Prairie Winds
University of South Dakota (USD)

Department of Military Science — Army ROTC

Prairie Fire Senior ROTC Cadet Battalion Hosts 96th Annual Military Ball

By: Cadet Shane Hansen

On April 16, 2016 USD ROTC hosted their 96th annual military ball. This grand event gave Cadets, their families, student veterans and distinguished guests a look into many of the Army’s traditions and history. The Cadets plan, resource and execute the ball. The event allows the Cadets to hone their planning skills, engagement skills and collaboration skills. This event also presents opportunities for Cadets to interact, engage and socialize in formal situations. The ball began with a social hour in which Cadets mingled with guests. Once social hour was completed, all of the Cadets and guests proceeded through a receiving line and were seated at their table. Once everyone is seated, the colors were presented and the formal portion of the ball began.

The keynote speaker was Brigadier General (BG) Ronald Place, USD/ROTC Alum. He graduated from USD and commissioned into the Army (distinguished military graduate) in 1986 with a degree in Chemistry. He then went on to Creighton University School of Medicine, receiving a Doctor of Medicine Cum Laude. In 2015, BG Place was promoted to the rank of BG subsequently taking command of the Regional Health Command – Atlantic (Ft. Belvoir, VA), responsible for all Army healthcare east of the Mississippi in 26 states and some activity in the Caribbean with 14 hospitals and dozens of clinics. After nearly 30 years after his graduation from USD, BG Place traveled from VA to share his leadership and medical experience with USD leaders, faculty and aspiring Cadets.

After the awards program, the MS III Cadets showed the annual Cadet skit video. The video, created by the MS III Cadets provides some comic relief to a hectic school year and builds comradery between the cadre and Cadets. After the formal portion of the ball was concluded, Cadets and cadre spent the rest of the evening on the dance floor and visiting with friends and family. Overall, the annual military ball was a great success.

http://www.plaintalk.net/local_news/article_60aee45a-08da-11e6-90e0-131a52a0178.html

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C/BC Schnell presenting BG Place with a gift

BG Place gives keynote address

BG Place with Cadets

USD leaders, faculty and aspiring Cadets.

Toasts
First Aid/First Responder Training

By: 2LT Cassie Donahoe

In February, the Prairie Fire SROTC Battalion Cadets planned and executed first aid/first responder lab. During this event, Cadets received education and hands on experience on assessing a casualty and how to provide basic, lifesaving care. During this lab the MS III Cadets taught different classes, including: assessing a casualty under fire, nine-line MEDEVAC, treating for shock, setting up a helicopter landing zone and transporting a casualty using buddy techniques and a litter.

A new portion to the first aid lab this year was the addition of a medical simulation trailer. The simulation trailer had two lifelike dummies who could blink, breathe, bleed, talk and were computerized to react to the environment around them. By using the simulation trailer Cadets were able to enhance their hands-on training and could put what they learned in the previous classes to the test. While in the trailer the Cadets were re-familiarized with how to apply a tourniquet, how to find a pulse, how to know if the chest is rising and falling evenly and how to handle a sucking chest wound. This lab not only gave Cadets an opportunity to learn lifesaving skills, it also gave the MS III Cadets a chance to gain experience/confidence in leading and briefing a large group of their peers. Regardless of previous experience, there was always something new that could be learned from this lab, especially with the medical techniques continually evolving and becoming better every day. This lab helped reaffirm the importance of first aid training and continuous learning.

Leadership Lab

By: Cadets Brandon Pennock and Cole Huber

Orders (OPORD). This lab was conducted on January 23rd at Patterson Hall on USD’s campus. The MS III (junior) Cadets were tasked with receiving an OPORD from higher headquarters and then using their skills acquired from Military Science class to convert the information in a way that they could brief the information to their team. The OPORD is a key element in the planning process of a mission. It is essential that MS III Cadets attending Cadet Summer Training are proficient in this skill. Each MS III Cadet was paired with another MS III Cadet so that during each OPORD, the pair would alternate between holding the position of a platoon leader and an enroute recorder. The MS I (freshmen) and MS II (sophomore) Cadets were tasked with observing MS IV (senior) Cadets to learn about the OPORD process. If either the MS I or MS II Cadets had any questions regarding the OPORD the MS IV Cadets were able to educate the underclassmen. This year’s leadership lab was successful in solidifying the MS III Cadets’ abilities in receiving an OPORD and adapting the information to the troop leading procedures.
Leadership Training Exercise (LTX)

By: Cadet Anthony F. Gosch

This April, the Cadets executed a Leader’s Training Exercise (LTX) north of Vermillion at the former USD Cross Country Course. These Cadets perform these training exercises several times throughout the school year. The MS IV Cadets prepared the lab with the focus on the MS III Cadets, however, the program of instruction provided valuable training to the MS I and II Cadets. The purpose of the lab was to familiarize the Cadets with real-world scenarios, such as an attack, an ambush or a key leader engagement. The MS III Cadets filled leadership roles as Platoon Leader, Platoon Sergeant and Squad Leader. They received a mission in OPORD format and constructed their own plans through Troop Leading Procedures (TLP), which they briefed to their platoon or squad. After briefing and rehearsing their plan, the MS III Cadets carried out their mission to completion. Meanwhile, the Cadre the MS IV Cadets evaluated training and provided guidance to further the development of all the Cadets. The Cadets adapted to some terrain changes as this training area was very different than the normal wooded setting they were used to. Here they had a widely open area to train in which provided different advantages and disadvantages. The Cadets utilized their critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills to counter the disadvantages and seize the advantages as opportunities. Because of how open the terrain was, the Cadets could see everyone in their platoon and then observe the various tactics and maneuvers.

Combined Leadership Development Exercise (CLDX)

By: Cadets Charlotte Taggart and John Wetherington

This year the Prairie Fire SROTC Cadet Battalion attended the CLDX at Camp Rapid, SD from April 21st-24th. We conducted training with South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, South Dakota State University, University of North Dakota and North Dakota State University.

The drive out to Camp Rapid was great as we got to know our fellow Cadets while on the bus. Upon arrival to the training site, Cadets from each school were assigned to one of three platoons. The MS III Cadets were placed in various leadership roles within the element, such as squad leader, platoon sergeant and platoon leader. Day one of the CLDX consisted of the platoon getting to know each other and conducting various rehearsals for the upcoming missions. Day two started bright and early with a two mile road march to the field where the Cadets set up a patrol base to operate out of. At this time, each platoon went their separate ways to conduct their first missions. At the end of the day the platoons settled into their patrol bases where they slept for the night. On day three, each platoon received their first mission and cleared the patrol base. By the end of the day, each platoon conducted three missions. Once all three platoons were consolidated, all three elements stepped off for the two mile ruck march back to Camp Rapid.

Camp Rapid has a variety of different terrain features such as gorges, steep hills and forests. The Cadets were equipped with not only an M16 rifle, but also larger weapons such as a M249 machine gun. Overall, the CLDX experience was a valuable training experience for the Cadets. It taught them to work with new Cadets and adapt to new environments. For more information on the CLDX please read the article at http://m.bhpioneer.com/local_news/article_c33535d6-0afe-11e6-ae7c-dbdc1d721ab7.html?mode=jqm

Cadet Wetherington briefs an Operation Order to his platoon before conducting an ambush.
ROTC in the Community

By: Cadet Logan Bullard

This year the Cadets worked towards maintaining an active presence in the USD and Vermillion communities. From the first day on campus, or as the Cadets call it “Zero Day,” the Cadets hosted a barbeque and open house on the front lawn of the Burr House (current ROTC offices). This was completed with food fresh from the grill and an inflatable pugil stick activity leased to us by the South Dakota Army National Guard. The Cadets have the honor of providing the Color Guard as well as ball and net staff for USD football game at the Dakota Dome.

The Cadets continued their tradition of volunteering for the Zombie 5K Fun Run in October and performing as Color Guard for local events. The Cadets really stepped it up during the week of Dakota Days by painting and conducting maintenance on the USD letters located on the hillside above the railroad tracks and Burbank Road a mile or so East of Vermillion. The Cadets hosted a barbeque and open house on the front lawn of the Burr House (current ROTC offices). This was completed with food fresh from the grill and an inflatable pugil stick activity leased to us by the South Dakota Army National Guard. The Cadets have the honor of providing the Color Guard as well as ball and net staff for USD football game at the Dakota Dome.

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Cadets remodeling the theaters

Cadet Leadership Course (CLC)

By: Cadet Alex Schnell

The CLC mission is to train Cadets develop Cadet leadership and provide feedback for individual officer development. The CLC is intentionally stressful and is designed to build individual confidence through the accomplishment of tough and demanding training. The course is designed to build upon the core on-campus instruction by developing and assessing leadership potential in a platoon environment. It is often Cadets' first exposure to Army life on an active Army installation and one of the few opportunities where Cadets from various parts of the country undergo a common, high-quality training experience. As Cadets arrive at Fort Knox they are assigned a platoon in which they will serve in various leadership positions. For the next thirty days, Cadets conduct company level missions in order to develop and assess their leadership abilities. During those thirty days, Cadets also are administered a series of collegiate learning assessments, including the Millers analogy test and the MS III cumulative learning assessment. By the end of CLC, Cadets experience several leadership opportunities that facilitate their development as adaptive leaders of character.

Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency Program (CULP)

By: Cadet Alex Schnell

For Army ROTC Cadets, the world is their classroom. Every year hundreds of Cadets travel the globe, spending up to three weeks immersed in foreign cultures, learning about customs, language, foreign military and how others around the world view the U.S. The training is designed to develop future leaders who are culturally astute with foreign language experience, who, on their first deployment, are confident and competent in the Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental and Multinational (JIIM) environment.

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Since the inception of CULP, USD ROTC Cadets, through a competitive selection process, are selected to participate in CULP every summer. This year, Cadet Denis Verbovskiy was chosen to participate in CULP and is traveling to Lithuania. When asked about being given this opportunity, Cadet Verbovskiy stated “I feel extremely fortunate. Being able to travel to a different country and learning more about different cultures not only accomplishes a personal desire to travel, but also facilitates my development as a well rounded leader.” Stay tuned for Cadet Verbovskiy's storyboard in next semester’s newsletter!
2016 Graduating Class

2LT Taber Baldwin
Major: Political Science
Branch: Infantry

Going through ROTC has taught me the value and importance of being confident, well rounded and efficient leader. Overall, it is an experience that has allowed me to start building a foundation of leadership, as well as learn how to live the Army Values in everyday life.

2LT Cassie Donahoe
Major: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Branch: Medical Services National Guard

ROTC has been a great experience for me. I’ve had many new experiences through ROTC like spending a month in Romania on a CULP trip to teach English and learning how to mentor and counsel younger cadets through CIET. ROTC has made me into a more compassionate person by teaching me to seeing things from other people’s perspectives. It has also showed me that no matter the obstacle put in your way there is always going to be a way to work through it, if you just take a step back, think through the situation and ask for advice from your peers or from the cadre.

Cadet Alexander Voisin
Degree: Law Student (J.D.)
Branch: JAG
National Guard
Commissions summer 2016

ROTC has taught me to have resilience in the face of what troubles may come because they can be defeated with the help of your family and comrades. This program has taught me valuable skills in terms of leadership and interpersonal relationships within the chain of command. ROTC has built me into a better team player based largely on the advice of the cadre and the valuable input from fellow cadets, thereby preparing me for the challenges ahead.
Professor of Military Science

Alumni, Family, Friends and Cadets of USD ROTC —

Spring semester has ended and as I close out my first year as the Professor of Military Science at my alma mater I am thankful for the opportunity to give back to the institution that prepared me for a career as an Army officer. Furthermore it was a rewarding and learning experience to watch our Cadets progress towards meeting their incredible potential. The Cadets are motivated, innovative and determined to succeed.

We commissioned six Second Lieutenants this year (December 2015 and May 2016). Congratulations to these new officers, they will be successful and represent USD ROTC well. Aside from our new officers, we have Cadets busy preparing for their summer internships. The selected Cadets are traveling to Cadet Summer Training and Cadet Initial Entry Training at Ft. Knox, KY, Air Assault Course at Ft. Campbell, KY, Cultural Immersion in Lithuania and CTLT at Ft. Bragg, NC.

We are sad to see MSG Jason Clayton (Senior Military Instructor (SMI)) and CPT Jerry Zevecke (Assistant Professor of Military Science (APMS)) depart the USD ROTC program this summer. MSG Clayton is headed back to FT Sill, OK to serve as a the First Sergeant for a TRADOC Firing Battery (pretty sure he will never leave OK again!) and CPT Zevecke is headed to the Cyber Center of Excellence at Ft. Gordon, GA. We wish both of these outstanding Soldiers and their Families all the best in their new endeavors. Both created a lasting impact on the program and we were fortunate to have them as part of the team.

On the bright side we welcome CPT Bobby Vankirk who arrived and is settling in as the APMS. He will attend the Cadre & Faculty Development Course (CFDC) at University of Louisville and Ft. Knox, KY. The CFDC a partnership between University of Louisville and US Army Cadet Command is designed to educate Cadre & Faculty in the Army’s ROTC programs in order to bring world class instruction into our ROTC classrooms. Additionally, we welcome Mr. Jeff Krigbaum our new Human Resources Assistant—who handles all of the Cadet and Cadre administrative actions (there’s a lot!) and Mr. Jeff Rarick will arrive the end of summer 2016 and serve as our Recruiting Operations Officer. Welcome to all and I look forward to great things next school year!

A Note to USD ROTC Alumni

We are attempting to build an alumni network of all former members. We also have a Facebook account, which is continually updated with photos and information about our Cadets. We would like to have more alumni be part of our FB group, so feel free to join. We are trying to reach out to all former USD ROTC Alumni - drop us a note and let us know where you are if you are still in the force. If you are retired or left the Army, drop us a note and tell us what you are up to these days. We want to get a hold of as many former ROTC Alumni as possible and start an annual USD ROTC Alumni social event (maybe even a USD ROTC Alumni Association) in the Spring semester if we get enough Alumnus together (looking at doing a USD ROTC Alumni golf tournament in spring 2017). On another note, keep in mind USD ROTC was established on 29 December 1919, so we will celebrate our 100th anniversary in 2019!!

Thank you to all the supporters of the USD ROTC program, from the faculty and administration to our Alumni, your support is extremely important in preparing, developing and training our Cadets to be adaptive, agile, innovative, flexible leaders of character and competency for service to our Nation.

If you are ever in the area please feel free to stop by we are located at the Burr House (corner of University and Cherry Streets). Go Yotes!

Very Respectfully, LTC Michelle (Shelly) Bunkers

Senior Military Instructor

Congratulations Prairie Fire SROTC Cadet Battalion on another successful school year. This has been a busy semester. The training we have conducted has been challenging and should do well to prepare our Cadets for all of the training opportunities they have this summer. Congratulations to our three Cadets that commissioned this semester or at the end of camp at Fort Knox, I wish you luck in your military careers. We have Cadets who are travelling all over the world this summer for a wide variety of training. I am certain that they will represent the Prairie Fire SROTC Cadet Battalion well, and will bring a wealth of knowledge and experience back to campus next year. Stay safe and keep your head in the game, you will all do fine. On a final note, my time as the SMI at USD has come to an end. I am proud of the work we have all done over the last three years to provide the Army with the best Commissioned Officers and Leaders we can produce. I would like to thank all the Cadets and Cadre that I have worked with throughout my time here for all of the hard work you have put into making USD ROTC great. I wasn’t exactly certain what I was getting into when I showed up to the Burr House three years ago, but USD ROTC has been a very challenging and rewarding experience. I hope to see many of you out in the Operational Army someday. Lead the Pack!
Leave a Lasting Impact

By donating to the SROTC Leadership Excellence fund, YOU are allowing us to fund many of the day-to-day functions of our great program! The Cadets rely on your generous donations to help offset many of the costs associated with Cadet events, such as the travel to competitions (Ranger Challenge and German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge) commissioning and award ceremonies, military ball, open house, guest speakers, event receptions, as well as training equipment and events that would otherwise not be possible. We are most grateful for your generosity. Please direct donations to the USD Foundation, P.O. Box 5555 Vermillion, SD 57069, or you may make a gift online at http://onwardsd.org/donate/rotc or http://www.usd.edu/rotc For specific information, please contact the USD Foundation at 1-800-521-3575 or email usdfound@usdfoundation.org.

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**Fall 16 Events and Activities**

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<td>First Day Fall Semester</td>
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<td>Planning/Ranger Challenge Lab</td>
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<td>Fall CLTX, Camp Ripley MN</td>
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<td>Dakota Daze</td>
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<td>Ranger Challenge Camp Ripley, MN</td>
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<td>Fall LTX</td>
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<td>Leadership Panel</td>
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