The NROTC Alumni Association held its annual Alumni Awards Ceremony and Bar-BQ this past semester on 2 November, 2013 awarding over $50,000 in scholarships. Battalion members use the money to help them cover various expenses, such as the cost of living in Austin, helping cover rent checks, and car payments. After the ceremony, the battalion and alumni gathered for a barbecue lunch where the students were able to interact with their predecessors. The afternoon culminated with a UT victory over the Kansas Jayhawks. The battalion wishes to extend its sincerest thanks once again to our generous alumni and other agencies that provide the resources for our annual awards.
On November 9th 2013, the UT NROTC hosted their annual Navy and Marine Corps Birthday Ball. The Ball was held in the Texas Union Ballroom at Texas Student Union. This time old tradition is one of the biggest events of our semester, and is a formal celebration which brings service members of the past and present together to commemorate the founding of our beloved Navy and Marine Corps. The Ball hosts many traditions and ceremonies including the Sword Line, Cake Cutting ceremony, and an address by the Guest of Honor. The Sword Line was commanded by MIDN 3/C Peter Thayer. The CO then cuts the cake, and the first piece is given to the Guest of Honor.

The next piece is given to the oldest service member present who then passes their piece to the youngest member present, symbolizing the passing of history and traditions to the next generation. Bob Brown, former of the United States Marine Corps, passed his piece of cake to the youngest Navy-Option, MIDN 4/C Destiny Lewis who was born 1996. Dr. Hans Mark passed his cake to MIDN 4/C Guerra, a Marine-Option who was born in 1995. The evening’s ceremonies concluded with the address by our Guest of Honor, Dr. Hans Mark, former Secretary of the Air Force. After dinner and the ceremonies concluded, the dance floor was opened. Upon the conclusion of the event, the Midshipman Officer in Charge, MIDN 2/C David Ibarra said “All the hard work and practice after practice definitely paid off and I am pleased with the committee and the effort they put in to make this event a success!”
The biannual NROTC Leatherneck Field Exercise, FEX for short, is an event that is usually overshadowed by The Run to Dallas and Birthday Ball events. However, the execution of the exercise is very important to the Marine MIDN and especially the MECEPs looking to pin on a couple of gold bars. As the Leatherneck Platoon Commander it was my traditional role to plan and execute this event. After a couple of meetings conversing over a few ideas with the MOI and AMOI, it was decided that the FEX would include a hike, land navigation, a paintball exercise, competitions and classes.

Those events alone had changed the game of what a traditional FEX would be. By gathering the MECEPs, SSgt Lovos, SSgt Quintanilla, SSgt Barton, SSgt Urban, and MIDN 1/C Alford, they were all able to meet up, coordinate, and plan the Field Exercise. In my years as a Marine Option Midshipmen I had not seen preparation and planning for the FEX like this. They wanted this event to be a great training experience for all who participated with very little information let out.

Another major difference from previous FEXs were the amount Navy volunteers for both the overall FEX and the competition portion. We even had the pleasure of our own Battalion Commander Officer Midshipman 1/C Poli taking part in the classes and competition portion of the FEX. These motivators were real game changers, and were a benefit to the overall event. We cannot thank them enough for what they did and dealt with for those couple of days.

The day before the Field Exercise, the weather forecast had shown that those few days were to be the “coldest of the year.” Did that stop us? Of course not, we sucked it up and went on with the FEX! The event started off a bit slow and the cold weather did not help, but the hike, and land navigation portion went well. Once we had completed that we hit competitions, and all of us participating had no idea what to expect. We finished our final class and we were off to the PT races, on the go we completed a stretcher run, a fireman carry run, buddy drags, a movement to contact run, and an equipment transport portion which involved a lot of mud. At the end of it we had two portions of the completion to complete, the stations event and lastly paintball, which allowed us to apply previously acquired knowledge and be evaluated on what we had learned throughout the FEX. There was a large amount of teamwork and comradery displayed and it was, no doubt, one of the most motivating event we had ever experienced.
Each year the UT NROTC competes a tri-service competition with the Army and Air Force Units. The competitions this year included: Volleyball, Basketball, Dodge Ball, Football, Soccer, Ultimate Frisbee, as well as a Pull-Up, Push-up and Sit-up competition. We might not have come out on top this semester but final results are not until the end of the year so be ready for a comeback this Spring! Thanks to all who participated!

As a battalion we also hold our own competition, Captain’s Cup. The teams were a draft pick and the events included: PNS Inspection, Knowledge Bowl, Basketball, Dodge Ball, Relays, Ma’am and Gentleman Run, Soccer, Push-Up and Pull-Up competition. Congratulations to Schmuckatellies for winning this semester’s competition!
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**CHANGE OF COMMAND**

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**SPRING 2014 BATTALION STAFF**

CO: MIDN 1/C Barone  
XO: MIDN 1/C Dinmore  
CMC: MIDN 2/C Jbeily  
ADJ: MIDN 3/C Becker  
SUPPO: MIDN 2/C Ibarra  
OPS: MIDN 3/C Joseph  
AOPS: MIDN 3/C Masters  
PTI: MIDN 3/C Hannum  
PAO: MIDN 3/C Baker  
DIVO1: MIDN 2/C Baugh  
DIVO2: MIDN 2/C Birdsall  
LN PC: MIDN 3/C Whiteman
WINTER COMMISSIONING

The Fall 2013 semester concluded with the commissioning of Ensign Andrew Watkins, Ensign Michael Lowe, 2nd Lieutenant Albert Quintanilla, and 2nd Lieutenant Nelson Lovos. ENS Watkins will report to Nuclear Power School in Charleston, South Carolina, for training with the submarine community, ENS Lowe will report to Pensacola, Florida where he will train to become a Naval Flight Officer. As for our Marines, they will both be reporting to TBS in June 2014. These gentlemen have contributed a lot of time and effort and influenced many midshipmen within the unit. Their time spent in the NROTC program has provided them with the knowledge and experience to overcome the challenges they are soon to face as officers in the United States Navy and Marine Corps.