OPEN RANKS INSPECTION

On the morning of Thursday, October 13, Detachment 330 cadets had an Open Ranks Inspection (ORI) during Leadership Lab. We were lucky enough to have nine senior non-commissioned officers, presently stationed at Fort Meade, volunteer their time to help us. The senior NCOs conducted the inspections, followed by a Q&A panel that allowed cadets to gain insight from a group of highly experienced Airmen into what it takes to be a leader in the Air Force. Detachment 330 is very grateful for the opportunity to learn from these exemplary individuals, thank you!

**Results of the ORI are on the page 3**

Left: The nine senior NCOs posing in front of the Reckord Armory on the University of Maryland campus. They include:

CMSgt David Vasser
SMSGt Ben Indino
SMSGt Eric Williams
SMSGt Kenyel Parker
SMSGt Heath Jennings
MSgt Michaelyn Eagan
MSgt Max Willoughby
MSgt Nikki Costa
MSgt Lindsey Hoxie

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Thu, 3 Nov: Physical Fitness Assessment
- 3 Nov-5 Nov: American Veterans Center Conference
- Sat, 5 Nov: Dining In
- Thu, 12 Nov: Career Day
- 23 Nov-25 Nov: Thanksgiving Break
COL. "ACE" ACREE (RET.) STOPS BY DET 330

On Thursday, October 20, Colonel George "Ace" Acree (Ret.) paid a visit to Detachment 330. He was taken on a tour of our Heritage Room, and donated some of his own personal items to the collection. Col. Acree is a 1957 distinguished graduate of the University of Maryland, and commissioned through the Air Force ROTC program. In his 28 years of service, Ace is credited with flying over 200 combat missions, earning himself the Legion of Merit once and the Distinguished Flying Cross three times.

Col. Acree also stopped by the Air Science 400 class to tell some stories from his Wild Weasel missions. Wild Weasel missions, which began in 1965 and continue today, are aircraft tasked with the destruction of air defense systems and SAM (surface-to-air missile) sites. They were some of the most dangerous missions of the Vietnam War, and ones in which Ace bravely flew countless times.

Thank you for stopping by and sharing with us, Colonel Acree!

Left: The Wild Weasel Patch

Right: Col. "Ace" Acree posing in front of an F-105

Left: Colonel Acree (Ret.) telling one of his many combat stories to cadets in one of the Air Science 400 classes
ORI RESULTS

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What does this mean for your flight?

Every inspector graded the flights using the same guidelines, however personal differences in observations will always be present. If a cadet failed to shave or was completely out of regulations for grooming standards, they automatically failed the ORI. Many graders felt that perfection was nearly unachievable, and gave very few outstanding marks, while others were more generous. Whatever your grader’s style, take the feedback you received and utilize it. You have complete control of your appearance and adherence to standards. Take away: Attention to detail is paramount to our success, both in the military and in life.

GERMAN ARMED FORCES BADGE

This year Detachment 330 was represented in the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge (GAFPB) competition thanks to the efforts of recently commissioned Lieutenant Nguyen. Most of the detachment had never heard of the German Proficiency Badge prior to Lieutenant Nguyen’s interest forms, but many cadets were immediately intrigued by the challenging competition and what it represented. The GAFPB is a decoration of the Bundeswehr, the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Germany and has been available since 1972 to U.S. service members who meet the rigorous proficiency standards. All eligible members of the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard and National Guard may compete for the award. The competition is a fantastic way for service members to gain a cultural understanding and appreciation for what German Soldiers must do every year to remain qualified in their military. In addition, throughout the competition service members of every branch are given the opportunity to build relations with our sister branches and NATO allies.
The badge is awarded in gold, silver or bronze, depending on the results of the events. The only personnel unauthorized to participate in the competition are those flagged, barred from reenlistment, anyone who has already left the service, or those with less than six months in the military. Awarding the badge to an allied soldier requires the presence and approval of a German liaison officer, therefore all badges are presented in a ceremony at the German Armed Forces Command in Reston, Virginia following the annual ruck.

The competition events include a German basic fitness test, where all three events must be completed in sequence beginning with 11x10-meter sprints, a chin-up flex-arm hang, and a 1,000 meter run. In addition, participants must:

- swim 100 meters in military uniform in under 4 minutes, then undress in the water and toss their blouse and trousers out of the pool, and finally exit the pool unassisted
- pass a go/no go first aid treatment test
- pass a go/no go nuclear, biological and chemical mission oriented protective posture procedures test
- qualify with the assigned service pistol at the range
- complete the ruck march (6, 9, or 12 kilometers), beginning and ending with at least 33lbs within the required time

The GAFP is one of the most sought after awards to achieve, with hundreds of participants attempting the competition every year.

Left: (L to R) Det 330 cadets Travis Carson and Mike Rivera, Det 330 grad 2LT Andy Nguyen, Det 330 cadet Ricki Sidorov

Lieutenant Nguyen has nothing but positive comments about the competition and detachment interest, stating "I am happy and proud with the results. We had 22 people that were interested in the competition and in the end 4 competed. The competitors demonstrated commitment to training over an eight-month period and I recommend anyone that is willing to take on this unique challenge to partake in next year’s competition." It is worth noting that of the 22 interested cadets, 11 started the competition and 6 were forced to drop due to being contracted for less than 6 months prior to the first event.

Many participants find the swim to be the most difficult event, while others single out the pistol qualification or the ruck. In the end, the competition is more of a personal challenge, where participants push themselves beyond what they thought possible, while building camaraderie with our allies.

--Cadet Ricki Sidorov, Senior

Right: Det 330 graduate and cadets showing off their newly earned German Armed Forces Proficiency Badges
PROJECT GO: THE NARVA EDITION

Imagine vacationing for the summer in a foreign country. Imagine going on excursions to different cities every week and learning about the history of these places. Imagine trips to a wonderful spa with massages and endless saunas included. Now add in a language barrier, being in class from 9 am to 1pm Monday-Friday, quizzes every week, exams every other week, and nonstop studying and you’ve got how I spent my past summer in Narva, Estonia.

This summer I got the unique opportunity to participate in Project GO, a program that provides scholarships for students to study various languages both domestically and abroad. As a Russian minor, I was accepted into the 3rd year course to study in Narva, Estonia, which is a primarily Russian speaking town. My time in Narva was filled with many highs and lows. We explored some great towns like Tallin and Tartu and discovered a quite few incredible restaurants. When we weren’t traveling we were hitting the books and trying to stay afloat with the workload. Simple things like grocery shopping became work. Since we couldn’t read the Estonian labels we had to use our Russian skills to talk to the workers. Although, the great thing about language immersion is that either you get really good at the language to survive or you stumble your way through the entire time. I like to think I fell somewhere in-between.

While we were constantly doing work and struggling to improve our skills, we were simultaneously building strong bonds. I can honestly say I met some of the greatest people when I was abroad and if it weren’t for them I’m not sure I would’ve made it through the program. If anyone is struggling with the decision of whether or not they should apply, I say *просто сделай это.

*just do it

--Cadet Morgan Comer, Senior

MY TIME ABROAD

Since I’m a Chinese major, I decided to take my Spring 2016 semester to study abroad in Chengdu, China, a city in the mid-western part of China. While I was there, I had the amazing opportunity to learn and experience so many things. I learned a lot about the language, the culture, and the day to day life of the Chinese people, as well as learn some things about myself in the process. Looking back at my time there with the different kinds of people I got to meet, it’s hard to put my whole experience into just a few words but here it goes.

One of the best things about studying abroad was how challenging everything was. When you arrive in a place where almost no one knows English, you’re forced to constantly think and speak in their language. If you don’t know how to say certain things, you then think of other ways to communicate through things like body language or your surroundings. You start to think creatively, even have fun with it at times. When we couldn’t read the menus at first, we would just point to a random item and hope that it was good!

Aside from the language barrier, another challenge was the internet and cell service. Yes, the rumors are true. Almost every website that you would find in the US are blocked in China, including Google, Facebook, YouTube, Netflix (this happened a month into the trip), and hundreds more. Phone calls or text messages were almost non-existent. I couldn’t get into contact with anyone unless I was in a restaurant with wifi or back at my dorm. Both of these things lead to little contact with the outside world and the feeling that I was in a small isolated bubble. Despite that feeling, it forced me to try harder to stay involved with the world. I read the BBC news (that was the only outside news source not blocked) and held intellectual conversations about a wide range of topics with other people in my program.

A final challenge I faced was the daunting fact that we were right in the middle of a city we knew nothing about. We were given maps but it only helped if you planned on walking everywhere. We had to learn the bus system, find cool and unique places to go to on our own, and try not to get run over in the process. You get used to it though, and eventually you’re able to move around just as easily as everyone else. Overall, because of all these challenges, I learned how to adapt in uncomfortable situations. I developed a new confidence in myself and my improved communication skills, and most of all I grew a new appreciation for what I have back in the US.
My time in China also provided me with a lot of unique experiences and traveling opportunities. I visited many museums, monasteries, and parks that were both educational and beautiful. I got a chance to learn how to meditate from a Buddhist monk and teach kids how to play football. I got to see the Terracotta Warriors, and the biggest shopping mall in the world. But out of all these experiences, one of my favorite trips was the field trip to E Mei Mountain. There, we saw monasteries that scaled a whole mountain, huts of people who lived up there, and we got the chance to climb up to the top of it all. We even saw wild monkeys! One of them bit my friend on the leg though and she had to get rabies shots for the next couple weeks. Aside from that, the views were breathtaking and it was really peaceful up there. I hope to visit it again someday.

The only thing that I didn’t like about my time there was the culture shock. It’s a little intimidating going to a different country and knowing almost nothing about the life there. It can also be scary when going through it alone. I had no friends going into the program, and my Chinese was a little rusty at that point so talking to other people was hard. People would stare when they knew you were American, spit everywhere, even indoors, and lines to buy items didn’t exist. People would push to get somewhere first, and they didn’t obey all the traffic laws either (I saw quite a few red lights being ignored). It was all overwhelming at the beginning and it took a little time to adjust to the new life around me, but I kept an open mind, made new friends, and little by little it became easier to grasp. That’s where the learning began.

All in all, it was a great experience and I highly encourage everyone to travel abroad if possible. It can be anywhere in the world. The risk of putting yourself out there and adventuring outside your comfort zone is an experience you don’t get anywhere else and one you will forever remember.

--Cadet Sierra Jan, Senior

Left: Cadet Jan (right) and her friend at Yellow River Ancient Town

Right: Cadet Jan and her two friends on the City Wall in Xi’an