



TIDE AND CURRENT STAFF

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Special Thanks to all the writers and editors for their contributions!

Congratulations Top 6, Spring 2008

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The Blackshirts of National Defense



University of Nebraska

Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps



Mission

To develop Midshipmen morally, mentally, and physically, and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor, and loyalty in order to commission graduates as officers who possess a basic professional background, are motivated toward careers in the naval service, and have a potential for future development in mind and character to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship, and government.

TIDE AND CURRENT



**UNIVERSITY OF
 NEBRASKA
 NAVAL ROTC
 FALL
 2008**



CO's Corner *By Colonel Eric Litaker*



This has not only been a busy semester, but one in which we have seen the student population grow by more than 25% over its level of the last few years. Once again we have an outstanding freshman class joining the Battalion and beginning to make their mark along with rest of the students in the unit. As has been the case in previous fall semesters, the Battalion has been involved in a number of activities, to include weekly Naval Science Lab sessions; providing security, and cleaning up afterward, for Husker football games; numerous color guard performances; and yet again winning the Joint Field Meet, for at least the third year in a row. In addition, we have been fortunate to have had a couple of visits by the Commander, Carrier Wing One; the second visit was when he was our Guest of Honor at the combined Navy and Marine Corps Birthday Ball. The Midshipmen Battalion can be justifiably proud of its achievements this semester.

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As I have mentioned the last couple of times, the issue of the expansion of the Campus Recreation Center and its impact on our unit remains unresolved. In addition to the positive movement we saw last spring, we have recently been informed that the current student leadership views the attempt to expand into the space occupied by the Pershing Military and Naval Science building as too expensive, at least for the present. In addition, the university is conducting a student survey

(Continued on page 2)

this fall, and there is still the possibility of a student referendum on this issue in the spring. As has been the case in the past, I will endeavor to keep everyone informed as this develops.

We were very fortunate to have had our Executive Officer, Commander John Long, return in late July from his Individual Augmentation assignment to Iraq. In addition, the new Assistant Marine Officer Instructor (AMOI), Staff Sergeant Aguilar, arrived in early December. It is great to have Staff Sergeant Aguilar on board as he holds a key position for both the staff and students. With that in mind, the students in particular have displayed commendable initiative in taking on the leadership challenge associated with not having an AMOI present.

With the frenetic pace and all that transpires on a university campus, it is easy to become distracted and lose sight of what is most important. In particular, the purpose of this unit is to ensure our students complete their degrees and the requirements for obtaining a commission in the United States Naval Services; to ensure that our students are successful in making the transition from civilian life to military life; and to ensure that we maintain appropriate standards, which are the foundation of the leadership our students will need to exhibit as commissioned officers. My goal for our unit is to provide a safe and enjoyable environment in which the students are able to achieve these objectives.

XO's Corner

By Commander John Long



It's great to be back in Nebraska! I'd like to start out by thanking the entire staff and LT Flanagan in particular, for picking up the slack while I was off serving in the sandbox.

If I learned anything from my time in Iraq, it's that our sea service officers, sailors, and marines, must be more prepared than ever to meet ever-changing demands, and new and unconventional tasks in support of our national policy. My journey began with five months of training, which included the Army's nine week Civil Affairs Qualification Course. I deployed with an 'Army' Civil Affairs Brigade which was 50% Navy and 25% Air Force. Most of the remaining Army personnel had never been in a Civil Affairs unit before. With the exception of the Brigade senior staff and some very specialized personnel, medical and legal, we were all thrust into a very foreign environment. There was the Hornet pilot and Hawkeye NFO who were responsible for assessing and developing the Iraqi vocational school system; a surface warfare LT who was assigned as the Brigade Headquarters Company Commander; the aviation maintenance officer and surface warrior assigned to coalition forces and working as contracting officers and pay agents car-

Congratulations Seniors!



Ensign Pat Hynes

MAJOR:

History

POST-GRAD PLANS:

USS Simpson
FFG 56
Mayport, FL



2nd Lt Josh Johnson

MAJOR:

Advertising

POST-GRAD PLANS:

The Basic School
Quantico, VA



The Drill Competition. (Left) The Freshmen Platoon. (Below) The Battalion Upperclassmen Platoon hard as nails. They handily defeated the Freshmen Platoon for the Fall drill competition honors.



UNL NROTC Battalion



rying, literally, millions of dollars in cash in a rucksack. I was assigned as the military liaison to the US Agency for International Development where my primary duty was to coordinate civilian and military development efforts, but along the way found myself drafting documents for the Iraqi government and helping coordinate humanitarian response initiatives. To ensure our Marine Option Midshipmen don't feel left out, I worked with a Harrier pilot who was an agricultural advisor for the MEF in Anbar Province. Needless to say, our pre-deployment training did nothing to prepare us for any of these positions. My point is, any of you may find yourself in similar situations, if not in Iraq, then possibly in Afghanistan or elsewhere. At some point you will be forced to think and work outside of your 'comfort zone' and get the job done. This is where your basic skills of analysis, problem solving, and decision making can save the day. I would challenge each of you to use your time here at the university, both academically and in your Battalion activities, to develop and strengthen those skills. They will be invaluable later in your careers as our profession continues to change with our changing world.

On a related topic, current Navy policy is leading us away from the concept of the Individual Augment (IA), pulled from a typical assignment, and is moving toward preplanned filling of IA requirements during the PCS cycle. While all of you should go directly to your community training tracks and then to your first fleet tours, you can still expect to be tapped for an IA at some point between subsequent permanent duty assignments. I would anticipate that the number of IA requirements will drop as our involvement in Iraq winds down, but renewed emphasis on Afghanistan and as yet unseen requirements elsewhere will ensure that many of you will complete an IA at some point.

Congratulations are in order for the many exceptional performances turned in by the Battalion since August. Orientation week was a singular event, planned and executed by our seniors. Special recognition is in order for MIDN Erickson and Madsen for demonstrating exceptional leadership and initiative in introducing our new freshmen to the wonders of close order drill, also to MIDN Lacy for setting the example in PT, and OC Hynes for overall coordination and logistics. Absent the guidance of an Assistant Marine Instructor, these individuals, and others, stepped up to ensure the O-week experience was meaningful, and the incoming freshmen were well prepared to meet the challenges of their first year in the Battalion. The annual Birthday Ball was an outstanding event. Those of you with a hand in planning or participating in ceremonies that night can take pride in knowing that our guests had a wonderful evening, and were very complimentary in their reviews of your efforts. It may have come down to the last event, but your performance during the recent Joint Field Meet brought home the trophy once again. You can all take pride in these accomplishments and your continued support to the local community. I would like to personally congratulate MIDN Zach on his receipt of both the USS Little Rock Association and the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association scholarships, MIDN Madsen for once again being

selected as a recipient of the Daedalian Society LeMay Scholarship, and MIDN Christopher Lewis on his selection for an NROTC scholarship. On behalf of the staff, I would also like to congratulate OC Hynes on his imminent graduation and commissioning. He has been a source of leadership and innovation during his time in the Battalion.

It's hard to believe, the fall semester is nearly over. I know it has proven to be a challenge for many of our new students, as the first semester always is. I hope that each of you has found support among your fellow midshipmen. As the semester draws to a close, and you prepare to depart for winter break, you have my best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season.

BNCO's Corner

By MIDN Feay

It has been noted by former Battalion Commanders that it is truly hard to believe the speed at which semesters come and go. As we conclude another semester at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, I feel it is important to thank all of the midshipmen, officer candidate, and sergeants for their hard work. The day to day operations of this semester would not have been possible without the dedication of my staff.



Before this semester, Naval ROTC has managed to hold the Commander's Cup for winning the annual Joint Field Meeting with the Army and Air Force ROTC units. This year, we went into the last event in last place. The event was the ammo can lift, and we had a team made of mostly freshmen. I don't believe I have ever been so impressed, as each midshipman took their turn throwing the metal box above their heads and pulling it back down to their chests as fast as their arms could move. Their faces told the story of aching muscles and unbreakable motivation. Because of them, we have earned the Cup for another year. A new addition to our program this semester is Navy Option Training. The new curriculum focuses on preparing midshipmen to be junior officers in the Navy, while motivating Navy Options who are far removed from any naval installation. None of it would have been possible without the devotion from OC Hynes. He has shown his commitment to modeling future leaders for the betterment of the Navy.

As I look back on the semester, I am grateful to our active-duty staff for giving me the opportunity to learn and make corrections to the way I view situations and interact with my peers. It is a leadership prospective that only one midshipman a semester gets to experience. It can be daunting at times, but the lessons I have learned will no doubt benefit me for the rest of my naval career.



(Above) The midshipmen were surprised, after a hard morning of physical training, by a delivery of cookies and brownies baked by Mrs. Beverlee Grey. These baked goods were a perfect Thanksgiving Break send-off.



The Gong Show. During lab, the battalion held the Gong Show, where midshipmen were given the opportunity to get up in front of their peers and poke fun at one another and some of the staff for various humorous events that took place over the semester. The midshipmen also held a competition where a midshipman from each class performed various tasks while only using “knife hands.”





The Marine Corps Birthday Cake Cutting Ceremony. (Above) Here, a picture is taken of all the Marines, old and young, at the Marine Corps Birthday Ceremony during one of the Battalion's labs.



Semper Fi. (Above) The Semper Fi flag football team playing Army. (Right) Sgt Josh Johnson is the team's quarterback. Unfortunately, The Bulldogs could not pull off the upset this year. Last year, the Semper Fi football team won the Intramural Flag Football Championship.

Battalion Activities



Color Guard. Here the Navy is represented during the all-service color guard performed at the POW MIA Ceremony.

POW MIA Ceremony. The Battalion participated in the joint POW MIA Ceremony on 25 Sep 08. Here, the MIDN bow their heads in prayer.



CH-53 Super Stallions. On 26 Sep 08, midshipmen had the opportunity to meet the pilots of and look over the CH-53 helicopter that performed a fly-over at the Nebraska v. Virginia Tech game. (Above) Capt Grey and LT Flanagan stand in front of the aircraft. (Left) MIDN Hunt poses in the cockpit of the CH-53.



CORTRAMID

By MIDN Holdcroft

On 10 July, of this past summer, midshipmen from all over the country headed to San Diego, California for Career Orientation Training for Midshipmen, or CORTRAMID. When we first arrived we were bused from the airport to our hotel on Naval Base San Diego. The first couple of days were taken up by paperwork and briefs on what to expect over the next couple of weeks. We were also split up into companies that we would train with over the next month.

My company's first week of training was with the Marines. It started bright and early Monday with a very enthusiastic gear inspection to insure we had everything that we would need to survive for a week at Camp Pendleton. We then loaded the buses and headed out to our new home for the week. The Marines had plenty to keep us busy while we were out there. We got to look around and ride in amphibious assault vehicles, fire various weapons including a M203 grenade launcher and the M249 squad automatic weapon (SAW), and talk with some Marines from 3rd Battalion,



MIDN Holdcroft in an FA-18 Super Hornet.

5th Marines based out of Camp Pendleton. Most will agree that the Marines' first-rate Immersion Trainer, used to train Marines before they are deployed to the Middle East, was one of the best experiences of the week. On the last day, before we headed back to San Diego, we ran the Marine Obstacle Course and were given an introductory course in Marine Martial Arts. Although the week was full of challenges, both physically and mentally, we came back with lots of stories to share with our fellow midshipmen.

Surface Warfare was the next community introduced. During this week, we received training on how to properly fight a fire and the types of fires we might see on a ship. We also spent two days on one of three ships; my group was sent to the USS Preble. While on the USS Preble, we got to experience numerous weapons displays including a test of the five inch gun and the phalanx. We were also able to fire some small arms such as the M2 .50 caliber heavy machine gun and the M240B medium machine gun. This was also a good opportunity to talk to the junior officers, and see what the day-to-day life is like for an officer onboard a ship.

The next week my company was scheduled to participate in Submarine Warfare indoctrination. During this week we had the opportunity to experience many of the simulators used for training submariners. These include the dive trainer and the wet trainer.

The Navy-Marine Birthday Ball



(Above-Left) MIDN Abbott, Fults, and Holdcroft are members of the Color Guard at the Birthday Ball. (Above-Right) MIDN Hogan, Roberts, and Essay are members of the Sword Arch. The Ball is a celebration of both the Marine Corps and the Navy's Birthdays. The evening starts with a ceremony where we present the graduating seniors and a cake cutting ceremony where we honor the oldest and youngest Marines and Sailors. The ceremony is followed by dinner, and then dancing. This is one of the Battalion's biggest events of the year and is looked forward to by all the midshipmen.



(Below) **F-18 Hornets.** Captain Paulsen provides midshipmen an opportunity to get a closer look at an F/A-18F Super Hornet. Here he provides MIDN Hunt a tour of the cockpit. (Right) MIDN Glen-denning tries on Captain Paulsen's flight helmet.



Joint Field Meet. (Left) MIDN Essay participates in the Pull-Up Competition at the Joint Field Meet. In this meet, the NROTC Battalion competed against the Air Force and Army ROTC units. (Above) MIDN Lacy competes in the ammo can lift. Going into this event, Navy was in third; but due to the stellar performance by all its participants, Navy was able to pull away with a victory and the Commander's Cup.



The dive trainer was a full-motion control room simulator. This trainer allowed us to experience dive angles up to 45 degrees. The wet trainer was a simulated engine room that had several leaks. Our job was to go in there and try to stop as many as we could before the water got too high. We were also given the opportunity to get underway for a day on the USS Topeka. While underway, we were allowed to drive the sub, explore the torpedo tubes, and spend some time up on the bridge. Many of the midshipmen

enjoyed the meals served aboard the sub; the Captain also hosted a movie night for the visiting midshipmen.

The final week was spent among the Aviation community. The first day they separated all the midshipmen that were going to be given the chance to fly in an F/A-18; I was lucky enough to be placed into that group. For the remainder of the first day we went through a swim test in full flight gear and a test in the pressure chamber. We spent the rest of the week training so we could fly in the aircraft; this included ejection seat training and a flight in a T-34. Thursday was the big day; we woke up at 0500 in the morning and went to the airfield on North Island where we boarded a C-2 and flew to Naval Air Station Lemoore. Once we arrived, we were split up again into two groups. One group was sent to fly the Hornet and my group went to go fly the Super Hornet. Arriving at our squadron, we received a quick brief on what to expect and with whom we would fly. The aircraft that I was sent up in had two sticks, so once we got up in the air, the pilot, Screech, did a bit of acrobatics, then he let me try. He let me roll right and left and then I pulled some Gs. After that, Screech decided to show me what the aircraft could do. We got up to .97 mach and pulled 7.5 Gs. After a quick half hour flight, we were back on the ground and getting refueled. The rest of the day was spent talking with the pilots while everyone else finished their flights. After everyone finished, we headed back to the airfield and caught a C-2 back to San Diego.

CORTRAMID provided an amazing opportunity to learn about the various communities out in the fleet. I took a lot away from those four weeks, and will likely never forget the opportunities I was given, not to mention the midshipmen I met from all across the nation who I will one day serve with in the fleet.



Orientation Week



By MIDN Hogan



Following four days of intense indoctrination into the University of Nebraska's Naval ROTC Program, 21 midshipmen stood before their Commanding Officer, Colonel Eric Litaker, waiting to be sworn into the Battalion. The compressed week spent at Camp Ashland, full of early mornings and long nights combined with highly structured lesson plans, was designed by the O-Week staff to fully indoctrinate the midshipmen into their new lifestyle. Each midshipman standing at attention before Colonel Litaker had anticipated this final day since the first long night of Orientation Week. Once sworn in, the midshipmen could begin their career as a member in the United States Armed Forces.

Orientation Week commenced on Monday, August 18, when the new midshipmen arrived at the Military and Naval Science Building and checked in with the Administration Office. After preliminary in-processing, the midshipmen reported to Room B-5 before being split into several groups to carry out the Plan of the Day. The first morning began with the issuing of sea bags and all required uniform items, a third class swim qualification test, and then a small sack lunch was provided prior to being bused off to Camp Ashland. Once the midshipmen arrived at Camp Ashland, they immediately checked-in to their assigned barracks to be briefed on what to expect in the upcoming week and become "acquainted" with the O-Week Staff. The remainder of the day included instruction on the proper assembly of the midshipmen's sleeping quarters, making of their beds (affectionately referred to as "racks"), the organization of their barracks, and then concluded with evening chow.

Tuesday morning came early with an introduction into physical training. A lesson in proper stretching and calisthenics, followed by a formation run, familiarized the midshipmen with the basics in Battalion PT. Following an early morning workout, came a quick change back into full camouflaged uniforms, known as "boots and utes," and then a quick march in platoons to the chow hall. An introduction to drill filled the gap between breakfast and afternoon chow. After the second meal of the day, the midshipmen were marched to the classroom for General Military Training (GMT) and additional close-order drill. In the evening, the midshipmen enjoyed their final meal for that

Battalion Activities



Campbell Elementary School Walk-A-Thon. (Left) MIDN Jacobs runs behind an elementary student at the Walk-A-Thon while (Below) MIDN Erickson and student show off the number of laps they ran. This event is an opportunity for the Battalion to get out and serve the community.



Navy Birthday Ceremony.

(Above) The Battalion celebrated the Navy's 233rd Birthday during lab. Here, Colonel Litaker is cutting the cake before presenting it to the oldest and youngest sailor.

Inspection. (Right) Before the Cake Cutting Ceremony, the Battalion held personnel inspections.



Officer Candidate School

By: *MIDN Madsen*

Marine Corps Officer Candidate School (OCS) tests the physical and mental endurance of all potential Marine Corps officers by training, screening, and evaluating these individuals on their leadership potential. Our NROTC unit sent four officer candidates to OCS this summer. Sgt Andrew Johnson, one of our prior enlisted Marines, attended the first six-week session. MIDN Erickson and I attended the second six-week session. Sgt Joshua Johnson, a Marine who joined our unit at the beginning of the semester as part of the Meritorious Commissioning Program (MCP), had the privilege of spending ten weeks at OCS.



In reminiscing about OCS with these three gentlemen, I have found that we had comparable experiences. I also discovered that I have a unique perspective on the training at OCS. This is not due exclusively to the fact that I am a female—we do the same exact work as the males—but rather because I actually enjoyed the time I spent at Brown Field. This is not to say that it was easy, but I appreciated the challenge of real Marine Corps training. I worried incessantly about the physicality of the training (both before I reported and while I was there). However, in the end, the physical aspects of OCS were my favorite parts. I loved the amount of time we spent outside—it didn't matter whether it was in a tactical training environment like the Small Unit Leadership Evaluation (SULE) or the Combat Course (which included swimming/running through the infamous Quigley, a disgusting swamp), or simply running the Endurance Course. The physical and mental stress of OCS was harder than anything I have ever done, but I found that I was capable of excelling in everything that was required of me.

Part of my OCS experience was unique because I am a female. At UNL, we only have male instructors, and the ratio of male to female Midshipmen is about ten to one, so having the opportunity to learn from other females was a positive experience for me. I was very lucky to be constantly surrounded by prior enlisted female candidates who taught me what female enlisted Marines expect of their officers. In addition to what I learned from my fellow candidates, I benefitted immensely from observing my platoon staff. Seeing the unwavering strength and professionalism of my Sergeant Instructors and Platoon Commander taught me everything I need to know about the standards that female Marines require of each other. I am very grateful that I was able to work with such outstanding Marines and learn from the example they set.

day and were instructed on how to properly carry out a fire watch during the night. After a few hours of much needed sleep and watchstanding, the midshipmen awoke to a similar schedule on Wednesday. In the afternoon, however, the midshipmen were allowed some personal time to study information from their issued instructional binder, known as “The Keel”. This provided the midshipmen an opportunity to bond together as a group while studying basic military knowledge. After chow that evening, the midshipmen were once again allowed to conduct themselves on their own before hitting the racks and carrying out their assigned fire watch duties.

The conclusion of Orientation Week at Camp Ashland could not have come soon enough for the midshipmen. The final day had begun very similar to the previous mornings that week with some exceptions. A close-order drill lesson was followed by morning chow and then a Field Day of the barracks. Field Day events consisted of packing up personal gear that had been issued throughout the week, along with rearranging of the racks, and an in-depth cleaning of the barracks. After passing the final inspection, the midshipmen were transported back to the Military and Naval Science Building to take part in a variety of Leadership Reaction Courses, or LRCs, and a Close-Order Drill Field Meet. These events demonstrated to the O-Week Staff, and the midshipmen themselves, how they had developed and progressed as one cohesive class throughout the past four days. Upon completion of these events, the midshipmen were dismissed to their dorms.

The conclusion of O-Week on Friday included a uniform inspection and the Swearing-In Ceremony led by Colonel Litaker. This was the first time the parents of the midshipmen were provided an opportunity to see their sons and daughters as one battalion. The ceremony concluded with administration of the oath of office, making them official members of the Naval ROTC Unit. Following the ceremony was a reception that allowed the midshipmen to reunite with family members and finally have a chance to relax for the first time in a week. A catered picnic on Saturday was another opportunity for the newly sworn-in midshipmen to get together and meet the rest of the Battalion before the official school year started.

Orientation Week enabled the freshman class to adjust to the new lifestyle that they would be living during their future careers as military officers. It was a time of intense training and bonding as a group that will be necessary in the future as a member of the University of Nebraska's Naval ROTC Unit. Many things from O-Week will be remembered, each unique to every midshipman, which will be shared with family and friends and used as a learning experience for the future. It was an influential week for everyone who participated and will not be forgotten as a first true taste of the military lifestyle.

Orientation Week Pictures



(Left) Here the midshipmen take their third class swim qualification test. The test consists of two laps in the pool, a five-minute prone float, and converting trousers into a floatation device.

(Right) MIDN Madsen welcomes the new midshipmen to Orientation Week. Her warm spirit and charm throughout the week helps the midshipmen learn how to react when placed in stressful situations.



(Left) Sgt Johnson instructs MIDN Brey on close-order drill. At the conclusion of O-Week, the two freshmen companies competed against one another in a close-order drill competition.

(Right) MIDN Lacy, the Battalion Athletic Officer, instructs the midshipmen on the course for morning PT. The midshipmen were provided a basic introduction to the physical fitness routines they would experience during the fall semester.



(Left) MIDN Erickson goes over basic drill movements with his company. This also provided an opportunity for him to discuss how the midshipmen would assimilate into the Battalion once the school year began.

(Right) MIDN Curry and MIDN Hogan standing at parade rest, waiting to be sworn in at the conclusion of Orientation Week. Once sworn in, the midshipmen officially became members of the Battalion.



(Left) Midshipmen stand at the position of attention, awaiting further instruction. A basic understanding of drill provides the introductory discipline training necessary in the military.