Alumni News

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Commanding Officer's Comments

Teammates, we are off and sprinting in to the Fall term here in Corvallis and making preparations for the Winter term. The Beaver Battalion welcomed our Class of 2030 students (yes, that sounds incredibly futuristic!) at New Student Orientation and we are all-in on developing them in to future Officers as they begin their college journey. We had an amazing turnout for the Alumni Tailgate and it was a great experience meeting so many of you. As an added bonus, your Oregon State Beavers are out there playing "must watch" football and that brings a competitive spirit to the campus which

(Con't Page 3)

Alumni Coordinator
Doug Neve USN '81

The OSU Beaver Battalion – Alumni Tailgater was big success. We had about 170 attendees, including students and their families, staff, alumni, and other guests. The Beavers were victorious over Washington State with a final score of 48 – 30. Many thanks to the attendees and generous donors for making this an event to remember.

There are other articles in this edition of the newsletter explaining the commissioning programs and cost to attend OSU. When I attended between Fall 1977 and March 1982, the scholarship program was tuition, fees, books, and a $100 per month stipend. Non-resident cost to attend OSU was around $8,000 per year. The OSU website currently estimates the cost for an Oregon resident is nearly $40,000 per year and a non-resident cost is around $65,000 per year. The point of this summary is that the Alumni Scholarships truly make a difference whether or not the recipients are on scholarship, college program, resident, or non-resident.

The Alumni Scholarship Endowment fund is at $215,000; we are only $35,000 short of our goal. Many companies offer a corporate match for contributions to charitable causes. Please check with your employer to see if that would be possible for our scholarship funds. You may make a contribution at

https://give.fororegonstate.org/PL1Uv3Fkug

Type in "NROTC" in the select designation box. Also, our point of contact at the OSU Foundation is Joel Moersch joel.moersch@osufoundation.org for information on other ways to contribute.

Next year is a milestone anniversary for the classes of 1957, 1967, 1977, 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.

" Heartfelt thank you to Ken Collyer for being the newsletter editor for the past four years. Herding cats (mostly herding me) to put together a top notch publication is not an easy task. BZ, Ken! Thanks also to Jenny (Oster) Kucera for taking on the task. Fair winds and following seas to all!

Doug Neve
USN, Class of 1981
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CO's Comments (con't from Page 1)

we are all fired up about. At the Tailgate one of my former shipmates showed up (Paul Brown, an alumni of the unit) and it was great catching up with him. I also want to offer a shout out and congratulation to another Beaver Battalion alum, CDR Jayson Larsen, on his retirement earlier this year. Jayson, hope to see you at the tailgate next year! Finally, just a reminder to everyone that you are always welcome back home at your Beaver Battalion so if you are in the area stop on by.

"One team, one fight, one family"

CAPT Rob Biggs

Battalion News

Summer Cruise

Over the Summer, many of our midshipmen conducted their Summer Cruises. These cruises are opportunities for our students to experience life in the fleet aboard ships, submarines, and aircraft squadrons. While our first-class and second-class midshipmen spend a dedicated cruise with a specific community, our third-class midshipmen go through CORTRAMID, where they experience all the communities and a week with the Marines. These students had the opportunity to visit many awesome places, such as Sasebo, Chicago, Mayport, New York City, and more! We also had the opportunity to send one student to Seal Officer Assessment and Selection.







Summer Cruise (con't)











Battalion News (con't)

New Student Orientation

From September 16th – 19th, Beaver Battalion conducted its New Student Orientation. Led by OC Muchai, this is a four-day training event designed to induct new midshipmen into the battalion. This orientation gives them the tools they need to succeed physically, academically, and professionally while attached to OSU NROTC. Events included the O-Course, Physical Training and PRT/PFT, Drill, Swim Test, introductory briefings on college/military life, and some socials with the upper-class midshipmen.









Battalion News (con't)

Fall Commissioning

Congratulations to our newest Ensigns and 2nd Lt. On September 25th, ENS Kyle Cherry and ENS Kellen Newby, and on October 1st, 2nd Lt Steven Cho, were sworn in and outfitted in their new uniforms having taken their oaths and receiving their new ranks. All three of our newest officers were prior active-duty enlisted students and have now completed their dreams of commissioning!





Battalion News (con't)

Almni Tailgater

On October 17th, our amazing alumni hosted the annual Alumni Tailgater at Cascade Hall, with the most attendees we have ever had! This event highlights the unique role the Alumni Association has in supporting the NROTC unit's students and operations. The was a fun day for all packed with food, games, tours, and great conversations between our alumni and our midshipmen that many will take with them into their future careers. Thank you, alumni!











Larry Salter '74, Ken Collyer '73 and Terry Daugherty '72 shared sea stories.

Battalion News (con't)

Upcoming Events

Fall Ball

On Friday, November 13th, the Beaver Battalion will host its annual Fall Ball. This event combines and commemorates the 251st birthday of both our Navy and Marine Corps! We will celebrate at the Philomath Scout Lodge with food, beverage, music, as well as the singing of our service songs and listening to the birthday messages from CNO and Commandant of the Navy and Marine Corps. This year's guest speaker is CAPT J.T. "P-Nut" Pianetta, USN (ret.). He a graduate of the United States Naval Academy and has a Master's degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College. He is a Naval Aviator and received his "Wings of Gold" in November 2001. CAPT Pianetta is the father of our own 2/C MIDN Pianetta.

Army Navy Flag Football Game

Join us in supporting the Beaver Battalion on **December 2nd from 4:30 to 6:30 pm at the Corvallis High School Football field,** as we take on Army ROTC in the annual Army vs. Navy Flag Football game. We're coming into this game excited from last year's amazing 40-6 victory, ready to win again for the third time in a row! This is a rivalry match we all look forward to each year as we prove ourselves the Best in the West. Go Navy, beat Army!

Check This Out!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xn95reVtRig shows the **demolition of the NROTC quonset hut** where many of us learned how to do pull ups along with some military things. The credit goes to Tim Hagey, YNCS(Ret). "Six years ago I saved all the videos from the camera at Finley Hall and stitched them together to create a time-lapse image. Demolition began on 9/2 and was completed on 9/16." *(ed note: Thanks SSgt OrtegaDiaz, AMOI, for the lead.)*

Battalion News (con't)

Frequently Asked Questions

What is MECEP?

The Marine Enlisted Commissioning Education Program is one of four commissioning pathways that allow motivated Enlisted Marines to ascend to the ranks of Commissioned Officers. Marines ranked Corporal or above apply into a competitive selection process whereupon selection they are sent to OCS and then a four-year institution of their choice. For the next four years they will attend courses with the university for their degrees and with the associated NROTC unit to receive their required military instruction. While maintaining their ranks, these students are referred to as MECEPs and hold a place of regard in the unit, typically serving as advisors and mentors to the Marine Option MIDN.

What is STA-21?

The Seaman to Admiral program is the premier enlisted to commissioning pathway (ECP) for the Navy, combining into one program, twenty-one separate ECPs. Sailors across the Navy compete annually for roughly 55 seats in the STA-21 class for that fiscal year. Those selected will attend the Naval Science Institute (NSI), an abbreviated OCS course, in Newport, RI and take on the title of Officer Candidate (OC). All OCs are required to earn a degree and commission in 36 months or less at their chosen university while taking additional leadership courses with their associated NROTC unit. OCs vary in their experience and time in the fleet, with some being selected in their A Schools or C Schools and others being selected from their ships or squadrons in the fleet. Therefore, OCs fill much of the same roles as their MIDN counterparts. Those with more experience and/or warfare devices are generally looked to for mentoring, advising, and training at Trident Club and Leadership Lab.

How much does it cost to attend in-state vs out-of-state?

Tuition varies considerably here at Oregon State University. For those Beavers who are Oregon residents or are otherwise eligible for in-state tuition spend approximately $16,000 per year in tuition. Those who do not qualify will pay out-of-state tuition at approximately $42,500 per year.

Ed Note: And I thought $163/quarter was pricey !! (1969-1973)

June ’26 Newsletter Follow Up



The June edition of the newsletter included this picture of a midshipman being presented with the Darrell S. Tipples Memorial award by Lt. Doug Neve. The midshipman in the picture was identified as Marine Option Rich McCormick.



Rich was commissioned into the Marine Corps in 1990. He was designated a Naval Aviator and flew CH-53 helicopters. He later earned an MBA and medical degree, serving in the Navy Medical Corp and retiring as a Commander. During his 25 years in the Marine Corps and Navy, Rich served in Africa, South Korea, Afghanistan, and the Persian Gulf. Rich was also cast in the well-known Marine Corps recruiting commercial “Chess,” linked here. Rich was an Emergency Room physician at the Gwinnett Medical Center in Lawrenceville, GA. Rich now serves as a Representative from Georgia in the United States House of Representatives.

June ’26 Newsletter Follow Up Continued

Nelson Olf Tribute

Nelson Olf, LtCol USMC(ret), had several scholarships endowed at the Benton Community Foundation. He also personally financed an individual scholarship. Unfortunately, Nelson passed away after the last scholarship was presented but before he was able to reimburse the Unit. As a result, our advisory committee voted to reimburse the Unit $1000 to cover the cost of the scholarship as a tribute to Nelson.

USS Constellation Stateroom Change
Scott Murray, USN '76

On board the ship, a chief petty officer controlled the stateroom assignments. He was like a king and it was almost impossible to persuade him to have your room changed. However, I needed to come up with a great idea since sleeping under the catapult was not working for me.

Being in deck department, one of our key responsibilities was being responsible for underway replenishments. This involved the carrier pulling alongside a tanker with both ships going about 12 knots. The tanker would send over hoses to our four refueling stations. My team was responsible for the #4 refueling station and there was always competition between the stations on who could connect first (we won most of those contests). In order not to interfere with flight operations, these refueling operations would take place starting at midnight and ending around 4am. After we were done, we would be dirty, oily and look like death warmed over. So after one of these events, I went downstairs and found the chief in charge of the staterooms and said, "Chief, I need a different stateroom – I need to get some sleep!" He looked at me horrified (not realizing I had just finished an underway replenishment) and immediately moved me to a three man stateroom over the engine rooms. The purr of the engines was so much nicer than the noise of the catapults launching aircraft and this became my room for the rest of my time on board Connie.

Ed note: Scott, I haven't forgotten about your other sea stories. I have forwarded them to the incoming editor. Look for them in future editions. Thanks for your support.

USS Constellation - In Port Man Overboard
Scott Murray, USN '76

When we had returned to San Diego, the ship got into a normal homeport routine. After working hours, most of the crew would leave the ship and go home. However, a duty section would stay on board the ship overnight. Because a carrier has so many people, we had the luxury of being in a six day rotation, where every six days we would have the duty (when I was on the destroyer, it was a four day rotation). When I had the duty, I was responsible for deck department, which involved providing sailors to stand quarterdeck watches (the entryway on and off the ship). Their responsibilities included checking identification of folks coming on the ship as well as making announcements over the 1MC.

The other responsibility I had, as the duty deck department officer, was to conduct an in port man overboard drill after work hours. This seemed silly to me sense we were in port and no one ever fell off the ship while we were in port. This drill consisted of me telephoning the Quarterdeck and telling them we had a man overboard at a specific spot. They would then announce "man overboard, location xyz" and the sailors in my duty section would come running to that spot where they would lower a rope ladder. In addition, we had responsibility for the Motor Whaleboat that was tied up to the pier. As part of the drill, a few sailors would run off the ship, get into the boat, and drive it to the location where we had just lowered the ladder. After a few minutes, we would say "good job" and then everyone would go eat dinner and relax for the rest of the evening.

One day, at about 1:00 in the afternoon, the Deck Department head (my boss) called all of us Duty officers to his office. He was boiling mad because he had been chewed out by the XO. One of the duties of the Quarterdeck watch standers was to watch out for the Captain. Whenever the captain either left the ship or returned to the ship, they were responsible for announcing over the 1MC "Constellation departing" or "Constellation returning" (the CO is called by the name of the ship he commands). There is one exception to this – it was a strict rule that there were to be no announcements over the 1MC after 10:00pm unless it was an emergency. The previous days duty section (not mine) had made an announcement over the 1MC after 10:00pm to announce that the captain was returning. The captain was not happy and had let the XO know, who in turn had let our boss know of their displeasure. The department head made it very clear to all of us duty officers that this situation had better never happen again or he would have our heads. We, of course, immediately went out and briefed our duty sections and made sure our sailors understood.

USS Constellation - In Port Man Overboard (con't)
Scott Murray, USN '76

The next day, I had the duty. I had conducted the normal man overboard drill and was enjoying a quiet evening onboard. I went to my stateroom, climbed into bed around 10:00pm, and starting reading. Around 10:30pm, I was just getting ready to turn off my bed lamp when I heard the 1MC click. A sailor on the quarterdeck had keyed the mic and I began to say to myself "no, no, no!" The sailor did not realize he had the mic keyed and I could hear him talking to someone "should I make the announcement?" I verbally said from my bunk to no one "don't do it! What are you doing!?" I was visualizing the end of my career. Then to my shock, I heard him say, "Man overboard, Man overboard, away the duty lifeboat!" I almost fell out of my bunk; thinking this is crazy; we are in San Diego, what is going on? I quickly put on my pants and shoes. I did not have time to put on my shirt, so I just grabbed my jacket and ran out the room.

I reached the Hanger Bay and starting running for the quarterdeck. I saw ahead of me some of my lifeboat crew running. The quarterdeck watch waved us off the ship and we ran down the pier to the boat. Our minds were still trying to figure out what was going on. We hopped into the boat and started the engine. Before we took off, one of Constellation's policemen ran up to us (a ship the size of Connie had its own police force called the "masters at arms"). "Sir", he said, "one of the prisoners from the brig escaped and jumped off the fantail" I thought, great we have a crazy person in the water so I told him to get in the boat with us. The boat roared to life and we took off. Even though this was San Diego, it was cold. As I looked at my crew, I realized we were all just wearing t-shirts – this was going to be a cold trip.

As we came up alongside the carrier, I was once again reminded about how big she was. We shined our flashlights but saw nothing. I saw the rest of my deck crew standing on the fantail so I yelled up "Any sign of him?" "No sir, we don't see anything". We slowly headed out into the bay and then turned to go alongside the ship. When we got half way along the ship, I told the petty officer to cut the engine. My thought was if there was someone out here in the cold water they would be making a lot of splashing and we could hear them. He cut the engine and we all listened. Dead quiet. We started the engine again and headed to the bow of the ship. There was nothing there so we retraced out steps. By now, we had been out there for over half an hour with no sign of the prisoner. Now I was getting concerned about the impact of the cold on my crew. I decided we would go back to the pier and regroup. We tied up the boat and headed back to the quarterdeck. When we got there, they informed us that they had captured the prisoner but had no way to contact us out on the boat. When the prisoner had broken free, he ran to the fantail and threw a large bag of trash over the side. A sailor heard the noise and thought man overboard. The prisoner then planned to run off the ship along with my boat crew (he was probably behind me) but the quarterdeck was able to quickly identify him and grab him. In my Navy career, I had never heard of a man overboard while in homeport but guess there is a first time for everything. I now felt better about our daily drills.

USS Constellation -Japanese Ship Murasame
Scott Murray, USN '76

When we were on our 8-month deployment to the Western Pacific, we always had at least one and usually several destroyers escorting us. One of the things the carrier liked to do is send their junior offices to one of the destroyers for a week or so to get experience on what it was like to serve on a "small boy". The ship usually could only afford to send one officer at a time and in return, the destroyer would send one of their officers to the carrier to get experience. As the deployment went on, I had not gotten a turn yet and to be honest, was a little bit disappointed. However, as we sailed towards Japan, my turn came. Much to my surprise and delight, I was designated to go to a Japanese destroyer when we pulled into port. There were two of us American officers assigned to the destroyer (I cannot remember what ship the other officer came from) and it turned out to be quite the cultural experience.

Here were some of the interesting things about life on board. First, the Japanese were extremely friendly, unfortunately only the executive officer spoke English and that was spotty at best. When it came to mealtime, we (us Americans) always knew were to sit – every place setting had chopsticks except for two spots with a knife and fork. And at every meal, including breakfast, rice was served. I remember one meal the Commanding Officer asked where I was from (with the executive officer translating). When I told him "Portland, Oregon", he got very excited because he had been to the Portland Rose festival on a Japanese ship (small world). The ship itself was about 20 years old and seemed small – it certainly wasn't designed for tall American's as I kept hitting my head when I walked down the passage way.

When we went to sea, there were two Japanese destroyers and three American destroyers sailing together as a squadron. The second day at sea the squadron did gunnery practice –first shooting at a target towed by a tugboat type ship and then later at air targets towed by an airplane. I was shocked and a little disappointed to see that these old Japanese destroyers were hitting the targets much more frequently than the newer U.S. ships. The next day the squadron went to hunt a submarine for practice. Once again, the Japanese constantly found the sub before the Americans. In my arrogance, I couldn't believe that these old foreign ships were out doing the best navy in the world. Then it dawned on me, that these Japanese sailors were ancestors of the World War II Imperial Japanese Navy, that at the beginning of the war was one of the best navies in the world.

That evening during the dinner meal, the executive officer told us that later that night our ship would be joining up with Constellation. I told them that it would be very confusing, that it would be like seeing a mountain of light in the middle of the

USS Constellation -Japanese Ship Murasame
Scott Murray, USN '76

ocean. The Japanese officers were polite but looked at me with supreme confidence even though they had not sailed with a carrier before.

As a side note, it is important to know that most ships at night have two lights on – one near the bow of the ship and the other high up in the mast. This combination allows other ships to visually tell what course the ship is on. However a carrier is launching aircraft and so has the flight deck lights on, the hanger bay lights on as well as the aircraft themselves have lights on. It can be crazy and difficult to tell what course the carrier is on (in addition, the carrier tends to change course frequently depending on the wind).

Anyway, after dinner, I went to my stateroom to relax and turn in early. About 1 am there was a loud banging on my door. I leapt up and opened the door. There was a Japanese sailor and in broken English said, "Come Mr Murray, Come!!" I could see panic in his eyes so I quickly got dressed and followed him. When I got to the bridge, there was the XO with fear in his eyes. He quickly pointed out the window and there was the Constellation. "Very confusing, very confusing". Sure enough, it looked like a huge mountain of light spitting out flys (airplanes). The XO asked me to contact the carrier via radio and find out what course they were on. Another side note: all NATO and allied navies use a book that has special "words" that allow us to communicate since not everyone speaks English. The words sound strange but everyone understands them but if you deviate, then chaos happens. So I grabbed the radio, "Constellation, this is Murasame, interrogative Corpen" (ie, what is your course). The bridge officers on the Connie started to crack up to hear a Japanese destroyer calling them with an American voice and they recognized right away that it was me. "Murasame, this is Constellation, is that you Scott? How's it going? We are heading 320". Remember the Japanese are extremely professional so this conversation was very confusing to them. They had no idea what the Constellation had just said. So I quickly put it in terms they would understand "Corpen 320". Then they smiled and nodded and put their ship in the proper position to screen the carrier. But I was admittedly somewhat embarrassed on the lack of professionalism that my shipmates had shown.

Flight of a Lifetime
Rob LaGrone, USN '89

"Did I scare you?"

As the carrier USS Independence approached the Strait of Hormuz on its way into the Gulf in December 1993, two A-6 Intruders launched into the hazy afternoon sky and headed southwest over the brown mountains of eastern Oman. A couple of F/A-18C Hornets and a C-2 Greyhound with additional aircrews accompanied us to the isolated base at Thumrait, where we would operate for several days of tanking practice and combat maneuvering in Exercise Beacon Flash with the Royal Air Force of Oman.

Five crews, two jets. Our venerable aircraft had led hard lives aboard ship, and we prayed they would hold up because we didn't want to miss any opportunities to fly over this desert region. I often volunteered for detachments like this: even though they cost me landings on the ship, they offered new experiences – some more rare than others.

After familiarization flights, we rested by the pool while the RAFO aircraft escorted the sultan on a domestic trip. The next day my pilot and I were scheduled for a 1v1 DACM flight (defensive air combat maneuvering between single aircraft) against a RAFO Jaguar fighter- bomber. While preflighting our aircraft I pushed up on the tip of the big horizontal stabilator and felt it rise loosely with a "clunk." A bearing had worn out, and the jet was "down" until a replacement part could be flown in from the ship. Five crews, one jet.

That afternoon the other jet was returning low over the desert for a "pitch" approach and landing (the Brits' version of coming into the "break") when a big piece of the port engine bay door tore loose. The force of the slipstream hurled it up and over the wing, damaging the leading-edge slat and a weapons pylon on its way aft. The crew brought the aircraft in for a gentle straight-in landing, and this jet was hard down. Five crews, no jets.

Thank heavens for the swimming pool. Our hosts arranged a bus tour to the serene little coastal town of Salalah. The next day a maintenance detachment from the ship arrived and repaired the stabilator on the other jet, and I learned that my pilot and I had drawn the choicest assignment imaginable on a detachment to Oman.

Star Wars Canyon had been well-known among Naval Aviators for years. It starts as an almost indistinguishable wadi among many others in the southern Omani desert and grows deeper and wider as a pilot flies southeastward towards its opening to the Arabian Sea. Its sheer sides require an aircraft to spend much of its time steeply banked as the walls race by in a blur, so close that the wingtips look like they will hit. Flying this hazardous route was a rare, coveted assignment. And it was mine.

After providing "practice plugs" to some Omani Jaguar pilots from our refueling buddy store, my pilot and I headed south and located the beginning of the canyon. The route is actually pretty short, and we planned to fly it twice before following a low-level training route along the desert floor back to base.

Flight of a Lifetime
Rob LaGrone, USN '89

We flew conservatively the first time, rising to the level of the rim for the tighter turns to assess the amount of speed and angle we would need later. In the middle of the route two huge buttresses stick out from opposite walls, one after the other. A pilot must throw his jet into a hard turn just before the first buttress, then quickly reverse his turn to avoid hitting the opposite one. It's a funny feeling, sliding towards a wall you can't see as your wings bite into the air and the "g" load comes on. You have to have faith in your timing. After the canyon opened onto the narrow coastal plain, we climbed back up above the cliffs and returned to the start point. This time we would fly aggressively and I would film the action.

This was the age before tiny helmet-mounted "Go Pro's," and I held my big Sony camcorder firmly on the top of my radar hood, pointed forward, as I kept my scan outside on the walls of the narrow canyon above me. It was easy to imagine myself in a Star Wars movie – except that nobody was shooting photon cannons or urging me to use the Force.

At the end of the route I hit the red "start / stop" button to quit filming, looked into the viewfinder, and was horrified to see it *start* to record. Somehow, as we entered the route, I had either not hit the button hard enough or double-tapped it. We had no footage of Star Wars Canyon. My pilot and I had planned on the desert low-level next, but we looked at each other and made a decision almost without speaking. We were going to do the route again, right now, flying upstream.

This time I double-checked that the camera was recording, and we raced back up the canyon. When we reached the first buttress, my pilot threw the jet hard over to starboard. I suddenly heard the engines spool down briefly as the massive rock passed "beneath" us and the pilot reversed his turn. "Did I scare you?" He asked over the intercom.

"Naaah, I knew you had it."

"Well, I scared myself a little." He had uncharacteristically throttled back in order to tighten his turn after starting just a fraction of a second late. Still five crews, one jet.

Climbing out the petite upper end of the canyon, we felt invincible as we raced low across the desert, running low on gas. We came in over the runway at Thumrait, pulled 7 g's in the pitch (just a tad above the NATOPS limit of 6.5), and landed with the "Low Fuel" light on (just a tad below the NATOPS minimum). We had flown Star Wars Canyon and had the footage by which to remember it. We told our envious fellow aircrews about the experience over dinner and drinks that evening in the officers' mess that evening.

I got only one or two more flights in the one jet during that detachment while our maintenance crew patched up the other one enough to get it back to the ship. It didn't matter. I had experienced the flight of a lifetime.

Flight of a Lifetime
Rob LaGrone, USN '89





Grumman Iron Works In Action



Blue sky sometimes above the aircraft







Fearless

Getting Together

Beaver Baseball is returning to Surprise Arizona again! Since I live in Surprise, I invite you to the 4th Annual OSU NROTC baseball tailgater at 2 hours before the 1st pitch of the game on **Friday February 19th** The tailgater will be in the parking lot adjacent to the Kansas City Royals clubhouse on the 3rd base side of the field. Look for the US Navy and US Maine Corps flags on our 20' flagpole. It will be drinks and snacks due to the tailgater starting at 2:30 PM and the first Beaver game at 4:30PM Mountain time. I will provide the Soft drinks and munchies and you need to BYOB (alcohol) if you desire.

We have early interest in the event, so let me know if you are interested so I can plan accordingly.

Tickets all General admission (sit where there is an empty seat) and are available at the gates or at the Surprise stadium. CollegeBaseballSeries.com

We will attempt to sit in a group behind the Beaver team on the 3rd Base line if you desire.

NOTE: There is also a bonus game on Monday Feb 22 against Kent State at 5:30pm.

RSVP to: Stan Smith srsmith772@gmail.com GO BEAVS!!!!!!!!!

ATTENTION CLASS OF '87: The OSU NROTC annual tailgater is a great opportunity for alumni to get together to catch up as well as visiting beautiful Corvallis in all of it's fall glory. October of 2027 would be a perfect time for the Class of '87 to get together and celebrate our 40 year reunion and watch the great new football program that is being put together. For any Class of '87 classmates that might be interested; please reach out to me at osu.nrotc.1987@gmail.com to share your contact info. I will give updates as plans start to come together.

Thanks, Paul Spilsbury (and Go Beavs!)

Alone In The IO Ch.5
Chuck Wagner, USN '74

Just like Tautog's entry to the I/O our exit was covert and alone, but fraught with two more nervous moments. The extra time spent and the extra miles at flank changed a plan to conduct a full scram to change controlling rod groups which fast attacks liked to do as part of a regular shutdown in port. It is a longer and more demanding evolution at sea and we would be forced to do this at sea in the middle of the I/O by the circumstances. As it turned out I was an involved eyewitness to the nervous moments because..... I was the Engineering Officer of the Watch (EOOW) for it.

The Nukes among you will understand this with little detail, but for the rest, I will get as detailed as needed at the risk of boring you all. Tautog had a reactor instrument quirk that in the semi tropical waters around Hawaii was annoying and a curiosity but not particularly troublesome: when it got hot in the instrument location, Machinery 2, the startup rate meter would spike periodically, not enough to be a problem but enough to be noticed. This would happen a lot in Fast Scram recovery drills, so it was well understood and mostly noted in passing. For all I know this was also the case for other 637 class fast attacks. But in the much warmer waters near the equator in the middle of the I/O it became a much more difficult problem.

Conducting a full scram to change controlling groups is not only a demanding operation, it is longer and more involved because some extra steps to calibrate instruments are required. So because we knew this we planned well in advance and and had extra experienced people ready to assist. The Engineer was in the Engine room, and I was the EOOW. We cranked up the emergency diesel generator, set reduced electrical and prepped well we thought for a rapid calibration and full scram recovery. And, as soon as the A/C went off it started to get hot in Machinery 2. We scrammed the reactor and it got hotter in Machinery 2. and with a full scram we could see the start up meter spiking already. After some time with the calibration done, and the start up rate meter spiking to our normal limit, I will refer to as "X" I hear "Captain to Machinery 2" and it was getting hotter as we waited to restart.

Shortly thereafter my Engineering Watch Supervisor (EWS) appears at the door to and says "Sir your presence is requested in Machinery 2" so he relieves me and I go out wondering how in the world we start up with the startup rate meter spiking to the limit of X - we might be able to pull rods in 1 in increments but it would take all day even if it worked. I arrive in Machinery 2 to see the lead Reactor Operator with the cabinet open, the CO and the Engineer watching and I look at them and reported. CO says "what do you think? " and looks at the Lead RO who says: best I can do Captain, its the heat. CO looks at the Engineer who says "Its the heat" and looks at me, and I say, "yep its the heat" At that point we are stuck. The start up rate limit is X, and the meter is spiking to X. 30 Sec pause, then the CO looks the Engineer in the eye and says "Engineer, Start up the Reactor, do not exceed a start up rate of 3X" after about 1 sec the Engineer says

Alone In The IO Ch.5 (con't)
Chuck Wagner, USN '74

"Start up the Reactor do not exceed a start up rate of 3X, Engineer Aye" The Engineer, my roomie, turns to me with a smile quirking at the corners of his lips and says: "Engineering Officer of the Watch, start up the Reactor, do not exceed a start up rate of 3X" And of course I repeated the order back to him with an Engineering Officer of the Watch Aye, and walked back to Manuvering where I relieved the EWS .

So all my watchstanders, turned to me, wondering how we would get out of this fix, and I looked the Reactor Operator, ET-2 Fred Landry, in the eye and said " Reactor Operator, start up the Reactor, do not exceed a start up rate of 3X" And I should remark at this point, that a start up rate of X was a hard limit drummed into us since Nuke school and we were all experienced operators. But there we were in the middle of the I/O thousands of miles from help and maybe not enough emergency diesel fuel to make a friendly port. Even so the Reactor Operator's mouth dropped open and he had a shocked look as did the others in Manuvering. And he turned to the door where all 3 of the Lead Reactor Operator, the Engineer, and the CO were standing. The Lead Reactor Operator nodded at Fred Landry who then sat down, looked me in the eye and repeated the order back with a Reactor Operator Aye, and started pulling rods.

We never exceeded 3X. We did a normal startup and once the AC returned the instrumentation behaved as normal. Off we went to flank and the exit of the I/O with the same track we went in on. This time more confident and less nervous than the first time. Nobody was surprised when we got to the critical part of our track with no navaids, no navsat and no Loran and as we had at the entry bounced a single sonar ping off a submerged cliff to verify our position and safe distance. The Navigator and OOD were still nervous, but it was routine now. And with the possible exception of that single ping, SSN639 completed its mission and returned to the Pacific intact and covert.

Mt. Baker Rescue
Kevin Murray, USN ’73

My first duty station was NAS Whidbey Island. I was a new LT and flying the SH-3D Sea King. Although the H-3 was a good sea level platform for ASW it was what we called the "Sea Pig” because it did not have great power needed for the mountain environment.

But we made the best of the old platform we had which was 20 years old. The weekend of August 1-3, 1986, I had SAR duty which meant 24-7 with a beeper. We were the asset for any military SAR or Medevac and our secondary role was any civilian SAR or Medevac. Somewhere around 8am on Sunday my beeper went off. Calling in to the OOD I was told that there was an avalanche on Mt Baker and several climbers were buried.

I arrived at maintenance control to review the aircraft book, brief and preflight. It was quite warm and foggy with less than 1/2 mile visibility. We launched and climbed straight up through the fog into clear blue sky and there off to our right was Mt Baker. Not a cloud in the sky but the inversion layer created a layer of fog about 100 feet thick.

LCDR Bob Nicol who I had flown with many times told me we were picking up 6 mountain rescue climbers. We discussed how that was going to affect our ability to hover with both of us knowing we would need to dump fuel at any altitude above 4,000 feet even before the additional 1,500 pounds of rescuers. A normal fuel load was about 3,000 pounds of fuel with a Corpsman and two other crewman. The bird holds 5,000 pounds of fuel but 3,000 pounds was the sweet spot for mountain rescues.

So we flew up to Bellingham Airport and the Sheriff’s Office briefed us on the avalanche situation. They told us a mountain rescue team was on the mountain and they were looking for survivors. Also there was a civilian BO-105 Medevac helicopter I believe attached to Bellingham hospital. After the briefing we launched along with the BO-105 and headed to the mountain. I remember flying in loose trail behind the Messerschmidt. A very capable high altitude flyer. Our job was support meaning anything the civilian company could accomplish we had to give them first right of refusal.

As we approached the mountain we began our climb. The mountain is 10,800 and there were several groups climbing the mountain that day, but we found our spot fairly quickly. I remember the Sheriff's office had communication with us on the mountain. As luck would have it, a mountain rescue team was practicing on the mountain at that time when they heard and saw about 1,000 feet above them

Mt. Baker Rescue
Kevin Murray, USN '73

a huge block of ice the size of a house break off and roar down the mountain burying the 4 man climbing team. Three men had been swept into a crevasse about 60 feet deep. One survivor was buried up to his waist and missed the crevasse and the second survivor was buried in the crevasse and had to be roped out to the surface. The other two climbers were unaccounted for but believed to be deeper in the crevasse.

The BO-105 approached for a landing, but it was quickly clear the ice field was too steep for him to land. We looked at it and discussed how we would approach it. The first thing we did was a power check. You test the helicopter's engines to see if your power available is greater than the power required. We were at 8,800 feet, so you fly to a position over a valley with 2,000 feet of relief and slow the helicopter to zero airspeed and zero rate of descent and watch your engine temperatures. As we did that the helicopter started descending with temperatures maxed out and the airframe shaking violently. We were way over weight. We knew the mountain rescue crew was the first thing that had to go. We informed them and dropped them off around 4,000 feet and they were on their own.

It was a warmer than usual day which is of course why the avalanche occurred early in the morning. My calculations had our density altitude at about 9,800 feet. The engine power was down about 15% compared to sea level standard day. We decided to dump about 1,000 pounds of fuel. That put us down to about 1.5 hours of fuel remaining. We went back around and did a power check again. Slowing down to zero airspeed the helicopter was responding much better although both engines were nearly "topped out" on temperatures but with some margins. We agreed that the power check was successful and we flew back toward the rescue site.

Bob and I discussed which side of the aircraft we would use to pull two Stokes litters in and out of the aircraft. We decided that we would put the survivors/ rescuers off of our left side and use the port side door to bring them onboard. We put the nose of the aircraft slightly to the right as we came in for a "landing" giving us a better wave-off position if we lost an engine while hovering. The ice sloped up about 15 degrees so we did a "one skid" hover. We put the left main mount on the ice with the right main mount maybe 5 feet above the ice and the tail wheel much farther above the ice.

Bob flew the approach and I back him up on the gauges and callouts. Once in the hover I could see that the ice sloped up on our port side. Our normal vertical clearance from the rotors was around 8 feet while turning on deck. With the ice

Mt. Baker Rescue
Kevin Murray, USN '73

sloping up we had about 4 feet rotor clearance. HM2 Pickett, our Corpsman, was the first in the door with a Stokes litter. I purposefully slowed down the conversation to point out the rotor disc. I told him he would need to crawl out on his hands and knees dragging his litter with him past the rotor arc. The H-3 rotor is 66 feet in diameter. So he had a good 30 feet of crawling to get clear. Our second crewman followed suit.

Once they cleared the rotor disc we closed the door and departed giving the Corpsman time to evaluate and stabilize both patients. We flew down the mountain several thousand feet and landed in a flat Basalt rock field and shut down to save fuel.

After what seemed like 20 minutes our Corpsman called on the PRC-90 and said he had one patient with a collapsed lung and 3 broken ribs. The other was in much better shape. We went back up to the same spot for pickup and repeated the same process of our approach, hover and pickup. We loaded the two patients on board, recovered our two crewman and flew off the mountain. We now had to turn the patients over to the Medevac Helo. He was shutdown at an overlook parking lot at about 4,000 feet. We came in and landed in the parking lot behind him and shutdown. After loading up the two survivors they flew off to Bellingham hospital.

The temperatures on the mountain by the afternoon became dangerous so the rescue team decided to stop the search for the missing climbers. We departed and flew back to the base. I remember we were on a 5 mile final when the left engine low fuel light came on.

Another crew flew up the next day but they did not find any more survivors. The two victims were recovered the next spring where they were found down in the crevasse. The Medical Examiner's office determined blunt force trauma was the cause. I was relieved that we had done all we could do that day.

Decades went by and I sometimes wondered what ever happened to those two guys we pulled off the mountain. In 2019, I decided to see if I could locate either of them. With a quick internet search, I found Tom Waller who was the one with the collapsed lung still living up in the Seattle area. I emailed him and he called me the next day. He told me what he went through after the avalanche lying on the mountain unable to move and barely able to breath in the thin air and rescuers getting to him and putting him in a sleeping bag because his core temperature had dropped to 92 degrees. His eyes glued shut with dried blood and thinking he was not going to get off the mountain. And then he heard a

Mt. Baker Rescue
Kevin Murray, USN '73

helicopter approach and he started crying. Yeah, I asked the same question to myself. How do you cry with your eyes glued shut? I don't know but it brought me to tears. Up until then I looked at the rescue purely from a technical standpoint. You train for it and you do it. Simple. But the human side is so much bigger than that.

Tom and I kept in touch and few months later he suggested we meet. Finally four years later I was up in Oregon doing the Crater Lake rim bike ride and I ventured up to Seattle to meet him. It was emotional. The next day we did some hiking on Mt Rainier. We could see Mt Baker up to the north. It had been just over 37 years since that eventful day and I was glad I could contribute to a successful outcome.

I included a photo of the rescue which I had not seen until 2019. We had just loaded the two survivors onboard. I had lifted off the ice and did a pedal turn 90 degrees to the left and we flew by the rescuers to thank them for their great work. The second photo is Tom and I on Mt. Rainier starting our hike.



A Day to Remember



Kevin & Tom

Ed Note: I flew out of NAS Whidbey flying the EA-6B. The Puget Sound is a very cold body of water and we relied on these SAR folks to come get us should we ever find ourselves floating for some reason or another. So, Kevin, after all these years, thanks for being there.

OSU NROTC ALUMNI WEBSITE

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

Member Email Updates

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.

Editors Note

Well shipmates…as promised in the Spring Newsletter, this is my final edition as your editor. It has been a great 4 years and I have totally enjoyed your stories and being able to forward them to the OSU NROTC Alumni. I appreciate the support that your Alumni Coordinator, Doug Neve has provided as well as the support of CAPT. De Pree and CAPT. Biggs.

The really good news is that you now have an editor with much more talent and capability than moi. Jenny Kucera, USN ‘81 is assuming the editor’s position and will be accepting all of your stories of high adventure and ne’er-do-well. You’re in good hands.

Jenny’s Email: newsletter@osu-nrotc-alumni.us

Also of note: The Alumni leadership team has established a new domain for their email accounts. It is still in its infancy but you might set your personal accounts to accept emails from the following.

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