World’s Greatest Naval Battalion (WGNB) Newsletter

February & March 2016

Notre Dame Leadership Conference

This past weekend the WGNB sent three midshipmen to the 2017 Naval Leadership Weekend at the University of Notre Dame. MIDN 1/C Joseph Morrison, MIDN 1/C Ariana Parra, and MIDN 2/C Alex Perello represented the WGNB at the event. These midshipmen, along with three hundred other students from around the country experienced the pinnacle of U.S. Navy leadership.

The weekend began with a welcoming speech from Rear Admiral Stephen C. Evans, Commander of Naval Service Training Command. The day continued with speeches from General Robert B. Neller, Commandant of the United States Marine Corps and retired Fleet Master Chief April D. Beldo. Following the speakers, the midshipmen had the opportunity to attend a junior officer panel and Q&A session. Junior officers from all communities within the USN and USMC.

Saturday began with a speech from Vice Admiral Christopher W. Grady, the Commander of 6th Fleet and then continued with many more impressive speeches. The other speakers included Admiral Michael S. Rogers, Commander, U.S. Cyber Command, Vice Admiral Thomas S. Rowden, Commander, Naval Surface Forces, and Dr. Michael C. Desch, Director of the Notre Dame International Security Center. The day concluded with a speech from keynote speaker Admiral John M. Richardson, Chief of Naval Operations.

When asked about his experience at the Notre Dame Naval Leadership Weekend, MIDN 2/C Alex Perello responded, “The Notre Dame Naval Leadership Weekend was a once in a lifetime opportunity to meet and learn from the Navy and Marine Corps highest ranking officers. I am still in utter disbelief that I was able to speak to the Chief of Naval operations, the Commander of the Surface Fleet, and learn from people like the Commandant of the Marine Corps. I took away an unfathomable amount of information in regards to leadership, and I am incredibly humbled and grateful that I had an opportunity to attend such an event.”

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WGNB Basketball Team

The WGNB basketball team is back in action this semester competing in an intramural league against other student teams on campus. The team is lead by captains, MIDN 2/C Alex Perello and MIDN 1/C Nathan Todd. Coming into the season the team had high hopes as four of the five starters from last year returned. As of now, they have lived up to the expectations and are currently undefeated. Along with a 2-0 record, the WGNB basketball team is the highest scoring team in the league. With one more victory the WGNB will clinch a spot in the playoffs and have an opportunity to avenge last year’s triple overtime loss in the first round of the playoffs.

OCS PREPARATIONS UNDERWAY

For the last two months, the Marine Option midshipmen of the WGNB have been focusing heavily on readying themselves for Officer Candidate School this summer at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia. The unit will be sending a total of eight midshipmen to both increments, and these candidates-to-be are in the process of finalizing the necessary skills that will be required to pass the six week course. The majority of this preparation occurs during Marine Option Laboratory, or MOLAB, every Tuesday afternoon.

No two weeks have been the same as there is a variety of knowledge that each candidate should master before arriving at OCS, and each week has thus far focused on this myriad of requirements.

One of the major tests at OCS is the small unit leadership exercise (SULE) that each candidate is required to pass. This evolution is made up of a variety of skills including land navigation, writing and briefing five paragraph orders, and squad-level tactics. Thus, the first few weeks of MOLAB have focused on reviewing land navigation. Midshipmen learned how an eight digit grid coordinate is mapped out with the use of a scale and protractor, and then practiced measuring distances and angles between points to prepare for eventually including them while giving a complete order. The next period of instruction focused on practicing with compasses to complete a land navigation course which mirrors yet another required evolution at OCS.

Writing and briefing five paragraph orders, the method used for running a SULE at OCS, was the next focus as midshipmen learned about each part of an order. They then worked to formulate and brief their own orders for review. Most recently, midshipmen reviewed fireteam and squad level formations in order to be able to bring the key elements of a SULE together for eventual practical application later on in the semester.

Many hours have and will go into the Marine Option’s preparations for OCS and all of them look forward to earning the title of United States Marine.

OCS PREPARATIONS UNDERWAY (Cont.)

The entrance to Marine Corps Base Quantico where marine option midshipmen will attend Officer Candidate School this summer (above).

The entrance to Marine Corps Base Quantico (WGNB) Newsletter
Retiring Executive Officer Commander Clayton A. Robinson receives a meritorious service medal from Commanding Officer Captain Charles C. Moore III (above).

Farewell to Commander Clayton Robinson

In early March the WGNB will say goodbye to their Executive Officer as Commander Clayton Robinson retires. Commander Clayton Robinson has served as the Executive Officer for the WGNB for the three years and has been an active duty service member for over twenty years. He has had a significant impact on future Navy and Marine Corps Officers and will be sorely missed.

Originally from Marietta, Ohio Commander Clayton Robinson attended the Naval Academy and earned a commission in 1996. He graduated with a Bachelors of Science Degree in History and service selected into the surface warfare community. Upon commissioning he began Division Officer training at Surface Warfare Officer School Command. From February 1997 through March 1999, he served as a Communication Officer and Ordnance Officer aboard the USS RUSSELL (DDG 59). In March of 1999, Commander Clayton Robinson was selected for department head and began Department Head training at Surface Warfare Officer School Command. After completing Department Head training, he served as Weapons Officer aboard the USS LABOON (DDG 58).

From May 2001 to June 2004, Commander Clayton Robison served as an Instructor and Billet Specialty Training Coordinator at Surface Warfare Officer Command where he was named “Junior Officer of the Year.” The following two years he served as the commissioning Combat Systems Officer aboard USS NITZE (DDG 94). Following that, he served as the Site Director at the Center for Security Forces, Chesapeake Learning Site. In July of 2009 Commander Clayton Robinson assumed command of Maritime Civil Affairs Squadron ONE. He served as the commanding officer until April of 2010, when he became the Operations Planner for the United States Central Command. His last billet prior to reporting to the University of Illinois was that of the Fleet Force Protection Officer for U.S. Naval Forces Europe, U.S. Naval Forces Africa and U.S. Sixth fleet in Naples, Italy.

All the while Commander Clayton Robinson served as an outstanding officer in the United States Navy, he was able to earn a degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the U.S. Naval War college as well as a degree in Business and Organizational Security Management from Webster University. Commander Clayton Robinson set the standard as an exemplary Naval Officer and the WGNB was lucky to be under his influence. Upon retirement, Commander Clayton robinson plans to move to Florida with his family and continue working.

Colorado Drill Meet

This past weekend the WGNB traveled to Boulder, Colorado to compete against other NROTC units in a military related competition. The event took place over two days and consisted of a drill competition, an endurance team competition, and a rifle/pistol team competition. The weekend looked to be a great learning experience for many midshipman considering that this is the first year that the WGNB has participated in the Colorado drill meet. On top of that, this was the first drill meet entirely for all of the fourth class midshipman that attended. Regardless of rank, everyone was excited to get there and represent the WGNB.

Now that the teams have returned we can look back on what proved to be a successful and fun weekend in the rockies. Although no trophies were brought home, all who participated gained valuable experience for future drill meets. The endurance team was tested heavily considering that the competition was the first time many of the competitors were able to run in the high altitude. Also, this year our drill team was made up almost entirely of fourth class midshipman with little to no rifle drill experience. So as much as of a disappointment losing was, the WGNB has a bright future ahead of itself and already has its eyes on the next drill meet.

Midshipmen after completing E-Team indoctrination last fall. This is the beginning of the training for any midshipman who hopes to compete in an E-Team competition such as Colorado (above).

WGNB Webstore

Recently, the supply department of the WGNB has been working towards the development of a webstore to purchase all items related to the WGNB! Their work has paid off and the site can be accessed via the link below. Be sure to share the link with friends, family, and all supporters of the WGNB.

http://Wgnb.logosoftwear.com

Commander Clayton A. Robinson inspects his new chair (above).

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