



All In The Family

Matriculation Day 2008

Feeling lost? Confused? Don't quite know what's supposed to happen? That's natural

By David White

The mottos of the Boy Scouts and the US Coast Guard are almost the same. Be Prepared and *Semper Paratus* (Always Ready) make a great philosophy for Matriculation Day.

On 16 August you and your soon-to-be-new knob will report to the parking lot at Johnson-Hagood Stadium where, from the comfort of your own vehicle, his or her name will be checked against a master list. You will be given an index card with a letter. This is your knob's company ... as well as home, hearth and family while at The Citadel.

You will then proceed to the appropriate barracks housing your company. There, the gates of one sallyport (*Citadel-speak: opening in the side of the barracks*) will be open. Park near that opening and unload all of the gear right on the sidewalk. Leave someone with the gear while you move your vehicle to one of the parking areas.

In the meantime, your son or daughter will enter the barracks and begin in-processing. The specifics of this process are some of the many joys and mysteries of discovery your child will experience at The Citadel.

Parents are not a part of this process.

(You may rubberneck from outside, however.)

Once your knob has received his or her room assignment as well as a few issued items, he will return to you on the sidewalk. Then you are welcome to enter the barracks and help him move in.

Take note: your knob's room will be on the Fourth Division (*Citadel-speak: fourth floor*) and there is no elevator available for the able bodied. And certainly no elevator available for moving in gear.

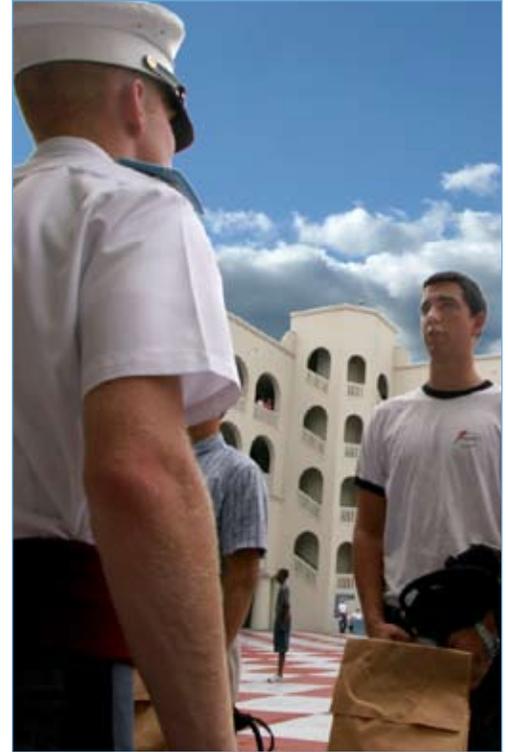
Prepare for hot. Drink lots of water. Wear shorts, hat and sturdy shoes.

Late in the morning, there will be a gathering in McAlister Field House, after which you and your child will have the opportunity for a few final minutes together before they fall into formation and their military training begins.

As of press time, the final schedule was being negotiated. Once finalized, it will be included in packet of material sent to you.

It will also be posted on their website,

continued on page 2



'I wish I could give each of y'all a big hug and tell you it's going to be okay'

By Donna Rosa, First Lady of The Citadel

Oh, my gosh, it's that time of year again. Graduation is over and John and I have said goodbye to our "children" one more time.

It seems to get harder each year. This is our third graduation and we both knew more cadets than in the past. Thus it was very bittersweet for the two of us ... sad, but joyous at the same time.

I found myself crying at each event beginning with the baccalaureate service and I continued crying until the graduation ceremony was over.

I'm not sure why I even bothered wearing makeup at all that week because I looked like a raccoon after every event.

You all will never know the pride John and I felt each time one of "our" cadets walked across stage and received their diploma.

Our son, Brad, class of '03, attended this year's ceremony because a very good friend of his was graduating. Afterwards we spoke about his Citadel experience and Brad told us once more how glad he was to have chosen The Citadel and how proud he is to wear the ring.

It was a difficult journey at times, but well worth it in the end.

And now, all of you are getting ready to bring your sons and daughters to The Citadel so they, too, can begin the next phase of their young lives.

I know it's a time of joy, excitement, a bit of sadness and lots of apprehension.

John and I can still remember how hard it was to leave Brad. To this day the feelings come back each time we think about it, especially on Matriculation Day, and we know exactly how you feel.

I wish I could give each of y'all a big hug and tell you it is going to be okay, but each cadet and each family has to go through this experience in his and her own way.

Last year I remember a young man and his family sitting behind John and me in the chapel at the service held on Matriculation Day. Mother, father, brother, uncle and future cadet. When I turned around I saw the mother's face and knew she definitely needed a hug. So I did just that, hoping to make her feel a bit better.

After the service, John and I spoke with the family and tried to assure them that this part was the hardest.

On Parents' Weekend, when they next would next see their son, pride would fill their hearts

and they would marvel at the changes in the young man then standing before them.

John and I saw this cadet and his family throughout his knob year and I am proud to say he continued to do well. He said it was a struggle many times but he was always happy with his decision to come here.

When we last saw him it was graduation

continued on page 2

In This Issue

Battalion & Company Representatives

•

Frequently-Asked-Questions Answered

•

Athletic Matriculation Day

All In The Family

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More than one Matriculation Day? Notified athletes to report 23 July

Did you know there's more than one Matriculation Day in a school year? While the majority of the class of 2012 will report on Saturday, August 16, there's a group of young adults who will have already experienced the infamous "left behind" feeling by then. Those are athletes scheduled to arrive at The Citadel on Wednesday, July 23.

Incoming knobs who have been notified that they are to be a part of Bulldog athletics will begin their Citadel experience early. The latest additions to the women's soccer and volleyball teams along with the new recruits for the Bulldog football squad will have their own Matriculation Day.

Fear not! The CFA will be on hand throughout

Athletic Matriculation, just as on August 16, to answer any questions. The Blue Shirt Brigade will be available to lend a hand and heart to the families of the newest Bulldogs.

So, when the majority of the class of 2012 begins to settle in, some of you will already have your knob look. Welcome aboard!

Parents of athletes reporting early are invited and encouraged to attend the CFA Picnic on at The Joe, August 16. See you there!



Parents' Weekend
11 October 2008



Homecoming
15 November 2008

Matriculation Day

continued from page 1
week and I am proud to say he was wearing a big smile and gold stars on his collar ... he had indeed done quite well his first year, as we knew he would. Thank heavens mother, father and cadet all survived their knob year.

Even though it will be a difficult day for many of you, I can promise it really does get easier. Don't be afraid to let the tears flow as you say goodbye to your cadet. If I didn't cry when leaving Brad, he would have thought something was really wrong with me.

Be sure to take lots of pictures on this day and each time you return. Keep the letters and emails your cadet sends you as well. It is such fun looking back from the beginning and seeing how far all of you have come since that first day you dropped off your prospective cadet. It's an amazing four years. Don't miss a minute.

John and I are so happy to begin another year getting to know you and your families. We'll take good care of your sons and daughters, and we will be there with words of encouragement throughout the year. I will have a big hug ready if they need one.

Please come by and say hello. We are easy to spot. John is the tall, good-looking one in the Air Force uniform and I am the one with the really big smile on my face because I have "my kids" back on campus again. It's going to be another great year.



What you're feeling is natural. Find a CFA rep in a blue shirt. We're here to help you

continued from page 1

www.citadel.edu/admissions/c/matriculate8.htm.

Through it all, look for the folks in Citadel blue shirts. They are Citadel Family Association (CFA) representatives who will be available to you for answers to your questions, limited assistance with logistics, and a comfortable shoulder to lean on.

The CFA is an organization of parents of cadets. In fact, you, by bringing your son or daughter to The Citadel, are already a member of the CFA.

But since we've been through Matriculation Day

CFA representatives for every company will be found at every barracks and at a tent set up outside P-T Barracks (2nd Battalion.) We're here to answer your questions and lend a sympathetic ear.



(some of us more than once) we know what to expect and know exactly how you're feeling. We're here to help you feel better and smooth the transition from "parent" to "knob parent."

Also plan to come that afternoon to The Joe, Charleston's baseball stadium on the southern outskirts of The Citadel's campus.

The CFA will host a barbecue where you can meet other knob parents from your knob's company (it's now your company, too), each company commander and experienced CFA members.

The bonding experience of the Citadel doesn't just happen to knobs and cadets; it happens to families, too. And it all begins Matriculation Day. Plus there's free barbecue. What could be better?

CFA BBQ RSVP

The CFA looks forward to meeting you on Matriculation Day at the CFA barbecue. Meet other parents and your Company Reps. Share your concerns. Ask questions ... and make friends that will last a lifetime.

**Welcome to the Citadel Family!
Look for an RSVP form in the mail later this summer!**

Questions from incoming parents & answers from parents and Cadets who have been there

You have heard the stories; are they true? As the parents of an incoming knob you know your son or daughter has been accepted to one of the finest military colleges in the United States. Someone else will tell them what to do, when to do it and how to do it. You can sleep secure ... sort of ... knowing they will be checked in each night, awakened each morning and fed three squares a day. You may feel your work is done at Matriculation Day. But, for both parent and knob, the journey is just beginning.

And you still have questions. The following questions (and answers) have been collected from conversations and correspondence between parents, CFA Representatives and experienced Cadets:

Q: What is the one piece of advice you would give to a knob that would help them succeed?

Cadet: *Keep a good attitude. Do your job. Stay focused on why you wanted to come to The Citadel in the first place. You will need to remind yourself of this from time to time.*

Q: What stands out in your memory about getting your knob ready to report for Matriculation Day?

Parent: *We bought the shoes and boots beforehand so they could be broken in. We encouraged our son to work on his physical training. And we asked him many times: "Are you sure this is what you want to do?" The answer was always, "yes." We reminded him of this later.*

Q: What is the one thing you now know that you wish you had known before your knob reported on Matriculation Day?

"As a parent, how do we prepare? ... How do you survive this?"

Parent: *I think what stands out the most for me is the quickness with which the knobs are whisked away from the parents [late Saturday morning]. I was utterly amazed, Cadets hugged Mom and Dad and away they went. I also didn't know that I would not be hearing from my son for a few weeks and if I had known that I would have had that set in my mind.*

Q: Ever think about quitting?

Cadet: *Sure, I do not know of anyone who didn't. But I made a commitment to stick it out for one year and as I look back, I am glad my parents were strong as they encouraged (and reminded) me many times, especially the first semester.*

Q: What would you tell a knob who questions, "Did I make the right decision to come to The Citadel?"

Cadet: *My parents told me, "Quitting was not an option!" Remember you are one of several hundred knobs going through the same thing. Others*

before us have made it and you can, too.

Q: What advice would you give a parent and a knob?

Parent: *A knob's best attitude is invisibility. Be where you're supposed to be when you're supposed to be there, and be prepared. Don't do anything to draw attention to yourself. And, Mom, that includes Matriculation Day. Moist eyes and a few tears are fine. So is a hug ... but the "last hug" should be like a good handshake: not too limp, not too firm or clingy. Out and out blubbering is never a good idea. All that does is saddle a knob with the "momma's boy" label.*

continued on page 4

2008 Citadel Football Schedule

Aug 30 - 7 p.m.	Webber International	Home
Sep 06 - TBA	Clemson	Away
Sep 20 - 1 p.m.	Princeton	Home
Sep 27 - 1 p.m.	Western Carolina	Home
Oct 04 - 2:30 p.m.	Appalachian State	Away
Oct 11 - 2 p.m.	Elon	Home
Oct 18 - TBA	Furman	Away
Oct 25 - TBA	Samford	Away
Nov 01 - 1 p.m.	Georgia Southern	Home
Nov 08 - 1:30 p.m.	Wofford	Away
Nov 15 - 2 p.m.	Chattanooga (Homecoming)	Home
Nov 22 - TBA	Florida	Away

SCENES FROM PREVIOUS MATRICULATION DAYS



Count on hot weather. Count on heavy lifting. Count on an air thick with excitement.



Questions and answers

continued from page 2

Q: From a parent of an incoming knob: “As a parent, how do we prepare? I know how to read the list of what he needs. I know what I need to do about his shoes. I know that it will be muggy ... I know the ache of leaving a child at college. [But], how do you survive this? What advice can you give me that will help me help our son get through this as easily as possible?”

CFA Representative: *It sounds as if you’re in the right place in your mind: excited, confused, scared and proud.*

And you should be. It’s perfectly natural. The Citadel is rarefied air: at once full of pomp and circumstance and, at the same time, demanding and tough. It can also petty, trivial, mundane and sneaky. It’s a fine academic organization. Its leadership training is evolving, for the better, and yet, at some levels, sometimes it can behave like a state agency. All in all, it’s probably the best real-world training 18-year-olds can get. Cadets are exposed to great leadership, competent leadership and bad leadership. It’s important to recognize and learn from all three. They learn

to work within a system of rules and regulations that, at first seem cut and dried, but, as they learn the ropes, they see that, as in any system, there are nuances and gray areas.

They will make friends who are closer to them than you or I could ever begin to understand. And I can think of no better proving ground.

On Matriculation Day, find a CFA representative (in the blue shirts) and lean on us. That’s what we’re there for. Take advantage

of the Company Representatives. There are at least two per company. These are parents who will field questions from parents throughout the year. Phone numbers and email addresses are published on page 3 and on the CFA website (www.citadel.edu/cfa). Of course, you won’t know your son or daughter’s company until Matriculation Day but you will have an opportunity to meet your Company Representatives then.



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