Welcome to NROTCU Rochester!

The first edition of the resurrected NROTC Rochester newsletter was very well received. I’m very happy to resume this means of informing family and friends of the unit about the many activities occurring. You can also get a glimpse of the Battalion in action by visiting their Facebook page, http://www.facebook.com/pages/Rochester-Navy-ROTC/335651753137213. As the many photos on the Facebook page portray, the semester has been very productive.

In August, we welcomed our largest incoming class in more than a decade. Our Freshmen or Fourth Class (4/C) Midshipmen come from all over the United States, truly representing the best and brightest of their generation - the future of our Navy and Marine Corps. They came to the unit with extraordinary capability, and yet would be the first to tell you that each has significantly improved through their own dedication and the efforts of the upperclassmen. Whether physical performance, military drill or academic study habits, the 4/C Midshipmen have fared well on a steep learning curve.

The Battalion showcased its ability in a regional ROTC competition at Cornell University in November. Once again, NROTC Rochester showed what consistent and demanding training can yield as they brought home a slew of trophies. That Military Excellence Competition was only one event in which the Battalion excelled. The articles in this issue will touch on many of their achievements over the past 3-4 months.

Each one of the Battalion activities is planned and executed by the Midshipmen leadership team. They exercise peer leadership, with all its challenges, balancing the many demands of their schedules as college students. As this semester comes to a close, MIDN Emily Rodenbush turns over the position of Battalion Commander, to MIDN Erik Smolinski, who will ably lead his fellow Midshipmen in the Spring Semester.

The Unit Staff experienced some turnover over the summer. New staff members include Commander Shawn Bohrer (Executive Officer), Lieutenant Sarah Brumley (Surface Warfare Officer) and Lieutenant Kevin Henderson (Nuclear Power/Submarine Officer). Each of these staff members teaches the Battalion naval science classes in addition to mentoring and other roles within the unit. If not obvious from my remarks, I am immensely proud of the unit. I consider it a blessing to be the Commanding Officer of such a fine staff and highly performing Battalion. I congratulate each member of NROTC Rochester for their superb performance and encourage you to be Ever Better. For those that provide the Midshipmen and staff such steadfast support - thank you. Your thoughts and prayers are well placed.

CAPT Jeff Bartkoski, USN
Commanding Officer, Naval ROTC Unit Rochester

From the XO's Desk

Greetings from the desk of the Executive Officer!

In August, I had the privilege of relieving CDR Ed Fischer as he retired from the Navy after 22 years of service. My wife, Jeni, and our two young children relocated to the Rochester area this past July after finishing up my most recent assignment as Executive Officer on USS GUNSTON HALL (LSD 44), which was homeported at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek in Norfolk, VA. My family and I are especially excited about our new assignment here at NROTC Rochester and are enjoying everything the community has to offer.

I am a Surface Warfare Officer and have served on a variety of platforms during my previous 16 years of service to include destroyers, amphibious assault ships and mine countermeasure ships. Being somewhat fresh from the fleet, I am looking forward to sharing my recent observations and experience with our Midshipmen as well as take away as much as I can from their perspectives.

This semester has been particularly busy for the Battalion and Unit Staff and their hard work and effort can be reflected in their strong showing at the Cornell University Military Excellence Competition as well as with the increased presence the Battalion has made on our campuses and in the community. As the fall semester comes to an end, the physical layout of NROTC Rochester will be taking on a new look. Work on an addition to Morey Hall is progressing which will require about a third of our spaces to be relocated over the Christmas/New Year period. Our new main office complex will feature a new Battalion Training Room, providing our Midshipmen a much needed area for meetings, training and informal gatherings. While no move is ever without its difficulties, our new facilities should greatly enhance the support we are able to provide our Midshipmen and mission.

I will wrap this up by saying again how excited I am to be a part of this fantastic NROTC Unit and University. I am thankful for being able to serve our extremely professional Midshipmen and look forward to seeing them commission and go on to do great things in our Navy and Marine Corps.

MELIORA!

CDR Shawn Bohrer, USN
Executive Officer, Naval ROTC Unit Rochester
Thank you for your interest in our newsletter! I have worked with a handful of Midshipmen over the past semester to compile photographs, articles, and accurate reports of the Battalion’s accomplishments. Whether you are reading this newsletter as an alumnus, parent, friend, or relative, it is my sincerest hope that it serves as both an informant of our activities throughout the past semester, as well as a recognition of the hard work contributed by each Midshipman in our Battalion. The achievements of each individual are the successes of our Battalion, and vice versa, and this newsletter certainly aims to highlight that.

One particularly exciting accomplishment this semester has been establishing a club with the University of Rochester, fittingly named Sea and Anchor Detail. While Sea and Anchor Detail embodies many of the same values and goals of our Unit, it is not in any way a recruiting device for NROTC. Our obtaining “club status” at the University of Rochester will open up a new realm of possibility for the members of NROTC Rochester. Sea and Anchor Detail will seek out new opportunities to improve the greater Rochester community, as well as reach out to the University student body, to promote awareness of local, national, and global issues. Secondarily, Sea and Anchor Detail will aim to educate the Rochester community on military customs and knowledge, as well as promote leadership growth.

Currently, the club is comprised of undergraduate students from the University of Rochester, Rochester Institute of Technology, SUNY Brockport, and St. John Fisher College in the NROTC program at UR, and welcomes membership of all undergraduate students at the University.

One of the many benefits to obtaining club status is our ability to officially accept donations and hold fundraisers to facilitate various training events for Midshipmen. If you are interested in donating to Sea and Anchor Detail, kindly contact our Midshipman Community Relations Officer at commro@nrotcrochester.org.

MIDN 1/C Olivia Wittman, USNR Communications Officer

BNCO’s Corner

I started this position with key goals in mind, including increasing our unit cohesiveness, our presence in the community and our development as leaders. With that in mind, my leadership team challenged the Battalion to adapt the tenets of the CNO’s Sailing Directions, warfighting first, operate forward, and be ready, such that they are more applicable to us. I am pleased to say that we met these challenges head on and took great steps in improving as a Battalion.

In the spirit of warfighting first, we pushed to always keep academics as our top priority as well as to increase our leadership ability and military knowledge. I’m sure that the 4/C can attest to an increase in military knowledge, though we have all grown in terms of our leadership.

In terms of operating forward, we sought to increase our involvement in the community and with ROTC Units at neighboring schools. We successfully initiated a 9/11 Vigil and successfully aided in events of RADM Pybus during Me liora Weekend in order to reach out to the University Community. In addition, we have gained preliminary club status for Sea and Anchor Detail, which we hope will increase our presence in the University Community. We also played host to RIT’s Army and Air Force ROTC Units during our Joint ROTC Warrior Day (during which we also proved our exceptional team work by winning the competition).

Be ready: The CNO’s Sailing Directions state, “Harness the teamwork, talent, and imagination of our diverse forces to be ready to fight and responsibly employ our resources.” We all took ownership in our billets and in our title of Midshipman. We instituted a Personnel Qualification Standards (PQS) system to increase our professionalism and accountability. We proved our teamwork at Cornell by taking first overall in MEC and several other trophies in Drill, as well as our excellence at Warrior Day.

I’d like to thank you for all of the hard work that you’ve put through this semester. It has truly been a pleasure and I am excited at both the progress we’ve made and the future success that this Battalion has in store for it. I have no doubt that MIDN Smolinski and his leadership team will lead the Battalion to continually improve.

MIDN 1/C Emily Rodenbush, USNR Battalion Commander

Editor’s Column
You’re standing in formation, holding this small yellow booklet, trying to remember everything your eyes meet. There are people around you in uniforms telling you where to go, moving you from place to place; you have no idea what is going on. You start second guessing your decision to come to this place. Then training begins and you have no clue how to operate under this sort of pressure; welcome to NROTC Freshman Orientation.

You have just undertaken probably the biggest challenge in your life. You are given more instructions than your mind can even process, and you are expected to operate efficiently and effectively. However, everything at this program has a purpose. Take 18 year old high school graduates who most likely have not been on their own yet, and show them what life in the military is about while instilling basic military values.

During your brief 3-4 day stay at Freshman Orientation, you are expected to absorb a vast amount of information. The staff is all upperclassmen, who have gone through the same training. Leadership by example is stressed at NROTC Rochester, and Freshman Orientation is a prime example.

The entire event is orchestrated by juniors and seniors with the guidance of unit staff. They plan classes, leadership reaction courses, physical training events which are essential to the freshman’s foundation. The short Orientation takes months to plan with many hours of preparation, training, and rehearsals.

Each year NROTC Rochester hosts a successful Freshman Orientation and marks the beginning of a very tough year for our incoming Fourth Class Midshipman. It is a time of dramatic growth and evolution for them; at first exposure they have no concept of team work or putting others before themselves. After their first year, they emerge eager to learn, quick to respond, and constantly improving themselves—and improving our organization. Meliora, ever better.
E-2 flight crew visits NROTC Rochester

By Matthew Rogers
MIDN 4/C

Cloudy and overcast days do not seem like ideal conditions to fly airplanes, but on October 23, five United States Naval Officers, four men and one woman, of VAW-125 flew from Norfolk, Virginia to visit the Midshipmen of NROTC Rochester. The plane they flew was no ordinary airliner or jet; it was a Gruman E-2C Hawkeye, the kind of plane most will only see on television or in books. This particular E-2 recently returned from deployment aboard the USS Carl Vinson; the same ship that buried Osama Bin Laden at sea when he was killed by Naval Special Warfare Operators and the same aircraft that has flown countless surveillance missions across the world. It was an honor to be able to see such a plane.

The event was attended by Midshipmen and Unit Staff of NROTC Rochester. The crew wasted no time in showing the young men and women everything they possibly could on this neat aircraft. In groups of two and three the pilots and flight officers took turns showing each part of the plane. The Midshipmen were able to take turns sitting in the cockpit and were even given the opportunity to try on the helmets that the pilots wore and turn the steering wheel. They were taken to the rear of the plane as well and shown how surveillance and other duties were performed. Along with viewing the cockpit and rear of the plane, the pilots explained the different procedures for taking off, flying, and landing. But what most Midshipmen found beneficial was the crew’s encouragement of questions. As all Midshipmen in attendance were aviation hopefuls, many found it quite informational to be able to ask about the requirements and training involved to become a pilot or naval flight officer. The crew also told interesting stories and shared experiences they have had while carrying out missions or general life in the Navy.

Lieutenant Matthew Scheel, USN was the officer in charge of creating such a great event for the Midshipmen. LT Scheel intends to have the plane come back soon and make it an event where the entire unit has an opportunity to participate. This event has had a positive impact on the Midshipmen who attended and encouraged an interest in those who may eventually choose an aviation career. MIDN 4/C John Siniscalco said, “I thought I wanted to fly before, but after today I have realized there is nothing else I would rather do.” Ultimately this proved to be an overall unique and positive experience, and one that was enjoyed by all in attendance.

Staying fit and healthy at NROTC Rochester

By Edmond Boullianne (MIDN 1/C) and David DeLong (MIDN 2/C)

Every Tuesday and Thursday at 0630, the Midshipmen of NROTC Rochester muster on the PT field to ensure that they are staying fit. Completing CrossFit based workouts created by the Athletics Officer, the Battalion works towards the individual improvement of each member.

For those Midshipmen who need a little extra help to pass the Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA), they conduct separate workouts on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday that focus on the areas that need a little more work.

Additionally, the Marine Options of the Battalion have a separate workout on Friday mornings where they learn the basics of becoming a Marine Option, including tactics and leadership while also conducting a workout.

The Battalion also has many events that challenge the Midshipmen physically. Many in the Battalion have run in the Rochester Marathon, including MIDN 1/C Christopher MacKoul, MIDN 1/C Emily Rodenbush, MIDN 2/C Erika Gratidge and MIDN 2/C Ryan Baptiste.

Some also participated in the half marathon as well as the marathon relay, where four people each run one 6 mile section of the marathon.

In addition, the Battalion has participated in many local 5k races including the Pound the Ground 5k for wounded warriors and the Shamrock 5k to benefit cancer research. Some Midshipmen even chose to run in boots and utilities.

While 5k races are fun, some Midshipmen believe they need to go to the next level. This year we had ten motivated Midshipmen travel down to New Jersey with the Marine Officer Instructor, Capt David Chapman, to compete in a Tough Mudder, a twelve-mile obstacle course designed by British Special Forces.

In the annual Cornell Drill Competition, the Midshipmen not only compete in drill, but also fitness challenges. From swimming relays to the 10k race to the PFA, Midshipmen can always find a competition that can challenge them.

Physical fitness is not the only way we try to stay fit. We also stress the importance of eating the right food to bring out our full potential.

Overall, the NROTC Rochester Unit is dedicated to physical fitness. This along with a focus on academics and extensive leadership training helps form the strong foundation of future Navy and Marine Corps Officers.
Annual Joint-ROTC Veterans Day Cadence Run

By Giorgi Bekauri
MIDN 4/C

On the morning of Friday, November 9th, Midshipmen and Cadets from the Navy, Army, and Air Force ROTC Units in the Rochester area mustered in Fauver Stadium for the 15th Annual Joint-Service ROTC Veterans Day Cadence Run. The young men and women of tomorrow’s military joined together to honor those who have served in our community and our country. Afterwards, a few attended the Annual Rochester Veteran’s Day Breakfast at RIT. Veterans and active duty service members from the community came to show their respect and dedication to our nation's veterans.

As their classmates were still warmly sleeping, Midshipmen and Cadets rose before the sun to make the annual trek to the Highland Park Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Enthusiastically calling cadences, they ran the 1.5 miles to the memorial with the help of Rochester Police escorts. As the three battalions arrived at the Memorial, the atmosphere changed. On the run over, the energy and excitement that often characterize these young leaders was abundant, but once they entered the memorial, an aura of calm and solemn respect came over the entire group. Watch caps were removed, and everyone was silent as the sun slowly lit the sky in the East. The cadence run carries its own significance to each Midshipman and Cadet who runs in it. MIDN 3/C Mackenzie Gage, a Marine Option from UR expressed his feelings about the run. “The cadence run to the Highland Park Memorial is a way that the Unit here at Rochester recognizes Veterans Day and local veterans’ contributions to this country. It also allows us to inform the rest of our school about the importance of Veterans Day.”

Executive Assistant to the President at Rochester Institute of Technology, Dr. Barry Culhane, joined the Midshipmen and cadets at the memorial to say a few words. Having served in the Army as a medic from 1969 – 1971, Dr. Culhane knows what it means to serve his country. He left everyone with a simple, yet fitting, statement for many of our veterans; “They gave all of their tomorrows for our todays.”

Unfortunately, this seems too often forgotten in today’s society. With a war whose consequences are not always seen in daily life, it’s easy to forget how much our veterans have done for us. For MIDN 4/C Alexander Dudek from SUNY Brockport, Veterans Day is about remembrance. “I didn’t know one person whose name was on a plaque there, but they gave the most, fighting for us. In general, Veterans Day is remembering those who served. It’s important for us to remember and to know that every day there are still those out there fighting. They are the ones who fight for us to be free and who fight so we never have to worry about a war on our own shores. Often, I think it’s the ones who give the most that are most easily forgotten.”

And while many of us may feel slightly removed from our veterans, for others, Veterans Day has a personal significance. “Growing (cont. under Veterans Day, p. 7)
By Joseph Thibodeau
MIDN 3/C

On September 11th, 2012, Midshipmen from the NROTC Rochester Unit participated in two events in remembrance of the fateful day in 2001. As is tradition on September 11th, the Battalion began the day with a cadence run around the University of Rochester campus. Later in the day, numerous Midshipmen volunteered to stand at attention in fifteen-minute intervals on the Eastman Quadrangle as part of the only campus-wide recognition of the anniversary of the 2001 attacks.

The cadence run route encompassed every dorm building on the University’s campus (excluding the Riverview Apartments). While the sleeping students may not have appreciated Midshipmen calling cadence outside their windows at 0700, it was ultimately a great way to help remind the University about the importance of September 11th.

While the cadence run has happened for several years in a row, the vigil held this year was the first of its kind. Vigils have been held in previous years, but never with this much involvement from the NROTC Battalion. The vigil was planned completely by MIDN 1/C Olivia Wittman and benefitted from the involvement of NROTC Midshipmen as well as Army and Air Force ROTC Cadets from Rochester Institute of Technology. Cadets and Midshipmen stood at attention in sets of three (one flag-bearer and two guards) for fifteen minutes at a time. Since it occurred at such a central location on the River Campus, several students and faculty were seen stopping and observing the Midshipmen and Cadets at attention. The President of the University of Rochester, Joel Seligman, came out to speak to the Midshipmen and thank them for putting on the vigil. The vigil was covered by several local media stations.

The NROTC Rochester Midshipmen are continuing with as well as creating new traditions to remember that awful day 11 years ago. While the cadence run may not be the most popular form of remembrance by University of Rochester students, it is undoubtedly an effective way to raise awareness and a popular tradition with the Midshipmen. The cadence run and the vigil, with its amazing feedback from both the University and the local community, are expected to become traditions on campus.

Veterans Day

up in a military family, I have always been proud of the military and my family members. Veterans Day is important because it allows others to recognize the significance of their service and it’s something that I am very proud of,” stated MIDN 4/C Lindsey Curtis.

The Veterans Day Breakfast at RIT was another way through which some reflected on the deeds of our veterans. With Color Guard and guest speakers from each battalion, it was a welcoming way to reflect as a community. Lieutenant Colonel Edward Whitaker of the RIT Army ROTC Battalion reminded us that while Veterans Day is important, we must remember to honor our veterans throughout the year, even if it’s in small ways. Likewise, our own Commanding Officer, Captain Jeffrey Bartkoski, had a reminder to those in uniform. “As someone who is still active duty and is still in uniform, it’s easy to not realize what they have done, and to think they are just doing what I do. I think it’s important that both active duty members and civilians focus on taking care of our veterans after they leave the service.”

For everyone, Veterans Day carries a special meaning. Whether it’s about remembering those who have given the ultimate sacrifice, honor those who we know personally, or raising awareness in our communities, Veterans Day is a day of gratitude and respect. These feelings are captured and shared by all branches of the military when our future leaders join to show their thanks with the Cadence Run. For them, it’s about honoring a legacy of honor and excellence which they one day will join. It’s about their nation’s past, and their own individual future. And for all of us, it is about saying thank you.
Navy Birthday celebration

By Alia Clark
MIDN 4/C

Our country would not be the great nation that it is today if it were not for the founding of our United States Navy on October 13, 1775. From what it started out as to what it has evolved into, the Navy’s existence is instrumental to our nation’s security.

The NROTC Unit at the University of Rochester understands the importance of acknowledging this significant event. In order to show its thanks, NROTC Rochester held a special birthday ceremony during a lab period on the Wednesday prior. Each of the four companies had a representative come forward and speak about an important event that happened during the Navy’s history.

The Navy first began as a fleet with only two vessels each with an eighty man crew. They deployed for three months at a time to transport munitions and stores to the troops. This was to take up arms against the British leaders because they threatened to stop the colonies trade. So the colonies started up their own defenses to defend the local waters.

Now it is the largest navy in the world and has 286 ships in active duty and more than 3700 aircraft. The U.S. Navy also has the world’s largest carrier fleet and a battle fleet that’s greater than the next top 13 fleets combined. The Navy service has 321,053 personnel on active duty and 106,188 in the Navy Reserve. Needless to say it has expanded greatly and is an imperative part of this nation’s defense system.

During the ceremony, Captain Jeffery Bartkoski, Commanding Officer of NROTC Rochester, read the CNO’s speech to the Battalion. Hearing this gave the Battalion the sense of belonging to something so much bigger than the unit that we’re a part of today. The CNO’s words made us realize that joining the 237 year old Navy is not only an honor, but a privilege. We have been given a responsibility that most are not willing to accept. Knowing that there’s a whole nation standing behind us, is a rewarding feeling. This Navy’s Birthday was not something that the United States or the University of Rochester NROTC unit were willing to let go unnoticed.

Midshipmen attend Navy Birthday Ball at Diplomat Club

By Robert Wieber
MIDN 3/C

On October 13, 2012, the Navy celebrated its 237th birthday. In honor of this event, Midshipmen and Staff from NROTC Rochester attended a joint-services ball at the Diplomat Club.

Various members of the United States and Canadian Military were in attendance, including Retired Army Reserve Officers Major General Dennis Lutz, Major General Barclay Wellman, and Major General Nord Rapple. Additional featured guests included Commander John Lowe, Commanding Officer of Naval Operational Support Center Rochester, our very own Captain Jeffrey Bartkoski, and Rear Admiral Sean Pybus, Commander, Naval Special Warfare Command. The Battalion had the privilege of meeting RADM Pybus during multiple Meliora Weekend events, which took place on the same weekend.

Eleven Midshipmen represented our Unit with an outstanding initiative from the Fourth Class (4/C). For many of these Midshipmen, this was their first chance to interact with members of the armed services outside of our unit, and in a casual setting. This undoubtedly proved to be an excellent learning experience, and showed the 4/C that, though the Navy works extremely hard, we definitely know how to throw a birthday ball and have a good time. All Midshipmen had an enjoyable experience and would do it again, given the chance.

The annual Navy Birthday Ball is an important event for our Battalion to be associated with because it gives Midshipmen a chance to interact with officers and enlisted members of all services, and learn from their experiences. Not only does it display initiative by the Battalion but it also demonstrates our involvement in the Rochester community.
USMC Birthday traditions upheld

By Jamie Scott
MIDN 4/C

On the afternoon of Wednesday, November 7th, 2012, the NROTC Rochester Battalion held an early celebration in honor of the United States Marine Corps Birthday. The Marine Corps was founded on November 10, 1775, in Tun Tavern, Philadelphia when the Continental Congress established the Continental Marines by ordering “two battalions of Marines to be raised.” There was never a formal celebration of this date until 1921 when it was suggested to Lieutenant General John A. Lejeune that it should become a celebrated Marine Corps holiday. LtGen Lejeune wrote an order that was to be read every year on that date expressing the history and what it means to be a Marine. The first formal celebration of the birth of the U.S. Marine Corps was held in 1925.

NROTC Rochester’s celebration began with all Midshipmen, dressed in their service dress blues (SDBs), standing in formation with their respective companies. Then, each company came to attention by order of their Company Commander as the Color Guard marched out the colors, and the Unit Staff and Battalion saluted as the National Anthem was played.

At this time, the birthday cake was marched out to the center of the court, and Marine Officer Instructor Captain David Chapman read the letter from LtGen Lejeune’s order:

“The term Marine has come to signify all that is highest in military efficiency and soldierly virtue . . . the men of our Nation will regard us as worthy successors to the long line of illustrious men who have served as “Soldiers of the Sea” since the founding of the Corps”. This really illuminates the pride and honor in the history of the Corps and of bearing the name United States Marine.

Capt Chapman also read the letter from the current Commandant of the Marine Corps, General James F. Amos, which stated “Now more than ever, America needs its Marines...we know who we are...we know what we stand for.” This shows how important the Marines still are today and that they live up to the high expectations that have been set by the great services of past Marines.

Following the tradition of the cake-cutting ceremony established in 1952, the oldest Marine present, Capt Chapman, and the youngest Marine Option Midshipman present, MIDN 4/C Jamie Scott, cut the cake with a Mameluke sword together and ate the first two pieces. This signifies the experienced Marines passing on knowledge to the younger generations.

As the cake was being marched away, the Battalion sang the Marine Corps Hymn, concluding the ceremony. The Marine Corps Birthday celebration is a timeless tradition and honor to participate in.
Second Annual Joint-ROTC Warrior Day

By Ryan Baptiste
MIDN 2/C

On September 28, 2012, the Army and Air Force ROTC units joined forces with Naval ROTC at the Genesee Valley Park in Rochester, NY for the second annual Joint-ROTC Warrior Day. This event allowed Midshipmen and Cadets to interact in a competitive environment while strengthening their bonds as fellow future officers of the United States military.

The competition consisted of tug of war, capture the flag, touch football, soccer, sack racing, and Jell-O eating. Coming in first place overall was NROTC Rochester, followed by Army, and then Air Force.

Highlights of these events included a loud and close Jell-O eating competition which saw NROTC unquestionably the victor. Another clean sweep taken by NROTC was the gruesome tug of war competition. Other popular battles took place on the football and soccer field as well as an impromptu arm wrestling tournament inspired, not surprisingly, by the Marine Options.

After several events, the competition broke for a cookout allowing the participants to enjoy some food as well as each other’s company.

An unexpected bonus to the day’s agenda was the opportunity to witness the promotion of Air Force ROTC’s Major Paul Cannon to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. It was truly a moving moment as LtCol Cannon said, “I can’t imagine I would rather this ceremony take place anywhere other than with the future of our military who will be taking my place in a few years and with my family.”

Cadet Kate Gunderson from Rochester Institute of Technology’s Air Force ROTC said, “It was such a great opportunity to experience the camaraderie amongst the different branches that I’ll get to serve next to once I graduate.”

This teamwork, sportsmanship, and unity are truly what made the event such a success.

Following the completion of the events, a friendly and non-scored water balloon fight ensued between the three units to close out the festivities.

The guest of honor for the event was Army Major General Dennis Lutz (Ret.), President of the Genesee chapter of the United States Reserve Officer Association. He donated the Joint-ROTC Warrior Day trophy, which is currently housed at the winning unit, NROTC Rochester.
Upholding a tradition: Dining In

By Anthony Momb
MIDN 1/C

As the final cohesive Battalion event of the semester, Dining In serves as a time for all members of NROTC Rochester to come together in camaraderie and reflect upon the previous semester. This reflection occurs in many forms throughout the night; the officers and Midshipmen mingle throughout the evening and discuss events of the semester, toasts are made to various aspects of the Navy, and a meal is shared by the Battalion.

The true fun of the night doesn’t begin until the President of the Mess declares that the floor is “open for fines.” At this point, brave Midshipmen can come forward and attempt to charge another member of the Battalion with an infraction. These infractions range from the mild (losing the company’s guide) to the philosophical (being confused with one’s place in life) to the outright horrendous (abuse of one’s teddy bear).

These charges are normally met with cries of “Say it ain’t so!” or “The humanity!” As with any fair trial the accused is allowed to prepare a defense and to plead their case before the President of the Mess. Should this defense seem adequate, the President may throw out the case and fine the accuser, otherwise, the offender must pay their dues.

The other part of the night that everyone looks forward to is the skits. These are performed by the different classes and companies, and incorporate different events from the semester. Of particular note this year were the skits created by the First and Fourth Class.

The First Class produced a dance dare video in which they danced incognito behind Unit Staff members at various events throughout the semester. (View Dance Dare video online at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Udmq_EQKM_s&feature=related) The freshmen performed their annual skit detailing their experience of NROTC Freshman Orientation. However, this year they managed to outdo themselves, producing a skit that incorporated the traditional Christmas poem “Twas the night before Christmas” in the telling of their tale. With rhyming lines such as “The Fourth Class lined up, excited but scared/ The cute little freshmen thought they were prepared,” and interjected skits between couples, the entire room was erupting in choruses of laughter.

Dining In’s combination of fun times, good food, and tradition make it one of the most anticipated events of the fall semester. Many of the Midshipmen wait all year to make use of their fines or in crafting a skit that will leave everyone in tears of laughter.

Cape Ability Outrigger Dinner

By John Emery
MIDN 1/C

On September 14, 2012, several Midshipmen from NROTC Rochester attended a dinner in honor of the wounded warriors participating in Cape Ability Outrigger Ohana’s Annual Rochester River Challenge canoe race. At this event, we were able to interact with the participants of the race, as well as their families. Sharing a meal with these individuals proved to be both inspiring and enjoyable, as many of them had incredible tales to tell of their service. It was remarkable that these wounded warriors had recovered from horrific battle-sustained injuries and were now able to compete in such a physically demanding event.

I was seated at a table with the local event coordinator and the guest speaker, a retired Army Major General. Although neither of these gentlemen were competing in the event, listening to what they had to say about their military experience was just as interesting.

The event coordinator spoke of the challenges of creating and hosting an event such as this canoe race, but said that it was worth it to honor those who served their country and suffered so much. Speaking to the guest speaker was just as rewarding. Despite his long years of service, he could still recall stories from when he was a junior officer, and was very interested to hear what this Midshipman’s future plans in the Navy were.

It was truly an honor to meet the warriors, their families, and those responsible for an outstanding event, in such an informal setting. There can be no doubt that this experience imprinted the true meaning of service on the minds of those who attended and it will be an event that will be remembered throughout their military careers.
By Mackie Gage
MIDN 3/C

On Saturday, November 17th, 2012, NROTC Rochester competed in the annual Cornell University Invitational Drill Competition (CUIDC) and Military Excellence Competition (MEC). Rochester took home the trophy for 1st Overall MEC. The competitors included the Naval Academy, West Point, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Villanova, Norwich, University of Pennsylvania, Penn State, and George Washington University.

MEC events test physical fitness, and Rochester fielded a team for every MEC event at Cornell. Rochester began the day by dominating the swimming events. MIDN 3/C Joshua Nysenbaum captained the swim teams, consisting of Midshipmen Jonathan Stone (4/C), Matthew Rogers (4/C), Luke White (4/C), Giorgi Bekauri (4/C), Alia Clark (4/C), and Sebastian Romesser (4/C), which took 1st Place in the 4x100 IM, and 2nd Place in both the 4x100 Relay and the Crescendo. In the 4x400 Relay track event, Midshipmen Benjamin Desch (1/C), Anthony Paschke (2/C), Mackenzie Gage (3/C) and Grant Salk (4/C) claimed 1st Place in a tight race, beating University of Pennsylvania by less than a second. MIDN 2/C David DeLong won 1st Place in the 10K race, continuing his pattern of running excellence in MEC events. The Ironman event consisted of a 500 meter swim, max set of pushups in two minutes, max set of sit-ups in two minutes, max set of pull-ups (males) or 70-second max arm hang (females) and a 3-mile run. Rochester’s Ironman team, consisting of Midshipmen Erika Grattidge (team captain, 2/C), Kunle Akinpelu (1/C), Ryan Baptiste (2/C) and Mackenzie Gage (3/C), earned 3rd Place in this competition.

However, the story of the day was the success of the Platoon Drill Team, both individually by two particular Fourth Class Midshipmen, and as a whole. Unlike most other schools, NROTC Rochester’s Platoon Drill Team consists of the entire freshman class; this armada of Midshipmen barely fit on the drill and inspection decks! Due to an injury sustained by MIDN 2/C Connor Kelley, Sergeant Brenten Bradley stepped up to lead the platoon after working with them for only a week. With fantastic bearing and attention to detail, the team took home 3rd Place in Platoon Inspection. The day ended with the most surprising highlight of all during the Individual Drill Routine (IDR). Midshipmen Jessica Locci (4/C) and Victoria Eskilson (4/C) took 1st and 2nd Place in this competition, respectively. IDR in years past has typically been won by upperclassman from various service academies, but this year none of them could top the hard work and dedication that these two 4/C put into preparing for Cornell. It was a successful day; as described by MIDN Nysenbaum, Officer in Charge of coordinating Rochester’s participation in CUIDC 2012, “We trained and prepared well, so as expected, our performance was nothing short of outstanding,” said Nysenbaum. NROTC Rochester took home 10 trophies for competing in 12 events between the Drill and MEC categories.
RESULTS

BATTALION EVENTS

Overall MEC
4x100 IM swim relay
Alia Clark, Giorgi Bekauri, Joshua Nysenbaum, Luke White
10K Run
David DeLong
4x400m run
Grant Salk, Mackenzie Gage, Benjamin Desch, Anthony Paschke
IDR
Jessica Locci

4x100 Freestyle Swim Relay
Joshua Nysenbaum, Luke White, Matthew Rogers, Jonathan Stone

Crescendo Swim Relay
Alia Clark, Matthew Rogers, Sebastian Romesser, Luke White
IDR
Victoria Eskilson

Iron Man
Erika Grattidge, Ryan Baptiste, Kunle Akinpelu, Mackenzie Gage

Platoon Inspection
By Christopher MacKoul

MIDN 1/C

Every year, NROTC Rochester participates in the University of Rochester’s homecoming, Meliora Weekend. This year, the Unit welcomed one of the most prominent members of our alumni community: Rear Admiral Sean A. Pybus, Commander, Naval Special Warfare Command. RADM Pybus is one of the few Navy SEAL graduates from the University of Rochester. This was an amazing opportunity for the Midshipmen to hear from and speak to someone so influential and prominent within the Navy who at one time had been in the same exact place that these students are now.

This year also boasted one of the largest NROTC Alumni turnouts the University of Rochester has seen in the past several years. Additionally, as in years past, NROTC Midshipmen were responsible for conducting security throughout the weekend, and Color Guard performed at the Navy Birthday Ball on Saturday evening.

RADM Pybus addressed the Midshipmen and alumni early Friday afternoon and opened to floor to a question and answer session where many alumni and parents had the opportunity to ask questions on various topics. It was a great opportunity and experience for everyone to hear honest, straightforward answers and opinions from such a high ranking Naval Officer.

Afterwards, RADM Pybus and many alumni joined a handful of Midshipmen in the unit for an open house where the Midshipmen had the opportunity to speak one-on-one with him and many other alumni on their experiences in the Navy and Marine Corps.

On Saturday, RADM Pybus attended a NROTC Alumni brunch and question and answer session early in the morning and later addressed the University populace on the role of Special Warfare Operations in Protecting America. This final presentation saw every seat and most of the standing space within Hoyt Auditorium filled.

MIDN 1/C Emily Rodenbush stands with Captain Jeffrey Bartkoski (left) and Rear Admiral Sean Pybus (right) following a NROTC Alumni panel and presentation featuring RADM Pybus.

TEAM EFFORT

NROTC Rochester Midshipmen and Staff participate in athletic events and competitions throughout the year. (Left to Right) Pictured are teams from the Kappa Delta Sharmrock 5K, Tough Mudder, and Rochester Marathon.
**Midshipman of the Month**

**September**

**MIDN Rogers**

MIDN Rogers has been awarded Midshipman of the Month. MIDN Rogers is recognized for his contributions and dedication to the betterment of himself and this Battalion. Despite passing the inventory Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA), Rogers attends remedial Physical Training (PT) on Friday morning in order to get that extra workout during the week which he hopes will prove fruitful when it comes time for the official PFA. Rogers also has volunteered at virtually every opportunity he was able to. From the Veterans Day vigil on the first week of his ROTC career to multiple 5k runs and nearly every event for Meliorea Weekend, this Midshipman is constantly working to make a name for himself within the unit and our community. There is no doubt that MIDN Rogers will continue at this rate and become an integral part of this unit.

**October**

**MIDN Gage**

MIDN Gage has shown a high degree of initiative, professionalism, physical fitness, and growth during the month of October. As a platoon commander for Alpha Company, he was a driving force in a fundraiser which yielded nearly half of the company’s dues. He represented the Battalion by participating in the demanding “Tough Mudder” in New Jersey. Furthermore, his Company Commander has witnessed his personal growth as a leader. He has consistently shown initiative by taking charge of his platoon and anticipating direction. On at least four occasions, he was given orders which he had already completed, exemplifying his initiative and dedication to the Battalion. His high level of physical fitness is demonstrated by his Physical Fitness Test (PFT) score of 296 out of 300, and a perfect score on the Combat Fitness Test (CFT).

**November**

**MIDN Nysenbaum**

MIDN Nysenbaum showed a high degree of professionalism and adaptability during the month of November. In MIDN Kelley’s absence, he fulfilled his role as Drill/MEC Chief in an exemplary manner. His hard work was reflected in the flawless transition of personnel and weapons to and from Cornell. MIDN Nysenbaum’s professional attitude contributed directly to the Battalion’s highly successful showing at the Cornell University Invitational Drill Competition. It is with the utmost enthusiasm that his Company Commander recommended MIDN Nysenbaum as the Midshipman of the Month for November 2012.
Hail and Farewell
Welcome Aboard!
Commander Shawn Behrer
Executive Officer
Lieutenant Kevin Henderson
Nuclear Power Officer
Lieutenant Sarah Bramley
Surface Warfare Officer

OUTGOING
BATTALION COMMANDER
Emily Rodenbush
BATTALION EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Natalie May
BATTALION OPERATIONS OFFICER
Benjamin Desch
ADJUTANT
Jonathan Godbolt
ATHLETICS OFFICER
Edmond Boullianne
DRILL/MEC OFFICER
Connor Kelley
LOGISTICS OFFICER
Anthony Paschke
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
Olivia Wittman
TRAINING OFFICER
Joseph Finkle
ALPHA COMPANY CO
Brenten Bradley
BRAVO COMPANY CO
John Emery
CHARLIE COMPANY CO
Rebekah Fleming
DELTA COMPANY CO
Ross Spinelli

INCOMING
Erik Smolinski
Olivia Wittman
Joseph Finkle
John Emery
David DeLong
Connor Kelley
Reid Muller
Trevor DeVisser
Edmond Boullianne
Brenten Bradley
Ryan Baptiste
Anthony Momb
Jonathan Godbolt

Battalion Staff

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Newsletter Staff
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