



World's Greatest Naval Battalion (WGNB) Newsletter

February 2016

Wisconsin Drill Meet

In October, a group of Midshipmen traveled to Madison to compete in the University of Wisconsin's NROTC Drill Meet. The Fighting Illini Midshipmen competed in a variety of competitions including: rifle and pistol shooting, squad and platoon drill, color guard, and a ten mile urban adventure race. Some of the competing units included Miami of Ohio, University of Colorado-Boulder, and the Ohio State.

The WGNB's Endurance Team won first place in the urban adventure race with a total time of 2:29.40, beating the second place University of Colorado-Boulder team by more than two minutes.

The urban adventure race consisted of a 10 mile run with team oriented obstacles such as buddy carries, push-ups, and rope climbs along the course. For an added challenge each six person team was given one 50lb backpack to carry throughout the entirety of the course--forcing members to work together and share the load.

The Wisconsin Drill Meet is a time for the battalion to work together in order to show other units that University of Illinois has the world's greatest Naval Battalion.



UIUC Midshipman competing in the Color Guard portion of the Wisconsin Drill Meet



The six members of the Endurance Team celebrate after their victory in Wisconsin.



Chief Petty Officer Mark Cooper and Commanding Officer, Capt. Charles Moore at the Naval Ball (above).

Naval Ball

The battalion held a Navy-Marine Corps Ball on 30 October in order to commemorate the birthday of both organizations. The Navy celebrated its 240th birthday on 13 October and the Marine Corps celebrated its 240th birthday on 10 November. The purpose of the Naval Ball is to enhance a greater appreciation of Navy heritage, and to provide a positive influence toward pride and professionalism in the naval service.

Some of the traditional festivities included a ceremonial sword arch, birthday messages from the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Neller and the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Richardson, a ceremonial cutting of the cake, a wonderful dinner, dancing, and words from the Guest of Honor, Chief Petty Officer, Mark Cooper.

Certain traditions such as the ceremonial cutting of the cake have specific meanings that have been passed on for years. The cake was cut by the most senior member (CAPT. Moore) and the most junior member (MIDN 4/C Lusk) of the unit to signify the passing down of experience and knowledge from one generation to the next.

The Midshipmen felt that the Navy-Marine Corps Birthday Ball was a great way to celebrate naval heritage and raise morale, as well as come together in camaraderie as a battalion to take part in a military tradition older than their parents.



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Veteran's Day Ceremony



(Above is Battalion Commander MIDN 1/C Acuna (right) and Battalion Executive officer MIDN 1/C Andersen)

In November, the battalion hosted a Tri-ROTC Veteran's Day Ceremony with the Army and Air Force ROTC units. The ceremony included a guest speaker, Surface Warfare Captain Jeffrey Smith (Ret.), the singing of service songs, a traditional wreath ceremony, and cake and refreshment afterwards. Several local veterans attended the ceremony, as well as the local newspaper and TV and radio stations around the Champaign-Urbana area to publicize the event.

Midshipmen and Cadets alike gathered for multiple early morning practices in order to perfect the movements in the ceremony. Their dedication was required to display the military discipline that has made the United States military the organization it is today.

The Tri-ROTC Veteran's Day ceremony was a great opportunity for the future leaders of the United States military to give back to those who have paved the way for them.

9/11 Memorial Run



Each year the WGNB, Army and Air Force ROTC Battalions come together for a motivational run to commemorate those who lost their lives on the tragic day of 9/11. Along the three mile route, various members of the battalion called cadence to increase motivation and pride as they honored all those who lost their lives in the national tragedy. As usual, the WGNB led the formation, and Captain Moore gave a very motivating speech on the Quad about the purpose of the run and why participation in the memorial run is important.

WGNB Wins Football Tourney



Members of the NROTC football team after their tournament victory

The Midshipman proved their football prowess by winning the Tri-ROTC football tournament held on December 5th. The Midshipman defeated the Army first and then went on to win the tournament by crushing the Air Force in a later game, showing their dominance over the other ROTC units.

Despite freezing temperatures, the WGNB performed their best in order to cement their title as the best ROTC unit. The outcome of this tournament mirrored the outcome of this year's famous Army-Navy football game, where the Naval Academy Midshipmen beat West Point 21-17.

All who participated on the football team felt that it helped promote physical fitness, camaraderie, and battalion pride.

Midshipman Fourth Class Paul DeLutio echoed this sentiment, "It was great to have friendly competition between the other ROTC units. Also, it was a great event for everyone involved and hopefully it will draw more participation from groups all over campus in the future."

Fall FEX (Field Exercise)



The Fall FEX was at Camp Atterbury, a National Guard base in Indiana. Over the course of the two-day exercise, Marine Option Midshipmen completed a night land navigation course, set up a bivouac site (a temporary camp site) under the stars, and a timed four mile hump to simulate the hump that is to be completed at Officer Candidate School. Other events the Midshipmen participated in were a Confidence Course and a Leadership Reaction Course to better develop the Midshipmen who are going to OCS this summer.

Every semester, Marine Option Midshipmen (Charlie Company) prepare for FEX through Marine Option Lab (MOLAB) held every Tuesday afternoon, as well as time outside of MOLAB in order to be properly ready for FEX and for OCS in the future.

One of the 2/C Midshipmen, MIDN 2/C McIlvene, preparing for OCS said this, "the Charlie Company Midshipmen gained a lot of practical experience from Fall FEX. It helped put knowledge from the classroom into effect."

Semester at a Glance



The fourth class midshipmen enjoy the Naval Ball as a bonding moment for their class.



Newly Commissioned 2nd LT Gonzalez navigates an obstacle during the Confidence Course at Camp Atterbury.

Battalion Member of the Month



MIDN 3/C Pepin with Company Commander, MIDN 1/C Acuna

Midshipman 3/C Pepin consistently performed his duties in an exemplary and highly professional manner. He ensured all required tasks assessed were successfully accomplished. He has played an important role in company morale and has developed clear and concise training plans tailored towards developing his Midshipmen into better leaders. In addition to accomplishing all his responsibilities, MIDN 3/C Pepin has participated in various extracurricular activities, all while maintaining a high grade point average and high physical fitness scores. His professionalism, dedication to duty, and leadership demonstrates his abilities as a future leader on the rise. His personal initiative and unwavering devotion to duty reflects greatly upon himself and his ability in keeping with the highest tradition of the United States Naval Service.