

COMMISSIONING WEEK / GRADUATION PREPARATION

Commissioning Week is that one final, big Yard Event. Perhaps, the most memorable event in your MID's and your Family's Life!.

Class of 2010 Commissioning is scheduled for May 28, 2010. The Commissioning week should begin on Friday May 21. Commissioning Week will contain the 2/C Ring Dance, the Plebe's Herndon Climb, and will terminate with the Graduation and Commissioning Swearing-In Ceremonies. However, since the Data and/or Information presented herein is subject to change, please remember to be sure to check with your MID, and the Information Packet received from the Yard, to ensure that you have the correct Times and Itinerary for the Events scheduled during this Week.

The Events that are scheduled to occur during that period known as Commissioning Week, which include Noon Meal Formations in Tecumseh Court throughout the week, as well as visits to the

U.S. Naval Ships, at anchor, in the Bay, are too numerous to mention. Remember that the key to a successful Commissioning Week is for you to Plan Ahead and Be Organized - Be prepared for anything! Then, in this way, you, your Family, Relatives, and Friends will be able to sit back and enjoy this very special week a whole lot more. Therefore, if it is at all possible, try to arrive a few days early to the Yard, so that you will have that extra time to settle in. Also, review the Yard's Schedule against your Plan Of Action, so that you can deal with any of those last minutes changes. Of course, also ensure that you will be able to relax in --

THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM !

PREPARATION

Again, whatever you can prepare ahead of time and bring with you will be a big help considering all of the other things that you will be worrying about and trying to ensure that everything happens according to your plan. The following information is provided as guidance. It is up to you to adjust, or modify as necessary, to meet your Family's needs.

Rentals

Find a rental house on www.vrbo.com (Vacation Rental by Owner) or from other sources (see LINKS page on our company web site for more options), and reserved it ASAP. Some families have already reserved a home 1 year in advance. Also since graduation is on the Friday of Memorial weekend, you may want to rent it thru the holiday weekend, rather than a Sat to Sat rental.

Some families want to walk and not drive if they can help it. In order to do that you should look for a home that is less than 2 mile walk to the Yard and the Stadium. If you have family members who can not make this walk then you may consider renting a house 7 miles or more from the Yard. You can save a lot of money and your drive should not exceed 10-20 minutes (if you stay around 15 miles or less of the Yard- avoid getting a house on the east side of the Bay Bridge- there's traffic there most of the time).

You can also book a block of hotel rooms in a couple of months (some take reservations as early as 9 months before graduation) Be very specific with the hotels for minimum stay periods as this is very popular weekend in Annapolis, and the hotels know it. Get all confirmation info in writing.

There are also lovely B&B's around the town- check those out as well.

Meals/Food

Plan all of your Meals, as well as where you may be going to eat, as far ahead of time as possible. While Annapolis has many good restaurants, many of them do not take reservations. Also, order any Graduation Cakes, or Special Foods, well in advance of this Event. In addition, most of the local Grocery Stores or Supermarkets that offer Party Trays and Bakery Cakes, may even deliver.

Traffic

Remember that Annapolis is almost always busy with activities other than those put on by the Yard. As such, parking is very limited, especially in downtown areas. Very few of the residents whose Home you may be utilizing for the Week, has off-street parking. Also, do be careful where and how long you do park when downtown.

Ticketing and Towing are the rule, NOT the exception! Consider parking at the Navy/Marine Corps Memorial Stadium. You can park all day for approximately \$5.00 and take a Shuttle to the Yard, or downtown. In addition, many of the hotels offer Shuttles as well. In any case, be prepared for large Traffic Jams and considerable delays in trying to navigate around Annapolis this week.

Tickets

Remember that Tickets are required for a large number of the Events that will be occurring during Commissioning Week. Check the Information that has been provided to you, both by your MID and the Yard; annotate those which you wish to attend that you will require Tickets. Have your MID obtain them as soon as possible. Also, the policy regarding Graduation Tickets changes periodically.

MIDs will now be allowed as many Tickets as they require provided that they turn in their number by the established Deadline. They will receive 6 tickets in the company seating area and more as requested in the upper deck area (locations TBD) However, in case of inclement Weather, remember that only 4 Tickets will be issued to each MID. Plan accordingly!

Events

Remember to be sure and tell every one that is going to be in your Party, what functions that they will be going to and when, as well as where everyone will meet before and after the Event, what the plan is if anyone gets separated, and what the appropriate dress will be for each Event.

Also, discuss with your MID as to which Events that you MID will be attending, those that you will be attending, and those that you and your MID will be attending together.

Details

Select a special place in the Navy/Marine Corps Memorial Stadium to meet with your MID and your Party after Graduation for the traditional pinning on of Boards and Bars. Ensure that all in your Party know where this location is, and, if possible, conduct a Dry Run.

Graduation

Plan to arrive at the Navy/Marine Corps Memorial Stadium as early as possible on Graduation Day. Parking Lot opens around 0630 Hours (6:30 AM). Go save your seats first. Consider having a Tailgate Breakfast and plan a Tailgate Party afterwards to allow for Traffic to dissipate. If possible, try to be in your Seats prior to the March-On which will take place before the Fly-Over by the Blue Angels. Handicapped Seating is available, if needed.



Weather

Be prepared for Hot, Humid Weather in Annapolis; bring Sun Protection and comfortable Clothing and Shoes; also, plan on wearing a Hat.

REMEMBER THAT FORMAL EVENTS WILL REQUIRE
DRESSY CLOTHES

TYPICAL SCHEDULE

GENERAL

The group of important Events that comprise Commissioning Week, will occur, at varying times, depending upon the Yard's Administration. The following is a typical Commissioning Week Schedule that has been compiled, over time, from other Commissioning Week Schedules. However, it must be pointed out and stressed that the actual Schedule, Dates, and/or Times are subject to Change Without Notice. We highly recommends that you refer to the Schedule that you have received in the Mail, from the Yard sometime in April, or check with your MID regarding these Events, or utilize the INTERNET at <http://www.usna.edu>, to access The Commissioning Week information page.

Sunday

A Continental Breakfast will be available in King Hall, beginning at 0800 Hours (8:00 AM). Baccalaureate Services will also be held that morning -- check the Schedule that you will receive in April of your MID's FIRSTIE Academic Year. In addition, a Gospel Choir Concert, in Mahan Hall, will be held in the early evening hours.

Also, there will be receptions for those MIDs who have elected to become Naval Surface Warfare Officers (SWO), as well as for those MIDs who have selected the Marine Corps (USMC). Superintendent's Garden Parties (4 guest per Mid) begin on this evening.

Monday

There will be a Dedication Parade, held at Worden Field to recognize the excellence of the Faculty. The Academic Departments will sponsor open houses during the afternoon, and the PLEBE Herndon Monument Climb, may also be held this day and will begin in mid-afternoon. Also, the USNA Alumni Association will sponsor a Family Picnic in the afternoon, at Alumni House. In addition, a Glee Club Concert, in Alumni Hall, will be held in the early evening hours.

There may be Family cruises onboard the Yard Patrol Craft (YP) and also visits to any of the US Naval Ships, at Anchor, in the Bay.

Tuesday

The Blue Angels will also be practicing, and that practice can be viewed from Dewey Field from 1145 Hours (11:45 AM) through 1345 Hours (1:45 PM). In addition, the Color Parade practice will be held at Worden Field (Time to be announced).

In addition, a Glee Choir Concert, in Alumni Hall. Superintendent's Garden Parties (4 guest per Mid) for 5th and 6th Battalions most likely will be held on this evening.

Wednesday

A Graduation Rehearsal will take place at Alumni Hall in the morning. Then, the Blue Angels! Be prepared for an interesting afternoon of Naval Flight Activities from early afternoon.

In addition, the Drum And Bugle Corps Concert, as well as the Electric Brigade Concerts will also be held this evening, and the Graduation Ball will be held in Dahlgren Hall in the Evening.

Thursday

The Color Parade will be held at Worden Field, the Prizes and Awards Ceremony will be held in Alumni Hall, and Gospel Choir Commissioning Week Concert, Mahan Hall in the evening.

Friday

Graduation and Commissioning Day! Gates at the Navy/Marine Corps Memorial Stadium will open at approximately 0630 Hours (6:30 AM), with the procession of Graduates, or March-On, beginning at 0915 Hours (9:15 AM). The Graduation Ceremony will normally begin at 1000 Hours (10:00 AM).

BE PREPARED, IN CASE OF FOUL WEATHER, FOR GRADUATION AND COMMISSIONING CEREMONIES TO BE HELD IN ALUMNI HALL, WHERE SEATING WILL BE LIMITED

TYPICAL SCHEDULE:

0915-	Procession Of Graduating Midshipmen	Navy/Marine Corps Memorial Stadium
1000-	Graduation / Commissioning Ceremonies	Navy/Marine Corps Memorial Stadium

SUGGESTIONS

GENERAL

The following is some additional Information and Suggestions. Tips that have been compiled over the past few Years of our SPPA Members attending their MID's Commissioning:

SUGGESTION / TIPS

Plan to arrive one Day ahead, if possible, to settle in and check your surroundings, as well as to check on last minute details and prepare last minute Meals

Check to see if your Living Quarters have Blankets -- Weather has been known to turn Cool, rather than always be Hot and Humid

Plan as many Meals as possible ahead of time; many dishes, casseroles, etc., can be frozen at Home and transported in a Cooler to Annapolis; do not forget to make plans for soda, beer, wine, whatever

Inquire as to availability of Grills -- if one is available where you will be staying, determine if it is charcoal or gas-powered

Ordering of special Graduation Cakes and most foods should be accomplished well in advance of arriving at Annapolis

If you plan to eat out in Restaurants, check out reservation status, many Restaurants will ONLY operate on a first come basis at this time - they will NOT accept Reservations

Think about hosting an Officers' Club Brunch after Sunday Services -- a good way to celebrate with Relatives, etc., who may not be able to attend Graduation Ceremonies and Festivities -- have your MID check out O-Club Requirements and Prices - now is not too early

Be prepared for parking problems for most Yard Events - where possible, utilize the Shuttle Bus from the Navy/Marine Corps Memorial Stadium; also, be prepared for numerous traffic jams, before and after most Yard Events

If you scheduled to be in the Yard for an evening Event, you may NOT be able to leave and return in time -- take your Clothing and change in a Restroom -- also, for most afternoon Events, bring a Picnic Lunch and spend time along the Sea Wall

Each MID will receive 4 Tickets to the Color Parade for Bleacher Seating -- however, there is always plenty of standing room on the Parade Grounds

Make sure that your MID purchases all required Tickets well in advance for any Events requiring same, that you plan on attending

Make sure that you have an early, firm count for Baccalaureate Services, Graduation, etc., in order that your MID can secure the extra Tickets from other MIDs who may not have many Family, or Friends, coming to these Events

Be prepared for Hot, Humid Weather; bring Sun Screen, comfortable Shoes, and cool, casual Clothes for the day time; be sure everyone has the right Clothes, including a Hat for Sun Protection

Have your MID pack some of his/her unneeded belongings early and ship them Home early; also, try to ship any remaining unneeded belongings Home if/when someone leaves Annapolis in an empty Car. You will be surprised at what comes out of that Room

Your MID, his/her Date, and his/her immediate Family are invited to the Superintendent's Garden Party. Check the Schedule for when your MID's Day will be.

Your MID, his/her Family, and all Guests are invited to the Graduation Ball -- Dress is

Formal or dressiest best

Remember to include your MID's Sponsoring Family, wherever possible

Ensure that your MID's Service Dress Whites are clean and ready to wear

Remind your MID to procure that Ensign's or 2nd Lieutenant's Kit before the MID Store runs out -- also that Sword and Case -- Also, remember that Marine Corps and Navy Swords are different

Plan to arrive early at the Navy/Marine Corps Memorial Stadium on Graduation Day - prior to 0800 (8:00 AM). Plan a Tailgate Breakfast for all who are in your Party before and a similar one for after Graduation to let traffic thin out. Also, do an early checkout, or dry run, of your assigned Seating and ensure that everyone in your Party knows what Gate to enter

Your MID will receive as many Tickets as asked for provided the Number is turned in at the required Cut-Off Date for Graduation Seating. If it Rains, then the Brigade Activity Center is then the focus; and there are only 4 Tickets available for Seating. Additional Tickets, if necessary, may be obtained for TV viewing. If you still require more Tickets, get your MID on it soonest, bugging Classmates who may have extras

Handicapped Seating is also available -- Check with the Handling Office, 410-293-2145

Be in your Seats prior to March-On, between 0900 - 0930 (9:15 - 9:30 AM) - Blue Angels Fly-Over is shortly after the MIDs take their Seats

Have a special place selected to meet with your MID after Graduation in the Stadium for the traditional pinning on of Boards and Bars -- Ensure that all in your Party know where to meet in case separations occur -- Ensure that your MID also knows

Also, remember that sometime during this period after Graduation, your MID must report to his/her Company Officer somewhere in the Parking Lot to pick up papers and checks

Do NOT forget that SILVER DOLLAR -- Tape 1 into your Ensign's or 2ND Lieutenant's Cover for either, to give out for that First Salute

It is YARD Tradition that each newly commissioned Officer present a Silver Dollar to the 1st Person to rendering a Salute to the new Officer; Silver Dollar is to be full-size Silver Dollar; no Susan B Anthony, or quarter-sized Alloy Dollar Coin; Coin to be one with some significance, usually minted in Commissioning Year, or Officer's Birth Year Anniversary, or other significant Event -- Coin purchasable at any Coin Shop, or on eBay -- Restraint recommended in purchasing, since prices vary greatly with Quality and Grade; do not want to give away valuable Collector Coin -- New, or Uncirculated, Coins available directly from US Mint, at www.catalog.usmint.gov, or USNA Maryland Parents/Sponsor Club (<http://www.usna.com/parents/Maryland/>) .

Following identifies available Coins; prices will vary depending upon Market Value and Demand:

MORGAN - Minted from 1878 to 1904 in Philadelphia (No Mint Mark), New Orleans (O Mint Mark), and San Francisco (S Mint Mark)

PEACE - Minted from 1921 to 1935; not many minted

IKE (EISENHOWER) - Minted from 1971 to 1978

SUSAN B ANTHONY - Minted from 1979 to 1981

SACAGAWEA - Minted from 2000 to Present

SILVER EAGLE - Minted from 1986 to Present, contain 1 ounce of pure Silver

GOLD - US Mint started producing Gold Bullion Coins in 1986; available in 1/10, 1/4, 1/2, and 1 ounces

PLATINUM - Same as Gold Bullion Coins



MORGAN



PEACE



IKE



S B ANTHONY



SACAGAWEA



LIBERTY

PROOF SET – From Year that MID was born; another method of recognizing that 1st Salute; may introduce Coin Collecting, which can be very profitable over time, even to passive Collector(s)

Assign 1 Person to be responsible for and keeping track of your ENSIGN's, or 2ND Lieutenant's, Cover and Insignia -- Also, know who will help with the pinning on of same

If possible, have someone go down onto the Stadium Floor for the Hat Toss -- You may get lucky and capture a MID's Cover for a Home Memento of this experience

Bring plenty of Kleenex, Camera Memory Disks, and Batteries, Coolers, light Raincoats, and plenty of \$\$\$ -- Think about borrowing, or renting, a Video Camera

Arrange to acquire a Video Copy of the Annapolis Capital Newspaper which will be covering Commissioning Week -- They will be doing a feature about the Yard everyday

Prepare a Map to your Residence in the Annapolis Area and give it to all who may attend -- Include that Phone Number; tell everyone who will be involved what all of the plans are - where you will be staying, what will be attended, Seating in the Stadium, Meeting Places, etc. -- Plan ahead and keep all informed of any Changes

Know what your MID Plans on doing and where he/she will be while you and yours are doing your thing

If there is to be a Wedding, it is too late for this Year -- all Naval Academy Chapel Weddings must be planned a Year in Advance

Remember -- Plan Ahead -- Be Prepared -