Greetings from the Commander

by LTC Joel Stephenson

Greetings once again from the Maverick Battalion. I wanted to take a few minutes to update you on some of the great things going on with our program. First, you’ll notice we’ve changed the design and appearance of our newsletter in an effort to make the product more user-friendly and visually appealing. CPT Justin Heinze, a recent addition to our staff and faculty, has enlisted the help of several current and past Cadets to fill these pages with informative and relevant stories. In addition, we look forward to publishing the newsletter more frequently in the future...once in the fall, once in the winter, and once again in the spring to ensure we maintain consistent communication with friends, family, and alumni of the Maverick Battalion. Also, don’t be afraid to check us out on our recently updated web page and follow our most up-to-date happenings on Facebook.

We recently concluded another great semester by commissioning 3 of the Army’s newest Lieutenants. Congratulations to 2LT Caitlin Christopherson, 2LT Brittney Leary, and 2LT Jacob Schmidt. Caitlin and Brittny are both Army Nurses and looking forward to BOLC in San Antonio. Jacob will be staying here in Minnesota and continuing his service with the National Guard as an Artillery officer. Our December commissioning is one of two this year and begins the graduation/commissioning process for perhaps one of our most accomplished and sizable classes in recent memory.

See Commander Remarks. Page 2

Nurse Training at Walter Reed
CDT Christopherson talks about her experience working at Walter Reed Medical Center. (Page 5)

CDT Krinki goes to El Salvador
CDT Krinke was 1 of 3 cadets from MSUM to be selected for a Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency training experience. (Page 6)
The Class of 2012 numbers in excess of 20 Cadets with 6 Distinguished Military Graduates. We look forward to honoring these folks at the Spring Commissioning Ceremony here at MSU, Mankato’s new ballroom in May.

You’ll see some articles in the following pages on the activities of our Cadets this past summer. Certainly amazing the programs and opportunities available in ROTC for our young people today. I accompanied our own CDT Danni Krinke and 8 others to El Salvador for 3 weeks last May on a cultural exchange to experience first-hand what ROTC does with these programs. Without question a great experience and something we’ll continue to take advantage of as much as possible. This is in addition to airborne, air assault, CTLT, and multiple internships (nursing, research, medical, and engineering) that we had Cadets participate in over the summer, all compliments of the Army and ROTC.

Once again, we’ve had great success with our competitive teams and training exercises this past semester. In October, our Army Ten Miler Team, led by Jon Kasprisin (59 minutes) and Dan Sweeney (61 minutes), took 4th out of 62 ROTC teams at the 27th Annual ATM in Washington, D.C. Also in October, our Ranger Challenge Team placed in the top 5 for the 3rd year in a row at the TF Ripley Ranger Challenge. We had a very successful Fall FTX in September with the entire Cadet Battalion up at Camp Ripley, and we concluded our fall lab sequence with a day-long training exercise at the Norseland Scout Camp near St. Peter in November.

Some of our more recent alum have been setting the standard out in the “real Army” of late. Had the distinct pleasure to pin 2LT Tim Harting’s Ranger Tab down at Fort Benning, GA this past August. Tim was one of our first Bethany Lutheran graduates in 2010 and now serves as a Rifle Platoon Leader in 4th Brigade, 82nd Airborne at Fort Bragg, NC.

2LT Marcus Piepho followed Tim at Fort Benning, graduating from Ranger School and completing airborne training in December. Marcus is home here in Mankato for the Holidays and will report to 4th Brigade, 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley, KS in January.

Would like to close by highlighting a few staff and faculty changes this semester. MSG Bart Irwin replaced the recently retired Don Friend as SMI in August. CPT Justin Heizne (MSU, Mankato alum) replaced Sara Livingston as MSI Instructor and APMS, also in August; and LTC Jerry Bohl just moved over in December from the training office to take over ROO responsibilities from MAJ Chris Rogers. No stranger to recruiting or the MSU, Mankato program – Jerry served as ROO his first 4 years with the Maverick Battalion. Would like to wish our departing faculty farewell and thank them for their time and effort over the years.

Thanks once again for your support of Maverick Battalion Army ROTC. Be proud of these young people and the tradition many of you helped to establish, dating back to 1981. Until next time...

LTC Joel Stephenson

The Airborne Experience
by CDT Sawtelle

This past summer I had the privilege of attending Airborne Jump School at Ft. Benning, Georgia. I was almost unable to go due to a shortage of the aircraft, but the problem was resolved and I left for Columbus, Georgia at the beginning of June.

Following in-processing, I fell in with Alpha Company’s formation along with over 500 other trainees for week one of training, known as ground week. Besides active duty Army personnel, there were ROTC and West Point cadets, members of the Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, as well as other soldiers from various European countries.

During ground week we conducted physical training in the morning, learned about the two different kinds of parachute harnesses we would be wearing, and practiced a proper exit from scale models of C-130s, as well as standing parachute landing falls (PLFs).

The following week was tower week, where we conducted PLF training from a twelve foot high platform and practiced a proper C-130 exit from a 34 foot high platform onto a zip line, occasionally with combat gear. Then we moved on to being dropped from a 250 foot tower with a parachute. Facing record high temperatures for that month, our company was given packets of electrolyte powder 2-3 times a day and occasionally a tub of cold water to immerse our arms to lower the core body temperature. Throughout all of this we continued to carry out the pre-chow tradition of jumping up to a bar and doing ten pull-ups followed by ten pushups.

Finally, week three came along which was jump week. Earlier than usual, our company formed up every morning equipped with our ACHs and half of us with ankle braces. After double-timeing down to the airfield, we conducted pre-jump exercises to review before putting on the parachute harnesses.

Throughout the week, I and the rest of Alpha performed five jumps from a C-130 around an altitude of around 1200 feet, including one jump with combat equipment, and one with a new parachute called the T-11. On Friday of that week we received our jump wings, having finished with the legacy that’s been nearly untouched since the 1960s.
Air Assault School
by CDT McGillick

At Air Assault school cadets and soldiers are instructed on how to conduct air assault, medevac, pathfinder and sling load operations. Air Assault school is a 10 day course that is very physically and mentally demanding. The course consists of 3 phases.

Phase 1 is devoted to familiarizing cadets with aircraft, tests of physical endurance, how to conduct MEDEVAC operations and how to plan combat air assaults.

Phase 2 is the phase where most personnel are dropped from the course. In phase 2 students are expected to learn sling load operations, this hands on portion of this phase is the most mentally demanding part of the entire school.

Inspection sequences must be memorized and carried out on 4 different “pre-rigged” loads with 4 deficiencies rigged in them that must be identified in 2 minutes by the student in order to pass this phase of training. Practice was key for this phase of testing, I spent hours going through the different inspection sequences. This paid off, when it came time for the hands on test, as I had no problem getting a first time “GO” on all loads.

The 3rd phase teaches students the proper rappelling techniques and fast rope method for exiting aircraft.

The final test of strength for all air assault students is 12 mile timed ruck march, despite the torrential rain and the radiant lighting most of the remaining students were able to complete the course. This course focused on individual performance, more than most students were used to in the military and some were not up to the challenge, out of 200+ personnel, 146 students including myself graduated from class 701-11. Air Assault school was a great learning experience; I am honored to be the cadet selected to represent the Maverick Battalion at Air Assault school.

146 OUT OF 200+ CDTS GRADUATED

More than most students were used to in the military and some were not up to the challenge, out of 200+ personnel, 146 students

CTLT in South Korea
by CDT Switzer

Last Spring a slot opened up for me to go to CTLT (Cadet Troop Leading Training) in South Korea and shadow a 2LT in an ADA unit. I was sent to 2nd Battalion 1st Air Defense Artillery, Alpha Battery, or the 2-1 ADA A BTRY.

Alpha Battery operates out of the Kunsan Air Base near Kunsan City, west coast of South Korea. The temperature in July and August in Korea radiates in the 90’s or higher. This maintains a slight Georgian like humidity, and breeding enough spiders to cover every corner and connect every tree on base.

While there, I learned very quickly that the 2nd Battalion lives up to their motto, “Second to None”, more so in their amount of material the officers need to read, acronyms to memorize, and machinery to operate, then the quality of the unit.

ADA is a slowly degrading unit that, for the most part, lacks use in modern day conflicts. As such, the amount of experienced NCOs and qualified officers that are needed to run this unit successfully are not being sent where they are needed.

Due to this factor and others, I learned more of what NOT to do as an officer then how to run a platoon successfully as the particular unit I was following found itself in some trouble while I was there. Overall, I did enjoy what the lieutenants describe as the “video game” aspect, or the training done with the radar and simulated fights.

I also witnessed on more than one occasion the extreme importance of PMCS with any and all equipment. Biggest lesson learned? Don’t leave equipment out in the rain, especially when it’s not waterproof.
2011 Ranger Challenge Event

by CDT McGillick

This year’s Ranger Challenge Team was, in my mind, one of our best. Overall in the competition we placed 5th out of 12 teams. Out of roughly 25 cadets that tried out for the 2011 Ranger Challenge team only 9 were selected to compete.

1) CDT McGillick  
2) CDT Struss  
3) CDT Darsow  
4) CDT Beal  
5) CDT Pederson  
6) CDT Clinchoc  
7) CDT Kim  
8) CDT Callahan  
9) CDT Putzier

The team trained hard every morning for 8 weeks with Cadet Sweeney and 2LT Christopherson as coaches. Daily workouts consisted of a combination of sprints, distance and hill runs, with strength training in between.

At the competition we placed first in the marksmanship portion of the competition, 2nd on the one rope bridge and 2nd on the Hand Grenade Assault Course.

Aided by cadre members LTC Bohl and SFC Goldner, we were able to make the best use of training time available.

I am very proud of this team, despite setbacks of losing team members later in the training process we were able to fill in gaps and drive on. It is because of the dedicated and knowledgeable cadre, as well as competitive Cadets that we were successful in the events and the competition.
Former ROTC Cadet Nursing Experience at Walter Reed Medical Center
by 2LT Christopherson

I spent a month of the summer of 2011 at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington D.C.; a wounded warrior center. Walter Reed is full of history and had an enormous campus. Walter Reed closed in August and re-opened at a new location in Bethesda, MD. It is now Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda. It was combined with the Navy hospital. The Bethesda campus is even bigger than the old one.

Miscellaneous
I was there with 10 other students from all over the country. We stayed in a Comfort Inn just under a mile away from the hospital. We had a shuttle service from the hotel that drove us to and from the hospital day to day. Our meals were provided at the DFAC at the hospital at no cost to us. The internship was paid.

Co-Workers
In an Army hospital, there are mostly civilian nurses working on the floor. The nursing assistants were either civilians or enlisted medical personnel. Walter Reed is a teaching hospital, so there were a lot of LPNs (Licensed Practical Nurse) from the Army doing clinical training there. The doctors were mostly in the Military.

Unit/Day-to-Day
I worked on a Cardiac Thoracic telemetry unit. I was assigned with a 2LT named Justin Adams; he had been a nurse for 3 years. I worked all the same shifts as he did the entire month. I took all the patients he was assigned to and provided all their care with his guidance. I had the opportunity to gain a lot of independence throughout my time there. The patients we had were either in the Army, retired from the Army, or a dependent of a soldier/retired soldier. Those are the types of patients at any Army hospital.

Additional Activities
We also had the chance to work in the lab practicing blood draws for an entire day, and spend a day working on Air Evacuation at Andrews Air Force base. On Air Evac we linked up with all the medical personnel from the Navy, Marines, and Air Force, received report on the incoming patients coming from Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, etc. From there we went out to the air field and picked up the Army Soldiers from the plane and loaded them in our vehicle. The vehicle was an ambulance that was large enough to hold 16 casualties; it looked like an ambulance Semi. From the Air Force base, we transported the Army soldiers back to Walter Reed. It was an amazing experience.

Application Process
To get the internship I just had to submit an application with my basic information on it. The locations we got were based on OML. As a nurse, I was only able to select certain locations. Most of the locations were Army Medical Centers, with a few additional options in Korea, Alaska, and Colorado. Germany, Walter Reed, and Hawaii were the most popular and most difficult to get.

Likes
It was a great experience. I worked 140 hours in 3 weeks (we were there for 4 weeks, but we had time off at the end and in-processing in the beginning). On days off we could do whatever we wanted. We all worked different shifts, so we just went out with whoever was around. Being in D.C. was an amazing time; there were so many things to do. The night life was great, and there was always plenty to do during the day as well. We were also there over July 4th, an experience I would definitely recommend.

We mainly used the subway for transportation. It was inexpensive and we stayed close to a train station, so it was easily accessible. It is a tourist city, so there were maps with all the hot spots making it really easy to find our way around.
Language Training in El Salvador

by CDT Krinke

My experience with the CULP program was awesome! I traveled to El Salvador visiting the following cities San Vicente and San Salvador which is the capital.

I was in El Salvador for three weeks. My CULP slot was a training mission, so I linked up with the National Guard engineering group for two weeks to help them with building schools.

Of the three weeks, two of those weeks I stayed at a FOB with a National Guard engineering unit. There we had four stations were I shadowed different officers performing different jobs. The different stations were MPs’, engineers’, TOC, and FOB maintenance. At these four stations I spent 2-3 days shadowing the officers.

At the MP I shadowed the second lieutenant, where the majority of the time all he was writing out trip tickets. Trip tickets are a sheet of paper saying whose leaving the FOB and at what time. The MPs’ would also drive to the school sites and check to see how things were going.

The next station was the engineers. Here I got to help build the school which was pretty fun, but hard at the same time. So on the days I went with the engineers I just gave them an extra hand at building the school.

The third station was the TOC was probably the best one so far, because I got to experience the behind the scenes work like the S1 (Human Resources) and so on.

The last station was FOB maintenance and was the grunt work of all the stations. Just by the name of it you can tell what we did at this station. So for the first two weeks in El Salvador this is what I did, it was pretty cool to see how it was like staying at a FOB.

Now the third week in El Salvador I went to San Salvador. I got to tour a lot of places, but the best part was touring the El Salvadorian military school and touring the different El Salvadorian branches as well!

I got to experience the food there, which was awesome! I got home and I can never look at tortillas the same way now or even refried beans too.

It was somewhat hard to experience the culture when I was at the FOB since they didn’t let many el Salvadorians in the FOB and didn’t interact with them a lot when outside the FOB as well.

When I left for San Salvador I really got to experience their culture, which was awesome and at the same time I bit of a shock the differences compared to the U.S. If you have ever been to Mexico not the resorts or anything nice, but the normal parts of Mexico, it was a lot like that.

When I was at the FOB I was in shock because what the people were living in and how some of the fields were covered up in garbage, but then when I went to San Salvador it was a total change. There were


Overall it was a great experience which I shall never forget! I’m very thankful I received a CULP slot and when I came home from the trip it really made my eyes open and being thankful for things that I have here!

2LT Leary Nurse Training

I spent 3 weeks working at Evan's Community Hospital at Fort Carson Colorado on a medical surgical unit. I was able to start IV’s, perform blood draws, learn to balance a four patient assignment, admit and discharge patients, and improve my assessment and intervention skills.

CDT Callahan Medical Internship

During my AMEDD internship at Ft. Sam Houston, TX I was allowed the opportunity to follow around many different dieticians at Brooke Army Medical Center. There were various dieticians for specific areas of work (burn unit dietician, pediatrician dietician, ICU dietician, etc.) I got to see all areas of the Nutrition Care process and how these people worked from day to day.

I did my internship with 9 other cadets who were also pursuing a medical career. We only worked M-F which gave us the opportunity to sight see around San Antonio. I loved everything about my internship! It gave me the opportunity to see all aspects of a dietician’s duties in the Army. This also gave me the opportunity to improve my military bearing as I was working with many higher ranking officers. Lastly, it reinsured that this is the career I want to do with my life. This was the best experience I could ask for!
For the second year in a row, I was selected to the prestigious Maverick Battalion Army Ten Miler team. The team consisted of six members that would be flown out to Washington D.C. in order to run the nation’s largest ten mile race.

The four best times would then be added up to achieve the teams overall score. Last year, the Maverick Battalion team placed second in the nation among ROTC teams; so this year, we had a lot of expectations to live up to.

Training for the Army Ten Miler is difficult since the event is scheduled so close to our Ranger Challenge event. This meant that we had to train for both events simultaneously while being a full time student and Cadet.

We covered hundreds of miles in order to prepare for the event. Finally, the time came to fly across the country. We planned our trip so that we had the weekend to tour the historic city before the race. The morning of the race, we anxiously walked to the Pentagon to the start and finish line, from our hotel.

After a few last minute adjustments and a happy snap to commemorate the moment, the team was ready to take on the competition; especially our rivals, The Fighting Saints Battalion.

Once the gun sounded, twenty-five thousand runners took off. It was hard to keep track of anybody, specifically fellow team members and the pain and fatigue in the legs.

Before I knew it, I had made it past the seven mile mark at the base of the nation’s capital. In the last three miles I had caught up to a familiar red shirt. It was a Fighting Saints runner.

After a few polite gestures and some motivating words that were exchanged between the two of us for those last three miles, a hilly four hundred yard sprint was all that separate us from the finish line.

After years of running on the hills of Mankato, I knew this Fighting Saints runner didn’t stand a chance. Half way up the incline I saw him run out of steam out of the corner of my eye. After the race we shook hands and discussed where the others on our team finished.

Heartbreakingly, I discovered that two other Fighting Saints runners had already finished. Which meant that three of their runners were done already, compared to our two.

During the post-race ceremony, we congratulated the Fight Saints team on placing first among ROTC teams. All that was left on the agenda was an AUSA meeting and conference the next day before heading back home.
I had the opportunity this last summer to participate in the Engineering Internship Program through ROTC. This program was a 29 day internship with the Corps of Engineers.

I was selected to go to the Picatinny Arsenal local office in New Jersey. While I was there, I shadowed the civilian and military Project Engineers in the office.

At Picatinny Arsenal, there were numerous construction projects that were ongoing; such as a new facility for the Navy to train men how to use their ship cannons, new firing ranges for small arms and for crew fired weapons, a new packaging and handling facility, an upgrade to the existing damn, a new research and development facility for testing fuses, and many other minor building upgrades.

The main focus of the assignments for these Project Engineers was construction management. This management included everything from payment for the contractors to selecting colors for the buildings. I personally worked with the contractors to aid them in submitting requests, filing for payments, and checking completed work.

The experience I gained while at Picatinny Arsenal gave me firsthand knowledge of construction processes I would have otherwise never known.

Alumni Section updates and current assignments:

LTC Troy J Soukup
Position: BN CDR, 1-125 Field Artillery, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division. (Took Command 15 OCT 2009-Present)

Deployed (400 days) to Kuwait serving as the BN CDR of 1-125th FA(New Ulm, MN) and the Camp Commander of CAMP PATRIOT/Kuwait Naval Base, Conducting SECFOR South mission.

Education: Currently enrolled in the United States Army War College.
Civilian: Territory Sales Manager for Zimmer Dental - selling dental implants, surgical instrumentation, and biologics to Oral Surgeons and providing support to General Dentists.

Married to Melissa and we have 4 children
COL Ahnness

Greetings from Zabul, Afghanistan.

I am currently serving a year-long tour at FOB Apache outside of Qalat, Zabul province, Afghanistan as commander of the Zabul Agribusiness Development Team (ADT).

The ADT is a specially designed unit of 8 soldiers with a focus on building the capacity of the Director of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (DAIL) to conduct independent operations as a respected arm of the Afghan government.

We also provide training and mentorship to farmers and the agribusiness sector to increase prosperity for the district.

The attached picture shows a Key Leader Engagement that we had with a village elder.

MAJ Jacobson & MAJ Weitzel

Currently my family and I are enjoying our second year at Fort Leavenworth with fellow alumni and good friend, MAJ Trisha Weitzel.

MAJ Trisha Weitzel and MAJ Brian

Though neither Trisha nor I know where we will be working this time next year, we are enjoying the opportunity to catch an occasional Vikings game (picture right) and take the short trips to Minnesota. Fort Leavenworth offers great opportunities for the family such as scouting, sports, and great schools.

This past year my wife, Kelly (Wach) has enjoyed her exposure to Cross-Fit and both our kids earned medals in the National Military Judo tournament. We are only a few months away from the AMSP graduation and are looking forward to the challenges that lay ahead wherever they may be.

CPT Bobby Johnson

Duty Station: Fort Bragg, NC
Job: Engineer company commander for Alpha company, 508th STB, 4th BCT, 82nd ABN DIV

Upcoming deployment to Afghanistan in Feb

Bryon Struder

Currently working as a DA Civilian (GS-14) for Army Materiel Command, Redstone Arsenal, Huntsville AL in the HQ AMC G3/5 Strategy and Concepts, Concepts Development Division.

Specific work is on future force concept development 2020. I work concept plans to change unit structures, Capability needs analysis, etc. Recently transferred to the AL Army National Guard where I am assigned to the 279th AFSB as a logistics officer.

Previous deployed assignments included BCT 5-4 for 1/34 HBCT, 16 months in Iraq, also deployed at 34th ID DTO to the Balkans.

CPT Stephen Stock (05)

This past year CPT Stephen Stock completed the Special Forces Qualification Course and Ranger School in addition to getting married. He is stationed out of Joint Base Lewis McChord, WA with his wife and daughter. He is currently deployed with 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) as a detachment commander in support of Operation Enduring Freedom XVII and Village Stability Operations.

CPT Sara Livingston (02)

Is an Account Manager at Wurth Electronics Midcom in Watertown, SD. In February she will assume command of HHC, 2-361st TSBn, Sioux Falls, SD.

Departing Staff Members

*Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.*

Harold R. McAlindon

1SG Friend Commandant of Cadets and Second year instructor has Officially Retired from the United States Army. Although brief, his three years of service at the Maverick Battalion has left an impact on many Cadets that will surely live on through their service as Officers for many years to come. (Left Photo)

MAJ Rogers Recruiting Operations Officer is also leaving the Maverick BN this year to complete his Intermediate Level Education at Fort Leavenworth. During his two years this ROTC program his seen significant growth. (Right Photo)
2011 Dec Commissioning Ceremony

Congratulations to Decembers Commissioned 2nd Lieutenants:

2LT Schmidt (Artillery)
2LT Leary (Nurse Corps)
2LT Christopherson (Nurse Corps)

Photo Below: 2LT Shmidt, 2LT Leary and 2LT Christopherson
2011 Fall Semester in Photo Review

Aug: Welcome Back Picnic for Cadets

Aug: Lead Lab Map Reading

Sep: Lead Lab Weapons Familiarization

Sep: Field Training Exercise at Camp Ripley

Sep: Pre-Football Game BBQ and promoting the ROTC program

Sep-Oct: Lead Lab Battle Drills

Oct: Color-guard for the Homecoming Game

Oct: Combat Water Survival Training

Oct: Ranger Challenge Event at Camp Ripley (Hosted this year by the Maverick Battalion)
2011 Fall Semester in Photo Review (Continued)

Oct: Squad Training Exercise at Norseland

Oct: Army 10 Miler at Washington D.C.

Nov: 6th Annual ROTC Veterans Day 5K

Dec: Lead Lab Broomball Team Building

Dec: Commissioning Ceremony

Dec: Hockey Night ROTC promotional Event

Dec: Hockey Night Rappelling

Dec: Hockey Night ACU Jerseys