

The St. John's Military School

Skirmisher

Summer 2018

*Spotlight on
Excellence*

*Kenneth
Golden*



*Max
Duncan*



Contents

The President's
Corner **1**

The Vice President
& Commandant's
messages **2**

Class of 2018 with
their diplomas in
hand **6**

Academic Honors -
Blue Beret & Student
of the Month
Cadets **8**

Farewell & Happy
Trails to George
and Paula. Service
that spans 26 years
of dedication **3**

Rifle Team has
successful
season **9**

Old Boy Lou
Barnett shares
his story **11**

Old Boy news,
"F" Troop,
and the Old Boy
Association **12**

Philip Tabor earns
the top spot for the
131st Corps **14**

Chase Fitzik
reaches his goal to
become the CSM of
the 131st Corps **16**

Features

Cadet Kenneth Golden: In
the Spotlight **4**

Old Boy Charles Beriault
provides a scholarship in
his name **10**

Cadet Max Duncan makes
the most of his
opportunities **13**

*Editor's note:
Mr. Beriault's last name
was spelled wrong the last
time he was mentioned in
The Skirmisher!*

Summer 2018

President's Corner



As I pen this letter for the June 2018 edition of the Skirmisher, I am reminded of the Old Testament words from the wisest and most influential king of Israel, King Solomon. Solomon states in chapter 3 and verse 1 of the book of Ecclesiastes, "To everything there is a season, a

time for every purpose under heaven."

The 2017-18 school year has been a season of change for St. John's. Throughout the course of the past year, we transitioned many leaders of the school, with several of those changes being put in place shortly after Commencement concluded in May. As many know, change is a part of growth. We are not simply changing for the sake of change; rather we are making adjustments to place St. John's in the best possible position to move forward operationally and strategically. The Board of Trustees is fully behind the direction of the school. Please know the essence of St. John's remains unchanged; our mission remains clear and focused: to provide young men the opportunity to grow Spiritually, Morally, Intellectually, and Physically.

To highlight a few personnel changes for you, both myself and the Commandant, CSM Ray Nunweiler, joined the team this past year before the school year actually began. We also installed SGM Mark Giles as the new Deputy Commandant during this time frame; Mark transitioned from being a Senior Military Advisor to this new posting. Former Senior Military Advisor Mike Reid became the Director of Operations as well. Additionally, several of our Military Advisors changed during and at the end of the school year. Clearly, our Military Department has undergone a significant amount of change over the past 12 months. Stability, adherence to standards, and better communication will be our goals for this department as we move forward.

At the end of the school year, we made other significant personnel adjustments within the school as well. Ms. Ginger Wooten, our Academic Dean for so many years, will now be serving as the Vice President of the school, focusing her talents and leadership on admissions, advancement, and communications. Given Ginger's previous experience in this area, depth of knowledge, and passion for SJMS, she is clearly the right fit for this position; I am confident that she will help take St. John's to new heights. Roy Lawrence, who has been with the school for 31 years and has been serving as the Athletic Director, has agreed to begin working within the Advancement Department to assist with this important aspect of the school's efforts. We are so deeply appreciative of his years of commitment to the school and willingness to apply his talents to a critical aspect of SJMS. Judi Casstevens, our long-standing Quartermaster (QM), will spend her final

year at St. John's assisting and training our new QM Director, Steve Young, who many of you know as 1SG Young, the Senior Military Advisor of HHC and a long standing member of the Military Department. Additionally, our Infirmary team will be changing during the summer period as well.

We will also be welcoming some new members to the SJMS team as well. Jacklynn Brown, currently the President of our Parents Association, will also be joining our team in the Admissions Department; Jacklynn will become our primary recruiter and point of contact within Colorado. For those who personally know Jacklynn, you know that she brings a passion and love for this school that is second to none. Our new Academic Dean, Wayne Grigsby, will be coming to us from Georgia Military College; Wayne's passion for teaching and mentoring young men, as well as his tremendous leadership skills will be extremely valuable for St. John's as we move forward into tomorrow's world. As we progress through the summer, we will hire our new Athletic Director and Infirmary team members as well. Our goal for filling all of our open positions is to hire leaders who are passionate and enthusiastic about fulfilling the school's calling.

As we go forward with the 2018-19 school year, we are looking to increase our overall enrollment; we have set a goal of 200 cadets. Though we raised enrollment by 20% during the past year, we need to increase this positive direction moving forward. The current capacity for the school is 235 cadets, and our goal is to fill the school in the near term. To meet this goal, we are diligently working on our marketing and communications efforts, adjusting our admissions staffing levels, and working on the internal requirements to effectively and efficiently handle an increase in cadets at the school. Please know that our admissions requirements will not be compromised to meet this goal. Rather, we will strive to enroll young men who will not only benefit by attending SJMS, but will also benefit others by being a part of St. John's.

From my vantage point, 2018-19 is setting up to be a great year for St. John's. I am very optimistic and enthused about our school's way forward; I firmly believe that the upcoming year will be a special year for St. John's - a year that we will look back upon and realize the long-term benefit to the recent season of change.

Best Wishes,

William J. Clark
COL (ret.), United States Army
President, St. John's Military School

A message from the Vice President



During the 2017-2018 school year, St. John's Military School has formed and fostered partnerships with three area colleges

focused on expanding educational opportunities for cadets. Cadets have taken classes at Kansas State-Polytechnic, Salina Area Technical College, and Kansas Wesleyan University. SJMS recognizes the courses as dual credit; cadets enrolled in college classes earn college and high school credit.

With a variety of delivery options, cadets have enrolled in courses on college campuses, courses offered at SJMS with a college professor, on-line classes in real time, and recorded on-line classes.

During the school year, cadets have enrolled at Kansas State-Polytechnic and participated in courses including College Algebra, College Composition, Psychology, Micro-Economics, and Macro-Economics.

SJMS and Kansas Wesleyan University are specifically working together with

students who are interested in pursuing degrees in business. A qualified incoming SJMS junior has the opportunity to begin the program and finish his Bachelor of Art's in Business degree in three years following his high school graduation. Additionally, he can earn his Masters of Business Administration from Kansas Wesleyan in one year after college graduation, either on campus, or on-line!

Salina Area Vo-Tech offers cadets a full slate of general coursework, and specific technical programs such as Welding, HVAC, CNA, and Construction. Cadets may begin technical programs during their junior or senior years, and finish with their technical certificate or Associates Degree. SATC graduates may choose to enter the work force upon completion of their certification or associates degree, or they may choose to transfer their credits to a university and complete their Bachelor's degree.

The partnerships SJMS has formed with local colleges will continue to grow. Additionally, we hope to offer more college

classes on the SJMS campus next year.

"As my focus shifts from Academics, to Admissions and Advancement, I have taken time to reflect on the blessings the SJMS family: staff, faculty and cadets, have bestowed upon me in the past nineteen years. The people I know as friends whom I have met as a result of my experience at SJMS, are my dearest friends. There are no higher quality people anywhere on Earth. Old Boys, both those currently enrolled, and those who have moved on, are the heart of SJMS. Countless many have a special place in my memories and in my heart. I look forward to my next chapter at SJMS, assisting a strong staff to bring worthy young men to SJMS. "St. John's forever!"

Ginger Wooten
Vice President of Admissions
and Advancement

A note from the Commandant



I would like to thank everyone who made my transition possible by helping me learn the nuances of the St. John's Campus. I have spent many

hours learning what makes St. John's so unique. After closing out my first year, I believe there are some improvements we can make to insure the Cadets' success while on campus and beyond.

As I reviewed and observed our leadership development program, I identified some ways to provide our Cadet leaders with additional tools to develop their leadership skills.

During this year's summer camp, we plan to integrate a different leadership development model than we used in the past. The Cadets will spend one-third of their time in the classroom learning the science of leading and one-third doing

hands-on/case study work. Our goal is to present a lesson in the classroom then get our Cadets involved in the learning process through a combination of methods other than lecture.

The final one-third of the development will be spent conducting Situational Training Exercises (STX). The STX is designed to begin teaching the Cadets the art of leadership by placing them in a controlled environment and expecting them to make decisions. The environment will vary from the most common situations they will encounter to more complex situations that are uncommon. After each exercise is complete, we will review the good and not-so-good decisions made by the Cadets in order to help them consider other options and techniques to solve problems.

The lessons we learn from the summer camp leadership program will be applied to the 2018-2019 school year. We are excited about the new model we are integrating and will continue to assess

our leadership program and make changes where necessary.

Our Drill Instructor Training began using this model just prior to the 2017 Christmas Break, resulting in noticeable improvements over the previous training. Our Drill Instructors are more confident; they are able to make the right decision based on the situation presented.

We view our campus as a leadership lab and take every opportunity to prepare our Cadets for leadership beyond St. John's. Our program will continue to evolve and help develop our Cadets into the leaders of tomorrow.

Thank you for trusting us to be involved in your young man's development.

Ray Nunweiler
Commandant of Cadets

Farewell

*May the road rise to meet you,
may the wind be ever at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
and the rains fall soft upon your fields.*

*And until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of his hand.*

Paula Lambert



Paula Lambert, aka, MSG Lambert has served as the administrative assistant to the commandant for twenty-six years. Her responsibilities were numerous, but her passion for her work easily solved

any complicated situation that might occur. Paula's quick smile and happy heart were an inspiration to all. She forged countless friendships among, parents, Cadets and staff. Serving as a St. John's 'Mom' to numerous Cadets, the bulletin board behind her desk displayed photos and correspondence received over the years as everyone stayed in touch.

Frequently leaving her office to walk over to the Vanier Academic building, Paula would stop and visit with anyone she passed. Often people would offer to bring the mail over to her, and her response would always be, "but then I wouldn't have this chance to catch up on your life."

Wendy Stein says of Paula, "while delivering a special order to her office I would often ask about her pride and joy, her grandson Elliot. Without missing a beat a photo and story would be shared and that beautiful smile would light up the room."

Thank you for your many years of dedicated to service to the St. John's Family!



George Norton, Class of 2002, US Army competitive sharpshooter, couldn't make the trip to Salina so he sent a tape relaying his thoughts about his St. John's mom, Paula Lambert. Upon meeting

Paula the first time George states, "Paula gave me a great big hug. And I'll remember her words for the rest of my life, 'this is the start of something very good.'"

MAJ George Stelljes



Maj. George Stelljes has dedicated twenty-one years of his life to St. John's Military School and its Cadets. For the past nine and a half years, he has served as commandant of cadets.

When asked to step into the position of Vice President, he readily accepted the position. We all know though, that the favorite part of his 'job' was mentoring young men. Imagine having three beautiful daughters of your own, and then having hundreds of sons. If you ask the Old Boys, they surely think of him as a father figure. You can see it in their faces when they return to campus. They immediately look for MAJ Stelljes and 'Mrs. MAJ,' as they affectionately called his wife Janice. Both Janice and George were selfless in their service to St. John's and have over the years positively impacted the lives of Cadets in so many ways it's difficult to imagine. It's safe to say that MAJ Stelljes cell phone has thousands of numbers belonging to St. John's alums. Old Boys don't hesitate to call, to reminisce and share their life stories.

George is also a wonderful story teller, and Janice encourages him to retell events that occurred on and off campus. Anyone within earshot will be amazed at the details he remembers and the adventures he's had in this lifetime.

Words cannot express the grateful hearts of the St. John's family for what George and Janice have done. Old Boy parent Patty Robichaux says, "Each and every one of us has been enriched by their presence."



Kyle Stuart, Battalion Commander of the 122nd Corps, flew in from California to pay tribute to his mentor and friend George Stelljes.

Kyle remembered, "Major guided me through some tough times and never gave up on me. His wife, 'Mrs. Major,' was like a mom to all of us. Their care and concern for the Cadets knew no bounds."

Kenneth Golden

A Golden Talent



Several thousand of Kansas' most musically talented high school musicians audition each year in Salina, Kansas for the chance to earn a spot in the state band. Of the approximate 25 tuba players who audition, only six are accepted. Those who are chosen represent the most musically talented students. Cadet Kenneth Golden, a junior at St. John's Military School earned one of those six tuba chairs—two years in a row. It is an accomplishment worthy of the highest praise.

Born in Houston, Texas, Golden first began to play the tuba at age twelve when he was in the sixth grade. When he enrolled in St. John's Military School for his sophomore year, Golden immediately sought out participation in the school's band. His band teacher, Mrs. Wendy Stein, could immediately tell that Golden was a rare talent.

"We haven't had that many tuba players in the 33 years that I have been teaching at St. John's, and I can only think of one who was as talented as Ken," said Stein. "What is unique about Ken though, is that he has a grateful heart. When I told him that I would help him prepare to audition for the District Band, for the chance to play in the State Band, he was extremely excited and appreciative, and has taken advantage of every opportunity over the past two years to better himself musically, and as an individual."

Earning a position in Kansas' High School Band does not only require talent. It requires a dedication to refining one's skills, and calm under pressure. To earn a position in the State Band, students must first secure a spot in their District Band.

"It's a smaller level, but more tuba players audition," said Stein. Five tuba players earned a position in the District Band.

After earning a position within the District Band, to prepare for the State Band, Golden practiced his tuba solo for four weeks.

"The audition piece is a very difficult solo, which is chosen by Kansas band directors," added Stein.

Fully committed to his goal of earning a

position in the State Band, Golden took every opportunity to practice and prepare.

"Any time I could come in and practice, I would," said Golden modestly. Stein added, "We have a morning tutorial before the academic day. Ken comes in for that. Then we have band hour, which is 45 to 50 minutes of practice, and then he practices during an optional after-school program. When we learned he was going to be preparing for the State Band, Ken said, 'Just sign me up for every practice session.' He has been that committed." Auditions for the State Band take place each year in Salina where students come from across the state to audition for all instruments.

"The State Band represents the cream of the crop," said Stein. "Many of the students who compete come from large schools with very competitive programs."

In addition to performing a solo, students must show proficiency in their instrument by performing a chromatic scale to demonstrate full range competency. Then, they must play in two major scales—an area of struggle for many of even the most talented students—and they must perform a sight read. Golden's audition performance earned him a position in the band both as a sophomore and as a junior. Golden stated that having earned a position in the band as a sophomore gave him confidence going into his junior year audition.

"Having made it the first year I knew what to expect and how to prepare," said Golden. "That set the expectation, so I felt more confident going into it this year."

The practice sessions and final performance take place in Wichita during the Kansas Music Educators' annual in-service workshop. Two days before the concert, State Band participants practice together for five hours. The next day the students participate in a full day practice session that lasts 10 to 12 hours. A college-level band instructor leads the ensemble.

According to Stein, what makes Golden such an impressive student and young man is not just

“Ken is an extraordinary tuba player, and he is taking advantage of everything the school has to offer to help him achieve his goals,” said Stein. “I have no doubt he will continue to be highly successful.”

his musical aptitude, but his overall character and his accomplishments as a student and as a member of the St. John’s Corps of Cadets. Golden has earned a position on the Dean’s Honor Roll and has participated in the school’s football, basketball, and tennis teams.

Golden also serves as the Band Master in the school’s marching band. It’s a big responsibility,” said Stein. “He will be showcased on the day we have our formal inspection. He has had to work hard and learn a lot of techniques to prepare for that day.”

During his second year Golden rose to the position of first lieutenant. He was executive officer (XO) of one of the school’s companies, a role held by only three cadets in the entire Corps.

“Ken is not just a one-dimensional student,” said Stein. “He also excels academically and in the barracks. Cadets are typically not able to accomplish such rank advancements in such a short period of time.”

As an XO, Golden is responsible for ensuring the cadets in his company are excelling academically. With an understanding of what it takes to succeed at the highest level, Golden is the right young man for the position.

“I help the cadets in my company maintain good grades and get their homework done,” said Golden. “If they are struggling in a subject, I talk to their teachers to find out how we can help them do better.”

Golden has been able to achieve his prestigious musical accomplishments thanks to his natural talents, his dedication to his craft, and the support and opportunities he received from St. John’s.

“One of the teachers at Kansas Wesleyan University saw Ken perform with the District Band and was so impressed with him that he asked Ken to audit a class at the college and participate in the college’s band, wind ensemble, and orchestra, so Ken is already obtaining college-level experience.”

After two years of proven continual success, Golden is in no way finished attempting to grow and excel musically. “Ken’s goal is to earn a position in the state band three years in a row,” said Stein. “When he does, he will be awarded a large and distinguished medal by the Kansas Educators Association.”

When asked about his future, Golden knows one thing: that music will be a part of it.

“I’m not sure what I want to do when I graduate, but I plan to find a place and time in my life for music,” said Golden, who is interested in attending college at Texas A&M University where he would like to study Psychology.

His band instructor is confident that Golden has what it takes to perform at the next level, which will help support his academic goals.

“Ken is eligible to earn scholarship money,” said Stein. “At a school like Texas A&M, they have a huge band. Students in the marching band at Texas A&M can get into all the football games for free. It can really enhance the college experience.”

Stein is fully committed to helping her talented student achieve his college goals.

“I’m going to keep working with him,” said Stein. “I plan to contact Texas A&M and learn what opportunities he may have to participate in their music programs and earn scholarships as a non-music major. I plan to get the school’s audition materials and set up an audition for him for Thanksgiving or spring break.”

According to Stein, when a student demonstrates such a natural talent and determination to achieve his goals at the highest level, he has to be supported, and his skill nurtured.

Golden will be joining the battalion staff of the 131st corps as the executive officer. He was also awarded the D. Dale Browning scholarship for his final year at St. John’s. When asked how he felt about receiving this scholarship he replied, “I feel honored and will strive to live up to the exemplary model set by Mr. Browning when he was a Cadet at St. John’s.”



D. DALE BROWNING AND KENNETH GOLDEN AFTER THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP.

Congratulations Class of 2018!

Diplomas

...in hand!



Zachary Batliner

Grandson of:
Becky and Joseph
Ziegler
Kansas City, MO



Erik Cabildo Arias

Son of:
Edna Arias Velasco and
Rodolfo Cabildo Garrido
Puebla City, Mexico



Casey Darroll

Son of:
Tracey Darroll and
Robert Darroll
Los Angeles, CA



Max Duncan

Son of:
Gabriele and Edward
Duncan
Aurora, CO



Dylan Ganyard

Son of:
Elaine and Ted
Ganyard
Aurora, CO



Charles Gibbs

Son of:
Erin Gibbs and
David Gibbs
Golden, CO



Kaden Glasser

Son of:
Kristen and Daniel
Glasser
Greenwood Village, CO



Bryce David Gross

Son of:
Debra and Sam
Gross
Hays, KS



Robert Hinze

Son of:
Lucy
Hinze
Highlands Ranch, CO



Logan Hoese

Son of:
Shannon
Hoese
Castle Pines, CO



Jack Jeffries

Son of:
John Jeffries and
Cynthia Jeffries
Lone Tree, CO



Bryce Kisner

Son of:
Meghan and Larry
Anderson
Ludell, KS



Chandler Latteman

Son of:
Jennifer and William
Latteman
Gardner, CO



ChenHao Li

Son of:
Ping Kang and HongTao Liang
Zhengzhou, Henan
Province, China



Oluwaferanmi Majekodummi

Son of:
Mary
Majekodummi
Aurora, CO



Christopher Reilly-Reed

Grandson of:
Brenda
Reed
Wichita, KS



Branden Rucker

Son of:
Randi and Aaron Kirk
and John Rucker
Salina, KS



Connor Schieffer

Son of:
Adrienne Schieffer-Nikolaev
and Nik Nikolaev
Littleton, CO



Daniel Summer

Son of:
Kristen and Craig
Summer
Denver, CO



Dalton Thibodeau

Son of:
Jennifer Irving and Phil
Thibodeau
Sonoma, CA



James Ushman

Nephew of:
Julia and Matthew
Peterson
Springfield, IL



Blase Whitting

Son of:
Janine and David
Whitting
Glen Head, NY

Academic Honors

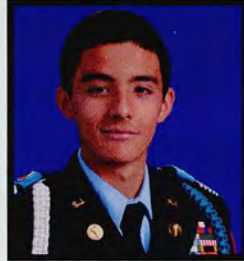
Blue Beret

Membership in the elite Blue Beret Club represents the top grade earners in the corps for each quarter.

High School



Jackson Brinn
1st Quarter



Adrian Cabildo Arias
Every Quarter



Zachary Laws
4th Quarter



Gan Shi
4th Quarter



ChenHao Yu
1st Quarter

Middle School



Jacob Delay
Every Quarter



Eliazar Hodgdon
Leybas
2nd Quarter



Xander Tamblyn
1st, 3rd and 4th
Quarter

Students of the Month

The faculty nominate Cadets for student of the month based on their work ethic and behavior in the classroom.

High School

September



ChenHao
Yu

October



Adrian Cabildo
Arias

November



Dalton
Thibodeau

January



Philip
Tabor

February



Kenneth
Golden

March



Zachary
Laws

April



Blake
Wedelstedt

Middle School

September



Timothy
Girard

October



Kevin
Costello

November



Reece
Findley

January



Alexander
Schmidt

March



Michael
Waldron

Rifle Team

Has a great season!

"In every way possible this season has surpassed expectations. With only one returning letterman this year I have to admit I wasn't looking for anything but to rebuild this year and hopefully win a couple of medals while doing so. Under team captain, senior and three time letterman Branden Rucker's leadership this young team stepped up and soundly showed all that they can do better. Better they did! In almost every match we improved last year's scores while improving every week culminating in a 6-2 league record as opposed to last year's 4-4 record taking second place behind Manhattan, Kansas. Branden Rucker improved his league average by over 36 points and can proudly boast two 2018 State Championship titles in Indoor Smallbore Prone and 3-position disciplines; whereas, last year a state title eluded us.

Another way we did better this year was we started with six shooters and we ended with six. With Branden and fellow senior ChenHao Li graduating this year that will leave us with four lettermen McCale Bladzick, Andrew Boyd, Deven Brown, and Austin Slaybaugh returning next year. With this past year's success and the experience gained by these four winners we have every reason to be optimistic for next year. At Commencement I was notified by the National Rifle Association's Postal Program Coordinator that the St. John's Rifle Team had won \$250 for taking 1st Place in the NRA National JROTC 3-position Precision Air Rifle Army Category. Branden Rucker also won \$250.00 for being the 1st Place Senior in the same category. When I received the awards I was pleased to see that McCale Bladzick and Austin Slaybaugh took first place in their sophomore and freshman class as well." *Tony Blair*

The rifle team celebrated at the annual League Awards Banquet with a chance to enjoy great company amongst competitors and friends alike. The cadets received their SJMS letters, NRA qualification awards, and medals earned in league competition and the Kansas State Indoor 3-position Championship.

Top honors went to Branden Rucker displaying his State Championship plaque along with Coach Tony Blair who is this year's league champion.



From left: McCale Bladzick, Austin Slaybaugh, Andrew Boyd, Tony Blair, CheHao Li, Branden Rucker and Deven Brown, display their hardware.

Charles Beriault

My time at St. John's was without question the most important time in my formative years. I learned that life isn't fair and that you have to make the most out of every opportunity that presents itself. My hope is that I can help present these opportunities to cadets that are deserving of such.



What did you do immediately following your graduation from St. John's?

After St. John's I attended Marymount College in Palos Verdes, CA, the smaller class size and student body in general helped me acclimate to college. I played soccer there and studied for two years before transferring to Regis University in Denver to finish my degree.

Did you know when you were in high school what your next step would be?

I had no idea whatsoever. My parents had always told me that college was my only option, so that made it easier ha-ha. Past that I was just a kid who was very focused on getting out of St. John's (which I'm assuming is like every other cadet in history)

What is your profession?

I'm the chief operating officer for a private investment firm in Dallas as well as the director of that firm's family office.

What path did you take to end up in this work?

Directly following college, I went into a management-training program with a large company in Denver. It was a very humbling cut your teeth type of job,

but afforded me some critical experience needed to be attractive to future employers. Subsequently I was recruited out of that program into banking, which was not at all what I had set out to do in college but it was a great transition. After being in private banking for several years with different companies I was approached by clients to run the operations of their firm. It's been a great experience, and every day presents a new and unique challenge.

How could you encourage other alums to follow your lead?

I think St John's is a brotherhood. We all shared an experience that galvanized us and turned us from kids into men. If it's possible for alumni to contribute to the future success of these young men, then it should be an easy decision to make.

Who have you stayed close to from your time at St. John's?

Roy Lawrence and I have kept in pretty close touch since I graduated, and I still keep up with several guys from the 109th - 112th.

What lessons did you learn while at SJMS that served you well in your adult life?

Leadership, integrity, and accountability

are three that first come to mind but there are many others. SJMS taught me how to carry myself and be responsible in my young life, and I think those lessons pay dividends if you are listening.

What advice would you give to current Cadets?

"Trust the process" is something that we hear in a lot of different areas now, but it really makes sense at St John's. Buy in; get some rank, walk the line. Take those accomplishments with you and remember that they are the framework of your future success.

In Closing I would just like to say, "congratulations to MAJ Stelljes for all of his contributions to SJMS and the cadets, he's truly an amazing guy!"
SJMS Forever!

*Charles R. Beriault
COO/CFO
Cactus Capital LLC*

Lou Barnett

I feel I owe my life to St John's. Even though I made poor life decisions, in my younger years, St John's instilled in me the values I needed to pull from to get my life back on track. There are so many wonderful examples of Old Boys who continue to inspire me; D. Dale Browning, COL Al Ransom and the list goes on...



Kimberly & Lou

What position or duties did you have as a cadet?

I arrived at SJMS near the end of my sophomore year after being pulled from a private boarding school in Switzerland. With about six weeks to go in the school year, I had terrible grades and had a lot to catch up on to stay with my class. I also had to make it through training to become an Old Boy before the end of the school year, but, I made it and the grades improved dramatically. By graduation, I was a 1st ITL and Platoon Leader, had done well in Fencing, played Football and serve as the Battalion Cadet Chaplain.

What lessons do you use today that you learned at SJMS?

I had a strict childhood; however, SJMS provided the final lasting touches in my core values. Sometimes it's difficult to find a business that really operates with the same values we were instilled with at St John's, however, it does pay off when you do. Through thick and thin, sticking with these values has been the key to my successes.

What is your favorite memory of SJMS?

There are several, mostly in Algebra classes where "Paul Harvey" was a class-room staple and Coach Gardner conducted a brief trading session at the start of each class. He would start

the year by offering to trade a couple pencils for anyone willing to give a decent pen and end the year with a nice stereo or something worth many times more than the initial trade.

Who was your favorite teacher or military advisor?

My favorite teacher was Mrs. Weckel who taught English. She made class interesting and she was good at challenging us. My favorite military advisor was Sgt. Titus, even though he was one of the scariest guys ever to live. Paul H. Kellogg and COL Duckers were probably the two who influenced me the most.

What is your fondest memory of Vail Hall?

It took such a brief time for me to see it as home. I thought and still feel that was strange for me as daunting as it was initially. The majestic appearance of the building was always something I appreciated. The loss of Vail Hall was particularly devastating for me as I grew so attached to it.

Give us an update on your personal and professional life.

After about 20 years in various positions within the heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration industry, I found myself looking for

something different and challenging. I am currently at Radeus Labs working remotely for our facility in the San Diego area as the company sales and marketing director where I got in on the ground floor of our SATCOM (satellite communications) endeavors. We manufacture rugged computing devices and digital flight recorders used for the predator unmanned aerial vehicle programs. The technology is amazing and my customer relationships from years past has made my work so much easier and satisfying.

My personal life has been enriched by my wife, children and grandchildren. I thoroughly enjoy my shop where I work on woodworking projects in my spare time and my wife, Kimberly, a photographer and master gardener, can easily lose track of time in the yard with her camera and flowers.

My involvement with my amazing friend, Terry Plumberg, in the founding and organization of the SJMS OBA (Old Boy Association) has been a particular satisfying journey. I look forward to our meetings and see my involvement as a way to stay connected and give a little back to St. John's. After being a bit lost for a number of years, I realized the value of my time spent at St. John's and now from within the OBA, my SJMS brothers have become a major part of my life again."

Lou Barnett, Class of 1973



Old Boys *The Heart of St. John's*

Old Boys turned out in droves for the 2018 commencement weekend celebration. The annual formation of "F" troop on Friday morning after the flag raising ceremony was a sight to behold. Generations of Cadets joined the 130th Corps of Cadets in a tear drop pass-in-review. "F" Troop was commanded by Tom Zachary, Class of 1999 and you can be sure the members of "F" Troop were all in step!



Alumni News

Steve Ritter, Class of 2011 has been promoted to Executive Officer Dealer Company, 101st Airborne Division, Ft. Campbell, Kentucky.

Jimi Martling, Class of 2003 is getting married October 27, 2018.

Ryan Harris, Class of 2011 will become a Dad sometime near the end of July, 2018.

Jorge Moreno, Class of 1984 Lives in Lima, Brazil, and is father of a 5 year old son, managing a family owned fuel terminal storage facility in Guatemala and developing an energy business in Brazil.

Jack Hare Jr., Class of 1991 is a twenty-two year veteran of truck driving, has three children - two living, both have excellent jobs. The oldest works for a bank and the youngest for waste management. His three grandchildren are all girls, the youngest is a month old. In his free time he gardens and does woodworking.

Levi Gottsponer, Class of 2013 will be finishing his masters degree and working for a bridge design firm in Arkansas in June. He graduated May 10, 2018 from the Colorado School of Mines with a master's degree in structural design. He will be starting work at Crafton/Tull Engineering in Rogers, AR as a bridge design engineer in training on June 4, 2018.

George Miklos, Class of 1979 is running for President in 2020 on the American Independent Conservative party ticket.

Jake Ellis is working for Norwegian Cruise Lines.

Final Roll Call

James Wellman, Old Boy 1975
June 3, 2017

Jeff DeJarnett, Old Boy 1998
July 4, 2017

Hunter Van Bogart, Old Boy 2012
August 14, 2017

Rev. Donald Overton, former chaplain
October 7, 2017

Mrs. Ruth Cox, former librarian
October 20, 2017

Bob Odell, Old Boy 1989
October 30, 2017

Jack Conrad, Jr. Old Boy 1966
October 31, 2017

Jim Jeppesen, Old Boy 1956
November 12, 2017

Brett Adkins, Old Boy
December 25, 2017

Robert Pearson, former Military Advisor
January 9, 2018

Jerry Mischel, Old Boy
January 31, 2018

Dylan Faust, Old Boy 2015
April 21, 2018

Scott Teschke, Old Boy 1971
May 3, 2018



Max Duncan

SJMS Cadet receives early admittance, full JROTC scholarship to U.S. Naval and U.S. Air Force Academies.

Since he was a young child, Max has held a desire to not only follow in the footsteps of his grandfather and his father by serving in the armed forces, but to earn a career in aviation, like his parents. It was no surprise to Edward and Gabriele, then, when Max first told them he wanted to pursue military service after graduating from St. John's. To achieve his goal, Max applied for early admittance to both the United States Air Force Academy and the United States Naval Academy. As a testament to his achievements and his leadership qualities, he was accepted into both institutions and also received a full Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps scholarship.

"I've always known I wanted to fly," said Max. "My parents introduced me to aviation, and I visited the Air Force Academy while we were in Colorado, but now that I'm enrolled in a military school, I really understand what it will mean to be at a military academy, and it has solidified my decision to choose that path."

Edward and Gabriele credit the resume that Max has been able to create for himself during his time at St. John's for helping him earn two such prestigious early admittances.

"Max probably wouldn't have received early admittance to both academies if he hadn't come to St. John's," said Edward. "It is a blessing. Only one-third of Academy acceptances are given out early and to be accepted so early to both, we felt like they were competing for Max. I believe in the providence of God, and while I don't know what the future holds for Max, I believe everything is happening for a reason, and I don't believe it would have happened if not for St. John's."

With two outstanding opportunities before him, which did Max choose? While honored by both offers, the choice, ultimately, was an easy one for the young man who has always dreamed of flight.

"I always knew I wanted to go into the Air Force," said Max. "My Dad was in the Air Force. It's close to home, and it's the best way to become a pilot."

For Edward and Gabriele, they are confident that Max will achieve his goals, and so much more in the years that lay ahead of him. "We hope that Max does well and advances to his full potential," said Edward.

Gabriele echoes her husband's sentiments, adding, "We hope Max can take advantage of this opportunity to reach his goals and to fulfill the plan that God has for him. I don't know what the future holds for Max, but as long as Max lives each day of his life with joy in his heart, even in times of hardship, then God's plan for him will prevail."

While it was a challenge for Max to leave his parents, his friends, and his teammates on his soccer team in Aurora, he chose to fully embrace every opportunity available at St. John's

from day one. In his year and a half at St. John's, Max has become an active and vital member of the school's varsity basketball team, varsity tennis team, choir, praise band, chapel council, and bible study group. Max has also earned the role of dedicated pianist for the school, playing the national anthem and the school's alma mater for all celebratory school events, including the annual commencement ceremony. As the executive officer (XO) of one of the school's companies, Max is also responsible for helping his fellow cadets maintain high academic standards, which has led him to commit his time generously to tutoring.

"On my first day at St. John's I was on the soccer field. I've played soccer here the past two seasons, plus I've played on our indoor club soccer team. All the lessons I've learned about leadership I've learned at St. John's," said Max.

According to Academic Dean Ginger Wooten, an understanding of the importance of leadership is something the school strives to instill in every cadet.

"At St. John's, we're all about teaching our cadets and students to be leaders," said Wooten. "Even in our classrooms while we're teaching math, reading and writing we understand that it is even more important to teach our students to be cooperative, to work together and to take on leadership roles when they can. I hope that through the academic and military lessons he has been exposed to, that Max will leave St. John's with a true understanding of what it takes to be a great leader."

Hearing Max speak about leadership, it is clear that he has already benefited from the lessons of which Dean Ginger Wooten speaks.

"When I was on the soccer team at my old school, my friends looked up to me, but at St. John's, I learned to understand what it means to have people you're responsible for, people who look up to you and who depend on you. You could participate in JROTC in a public school, but that experience is for one hour per week. Here, there are people who always need you and who you're leading, and that experience is amazing.

Dean Wooten believes that Max's exposure to so many leadership opportunities while at St. John's has helped him gain the confidence needed to lead and inspire others.

"I've also learned that you can't view yourself as more important than others. I had that attitude for a while, but I realize now that as a person and as a leader you can't treat others as less than you." *Max Duncan*



Philip Tabor

Battalion Commander of the 131st Corps of Cadets

A WILLINGNESS TO SERVE
A DESIRE FOR SUCCESS

The role of Battalion Commander at St. John's Military School is a critical component and success factor for the Corps of Cadets. According to Colonel William Clark, President of St. John's Military School, the role of Battalion Commander requires an understanding of how to collaborate with others, an ability to understand and shape the culture of an organization, and above all, be motivated by a desire to serve for the betterment of the brotherhood—not a desire for recognition or prestige.

Based on these requirements, the decision by the school's leadership to select Cadet Philip Tabor to serve the role of Battalion Commander of the 131st Corps of Cadets was simple.

"I feel honored to be chosen," said Philip Tabor, who is spending his summer back home in Colorado Springs with his family before returning to St. John's for his second, and final year of high school at the military school.

"Philip is a brilliant young man," said Colonel Clark. "He understands organizational dynamics, and he has a willingness to be a part of the solution and to be a servant leader who will help move the organization forward."

ACHIEVING UNEXPLORED POTENTIAL

Cadet Tabor has spent only one year at St. John's Military School, but according to his parents, Greg and Lenora Tabor, the time has been transformative. Over the past year, The Tabor's have watched their son reach his academic and leadership potential and develop abilities that are opening up opportunities he had not previously considered.

"Shortly after Philip enrolled at St. John's his grades turned up pretty abruptly," said Greg Tabor. "We always knew he

was capable of achieving straight A's. We're excited about the opportunities that his accomplishments are now opening up and for his future career beyond St. John's."

Not only has Philip excelled academically, but he has also demonstrated a furtive commitment to success in every role in which he has been assigned and had an opportunity to lead.

"After the New Boy period, Philip became a drill instructor, and after that, he advanced to a senior drill instructor," said Greg. "Lenora and I spoke to President Clark and Commandant Sergeant Major Nunweiler during parents weekend, and they shared with us that they had observed Philip had demonstrated exceptional leadership abilities that were benefiting the cadets under his instruction."

FINDING A ROLE WITHIN THE BATTALION COMMAND

When Cadet Tabor first began to consider the possibility of applying for a position in the Battalion Command for the following year, his interest surrounded a role that would allow him to focus on what he believed to be his area of greatest strength—leading and developing others.

"I applied for the position of S3, the Battalion Operations and Training officer; I figured it was a logical next step," said Cadet Tabor before adding with humility, "But I guess the President and Commandant and the leadership staff decided I would be best suited for a different position."

According to Colonel Clark, Cadet Tabor's inherent leadership abilities had been evolving throughout his junior year at St. John's, proving he had the skills needed for a critical position that would maximize his potential and impact the greater good of the entire brotherhood. The singular moment that crystallized Philip's aptness for the role of Battalion Commander occurred during his Battalion Command interview with the school's leadership.



Philip Tabor participates in the change of command ceremony with the battalion commander of the 130th Corps, Christopher Reilly-Reed and Ray Nunweiler, commandant of cadets.

“I asked Philip if he would be interested in any positions other than S3,” said Colonel Clark. “Philip looked at me and said, ‘I will do whatever the school needs me to do to lead the corps to a higher level next year.’ And that’s why Philip Tabor is our Battalion Commander.”

LEARNING LESSONS OF LEADERSHIP

Greg and Lenora Tabor are thrilled to see their son earn such an impactful role at St. John’s.

“We are very proud of Philip and his accomplishments,” said Lenora Tabor. “He has done so well. We weren’t expecting him to be appointed as Battalion Commander, but I think he’s up for the challenge. Deciding to send our son to St. John’s was not an easy decision, but it was the best decision. He’s really blossomed there. I don’t know how they do it, but the school finds a way to motivate its cadets and help them to reach their fullest potential.”

While the school’s leadership has the utmost confidence in Philip’s ability to inspire others and be a positive force for change, Philip has the utmost confidence in his Battalion Command staff.

“I’m most excited about my staff,” said Cadet Tabor with enthusiasm. “My S4 will be Qian—we went through new boy together. And I’m glad that Golden will be our XO and Fitzek the Command Sergeant Major, and Cabildo the S3. I was anxious about who would get the S3 if I didn’t, but I feel completely confident with Cabildo.”



A FUTURE WITH LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES

For Greg and Lenora Tabor, they are most excited about the future that lays ahead of their son after he graduates, and how his experiences leading the 131st Corps of Cadets will further help to shape their son into a man with limitless potential.

“Philip’s experience as the Battalion Commander will help him develop his abilities and is already helping him build a strong résumé as he considers his next move,” said Greg.

“There’s a lot of mail coming to our house for Philip these days,” adds Lenora with pride in her voice. “There are so many colleges starting to express interest in him now. We weren’t sure if college was going to be part of his future path. It’s great to see he has so many opportunities. That’s what every parent wants for their child—a future that is filled with opportunities and choices that they have made for themselves and that they have choices that can lead them to a happy and successful life.”



Chase Fitzek

Command Sergeant Major of the 131st Corps of Cadets

LOFTY GOALS

Many of us set out to reach individual goals. Many of us set out to achieve lofty goals. Too often, however, we lack the determination and resiliency to grasp the brass ring, setting our sights instead on more easily sought concessions. Such concessions are not acceptable to Cadet Chase Fitzek.

"I wanted to earn the role of Command Sergeant Major since I first arrived at St. John's," said Cadet Fitzek, who will be entering his fourth and final year at St. John's in the Fall of 2018. "When I found out I had been chosen, I was so pumped. I'm so excited to work with the whole Corps of Cadets."

LEARNING TO SMILE AGAIN

For Chase's mother, Megan Millspaugh, back home in Indiana, seeing her son live up to his leadership potential and achieve his ultimate goal of the position of Command Sergeant Major is not a surprise. Rather, it is an affirmation that the difficult choice to send her son away from home was the right and the best choice for him.

"Before St. John's, Chase was lost," said Megan. "He had been through several emotionally challenging situations over the course of a year that set him back academically, including a broken arm and a concussion that kept him from playing baseball, which is his passion. He was angry and sad, and it felt like there was nothing we could do to help him. We started looking at other school options and ultimately decided to send him to St. John's. It was such a hard decision to send him away to school, but when we went to visit him at parents weekend, he was finally smiling again."

THE QUEST FOR GREATNESS

According to Chase, it was completing the new boy period at St. John's that cemented his commitment to the brotherhood and left him with an even deeper resolve to earn the role of Command Sergeant Major for the 131st Corps of Cadets.

"I knew I could fulfill the role of Command Sergeant Major because I work well with the NCOs (non-commissioned officers)," said Cadet Fitzek. "I wanted the opportunity to reach the highest NCO position in the Corps and work with those below me to make them better cadets so that they too can achieve higher goals."

According to Command Sergeant Major Ray Nunweiler, Commandant of St. John's, the role of Command Sergeant Major for the Corps of Cadets is an essential role that requires leadership skills and a commitment to achievement.

"The command sergeant major is responsible for the standards within the Corps of Cadets," said Commandant Sergeant Major Nunweiler. "He is responsible both for the cadets' individual standards, such as room cleanliness, uniform appearance, and how the cadets carry themselves, as well as the overall discipline of the Corps."

LEADING TO THE HIGHEST STANDARD

To encourage over 100 fellow cadets to achieve the highest possible standards, one must know how to inspire and lead. Cadet Fitzek's innate understanding of the role of a leader to do what is right even when it is not the easy or popular decision makes him well-suited to continue to achieving his goals at the highest level, and motivate those around him to do the same.

Chase Fitzek is congratulated by Ray Nunweiler, commandant of cadets after being named the CSM of the 131st Corps. Dalton Thibodeau, the CSM of the 130th Corps has just passed the sabre to signify his tour of duty is complete.



“To me, being a leader means making the right decisions and not worrying about what people think or how they see me. It’s about making strong decisions.”

Chase’s mother has always known her son possesses such a selfless ability to lead and inspire.

“Chase has always been an individual,” said Megan. “He fits the role of command sergeant major. He doesn’t get upset if he makes someone angry. He will do what is best and what has to be done.”

Commandant Sergeant Major Nunweiler and the leaders at St. John’s who were responsible for building the Battalion Command team for the 131st Corps of Cadets also saw Cadet Fitzek’s unique leadership potential.

“Cadet Fitzek is a quiet professional. He is the type of young man who can lead cadets and resolve problems,” said Commandant Sergeant Major Nunweiler. “He can change his leadership style when necessary to help solve problems. He has sought my advice in the past when he has needed help, which is also a crucial characteristic for the role of command sergeant major. You can’t feel like you are on an island. You have to seek help when you need it.”

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE WITH A SMILE

Cadet Fitzek will never stop reaching for goals at the highest level. “After I graduate from St. John’s, I’m going to attend a university to major in sports management and play baseball. I want to play Major League Baseball,” said Cadet Fitzek, with a tone that implies utter resolve and decisiveness. For his mother, as long as her son keeps smiling, so will she.

“Not having Chase home with us every day is a sacrifice we had to make as a family, but seeing him smile, I know it was the right decision. We knew we had to save him from himself. As parents, we have to make decisions out of love for our children, not out of what we want as parents. I will forever be grateful to St. John’s for putting a smile back on my son’s face.”

St. John's Military School
Box 5020
Salina, KS 67402-5020



NON PROFIT

U.S. POSTAGE PAID

PERMIT NO. 31



Attention Old Boys, please send your news to Wendy Stein at wendys@sjms.org... We'd love to know what you've been up to. Also, include your current address so we can be sure to send you the Skirmisher!

Board of Trustees

D. Dale Browning, Headmaster
Rob Exline, Chairman of the Board
Larry Britegam
Tim Chapman
Denny Dumler
Dr. Verna Fitzsimmons
Randy Hoppe
Bob Miller
Trey Mowery
Dennis Mudd
Tom Pestinger
John Seitz
Harry Smith
Tim Soule
John Vanier

Endowment Board

Joel Looney, Chairman
D. Dale Browning
Mark Miller
Frank Norton
Lee Young

The Skirmisher is published
two times a year for
alumni, parents, students,
and friends of
St. John's Military School
P.O. Box 5020
Salina, KS 67402-5020
(785)823-7231
www.sjms.org