



OAK LEAF

MAGAZINE

THE
RETURN
EDITION

*THE OAK LEAF
IS BACK*

2020 FALL/WINTER EDITION

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The Oak Leaf is a bi-annual publication of Oak Ridge Military Academy.
The Fall/Winter 2020 edition of the Oak Leaf was produced by the Yearbook Staff
under the direction of Mr. Rex Blackburn.



OAK RIDGE
MILITARY ACADEMY

LETTER

from the

PRESIDENT

Dear Alumni, Parents, and Friends:

At last the long-anticipated return of the OAK LEAF has arrived, thanks to the efforts of Mr. Rex Blackburn, our English Department Head & Marketing Advisor. Many years ago, this publication helped to keep our Alumni informed and abreast of the happenings at "The Ridge." We are all very excited about the rebirth of this publication.

With the looming threat of the COVID pandemic, new challenges have been met by our academy. Cadets now wear masks, have single rooms, and practice social distancing in classes where teachers all wear face shields. Many parents who have been dealing with "in home" or "virtual" learning have decided that our academy is offering a better learning environment for their student, resulting in increased enrollment. Currently we have an enrollment of 78 cadets with realistic projections of 100 by January. Considering that most military academies are experiencing a 30% decrease in this year's enrollment, we are headed in the right direction! But our greatest improvement has been the *quality* of student that has decided to attend ORMA. Our current students are committed to our vision in such a way that many of our students have even chosen to stay at ORMA during breaks for leadership training. Our future looks very promising.

Our athletic department is also benefiting from our increased enrollment. In recent weeks, our basketball program has begun to practice with 23 cadets reporting, allowing us to floor varsity, junior varsity, and middle school teams. We also have plans for baseball, softball, volleyball, flag football, and even a swim team! We've also re-established a drum and bugle corps.

Much of this progress and success can be attributed to our Admissions team: Major Rob Forde and Nathan Freeman. Also indispensable have been our Marketing Director and IT Specialist, Gary Holbrook; our Commandant, CSM Terrence Lewis; our Academic Dean, Caroline McKaughan; and Ms. Sandra Bush in Alumni Relations. This is without question the strongest staff I have ever had the privilege to work with and the results that we are experiencing show this to be true.

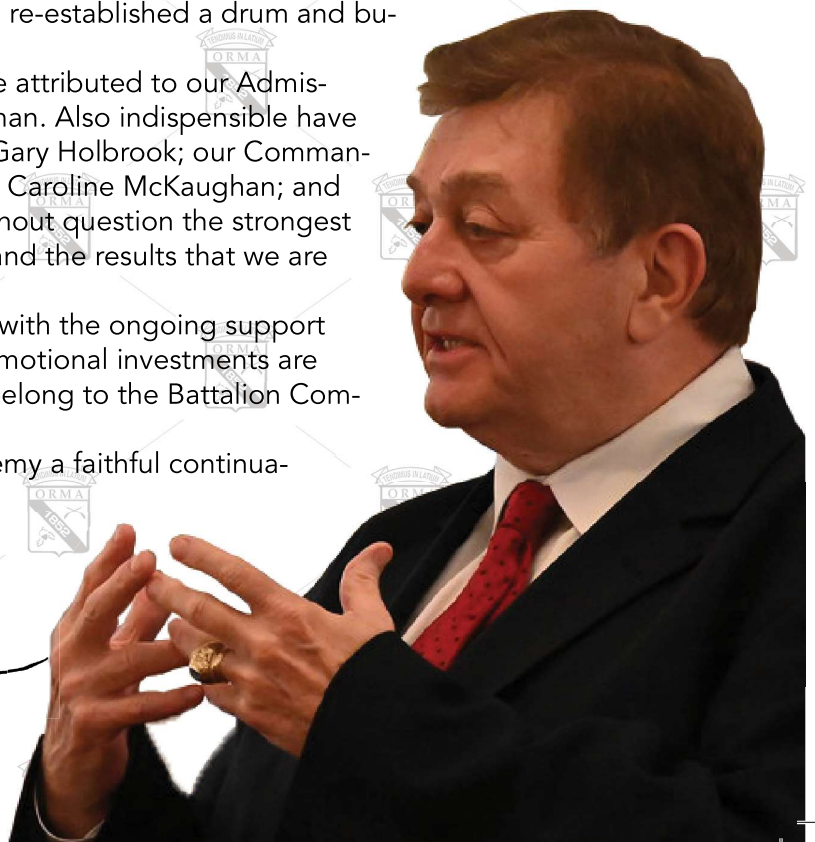
Our academy can only continue to grow with the ongoing support from our alumni. Your continued financial and emotional investments are always noticed and appreciated. I urge you to belong to the Battalion Commander Club today.

Thank you for helping to make our academy a faithful continuation of its grand heritage.

Sincerely,



Dr. Thomas Steve Wilson,
President, Oak Ridge Military Academy



CADET PROFILE

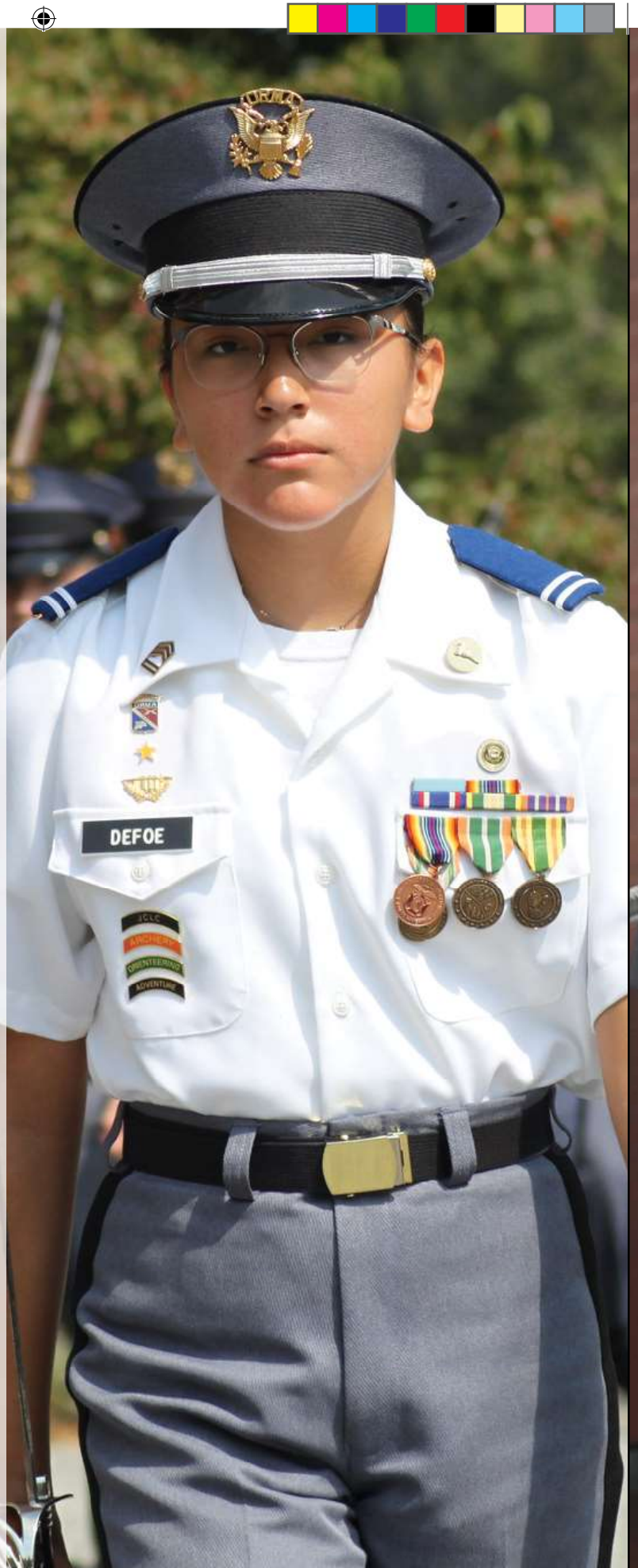
REYNA DEFOE

After traveling over 1,000 miles to Oak Ridge in the fall semester of 2019, she felt a bit intimidated and uncomfortable in the military environment. Now, she's providing decisive leadership to the corps as the Battalion Commander.

- Battalion Commander, class of 2021
- First Battalion Commander of Native American descent
- From Bloomington, Minnesota

"I never thought that earning the Battalion Commander position was a possibility for me," she said. "Every day, I get up and think back to when I first came here. I wanted to see someone in leadership who represented me. Now, I can be that mentor for other young women."

In a different environment, Reyna could have gotten lost. But at Oak Ridge, students like Reyna are given chances to prove their ability to lead. "I've always wanted to serve others," said Defoe, and ORMA has given her that platform.





FACULTY PROFILE

BOBBY BARBERA

For those familiar with Oak Ridge Military Academy, the teacher affectionately known as “Major B” is a staple. Mr. Barbera has served in various capacities since 1966, including teacher, coach, and even Commandant.

He is a graduate of Appalachian State University with a Bachelor of Arts in History and a minor in Political Science.

-Actively plays tennis 3-4 days a week

-Enjoys cooking

-55 years at ORMA

-Lived on campus for 30 years

When asked to give his perspective on how the year is going, he credited the Admissions team with bringing in “a higher quality cadet--these kids work hard and are willing to participate. They’re more well-rounded kids than we’ve seen in years. I’m optimistic about the school’s future.”



ON-CAMPUS

NEW ADMISSIONS

Of the almost 80 students that are on campus at Oak Ridge at the production of this issue, nearly 50 are new recruits this year! Our Admissions Department has much to be proud of! By increasing advertising efforts, establishing a stronger social media presence, and being more selective in our admission decisions, we've managed not only to increase enrollment, but to admit cadets who truly belong at Oak Ridge Military Academy. The morale among the cadets is higher than it's been in years. With a capable faculty and staff at the helm, Oak Ridge is poised for a strong surge over the next few years.





HAPPENINGS

INTRAMURAL SPORTS

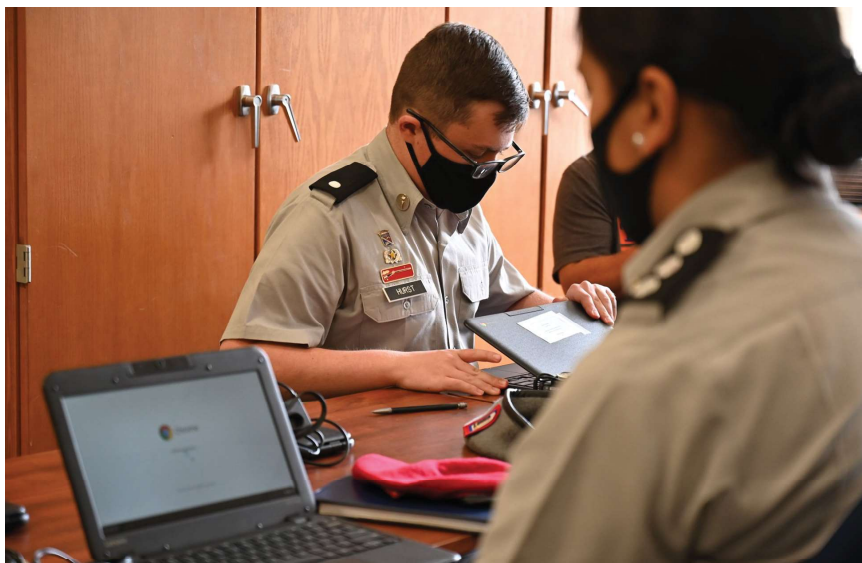


In the absence of inter-scholastic sports, Athletic Director Bobby Allison organized a series of intramural competitions to keep the cadets competitive. Involving kickball, ultimate frisbee, basketball, volleyball, and other sports, each cadet was able to participate. The cadets greatly enjoyed the competitions, and we are thankful to Coach Allison for making this project a great success for everyone involved.

CHROMEBOOK DISTRIBUTION

The present administration of Oak Ridge Military Academy is committed to bringing ORMA firmly into the twenty-first century. This has been necessary in meeting the unique demands of learning in the midst of a pandemic, but it also prepares our students for college-level technological interaction.

As part of this effort to introduce more modern technology into our classrooms,



each cadet has been issued a Google Chromebook for their use during the Academic Year. Each class is integrated with Google Classroom, Google Drive, and the rest of Google Suite. This also allows our teachers to incorporate technology into their classes in new and exciting ways. "With the Chromebooks at their disposal, the cadets' learning experience much more closely resembles what I experienced at the college level," commented one teacher. Both cadets and faculty have been happy with this development.

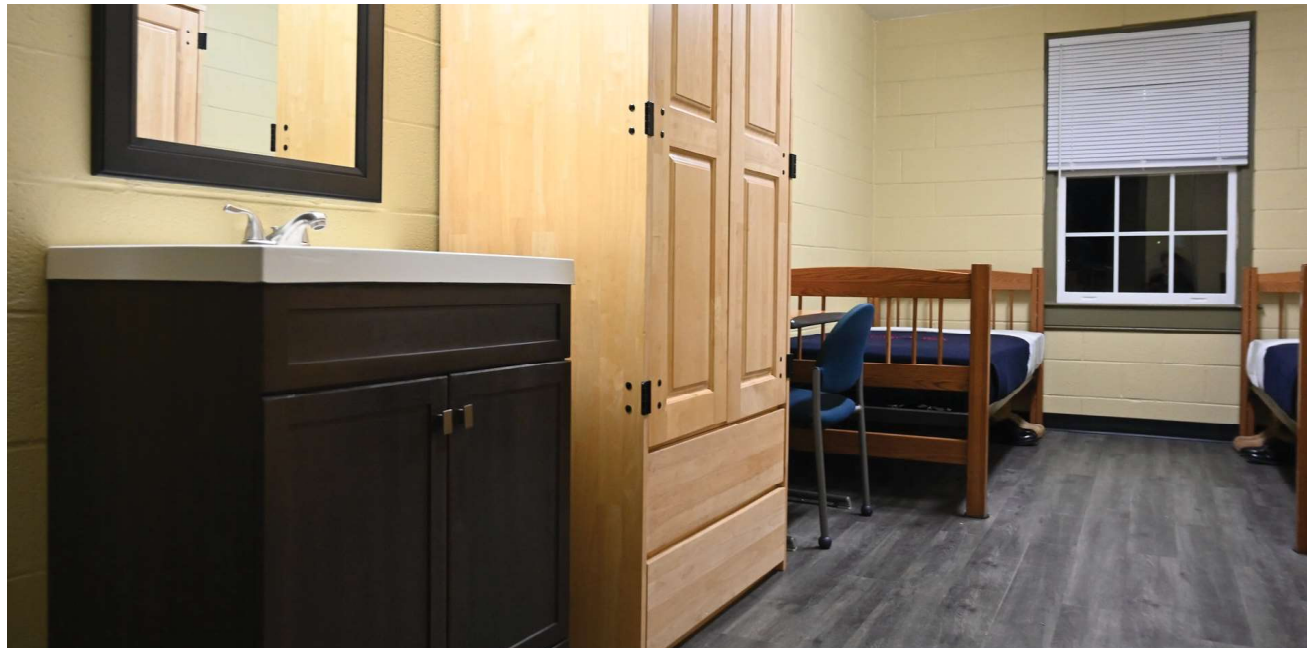




DEVELOPMENT

CEASAR CONE II HALL

Cone Dormitory has been in need of a facelift--and that's exactly what it's getting. We're happy to announce that the Cone Dorm project has been fully funded! Thanks to our Capital Development Manager, Sandra Bush, ORMA has acquired a grant from the Cemel Foundation to finish paying for the dorm room renovations. Improvements include new vanities, mirrors, lights, wardrobes, desks, chairs, beds, floors, and freshly-painted walls--not to mention the new appurtenances in the bathrooms, and upgrades to the Cadet Lounge in the basement of Cone. The entire roof was replaced earlier this fall as well. We are so thankful for the partners who helped make this possible!

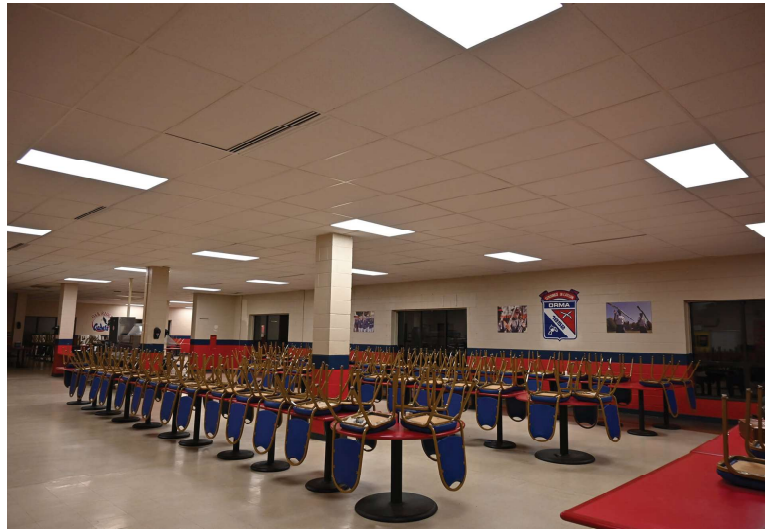




WHITE DINING HALL

Thanks to our partnership with Gordon Hunt and Illuminating Technologies, the lights and ceiling in the Mess Hall have been totally replaced! We also need to recognize Oak Ridge's own maintenance crew for their outstanding efforts in completing the project.

One challenge of having a historic campus is staying on top of all the maintenance needs, and we're proud of our staff's work to keep ORMA's campus looking sharp.



AVIATION COURSE



ORMA's new aviation program is thriving at full capacity, with 16 students. This newly-added course is being taught by Mr. Steve Flippin, the founder of the Air and Space Camp for youth and the director of the Winston-Salem Air Show. The students meet on Wednesday nights in Alumni Hall for the course. Not only does a course of this nature build their familiarity with aviation principles, the cadets simply enjoy it as well!



Aviation classes have an ability to inspire youth and create an excitement that can spill over into their standard classrooms. Skills in science, engineering, math, critical thinking, and problem solving can be applied in a variety of different career paths. Also, the students who complete the course will be issued flight credits toward their pilot's license! It is our hope that some of our students will pursue this, and that all of them will benefit from the course.



W I S H L I S T

Often, our donors ask for specific projects towards which to donate, so we'd like to provide a list of priorities on campus right now. If you'd like to give toward one of these projects, please contact Sandra Bush.

Woodard Rappell Tower

Cost: \$9,800

The rappell tower, a high-profile symbol of our JROTC heritage, is in need of a facelift. From the signature Cadet logo on its front to the steel beams behind, the Woodard Rappell Tower needs to be restored to its former glory.

Cadet Travel Van

Cost: \$24,000

With the recent surge in enrollment, there has been a corresponding expansion of our sports program. Between the 3 basketball teams, our drill team, and our other spring sports, an additional 15-passenger van is high on our list of needed items.

Maple Glade Restoration

Cost: \$47,000

Built in 1905, Maple Glade is currently the oldest building on the Oak Ridge campus. Registered as a National Historic District home, this majestic building is in need of both cosmetic and structural repairs--particularly on the exterior, where over 100 years of weather have taken their toll.

DONOR RECOGNITION

Order Of The Oak Leaf (\$5,000+)

The Oak Ridge Society
The Cemela Foundation
George Lyerly Trust Fund
Tom Davis Fund
James Parrish Trust Fund
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Roy Cook

Grady White Boats Inc.
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President's Cup Club (\$3,000-\$4,999)

Winston-Salem Foundation
Phillip & Frances Daly
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Battalion Commander Club (\$1,500-\$2,999)

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Gold Star Platoon Club (\$1,000-\$1,499)

The David Belk Company
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James Rurak
Donald Caine
Vanguard Charitable Fund

Officer's Club (\$500-\$999)

Association of Military Colleges
St. Patrick's Landscaping
East Coast Lumber Co.
Wanda Meador
Steve Dean
Battleground Restaurants Inc.

Wilbur W. Yeargin, Jr.
Arthur Ashburn
Sydney & Linda Smith
Paul Blevins
Walter Stamper

NCO Club (\$200-\$499)

MEP Painting
Thomas Petigrew
Paul Schenk
Wanda Meador
Ken Morgan

Dudley Miller
Charles Frye
Brooks-Ann Meador
Jack Thames
Kevin James

Thank you to each of this year's donors who have contributed to the vision of Oak Ridge!

ALUMNI PROFILE

NATHAN FREEMAN

Former Battalion Commander

Class of 2015

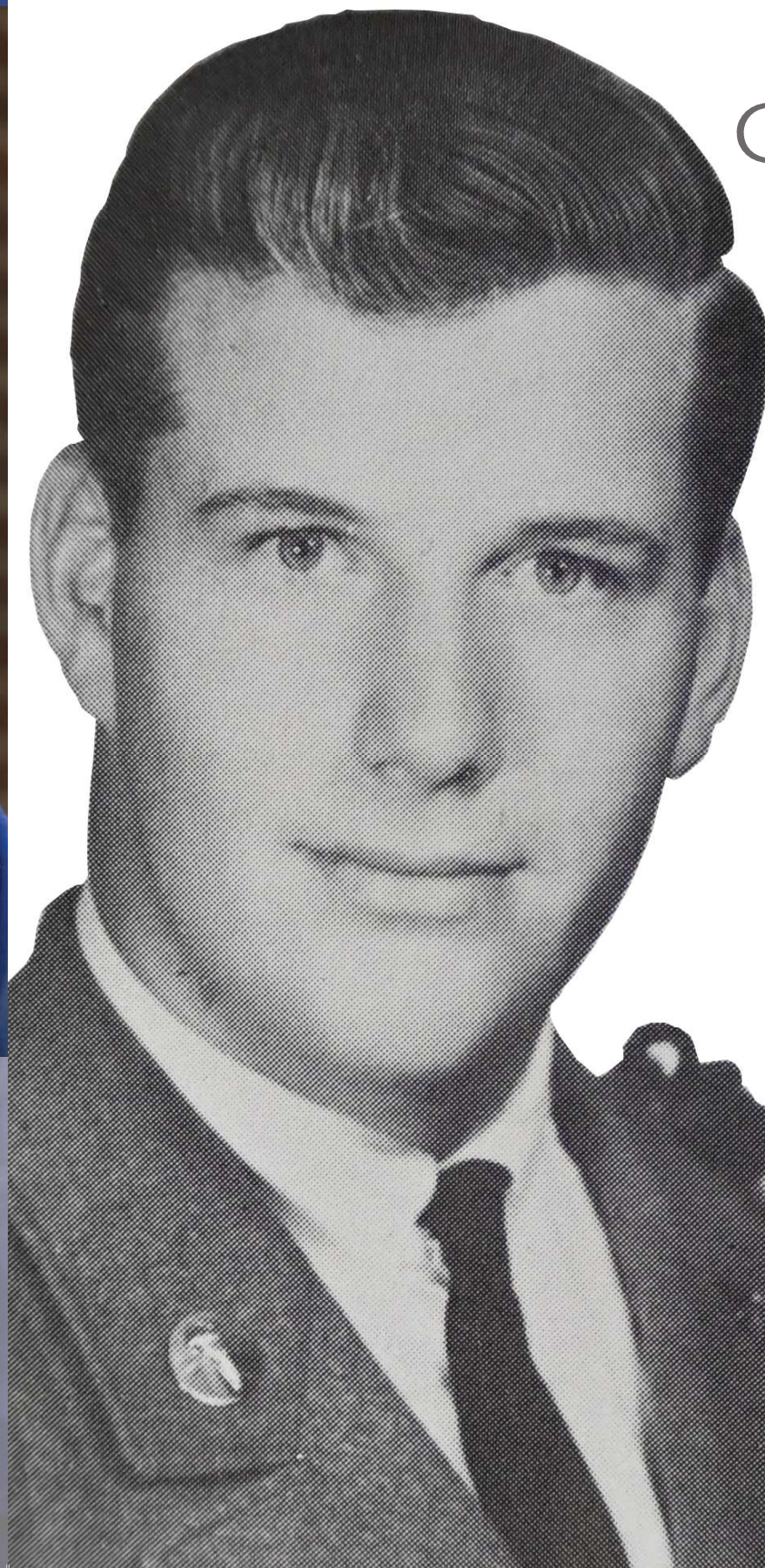
On staff at ORMA

Growing up 15 minutes from ORMA, Nathan Freeman could not have known as a young boy what impact the school would have on his life. Having served as the Battalion Commander during his time here (c/o 2015), he returned to ORMA last year to serve the school that has served him. His presence in the Admissions Department has been indispensable to ORMA's strong recruiting class this year.

In a sense, Nathan is the face of the school. One of his main responsibilities is conducting the campus tours taken by prospective families. Nathan proudly owns his connection to the school, "I let each family that I speak with know how much pride I feel as an Oak Ridge graduate and especially as a former Battalion Commander." ORMA is fortunate to have alumni like Nathan who are committed to the school's success.



ALUMNI PROFILE



CLARENCE YORK

Nickname "Beagle"

Class of 1964

Battalion S-2

The administrators, faculty, and alumni of Oak Ridge Military Academy were sad to learn this year of the passing of one of our own: Clarence "Beagle" York.

Clarence was a graduate of the class of 1964, and was a friend of the Academy long after graduating.

Clarence continued from Oak Ridge to study at George Mason University, and was fond of traveling--spending time in Nepal, China, Thailand, UAE, and Switzerland just to name a few!

Whenever one of our own passes, there's still a strong sense that they belong to the Long Gray Line of Oak Ridge alumni. You'll be missed, Beagle.



CLASS NOTES

Class of 1943

- Irvin G. Angel, who attended ORMA in the early 1940s and was a generous benefactor to the school, passed away in June of this year. He will be missed.

Class of 1964

- Ken Hartman, class of 1964, was awarded the ORMA Alumnus of the Year award for 2020. A presentation was held in Linville Chapel.

Class of 1964

- Steve Wilson, class of 1964, received the prestigious "Major B Award" for his service to the Academy. A presentation was held in Linville Chapel.

Class of 1972

- Willie McRae, class of 1972, passed away due to lung cancer in April. He was living in South Carolina. Rest well, cadet.

Class of 1989

- Joe Gorlesky, ORMA class of 1989, lost his battle with cancer in September. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

Class of 1993

- Bryan Dayton, who had been stationed in Europe, was sworn in as a justice of the Supreme Court of the State of Georgia in August. Congratulations, Bryan!

Class of 1997

- Steven Alex Wilson, class of 1997, was inducted into The Order of the Long Leaf Pine Society

Class of 2007

- Christina Thomas, who attended Oak Ridge in 2004-2005, passed away this summer. We send our regrets to her family and classmates.
- Joe Carpinetti, ORMA graduate from 2007, joined the US Army Special Forces.

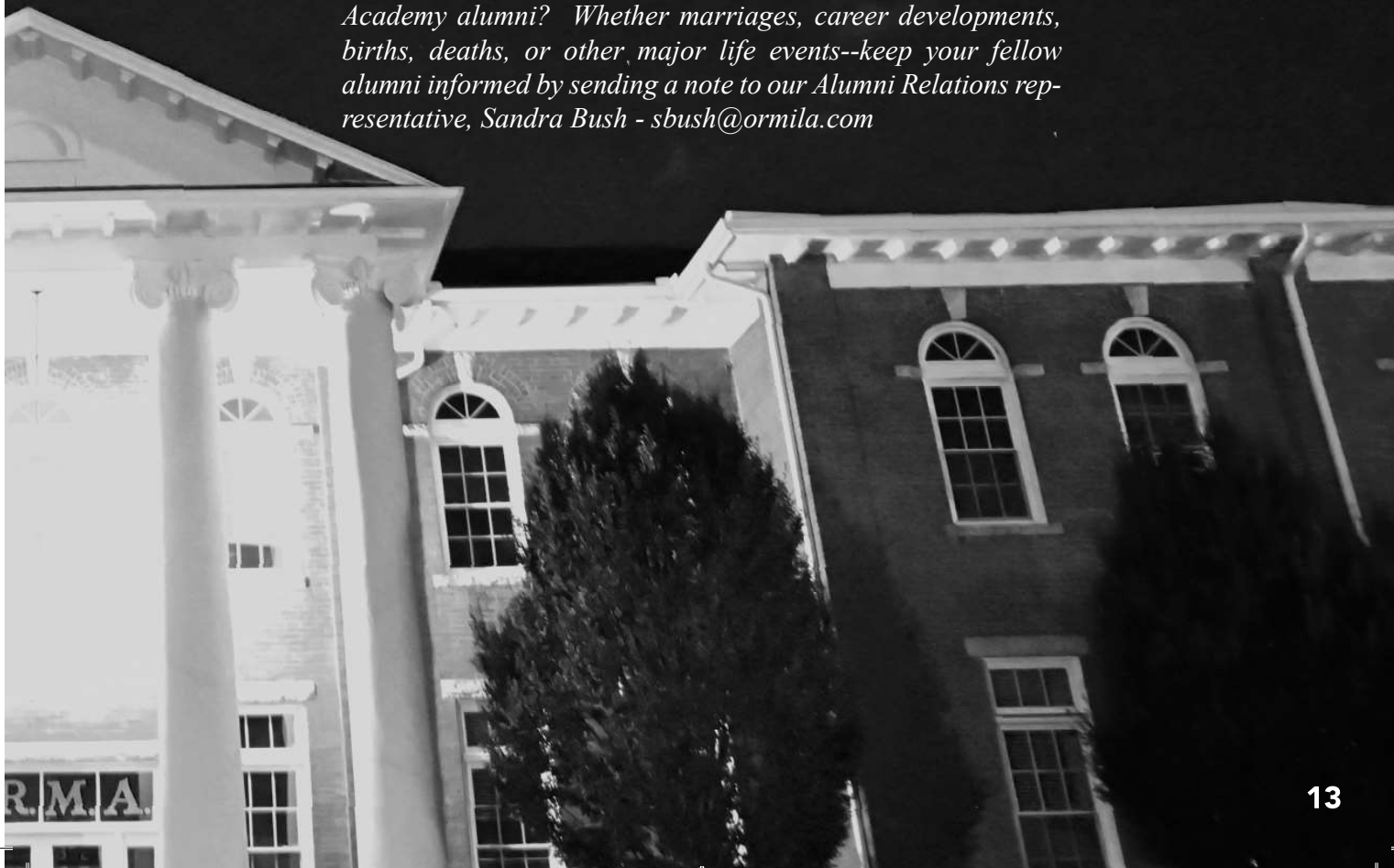
Class of 2020

- Jiraphorn Noimanee, Battalion Commander of last year's graduating class, began Basic Training this fall.

ORMA Staff

- Betty Hunt, former ORMA librarian, passed away in the summer of 2020. She was a great friend to the Academy and the cadets; she will be missed.

Do you have information to share about Oak Ridge Military Academy alumni? Whether marriages, career developments, births, deaths, or other major life events--keep your fellow alumni informed by sending a note to our Alumni Relations representative, Sandra Bush - sbush@ormila.com



HAPPY HOLIDAYS



OAK RIDGE MILITARY ACADEMY
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