

ALUMNI NEWS



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Captain Robert Biggs, CO, PNS

Commanding Officer's Comments

Greetings Alumni, and Welcome to the Spring Edition of Your Newsletter! It has been a busy time as your battalion has excelled academically, competitively and in engagement within the community. We have partnered with the ROTC units here on campus, hosted Officers from the HARRY S TRUMAN and represented Oregon State well in every endeavor! A special thanks to everyone who supported the battalion as part of DAM PROUD day! We hope to apply some of that generosity so that the battalion can participate in events like NW Navy and leadership training opportunities going forward.

Another reminder to feel free to visit your battalion if you are in the area and hope to see you at the Alumni Tailgate or sooner!

Battalion News

OSU Food Drive

In March your Beaver Battalion participated in the annual OSU Food Drive to support those in need. Led by MIDN Pelczar, we managed to collect 8,465 meals and raised \$2,043.15. This totals to a 42.63% increase in meals and a 14.68% increase in funds. Our midshipmen, donors, and community continue to excel and outdo itself in charity and generosity. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this mission!



Winter Commission

Join us in congratulating our recently commissioned ENS Samantha Schacher! Earning her Bachelors of Science in Supply Chain Management, ENS Schacher commissioned on March 20th, 2026. Prior to joining our battalion via the Seaman to Admiral 21 Core Option, she was a GM1 serving in the Expeditionary Warfare community as well as serving aboard the historic USS Constitution. She heads next to Basic Division Officer Course in San Diego and will be assigned to USS Sterett (DDG 104).



Northwest Navy Competition

In April the Beaver Battalion traveled to the University of Washington in Seattle, WA to compete in the annual Northwest Navy competition. Our midshipmen, Officer Candidates, and MECEPs competed and DOMINATED in a variety of sports and military evolutions. After a lot of hard work and preparation, the Beavs took second place overall! This year was especially unique, as we had guest schools joining the competition. Along with our usual competitors at UW and UI/WSU, we also competed against University of Southern California, Yale, Georgia Tech, and University of California, Berkeley. We look forward to hosting next year's Northwest Navy here at Oregon State and taking home the gold!



Northwest Navy Competition



Ed.Note: Head Ball Balancing requires great concentration!!

Joint Service Review



Alongside the Army and Air Force ROTC units, the Beaver Battalion marched into the 106th Annual Joint Service Review (JSR). A time-honored tradition dedicated to Oregon Governor James Withycombe's review of officers shipping off to World War 1, JSR is a time for the battalion to shine professionally and put to work the discipline and high standards that we train to. Hosted by Air Force ROTC, this year's event took place on May 1st and was reviewed by COL Jeremy Sheppard, USAF. A special thanks to our guest speaker for honoring us by taking part in this time-honored tradition.

Joint Service Olympics



On May 4th and 6th, Beaver Battalion competed against Army and Air Force ROTC in the annual Joint Service Olympics, hosted by Air Force ROTC. We are proud to claim our victory overall! Of the ten events conducted, our students took first place in six (60%, math checks out!). This event highlights and strengthens the fierce fighting spirit and strong camaraderie between our respective branches, representing the unity of our military forces overall. All three units put on a strong display and showcased the strength and endurance of our Oregon State ROTC units. Go Beavs!

Spring Awards



Attention to Awards! Congratulations to our Midshipmen, Sailors, and Marines who accepted awards and scholarships at our annual Spring Awards on May 1st. Fifty awards were presented to our students by donors and sponsors, to include over \$55,000 in scholarships! We'd like to extend a warm thank you to all of those who support these students in pursuing their goal of serving the nation as Naval and Marine Corps Officers.

Spring FEX

In May our Marines and Marine Option Midshipmen and OPFOR (Navy students) conducted their Field Exercise (FEX) at OSU McDonald-Dunn Forest. Beginning at 0430, these students received live experience in a highly immersive combat scenario consisting of land navigation between objectives, coordinating fireteams and maneuvers, and repelling ambushes along the way. Spread across 308 acres of dense and diverse forest, these Marines learned critical skills that will prepare them well for their time at OCS and for their broader careers beyond.

Spring FEX



Scholarship Activations

In the months of April, May and June we had the pleasure of activating scholarships for MIDN Bryant, MIDN Juarez, and MIDN Luto, respectively. MIDN Bryant and Juarez received their four-year National Scholarship, while MIDN Luto activated his two-year sideload scholarship. BZ to these outstanding midshipmen!



Battalion Change of Command



Near the end of the term in May we conducted the Spring Change of Command Ceremony. After an outstanding term of service, MIDN Smart (now ENS Smart!) turned over the battalion to MIDN Nelson. Accompanied by MIDN Voelpel as BnXO and MIDN Logan as OPS, MIDN Nelson is well prepared to lead this battalion in the upcoming Fall and Winter terms and we look forward to his leadership. BZ to ENS Smart and her team in all of the successes achieved by the battalion in the past two academic terms.

Spring Morale Event



Wrapping up the year, we conducted our Spring Morale Event on June 6th at Chintimini Park. For the past few years, the battalion has held this event in place of Spring Ball. With a BBQ, volleyball, and lawn games, it's a great time for the students to wind down after a long year. It's also a time reserved for our senior send off and the tradition of the reading of the senior wills. Congratulations to all our students on a strong finish to the year!

Spring Commissioning



On June 12th, the Beaver Battalion conducted the Spring Commissioning ceremony for ten newly commissioned officers! Bravo Zulu to our new Ensigns and Second Lieutenants who have taken their oaths of office and move forward to a career of service. We commend them for taking on the duty of protecting this nation and the responsibility of leading the men and women who will serve under them. We thank them for their time here and everything they have contributed to our battalion, and we look forward to great careers for all of them. This year's guest speaker was CDR Mitch Nelson, Deputy Director of Submarine Safety at COMSUBLANT.

Congratulations to the following: ENS Travis Whitney, ENS Hannah Moskowitz, ENS Sofia Smart, ENS Maxwell Gubler, 2ndLT Cooper Hurley, ENS Timothy Morris, 2ndLT Kassandra Esteva, ENS Ashton Keana'aina, ENS Logan Setera, ENS Jack Morrison

Future Happenings

Summer Cruises

Throughout this summer, our midshipmen are taking part in cruises around the fleet. Participating in NSI, CORTRAMID, or at sea on their 2/C and 1/C cruises, these students begin to get a taste of what their lives will be like as future officers in the United States Marine Corps and Navy. We look forward to hearing their summer cruise stories!

NSO

Keep an eye out for news on our upcoming New Student Orientation. Held in September, just prior to classes starting, we will be welcoming our incoming freshmen. This orientation gets them speedily in tune with the battalion's battle rhythm and indoctrinated with military life.

Alumni Tailgater

We'll see you next fall for our Alumni Tailgater! Join us at Cascade Hall for a BBQ hosted by your very own Alumni Association. With the recent deconstruction of the Facilities Building and planned expansion of the parking lot, we'll all enjoy a change of scenery. We are excited to host as we all gather together to remember old times, hear your sea stories, and cheer on our Beaver Football team.

2025-2026 OSU NROTC



UNITED STATES NAVAL RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS
OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY
2025-2026

Now, a look at our battalion! Taken on May 26th, our unit showed up sharp and ready to display the professionalism and high standard that we've been trained to. On the steps of the Memorial Union, we're proud to represent the ongoing development of future Navy and Marine Corps officers and follow in the footsteps of all those who came before us.

USS Constellation USS Bagley

Scott Murray, USN '76

A carrier is a very important ship and wields a lot of power. Thus, the Russians liked to keep track of where we were and they did this by having a trawler follow us. The trawler was really a spy ship and although small, was packed with radio and radar tracking equipment.

When we were sailing off of the Philippine Islands, a Russian Trawler would show up each morning and using flashing lights signal, "Good morning Constellation". Then it would watch us from a distance as we conducted Flight operations. As the sun went down, it would flash "Good evening Constellation" and disappear until the next morning. This went on for at least a week and we were starting to get use to our little buddy. Then one morning, the Trawler showed up but did not flash his normal "good morning Constellation". After watching our flight operations for a couple of hours, the Trawler maneuvered to position themselves right in front of us and then they slowed down. This was an irritating game of chicken that the Russians were playing – the goal was to make us turn and disrupt our flight operations. Our Commanding Officer (CO) was sitting in his bridge chair watching flight operations and got mad at the Russian. He called up the Admiral and requested permission to have an F-14 buzz the Russian. The Admiral denied the request, so the CO order the carrier to turn to avoid the Russian. After finishing launching aircraft, we turned around to retrace our steps and get ready to recover aircraft. Then the Russian did the same thing again! He positioned himself in front of us and slowed down – daring us to hit him. This really made the CO mad and the Captain called the Admiral and requested permission to ram the Russian. Of course, this was denied and I am not sure the Captain would have really hit him anyway. So again, the carrier turned to avoid hitting the Trawler. Meanwhile our escort destroyer, the USS Bagley, had been watching this and they decided enough is enough. As we turned around again to begin launching aircraft, the Russian moved to block us but before they could do so, the Bagley put themselves between the Russian and us. The Trawler, now seeing there was no way to get pass the Bagley, decided to steam away. As they started to sail over the horizon, they flashed us one last time with their lights, "Good evening Constellation". That was the last we saw of that Trawler and our theory was that since it was their last day with us they wanted to see what they could get away with.

USS Constellation - Secondary Conn

Scott Murray, USN '76

When you look at the very front of an aircraft carrier, you will see some portholes. On the other side of the portholes is an armored “pill box” with two doors leading into it. Inside the pillbox is a scaled down replication of the bridge – including a radar, steering wheel (helm), engine order telegraph (lee helm) and navigation station. This area is manned during General Quarters or other special evolutions, and has one officer in charge with a handful of enlisted personnel. The purpose of this space is to be the backup to the bridge. If the bridge is knocked out or becomes disabled, this space takes over navigation responsibilities. Thus, the officer in charge has to be Officer of the Deck (OOD) qualified. This was my general quarters station.

The pillbox is known as “Secondary Conn” and was a great GQ station. A ship is always training and practicing going to General Quarters. For my team, when the General Quarters alarm would go off, we would staff the space, check out all of the equipment, then kick back, and relax during the rest of the drill. There was even a captain’s chair that I would sit in and look out the porthole.

Now to share two stories...

One night, we were steaming in the Pacific and I was in my stateroom getting ready for bed. Over the 1MC (ship wide announcing system) came the following: “Fire, Fire, Fire! Fire in space xx.xx.xx, away the Flying Squad, away!” This was not unusual. With a ship the size of Constellation, we would have a fire on board every couple of days and our fire department was called the Flying Squad. If a fire was real serious, then we would go to General Quarters and man up the eight or so additional fire departments onboard.

I started to tune out the announcement and continue to get ready for bed, when another announcement came out: “Fire, fire, fire! Fire in space yy.yy.yy, away the Flying Squad, away”. Now my heart started pounding and I quickly got dressed. As an OOD, I knew we only had one flying squad and they cannot fight two fires at the same time. As I left the stateroom, an alarm went off that you don’t want to hear: “Bong, Bong, Bong” “General quarters, General Quarters, all hands man your battle stations – this is NOT a drill!” I immediately started running for my GQ station. As I crossed through the hanger bay, all of the sailors running in all directions amazed me. I noticed many belonged to the airwing and I thought, ‘I wonder where they are running to’. As I got to Secondary Conn, we quickly checked out the equipment and then buttoned ourselves up into the pillbox. I hooked up the headsets so that I could monitor Damage Control Central (the area

USS Constellation - Secondary Conn (cont)

Scott Murray, USN '76

that controlled the firefighting teams). After an hour or so, they discovered that there was only one fire but the smoke had gone up a couple of decks and someone thought there was a second fire. I found out later that Damage Control Central was very frustrated with the bridge. When the bridge tried to call away the Flying Squad twice, DC Central called up the bridge, started yelling at them, and told them to go to General Quarters (which the bridge should have known). In my time on ships, this was the only time I had to go to GQ for real – really got the heart going.

The second story occurred after we had gotten back to San Diego. As I mentioned earlier, ships were always going through training and periodically would have inspectors on board to evaluate the crews. We were going through one such inspection. They decided we would leave port and simulate wartime conditions, so we were at General Quarters. As soon as we had pulled away from the pier and headed down the channel, the inspectors announced that the bridge had been “knocked out” (simulated). Secondary Conn was now in control. All of a sudden, my small team and I were responsible for navigating this huge carrier out the channel, which required making several turns. It was a strange feeling to look out the porthole and remember that you had a thousand feet of ship behind you. We had to quickly calculate how many seconds it took the ship to go so many feet through the water. When we saw the turning buoy in the water, we would then start counting and when we had calculated the ship was about 50 percent past the turning buoy (which was now out of sight behind us), I would then order the ship to turn. We had to repeat this for the several turns needed to navigate out of San Diego. It felt a lot like a blind man navigating his way out of port. We obviously made it out but I am sure the captain and the bridge crew were biting their nails hoping we would make the turns when we were supposed to.

Getting Together

This sent in from Jim LaRue.

Just got back from visiting some friends and fraternity brothers in Portland. Made a trip down to Corvallis to connect with a good friend from the "Unit". We both started at OSU and NROTC in the Fall of 1963. Made "cruises" together, went through 5 years of engineering school together (Mechanical) and lived together our 5th year in a dumpy house off campus with a couple other guys in the unit (Chris Guild and Mike Target (RIP)). We were each Battalion Commanders for one quarter in our fifth year ('67-'68). Graduated and commissioned Spring of '68. We have stayed in touch over the years and have visited each other's homes on several occasions. (Life lesson: "Stay in touch with your friends")

Jim Wojtasek (Woody) was a Marine Option student and had a stellar career as a Marine Aviator including multiple tours overseas. Woody retired as a full Colonel in the Marine Corps. After retirement, he continued a very successful career in business. Woody and his wife Cindy live the good life in Sisters, OR

Jim LaRue (Lash) flew for 5 years as a Naval Aviator - two of those as a flight instructor in the Advanced Jet Training Command at VT-22 in Kingsville, TX then went on to a successful business career in Atlanta, GA. Lash and his wife Margie (OSU '67) live on the shores of Lake Keowee in SC.



PS - Woody is the tall one.....

Alone In The IO Ch.2

Chuck Wagner, USN '74

TAUTOG TALES SSN639

The distances to and from the Indian Ocean -IO- from USN bases, like home port for Tautog, Pearl Harbor are L O N G. Thousands of Nautical Miles. Weeks at sea. If you are Tautog going extra miles to remain covert, it requires a lot of time at FLANK and requires a lot of time submerged with few delays for trips to periscope depth, searches, housekeeping, something that submariners have a fair amount of apprehension about. You still must get radio traffic you still must do some area monitoring so you detect anyone before they detect you, and if you transit some confined waters you have to slow down to be safe. Add to that as noted in Chapter 1, lots of spaces in the IO that are not well charted, blank spaces with few soundings and lots of mystery. Which, if you have to Flank it a lot leads to Submarine OOD nerves because every submariners nightmare is charting an unknown seamount with your bow, as the unlucky SSN 777 San Francisco found out many years later. As an occasional and less experienced OOD every watch I reviewed my safe operating envelope and collision procedure. My CO's standing orders and night orders made clear reference to our expected operations which were unusual- for instance we were on a much longer radio copy schedule on the Submarine Broadcast so we could devote more time to Flank speed. So we could make our appointed meeting point in the middle of nowhere IO with the Enterprise task group. As noted before, this meant some added caution due to lack of good chart, weather information as well as poor navigational aids so actual position was more in doubt than we were used to. Navsat coverage of IO in 1977 was nothing and Loran was unreliable. So the few times we came to periscope depths were busy, interesting, and to us quite risky. Which explains what happened one night....

While I was mostly aft as EOOW I was occasionally on watch as OOD to gain experience usually in the "Big Wide" as we began to call the open IO where there was literally nothing. No soundings to speak of. No islands. No contacts. No loran, No Navsat... just a lot of water. One midwatch relieving at Flank I was excited to find I had the schedule to come to Periscope Depth get the sked-Copy the Submarine Broadcast, ventilate, conduct housekeeping. As luck would have it, as I slowed and came up to clear baffles at 150 ft we experienced a little movement, and as we slowed, more. I proceeded to clear baffles and had no contacts and TAUTOG was taking 10 degree rolls. And I thought, oh....c..... this

Alone In The IO Ch.2 (cont)

Chuck Wagner, USN '74

is gonna be miserable. As per standing orders I called the CO who was asleep that night - maybe- and I knew straight away I had woke him up by the conversation, which started with a groggy "Captain" . "Excuse me Captain, This is Lt Wagner, OOD I am at 150 ft, course and speed, holding no contacts, request permission to come to periscope depth, copy the sked, ventilate and conduct housekeeping" Tautog just then takes a 10 degree roll. Dead silence for about 10 sec. Then "Chuck What depth are you at?" Tautog takes 15 degree roll. "uh One Five Zero feet Skipper" Tautog takes a 15 degree roll. 15 second pause. Tautog takes another 15 degree roll. "Chuck I think we will go back down and run for a while" I gave a relieved breath, "Aye Aye Skipper" And then I turned to the tense control room crew and diving officer and said "Diving officer make your depth X" - our running depth, "Ahead 2/3" The dive officer heaved a big sigh of relief as did the rest of the control room. Obviously a big Typhoon was overhead and we had no weather reporting in that area. When occasionally I am asked about the biggest storm I was ever in, I reply, "Well the biggest storm I was ever in, I was never in" And then I tell them the above true story from the middle of the IO.

A few hours later all at Flank, I informed my relief the Navigator he would need to come to Periscope depth and copy the sked because we were running out of time. He was somewhat irate and at the same time excited he would not have a boring watch - "why didn't you get the sked?" I explained the rolls to him and the CO's direction and told him I guess you will be at the end of the "run for a while" About an hour after my relief and over a hundred nautical miles later He came up and got the sked without any serious weather. And Tautog proceeded on, to its appointed rendezvous with Enterprise Task Group, undamaged and covert.

Alone In The IO Ch.3

Chuck Wagner, USN '74

After many days at flank with one or two whiffs of Mr Charlie and Mr Echo, Tautog approached our secondary Mission coordinates and began preparing to join the Enterprise Task Group in Mid I/O, undetected and undisclosed. Detecting them many nautical miles away, Tautog exchanged recognition signals and also began getting whiffs of Kynda. After a long spell we were no longer alone. Tautog weeks conducting various joint exercises with Enterprise and its ASW team to test the brand new Direct Support Manual, and we developed a somewhat effective working relationship. I am pretty sure the practice of placing a Submarine Element watch staff on the Carrier grew out of some of our recommendations.

In company with the Task Group we proceeded to move in the direction of our Port Visit in Mombassa, Kenya. Which after 48 days at sea submerged, we were looking forward to. 48 days is nothing to the Boomers but to a Fast Attack was quite unusual. Evidently a week or less before our arrival the Navy disclosed our presence in the I/O and prospective port visit to Mombassa, because right about then we began to get Family Grams about meeting in Kenya, and, predictably Kynda came out to play and shadow the Task Group. Naturally, Tautog had some fun with Kynda. Mr Charlie and Mr Echo stayed a long way from the group. Some Family Grams were more amusing than others, and for those of you who are not familiar, in those days radio traffic on the Submarine broadcast was very restricted so Family grams were very brief, limited Characters about 2 lines. Which tended to cause some interesting confusion. My boss, roomie and the Engineer on Tautog got one from his wife which read simply: "Boat sunk. Basil and I fine. Love Ruth" His dog was Basil and he owned a wooden 22 ft sailboat anchored out at Rainbow Bay Pearl Harbor. He was very philosophical about it. When we returned several of us helped him pull his drowned engine and replace shaft and the seal and failed bilge pump that caused it to ground on bottom of the harbor. Family grams also informed us that TAUTOG had made TIME MAGAZINE!! Very exciting. We all looked forward to reading it in Mombassa only to find a 2 liner that Tautog was visiting Mombassa and Nuclear submarines were very quiet so quiet that the crew wore slippers in the engine room. Which fed a lot of laughter and my long time skeptical view of 'News Reporters". For those of you not on submarines we wear Black shoes and boots, usually with steel toes in the Engine Room. The supply officer asked the CO if he could order slippers with the pointed toes with bells on them.

As it turned out right about that same time Idi Amin the Dictator of Uganda started acting up making threats and claiming the USA was out to get him (more on this

Alone In The IO Ch.3 (cont)

Chuck Wagner, USN '74

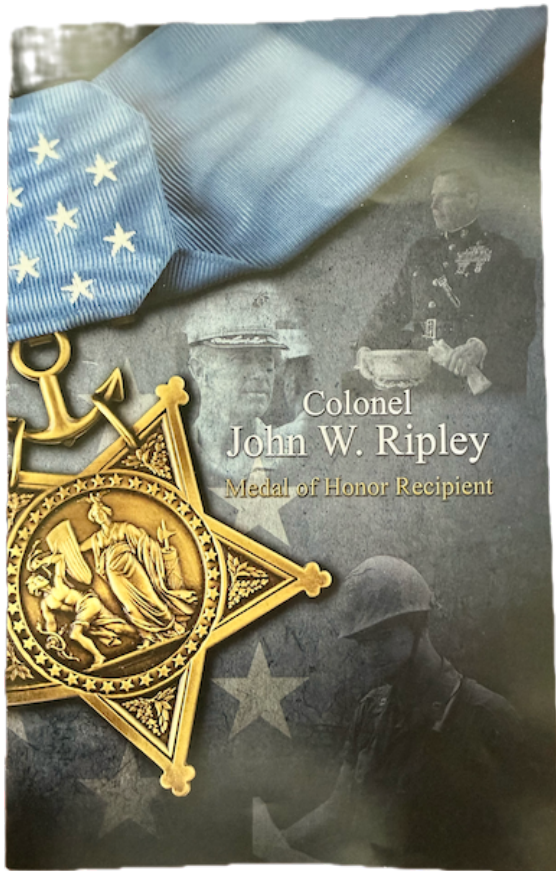
later). We had a fine time in Mombassa, Moored out, steaming so most of us only got 2 days of liberty and the rest of our visit on watch. Other than not getting the hotel rooms we were promised, it was an interesting if unusual visit for a Nuclear Submarine. We were told the air crews had nabbed our reserved hotel rooms somehow. After some creative whining, the shore coordinator said to our supply officer - who was taking the brunt of various remarks and threats... Hey wait! we have a Penthouse reserved for the Shore Patrol that wont be needed, you guys can have it! Well, happy days! a whole Penthouse just for us what Luck! So after a few celebratory Tusker beers, we head over to check into the Penthouse and sure enough its on the top floor with..... wait for it... NO FURNISHINGS but for one bed. So we groused for a bit and in true Fast Attack Tough fashion (one crew black and blue) 4 of us decided we would stay ashore and flip for the bed. Doug won first flip so he got the mattress. The Chop -Supply officer- won the second and got the box springs, I won 3rd so I got the bathtub and a blanket, and poor Russ was last so he got the floor and the bedspread. Naturally after all that we were were looking forward to about 10 days at sea and then an even better port visit to Perth, Australia. And the stories we got from officers on the Enterprise were stoking our anticipation. Sitting in the Royal Mombassa Yacht Club- we were invited by the local Brits- we heard the most amazing tales of Liberty in Perth where the people still loved the USN. The best one was the LT who told us that he got ashore late and wanted to rent a car to see the area only to find that the dealership had rented out all the cars they had. But, no worries, Mate! The owner gave him the keys to his personal car and only after he was down the road an hour did he realize that the owner not only didnt get his ID, but he didnt even know who he was!! We were primed for a great liberty in about 14 days, until.....

The Enterprise Task Group departed Mombassa at high speed, dragging the hovering Kynda with them headed for the Straights and the Pacific. Meanwhile Tautog lagged so we could stream STASS (before 637s got internal streaming) from a small boat unobserved. And Tautog was again, alone in the I/O, headed for Perth however!!! Three days at sea doing normal speeds and only 7 days from Perth Tautog gets FLASH message from Comsubpac: Turn around at best speed, and MODLOCK at specific point off the coast of Kenya until further notice. Idi Amin had blown a gasket and accused the usa of lining up to invade Uganda with the Enterprise task group and a submarine. So we beat feet at flank to our appointed station and MODLOCKED in a 50 mile circle for one day, two days. We counted. If we got released in 5 days or less we could flank it again and still make Perth on time!!! The Nav plotted intended course and speed every day... Four days...Five days.. Six Days... Eventually 10 days.. circling circling. Yes when we

got bored occasionally zig zag. We had no idea why COMSUBPAC wanted us there to react to a land locked country with a crazy dictator. I don't know to this day, but I suppose we were covert and therefore not provocative but could monitor the situation and the Kynda as well as Mr. Charlie and Mr Echo. The supply officer ever the wag, showed up in the wardroom with his black sweater and watch cap and asked the CO for permission to lead the landing party...

So finally, we get released with the missive to make our regular port visit in Guam on time. Which meant once again we were alone in the I/O and flanking it to make the appointed port call. Which meant 38 days at sea submerged, no Perth, and another problem to solve mid ocean - the need to do a full scram to change controlling rod groups.. Which will wait for Chapter 4.....

Colonel Ripley Awarded Medal of Honor Ken Collyer USMC '73



Several classes of OSU NROTC alums will remember 'Major' John Ripley as our Marine Option Instructor. At the time he wore the Navy Cross for decisive individual actions in VietNam that resulted in the destruction of the Dong Ha bridge. The award of the Navy Cross was subsequently upgraded to the Medal of Honor which was presented (posthumously) at the White House on 18 June by President Trump.

I was honored to be invited to the Colonel Ripley Medal of Honor Hall of Heroes Induction Ceremony held at the Pentagon the following day. I met his four children Stephen, Thomas and Mary and John Thomas (see Feb '26 newsletter). They seemed to have grown up quite a bit since I last babysat them in 1974.

Dave Galati: (USMC '73) My congratulations to the Ripley family! Colonel Ripley always did deserve the Medal of Honor....he was and is the very epitome of honor both as a man and a Marine!

Dave Dotterer: (USMC '73) As we celebrate Colonel John Ripley's Medal of Honor I wanted to provide my fellow Beaver Battalion alumni with story of when I served later in my career with him. It was the summer of 1980 and I had just received orders as a captain to the 2nd Marine Division. Prior to arriving I had been informed I was going to be assigned to the 8th Marines. I was particularly excited about this because I knew this regiment provided the infantry battalions for the Mediterranean floats. After a 13 month unaccompanied tour in Okinawa, which included a six month WestPac deployment and participation in the Saigon evacuation, I was ready to do something new and different. However, when I checked into division, I was informed I was going to the 2nd Marines, specifically 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines. When I asked why the change I was informed the battalion commander had specifically requested my reassignment. When I asked

Colonel Ripley Awarded Medal of Honor

who the battalion commander was I was told, Lieutenant Colonel Ripley.

When I checked into the battalion, I was informed by the Colonel that the only captains billet available was the S-4 and that in a year we were going to be the first infantry battalion out of Camp Lejeune to participate in the unit deployment program to Okinawa. Gosh, thanks! Nevertheless, as I'm sure you can well imagine it was an honor to serve with him and, when he left the battalion eight months later, he specifically assigned me to be a rifle company commander!

Michael Sharp: (USN '74) I started Navy ROTC at OSU in 1973 as a Junior (I was the first of the restarted Naval Science Institute). This also happened to be the first year of our new MOI, Major John Ripley. Throughout my two years there, I had no idea of what Major Ripley had done prior to coming to Corvallis. Like any good MOI, he often tried to recruit me into the Corps but I was focused on Nuclear Power and Submarines. I think I even jokingly said to him once or twice "The only good Marine is a Submarine". After Commissioning and Nuclear Power School I reported to my first Submarine. They had a small professional reading library and one book was "The Bridge at Dong Ha". I thought that would be interesting so I read it. I did not immediately recognize that Captain Ripley and Major Ripley were one and the same. I then thought, man I should have been more careful as he could have killed me with his bare hands (but then again, probably most Marines could). 20 plus years later when I was a Rear Admiral, our Naval Submarine League honored retired Colonel John Ripley at our annual gathering in Washington DC. He was in a suit and I was in my mess dress uniform. I went up to him and introduced myself as Midshipman Sharp. I doubt that he remembered me but we had a nice conversation. Since retirement, I have run into several retired Marine Officers that worked with Ripley. They all have fond memories and all are pleased that he will finally be awarded the Medal of Honor.

One more memory. In the spring of 1974, on our last PT test. All of the seniors (well at least the Navy ones) skipped the run. We ran to our cars and went to a local watering hole. Ripley went nuts and threatened to hold up our commissioning. Luckily we all were commissioned on time. Maybe because our CO was Navy.....

Farewell Shipmate

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of **LtCol Nelson Olf** on May 27, 2026.

LtCol Olf was a proud Oregon State University alumnus (OSU NROTC 1957), a distinguished Marine officer, and a steadfast supporter of the Beaver Battalion. Through his generosity and commitment to developing future leaders, he established multiple scholarships that have helped countless NROTC midshipmen at Oregon State University pursue their education and earn commissions as officers in the Navy and Marine Corps.

His enduring connection to Oregon State University and his unwavering belief in leadership, service, and impact on generations of students. More than a champion of our mission for the young men and serve our nation.



In recognition of his commitment to the officers, the Beaver was dedicated in his who trains on the LtCol Course is a testament to leaves behind.

contributions and development of future Battalion obstacle course name. Every midshipman Nelson Olf Obstacle the enduring legacy he

The Beaver Battalion extends its deepest condolences to the Olf family, friends, fellow alumni, and all those whose lives were touched by his generosity and leadership.

Fair winds and following seas, LtCol Olf. Thank you for your unwavering support of Oregon State University, the Beaver Battalion, and the future officers of our Navy and Marine Corps. Your legacy of service, leadership, and generosity will

We were informed that **Lester Apple**, USN '64 passed away in July 2023. No further details were provided.

***Can You Help
Stan Smith, USMC '72***

OSU NROTC— “Died while in Service to our Country”

What midshipmen must come to realize is that "Harm's Way" is the road most taken by those who survive the rigors of NROTC and move on as officers of Sailors or Marines. Death is always in play, a grim reaper in combat but no less driving home from a picnic.

Our response must be to focus on the mission and defend those who expect us to fulfill our role to lead. Their fate is how we judge our success, not our own. In the looming (and lurking) dangers of Harm's Way, we embrace our calling. This is where honor resides.

-Jud Blakley, Marine '65, Former Webmaster

It has been twenty years since we have updated our website/records of those fellow Classmates/Alumni that have died while in “Service to our Country”. If you are aware of anyone, please send the name and or any information to: Stan Smith '72 srsmith772@gmail.com .

Alumni Coordinator
Doug Neve USN '81

The Tailgater will be October 17th this year, coinciding with homecoming and Family Weekend. The Tailgater will start at Noon and the game will be at 3 PM.

We will once again rely on donations to fund the event in addition to the cost to attend. More details to follow

2026 is the United States semiquincentennial, a big word (even for the nukes) that means 250th anniversary. Let's make this tailgater a big one!

Now is a good time to reserve a hotel room if you need one.

We have a block of 40 seats reserved at a group rate for the October 17th Homecoming game following our Tailgater. The beavers play Washington State University this year.

You can go to the following link to purchase your tickets:

Group Link: <https://osubeavers.eventue.net/promotions/event/F26/F04/NAVYROTC>

You can also log into your Beaver account and use the "NAVYROTC" promo code for the same block of seats.

More information on the Tailgater will be provided as plans develop.

Dam Proud Day on April 29th brought in \$43,000, bringing our endowment to just over \$200,000. Many thanks to the generous donors without whom we would not be able to support the unit. We are within \$50,000 of our \$250,000 endowment goal and are making plans to try to reach the goal before the year's end. If you would like to know more about supporting the Alumni Scholarship funds you can contact Denise Harrison (our OSU Foundation representative) at 541-609-9661 or denise.harrison@osufoundation.org.

Another Spring Awards Ceremony is in the books. Congratulations to Midn 3/C Moreno, Hays, and Boyer, the recipients of the NROTC Alumni Scholarships. A total of 55 awards and scholarships were delivered to deserving midshipmen, officer candidates and MECEP students. Congratulations to all.

Alumni Coordinator (cont)
Doug Neve USN '81

It was nice to catch up with Doug (USN, 1981) and Marilyn Rhodes, who were in town on a cross country trip and were able to attend the June Commissioning Ceremony.

This year is a milestone anniversary for the classes of 1956, 1966, 1976, etc. If anyone would like to head up reunion activities for those classes (or any other), please let me know and I will provide database excerpts so you can round up your classmates.

Fair winds and following seas to all!

Doug Neve USN 1981

OSU NROTC Alumni Coordinator

dneve9876@gmail.com

763-464-4864

Help us get the word out!!!

Please update your contact information if your email address changes. We have lost track of several alumni when they have retired and left us with a business email address. Also please encourage other alumni you know to get in touch with us to be added to the email list. They can either contact Doug Neve directly or sign up from the website.

Alumni Coordinator Needs Assist Doug Neve USN '81



Young Lt. Neve presenting the Darrell S. Tipples Memorial Award in 1989 or 1990. Can anyone identify the handsome and deserving Marine Option?

Editor's Note: Doug is the short guy on the left!!

OSU NROTC ALUMNI WEBSITE

<http://www.osu-nrotc-alumni.us/>

Editors Note

Well readers, it comes time to focus on family and with that I'm hereby giving notice that the next newsletter (October) will be my final attempt to assemble the sea stories and tales of adventure that y'all have submitted. I have totally enjoyed supporting this effort but I have the simple task of assembling what is submitted..... without your inputs there would be no need for me to do what I do. I have 2 remaining stories (Vivian and Chuck) for October's edition so I could use a couple more.

Doug and the rest of the Alumni volunteers have been a tremendous group of folks to work with. **Please consider volunteering** to take over this editor's position. I will be more than happy to answer any questions or assist with your first edition.

Email me at kencollier73@gmail.com

Semper Fi

Ken

(737) 215-9471

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[Click here for Alumni Web Site](#)

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