



Newsletter
OSU NROTC
Alumni Group



Volume 4 Issue 3

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A Message from the CO



CAPT Warren E. Sisson, III
Commanding Officer

Oregon State University NROTC commissioned 15 junior officers into the United States Navy and Marine Corps on 15 June 2018. The ceremony was held in historic McAlexander Fieldhouse. We were privileged to have former OSU NROTC Commanding Officer and current Naval Service Training Command (NSTC), Director of Officer Development, Captain

Donald "Biskit" Nisbett, Jr. back in Corvallis to serve as our guest speaker. The following naval officers were commissioned, with orders to:

- Ensign Benjamin Bloom, USS Makin Island, San Diego, CA
- Ensign Tyler Bloom, Naval Flight School, Pensacola, FL
- 2nd Lt. Timothy Bourque, The Basic School, Quantico, VA
- Ensign Patrick Doyle, Naval Flight School, Pensacola, FL
- Ensign Jeff Garcia, Naval Nuclear Power School, Charleston, SC
- 2nd Lt. Dante Gigliotti, The Basic School, Quantico, VA
- Ensign Thomas Holloway, USS San Diego, San Diego, CA
- Ensign Endy Leng, USS Sampson, Everett, WA
- Ensign Elijah McCarty, Naval Nuclear Power School, Charleston, SC
- 2nd Lt. Troy McCool, The Basic School, Quantico, VA

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News from Steve Lambert



OSU NROTC Class of '65 USN

Editor's Note: This story about Steve Lambert first appeared in a special 2014 newsletter leading up to the 50-year reunion of the OSU NROTC class of '65. I think you will find this story of interest for reasons that will become apparent. Those of you in the Class of '65 may remember this story. For the other 800+ alumni reading this newsletter, it will be new. Steve, I hope you don't mind if we take another look at your story.

After graduating from OSU in 1965, I went straight to flight school in Pensacola, Florida. I got my wings in March of 1967 and was assigned to fly F-8 Crusaders at Miramar NAS in San Diego.

I had two combat cruises with VF-211 on the USS Hancock and had 155 combat missions.

I returned to Miramar as an instructor in the F-8 replacement squadron. In late summer of 1971, my dream came true as I was selected to fly with the Blue Angels. My first year with the

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From the Editor

The next school year is starting. The Class of 2018 has graduated and a new batch of Navy and Marine Corps officers have reported to their first duty assignment. A new batch of fourth class midshipmen are starting their training.

CAPT Sisson fills us in on everything that is happening at the Beaver Battalion, and as always, there is a lot happening.

This issue contains an article from Steve Lambert, Class of '65 (USN) that was first published in a special newsletter leading up to that class's 50th reunion. Steve flew with the Blue Angels for two years. During one of those years a fellow classmate joined the team. Two OSU NROTC alums from the same class on the Blue Angels team is pretty good representation.

We also have a story from Jim "Lash" LaRue, Class of '68 (USN). Jim has recently published a book you may find interesting.

We welcome back a number of "found" OSU NROTC alumni. Most were found by Mike Brewer, Class of '73 (USN). We thank him for his productive detective work. Reach out to Stan Smith if you would like to assist in finding our classmates. Stan's contact info is below.

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We bid Sue Plagmann, the OSU NROTC Administrative Assistant, farewell. She retired this summer and we are grateful for all she has done for the Battalion and the Alumni Group.

We are saddened to learn John C. Burger, Class of '56 (USMC) and Thomas D. Currier, Class of '72 (USN) passed away recently. This issue includes a memorial article for each.

Finally, as always, we need to hear from you. Send us your story. We can't do this newsletter without your input. There are now over 800 OSU NROTC alumni receiving this newsletter. You would think the stories would pour in from such a large group, but you would be wrong. So I beg you to take the initiative. Don't wait any longer. Tell us your story. If you were in the military, you have stories and your classmates enjoy hearing from others.

Regards—Rodger Bekooy, '65 (USN) - Newsletter Editor



Tell Us Your Story

Tell us your story. Why OSU? Why NROTC? Did you make the military a career or did you move on to something else? Where did you grow up? What were the milestones in your life? Tell us a sea story. Did you have some adventures? Were there turning points? Do you have a story about a classmate (that is fit to print)? What are you doing now? Family? Hobbies?...You get the idea.

E-mail your stories to me, the newsletter editor. My contact info is at the left. I will edit your story for readability and length. Be sure to send copies of pictures. Pictures add so much. Digital images in JPEG format are best, but I can work with other formats, too. This is the newsletter schedule.

Article Deadlines	Publication Dates
15 JAN	1 MAR
15 APR	1 JUN
15 JUL	1 SEP
15 OCT	1 DEC

Newsletter production and the scheduling of my time around my business responsibilities necessitate the early deadlines. I can accommodate some deadline flexibility for breaking news. Please, let me hear from you. Tell us your story.

A Message from the CO

(Continued from page 1)

- 2nd Lt. Paola Phipps, The Basic School, Quantico, VA
- Ensign Michael Romero, USS America, San Diego, CA
- Ensign Matthew Ruiz, Naval Nuclear Power School, Charleston, SC
- Ensign Nathan Wagner, Naval Flight School, Pensacola, FL
- Ensign Donald Zeccola, Naval Flight School, Pensacola, FL

Honored OSU NROTC alum, Rear Admiral Michael Sharp, retired, was also present for the commissioning ceremony. In a preceding ceremony, Rear Admiral Sharp presented the Naval Submarine League Award and the Michael A. Sharp Award to Ensign Elijah McCarty. He also generously presented “dolphins” (Submarine Warfare insignia) to graduating submarine candidates Ensign McCarty, Ensign Jeff Garcia, and Ensign Matthew Ruiz.

I mentioned in my last update that 34 percent of the battalion made the OSU Honor Roll in the winter 2018 term, up from



Admiral Sharp presenting Submarine Duty Awards

32 percent in the fall 2017 term. I am happy to report that the positive trend continued in the spring 2018 term. Forty-one percent of the battalion made the OSU Honor Roll! We also had four individuals successfully screen for the Naval Nuclear Power Program at Naval Reactors in Washington, D.C. Commander, NSTC, Rear Admiral Mike Bernacchi personally reached out to us to recognize the “exceptionally strong performance” of our candidates and thanked us for supporting “this very important mission.”

In other news, our State Secretary, Sue Plagmann, retired on 30 June 2018. She was dedicated to helping the Beaver Battalion accomplish its mission since 2013 and served diligently as our point of contact for alumni affairs. We wish her good health and happiness with her family and grandchildren during retirement! We have begun the hiring process for a new “Program Assistant,” and will let you know



Spring 2018 Commissioning

when we have a new person on the team. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or any other member of the staff.

While some midshipmen are attending classes this summer, most are taking part in summer training. Beaver Battalion midshipmen are participating in Career Orientation and Training for Midshipmen (CORTRAMID), Marine Officer Candidate School (OCS), and various submarine and ship cruises. Midshipmen 2nd Class Chase Griffin and Christopher Hoskins took part in “Sea Trials,” a new requirement for rising 2nd Class Navy Options. Sea Trials is a 10-day event where midshipmen receive training in core competencies of watch standing, physical fitness, seamanship, shipboard firefighting, damage control, swimming, M9 pistol qualifications, and drill. Midshipmen Griffin and Hoskins had to properly demonstrate the skills



Marine Option PFT

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A Message from the CO

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Navy Option PFT

they developed throughout their training at the culminating Battle Stations event, designed to test performance under pressure. Midshipman Hoskins reported that the Sea Trials training was very beneficial. One focus for the program is mental toughness. "The mindfulness training was very helpful; it helped me re-anchor my mind following stressful

experiences, and stay focused on the immediate task," said Hoskins. Check out videos from Sea Trials by [clicking here](#).

We will conduct New Student Orientation for the Class of 2022 from 12-16 September. Shortly after welcoming our new 4th class midshipmen to the battalion, we will begin the 2018-2019 academic school year. Please mark your calendars for the 2018 "Beaver Battalion Foxhole and Fantail Muster" on 20 October 2018, during Homecoming weekend, here at the Naval Armory. This is not only a great time to catch up with old friends and classmates, but also to meet the midshipmen of the Beaver Battalion and share some of your sea stories and wisdom!

Once again, thank you for your enduring support to the mission of Oregon State University NROTC and to the future junior officers of the Navy and Marine Corps! As always, please do not hesitate to visit us when you are in the area.



Recently Found Alumni — Welcome Back!

Mike Brewer, Class of '73 (USN), is one of the Alumni Group Committee members. Mike has been working hard to find our classmates. Eight of the classmates listed below were found by Mike. Bird-dogging and phone calls gets the job done. If you would like to help find your classmates, reach out to our Alumni Group coordinator, Stan Smith, and he will get you started. Stan's contact info is on page 2 of this newsletter. 

Name	Year	Service
Don Wincell	'69	USN
Norm Derouin	'72	USN
Richard Hobin	'72	USN
Mark Moranville	'72	USN
Carl Porterfield	'72	USN
James Renton	'72	USN
M. Schwartzkoph	'72	USN

Name	Year	Service
Tom Bradford	'73	USN
Kerry Norton	'73	USN
John Taylor	'78	USN
Carl Zeitz	'82	USN
Gregory Zwicker	'84	USN
Michael Lewis	'89	USN
Alan Arceneaux	'90	USMC

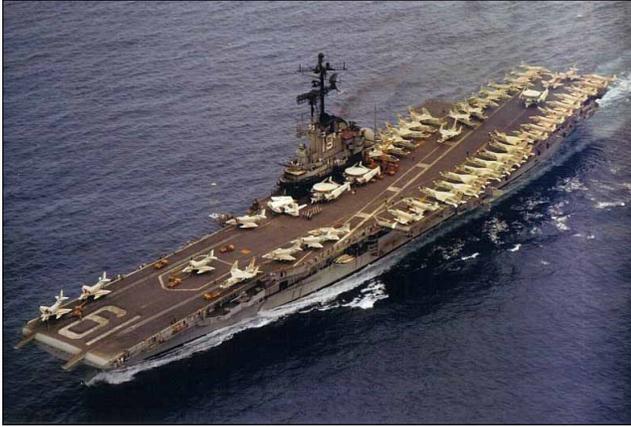
Save the Date—Beaver Battalion Foxhole and Fantail Alumni Muster

The 6th annual Beaver Battalion Foxhole and Fantail Alumni Muster will be held during Homecoming weekend, 20 October 2018. We will meet at the NROTC Unit (2201 SW Washington Way) three hours prior to game time. More details to follow when game time is set by the University. We are in the process of arranging for a block of seats for the game.

The Foxhole and Fantail Alumni Muster happens once a year during Homecoming weekend. It is an informal gathering and a chance to catch up with old friends/classmates (and possibly the last time at this location). 

Steven Lambert '65

(Continued from page 1)



USS Hancock CVA-19

team, I was #6, the opposing solo pilot. We flew about 100 airshows in about 30 states with the highlight being TRANSCO 72, an international airshow at Dulles Airport in Washington D.C. We flew with the USAF Thunderbirds, Canada's Snowbirds, and Great Britain's Red Arrows. Later that year, we flew in the Canadian National Airshow in Abbotsford, British Columbia. I was #5, the lead solo pilot, for the 1973 season. Marlin Witta, another '65 OSU NROTC graduate, joined us as the right wingman. Pretty neat to have two OSU NROTC guys flying on the Blue Angels at the same time.

The highlight of 1973 was flying to Europe to fly in the Paris Airshow and various other airshows in six other countries. It was great being able to show off the U.S. Navy throughout Europe.

Back in the United States, we were flying an airshow in Lake Charles, Louisiana, when I experienced an engine problem while doing a slow speed upside down maneuver about 100 feet above the ground. As I was attempting to right the aircraft and remain airborne, I impacted the ground while still in the plane. Fortunately, the plane bounced once and I ejected during the bounce. No injuries - wasn't my day to go.

After my tour with the Blues, I left the Navy with a desire to fly for the airlines. The timing wasn't good as the airline industry was furloughing pilots and I moved on to the private sector spending most of my time in the golf course management business. I'm currently the General Manager of Colbert Hills Golf Course in Manhattan, Kansas, once again working with my old partner, Jim Colbert, a former PGA player on both the regular and Champion's tours. I have one daughter, Ashley. She's a 2012 OSU graduate.

[Click here](#) to see a video of Steve performing with the Blue Angels (shot with an onboard camera). 



1973 Blue Angels Team

Left to Right: LT Chuck Newcomb, PAO; LT Jerry Tucker #6; Capt Mike Murphy USMC #4. LT Marlin Witta (OSU) #2; LCDR Skip Umstead, Flight Leader #1; Capt John Fogg, USMC #3; LT Steve Lambert (OSU) #5; LT John Chehansky, Narrator #7

How the Blue Angels Did It

Editor's Note: What follows was taken from The Aero Experience Newsletter (EAA Chapter 64) of Wednesday, September 4, 2013. The newsletter summarized a presentation of the history of the U.S. Navy Blue Angels by aviation historian Joe Gurney and Navy Captain (Ret.) William Switzer. Captain Switzer flew with the Blue Angels as a LT during the 1971 and 1972 seasons in the F-4J Phantom II. Both Bill and Steve Lambert were on the 1972 team together.

Flying the Phantom II with such precision can be very challenging. During a typical airshow, Blue Angel pilots pull between -1 and 9+ g-loads (force of gravity: 1g = normal weight on ground, 9gs = 9x normal) during their maneuvers. However, the Blue Angel pilots did not use anti-g suits - standard equipment for military tactical jet pilots that uses inflatable air bladders to keep blood from flowing out of the brain to the feet. The air bladder inflation was a distraction that often

made the pilot move the stick slightly, which at close formation can lead to collision (the USAF Thunderbirds fly F-16s which have side stick controllers, allowing them to wear their anti-g suits). Blue Angel pilots have to focus on the aircraft in formation and fly 36 inches apart during maneuvers. CAPT Switzer remarked, "It had to be total concentration, and you knew within about an inch or two if you're high or low. That's all you focused on for the whole airshow."

"We were flying about a hundred feet above the ground, inverted, and you never looked inside the cockpit," Captain Switzer continued. "Even if you looked inside the cockpit for even a split second, your instruments are lagging a second or two behind what the airplane is really doing. So you just set your nose out there on the horizon and you know exactly what you're doing."



A Note from Missy Meadows

The 1 June 2018 newsletter was devoted to the memory of Chuck Meadows, OSU NROTC Class of '61 (USMC). If you haven't seen that edition of the newsletter, you may wish to check it out. Chuck's devotion to service was memorable.

Chuck's wife Missy Meadows sent us this note shortly after the newsletter was published.

"Thank you for that amazing tribute to Chuck...I read it with tears in my eyes...he was everything that was said and more...a Marine through and through. I hope the midshipmen take advantage and read Hue 1968...and the news article and aspire to be the best that they can be. Thank you again.

Missy Meadows



Sue Plagmann Retires

Administrative Program Assistant, OSU NROTC



SUE PLAGMANN, Administrative Program Assistant, OSU NROTC, retired effective 30 June 2018. On behalf of the Alumni Group, I wish to thank her for her service in support of the NROTC program and the many midshipmen who were a part of the Beaver Battalion. Sue has been a tireless supporter of the Alumni Group and its mission and it has been a pleasure to work with her. We extend our gratitude and best wishes for the future.

Stan Smith
OSU NROTC Alumni Group Coordinator
OSU NROTC Class of '72 USMC

News from Jim "Lash" LaRue

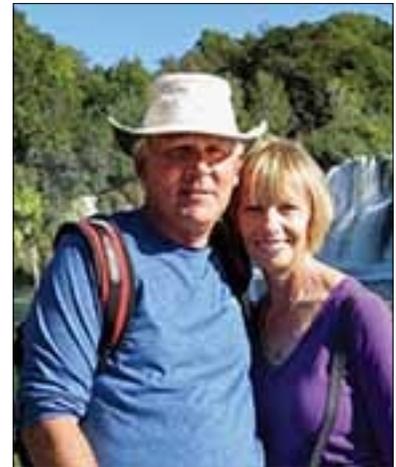


OSU NROTC Class of '68 (USN)

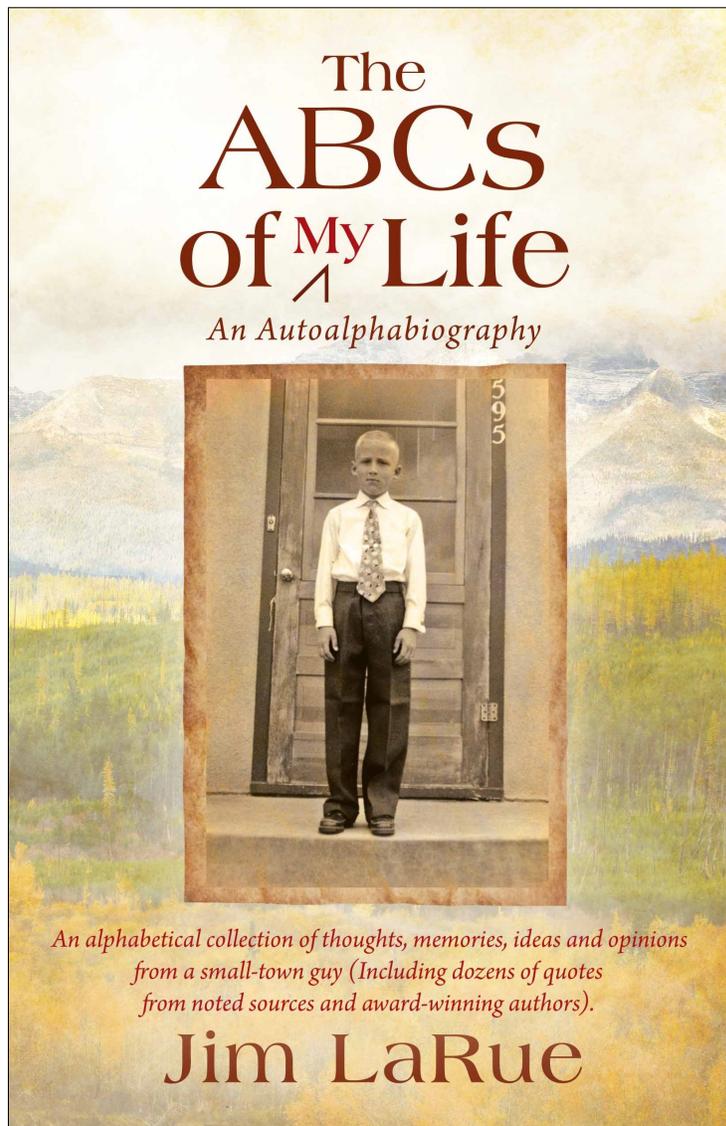
Jim LaRue grew up in NW Montana. He attended Oregon State University on a Navy ROTC scholarship and graduated in 1968 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. Upon graduation and commissioning, he served five years in the Navy as an aviator. His professional career consisted of several independent business ventures with the last twenty years spent in the financial services industry with a major national firm. He retired in 2006 and resides with his wife Margie on the shores of Lake Keowee in NW South Carolina.

Jim writes that he recently published a book you may find interesting. *The ABCs of My Life* is a rambling collection of thoughts, opinions, observations and memories from an average small-town guy who survived the cold war, the polio epidemic, chicken pox, measles, mumps, broken bones, drinking water from a garden hose, nuclear war drills, an older sister, playing in the street, speeding, underage drinking, riding a bike without a helmet, dog bites, cat scratches, skiing in the fog, driving on icy roads in winter blizzards, corporal punishment, harsh winters in Montana, living for two months under water in a submarine, flying jets off the deck of an aircraft carrier, raising two sons and forty-nine years of marriage.

Most of the sections in this book include quotes and excerpts from noted speakers, writers and award-winning authors on the subjects of goals, success and personal development. The genre fits somewhere between autobiography, personal development, and success-building. If you are looking for an alphabetical collection of life experiences, observations, opinions and pointers for success, this may be it. If you are old enough, you will relate to many of the author's experiences and observations. If you were born later than the 1940s or 1950s, you will gain from his insight and from the writings of other recognizable and famous authors. If you are a kid, this book is for you. It was written primarily for Jim's four grandchildren so that they might learn a little more about "Pops" while they learn a lot about life and making choices. Jim hopes this book will have something to offer every person of every age who will take the time to read it. Perhaps it will serve as a dictionary of successful ideas.



Jim and Margie



In Memoriam -- John Clayton Burger



OSU NROTC Class of '56 (USMC)

We recently learned John C. Burger, OSU NROTC, Class of '56 (USMC) passed away May 24, 2018 after a courageous fight with cancer.

Born July 9th, 1934 in San Louis Obispo California, John was a lot of things: an ROTC Marine who proudly served his country in the late 50's; an accomplished executive through his corporate career and later as an entrepreneur with his wife Patte in ownership of The Book Vault; a volunteer for the Red Cross in Tigard, Oregon and driving commuter buses for seniors in the area. He was a lifelong Oregon State Beaver, a football season ticket holder and alumni member and a member of the Oregon Beta chapter of Phi Kappa Psi (initiated in 1953, badge 135)

John was a lifelong tennis fanatic. He was a member of his high school tennis team, played throughout his adult life and

followed each tennis open. He continued to actively play with a number of friends in the Summerfield community up until he was diagnosed.

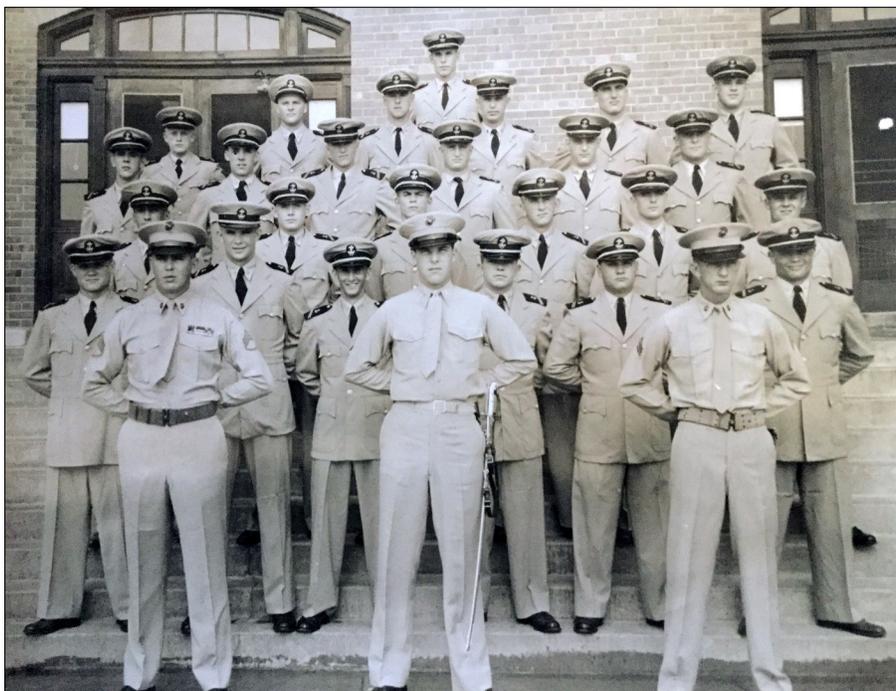
John was a dedicated SNOB (Supporter of Native Oregon Beer) with a passion for craft beer. He enjoyed frequent travels to brewpubs all over the states of Oregon, Washington and California and attended any craft beer festival he could make it to. Family trips to the Oregon Craft Brewers festival became an annual event.

To his children John was dad. He was the guy who pushed them to play hockey but couldn't skate himself without breaking his nose the first time out.



He was the guy who encouraged them to ski. He was the guy who never successfully got his butt out of the water when trying to water ski. He was the distributor of presents at Christmas interspersed with a loud "Bah Humbug" throughout the process. He was the guy who could most likely pack 50 pounds of potatoes into a 10 pound bag based upon how he packed the camper for summer trips. He was the guy who taught them to swear – specifically phrases involving "bats" or "Jesus H". He could be funny, he could be annoying, he could be aggravating, and he could be loving.

The only son of Roy and Pauline Burger, he is survived by Patte, his wife of 62 years, children, Tim (Julie), Dave (Lisa), Phillip (Heather), and Megan ("Ozzie"), and grandchildren, Andrew, Kira (Andres), Emily and Stephanie.



In Memoriam – Thomas D. Currier



OSU NROTC Class of '73 (USN)

Tom passed away on May 23, 2018 after an 11-month battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife of 38 years, Katie M. Currier.

Tom also leaves behind two children: Scott Thomas Currier and his wife Darlene of Greenville, SC, and Allison Currier Williams and her husband Robert of Mount Holly, NC; and four grandchildren: John Currier, Caroline Currier, Charlotte Currier, and Ellison Williams.

Thomas was born in Portland, OR in 1951. He was a member of the OSU NROTC Drum and Bugle Corps and a Lamb-

da Chi Alpha member. He then went on to serve in the Navy for five years.

Thomas was the owner and area franchisee for The UPS Store in Charlotte and Western NC, and owned several stores in the Greenville area for 25 years. He retired in 2015.

He was a loved Kiwanian for many years and served as Governor for the Carolina's District and Regional Formula Chair for the southeast region of the US.



How to make a Donation to the OSU NROTC Program

The Alumni Group encourages alumni of the OSU NROTC program to provide financial support to the midshipmen. The Taffrail Fund helps finance events and program expenses that promote midshipmen development. The Scholarship Fund provides dollar awards presented at the Spring Award ceremony. Both funds help the midshipmen.

NROTC scholarships cover tuition and fees and they provide a small monthly stipend. However, the stipend does not cover food, housing, and other living expenses. Many of the midshipmen struggle financially and you can help.

It is easy to make a contribution, but **there has been a change since the last edition of this newsletter**. NROTC units have been directed to remove donation links from their web sites so you can no longer make donations through the OSU NROTC website.

As before, donations to the Taffrail Fund and to the Naval ROTC Alumni Scholarship Fund are still processed through

the OSU Foundation via their secure website. The only thing that has changed is that the links to the OSU Foundation website have been removed from the OSU NROTC website. We provide you with the necessary links here, so making a donation is still easy.

If you would like to make a donation to the Taffrail Fund, click [Taffrail Fund Donation](#).

If you would like to make a donation to the Naval ROTC Alumni Scholarship Fund, click [NROTC Scholarship Fund Donation](#).

Both these links will take you directly into the secure OSU Foundation website where you can complete your tax free donation.

The OSU NROTC Alumni Group thanks you for your support of the midshipmen.

