

# The Alumni Anchor

Academic Year 2008-09

Spring 2009



## NROTC UNIT

- CAPT Jimmer Sullivan
- CDR Mark Volpe
- CDR Patrick McNamara
- Capt Nathaniel Doherty
- LT Christopher Martin
- LT Jake Jones
- LTJG Adam Christensen
- GySgt Javier Lozano
- HR Tech Tim Hagey
- Supply Officer Dorothy Engle
- State Sec Cass Williams



### Inside this issue:

CO News	1, 2
Back to the Future	2
MOI Corner	3
New SWO on Board	3
Sub Ball Discussion	4
LT Martin Wrap Up	4
Battalion Update	5
Thank you Alumni	5
Event Schedule	5

## News from Captain James R. Sullivan

Greetings from Oregon State. What a fantastic tour this remains. Two significant changes we have experienced this past year in the front office include CDR Mark Volpe onboard as the new XO and Capt Nathaniel Doherty onboard (albeit almost 10 months) as the MOI. It is hard to think this will be my last Alumni Anchor update as I will be moving on this Summer. But I'll discuss that later, let's talk about the wonderful things the students here are doing.

While the students were off on a well deserved Spring Break they did so with great pride in their performance at this year's Northwest Navy competition. We all made the long road trip to Salt Lake City where the University of Utah hosted a great event. Your OSU team came away with first place finishes in Regulation Drill, Exhibition Drill, and Soccer, while they pulled out second place finishes in Basketball, Swimming, Pistol, and PRT. It was especially uplifting to see the excitement in winning both drill competitions since we have so many students involved, especially Freshmen, who have worked so tirelessly this past year to learn how to drill. It was the perfect lesson in hard work pays off. But I must say I was

even more proud of how our students conducted themselves throughout each competition, with intense focus combined with the highest ideals of sportsmanship. They did you all proud. On top of that we all made it there and back safely despite the winter weather.

I think this is also an appropriate place for me to thank all of you that have given so generously to the NROTC Taffrail fund. Your contributions helped offset a significant increase in bus costs and helped ensure this great tradition lives on.

This year to date we have commissioned two Ensigns and two Second Lieutenants. In June we expect to commission nine Ensigns and four Second Lieutenants, and one more Ensign at the end of the Summer term. Numbers overall are again down this year throughout the nation due to the reduced number of scholarships offered four years ago to save money and meet officer drawdown. However, with Navy manpower leveling off and the Marine Corps slated to increase in size we have started to see larger classes. Next year we expect a 70% increase in commissionings. Our Freshman class this year at NSO was the largest in

a long time with 53 students. Currently we have about 120 stu-



dents in the unit which I expect to increase next year.

This year to date has seen a number of student events. After a successful New Student Orientation we launched into a busy schedule of training, school and intramural sports. We enjoyed our Fall Ball, Navy and Marine Corps birthdays, marching in the Albany Veteran's Day parade, and Commander's Cup.

The NROTC Class of '88 gathered at the unit for the 13 Sep OSU-Hawaii football game in order to honor a classmate, Max Galeai, who was killed in action in Iraq. The athletic department used the game to honor all individuals from the state of Oregon who have fallen in the war on terror but they did an especially good job honoring fallen OSU graduates who, in addition to LtCol Galeai, include class of '01 graduates Fred Pokorney and Jeffrey Ammon.

Winter term was busy as well with the unit participating in a highly successful Armed Forces Blood Drive with our fellow ROTCs on campus. Additionally the unit helped raise over 1500 lbs of food

## CO News (cont.)

for the Benton County Food Bank. Of course all the preparations and the eventual execution of Northwest Navy kept them busy as well.

Over both terms our students remain very involved in the community. Most of them are actively involved in a variety of charity organizations and helping in children sporting events. Additionally, we support the funerals of Navy/Marine Corps veterans throughout central Oregon with a flag detail that presents a flag to the families of the veterans. All of this serves to build the character of our students and make them better officers. Throughout all this they continue to shine academically maintaining a GPA higher than the average OSU student.

Spring term will be another busy time for us. At some point we will dedicate our new obstacle course. Special thanks to alum Nelson Olf (class of '52) for his generous contribution toward completing the course. We invite any of you in the area to join us for Joint Service Review on the MU Quad Friday morning the 1<sup>st</sup> of May or the Spring Awards ceremony the same day at 1p.m. at LaSells Stewart Center. We look forward to hosting the NROTC class of '58 who will be celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> re-union the first weekend in June. This year's Spring commissioning will be on Friday the 12<sup>th</sup> of June at 4 p.m. NOTE: This is change from previous years when we commissioned on Saturday. OSU has moved commencement to Saturday this year so we have been forced to move commissioning to Friday.

We continue to fundraise to meet funding shortfalls. Cutbacks have not affected our ability to produce high quality officers but they have affected our ability to give our students some of the experiences some of us enjoyed as midshipmen. To insure more stable program funding for the future, the NROTC Taffrail Fund at the OSU Foundation was established last year. This is not the student's Taffrail Fund but rather a fund managed by our staff. We invite your support and you can give in any range; \$50, \$100, \$350. Our goal is modest: raise \$6000 annually. Any gift, large or small, goes right to work for the program. The simplest way to donate is to write a check today, made payable to the OSU Foundation, with "NROTC Taffrail" on the memo line of the check. All checks should be sent to: Gift Processing, OSU Foundation, 850 SW 35<sup>th</sup> St, Corvallis, OR, 97333.

Finally, all good things must come to an end. I will be turning over this summer with my relief CAPT Ed Campbell, a P-3 NFO who is currently serving at NORTHCOM. I am off to Stuttgart, Germany, where I will serve as the Naval Forces Europe liaison officer on the EUCOM and AFRICOM staffs. I and my family are very excited while at the same time regretting our requirement to leave such a great job, area and friends. This has been such an incredibly wonderful experience for me and my family. These students are fantastic and I invite you to share in the experience by attending some of our events, reviewing the Photo Gallery on this website, or simply dropping by the unit when you happen to be in town.

## Back to the Future ~ by CDR McNamara

This article summarizes my insight into the mind of the 4/c Midshipman as my tour winds to an end. My focus is the "Freshman" because I had the most contact with them in the Naval History class their first year.

My first observation is that they come into the program and either accept a scholarship or pursue a scholarship because they seek something different in their lives. They gain clarity about their future as a warrior, mariner and diplomat during the Naval History class their first year.

Most express a degree of shock that the Navy has not always been the warfighting world power they have known all their young lives. They learn that the United States has a history of letting down its'

guard during interwar periods, partly because of our agrarian history and the domestic politics of isolationism. They see through history that the United States has a healthy and proper aversion to war, but becomes very efficient at the art of war once involved. They grapple with the foreign perspective that the United States can be your best friend or your worst enemy.

They are also surprised to learn that the "mariner" portion of this Navy thing – simply getting from point A to point B on a ship – is more difficult than they imagine. The bulk of the Naval Science classes for Navy Option Midshipmen during their remaining time in this program center on "mariner" skills: Navigation, Seamanship, and Engineering. They begin to realize that

getting from point A to point B is even harder when you sprinkle in a little weather.

Most are more intrigued by the failures of Naval officers as diplomats, especially during the 1800's. They are excited by the prospects of modern interaction with U.S. and foreign diplomatic staffs. I remind them that their Leadership and Ethics class taken their senior year is probably their most important class.

Some decide too early that they are not up to the tasks required of Naval officers as warriors, mariners and diplomats. The intangible perk during this tour has been witnessing the growth process of our future steely eyed warriors over four years. I look forward to their future as they write the next chapter in our nation's Naval history.

## THE MARINE OFFICER INSTRUCTOR AND BATTALION ADVISOR



2009 is upon us and with it changes at every level. The biggest and most obvious change is Major Brad Aiello having departed in June of 2008. He left behind a well oiled machine and many fond memories by staff and students alike. We will keep him in our thoughts and prayers as duty calls him back to Iraq.

This year's presidential election has brought about, and will continue to bring about, a great level of change. Military members all wait anxiously to see what is going to happen in regards to Iraq and Afghanistan. While we aren't war mongers, angered by talks of a withdrawal, we are still proud of what we have done and continue to do in those countries. Quitting before the mission is complete would symbolize another victory for those who have fought against us over the past seven years. Regardless, our role is quite simple: we will obey the orders of those officers appointed over us.

This year has brought about financial changes as well. Many of us have felt the sting of a market gone south. Yet, it is these troubling times that make a career in the military so appealing. We know that every two

weeks there is a check in the mail. Our students who are successful in graduating and getting their commission will not have to worry about finding employment in a market where over 10 million people are currently out of work. Those service members fortunate enough to retire from active duty can look forward to a steady supplemental income for the rest of their life.

For those that have driven by the unit as of late you may have noticed some physical changes. Hard work and dedication by a few key individuals combined with a generous donation has allowed us to rebuild the "O-Course". The O-course had become a prominent symbol of Oregon State University. The latest rebuild should guarantee another 15+ years of physical suffering by NROTC students. Now if we could just convince the university to replant some trees!

The Marine Corps continues to change as it grows in size. The goal of raising our numbers to 202K became evident by this year's freshman turnout. More Marine option midshipman arrived this year for New Student Orientation than the previous five years. Thus far it would appear that while our numbers may be growing, the quality

of student is not dropping.

Change has occurred on a personal and professional level for many of us with the passing of Colonel John W. Ripley. Col Ripley was not only a true Marine Corps and American hero, but helped mold the future of our Corps by his example and leadership as the MOI here at Oregon State. In looking out over the NROTC student body, I have no doubt there a several "Colonel Ripleys" just waiting for the chance to follow in his foot steps of greatness.

Lastly we have seen the ultimate change with the commissioning of four students. These "leaders" made the transition from either civilian or enlisted Marine to that of a second lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps. In their hands we have placed the future of our Corps and perhaps, our country. I have no doubt that they will do as Marines have always done, by adding to our already colorful and heroic legacy. So until next year, Semper Fidelis!

Captain Nathaniel P. Doherty

## New SWO on Board ~ LTJG Christensen

**H**aving only been here a few short days it is difficult to write on all the goings on here at Oregon State, but I thought I'd take this brief opportunity to introduce myself. I myself am an Oregon State NROTC Alum, having graduated in June 2005. Initially I was onboard USS WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD 41) and participated in humanitarian operations in Biloxi Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina as well as in the evacuation of American citizens from Beirut Lebanon during the Israel/Lebanon conflict of 2006. Following that I transferred to USS VELLA

GULF (CG 72) where I served as the Main Propulsion Assistant. While there I conducted one deployment to the Fifth Fleet AOR and participated in a great deal of anti piracy operations. Its hard to believe that a few short weeks ago I was on a ship conducting anti piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden, but I am excited about the opportunity to mentor the next generation of Navy and Marine Corps officers. It's great to be back.

GO BEAVS!!!!!!



# Annual Submarine Birthday Ball

## LT Jacob J. Jones

2008 was another exciting year for the Beaver Battalion. We started the year with the annual Submarine Birthday Ball in Bangor, Washington. We had 17 attendees a few of which selected submarines, have graduated, and begun their progression through the training pipeline. The tours were memorable partially because of the great support from the staff at Trident Training Facility as well as the incredible brief with CDR Daniel Christofferson, Commanding Officer of the USS Connecticut (SSN-22). This rare tour of a Seawolf class fast attack submarine offered a new perspective on submarine missions and life at sea. Our many thanks to the staff and crew that offered their time, especially the junior officers that volunteered to give tours just hours after returning to port. This year's Sub Ball will be a little different than last year because it will be

at the Grand Hyatt in Seattle whereas last year it was across the parking lot from the BQ at the Bangor Plaza Trident Ballroom.

One academic change that will be implemented this upcoming year is the formation of a tiered major system. Incoming students beginning Fall of 2009 will be assigned to a tier based on their major whether it be a technical, semi-technical, or non-technical major. These students will need to get special permission to change majors to a different tier and the amount of their scholarship may depend on which tier they are in.

Another exciting change that happened recently was the formation of a new organization known as "Sub Club". This has nothing to do with eating healthy sandwiches but instead offers a chance for anyone interested in learning more about submarines to get together and

have discussions. Meetings have included presentations from Ensign Van Gelder and OC White on topics such as Damage Control, Internal Communications, MAIDS reports, and many others. Members were also given the opportunity to practice issuing and receiving orders and making MAIDS reports over two-way radios. This has provided the prior enlisted students an opportunity to share their experiences and exhibit leadership. We would love to have some guest speakers come and share some of their salty experiences. If you are interested, we meet every other Friday afternoon at 1600.

Please contact me so we know you are coming.

Jake Jones  
submarines@oregonstate.edu  
(541) 737-5610

## Wrapping it up with LT Martin

I am now in my last year at Oregon State University, and as I move into my final terms at NROTC, I continue to be impressed with the accomplishments and the dedication of the students in our Unit. I know they will become excellent young Officers and outstanding future leaders in the Navy and Marine Corps. The opportunity to work with and mentor them over the years has been an honor, and seeing them grow and develop, from NSO to commissioning, is what has made this tour a very rewarding experience.

In 2008, the unit continued to produce quality Officers for the fleet, commissioning a total of 23 new Ensigns and Second Lieutenants. Of those 23 commissionees, four were designated as stu-

dent Naval Aviators (2 Navy, 2 Marine), and one was designated as a student Naval Flight Officer. I wish them all the best as they begin their aviation careers.

As the unit's Sail Training Officer, I confidently report that the Navy sailing program here at OSU continues to be strong. This year, we conducted three training sessions in June using the facilities at the Eugene Yacht Club on the Fern Ridge Reservoir, and qualified 13 Navy option midshipmen up to the level of Skipper "B" on our Laser sailboats. In August, a handful of the new Ensigns, who had not done any sailing while in NROTC, also got a chance to go out on the water for a day and practice maneuvering around. This experience is im-

portant in the development of good seamanship skills and provides a sense for how vessels move through the water.

The 2008 Summer cruise was another success. We sent students to Navy ships, submarines and squadrons, all over the Pacific. Some of those who went to Hawaii had the chance to get underway on vessels participating in the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercises that were conducted around the Hawaiian Islands during late July. On the Marine side, we sent students to the Mountain Warfare Training Center, near Bridgeport CA, as well as a few lucky individuals who got to go through Marine OCS. Fun was had by all (and a few people learned some things too).



## Battalion Update

By MIDN David Fitzgerald

Wow, the 2008-09 school year has been kicked off and is well underway. Under our fearless leader, Battalion Commanding Officer, MIDN Colton Cross, we are in the midst of our best year yet. Already we have had great success with inducting students during our New Student Orientation, enjoying ourselves at the Navy and Marine Corps Birthday Ball, solemnly standing the POW and MIA Vigil, and marching in the Veteran's Day Parade. With Fall and Winter term finished, Spring is looming ahead, the battalion stands strong and is prepared for all that is to come.

New students arrive each new year and this year is no exception. At our New Student Orientation in the fall, we had a surge of 48 students including 36 Midship-



man, 10 Officer Candidates, and 2 Marines. Already the new students are being acclimated to military life through physical fitness, teambuilding exercises, and close order drill. With the help and experience of our senior battalion members guiding them, the new students are well on their way to becoming exceptional members of the battalion.

The students are not the only ones new to the unit; over the summer, our former Marine Officer Instructor, Major Aiello, left us to rejoin the fleet in Okinawa. His replacement, Capt. Doherty, has already taken charge of his billet and is helping out the unit by advising students, giving briefs, and helping keep the students in line. While we will miss Major Aiello, it is needless to say that we look forward to and expect great things from Capt. Doherty.



On October the 25<sup>th</sup> we celebrated the 223<sup>rd</sup> birthday of the Navy and Marine Corps at our annual Birthday Ball. The Birthday Ball was held in the Memorial Union with Admiral Symonds as our guest of honor. His insights and advice will carry over into all of our officer careers. Armed with proper dining skills mastered by the battalion, and the efforts of MIDN Ruark's team of event coordinators, the ball went outstandingly well.

We have had quite a year so far and are looking forward to the many upcoming spring events. We performed well at Northwest Navy in Utah, and have seen the completion of the unit's O-course. All of the students and staff are meeting old milestones and awaiting new challenges. Everyday here at Oregon State University NROTC is an adventure for a new generation of steely eyed warriors, and we are ready.

## 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.

If you would like to donate, please make checks payable to "Taffrail" and mail to:

Taffrail Custodian  
Oregon State University  
Naval Science Department  
104 Naval Armory  
Corvallis, OR 97331-5401

## Events Schedule

01 May — Joint Service Review [OSU]  
01 May — Spring Awards Ceremony  
28 May — Bn Change of Command  
12 June — Commissioning Ceremony  
13 June — OSU Commencement  
July/Aug — Summer Cruise/Cortramid

## OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY NAVAL RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS

Oregon State University  
104 Naval Armory  
Corvallis, OR 97333

Phone: 541 737-6289  
Fax: 541 737-3183  
E-mail: [state.sec@oregonstate.edu](mailto:state.sec@oregonstate.edu)



See our Newsletters  
and Events on the web  
[nrotc.oregonstate.edu](http://nrotc.oregonstate.edu)