one's parents can make the simplest tasks, like go-

ing to bed on time so you aren't tired for class the next day, difficult. Managing sleep is especially difficult when there is so much to do, parties, fraternities, staying up late with no rules. Any of those could be an activity that could lead to failure in the program. NROTC taught us both to not only manage our sleep schedule but all aspects of our daily routine as well. Saying no to a party or hanging out with friends can be hard when you are in a new environment, but it was necessary at times to make sure our responsibilities, like maintaining a 3.0 GPA and keeping with our fitness standards, were met.

When you are in a program with so many high caliber people you often lose perspective about how hard the program actually is. Everyone takes calculus and physics, everyone has to get up to PT or drill, everyone has to take naval science courses, that are additional credits outside their major, everyone has responsibilities in the unit, and everyone is preparing to be a future officer. So, of course, it is difficult to set one's self a step apart.

Summer cruise is another task we must complete. Many individuals

would not willingly sacrifice their summer vacation for a month of military training. That's just it though, everyone in NROTC is doing what everyone else cannot do. That realization is what made us really appreciate what we were doing here in this program. The different leadership roles over the last four years gave us the opportunity to manage people and get a taste of what real leadership is about.

NROTC and especially summer cruises provided a plethora of knowledge and experience that has prepared us both for our respective communities as officers. Ensign Lamb was prepared to take and pass the aviation standard test battery and will shortly be going to flight school. For myself, there was plenty of knowledge from course work and from the staff to prepare me for the interview at naval reactors and I will be going to nuclear power school in April.

Ultimately, we are grateful for what we've learned in NROTC and believe that we are prepared for life in the fleet and look forward to our careers in the United States Navy.

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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