

BEARKAT BATTALION

NEWSLETTER



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A MONTH OF EXCELLENCE AND ESPRIT DE CORPS

As the semester nears its end, the Bearkat Battalion has continued to push forward with a series of high-impact events that reflect our cadets' dedication to leadership, service, and professional development. From field training to academic recognition, this month was filled with achievements that showcased the strength and versatility of our cadets both in and out of uniform.

We began April with a multi-program Field Training Exercise (FTX), where MS3 cadets took on leadership roles in realistic tactical environments, honing their skills in preparation for Cadet Summer Training. Underclassmen also gained valuable exposure to field operations, building cohesion and gaining mentorship from their upperclassmen leaders.

Our program was honored with the Sam Houston Cane Award at SHSU's 31st Annual Sammys—a proud moment that recognized the Bearkat Battalion's continued commitment to leadership, service, and university spirit.

As always, the Bearkat Battalion continues to lead the way. We thank our cadets, cadre, and supporters for a month of outstanding effort and achievement.

Eat 'Em Up Kats!



Multi-program FTX

Read more on pages 2-3



Military Ball

Read more on page 4



The Sammys

Read more on page 7

Multi-program FTX

The Bearkat Battalion kicked off the month with a joint Field Training Exercise (FTX) involving multiple ROTC programs. This FTX focused on developing the leadership and tactical skills of our MS3 cadets, ensuring they are well-prepared for Cadet Summer Training (CST).

This three-day training event gave MS3 cadets the opportunity to showcase their skills on the range, in land navigation, and during field operations.

Throughout the FTX, MS3 cadets participated in training scenarios that allowed them to apply their classroom knowledge in the field. They honed their leadership skills by planning and executing missions, gained confidence through challenging tasks such as land navigation and marksmanship, and fostered strong team cohesion by working closely with their peers and Cadets from other ROTC programs in a new high-pressure environment—all of which are essential components for success at Cadet Summer Training.

Just as importantly, underclassmen benefited from the mentorship and example set by their MS3 leaders. Participating in the FTX alongside more experienced cadets allowed them to better understand ROTC expectations, military procedures, and the importance of teamwork. The immersive environment fostered a stronger sense of cohesion, trust, and accountability across all class levels.

On the final day of the FTX, several cadets were recognized for their outstanding performance and unwavering dedication to the program. Cadets Mcmillin, Chapa, Binetti and Werts were recognized for their commitment and outstanding performance throughout the FTX.



Multi-program FTX



Military Ball

On April 11, the Bearkat Battalion hosted its annual Military Ball—a tradition that celebrates cadet achievements, fosters camaraderie, and marks the conclusion of a successful semester.

The event began with a formal receiving line and a special recognition of the soon-to-be commissioned seniors, honoring their commitment and accomplishments. Guests then enjoyed a formal dinner, followed by the traditional cake-cutting ceremony. After the ceremonial portion of the evening, Cadets, and guests concluded the night with music and dancing, celebrating the closure of a successful semester.

This annual tradition is a meaningful event for the Bearkat Battalion, as it reinforces the long-standing customs and courtesies of the Army, honors the dedication, leadership, and accomplishments of our Cadets, and provides an opportunity to strengthen esprit de corps in a setting outside of training.

Equally important is the chance for cadets to share this moment with their loved ones. For many guests, it's a rare glimpse into the culture and camaraderie that cadets experience throughout their time in the program. The ball creates space for reflection, recognition, and connection—elements that build esprit de corps and leave lasting memories.



Norwegian foot march

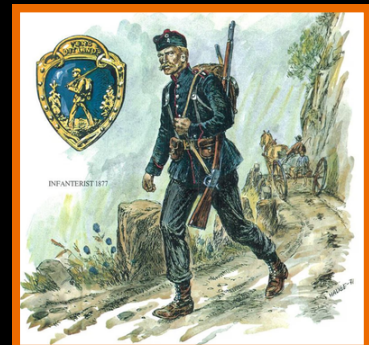
The Norwegian Foot March is a ruck march originally developed in 1915 by the Norwegian military to build soldiers' stamina and assess their operational readiness. Today, it has become an internationally recognized challenge, open to military personnel and cadets who seek to earn the prestigious Norwegian Foot March badge.

To successfully complete the NFM, participants must march 18.6 miles, carry a 24lb ruck, and finish within a set time limit based on age and gender.

Participation in the NFM tests not only physical endurance, but also mental toughness, time management, and preparation—all qualities essential to future Army leaders. Completing the foot march is a notable achievement and can count toward certain military awards and recognition.

The Bearkat Battalion hosted its first Norwegian foot march on April 11 from 2am-5am. It was an event opened to the public and other ROTC programs. The Bearkat Battalion Cadets who earned their NFM Badge are as follows:

- Benetti, Simon
- Brown, Kaleb
- Calhoun, Walker
- Clement, Jacob
- Cooke, James
- De La Rosa Hernandez
- Evans, Madison
- Gonzales, Haggai
- Huff, Michael
- Johnson, Dominick
- Kilgore, Michael
- McGinley, Makade
- Mcmillin, karli
- Paez, Diego
- Piro, Joseph
- Prudencio, Irvin
- Ratliff, William
- Rodas, Caleb
- Silva, Lauren
- Tebungagi, Iris
- Ullrich, Richard
- Werts, Elizabeth



Cadet Highlights

Cadets in STEM and Sciences

Bearkat Battalion Cadets continue to exceed expectations—not only in ROTC training, but also in their academic and professional pursuits. Cadets like Catherine Benton and Jesus Ortega have conducted impactful research with the potential to improve lives and contribute meaningfully to their fields.

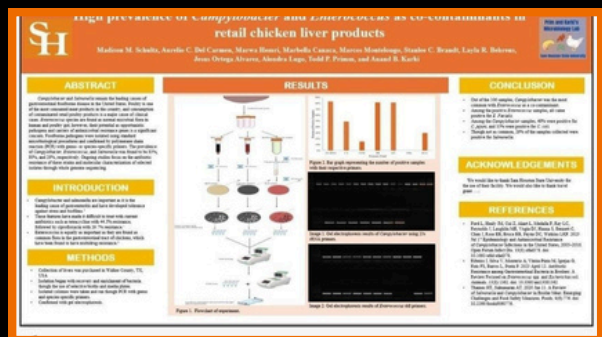
Cadet Benton and her team collected information about invasive species to build a structure that can potentially be used in visitor centers across the US. Their structure would provide information about these species using VR (virtual reality) and AR (augmented reality) technology to capture the mind of young readers using a different way of learning.

Cadet Ortega has been accepted into his third research lab and completed research on contaminants in liver products. Cadet Ortega remains dedicated to his research, focusing his efforts on producing a high-quality and impactful final product all while dedicating time to the program.

The ability to balance rigorous academic research with the demands of ROTC training reflects the strong work ethic and adaptability that define the Bearkat Battalion. Cadets must manage early morning PT sessions, leadership labs, and field training exercises alongside hours in the lab, library, or classroom—all while maintaining academic and physical excellence.

Their academic accomplishments not only enhance their individual career prospects but also enrich the ROTC program and demonstrate the caliber of leaders SHSU produces.

As these cadets push boundaries in their fields, they continue to set the standard for what it means to be a student, a scholar, and a leader in uniform. We proudly recognize their achievements and look forward to seeing the innovative work they will pursue next.



The Sammys

On April 9, 2025 the Bearkat Battalion was recognized at the 31st annual Sammys. The Sammys is the official university ceremony that recognizes SHSU's outstanding student leaders and organizations. The event featured a variety of awards, including the prestigious Sam Houston Cane Award, which honors university entities that significantly contribute to SHSU's spirit, tradition, and service.

The Bearkat Battalion was proud to win the Cane Award. The Sam Houston Cane Award recognizes entities of the university that do not fall within the parameters of the current student leaders and organization categories. These groups contribute back to the university in the areas of spirit, tradition, and service.

Being recognized with the SHSU Cane Award is meaningful for the ROTC program because it affirms the battalion's commitment to leadership, service, and excellence —values central to both Sam Houston State University and the Army. The award highlights the Cadets' impact beyond military training, showcasing their involvement in the campus community, dedication to academic and civic responsibilities, and embodiment of SHSU's motto: "The measure of a Life is its Service."

This acknowledgment reflects the hard work and commitment of our entire team, and we couldn't be more humbled by this recognition.



Ranger Board

This semester, candidates in Ranger Company faced the Schuder's Ranger Board. The board is designed to evaluate and recognize the highest levels of military knowledge, leadership, and professionalism among cadets.

The Schuder's Ranger Board serves as both a rite of passage and a mark of distinction. Cadets who sit before the board are tested across a wide range of military subjects, including tactics, Army values, leadership doctrine, current events, and Army knowledge. In addition to technical proficiency, cadets are evaluated on their appearance, confidence, and ability to articulate their thoughts under pressure—skills essential for future officers.

Earning a scroll is a reflection of a cadet's commitment to excellence and their embodiment of the warrior ethos. The board sets a high standard and helps prepare participants for the rigor of commissioning, selection boards, and life as an Army leader.

Those candidates who scrolled this semester are: CDT Risinger, CDT Paez, and CDT Binetti.

We are incredibly proud of these outstanding cadets and the unwavering commitment they demonstrate to the Bearkat Battalion and the ROTC program as a whole.



Fall 2025 - CADET CHAIN OF COMMAND

THE 'BIG' THREE



CADET DIEGO PAEZ
EXECUTIVE OFFICER



CADET MADISON EVANS
BATTALION COMMANDER



CADET KARLI MCMILLIN
COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR

SUPPORT STAFF



CADET SAMANTHA GAUS-SCHMIDT
S1 OIC



CADET IRVIN PRUDENCIO
S2 OIC



CADET TAYLAR RUSSELL
S6 OIC



CADET ADRIAN SIMONSEN
S8 OIC

TRAINING STAFF



CADET ALEXANDER CANNON
S3 OIC



CADET RYAN STRICKLAND
AS3



CADET IFEOLUWA ADEJUWON
AS3



CADET BORIS ANDERSON



CADET TAYLOR KNIGHT
AS3



CADET KALEB BROWN
COMPANY COMMANDER



CADET KENNETH SMITH
1ST PL



CADET ALICIA SUMMERS
2ND PL

SPECIALTY PROGRAMS



CADET IRIS TEBUNGAGI
ACE OIC



CADET GILISA LAWRENCE
PAO OIC



CADET VICTORIA NETTLETON
RECRUITING OIC



CADET MIA CHAPA
NEWSLETTER OIC

UPCOMING EVENTS!



09 MAY: COMMENCEMENTS AND
COMMISSIONING CEREMONY



JUN-AUG: CADET SUMMER TRAINING



25 AUG: FALL SEMESTER BEGINS