



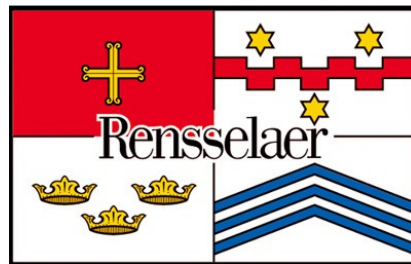
# NROTCU RPI HI LINE

24 OCTOBER 2009

## CAPTAIN'S CORNER

BY CAPTAIN KREMER

Greetings to family, friends and shipmates from the shores of the Hudson River. The last days of summer weather (not that we had a summer this year) are in full retreat, the winter seems to be approaching faster than ever. Over the summer our battalion has grown. Following the commissioning of 11 Ensigns and 4 Second Lieutenants and the arrival of a new freshman class, we are up to 89 plus a STA-21 student. This year we added 27 freshmen, including two Marine Option, one Union College student and 3 college programmers. We had a few more at the start of Orientation Week, but some things have changed and we are now at 27. As I start my final year before retirement, I had hoped to reach 100 Midshipmen, but it was not to be. We have grown every year for the last four years, so we are on the right glide slope and I am happy with that. I am especially



pleased to see two of our students (past and present) with siblings in the freshmen class, a testament to the legacy you are building at RPI. The schedule is filling up fast with the involvement of the color guard in numerous athletic events; the grand opening of the EVAC stadium during Homecoming/Reunion weekend; the parents' weekend agenda topped off with the annual flag football game against Air Force followed by a barbeque and demonstrations/displays in the battalion area; annual Navy/Marine Corps Birthday Ball; and Holy Cross and Cornell MECs. We continue to make contact with many NROTC RPI alumni in an attempt to establish and grow ties between students and alumni that will produce opportunities for mentoring and networking far into the future. Are any of the alumni interested in forming an alumni association for the RPI NROTC pro-

### Inside this issue:

CAPTAIN'S CORNER	1
OCS	1
O WEEK	4
1/C CRUISE	4
LT KRETSCHMANN	5
CORTRAMID	7
LT MCDONOUGH	8

## OFFICER CANDIDATE SCHOOL

BY MIDN HOLCOMBE

"We should remember that one man is much the same as another, and that he is best who is trained in the severest school." -- Thucydides

For Marine Option midshipmen in the NROTC program, performance in classes and Unit activities is very important. But ultimately, our four short years of hard work at RPI will be judged by our performance during six long weeks of intense screening and evaluation at U.S.M.C. Officer Candidates School in Quantico, Virginia.

Upon our arrival at the airport in Wash-

ington, D.C., candidates were met by two NCOs waiting to load us onto buses headed for Quantico and OCS. As soon as we got to the Brown Field area, we were hustled off the bus and into Yekel Hall, a giant auditorium-style classroom just inside the railroad tracks which separated OCS from the rest of the world. After four days of medical and administrative in-processing, the Commanding Officer of OCS introduced us to our training staff and told us that we were ready to be "picked-up" by our instructors. Thus began our journey into the unknown with no promise of success.

# CAPTAIN'S CORNER (cont.)

gram? Several schools have them as a vehicle for this relationship. We hope to see many of you at the football game on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October.

Our Sailing Team is making the annual trek to compete in the George Washington University Regatta and the MEC teams are gearing up for the Holy Cross and Cornell MECs. We look to continue our dominance in Taylor Trophy competitions. Approaching milestones include service selection for the seniors, preferences are in and we hope to have results by the end of October. Also on the radar screen is the Fall PRT and the Battalion Commander's and PNS' inspection. Over the summer, LT Kretschmann reported to fill the aviation billet fresh from a tour in Iraq in the same outfit the LCDR Yager belonged to. Speaking of LCDR Yager, he is back from Iraq and with us for a few months as he prepares for retirement the end of this year. Our STA-21 Officer Candidate is Mr. Jones, who will be with us for about a year and a half. He is a nuke submariner who will be entering the CEC upon commissioning. Don't hesitate to bend his ear about what it is really like out there in the fleet. Welcome aboard all! LT McDonough is heading out in October to be a department head on a ship out of Norfolk. Good Luck and thanks for all the hard work!

You have begun to see construction in our spaces on the third floor as we begin the process of adding an electronic classroom for use in the Naval Science classes. The XO, LT Canavan and Battalion Staff have moved their offices and the break room is somewhere in between the old and the new location. Soon, RPI contractors will come in and expand the conference room taking up the old offices. Hopefully, before winter break, the construction will be complete and the room ready for Navy contractors to come in and install the furniture, computers and monitors/white boards. Between RPI and Navy funds, an investment of nearly a quarter of a million dollars. The plan is for the classroom to be complete and instructors fully trained by the start of next fall. This classroom will enhance the classroom experience and provides a great potential for future use with all

kinds of computer based training.

The Battalion Staff hit the ground running this Fall, building on the lessons of those that have gone before them. I have been impressed with the effort in physical fitness (but I know some of you did not continue your workouts through the summer) and new ideas to improve fund raising. As always, funds for capital improvements in sailing equipment and funds to reduce the cost of midshipmen participation in drill meets, MECs and other events are the target of the battalion's fundraising activities. We would really like to achieve our goal of going to the Tulane MEC every other year by going this February if enough funds are raised. We are extending our reach into the community and out to our alumni, trying to get the word out on the success of our Midshipmen and working hard to develop a culture of success that will provide our midshipmen the best foundation for success in the Navy and Marine Corps. Remember.....

***IT'S OUR LEGACY.....DEFINE IT, SHAPE IT, MAKE IT HAPPEN!***



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# OFFICER CANDIDATE SCHOOL (cont.)

According to the Candidate Regulations, “The mission of OCS is to educate, train, evaluate, and screen officer candidates to ensure they possess the moral, intellectual, and physical qualities for commissioning, and the leadership potential to serve successfully as company grade officers in the Operating Forces.” This mission was accomplished using a variety of methods, most of them unique to the Marine Corps—and uniquely unpleasant in nature.

As we quickly discovered, officer candidates are evaluated at *all* times, no matter what they are doing. The three main areas of emphasis are physical training, academics, and—by far the most important—leadership. Training began at 0500 every morning and “ended” at 2100. But candidates rarely ever got more than three or four hours of actual sleep. This deprivation was an important part of the stress induced at OCS.

We were tested in various PT events, including the PFT, the Combat Fitness Test, the Obstacle Course, and the dreaded Endurance Course. The E-Course was a challenging test of physical courage that consisted of the candidate running through a 2.8-mile course in boots, utilities, and full war gear while carrying a rifle. The course itself consisted of all sorts of obstacles, including a cargo net, a low crawl under barbed wire, a run through a muddy creek, and many others. The candidate’s academic grade included both written tests, such as Marine Corps History and General Military Subjects, and practical application tests, such as Weapons Performance and Night Land Navigation.

Tantamount to a candidate’s success at OCS, however, is the leadership grade. This grade consisted of the Leadership Reaction Course (LRC), the Small Unit Leadership Exercise (SULE), and two Command Evaluations. The LRC was a fire team event in which candidates took turns leading their fellow candidates through an extremely difficult, combat-oriented obstacle. SULE consisted of squad attacks on given objectives, with each candidate getting the opportunity to lead the squad through a scenario. Very few of the attacks ended up at the objective, however, as more often than not, the squad faced some type of ambush along the way. The purpose of this was to test the candidate squad leader’s ability to make sound and timely decisions while under the pressure generated by the constantly changing circumstances. The Command Evaluations were made up of everything else we were evaluated on at OCS, including garrison billets at the platoon and company levels. The platoon staff gave each candidate a grade based on their judgment of the candidate’s overall performance and leadership potential.

The OCS Graduation Ceremony, for those that passed the test, was a memorable experience. The feeling of pride that we felt while we marched across the parade deck for the final time cannot be adequately described. It was finally over, and we had overcome the most formidable challenge in our quest to earn the privilege of leading Marines.



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# ORIENTATION WEEK

BY MIDN WATSON

Every fourth class midshipman had very different expectations and backgrounds leading into orientation week 2009, but by the end of the week, each had become acclimated to military life at a basic level, and had been fully prepared to enter into NROTCU RPI. O-week is the first step in the completion of the mission of our unit, "To prepare midshipmen morally, mentally and physically..." and it did its job well.

The week began with in-processing in the Armory. The fourth class were cleverly made to think they could relax during some time in room 209. Ms. Vansice, specifically, did quite well to come across as a friendly face willing to "chat it up" with the future Midshipmen. This could only last so long, however. In a split second the upper class made it clear when to move, where to move, and how to move. Gear issue began and the new freshmen were given briefings on how to address upperclassmen and officers, and general military conduct.

At this point, the busses were loaded up and got underway to Newport, RI. O-week took place on deck at the Naval Academy Prep School and Naval War College. And so began the week long culture shock. Over the course of the week the Midshipmen learned basics in military courtesy, spent hours studying their 'foundations' of military knowledge and got acclimated with

marching and drill. On top of that, they did Physical Training each morning and spent parts of the day in classroom briefings from upper class midshipmen, unit staff and even the C.O.

The highlight of the week, and the only relative break for the new midshipmen, aside from sleep, was a crash course in sailing in Narragansett Bay. They were acquainted with the unit's Laser racing sailboats and given instruction manning the helm and gained valuable teamwork experience.

The week concluded with a Pass in Review in front of fourth class parents which proved a proud and motivating experience for all. The fourth class were sworn in as midshipmen for the first time and officially became a part of NROTCU RPI. The week prepared the new freshmen for integration into the unit and was both a great success and memorable experience for all.



# 1ST CLASS EOD CRUISE

BY MIDN WNUK

Generally, 1<sup>st</sup> class midshipmen can expect to spend a portion of their summer aboard a ship or submarine, or perhaps with a squadron. Midshipman Rollow, Midshipman Rissi, and I decided to pursue different, less travelled, paths. Midshipman Rissi spent some time with a SEAL team, while Midshipman Rollow and I had the opportunity to spend a month with Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit Two (EODMU2) in Little Creek, VA. EODMU2 is a command under the leadership of an EOD Captain and contains a number of smaller platoons, each commonly led by a Senior Chief and a junior officer. The initial EOD pipeline for both enlisted and officer trainees consists of 9 weeks of dive school and 42 weeks of EOD training. EOD training for each branch of our mili-

# WELCOME LT KRETSCHMANN

BY MIDN DEEDY

After dropping off all of its cargo into the city of Mogadishu in Somalia, the North Korean freighter prepared for the journey home. As it was readying to leave port the captain was approached by a Somali who, for a small fee, offered to accompany the vessel through pirate territory with an armed crew and act as security. The captain agreed and twelve miles off the coast the security force turned on the crew, a firefight ensued resulting in casualties on both sides, and the North Korean crew barricaded themselves in the engine room maintaining control of the ship and sent out a distress signal.

Meanwhile the watch on board the USS James E. Williams sprang to action when they received the distress signal. The VBSS Team assembled and LT Kretschmann rushed with his flight crew to their SH-60B Seahawk. The group intercepted the freighter and after a tense standoff involving threats of VBSS action and air launched weapons, the terrorists surrendered. The VBSS team boarded and helped the North Koreans secure the prisoners before the ship headed home. For their assistance in the rescue the US government received a formal thank you letter from the North Korean government, marking the first time since the Korean War a thank you has been received from the North Korean government by the United States.

Lieutenant Kretschmann's role as the pilot of the air support no doubt contributed to the successful outcome of the event, but this is only one of the many experiences he has had as a United States Naval Aviator. For as long as he can remember becoming a pilot has always been his dream. This motivated him to earn a Naval ROTC scholar-

ship and attend the Georgia Institute of Technology and graduate in 2003 with a degree in International Affairs. After receiving his degree LT Kretschmann attended Aviation Pre-flight Indoctrination at Naval Air Station Pensacola. He opted to become a helicopter pilot because he enjoyed his experiences with that community most. From API he was assigned to VT-6 and then HT-8 at NAS Whiting field to learn how to fly helicopters. After graduation from flight school he was assigned to HSL-40 to learn how to fly the Seahawk and be augmented into the fleet. After his time with HSL-40 LT Kretschmann was then transferred to the fleet squadron HSL-44, both of which were in Mayport, Florida.

Once the transition to HSL-44 was complete he was assigned to the USS Roosevelt, DDG 80, and completed his first tour in the North Atlantic in support of NATO operations. LT Kretschmann's second deployment was aboard the USS James E. Williams, DDG 95, in 5<sup>th</sup> fleet's area of operations. The James E. Williams patrolled around the Northern Arabian Gulf and Horn of Africa supporting counter-terrorism and counter-piracy operations. For the last year of his first sea tour, he was individually augmented to the Army's 63<sup>rd</sup> Explosive Ordnance Disposal Battalion in Iraq. His battalion was responsible for EOD and counter IED operations, while LT Kretschmann was in charge of the Electronic Warfare program.

Upon completion of his IA, LT Kretschmann was assigned to NROTCU RPI where he teaches Intro to Naval Science and Sea Power and Maritime Affairs. He lives in the area with his wife and is currently working on completing his Masters in Management.



# 1ST CLASS EOD CRUISE (cont.)

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tary is led by the Navy, and students learn about conventional ordnance, IEDs (improvised explosive devices), aviation ordnance, chemical/biological ordnance, nuclear ordnance, and underwater ordnance (specific to the Navy). Follow-up training includes but is not limited to jump school and small unit tactics.

Our cruise was spent with the research and training division of EODMU2, so we got a unique perspective on things. We assisted them in training the various platoons that were moving through the training cycle to prepare for their next deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan. Navy EOD platoons can deploy aboard a ship, as an expeditionary group in a traditional EOD capacity, or even with a special forces or special warfare team. Because they need to be ready for such a wide variety of missions, they are



constantly immersed in demanding and intensive training. Each platoon needs to be proficient in reacting to any type of ordnance, particularly IEDs, but must also maintain combat excellence. Special forces and special warfare teams participate in high risk missions, frequently hunting down high profile terrorists. As one small part of their preparation for such missions, and for combat in general, we spent two weeks of our cruise at a remote Army base assisting them with an advanced shooting course and a variety of explosives drills. We earned the perks that we got while on cruise by working hard setting up targets, picking up brass, carrying equipment, acting as the opposing force during their drills, and more. This may not be what you would expect from a 1<sup>st</sup> class cruise, but it was well worth it. We had the opportunity to shoot M4s with red dot sights at 100, 200, and 300 meter steel targets, and the research and training personnel were kind enough to take us to Blackwater's facilities for a day to earn our Navy pistol and rifle qualifications. Midshipman Rollow even got to participate in a chemical ordnance reaction and decontamination drill. Additionally, we were exposed to a great deal of technology including night vision goggles, bomb disarming tool kits, various types of explosives and

weapon systems, dive gear, EOD robots, and more.

The real reward, however, was spending so much time with the EOD platoons and being immersed in such a wealth of experience. Traditionally, a 1<sup>st</sup> class cruise is designed to give the perspective of a junior officer, but we ended up spending the vast majority of our time with the enlisted EOD technicians. Most of these people have already spent at least one tour in Iraq or Afghanistan. Getting to know them by talking to them, PT-ing with them on a regular basis, listening to their stories, and watching them do their jobs was the most interesting part of cruise. Any junior EOD officer has a great deal to learn from the enlisted members of his platoon, so having the opportunity to learn from platoon members as well as training personnel as a midshipman was a valuable experience. This is an important lesson for any new officer, not only in the EOD community. While on 1<sup>st</sup> class cruise, wherever it may be, challenge yourself, get involved, and get as many perspectives as possible in order to prepare yourself for the real thing the following year.

# CORTRAMID

BY MIDN WALTON

CORTRAMID (Career Orientation and Training for Midshipmen) is the summer training cruise that 3<sup>rd</sup> class midshipmen on scholarship go on for four weeks after their first year. During this cruise, midshipmen get the chance to explore all four service selection options available to them through NROTC for one week each. These service selection options are surface warfare, submarines, aviation, and the Marine Corps. CORTRAMID is available on the West Coast at Naval Base San Diego, and is available on the East Coast at Naval Station Norfolk. Overall CORTRAMID is a summer cruise that allows midshipmen to experience many exciting once-in-a-lifetime opportunities while summoning camaraderie and education of midshipmen.

During Surface Week midshipmen get to experience living on a ship in the surface navy. They experience many exciting things like underway replenishment, watching helicopters practice landing on the deck, and fire prevention training. Midshipmen also experience the tight living conditions of the enlisted while staying for multiple nights on a cruiser or destroyer. Surface Week offered many unforgettable moments, like standing on the bridge of a ship while coming into port, and shooting a .50 caliber machine gun off the side of the ship. After arriving back to land, Midshipmen had one day to experience a grueling EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) workout and to see the career paths of Riverines and Seabees. Surface Week was a very insightful look into the Surface Navy.

Submarine Week allowed Midshipmen, including females, to spend a night on a submarine, and to learn more about the submarine community. The East Coast Submarine Week takes place in King's Bay, Georgia. While on the submarine, midshipmen get the experience of swimming in the middle of the ocean during a swim-call, standing on the bridge of a surfaced sub, and seeing the inner workings of the secretive nuclear submarines and their control rooms. While off the sub, midshipmen get to experience such fun things as a wet trainer and a control room simulator.

Aviation Week is a week that is very laid back. Midshipmen have the opportunity to see nearly all of the aircraft in the navy, fly in a T-34, and experience many simulators. In order to fly in a T-34, midshipmen will have to pass a swim qualification that can be pretty exhausting. But once they are in the aircraft, they have the opportunity to experience some amazing, and possibly nauseating, maneuvering. The rest of Aviation Week is full of tours of all types of aircraft and simulators for aircraft like the E/A-18 Growler, F/A-18 Hornet, and the P-3 Orion.

Marine Week is the most intense and jam-packed week in all of CORTRAMID. Midshipmen will be transported to a Marine Corps Base, like Camp Lejeune at CORTRAMID EAST, where they will directly be under the guidance of Gunnery Sergeants. During this week midshipmen will get to experience such things as an early morning hump, Marine Corps Martial Arts, pugil stick fights, live firing on a range, a night in the field, an obstacle course, paint-ball training, explosive demonstrations, and a gas chamber. Some midshipmen will be given leadership positions in this very busy week where they will have to keep accountability. After all the tiring and exciting evolutions, Marine Week will be looked back on as a very challenging and rewarding week.

CORTRAMID is a four week cruise filled with challenges and fun events. When the midshipmen come back home they will have been given an insight into many of the facets of the Navy and they will have made many new friends. After all the exciting events, all midshipmen will have a more eventful summer than all their non-ROTC peers. In the end CORTRAMID will help guide midshipmen and complete its ultimate purpose of helping midshipmen decide what service selection option they want to pursue.



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# **GOODBYE TO LT MCDONOUGH**

BY MIDN VANSICE

LT McDonough has been the 4/C advisor of the NROTCU RPI for the past three years while experiencing a tour on IA for a brief period. He has been a very inspiring officer while at the unit and has worked diligently to ensure the success of all midshipmen.

LT McDonough will be leaving NROTCU RPI in October 2009. He will be reporting to AEGIS Weapons System Training in Dahlgren, VA and then to Department Head School in Newport, RI at the beginning of January 2010. Upon completion of these two diligent schools LT McDonough will report to the USS TRUXTON (DDG-103) as the ship's Weapons Officer. LT McDonough looks upon these new challenges with excitement and is prepared to pursue his future goals in the Navy with the effort to excel. These character traits are abilities LT McDonough has always tried to develop to their fullest potential in the midshipmen around him.

Prior to arriving at NROTCU RPI, LT McDonough has had a long career in the Navy which he has shared multiple stories of his experiences with the midshipmen at our unit. LT McDonough enlisted in the United States Navy in 1990 and was trained as an enlisted Electronics Warfare Technician. He has served aboard the USS SURIBARCHI (AE-21) and USS SEATTLE (AOE-3), both which happened to be home ported out of Naval Weapons Station Earle, New Jersey. Once commissioned through the Seamen to Admiral Program in 2002, he served as the Repair Division Officer aboard the USS SHOUP (DDG-86) home ported out of Naval Station Everett, WA. LT McDonough was then assigned as the Auxiliaries Division Officer aboard the USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN (CVN-72) once again home ported out of Naval Station Everett, WA.

When the time came for LT McDonough to select his division officer shore duty in spring 2006, he decided he wanted a billet as an NROTC instructor. LT McDonough was looking for a billet at a school in the Northeast after spending so much time in the Pacific North West. He had to select ten choices from a list of approximately fifty options and according

to LT McDonough himself NROTCU RPI was actually his second choice behind University of Rochester NROTC. Once he received word that he was assigned to NROTCU RPI, LT McDonough was excited because overall his ultimate goal was to inspire and educate the future of the Navy despite the exact location of his work.

In his final interview for NROTCU RPI for this article of the HI-LINE LT McDonough was asked what he has considered his most valuable experience at RPI. LT McDonough stated "The most valuable experience that I've had during my tour at NROTCU RPI was simply having the opportunity to, in some small way, influence the future leaders of the Navy and Marine Corps. It has truly been an honor to have been able to work with some of the brightest young minds in the country and I am really looking forward to running into some of you in the fleet someday". LT McDonough has passionately pursued the educational and moral development of young Sailors and Marines at NROTCU RPI. He is an officer who pushes every midshipman to pursue, identify, and challenge their potentials as a leader, student and person. LT McDonough had a hard time identifying his most difficult endeavor at NROTCU RPI and instead gave the midshipmen a great compliment by stating "The students of NROTCU RPI are remarkable and have really made the job a lot easier than it could have been".

LT McDonough's final words of wisdom to the midshipmen of NROTCU RPI are to "persevere. Life can tend to be difficult at times. You need to keep your head up, your eyes forward, and move on. Learn to overcome the obstacles that are placed before you and you will be a stronger person for it. I am really proud to have known you all. I hope to see you in the fleet someday. Fair winds and following seas." Everything in Navy and life is in preparation for future endeavors. LT McDonough has been an integral wealth of knowledge and has done his best to ensure the success of the midshipmen at NROTCU RPI throughout his tour. LT McDonough will be missed once departed from NROTCU RPI but we wish him the best of luck in all his future goals and pursuits. Fair winds and Following seas to you as well, Sir, and thank you for all you have done.