



World's Greatest Naval Battalion (WGNB) Newsletter

October 2017

Wisconsin Drill Meet

This October the Rifle/Pistol, Endurance, Color Guard, Drill, and Football teams competed in the University of Wisconsin NROTC Fall Invitational Meet against NROTC units from around the Midwest. On Friday the Rifle & Pistol team tested their marksmanship with both .22 caliber rifles and pistols. That evening, the Midshipmen attended a social event where they had the opportunity to meet Midshipmen from other schools. The following day, the WGNB Endurance, Color Guard, Drill, and Football teams competed with rain clouds looming overhead. Awake before dawn, E-Team conquered the Urban Adventure Race, where the six Midshipmen ran a course several miles long in flak jackets, and completed full body exercises. After finishing in 3rd place, Team captain, MIDN 1/C Christopher Leigh, says in terms of training, they will be, "laying it back a little until another competition comes [into their] sights." Shortly after the E-Team began their trek, the WGNB Color Guard mustered to perform their drill card. Proudly presenting the United States, Navy, and Marine Corps flags, the Color Guard received 3rd place. Comprised of mostly underclass Midshipmen, MIDN 3/C Betsy Rodriguez led the Platoon drill team to place 3rd. Shortly after, the Squad Drill team, led by MIDN 2/C Matthew Mah, went on to win 1st place. Throughout the day, while the the Drill teams ran their drill cards, the flag football teams played a double elimination tournament where the WGNB took 3rd place. After taking last place the previous year, the WGNB teams took 3rd place overall.



MIDN 3/C Betsy Rodriguez stands in front of her platoon during the drill meeting at University of Wisconsin (above). The First Class Navy Option Midshipmen hold up their service assignment moments after the public reveal (below).



Alumni Tailgate

To honor fallen Marine Captain Tony Slick, a 1989 alumnus of the WGNB, a large group of alumni and Midshipmen came together to pay tribute at the tailgate for the Rutgers vs. Fighting Illini football matchup. Organized by Tom and Trish Post, class of 1989, many retired and active duty senior Officers traveled from across the country with their families to reminisce with former classmates and to remember their time in the battalion. More importantly, some of Capt Slick's best friends from the WGNB spoke powerful words about his character and spirit, while emphasizing the risk associated with serving in the world's greatest fighting force. This tailgate was in memory of Capt Slick and for all the brave men and women like him who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our country. The WGNB wants to extend gratitude to the Alumni for their generous donations to the Midshipman Recreation Fund! We hope that the Midshipmen and Alumni relationship continues to flourish.



LtCol Don Modder USMCR Retired/Class of 1989 and Joyce Fisher, Captain Tony Slick's mother, stand side-by-side as some of Tony's classmates share a few words about their loved one.

Service Assignments - 1/C Navy Option

Across the nation, the Navy gave the First Class Navy Option Midshipmen their service assignments. Each Midshipman's service assignment determines which community they will join upon commissioning into the fleet: Surface Warfare, Pilot, Naval Flight Officer, Submarines, Reactor Design, Special Warfare (SEAL), or Special Operations (EOD). In order to emphasize the importance of this moment, MIDN 1/C Sean Pepin planned a public reveal for his classmates to receive their service assignments in front of fellow Midshipmen, Unit Staff, close family, and friends. Against all odds, all of the First Class Midshipman in the WGNB received their first choice! MIDN 1/C Alex Villafuerte was assigned Submarines, MIDN 1/C Alex Perello was assigned Surface Warfare Officer, MIDN 1/C Rune Brown was assigned Naval Flight Officer, and MIDN 1/C Ted Groebe, MIDN 1/C Sean Pepin, MIDN 1/C Nicholas Paulson, MIDN 1/C Dirk Husemann, MIDN 1/C Zach Thoren, MIDN 1/C Michael Brady, and MIDN 1/C Brian Todd were assigned Pilot.

"Contemporary NROTC" Project

This semester the Public Affairs staff of the WGNB has been tasked with a new project called "Contemporary NROTC." CDR Joe Rank (ret), a graduate of the battalion and former Public Affairs Officer, is currently working to finalize exhibits for the University of Illinois Welcome Center slated to open in Spring 2018. One of the exhibits will be devoted to "Illini in War and Peace." Among other things, it will document the University's 150 year tradition of military instruction. He has contacted the unit in hopes of acquiring more recent, high-quality, high-resolution, color photographs that depict contemporary ROTC activities. The goal of the Public Affairs staff is to take this opportunity to effectively archive all photos, documents, articles, and books produced by the University of Illinois Naval ROTC battalion over the past several decades. This will not only assist Mr. Rank in building an amazing exhibit but will also give the public access to these photos via a website link and preserve them for many years to come. In order to digitize the hundreds of pages of physical documents that are in the unit's possession, the Public Affairs staff has been in contact with the UIUC Archives department. This process is going to be a rather expensive investment and the WGNB is looking for ways to fund it. In doing so, we are asking for any monetary donations that would go towards our alumni fund to help cover this project. The heritage of the WGNB deserves to be preserved for the sake of past and future generations. If we don't do something to maintain all of this data, it will soon be lost. Please contact our Commanding Officer's Administrative Assistant Ms. Amy Carr (acarr@illinois.edu) if you are interested in donating.



Upcoming Events for the Public

If you are in the area, we welcome you to join us at any of the following future events!

- Tailgate vs. Wisconsin - 28 OCT 2017 at 0800
- Dad's Weekend Tailgate vs. Indiana - 11 NOV 2017 at TBD



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<https://www.facebook.com/IllinoisNROTC>

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Donate at:

<http://rotc.navy.illinois.edu/alumni-donation.html>