Midshipmen on the Road

Running across Texas was one of the activities that kept members of the Navy ROTC occupied in 1983-84. "Being in the Navy ROTC does not mean just wearing uniforms and going to school," said Gary Thomas, battalion commander. Striving to prepare men and women to become officers in the United States Navy and Marine Corps was the basic goal of the Navy ROTC program at UT. The program kept midshipmen busy both in and out of uniform.

Since midshipmen had to pass physical fitness tests each semester, they played intramural football, soccer, volleyball, basketball and softball. In most sports, the Navy had men's and coed teams. Each semester, Navy ROTC members held field meets including wheelbarrow races, human pyramid competitions and tug-of-war finales — which, junior midshipman Alyson Headle said, were less rigorous and more fun than the physical fitness tests.

The physical conditioning paid off for the midshipmen on Veterans' Day, 1983, when a group of them carried an American flag to Fredericksburg, Texas, site of the Adm. Chester Nimitz Museum and a rally point for state Veterans' Day marches, to honor armed forces veterans. "The worst part about the run," Thomas said, "was waiting in the van to take your turn." During spring break, midshipmen were again on the road, running this time for the Special Olympics Committee. The midshipmen ran in shifts, with a supporting van, from El Paso, along Interstate Highway 10, to San Antonio and on to Orange, Texas.

To showcase their activities, midshipmen published The Longhorn Log, the Navy ROTC yearbook, and The Naval Orange, a pamphlet containing stories about the midshipmen.

The Drum and Bugle Corps traveled to New Orleans to march in a Mardi Gras parade during the first weekend in March, 1984.

Early morning workouts prepared midshipmen for their physical fitness tests.
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The midshipmen cleaned up Memorial Stadium after football games and stuffed inserts for *The Daily Texan*. The money raised from these projects helped fund the NROTC social schedule.

Midshipmen met for Friday beer calls at local establishments. When warm weather arrived, members traveled to New Braunfels to float down the river. Each semester, the ROTC held a Dining Out, a formal military dinner. The Spring 1984 Dining Out was followed by the Ring Dance, which honored the senior midshipmen. The unit also held birthday parties for the United States Navy and Marine Corps. The Navy birthday, Oct. 13, was celebrated with a cake-cutting ceremony and music played by the Drum and Bugle Corps.

The Anchorettes, a group who has supported the Navy ROTC throughout the semester, celebrated with the cadets.
Midshipmen attended professional labs every Thursday, where they discussed topics such as Marine tactics, military courtesies, Soviet naval strength and the problems of drug abuse in the Navy.

The midshipmen took three summer cruises as part of their naval training, including a month after the sophomore year comprising one week with the Marines, one week on surface ships, one week in submarines and one week with aviators. Before Navy ROTC members began their senior years, they acted as junior officers on Navy ships. "We each stayed with an officer and saw what they actually did," Thomas said. Recreational sailing aboard the 41-foot sailboat, "The Spirit of St. Louis," included a summer of 1983 trip to the Bahamas and a summer of 1984 journey to the Virgin Islands.

After being commissioned, Navy ensigns and Marine Corps lieutenants continued their military educations at specialized schools across the country. By all of this preparation, Thomas said, "Navy ROTC members learn to prepare for a national crisis." — Jennifer Platt

Taking a break during their physical fitness test, these midshipmen ham it up for the camera.

A bit of fun and games has its place in Navy ROTC as these midshipmen compete against Army and Air Force ROTC members.

NAVY ROTC
Two marines from NROTC participate in an obstacle course.

ROUD TO DRESS DOWN

Lines of men filled Bourbon Street, moving forward in strict time and unison. Mardi Gras trappings littering the ground and clinging to the marching men served only to brighten the shining brass buckles and buttons, evoke respect and appreciation for the perfectly aligned hats, and cause all to wonder at the immaculately clean uniforms. They cause all to wonder, that is, but the cheering group of Anchorettes commanding a choice view on a curve in the route. They did not wonder because it was they who had “dressed down” the Buccaneers before the parade. The Anchorette women provide support and spirit for Navy ROTC, Marine Corps ROTC, and such groups as the marching Buccaneers and Scabbard and Blade.

The trip to Mardi Gras was but one of many ways the Anchorettes showed the military they cared. Their activities included picnics, cookie calls, beer calls, and T.G.I.F. parties.

The Anchorettes gained a better understanding of military life by attending military labs. To its members, Anchorettes means “fun, support, and an understanding of the military.” — Dana Cohen

Marianne Day of the Anchorettes serves cake during the Navy Birthday celebration.

BRANCHES UNITED

"This year Scabbard and Blade has excelled, and I think it's due to our fine corps of officers," Air Force Corps Commander Brus D. Messinger said. The officers devoted more time trying to make the three areas of the armed services more cohesive, said Messinger.

As a tri-service organization with members from Army, Navy and Air Force ROTC units, Scabbard and Blade's fundamental principle was "to unite in closer relationship the military departments of American universities and colleges."

One event that allowed members to meet and work together was the annual Scabbard and Blade Invitational Drill Meet, held in the spring. Drill teams from Texas high schools and universities attended the one-day meet at Memorial Stadium.

"The thing that I like most about Scabbard and Blade is the camaraderie that the different services are able to enjoy," said Scabbard and Blade Captain Michael Snyder.

"I feel the organization is more a professional than social organization because you're meeting people in the same line of business, and you really pull for each other even though there are some differences," Messinger said. "You can help yourself, help your service, and help your country."

— Sharlet Wagner

UT's military departments are united through tri-service organizations such as Scabbard and Blade.

"The Praetorian Guard produces better officers," according to Jon Hall, commanding officer of the tri-service social and professional organization. The Guard, he said, had the same goals as the service, but was more intense in their pursuit.

To properly prepare and test themselves for wartime conditions that they might later be subjected to, the Guard's members learned to act decisively when subjected to the high pressure of quick decisions made amidst flurries of commands from all sides. Guard members also learned to work as a unit through such activities as scavenger and treasure hunts. Most importantly, each member had to realize the essentiality of presenting a strong and positive appearance at all times.

Hall reinforced that doctrine, saying, "No matter what situation you are in, military or otherwise, it is necessary to present the image of a stable, well-organized and functioning group despite any problems or confusion." Hall said of the program, "We don't make anyone do anything they can't do, but we do expect them to show special effort."

Of equal importance in molding superior officers was the promotion of tri-service interaction and understanding. The Praetorian Guard provided its members with an important orientation to the armed forces as a whole. For instance, Guards were taught how to address and salute members of each of the service branches. For a change of pace, fun activities such as the tri-service track meet helped to provide a closer and more relaxed atmosphere.

To truly set themselves above the average officer, Guard members were encouraged to broaden their horizons. They were prompted to take their college educations seriously, branching out into other campus activities in addition to their military responsibilities. Hall said, "Because the military can be very restricting and often funnels one into a narrow area, we strive to make our members expose themselves to things outside of the military and to bring their military and civilian lives into a more healthy balance." — Dana Cohen

Traditionally on Dad's Day day, fraternity houses throughout that area displayed banners welcoming dads to The University. Above one house on Rio Grande, a banner read "Welcome Dads of Sigma Wang, Whoever You Are." The house was not a frat house, but the Navy ROTC cooperative known as the Crow's Nest.

Started in 1948, this house served as a social center for many midshipmen in the ROTC program. Further, it provided a cheaper alternative for NROTC students choosing not to live in dormitories. Housing only 20 students, the Crow's Nest provided a place for the entire Naval battalion and the Anchorettes, a women's service organization in the ROTC, to hold their parties and other activities.

As did fraternities, the Crow's Nest took in new pledges, whom they called "pukes." Pukes went through many initiation ceremonies such as "midnight muster" and "freshman follies" before becoming full "nesters" in February, 1984.

Traditions at the Crow's Nest also included a special way of celebrating birthdays or anniversaries. The lucky nester, or puke, would be thrown into the swimming pool in the apartment complex across the street in a tactic known as the "pool offense."

Although the majority of Crow's Nest activities were social events, the members also performed service functions such as a canned food drive for the Salvation Army before Thanksgiving. — Sanjay Chandra