HC ROTC celebrates 60 years on Mt. St. James

By Carla Jurczynski   Contributing Writer

The Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) battalion at Holy Cross is made up of 103 midshipmen and officer candidates who are all students of Holy Cross, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and Worcester State College. In addition to being regular college students, each member of the battalion is training to be an officer in the United States Navy or Marine Corps. Every Tuesday, the battalion has Naval Science Lab where topics such as leadership, Naval customs, and military courtesies are discussed in order to prepare the midshipmen to be officers. The battalion has been involved in many different activities. The NROTC at Holy Cross has been spotted in formation in front of the flagpole, running around campus in "Navy" and "Marines" t-shirts. It may have been a mystery what they have been up to, but by being around campus, the battalion has been involved. On Saturday, November 8, the battalion hosted the 3rd annual Military Excellence Competition (MEC). ROTC units from Boston University, the University of Pennsylvania, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and Worcester Polytechnic Institute all came to Holy Cross to participate in this competition. The MEC consists of events in which the various units compete against each other. Included are a 10k run, swim relays, a 4x400 relay, an "Iron man" competition, a basketball tournament, and a drill and competition. Members of the Holy Cross battalion participated in the competition and coordinated events. Whether running, swimming, timing, or keeping score, everyone was busy making the event a success.

One week later, on Saturday, November 15, the battalion came together to celebrate both the 25th birthday of the Navy and Marine Corps and the 60th anniversary of the NROTC battalion at Holy Cross. The two-mile course was completed by 192 runners in a formal ball that was held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in downtown Worcester. The members of the naval academy were involved in events for dates for a night of refreshments, hors d'oeuvres, dinner, and dancing. Every birthday celebration has some sort of different military traditions into the ceremony. This year's ceremony started with the fifteenth birthday of the navy and was followed by the oldest and youngest navy and Marine Corps members are present at the first pieces of cake. This tradition is a smaller version of the tradition from ROTC birthday bash, page 4

HC Trustees approve new apartment-style dorm

By Megan Fitzpatrick   Crusader News Staff

There's good news for underclassmen -- Holy Cross' Board of Trustees has approved the construction of apartment-style, on-campus housing, with a projected opening in the fall of 2003. This past April, Jacqueline Peterson, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, along with Michael C. O'Neil, Director of Students and Director of Residence, and Bill Durgin, Vice President for Business Affairs and Treasurer, presented the logistics of this project to the Board. Presenters announced the site location and displayed blue prints of the apartments.

The entire process up until now has involved the circulation of multiple surveys and the formation of focus groups in order to determine whether there was indeed a need for this costly project. The school began by hiring Dober, Lidsky, Craig and Associates, Inc., a consulting firm based in Boston, to initiate a series of studies comparing Holy Cross to similar liberal arts colleges. In comparison to Amherst, Colby, Hamilton, Pomona and various other institutions, Holy Cross could not compete with their on-campus housing options. Holy Cross has about 76 percent of its students living on campus as opposed to the range of 90 to 100 percent boasted by its peers. As Dean Peterson stated, "It's part of our mission to be a residential college." Since the studies revealed that housing was needed, the next question became what type of housing options should be pursued -- should Holy Cross build new dorm rooms or renovate existing buildings?

The College then called upon a committee consisting of four students, a faculty, and administrative staff to set goals for new housing. These goals included bringing juniors and seniors back to campus, creating a variety of housing types, and constructing common areas and community spaces. In addition to the opinions of the study committee, a survey was distributed to students. A relatively large response was received from the student body, demonstrating that housing is a priority among students. Of the 959 students that completed the study, 843 students reported that they live on campus while the remaining 116 reported that they live off campus.

The majority of students both on and off campus reported that housing did not influence their initial decision to come to Holy Cross, but 52 percent of them would accept an increase in room costs if improvements were made. Lastly, students were asked to rank factors they would use to select housing. At the top of the list were location and building. In comparison to its peers, the average square footage per bed at Holy Cross was 156 square feet, while other schools accommodated an average of 231 square feet per student.

After the consultants of Dober, Lidsky, Craig and Associates presented their findings in May 2001, board members agreed that an investigation for new housing should be conducted, and Dean Peterson and Vice President Durgin were delegated to research potential architectural and pre-engineering firms. A search revealed that an additional 200 to 300 beds were needed.

Beginning in early September, an advisory committee was formed consisting of Dean Peterson, the Residence Life staff, and the Physical Plant staff. In June 2001, the board approved construction to begin this spring, May 2002. The $17 million project will be financed by the endowment and costs of now, a projected cost for living in the apartments remains unavailable. However, Mike Morroli expects the cost to be more than our current suite fee of $4,340 because of the facility's.

The logistics of priority are not fully determined. Although administrators have decided that seniors will receive priority, they are unsure of whether additional criteria will