

# THE BUGLE

## BALTDEFCOL NEWSLETTER



June '11 Nr. 10

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### JCGSC of 2010/2011 Organized a Charity Event

It has been a tradition that each JCGSC performs some kind of act of charity during their studies here at the BALTDEFCOL. The students of JCGSC decided to organize a donation for Sveķi Special Boarding School in Latvia. Students gathered 500 Euros and bought a washing machine and two irons for that money. A delegation of BALTDEFCOL students handed over donations on 7th June.

The Sveķi Special Boarding School guarantees elementary education and professional education for students with different kinds of mental disabilities in 10th-12th classes. Students up to 9th class acquire special programs of elementary education in A, B and C levels. They learn English and Russian along with housekeeping and technologies, sewing, basics of gardening, cookery, traffic rules, business writing, health lessons and ethics. After lessons they can spend their free time at the boarding school groups. They also have a computer class, ball bath and chutes for younger children and a gym for older ones. In addition the school organizes regularly different activities for the students.



(Photos by Oliver Toots)

**THE BUGLE**  
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## Commandant's foreword

We are almost at the end of the JCGSC 2010/2011. Great deal of effort has been devoted by students as well as staff to improve our performance. The main objective – to develop and mentor students so that they realise their full potential– has been achieved. A number of activities such as exercise Viking II, International Study Tour and in-house lectures have served their purpose.

Despite the fact that we have accomplished our main objective, there is still room for improvement. In fact, I believe that the full potential of our individual staff members have not yet been fully employed. We have such an astonishing pool of knowledge which, if used in a right way, will significantly improve our collective performance. In other words, we can be proud of our knowledge but we will hoist it even further to the higher levels.

The Baltic Defence College is, by all means, a pioneer in the field of teaching as well as in the field of organisational development. The latter has been used on a number

of occasions as an example of future co-operation trends for other colleges to follow in order to tackle future challenges in the current financially strained environment. The College has proven to be a remarkable example of co-operation not only for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania but for participating nations as well. For that reason it is our common responsibility to maintain good standards and practises developed throughout the years of college's existence, but it is also our common responsibility to make necessary changes. The application of COPD in our teachings is another example of progressive, future oriented way of operations. I am particularly pleased to see that our personnel, regardless of the department, are actively involved in analysing that conceptual framework and synthesising the right solutions for the BALTDEFCOL. In words of General Mattis: *There is temptation and tendency for military officers to use planning documents mechanically.* Far too often he is right and we can see that the focus is on proc-

ess rather than on substance. Luckily, this is not the case in BALTDEFCOL. Our team has taken the conceptual approach what is profoundly and fundamentally different from the process driven practices. In rough times we are asked to do more with less. The budget and manning negotiations are still ongoing, yet I am confident that our framework of Nations has recognised that our manning and budget demands are reasonable. In order to work effectively, I anticipate that all our people are actively involved in planning and execution of our activities, doing so we will increase our effectiveness and value for resources.

We are about to finalise our academic year, therefore, I wish that you have a wonderful summer vacation. It is time to "recharge batteries", have fun and, last but not least, have quality time with your families and loved ones.

BrigGen  
Meelis Kiili

### In Brief

#### New Staff Member

Our staff has a new member Alo Abiline. Alo is our new College dormitories manager. His task is to guarantee accommodation services at the Ida Street houses, organizing the accommodation for students and guest lecturers, preparing contracts, sharing information, introducing house rules etc.

So if you have any questions or problems relating to the apart-

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ments on Ida street then Alo is the person you should contact. [alo.abiline@bdcol.ee](mailto:alo.abiline@bdcol.ee)  
+372 5629 1809  
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We wish him all the best on his job!

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#### Historical Film Premiere

28<sup>th</sup> April was a memorable day in BALTDEFCOL as the historical film about operation Albion, which took place in 10-12 October 1917, was first shown in Estonia. The owner of the film is an Estonian collector Vahur Kuhlberg who stumbled upon this film on e-bay and once he was convinced of its originality bought it without hesitation. The first film premiere was organised by the ENDC and BALTDEFCOL. The importance of the film lies not only in the fact that it is almost 100 years old, but also that it is about the

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biggest and most successful landing operation of the First World War.

Once the background of the operation had been explained in detail to the audience, it was time to see the film. As it was almost a 100-year-old film it needed a special film camera to show it. The lights were dimmed and the camera started rolling. It showed clips from preparation of the operation to actual landing. The film was of remarkably good quality and the audience enjoyed all 13 minutes of it.



## Speech by Estonian Minister of Defence on Future of Regional Defence Cooperation

On 17th May Estonian Minister of Defence, Mr Mart Laar, visited Baltic Defence College and gave a speech on the Future of Regional Defence Cooperation to the staff and students of both BALTDEFCOL and the ENDC. In his speech the Minister pointed out that BALTDEFCOL is not only the longest cooperation project between the Baltic States but also one of the most successful cooperations, being an international organization with staff members and students from different countries. He stressed that we do not cooperate just to save money, we cooperate to gain more from the resources we have. The Baltic States are small and our resources are scarce. Mr Laar emphasized that, therefore, smart cooperation with input from all three states is important as the practical added value from cooperation can contribute to EU and NATO significantly more than Baltic countries could contribute separately. He added that, nevertheless, the three Baltic States have not been able to create continuous cooperation in some areas. The answer, Mr Laar said, lies in the difference of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian level of ambition, national priorities and resources. Mr Laar expressed opinion that the aim of the Baltic States' cooperation should be increased in congruence with Nordic cooperation through deepened political dialogue and intensified practical cooperation in order to further strengthen the regional security.

Mr Laar brought NORDEFCO as a good example of cooperation and said that it would be reasonable for Baltic States to implement similar management structure to bring Baltic and Nordic cooperation closer together, but over-formalization should be avoided and the existing cooperation mechanisms – such as BALTDEFCOL – should be further devel-



Minister of Defence Mr Mart Laar giving a speech in BALTDEFCOL  
(Photo by Raido Saar)

oped.

According to the Minister of Defence, the main areas for further cooperation are capability development, joint procurement, training and military exercises, and having the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence in Tallinn, Estonia is particularly interested in cooperation regarding cyber-defence.

When talking about Estonia's support for bigger involvement of US

in the Nordic-Baltic region, Mr Laar elaborated that there is a need for the meetings of the ministers of defence of Nordic-Baltic-US as they used to take place years ago.

After the speech students and staff members had a chance to ask questions from the Minister. The Minister of Defence will also be a keynote speaker at the ISMS Conference held in November in Tartu.



(Photo by Raido Saar)

## Looking Back at JCGSC of 2010/2011

By LtCol (ret.) Ron LaGrone

The graduation ceremony of the Joint Command and General Staff Course is a good time to reflect on the history of the Course, our present, and where we are headed in the future.

When 32 officers attended the Senior Staff Course from 1999 to 2000, the geopolitical and military circumstances of the Baltic States were profoundly different than today. Memberships in NATO and in the European Union were major goals of each nation. Armed forces were very much in early stages of formation with positive outcomes far from certain. Principles of territorial defence were the main aims of the teaching. The directing staff had a strong Nordic and European influence. All of them were from either NATO or Partnership for Peace Countries. Our objectives were to make the company grade and junior field grade officers attending the course competent combined arms battalion and brigade staff officers capable of ground operations in the defence of their countries. Our graduates went on to become leaders in the armed forces of the Baltic States including distinguished service in national and international assignments in several zones of conflict. It is a record that they and we can take pride in.

Today the officers on the JCGSC 2010/2011 face a far different course with significantly increased ambition and challenges. We have come a long way in our aim, and it is best that those aims be stabilized for a while so that our capability to deliver them for all officers attending the course improves considerably. This is a question of the skills, knowledge, and attitudes of the officers both attending and delivering the Joint Course.

The JCGSC was not designed to be easy to complete or to conduct. For most officers it reflects the last serious long term institutional effort



JCGSC students and staff members on the International Study Trip (Photo by Alar Lehesaar)

to prepare an officer to serve their country at the highest level. For the Baltic States, it represents one of their most significant investments in Defence capability. This investment is not merely a financial one. It is an investment in human capital. Money is important, but the most significant investment is in the time and personal effort spent by those attending the course and

**“In the end they and we will be judged not by what happened here, but mainly by what we all do from this moment on.”**

those sent to teach it.

The aim of the Joint Command and General Staff Course and its content remains a serious challenge for the current Directing Staff to execute and for the officers attending to complete. For the self directed officer, the content and additional activities of the course including possibly earning an accredited Master of Arts degree in Security Studies from a Baltic educational institution are more than enough to

provide for a world class professional military education at this level. Those who are less experienced must set their own priorities for the course, negotiating the tasks placed before them the best way they can.

As for the officers graduating from JCGSC 2010-2011, they are a determined and business minded professional group who dealt with the course in their own positive way. Given the rather diverse nature of the officers attending the course, and the international environment in which the Course is conducted, it is safe to say that the professional military education offered here is unique among all such institutions. These officers have succeeded in a difficult task. In general, they took on the course challenges both fair and unfair with the same quiet determination and assurance of success.

Some came able and willing to make significant and needed contributions to their fellow officers and to the College. We are grateful to them. Some had to fight for every accomplishment



large or small. Those are the ones who have earned our respect and kept us focused on our mission. In the end they and we will be judged not by what happened here, but mainly by what we all do from this moment on. This is the way it should be for in the military profession and in any organization with a mission of consequence, it is performance that counts, first, last and always.

Special thanks go to the class leader Major Edgars Allers and those who assisted him. The class leader's job is largely a thankless one, full of headaches and very

few rewards. Both his experience and dedication to his task helped bring everyone through in the best way possible.

With some support from the Directing Staff, Major Igors Klavinš was able to organize a significant contribution to the Sveķi Special Boarding School in Gulbene, Latvia. Through his leadership efforts and generous donations from the officers attending the course, the children of the school will see a significant improvement in available educational materials.

As the warm days of summer approach, memories of those difficult

exercises and other frustrations will fade for most, and everyone is looking forward to graduation and some serious rest. As for the JCGSC Class of 2010-2011, it will be well deserved. They got the job done well, and you cannot ask for more from any group of officers. If the pattern holds, many of them will return to Tartu. For reasons only known to each person and family; this city, these people, and the College put a hold on you that not easily or willingly shaken.

## Lessons Learned From Exercise VIKING II

By LtCol Aare Tuvike

On 5-14 April students of the JCGSC 2010/2011 together with 17 College faculty members participated in the multinational command post computer assisted staff exercise VIKING II. The exercise was conducted mainly by the Swedish Armed Forces and most of our students were appointed in different Component and Joint level staff positions in Sweden: Enköping and Kungängen.

The main value of the exercise is the multinational working environment. Although, the principles of military procedures and working techniques are rather similar in all modern societies, people from different countries, colleges, or courses may have diverse experiences and mindsets. Therefore the approaches to find solutions and solve problems evolve in different ways in different states or organizations. On the one hand, coming together in the international exercise like VIKING II provides us with the opportunity to see these different approaches and to implement them in military procedures along the world. It broadens our

mind and world perception that we have obtained and have considered to be the only true and possible. On the other hand, it is also an opportunity to find out that different ways to solve problems is not necessarily contradiction or antagonism but rather they supplement each other. It was interesting for our College students to show to Finish or Swedish students how things are done in the Baltic Defence College; and vice versa as well.

It is also not less important to see "the world from outside the planning group". Until the VIKING II our students mainly focused on the planning and mission analysis. The

exercise provided us with the opportunity to see how plans are executed in the missions and how to solve problems that are not derived from the documents and scenarios only but created from real life situations. Students could feel the responsibility that accompanies decisions and judgments and have real practical outcome.

In conclusion, it can be said that exercise VIKING II played an important part in the training and preparation of the JCGSC 2010/2011 students and was useful supplementation to the education provided by the course. Not to mention the social part of the exercise life and Stockholm trip.



Students of the BALDEFCOL during the VIKING II exercise (Photo by Meelis Koger)

## Challenge on the Kart Circuit

On 19th of May OPD Challenge Cup was held in kart racing. This was the second time that teams competed on the Kuningamäe kart circuit. As it turns out kart racing is as popular among staff members as was bowling. There were 24 brave racers and 4 teams.

Once the colourful red and blue costumes were put on and helmets were selected, it was time for warm up laps. Since we had so many participants we had 3 warm up groups. The warm up laps gave the participants a chance to get to know the singularities of the circuit and of the kart machines and it gave a chance to see how fast the others are going. 3 groups were formed based on the results of the qualifying warm up laps : the slow, the mediocre and the fast. The fastest of the first group was Kelli Nemvalts, beating Kristiina with only 0.21 seconds. In the second group Risto Kanketer was victorious beating Ugis with only 0.23 seconds. The third and fastest race was won by Olavi Jänes who also gained individual first place. According to the individual score Olavi Jänes was first, Oliver Toots second and Paavo Reidla third. But as the Cup does not go to the individual winner but to the best team, the first place went to the Support Staff team following OPD team, DPS/HCSC/SS UNITED team and Girl Power. Last year the kart race was also won by the Support Staff team.

As the Support Staff remained the Cup holder it is once again their task to organize the next Challenge Cup event. Next event will take place in autumn so we have the whole summer to improve our skills in different potential Challenge Cup activities.



BALTDEFCOL staff members are enthusiastic before the race...



...focused during the race...



...and of course happy and smiling after the race. (Photos by Oliver Toots)



## Blood Donation Gathers Popularity

You may remember that about 6 months ago, before Christmas, some of our Staff members in good spirit donated blood. Since it was a memorable event for all the participants we decided to make it a regular event. Our second blood donation event took place on a lovely afternoon of Friday May 20<sup>th</sup>.

This time we had significantly more volunteers. Maybe it was the sunny weather or the fresh spring feeling or the fact that people tend to be less sick in May than in cold December but we managed to gather a group of 10 people! The number of people who wanted to participate was even bigger, but due to different reasons not everyone could come. But I would like to thank every one of them, because it is the thought that counts.

This time we had also people among us for whom it was the first time to give blood. They were given materials about blood donation and conditions for donators upon arrival. The rest of us could already be called regular or frequent donors and we just had to



*First time donors going in depth with the information sheets...*

fill in the regular information sheet. But this event was also special for one reason – we had a non Estonian donor with us. LtCol Mika Juha Kerttunen is an experienced blood donor in his home country and, according to the regulations in Estonia, a person who has a valid residence permit and has lived in Estonia for over a year and is in good health can donate blood.

All the procedures went smoothly up to the point when it was time for Kristiina to give blood. The nurse had trouble finding her veins. I will not go into detail, but all in all everything went well and she still had colour in her face.

Our next brave first time donor was Kelli who overcame her fear of fainting and bravely donated blood. We also had people holding hands of our brave first time donors who distracted them from thinking too much about the details of the procedure.

They say that every donated blood dose saves someone's life. Last year 36 136 donors visited blood centres in Estonia and 17 980 patients received doses of donated blood. This time BALTDEFCOL donated all together 3,6 litres of blood.

Our next blood donation event will probably take place in autumn and all of you who couldn't make it this time are welcome to join!



Some are tense, some relaxed, some smiling and some have very shy veins that hide away when the needle comes. (Photos by Berit Marksoo)

## Letter From the Study Trip of JCGSC

By LtCol Malte Raschulewski

*Tere from Estonia!*

*Today I am writing you about our JCGSC study trip to the NATO institutions in Madrid and Lisbon.*

*Got up at 0315 hrs on Monday morning to meet the buses transporting 68 students and staff members to Riga Airport. Quite early; especially when expecting another dull incentive of repetitive and unengaging lectures, with a lot of travelling.*

*First station after a long trip was Madrid. Starting from our nice hotel in the outskirts of Spain's capital close to the NATO Allied Force Headquarter we first took a very interesting sightseeing tour even passing the Stadio do Real Madrid (Our guide invited us to cheer for the team, being from Bavaria it seemed self-evident that I "refused"). For some of us the evening ended in experiencing Madrid's wonderful summer nightlife on a Spanish national day...*

*The day after we were welcomed by the Allied Force Headquarter Commander and, different from expectation, had really interesting and informative presentations adding up on the lectures held at the college. What gave a funny notion to that was the "camping"-exhibition of the so called OMLT teams (reminded me on my time as military observer).*

*Same day flying to Lisbon, quite the opposite side of the Europe, referring to Estonia. Again accommodated outside Lisbon I took the chance to visit Belém parish in the evening, the place from which Vasco da Gama departed for India in 1497.*

*Again in dress uniform Wednesday was planned for visiting the bunker of the NATO Allied Joint Command. An impressive base in Oeiras with a wonderful Atlantic view, fortified as if a conventional arms assault is expected to occur.*



Find the pair of sleeping eyes.

*Professional, but not always thrilling, briefings led to interesting discussions. Especially the headquarters' responsibility for the NATO operation Ocean Shield in Somalia heated the air of the Operations Centre. I loved to watch the engaged discussion, even led by my Baltic comrades. As usual the southern cuisine served for lunch was sumptuous and gave the possibility for additional smalltalk. The evening bus tour through Lisbon offered a vast insight into Portugal's capital. Who knew that Lisbon's colourful painting of the buildings sought to distinguish clerics from different secular institutions?!*

*Getting off the bus in downtown many of us had the chance to see late Lisbon ambling through the 'seven hills'-city at the mouth of the river Tejo. Others took the chance to have a swim in the ocean.*

*The most surprising part was the next day's visit to the Joint Analysis & Lessons Learned Centre (JALLC) in Monsanto. Totally new to everybody's thinking it gave insights into a Sisyphus-like work to convince people in knowledge management. I even had the honour to hand over one of the BALTDFCOL tin mugs to thank one of the speakers (You won't believe what kind of different stories were delivered for the different occasion).*



Our Beach Boys enjoying the „West coast“!

*We finished the tour the day before Friday's trip home with a hosted dinner on the hotels 9<sup>th</sup> floor enjoying a priceless view over the Atlantic Ocean.*

*I personally think the trip was, in general, a surprising and well organized event.*

*Tervitused! Your Malte*



## Interview With the Students of JCGSC of 2010/2011

As the JCGSC is coming to an end, the Bugle sat down with a couple of students from the graduating JCGSC of 2010/2011 and asked them a few questions about their first impressions of the College and their studies here. Maj Viktoras Bagdonas and Cdr Kai Brand were bravely willing to answer a few questions.

### What were your expectations when you first came to the College?

**VB:** to learn as much as possible about the Joint level planning and everything what is related to it. When I came here I already had heard a lot about studies and College from my colleagues who have been studying here before. After spending a year in the College I can confirm that they had a good image of what to expect and what's going to happen. Coming to the College I primarily aimed to the exercises which, to my opinion, are a primary tool to learn.

**KB:** I didn't have any expectations because I had never heard of the



College before and when they told me that we are going to Estonia for this course we thought it would be in Tallinn and when I got the documents later, I read that it would be in Tartu and I had never heard of Tartu as well. I was quite open minded about what was going to happen.

### So you couldn't be disappointed, because you didn't expect anything?

**KB:** Yes, you can say so, if you take it from that side.

### What were the positive qualities of the course and the college?

**KB:** it is definitely too early to assess the value of the course, time will show in our future careers and deployments how good the value really was; we had some very good lessons and some very bad lessons as well. But one thing is quite clear already, we were strangers when we met last year for the very first time. Today, a lot of us, especially in the syndicates, are very good friends and considering that some of these 18 different nations were supposed to be enemies 25 years ago they became friends now – in my opinion this is maybe the best value of the course.

**VB:** I concur. All of us have made a lot of good, new friends and it was a new experience working in an international environment. I am sure every one of us got something valuable to increase one's professionalism. As for myself – I was looking for experience in operations planning and today I'm really happy about the knowledge and experience I have gained, and my self-confidence has increased too.



**Was there anything that needs improvement or what you think could be done better next year?**

**KB:** a few people that are deployed here for very good money have made their life a bit too comfortable and it seems that students disturb them while they are enjoying their time in Estonia. But again, it is too early to assess the education. I experienced here one of the best lessons in the 20 years of my military career as well as some of the worst lessons, so the amplitude between very well done and poorly done is maybe higher than I have experienced before. But at the end of the day the average is most likely the same like in any other college.

**VB:** the quality of the lectures and lecturer's ability to give lectures is an issue definitely. There have been good lectures with well prepared materials (slides, handouts), however, you can see that the lecturer is not the right person to stand in front of the audience. Therefore, selection of the lecturers should be done much more carefully, to make sure they are the right persons to do the lectures. Another thing I would like to mention is the academic writing. It has been a pain, especially if I'm not aiming at Master's degree. It seems to be a little unfair, because the guys are spending just a bit more time attending some extra hours after the course and they will get a Master's degree. I have one already and I had to spend a lot of time doing more or less another Master's document. I would prefer to spend that course time on exercises instead of writing the ISP. Essays – that's fine, we are all Majors, Lieutenant Colonels etc, we have to know how to write but that amount, I would say, is too much.

**KB:** I see that a little bit differ-

ently, because I think the Master's programme gives additional value to the course and it is a good advertising for the course. But if someone already has a Master's degree it is a waste of time in order to show capabilities in the learning area he has already shown somewhere else. Then maybe the ISP should be simply related to the Master's programme and that's it. But another thing I would like to point out is that it was a very nice year and we were very welcomed not only by the college. My family and I had a great time in Estonia and unfortunately the year has gone too quickly and my family would like to stay in Tartu and enjoy one more summer here. So it was a very good year and I was not once upset that I was sent to Tartu; on the contrary, I would like to come back one day again. The city in general, is a great place to be. We never had any problems in the entire year and it was really enjoyable in the rare spare time the college was allowing us. Maybe we should have had more time for social life with the course and with the College, because I think education is an important part but making friends within the course is as important as the education. With the exercise, the ISP and a lot of readings you are simply running out of time to visit more places in the Baltic States to get to know the area a bit better because most of the time we are supposed to sit behind the computer and read or write something.

**As you are working in an international environment, were there any communication or language problems among the student, staff, College?**

**VB:** Our syndicate guiding officer LtCol Sam Casmus is a great person, he is a great teacher and friend. Thanks to him and to class-

mates we had a perfect environment in the syndicate.

**KB:** I would say language is really not an issue. It was a little bit harder for all of us at the beginning but pretty soon in this English speaking environment all of us improved our language skills fast. When talking about communication of the College, the College could be a bit more "self-confident" in order to approach the students if they do not behave like a student is supposed to. Some students tended to be very lazy and didn't contribute to the course at all but they managed to pass the course. This is unfair to those students who put a lot of effort into the work. I think it should be possible even in an international environment to address these things.

**What was the most memorable event or experience during the course?**

**VB:** International night.

**KB:** For me it was the uncomplicated view on history. As a German we do not approach military history in an objective way like it was done here. I was impressed in a positive way that the case studies and other lectures about operational art were open minded and not preoccupied by any political issues. This was a very good academic approach.

**VB:** I agree. I would like to point out LtCol Kondrotas. He was a tough instructor and from time to time it was difficult to accomplish the missions given by him but, at the end, we were very happy about the experience and knowledge we got from him.

**VB&KB:** We wish our classmates, BALTDEFCOL and the future students all the best!