Jan 5

Task Force members,

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!**

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #60 will be on **Thursday, 18 January 2018**, beginning at 9:00AM at the Residence Inn, 600 W. Gaines Street, Tallahassee FL 32304. There will be a dinner for Task Force Members with members of the Veterans Florida Board on Wednesday, 17 January 2018 (more info to follow).  *Reminder, Florida Legislative Session begins on January 9, 2018.*

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   Call In Number: 800-501-8979  
   Access Code: 1869945

3. **Task Force Annual Report** – Thank you for your feedback on the report. It will be finalized prior to the January 18, 2018 meeting in Tallahassee, FL when it will be up for approval. For planning purposes, the approved Meeting Schedule for 2018 is attached so you can mark your calendars for the upcoming year.


5. **Florida Air National Guard Misses Out on F-35** – The US Air Force selected Alabama and Wisconsin for this round of National Guard basing. See article below in the *CLIPS* for more information.

6. **Trump Administration Plans Oil Drilling off Florida’s Coast** – Governor Scott released a statement on Thursday, January 4, 2018 prior to an anticipated announcement from the Trump Administration about opening up waters off the off the Florida coast to new oil drilling. The Governor stated: “Based on media reports, it is likely that the Department of the Interior will consider Florida as a potential state for offshore oil drilling – which is something I oppose in Florida. I have already asked to immediately meet with Secretary Zinke to discuss the concerns I have with this plan and the crucial need to remove Florida from consideration. My top priority is to ensure that Florida’s natural resources are protected, which is why I proposed $1.7 billion for the environment in this year’s budget.” See several articles below in the *CLIPS*.

7. **Military / Veteran Related Bills Filed This Week** – 2018 Session begins on January 8, 2018 and bills are being filed. To review or track House Bills (HB), go to [www.myfloridahouse.gov](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov); for Senate Bills (SB), go to [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov). For both sites, insert the bill number at the top of the page if you would like current status throughout session. Bills filed this week are below and the current summary of all related bills filed to date is attached.
HB 4377 WestCare Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. - Veterans Integrated Behavioral Healthcare Initiative (Burgess)
WestCare Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. - Veterans Integrated Behavioral Healthcare Initiative: Provides an appropriation for the WestCare Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. - Veterans Integrated Behavioral Healthcare Initiative. Effective Date: July 1, 2018

SB 1424 Court-ordered Treatment Programs (Gainer)
Court-ordered Treatment Programs; Providing that veterans who were discharged or released under any condition, individuals who are current or former United States Department of Defense contractors, and individuals who are current or former military members of a foreign allied country are eligible in a certain Military Veterans and Servicemembers Court Program, etc. Effective Date: 10/1/2019

HB 1173 Lands Used for Governmental Purposes (Raschein)
Lands Used for Governmental Purposes: Provides for acquisition, lease, & conveyance of lands used to buffer military installations; immediate acquisition of lands that prevent or satisfy private property rights claims within areas of critical state concern; land authorities to contribute tourist impact tax revenues to counties for certain affordable housing. Effective Date: upon becoming a law

SB 1486 Department of Health (Grimsley)
Department of Health; Requiring the Department of Health to adopt rules to implement a federal program to further encourage qualified physicians to relocate to and practice in underserved areas; revising health care practitioner licensure eligibility requirements for certain members of the armed forces and their spouses; requiring certain pharmacies and outsourcing facilities located in this state to obtain a permit in order to create, ship, mail, deliver, or dispense compounded sterile products; revising qualifications for licensure as a massage therapist, etc. Effective Date: 7/1/2018

HB 1191 Military and Veteran Support (Latvala)
Military and Veteran Support: Requires DVA to contract with individuals & entities to provide alternative treatment to certain veterans; requires treatment to be provided under direction of licensed individuals; requires reports to DVA; authorizes Supreme Court to admit bar applicant who is spouse of servicemember; requiring DOE to expedite application for educator certification submitted by spouse of servicemember; requires SBE to adopt rules for extending validity of temporary certificate if the applicant is the spouse of a servicemember; provides legislative findings & intent regarding continuing education for veterans. Effective Date: July 1, 2018

SB 1566 Military and Veteran Support (Grimsley)
Military and Veteran Support; Requiring the Department of Veterans’ Affairs, subject to appropriation, to contract with individuals and entities to provide alternative treatment options for certain veterans; authorizing the Supreme Court of Florida to admit on motion a bar applicant who is the spouse of a servicemember stationed in this state under certain circumstances; requiring the Department of Education to expedite the processing of an application for educator certification submitted by the spouse of a servicemember stationed in this state; requiring the State Board of Education to adopt rules regarding extending validity of a temporary certificate if the applicant is the spouse of a servicemember stationed in this state, etc. Effective Date: 7/1/2018
8. **Attachments:**
- 2018 Task Force Meeting Schedule
- Task Force Logo Complete
- TPG EOM Report – Dec 2017
- Military and Veterans Bills Filed to Date

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**National Security Strategy / NDAA**

**Trump’s National Security Strategy unveiled, with focus on economics**

By: Aaron Mehta, December 18


**WASHINGTON** — U.S. President Donald Trump’s new National Security Strategy lays out a world where America is locked in global economic competition with both partners and potential adversaries.

Trump officially revealed the 68-page report during a Monday speech, telling an audience that the new strategy document will pave the way for America to remain a leader in global affairs.

“A nation that does not protect prosperity at home cannot protect its interests abroad. A nation that is not prepared to win a war is a nation not capable of preventing a war,” Trump said. “A nation that is not proud of its history cannot be confident in its future. And a nation that is not certain of its values cannot summon the will to defend them.”

On Sunday, a trio of senior administration officials previewed the document for reporters. The theme of the document is what those officials called “principled realism” of an “ever-competitive world,” where the question of “how we advance our goals is more critical than ever.”
The NSS is the broadest of a series of upcoming strategic documents. Following the release of the National Security Strategy will come the National Defense Strategy, then in some order the Nuclear Posture Review, National Biodefense Strategy and Missile Defense Review, all of which are expected to be released in early 2018…..

**National Defense Strategy to Follow Trump’s New Security Blueprint**


http://mailchi.mp/defensecommunities/president-softens-stance-on-border-wall-funding-253393?e=28cebe069c

The new national security strategy unveiled Monday by President Trump, which advances a theme of “principled realism” in an “ever-competitive world,” calls for a greater emphasis on the nation’s economic health as a national security issue, along with an “unprecedented” focus on homeland security. The 65-page document is the broadest of a series of upcoming strategic papers and will be followed by the national defense strategy, reports Defense News. Later the administration will release its nuclear posture review, national biodefense strategy and missile defense review. All are expected to be issued in early 2018.

One of the security strategy’s key pillars, promoting American prosperity, will require protecting the “national security innovation base,” a term used by a senior administration official to “capture the broader ecosystem of activities we need to make sure to protect and promote to make sure we can continue to innovate as a nation.” Preserving peace through strength is another of the strategy’s pillars, one that calls for military modernization and reversing previous decisions to shrink the force, Trump said during a speech at the Reagan Building.

“It calls for streamlining acquisition, eliminating bloated bureaucracy, and massively building up our military, which has the fundamental side benefit of creating millions and millions of jobs,” the president said.

**Defense Strategy Will Prompt Change, Top Official Says**


http://mailchi.mp/defensecommunities/president-softens-stance-on-border-wall-funding-253413?e=28cebe069c

The Pentagon’s new national defense strategy, which will be released in January, will provide significant guidance for defense policymakers, Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan told reporters Thursday. “We will probably talk about the national defense strategy probably a hundred thousand times [next year],” Shanahan said. “If we don’t talk about it a hundred thousand times, it will just become a document that lives on a shelf.”

One issue the document won’t directly influence, though, is climate change, as the new strategy will not address the topic, reported the Hill. “We don’t specifically address climate change. ... There is only so much, you know, depth and breadth. ... It really reflects the high priorities of the department,” Shanahan said.
The Trump administration is behind a wave of efforts to undermine longstanding policies and sensible regulations on drilling for oil and gas off U.S. coasts. The erosion of reasonable protections would jeopardize marine environments and tourism-and-real-estate-based economies — including Florida’s — up and down the Atlantic and Gulf coasts.

Members of Congress from both political parties should quickly and firmly resist the concentrated attempt to erode safeguards designed to protect human lives, the natural environment and economic sustainability.

Not long after Donald Trump was inaugurated and his interior secretary, Ryan Zinke, was confirmed by the Senate, it became clear that the administration would consider a new Oil and Gas Leasing Program that would unnecessarily open additional offshore areas to fossil-fuel exploration and drilling.

Drilling within 125 miles of Florida’s Gulf coast has been banned under a federal moratorium, approved by Congress in 2006, that was supposed to last at least until 2022.

In a March 24 letter to Trump, 17 of the 29 members of Congress representing Florida — including Rep. Vern Buchanan, R-Longboat Key, and Democratic Sen. Bill Nelson — pleaded with the administration to maintain the moratorium in the eastern Gulf of Mexico.

The bipartisan plea was disregarded.

On April 28, Trump issued an executive order intended to commence “the process of opening offshore areas” to exploration and eliminate some key regulations adopted by President Barack Obama’s Interior Department — upon the recommendation of the bipartisan National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling.

That commission was formed in response to a 2010 catastrophe, when a BP oil well blew out off Louisiana, causing the Deepwater Horizon drill rig to explode, killing 11 workers and releasing millions of barrels of toxic crude oil into the Gulf of Mexico and off Florida’s shores. ……

Florida Gov. Rick Scott said Thursday that he opposes a planned measure by the Interior Department that would potentially open up Florida for offshore drilling, putting him in agreement with Democratic Sen. Bill Nelson. Scott is likely to run against Nelson, a longtime opponent of offshore oil drilling, in 2018.
“Based on media reports, it is likely that the Department of the Interior will consider Florida as a potential state for offshore oil drilling – which is something I oppose in Florida,” Scott said in a statement. "I have already asked to immediately meet with Secretary (Ryan) Zinke to discuss the concerns I have with this plan and the crucial need to remove Florida from consideration. My top priority is to ensure that Florida’s natural resources are protected, which is why I proposed $1.7 billion for the environment in this year’s budget."

Scott, an ally of President Donald Trump, was largely silent on opening up Florida for offshore oil drilling during his tenure in Tallahassee, an idea opposed by many Florida Democrats and Republicans in Congress.

Nelson vehemently opposed the Interior Department's plan, which is expected to be officially announced later on Thursday, during a speech on the Senate floor on Wednesday. He argued that loosening regulations and expanding drilling could lead to more environmentally destructive oil spills in the Gulf of Mexico.

"I hope the public understands that and starts registering some complaints, and I hope that during that time every Floridian remembers what happened to us when the beaches of Pensacola Beach were blackened with tar and oil, and we lost a whole season of our guests, our tourists who come to this extraordinary state," Nelson said.

**Trump administration to expand drilling off U.S. continental waters**

By Darryl Fears January 4 at 1:06 PM

The Trump administration unveiled a controversial proposal Thursday to permit drilling in most U.S. continental-shelf waters, including protected areas of the Arctic and the Atlantic, where oil and gas exploration is opposed by governors from New Jersey to Florida, nearly a dozen attorneys general, more than 100 U.S. lawmakers and the Defense Department.

Under the proposal, only one of 26 planning areas in the Arctic Ocean, Pacific Ocean, Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean would be off limits to oil and gas exploration, according to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke. He said the Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management has identified 47 potential areas where industry companies can buy leases between 2019 and 2024, when the proposed open period would begin and end.

The Draft Five Year Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program was embraced by oil and gas industry groups but is expected to face withering opposition from a wide range of state officials and conservationists. “Nothing is final,” Zinke said in remarks at a news conference. “This is a draft program. The states, local communities and congressional delegations will all have a say” before the proposal becomes final in the coming months…..

**Administration’s Plan to Permit Offshore Energy Exploration Roils Coastal Communities**

The Trump administration’s proposal to permit drilling in most U.S. continental shelf-waters opens the potential for conflicts with military testing and training along much of the nation’s coastline. Only one of 26 planning areas in the Arctic Ocean, Pacific Ocean, Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean would be off limits to oil and natural gas exploration, according to the proposal unveiled Thursday by Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke.

Democratic and Republican governors from states along the Atlantic Coast have vowed to take action to prevent the expansion of drilling off their coasts. Florida Gov. Rick Scott (R) and Sen. Bill Nelson (D-Fla.) said they will oppose the plan to open previously protected parts of the Atlantic Ocean and eastern Gulf of Mexico to offshore drilling, partially because it could interfere with military activities, reported the Northwest Florida Daily News. “I have already asked to immediately meet with Secretary Zinke to discuss the concerns I have with this plan and the crucial need to remove Florida from consideration,” Scott said in a statement.

Zinke did not address potential conflicts with the military but Kate McGregor, an assistant secretary, said a task force has been established for the Interior and Defense departments to handle them, reported the Washington Post. “We believe things can be done safely,” McGregor said. “In fact, in the central Gulf of Mexico planning area, 36 percent of leases are in military planning areas. We intend to continue a very strong relationship with DOD.”

A recent analysis by advocacy group Oceana found that nearly all of the Outer Continental Shelf waters off Virginia are used by every branch of the armed forces for aviation, surface, subsurface and special operations training. “There’s little room to drill off Virginia’s coast,” Oceana’s campaign director, Diane Hoskins, told the Daily Press. “Ninety-four percent [of the area] has longstanding DOD operations critical to national security and military readiness. There’s too much at stake.”

**Rubio wants offshore drilling ban extended near Florida**

BY TIMOTHY CAMA - 01/04/18 03:04 PM EST 132

Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) wants the Trump administration to walk back its proposal to open the eastern Gulf of Mexico, adjacent to Florida, to offshore oil and natural gas drilling.

Congress has put a moratorium on drilling in that part of the Gulf through 2022, which has strong bipartisan support from Florida’s leaders, including Gov. Rick Scott (R).

But the administration released its proposal Thursday for offshore drilling rights sales through 2024, and it envisions selling leases there to oil companies in 2023 and 2024.

Rubio, who has proposed extending the legal moratorium to 2027, said in a Thursday statement that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke should take the eastern Gulf off the table.

“As the Department of Interior works to finalize their draft plan, I urge Secretary Zinke to recognize the Florida Congressional delegation’s bipartisan efforts to maintain and extend the moratorium in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico, and remove this area for future planning purposes,” he said.

Florida was hit especially hard by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster. It sent oil onto some of the state’s beaches, and the tourism and related industries suffered for years.

In addition, Florida hosts numerous military bases. The Pentagon has in the past supported the eastern Gulf drilling ban……
The new BRAC strategy: capability over cost savings

By: Aaron Mehta and Joe Gould, December 14, 2017
https://www.armytimes.com/pentagon/2017/12/14/the-new-brac-strategy-capability-over-cost-savings/

WASHINGTON — After years of arguing that a new round of base closures is needed to save the Pentagon money, the department has a new strategy — but members of Congress are already expressing skepticism.

In a November interview, Lucian Niemeyer, assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment, said lawmakers felt the messaging for a new round of the base realignment and closure process, or BRAC, from the department “wasn’t compelling enough” and said his team has “done some re-messaging a little bit.”

The Pentagon estimates that a new BRAC could close about 22 percent excess capacity for an annual savings of $2 billion or more by 2027. But members of Congress have openly expressed skepticism about that figure, particularly in light of the 2005 BRAC process that saw significantly higher costs than expected.

Niemeyer, a longtime Capitol Hill staffer, noted he has a history with BRAC and understood how the Pentagon’s dollar argument was a non-starter on the Hill. As a result, the department will now focus on the idea that a new BRAC furthers the Trump administration’s new National Security Strategy.....

Better Basing Through BRAC

http://mailchi.mp/defensecommunities/president-softens-stance-on-border-wall-funding-253385?e=28cebe069c

The Pentagon’s top installations official has settled on a better way to sell Congress on the wisdom of authorizing a new round of base closures, but it’s not clear if the new approach will make a difference. Rather than emphasizing BRAC’s potential to save $2 billion annually and unload unneeded infrastructure, the department instead will focus on the opportunity to increase combat effectiveness by realigning missions and restationing forces, Lucian Niemeyer, assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment, tells Defense News.

“We believe there are, ultimately, billions out there we could save annually, but just as compelling is the ability to make our forces more lethal by where they train, how they train, where they are co-located,” Niemeyer said. “It’s all about location, location, location.”

Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.), chairman of the Senate Armed Services’ Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee, remains skeptical, however. Tight constraints on DOD spending means the department can’t afford to make the upfront investment required to carry out a BRAC round, he says. And the department has the ability to carry out any strategic changes needed to better align its forces with its infrastructure short of closing or downsizing installations, Inhofe said.
Cyber

Military Veteran Takes Top Florida Information Security Job

BY SKIP DESCANT / DECEMBER 14, 2017
HTTP://WWW.GOVTECH.COM/PEOPLE/MILITARY-VETERAN-TAKES-TOP-FLORIDA-INFORMATION-SECURITY-JOB.HTML

Florida has turned to a military veteran to serve as its new chief information security officer.

Thomas Vaughn, who has served in the U.S. Army and Coast Guard, is the Florida Agency for State Technology's (AST) new chief information security officer, taking the place of Danielle Alvarez, who left the agency for a job in the private sector in June.

“I’m very excited by the challenges the job presents. And I’m really interested in being able to have a larger impact on information security,” said Vaughn. “It sounds a bit idealistic, but I really see this job as contributing not only to the safety and security of the citizens of the state of Florida, but also ultimately, to the defense of the nation. Because in the cyber-realm, we’re all kind of on the same battlefield. So, I’m looking forward to having some impact there.”

Vaughn began his new CISO role about two weeks ago, and wants to largely continue the efforts of Alvarez — who recommended that he apply for the position.....

NAS Pensacola

Military offers $10 million prize to any researcher who can solve jets' oxygen problems

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, mnelsongab@pnj.comPublished 9:00 a.m. CT Dec. 22, 2017

The Department of Defense hopes a $10 million prize will spur creative researchers to find a solution for ongoing issues involving the oxygen systems of some Navy jets.

The prize money was the idea of U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Mississippi, and was recently authorized by President Donald Trump.

Ryan Taylor, a spokesman for Wicker, said the issue is important to Wicker because his state is home to Meridian Naval Air Station, a major aviation training base.

"He worked to have (the prize money) included in the defense spending bill," Taylor said.

Taylor said the Department of Defense will oversee distribution of the prize money.

He said the idea is similar to the nonprofit XPRIZE Foundation, which provides money through competitions for technological advancements that benefit humanity.

Navy and Marine pilots reported in-flight hypoxia during flights in the Navy's T-45 Goshawk training jet in early 2017. The Navy's T-45 fleet was briefly grounded in April when some instructor pilots,
including those at Pensacola Naval Air Station, refused to fly after experiencing hypoxia-related problems……

NAS Pensacola Awarded 2017 SECNAV Energy Conservation Award

Story by Gregory Mitchell Naval Air Station Pensacola, 01.03.2018

The award seeks to applaud Navy ships, installations and squadrons for outstanding accomplishments in the areas of procurement, storage, and delivery of energy to naval forces. Access to secure, reliable sources of energy enhances Navy readiness and mission capability.

The SECNAV announces the previous period’s award winners during the third quarter of each fiscal year. The winners are authorized to display the SECNAV Energy Conservation Award flag for a period of one year from the announcement date.

NAS Pensacola was deemed to meet the gold level of achievement standards, which indicates a very good to outstanding energy conservation program. In total, 31 bases and installations were determined to meet this benchmark as well.

Sabrina Williams, the Installation Energy Manager for NAS Pensacola, was pleased with the accomplishments of her team.

“To earn the SECNAV Energy and Water Gold Award means NAS Pensacola has a very good to outstanding energy program.” Williams said. “This is a great accomplishment for any installation.”

The SECNAV Energy Conservation award was established to recognize and promote excellence in energy management and energy conservation within the Department of the Navy. These efficiency efforts are integral to the development of war fighting capabilities, which result in choices for the operational commanders…..

NAS Whiting Field

Bowdich to lead NAS Whiting Field

By Press Gazette contributor, Posted Dec 18, 2017 at 5:42 PMUpdated Dec 18, 2017 at 5:42 PM

MILTON — Naval Air Station Whiting Field observed a time-honored Navy tradition Monday, Dec. 18 at the Clyde E. Lassen Auditorium, where command of the air station passed from one officer to another.

Capt. Paul Bowdich accepted command of NAS Whiting Field from Capt. Todd Bahlau following Bahlau’s three-year tour at the helm. The change of command ceremony is a Navy tradition that enables the two officers to formally exchange duties in front of the assembled military and civilian staff. It is also a time to recognize accomplishments of the outgoing “Skipper” in front of his family and friends……

….ABOUT BOWDICH
Bowdich, who becomes the installation’s 42nd commanding officer, brings a wealth of experience as an aviator. A native of Berkley, Michigan, he is a 1994 graduate of the United States Merchant Marine Academy, in Kings Point, New York and was designated a Naval aviator in April 1997.

Bowdich’s first operational assignment was with the Fleet Angels of HC-2 with two deployments to Manama, Bahrain. Following this assignment he completed detachments with Commander Second Fleet onboard the USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) and the USS Enterprise (CVN 65).

His other assignments include: Helicopter Combat Support Squadron (HC-2) with detachments to the USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) for Operation Strong Resolve, in which he flew with NAS Oceana SAR, NAS Pensacola SAR and NAS Key West SAR; USS Ogden (LPD 5) in San Diego, California, Air Boss during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom; and The Merlins of HSC-3 and a deployment to Barking Sands, Hawaii.

Bowdich reported to the Naval War College to earn a Master of Arts degree in National Security and Strategic Studies. He reported to the Coalition Coordination Center U.S. Central command; following this assignment he reported to Training Air Wing FIVE as executive officer of Helicopter Training Squadron EIGHT to become commanding officer from December 2011 until April 2013.

Bowdich then reported to the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) with a deployment in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. His last assignment before taking over command with NAS Whiting Field was to Naval Education and Training Command, Pensacola.

Commander Navy Region Southeast Rear Adm. Bette Bolivar served as the guest speaker for the change of command.

Whiting Field Naval Air Station named best small base in the Navy

From staff reports, Published 12:43 p.m. CT Dec. 20, 2017 | Updated 12:46 p.m. CT Dec. 20, 2017

Whiting Field Naval Air Station has been named the best small base in the U.S. Navy by the commander of naval installations.

The Milton base was recognized for excellence in many categories including installation management, environmental stewardship, mission success and community outreach.

Vice Adm. Mary Jackson, commander of naval installations, congratulated Whiting Field.

"This year's competition was intense, and it is clear our winners represent the very best of the best within the shore enterprise," she said.

Sixty percent of all Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard pilots receive their primary flight training at Whiting Field. More than 1,200 aviators graduate from the base's training programs every year.

With 1.1 million flights a year, Whiting Field conducts more flight operations than any other air field in the country.
Hurlburt Field

Got a drone? Not so fast flying it around Northwest Florida

By Jim Thompson | 315-4445 | @Jimtnwfdn | jthompson@nwfdailynews.com, Posted Jan 1, 2018 at 12:00 PM

FORT WALTON BEACH — Get a drone for Christmas?

Surprised when it didn’t take off swooping into the sky?

Don’t be, if you live along much of the Northwest Florida coast. Flight restrictions imposed on drones by the presence of military bases and airports impose significant limits on where and how they can be operated locally.

Just a few years ago, in the early days of the drone craze, the story was somewhat different. Restrictions were in place, but their enforcement relied almost entirely on drone users, both recreational and professional, knowing the restrictions and abiding by the rules.

More recently, however, most serious drones — not the ones available at your local big-box store for $100 or so, with limited range and short battery life, which aren’t regulated — come equipped with Global Positioning System software.

The software, programmed to recognize when a drone is located within restricted airspace, won’t allow the drone to operate as long as it is in that space…..

Eglin AFB

Santa Rosa leaders put beach preservation on hold, citing dispute with Sen. Bill Nelson

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Published 2:37 p.m. CT Dec. 14, 2017 | Updated 5:07 p.m. CT Dec. 14, 2017

Without assurances from U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson that he will support changing the complicated lease fee system governing development on Pensacola and Navarre beaches, Santa Rosa County leaders refused to move forward with discussion of beach preservation on Thursday.

Bob Cole, chairman of the Santa Rosa County Commission, said he approached Nelson's staff with a compromise proposal in the hope of advancing a bill that has stalled in a U.S. Senate committee because of Nelson's concerns.

But Cole said Nelson has ignored his compromise plan, which calls for Nelson to support changing the lease system in exchange for Santa Rosa County agreeing to place some county-owned beach property in permanent conservation/ preservation status.

"He is using us like a pawn," Cole said of Nelson. "He has had plenty of time to pick up the phone or drop an email."

Cole tabled discussion of placing the county-owned beach property in permanent conservation status.
"If Sen. Nelson answers us, we will put this back on the agenda," he said.

At issue is the continued refusal of Santa Rosa County leaders to permanently abandon their push to cut a pass on the eastern edge of Navarre Beach to allow boaters easy access from Santa Rosa Sound to the Gulf of Mexico……

7th Special Forces Group sends Christmas toys to Puerto Rico


EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE — The seasonal goodwill of the 7th Special Forces Group extended all the way to Puerto Rico this year, as its personnel brought some holiday cheer to the island still reeling from the devastating effects of Hurricane Maria.

Every year, the 7th Group uses a combination of charitable activities, from “toy jumps” to more traditional fundraisers, to get donations of Christmas toys. This year, there were three days of scheduled toy jumps, dubbed Operation Toy Drop. In addition to the 7th Group, the jumps included a number of partner nations, including Chile, Mexico and Brazil, all working to make Christmas a little brighter for the children of Puerto Rico.

The move to get toys to Puerto Rico for Christmas came from soldiers in the 7th Group, who presented the idea to the Group’s leadership. From there, Group leaders, in conjunction with its ministry team, took on the work of coordinating the donations.

“Puerto Rico needs all the help they can get. Anytime you can make kids happy it is a good thing,” said David Meyer, chaplain for the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne). Many 7th Special Forces Group (Red Empire) families were directly affected by the hurricane’s aftermath.

In addition to the toy drops, another fundraiser was conducted by the 7th Group’s 4th Battalion softball team, in conjunction with its participation in a softball tournament in Niceville. The tournament comprised 18 teams representing all branches of the military, and helped 4th Battalion get nearly 300 donated toys…..

FL National Guard / Camp Blanding

Jacksonville passed over for new F-35s

By: Stephanie Brown @SBrownReports, December 21, 2017 2:22 PM
http://www.wokv.com/news/local/jacksonville-passed-over-for-new-35s/93SiNsCWsGM54LkRUQDqWM/

Jacksonville, FL - They had been one of only a handful of installations under consideration, but the Florida National Guard’s 125th Fighter Wing in Jacksonville has not been selected as the new home of the new F-35A Lightning II aircraft.

The Florida National Guard says they were hoping for a different outcome, but are confident the Air Force made the best decision for the “long-term strength and security of our nation”.

“Although we were not selected, our forces are more relevant than ever before. Our 125th Fighter Wing remains strategically located to provide a capable defense against current and emerging threats,” the Florida National Guard says.
The Florida National Guard further says the Department of Defense modernization plan being developed will ensure their current F-15 fighter jets remain “unmatched”.

Florida’s Governor, Congressional delegation, and state lawmakers had all joined in the push to house the new aircraft in Jacksonville.

**Land trust locks up 522 acres in environmental corridor, federal money to protect more**

By Steve Patterson, Posted December 28, 2017 05:53 pm | Updated December 30, 2017 12:07 pm


A Jacksonville nonprofit has landed a chunk of property inside a huge corridor targeted for conservation — and up to $3.6 million in federal money to help protect the rest.

The 522-acre donation in Columbia County builds the North Florida Land Trust’s modest holdings in an area conservationists dub the O2O Corridor, a swath connecting the Osceola National Forest beside the donated land to the Ocala National Forest in Marion County.

The nonprofit said this year it would focus more on preserving land in the 1.6 million-acre corridor, considered critically important for efforts to maintain habitat for longleaf pines and gopher tortoises.

The corridor is also valuable as territory for the Florida black bear and the federally protected red cockaded woodpecker and indigo snake.

A natural corridor between the two national forests has been a longtime goal for conservationists who want a way for wildlife to move through the region undisturbed and want to protect areas where underground features allow rainwater to recharge the Floridan aquifer, protecting water supplies......

**NS Mayport**

**Navy Commissions Mayport's Next Littoral Combat Ship**

By Joe Daraskevich, The Florida Times-Union, 17 Dec 2017


The squadron of littoral combat ships at Mayport Naval Station will soon grow from two ships to three after the Navy commissioned the USS Little Rock on Saturday in Buffalo, N.Y.

The latest ship to join the fleet will now continue the voyage from Marinette, Wis., to Northeast Florida where it will become the newest warship in Littoral Combat Ship Squadron Two.

The Navy has two varieties of littoral ships -- the Freedom class and Independence class -- with one type on the West Coast and the other on the East Coast.

All of the Navy's Freedom-variant ships are built in a shipyard at the mouth of the Menominee River, on the border of Wisconsin and Michigan. Each ship then goes through a series of trials in the waters of Lake Michigan before the crew begins the transit to the Atlantic Ocean.
The ships are all commissioned in different locations, but this is the first one in Mayport's squadron that isn't named for a city located in the Great Lakes region. First the USS Milwaukee was commissioned in its namesake city, then the USS Detroit was commissioned in Detroit……

**MacDill AFB**

**MacDill shipping off two old warbirds, expanding Memorial Park**

Howard Altman, Times staff writer, Published: December 29, 2017


They could survive the rigors of military service, but retirement was hell on their old frames. So MacDill Air Force Base is losing two of its most iconic landmarks — static displays of a KB-50J Superfortress and an F-16 Fighting Falcon.

The two aircraft, at Memorial Park on base, were victims of Tampa’s corrosive sun and salt air, according to base officials. Maintaining the old war birds became too costly and time consuming, so they are being dismantled and shipped out and the park. The park will be expanded to take in their footprints.

"The base commander of MacDill at the time, Col. Charles T. Ohlinger III, and the airpark committee had a vision to expand the park with aircraft to represent each era of the base’s history," Steven Ove, 6th Air Mobility Wing base historian, said in an article on the base website. "Once the landscaping of the park was finished, the KB-50J found its way to MacDill in late 1995."

After base operations ramped up following the 9/11 attacks, the maintainers assigned to care for the aircraft in the airpark were pulled, leaving maintenance and care to be contracted out……

**Cape Canaveral AFS**

**ASRC Federal Subsidiary Wins Potential $395M Cape Canaveral AF Station Support IDIQ**

Nichols Martin, December 27, 2017 Contract Awards, News 70 Views


An ASRC Federal subsidiary has won a potential $395 million contract to support operations and infrastructure assets at a U.S. Air Force installation located in Florida.

**ASRC Federal Communications** will help the military branch operate, maintain and engineer systems and facilities at Cape Canaveral AF Station under the indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity contract, the Defense Department said Friday.

The 45th Contracting Squadron at Patrick AF Base received four offers for the contract via a competitive procurement.
DoD noted the service branch will obligate $58,763 in fiscal 2018 operations and maintenance funds at the time of award.

ASRC Federal Communications works with defense and federal civilian customers to help them manage intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance missions as well as provides information technology, logistics and base operations support services to customer agencies.

**SpaceX leases Cape Canaveral home for Crew Dragon**

James Dean, FLORIDA TODAY, Published 4:59 p.m. ET Jan. 1, 2018 | Updated 8:27 a.m. ET Jan. 2, 2018


In a sign that astronaut launches from Florida are growing nearer, SpaceX recently leased an Air Force facility where it will prepare Dragon capsules to fly crews to the International Space Station.

The 45th Space Wing said work on the capsule called Crew Dragon or Dragon 2 would take place in Area 59, a former satellite processing facility on Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

“This summer, they should be receiving their first Dragon 2 capsule, which will directly support NASA and the return of astronauts (launching into orbit) from U.S. soil,” said Brig. Gen. Wayne Monteith, the Wing commander, at a recent transportation summit in Port Canaveral.

It’s unclear when SpaceX or Boeing will be ready to launch test flights of astronauts under NASA contracts…..

**Homestead AFB**

**F-16 jets escort private plane after Trump airspace violation**

GARY DETMAN, 1-1-2018


The pilot of a private plane was escorted to the ground by two F-16 fighter jets after violating the temporary restricted air space due to President Donald Trump's presence at Mar-a-Lago.

A spokesman for NORAD, the North American Aerospace Defense Command, told CBS12 the airspace violation happened Sunday afternoon.

Navy Lt. Michael Hatfield said the plane came within 29 miles of the Winter White House when the jets escorted it to the North Palm Beach County General Aviation Airport.

Hatfield said the jets, from Homestead Air Reserve Base, were on patrol when the pilots received the mission to intercept the private plane……
US Southern Command

US Calls Off Efforts to Aid Argentina in Search for Missing Sub

By Richard Sisk, Military.com 27 Dec 2017

U.S. Southern Command announced Wednesday the U.S. was withdrawing support for the mission to find the Argentine submarine that went missing last month with 44 aboard in the South Atlantic.

"On behalf of the people of the United States, we offer our respects to the families of the crew of A.R.A. San Juan and the people of Argentina," Rear Adm. Daniel B. Abel, SouthCom's director of operations, said in a statement.

The U.S. will begin to drawing down operations that were assisting in the search, SouthCom said, but American specialists will continue to help Argentina with data analysis.

With a crew of 44 aboard, the 216-foot, diesel-electric powered San Juan was enroute from Ushuaia, a port at the Tierra del Fuego southern tip of South America, to Mar del Plata about 250 miles southeast of Buenos Aires when the last communication was recorded on Nov. 15.

The San Juan's captain reported that water had entered the snorkel and caused one of the submarine's batteries to short circuit. The captain later communicated by satellite phone that the problem had been contained, the Argentine navy said.

Several hours after the last communication, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization, based in Vienna, said that two of its hydro-acoustic stations detected an "unusual signal" deep in the Atlantic near the submarine's last known location about 125 miles off the Argentine coast.

The Organization, which monitors for nuclear events, said an analysis of its data showed that the signal was consistent with an explosion. The U.S. Navy reached a similar conclusion from its own analysis.

The U.S. joined the Argentina-led international search efforts for the German-built San Juan on Nov. 17......

Energy

Air Force Initiative to Streamline Energy Delivery Moves Ahead

Dan Cohen, “On Base”, 1-4-2018
http://mailchi.mp/defensecommunities/president-softens-stance-on-border-wall-funding-253421?e=28cebe069c

The Air Force’s effort to demonstrate how a new model for procuring energy and energy management functions can be implemented is moving ahead, with officials preparing to issue a formal solicitation for its “energy-as-a-service” pilot in mid-2018. Officials continue to review responses from energy service providers and utilities to a request for information that closed last September, reports C4ISRNET. The service plans to test the new approach at Altus AFB, Okla., and Hanscom AFB, Mass.

The pilot is intended to answer a number of questions as to how the Air Force would implement the new approach, under which a single provider would carry out a range of activities the service now acquires
separately, including procurement of electricity; investment in the on-base electricity system, including onsite generation; and energy conservation and demand management measures. “Who is going to own the infrastructure? Does that go to the contractor, or do we retain infrastructure ownership?” Mark Correll, deputy assistant secretary for environment, safety and infrastructure, told C4ISRNET. “How would we award a contract like this? What would be the mechanisms we would use?”

**Defense Industry**

**Lockheed Martin/Northrop Grumman joint venture and more land $26.2M in defense work**

By Matthew Richardson – Staff writer, Orlando Business Journal, Dec 22, 2017, 9:59am


A couple of defense firms landed contracts totaling $26.2 million on Dec. 21, and one is related to making repairs to naval facilities due to Hurricane Irma, according to a report from the U.S. Department of Defense.

San Francisco-based URS Group was awarded an $8.1 million contract from the U.S. Navy to make repairs within the Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southeast area due to Hurricane Irma sweeping through Florida and other states in September.

Work includes electrical power degeneration and distribution, debris clearing and removal, stabilization of damaged facilities, mold remediation and other construction-related tasks throughout Cape Canaveral, Jacksonville, Mayport and Kings Bay, Ga. The contract has a September 2018 completion date.

Meanwhile, Orlando-based Longbow LLC — a joint venture between Lockheed Martin Corp. and Northrop Grumman Corp. — was awarded an $18.1 million contract from the U.S. Army to perform services on a fire control radar and unmanned aerial system assembly. All of the work will be performed in Orlando where Lockheed Martin has more than 7,000 employees and Northrop Grumman has hundreds, as well. The contract has a Dec. 31, 2021, completion date.

**Lockheed preps satellite for Florida launch**

Jackson Observer, December 28, 2017


The satellite that will hitch a ride on the first rocket launch from Florida this year has been sealed within its protective launch vehicle.

Lockheed Martin released a photo Tuesday of the U.S. Air Force’s satellite, which will join a network of satellites in space that collect and transmit infrared surveillance information.

The so-called encapsulation took place at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on Florida’s Space Coast. A 40-minute window for its launch on a United Launch Alliance rocket opens at 7:46 p.m. on Jan. 19.

The satellite will carry the Space Based Infrared System, or SBIRS, Geosynchronous Earth Orbit satellite, which Lockheed built.

The satellite helps the U.S. military detect missile launches and support missile defense, according to a Lockheed news release.
David Sheridan, vice president of Lockheed's infrared-based division, said the launch will "greatly enhance" the infrared system's ability for surveillance from space.

Central Florida's launch activity has been ramping up in recent years, as multiple private space companies increase their number of launches here.

**Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman's Longbow venture lands $103M contract**

By Matthew Richardson – Staff writer, Orlando Business Journal, Dec 29, 2017, 10:30am


Orlando-based joint venture Longbow LLC landed its second major contract within two weeks, ending 2017 on a high note.

The company, created by global firms Lockheed Martin Corp. (NYSE: LMT) and Northrop Grumman Corp. (NYSE: NOC), was awarded a $103 million contract from the U.S. Army on Dec. 28, according to a report from the U.S. Department of Defense.

Longbow will provide support services for the fire control radar that's mounted on top of the Apache attack helicopter. The fire control radar allows the Apache to be in stealth mode. The bubble-like system is able to pop up over a terrain, target enemies and fire off missiles without being seen. The contract has a July 31, 2023, completion date.

Longbow was awarded another contract on Dec. 21, valued at $18.1 million from the U.S. Army. That work will also be for fire control radar and unmanned aerial system assembly.

Lockheed Martin has more than 7,000 workers in Orlando, while Northrop Grumman has more than 2,000 workers in Central Florida, covering Orlando and Melbourne.

Military contracts contribute to the local economy in the form of jobs and subcontractor opportunities, and Central Florida is a major player when it comes to defense contracts. The region snags about $4 billion in government contracts each year because the nation’s Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines simulation operations are based in Central Florida Research Park.

That work helps make Orlando the modeling, simulation and training capital of the world, according to the Orlando Economic Partnership.

**Tampa company lands up to $40 million federal contract for military training**

By Janelle Irwin – Reporter, Tampa Bay Business Journal, 1-4-2018


A Tampa company is getting $40 million from the U.S. Air Force to provide specialized training for international military students.

The Air Force announced this week the contract will pay for CAE USA to provide aircrew and maintenance technician simulator training in the Tampa Bay area through 2022.
The contract is an indefinite quantity grant meaning CAE can make up to $40 million on the contract, but is paid on a per-contract basis for the duration of the five-year term so it's not guaranteed the full $40 million.

Training occurs when a foreign military requests it. CAE provides in-flight simulation on C-130s for things like transport services, air drops and personnel recovery. Flight crews can learn how to manage emergency situations like engine fires or how to navigate difficult landing on unpaved airstrips, according to a CAE spokesman.

The simulators are akin to high-tech video games. The cockpit is an exact replica of a C-130 and the scene outside the aircraft is simulated to match real life..

**Other Of Interest**

**Court orders revamped plan for military spouses to practice law in Florida**

Jim Saunders, News Service of Florida, Florida Supreme Court (Gray Rohrer/Orlando Sentinel), 12-14-2017


TALLAHASSEE — The state Supreme Court on Thursday turned down a proposal aimed at helping ease the way for military spouses to practice law in Florida and ordered a revamped plan that includes more restrictions.

The Florida Bar in February filed a petition to change rules and allow military spouses to practice in the state without first passing the Florida Bar exam. The proposal included a series of requirements, such as graduating from an accredited law school, passing another state's Bar exam and being admitted to practice elsewhere.

But the Supreme Court, in a 5-2 decision Thursday, directed the Florida Bar and the Florida Board of Bar Examiners to file a proposal within 90 days that includes more restrictions.

“Such restrictions must include a time limit on the duration of the authorization [to practice in Florida] and must require that all persons who receive authorization associate, either through participation in a law firm or through mentorship, with a member of the Bar who is eligible to practice law in Florida for the duration of the authorization,” said the majority decision by Chief Justice Jorge Labarga and justices Barbara Pariente, R. Fred Lewis, Peggy Quince and Ricky Polston.

But Justice Alan Lawson, in a dissent joined by Justice Charles Canady, wrote that the requirements in the Bar proposal would “suitably protect the public.”

“Accordingly, I would adopt the rules, as proposed, for the good and sufficient reason that they appropriately give form to the gratitude that we should all share for the sacrifices made each day by those serving in our Armed Forces, and by their families,” Lawson wrote.

**Bay Defense Alliance advocates for military bases, personnel**


PANAMA CITY — When the military bases in Bay County were under threat of closure in the 1990s, the Bay Defense Alliance formed to make sure that didn’t happen.

The BDA, a nonprofit made up of community members who advocate for local military bases and their personnel, was started in 1993 by former members of the Bay County Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee in response to the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process.

Since then, the BDA has worked behind the scenes to bolster the local military, whether it’s encouraging legislators or making sure service members and their families feel welcome. It’s important work; figures cited by the BDA point to a $2.5 billion annual economic impact from the military in Bay County and 22,561 jobs, which makes up 31.1 percent of the economy.

Since its formation, the BDA has helped keep Tyndall Air Force Base and Naval Support Activity Panama City open; advocated for having F-22s and a formal training unit at Tyndall; and supported a training complex in the Gulf Coast used by Air Force pilots and others, among other work. BDA members, numbering about 30, have traveled regionally and to Washington, D.C., to make sure the military remains a strong presence here.

The BDA “is a group of people that really understood our missions, could build trusting relationships with our legislators and with our military leadership that was progressing over the years into new jobs and different places,” BDA President Tom Neubauer said. “It has turned out to be a really smart move. ... The assurances we give to our bases are, ‘Look, we’re not going to get out in front of you. We’re here to help you support the mission, support the people and make sure the base has long life.’”

Retired from the military? States and cities are fighting to attract you

by Bobbie O'Brien (American Homefront), in St. Petersburg, Florida, 12-26-2017

Dec 26, 2017 — States and cities around the country are ramping up their efforts to attract military retirees, who they hope can boost the local economy. People who've retired from the armed services come with government pensions and VA health care, and some stay in the workforce after leaving the military.

Mike Plummer was instrumental in bringing the Tenth Mountain Division to Fort Drum in 1984. After his Army career...

He stayed in Watertown. It was affordable. He felt like people shared his values. And, he said, "I have two special children needs children and I have not found, nor my wife, any social service that’s anywhere near as good as what we have up here."

Plummer’s children are adults now. They live at home. "Instead of being in a sheltered workshop, they actually help them get drivers’ licenses so they could get job coaches so they could go to work every day and wake up with a goal to which to aspire," he said.

He credits the North Country - and its service providers - for his kids’ success.

Of course, North Country winters aren’t for everyone, and many military retirees flock to sunnier climes.

Florida wants you!

Florida officials like to brag that they’re the most veteran friendly state in the nation. Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam at a business conference last year listed some of the lesser known veteran
incentives: "If you are processing out of the military and you want to build your business here in Florida, we’re going to waive the application fees on almost every occupational license that’s out there. It means if you’re applying for a concealed weapons license, you’re going to go to the front of the line and it’s going to be expedited in less than two weeks," Putnam said.

There’s no ambivalence - if you’re retiring military - Florida Wants You!....
Jan 12

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #60 (agenda attached) will be **Next Week** on Thursday, 18 January 2018, beginning at 9:00AM at the Residence Inn, 600 W. Gaines Street, Tallahassee FL 32304. Meeting books are in the mail for members and e-books are available on our web site at [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/EBook-FDSTF-Meeting-60.pdf](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/EBook-FDSTF-Meeting-60.pdf).

2. **Call In Number**

   Call In Number: 800-501-8979       Access Code: 1869945

3. **Senator Broxson Files Military Friendly Bill** – Senator Doug Broxson filed SB1864, an “Act related to Military Affairs” on Jan 5, 2018. The bill is a nearly identical companion to the HB785 filed by Representative Ingram on 11-21-2017 (both bills attached). The bill includes several initiatives the Task Force has supported such as prohibiting landlord from requiring prospective tenant who is servicemember to deposit or advance certain amount of funds; authorizing a tenant who is a servicemember to terminate rental agreement under certain circumstances; providing that title to certain lands remains subject to easement for specified purposes; transferring certain duties from DEO to Florida Defense Support Task Force; and prohibiting certain construction or activities incompatible with mission of military installation on certain land under rural-lands-protection easements. SB1864 includes an additional provision that authorizes a state agency to set aside a certain amount of funds allocated for the procurement of personal property and services for contracts with certified veteran business enterprises that is not included in HB785.

4. **Governor Scott Stops Drilling of Florida’s Coast in the Gulf of Mexico** – Following the announcement by Secretary Zinke that areas of the Gulf of Mexico east of the Military Mission Line (MML) will be open following the end of the Gulf Of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) moratorium in 2022, Governor Scott jumped into action to help adjust policy. A key point in the BOEM plan is that sales are scheduled in 2023 (Sale 39) and 2024 (Sale 45) for east of the Military Mission Line in "those areas available following the expiration of the GOMESA moratorium." On January 9, 2018, Governor Scott met with Secretary Zinke in Tallahassee and was able to convince him and the Trump administration to curtail the plan. Additionally, members of Florida’s Congressional delegation including both Senators Nelson and Rubio as well as Congressmen Gaetz, Dunn and Rutherford pushed back vocally and according to some reports have garnered the support of Speaker Ryan to extend the GOMESA moratorium indefinitely. BOEM will be conducting public hearings nationally including a local Tallahassee date of February 8, 2018 at the Four Points by Sheraton. As a refresher on the topic, the White Paper on Oil Drilling and Military Mission Compatibility which is available on our website at [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/FDSTF-White-Paper-Oil-Drilling-and-Military-Mission-Compatability.pdf](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/FDSTF-White-Paper-Oil-Drilling-and-Military-Mission-Compatability.pdf). See several articles below in the CLIPS.
5. **House Resolution 319 (HB0319) Passes First Committee** – The Florida House Subcommittee on Local, Federal and Veteran’s Affairs met on Wednesday, January 10, 2018, and among other business, favorably passed House Resolution 319 (attached) by Representative Mel Ponder (FL-4) that supports an indefinite extension of the oil drilling moratorium currently codified in GOMESA. The committee unanimously approved the resolution without debate. The resolution states that: “State of Florida must maintain a united front in supporting an extension of the current moratorium on drilling in the Gulf of Mexico east of the Military Mission Line. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that to allow drilling east of the Military Mission Line would mean loss of range areas and possible relocation of aircraft and bases to other unrestricted range areas. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Florida House of Representatives supports an indefinite extension of the restriction, specified in the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006, oil and gas leasing in all areas east of the Military Mission Line established at 86°41' W. longitude and indefinite extension of the Act's ban oil and gas leasing within 125 miles of the Florida coastline in the Eastern Planning Area and in a portion of the Central Planning Area.”

6. **Senate Bill 370 Passes in Appropriations** – According to a press release from Lobbytools, “The Senate Appropriations Committee Thursday passed Senate budget chief Rob Bradley’s Florida Forever funding bill, sending it to the full chamber. SB 370 appropriates $100 million annually for land acquisition and conservation. Other efforts such as beach renourishment or to protect the St. Johns River are not included in the $100 million, Bradley said later. Bradley amended the bill to say that the Land Acquisition Trust Fund may not be used to cover administrative overhead costs.”

7. **National Defense Strategy to be Released Next Week** – According to Dan Cohen in “On Base” on 1-8-2018, “DOD will unveil its national defense strategy Jan. 19, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis told reporters Friday. Much of the strategy will remain classified, but a small portion of the document will be publicly released, reported Army Times. “There will be a classified one that is relatively thick; there will be a shorter one that will basically lay it out unclassified, and we’ll get those copies to you,” Mattis said. The review comes on the heels of the broader national security strategy, which President Trump introduced last month.”

8. **Military / Veteran Related Bills Filed This Week** – 2018 Session began on January 9, 2018. To review or track House Bills (HB), go to www.myfloridahouse.gov; for Senate Bills (SB), go to www.flsenate.gov. For both sites, insert the bill number at the top of the page if you would like current status throughout session. Bills filed this week are below and the current summary of all related bills filed to date is attached.

- **SB 1622 Lands Used for Governmental Purposes** (Flores)
  Lands Used for Governmental Purposes; Specifying the authority of the Division of State Lands within the Department of Environmental Protection to acquire lands from an annual list provided by the Department of Economic Opportunity and the Florida Defense Support Task Force for the purpose of buffering military installations against encroachment; authorizing land authorities to contribute tourist impact tax revenues to counties for the construction, redevelopment, and preservation of certain affordable housing, etc. Effective Date: Upon becoming a law

- **SB 1864 Military Affairs** (Broxson)
  Military Affairs; Prohibiting a landlord from requiring a prospective tenant who is a
servicemember to deposit or advance more than a certain amount of funds; providing that the title to certain lands remains subject to an easement to prevent encroachment of military installations after a tax sale or the issuance of a tax certificate in foreclosure proceedings; providing that the president of Enterprise Florida, Inc., is the executive director of the Florida Defense Support Task Force, etc. Effective Date: 7/1/2018

- **HB 0029 Military and Veterans Affairs** (Ponder)
  Military and Veterans Affairs: Revises licensure eligibility requirements, waiver of certain licensure fees, and prelicensure course requirements for certain military members, their spouses and veterans; designates "Medal of Honor Day"; establishes educational leadership certification requirements for certain individuals. Effective Date: July 1, 2018

- **SB 1884 Military and Veterans Affairs** (Broxson)
  Military and Veterans Affairs; Providing requirements relating to licensure or qualification for a trade, occupation, or profession of persons ordered into active duty or state active duty; specifying conditions under which a spouse of a person serving on active duty in the United States Armed Forces has a defense to a citation and cause of action brought due to the unlicensed practice of a health care profession; designating March 25 of each year as “Medal of Honor Day”; revising the list of students who must be given priority by the Florida Virtual School, etc. Effective Date: 7/1/2018

- **HB 1253 Veterinary Care for Retired Military Working Dogs** (Moskowitz)
  Veterinary Care for Retired Military Working Dogs: Creates Veterinary Care for Retired Military Working Dogs Program within DVA; requires DVA to contract with nonprofit corporation to administer program; provides selection criteria; provides for disbursement of program funds; provides for payment & use of administrative fees; provides appropriation. Effective Date: July 1, 2018

- **SB 1636 Homestead Tax Relief for Parents of Unmarried Veterans Who Died from Combat-Related Causes** (Rader)
  Homestead Tax Relief for Parents of Unmarried Veterans Who Died from Combat-Related Causes; Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to authorize the Legislature by general law to allow counties and municipalities to grant by ordinance partial or full ad valorem tax relief on homestead property of a parent or parents of an unmarried veteran who died from combat-related causes while on active duty as a member of the United States Armed Forces, etc.

- **SB 1638 Homestead Property Tax Exemptions** (Rader)
  Homestead Property Tax Exemptions; Authorizing counties and municipalities to exempt from taxation homestead property of certain parent or parents of certain unmarried veterans who died from combat-related causes while on active duty as members of the United States Armed Forces; authorizing the tax exemption to carry over or transfer under certain circumstances, etc. Effective Date: On the effective date of the amendment to the State Constitution proposed by SJR 1636 or a similar joint resolution having substantially the same specific intent and purpose, if such amendment to the state Constitution is approved at the general election held in November 2018 or at an earlier special election specifically authorized by law for that purpose
**SB 1740 Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services for Veterans** (Torres, Jr.)
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services for Veterans; Requiring a veteran who is involuntarily examined under the Baker Act or involuntarily assessed under the Hal S. Marchman Alcohol and Other Drug Services Act to be released to a United States Department of Veterans Affairs hospital to ensure coordination of treatment, etc.
Effective Date: 7/1/2018

**HB 1359 License Plates** (Grant (J))
Revises provisions relating to specialty license plate presale, discontinuance, fee distribution, & design; directs DHSMV to audit certain organizations receiving funds; establishes & deletes certain specialty license plates; provides for special license plate to be issued to Bronze Star recipient. Effective Date: October 1, 2018

9. Attachments:
- Meeting #60 Agenda
- SB 1864 and HB785
- HB0319 – Gulf of Mexico Range Complex
- TPG Bi-Weekly Conference Call Memo
- Military and Veterans Bills Filed to Date

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**FDSTF**

**Northwest Florida Rep. Clay Ingram meets term limit**

by Allie Norton, 1-8-2018

This will be the last session for a Northwest Florida representative. Clay Ingram meets his term limit this year.

He said it's bittersweet for him.
Ingram said he'll be mostly focusing on topics from the committee he chairs, which is for transportation and tourism.

"Most of my time will be spent on trying to make sure that things like the five-year work program in the Department of Transportation are well funded and so that's sort of the nuts and bolts of what I personally will be doing when the session starts tomorrow," he said.

Ingram said he'll also be working on recommendations from the Florida Defenses Support Task Force. He said one of those is to make sure military personnel aren't taken advantage of and receive fair housing.

**Northwest Florida Support Group Leverages Region’s Assets to Secure Reaper Mission**

Dan Cohen, “On Base”, 1-12-2018


Despite receiving a lack of encouragement from a four-star general about the chances that Tyndall AFB, Fla., could host remotely piloted aircraft (RPA), leaders of the Bay Defense Alliance believed the new mission was worth pursuing as the installation had some strong selling points. The first one that came to mind was the favorable climate and quality of life of the Florida Panhandle, a sharp contrast to the Nevada desert location of Creech AFB, BDA President Tom Neubauer told the Panama City News Herald. During a visit to Creech in 2016, Neubauer learned the Air Force had a critical shortage of RPA pilots.

But Tyndall possessed other assets as well. It already had a runway for unmanned systems and the cost of construction was cheaper than at Vandenberg AFB, the Air Force’s alternative. And the region’s strong history of support for the military couldn’t hurt. “The scoring of the bases was close,” Neubauer said. “The difference between one base and the other may have just been community support, so everything you do and all the members of the community to support the military was probably the game changer.

In November, the Air Force announced that Tyndall had been selected as the preferred location for a new wing of MQ-9 Reapers. At the time, Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson cited multiple attributes for the decision — fewer aircraft competing for air space, nearby training ranges, great weather and lower upfront costs at Tyndall.

**Gulf Range / Oil Drilling**

**Editorial: Why Trump’s drilling plan is wrong for Florida, Nation**

Published: January 5, 2018, Updated: January 5, 2018 at 05:03 PM


The Trump administration’s plan to open virtually all U.S. coastal waters to new oil and gas drilling is wrongheaded in every respect. It’s bad for Florida, which depends on a healthy environment for its multibillion-dollar tourism, fishing and agriculture industries. It’s bad for American military readiness, which depends on open waters near the coast for U.S. forces to conduct training exercises. And it’s bad
for America’s economy and influence in the world, as other states and nations continue to reap the benefits of leading a global shift toward renewable energies.

This invitation to drill, of course, was expected. President Donald Trump signed an order in April directing the Interior Department to review an Obama-era plan that limited drilling in areas of the Arctic and southeast Atlantic between 2017 and 2022. The president was looking to maximize production activity on the outer continental shelf in the Alaska region, the southern and mid-Atlantic and the western and central Gulf of Mexico. On Thursday, the department issued a proposal to reverse the Obama-era rules; rather than 94 percent of the outer continental shelf being off-limits, more than 90 percent would be open for leases under a five-year plan beginning next year.

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke’s plan calls for 47 lease sales in 25 of the 26 offshore planning areas by 2024, including 12 lease sales in the Gulf of Mexico. Ten of those sales in the gulf would be in areas not currently off-limits. A congressional agreement from 2006 bars drilling within 125 miles of the Florida Panhandle and 235 miles of Tampa Bay. But that agreement expires in 2022. After it expires, the Trump plan calls for two lease sales in the eastern and central gulf, marking the first time since the 1980s that the majority of the eastern gulf would be open to drilling.

The Trump administration’s review was clearly a sham to rationalize a drill-baby-drill energy policy in even the most sensitive waters. The 2010 BP Deepwater Horizon rig disaster showed how a spill off the coast of Louisiana could impact Florida. It exposed the difference between a safety plan that exists on paper and one that’s tested by reality. That’s one reason Florida Democratic Sen. Bill Nelson has led the charge to block drilling off Florida’s coast. He sought to pre-empt the Trump administration’s move last year with legislation to block any new areas for drilling until at least 2022. Nelson has also moved to extend the existing ban in the eastern gulf an additional five years, until 2027.

U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, Gov. Rick Scott and other state Republican leaders also voiced opposition to the Trump plan on Thursday, joining Democrats in a bipartisan push to keep waters off Florida’s coast off-limits. Scott said he asked to "immediately meet" with Zinke to relay his concerns. Beyond the environmental and economic risks of a spill, the Pentagon also sees keeping oil rigs away from the coast of Florida as essential for protecting the safety of military training operations in the area. The Defense Department, in a letter to Congress last year, said it "cannot overstate the vital importance of maintaining this moratorium." The ban needs to be made permanent…..

The Gulf is our future, protect it: Guestview

Jack Stevenson, Guest columnist, Published 9:00 a.m. CT Jan. 7, 2018

The military training and testing missions conducted in the eastern Gulf of Mexico from Eglin Air Force Base are a vital part of our national defense.

President Trump signed Executive Order 13795 on April 28, 2017, directing the Secretary of the Interior to expand lease exploration drilling sales to include the U.S. continental shelf. However, the executive order excludes the eastern Gulf area that is used for military training and testing. That area is protected by law until 2022. The protected area extends from the Military Mission Line, a western boundary located approximately at Mary Esther, Florida, to the west coast of Florida and south to the Florida Keys. All of that space is needed for the various types of training, testing, and weapons required for defense of the United States.

The military training area is currently protected for the next four years, but considering the many contentious issues facing the U.S. Congress and the difficulty of obtaining agreement, it is not too soon to pursue an extension of law that ensures defense training and testing capabilities in the eastern Gulf.
Florida has 10 U.S. congressional districts that border the eastern Gulf: 1st, Matt Gaetz (R); 2nd, Neal Dunn (R); 11th Daniel Webster (R); 12th, Gus Bilirakis (R); 13th, Charlie Crist (D); 16th, Vern Buchanan (R); 17th, Tom Rooney (R); 19th, Francis Rooney (R); 25th, Mario Diaz-Balart (R); and 26th, Carlos Curbelo (R). These 10 members of the U.S. House of Representatives and Florida's two U.S. Senators, Marco Rubio and Bill Nelson, have an interest, in behalf of their constituents, in extending the current law that reserves the eastern Gulf for necessary military use. Together, they should have enough influence to persuade their congressional colleagues to reserve the eastern Gulf for an additional forty years. During that time, military technology and petroleum requirements will change, and a new assessment will eventually be needed…..

Oil and gas industry wants a crack at waters off Florida's coast

By Karen Graham, 1-8-2018

President Trump’s administration has proposed opening up nearly all of America’s offshore waters to oil and gas drilling, but the industry says it is mainly interested in one part of it, now cordoned off by the Pentagon - the eastern Gulf of Mexico.

The oil and gas industry is more interested in drilling in the waters off Florida's Gulf Coast and the Straits of Florida, even though the Department of the Interior's proposal, open to public comment for the next 60 days, would more than quadruple the number of drilling leases available in U.S. waters.

The proposal would also open the waters off California, the Atlantic Coast and the Arctic to drilling. But accessing the Eastern Gulf Coast waters would likely require the consent of the U.S. military. This area has been off-limits to drilling since 2006 due mainly to the Defense Department's concerns that oil development would interfere with extensive military testing and training exercises in the area.

"The eastern Gulf of Mexico could be very attractive to industry because of the proximity to existing infrastructure in the central and western Gulf of Mexico," the National Ocean Industries Association, which represents the offshore oil and gas industry, said in a statement.

"Investing in the eastern Gulf could yield results - new jobs, new oil and gas production and increased energy security - quicker than investing in other offshore areas."……

GOP congressmen say Ryan to push permanent moratorium on eastern Gulf drilling

By MATT DIXON and BRUCE RITCHIE, 01/08/2018 03:57 PM EST

TALLAHASSEE — With President Donald Trump proposing an expansion of offshore oil and gas drilling, two Republican Florida congressmen say they have received assurances from House Speaker Paul Ryan that he will push for a permanent moratorium on drilling in the waters of the eastern Gulf of Mexico.
“There is a governmental funding bill that has to be passed later this month,” said Rep. Matt Gaetz, (R-Fla.) “Francis Rooney and I had a conversation about this with Speaker Ryan, who gave Rooney and I a commitment that eastern Gulf moratorium language will be in the must-pass bill.”

Both Gaetz, who is from Shalimar, and Rooney, a Republican from Naples, represent districts that border the Gulf of Mexico and are staunch Trump supporters. Like other elected officials in Florida, the two oppose the administration’s plan, unveiled last week, to include Florida in expanded offshore drilling, but hope language creating a permanent moratorium on eastern Gulf of Mexico drilling will ease concerns.

Rooney said he was personally working on such language, with the aim of making sure the current drilling moratorium does not expire.

"Matt [Gaetz] heard the speaker say the same thing I did — he and the leadership will help us on preventing expiration of the moratorium," Rooney said. "I am drafting language to do this, and to begin recruiting support with Matt and others."

Ryan’s office did not return a request seeking comment.

Gaetz also joked about getting help from former Republican Speaker John Boehner, who owns property on an island off Florida's southwest coast. "I want to thank former Speaker Boehner for all his help from Marco Island on this," he said.

The issue of banning drilling in the Gulf of Mexico goes back to President George W. Bush. He signed into law the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 that bans oil and gas leasing within 125 miles off the Florida coastline and areas of the Gulf of Mexico until 2022. Companies could exchange leases in the closed areas for bonuses and royalty credits on leases elsewhere in the Gulf of Mexico.

A year ago, the Florida Defense Support Task Force called on the state to "maintain a united front in supporting an extension of the current moratorium on drilling" east of the "military mission line" in the eastern Gulf. That line extends south from the Santa Rosa-Okaloosa county line.

In January 2017, Democratic Sen. Bill Nelson filed S. 74 (115) to extend the moratorium to 2027.

In March, Nelson and 16 bipartisan members of Florida's congressional delegation urged the Trump administration to keep the eastern Gulf of Mexico off limits to drilling because of military training and coastal tourism.

Among those not signing the letter were Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), along with Panhandle Republican Reps. Neal Dunn (R-Panama City) and Gaetz.

Later in March, Dunn and Gaetz were among 15 delegation members who asked Defense Secretary Jim Mattis to support maintaining the moratorium on oil and gas to protect military training in the region. Last May, Rubio filed his own bill, S. 1041 (115), to extend the moratorium but neither his nor Nelson's bill have been heard by committees.

Rubio asked Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke last week to remove the area for future planning purposes. Nelson said he will do "everything I can to defeat it."

Rep. Neal Dunn (R-Fla.) said on Monday that Rep. Rob Bishop, (R-Utah), who chairs the House Committee on Natural Resources, told him that he would "work very constructively" on a proposal extending the moratorium on drilling for 40 years.

Asked whether the environment was a consideration in opposing drilling, Dunn told POLITICO, "I'm all about the military."

"This is a unique asset for the country," he said of the military training range in the Gulf. "When I say unique it cannot be duplicated anywhere else in the country."
He added; "I want to see America be completely independent energy wise. I think it makes the world a more stable place."

Gov. Scott Fought to Protect Florida’s Coastline

Press Release by Staff, January 9, 2018

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, following Governor Rick Scott’s meeting with United States Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke, the Department of the Interior announced that Florida’s coastline has been removed from consideration for future oil drilling. Last week, Governor Scott requested to immediately meet with Secretary Zinke to discuss his concerns with the federal oil drilling plan and the crucial need to remove Florida from consideration.

Governor Scott said, “I am proud to announce that Secretary Zinke has agreed to remove Florida’s coastline from consideration for future oil drilling. I would like to thank Secretary Zinke for coming to Tallahassee today following my request for a meeting last week to hear our concerns about oil drilling off Florida’s coast. By removing Florida from consideration, we can now focus on how we can further protect our environment, including our proposal for record funding for the Everglades, our springs, our beaches and our state parks. I will never stop fighting for Florida’s environment and our pristine coastline.”

Secretary Ryan Zinke said, “I have had the honor to witness Governor Scott's leadership through hurricane season and am working closely with him on Everglades restoration. He is straightforward and a leader that can be trusted. President Trump has directed me to rebuild our offshore oil and gas program in a manner that supports our national energy policy and also takes into consideration the local and state voice. I support the governor’s position that Florida is unique and its coast is heavily reliant on tourism as an economic driver. As a result of today's discussion and Governor Scott's leadership, I am removing Florida from consideration for any new oil and gas platforms.”

Trump administration says no oil drilling off Florida coast

By Gary Fineout and Matthew Daly | AP January 9 at 7:57 PM
https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/energy-environment/trump-administration-says-no-oil-drilling-off-florida-coast/2018/01/09/d0d9bd50-f59a-11e7-9af7-a50bc330042_story.html?utm_term=.1b8c6a9b75b0

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — The Trump administration said Tuesday it would not allow oil drilling off the coast of Florida, abruptly reversing course under pressure from Republican Gov. Rick Scott.

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said after a brief meeting with Scott at the Tallahassee airport that drilling would be “off the table” when it comes to waters in the eastern Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean off Florida.

The change of course — just five days after Zinke announced the offshore drilling plan — highlights the political importance of Florida, where President Donald Trump narrowly won the state’s 29 electoral votes in the 2016 election and has encouraged Scott to run for Senate.

The state is also important economically, with a multibillion-dollar tourism business built on sunshine and miles and miles of white sandy beaches.
Zinke said Tuesday that “Florida is obviously unique” and that the decision to remove the state came after meetings and discussion with Scott……

Florida congressional delegation opposes rolling back oil drilling regulations

By Staff report, Posted Jan 9, 2018 at 11:07 AM, Updated Jan 9, 2018 at 11:07 AM

WASHINGTON — Twenty members of Florida’s congressional delegation sent a letter Tuesday to the Trump Administration opposing any rollback of safety regulations adopted after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

The letter was released by delegation co-chairmen U.S. Reps. Vern Buchanan, R-Longboat Key, and Alcee Hastings.

In a letter to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, the Florida representatives warned that “an oil spill can devastate a regional economy and inflict long-term environmental damage” and asked the secretary to “reject any proposals to roll back regulations that were specifically adopted to address systemic safety failures that led to the 2010 Deepwater Horizon spill.”

A division of the Interior Department, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, recently said some of the regulations adopted in response to the tragedy created “potentially unduly burdensome requirements” on oil and gas operators, Buchanan’s office said in a news release. The proposal to roll back safety rules was published in the Federal Register at the end of 2017……

Rick Scott and Trump administration strike deal: No drilling off Florida coast

By Steve Bousquet, 1-9-2018

A hastily-arranged airport rendezvous Tuesday ended with an announcement from President Donald Trump's administration that the state of Florida is "off the table" for new offshore oil drilling, a declaration that brought both relief and protests of election-year politics.

Florida Gov. Rick Scott met with U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke at the airport in Tallahassee Tuesday afternoon. Both men emerged 20 minutes later to face waiting reporters, who had an hour's notice of the meeting.

"As a result of our interest in making sure that there's no drilling here, Florida will be taken off the table," Scott said.

Zinke said the decision was a culmination of multiple meetings between Scott and Trump administration officials.

"Florida is obviously unique," Zinke said. "For Floridians, we are not drilling off the coast of Florida, and clearly the governor has expressed that it's important."
The airport meeting came five days after the Trump administration made the controversial announcement that it would open a massive area to offshore oil exploration. Four days before the drilling announcement, Scott and Trump had a New Year's Eve lunch at Mar-a-Lago, the president's estate in Palm Beach.

Thursday's drilling declaration immediately brought howls of protest from governors as far north as New Jersey and included Scott, a Trump supporter who is strongly considering running for the U.S. Senate this year against Democratic Sen. Bill Nelson……

Drilling ban applauded, but questions remain

By TOM McLAUGHLIN, Posted Jan 10, 2018 at 6:45 PM, Updated Jan 10, 2018 at 6:45 PM

Prior to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke’s announcement Tuesday that Florida would be exempt from Trump administration efforts to expand offshore drilling across the country, First District Congressman Matt Gaetz had begun working to persuade the White House to reconsider its stance.

A week ago, Zinke announced a plan to open 90 percent of the nation’s continental shelf area to exploration and drilling. Following the announcement, Gaetz began documenting the negative economic and national defense impacts drilling could have on the Eastern Gulf of Mexico.

He said his plan was to present a strong argument against the proposal, but he was glad to abandon his fact finding when Zinke announced his reversal.

“This is a great day for Northwest Florida,” Gaetz said Wednesday morning.

Later, Gaetz released a formal statement heaping praise on Gov. Rick Scott, who Zinke largely credited with convincing him to exempt Florida from oil drilling consideration.

“I am deeply pleased that Secretary Zinke will no longer pursue oil drilling off the Florida coast, which would have been disastrous to Florida’s economy, the environment, and, most importantly, to the readiness of America’s armed forces,” Gaetz said. “Governor Scott’s strong leadership on this issue and President Trump’s swift response were commendable, and I am proud that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle could unite to protect the Sunshine State.”……

……..“What exactly does off the table mean?” Nelson asked his fellow senators rhetorically. “The whole Eastern Gulf? Half of it? 125 miles off the coast? Does it mean both coasts of Florida? Does it mean just one? What about the Straits of Florida?”

Nelson also wanted to know if Zinke intended, as part of the announced Florida drilling exemption, to prevent the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management from conducting seismic testing off the coast.

Such testing poses risks to all forms of saltwater life, up to and including whales and dolphins, Jackalone said, and isn’t necessary in water where drilling is off limits.

Florida’s senior senator also questioned whether Zinke’s support for banning drilling off the state meant that the Trump administration would support a call to extend the existing moratorium against drilling east of the military mission line. The moratorium runs now through 2022.

Calls have been made to extend the moratorium for five years. Given Zinke’s recent comments, Jackalone it is conceivable Florida’s congressional delegation could be in position to push for the Gulf Coast Energy Security Act moratorium to be made permanent.

“I’ve never seen it go that far, but Congressman Gaetz says he’s got a commitment from Speaker Ryan,” Jackalone said. “I would support any effort to create a permanent moratorium.”
The drafting, negotiation, and passage of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) is an annual event that sets the annual budget for the Department of Defense. During this time Congress is able to exert control over the priorities, guiding principles, and issues that will be addressed by the department in the coming year. The 2018 incarnation of the NDAA, which has just been signed into law by the president, includes, nested in Title XVI, Subtitle C, provisions, a requirement that the White House and the DOD meaningfully investigate, consider, and establish national standards and guidance in the cybersecurity and cyber-warfare space. They must explore the development of a national posture for these issues.

Title XVI, Subtitle C, which is referred to as “Cyberspace-Related Matters,” contains several provisions, suggestions and requirements which range from prohibiting Kaspersky Lab products on federal systems (Section 1634) to studying the application of blockchain technologies for the DOD (Section 1646), and even authorizing the department to help states assess and detect cyber vulnerabilities in state elections (1638). Additionally, Congress wants DOD to concentrate on increasing America’s leadership role in the development of international legal norms for cyber warfare. While these are all important aspects of the U.S. national cybersecurity posture, they are constituent elements of a much larger query: what is the U.S. cyber posture and position. Fortuitously, this section contains provisions that require the DOD to analyze, study and propose answers to these questions which play a unique role in preserving America’s national security into the twenty-first century. Congress has used its power of the purse to ensure heightened engagement with these essential issues. This article seeks to present and consider Congress’ priorities in this space as they were made manifest in the 2018 NDAA…

BAY COUNTY, Fla. - Officials from the Bay Defense Alliance gave an update Wednesday Morning on the MQ-9 Reaper Wing set to land at Tyndall Air Force Base.

Back in November, the Bay Defense Alliance announced that Tyndall Air Force Base is one of the top candidates to be the home for the MQ-9 Reaper mission.

The Air Force scored bases to determine the best place for the program, and Bay Defense Alliance President, Tom Neubauer, said Tyndall Air Force Base is the front runner.
"Other bases scored very well also, we knew it would be very close," he said. "But what Tyndall has in addition to the Gulf range airspace, the grassy airspace, the location here which is ideal for drones -- we have a culture here of unmanned systems for several decades, so that is engrained in Tyndall."

The mission is anticipated to provide 1,600 jobs and bring new families to the area.

One of the requirements for the location of the program is a military supportive community, which they found in Bay County.

"This community has always been very fond of the military, we have military parades, we have different things, I don't think it's a secret anywhere what we think of the military," Panama City Beach Mayor, Mike Thomas, said.....

**FL National Guard / Camp Blanding**

**Tears, hugs in Lakeland as National Guard unit deploys**

By John Chambliss, Posted Jan 7, 2018 at 9:21 PM, Updated at 9:42 AM  

**LAKELAND** — Bryan Kirkland of Lakeland clutched his three children in a long hug Sunday afternoon. Monte Klein of Ocala couldn’t let go of his 3-year-old son, Parker.

It was a scene repeated over and over full of hugs, tears, and expressions of love as a 120-member unit from the Florida Army National Guard said goodbye to loved ones at Joker Marchant Stadium before they left for a year-long mission in the Middle East......

.....The departing unit was the 3rd Battalion, 116th Field Artillery Regiment based in Plant City. They were expected to take a bus to Lakeland Linder Regional Airport and board a plane to Texas. From there, they planned to fly to an undisclosed location in the Middle East. Most of the members of the Guard, who trained in Avon Park, were from Central Florida.

Hundreds of people sat in the stands at the stadium as National Guard officials and Gov. Rick Scott spoke to the unit as the stood on the baseball field. In addition to Scott, numerous politicians attended, including U.S. Rep. Dennis Ross, R-Lakeland, Lakeland Mayor Bill Mutz, and City Commissioners Scott Franklin, Michael Dunn and Stephanie Madden.....

**MacDill AFB**

**2019 Warrior Games coming to Tampa**

Howard Altman, Times staff writer, Published: January 8, 2018, Updated: January 8, 2018 at 08:33 PM  

**TAMPA** – The 2019 Department of Defense Warrior Games are coming to Tampa.

U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson made the announcement Monday after receiving a letter from the Pentagon.

In a recent letter, the Pentagon informed Nelson that the games, which drew about 50,000 people when held in Chicago last year, will be hosted by U.S. Special Operations Command, with headquarters at MacDill Air Force Base.
"The supportive relationship between the military and Tampa community made Tampa the clear choice for the 2019 Games," Pentagon official Robert Wilkie wrote to Nelson, a Florida Democrat.

The Warrior Games were established in 2010 as a way to enhance the recovery and rehabilitation of wounded warriors and to expose them to adaptive sports. Last year, about 265 wounded, ill and injured service members and veterans took part at the games, held in Chicago, representing teams from the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Coast Guard, Air Force, SOCom, United Kingdom and the Australian Defense Force.

They competed in shooting, archery, cycling, track and field, swimming, sitting volleyball and wheelchair basketball. A warmup event for the SOCom team was held last year at MacDill.

The 2018 games will be held at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Cape Canaveral AFS

Air Force commander predicts big year – and beyond – for Space Coast launches

Emre Kelly, FLORIDA TODAY, Published 7:17 p.m. ET Jan. 9, 2018 | Updated 6:07 a.m. ET Jan. 10, 2018

The Space Coast will live up to its moniker this year and beyond as advances spearheaded by the Air Force and space industry boost launch-related activities, the 45th Space Wing's commander said during a Tuesday luncheon in Cape Canaveral.

"I can't imagine, short of the time back in the 60s and 70s, when there was a better time to be in this business," Brig. Gen. Wayne Monteith said during a packed National Space Club Florida Committee luncheon at the Radisson Resort at the Port. "And we get to do it on the Space Coast."

He said the area could see up to 35 launches this year, a healthy increase over last year's 19, though a few will be submarine-launched Trident missiles, which are classified missions. Delays due to weather and hardware issues, though, usually deflate the projected number.

"One quarter of all the launches in the world come from the Eastern Range," Monteith, who is also director of the Eastern Range, said. "That's pretty darn remarkable considering we are in the lightning capital of America."

The Range is comprised of both Kennedy Space Center and Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

His Wing has embarked on the "Drive to 48," or a target of supporting up to 48 launches a year, which translates to one a week on average. That could unfold between 2020 and 2023 as Blue Origin starts flying alongside SpaceX, United Launch Alliance, Orbital ATK, NASA and possibly others.

US Southern Command

Honduran Communities Receive Humanitarian Aid

Kay Valle/Diálogo | 8 January 2018
Rural communities in the department of Choluteca, on the border with Nicaragua, benefitted from medical assistance provided through a U.S. military humanitarian aid campaign. From October 26th–28th, 2017, people in Comalí, Duyure, and Monjaras received medical care and took preventive medicine courses.

Members of Joint Task Force Bravo’s (JTF-Bravo) Medical Element, under U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), headquartered at Soto Cano Air Base in Comayagua, Honduras, conducted a Medical Readiness Training Exercise (MEDRETE) in support of the Honduran Ministry of Health. A 42-person brigade from JTF-Bravo, including medical and military personnel, deployed to southern Honduras to help local residents. More than 100 Honduran service members, general practitioners, and medical specialists also joined their peers from JTF-Bravo.

### U.S. and Chilean Special Forces Poised for Regional Challenges

Felipe Lagos/Diálogo | 11 January 2018  

For almost three weeks, the U.S. Gulf Coast took center stage in a special operations training that included hundreds of U.S. and Chilean troops. Special forces from both countries carried out air, land, and sea maneuvers in mock situations.

The Northern Star 17 exercise included more than 70 U.S. and 88 Chilean special forces troops. U.S. participation included personnel from Special Operations Command South (SOCSOUTH), Marine Corps Special Operations Command, and the U.S. Army's 7th and 20th Special Forces Groups. Chile attended with troops from the Army, Navy, and Air Force Special Operations Brigade as well as delegates from the Joint Chiefs of Staff (EMCO, in Spanish).

“U.S. and Chilean Special Operations Forces have a long shared history of military cooperation and training,” U.S. Army Colonel Marshall Ecklund, deputy commander of SOCSOUTH told Diálogo. “This annual exchange has become a symbol of the degree of cooperation between U.S. and Chilean Special Operations Forces.”

The exercise—second to happen on U.S. soil—took place from October 18th–November 3rd, 2017, in several training camps, including Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center, the National Guard Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTR), and NASA’s Stennis Space Center, on the Mississippi coast. Northern Star seeks to increase the interoperability capacities of both countries’ special operations units.

### DoD Budget

**Bulk of Buildup to Await FY'20 Budget, Shanahan Says**

Dan Cohen, “On Base”, 1-8-2018  

While the first signs of the military buildup President Trump promised since taking office will be evident in the fiscal 2019 budget request the administration is slated to release in February, much of
the planned growth will not be fully apparent until the FY 2020 proposal. The FY 2019 budget will
include a “step up” in the defense budget, Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan told reporters
last month, but the lion’s share of the administration’s long-term strategy will not be fully realized until
the FY 2020 budget, as the national security strategy and subsequent documents — the national
defense strategy, ballistic missile defense review and nuclear posture review — were being prepared at
the same time as the FY 2019 budget, reported Defense News.

“A big portion of my time in the next twelve months will be to make sure [the FY 2020 budget] is the
masterpiece. It is probably the next biggest step we can take to make sure we can’t unwind the
strategy,” Shanahan said. He would not provide details about the FY 2020 budget, but said it would be
driven with the national defense strategy “firmly planted on the hill in front of our brains.”

Fourth CR is Likely Next Step in FY'18 Appropriations Process
Dan Cohen, “On Base”, 1-9-2018
http://mailchi.mp/defensecommunities/president-softens-stance-on-border-wall-funding-253433?e=28cebe069c

With congressional leaders no closer to reaching agreement on topline spending levels for fiscal 2018,
lawmakers almost certainly will need to clear a fourth continuing resolution (CR) by Jan. 19, when the
current stopgap runs out. Talks have slowed as Democrats’ attempt to include a fix for “Dreamers,”
undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States as children, in a budget deal appears
to have led to a standoff as President Trump is insisting on funding for a border wall and other
provisions Democrats oppose, reports the Hill.

House appropriators returning to Washington on Monday offered varying views on how long the next
CR would last, ranging from a “very short term” to a month.

GOP Considering a Tremendous Jump in Defense Budget Caps
Dan Cohen, “On Base”, 1-11-2018
http://mailchi.mp/defensecommunities/president-softens-stance-on-border-wall-funding-253441?e=28cebe069c

Republican leaders are discussing a budget deal that would lift the statutory defense spending caps by
$152 billion over two years, but provide non-defense accounts a boost of only $95 billion for fiscal
2018-2019. Such a proposal would meet the demands of defense hawks, but because it would violate
Democrats’ insistence on parity between increases in the two accounts, it is not clear whether the
proposal, or anything close to it, could be the basis of a bipartisan agreement. Still, lawmakers are
hoping to reach a deal on new cap levels by next week, reports CQ.

At the same time, the GOP is considering a fourth continuing resolution that would extend government
funding through Feb. 16, although a March deadline also has been discussed. Congressional leaders are
crafting a measure to attract bipartisan on the floor of both chambers next week, but the ongoing
standoff over Democrats’ attempt to include a fix for “Dreamers,” undocumented immigrants who
were brought to the United States as children, in a spending deal remains a key hurdle.
WASHINGTON — Each passing day without a budget, the U.S. military runs the risk of falling behind in a frenetic race to defend the nation against new, rapidly evolving cyber and hybrid warfare threats.

“The longer a CR [continuing resolution] lasts, the more damage it does,” said spokeswoman Dana White during a Pentagon press briefing Thursday, in response to Sen. Mark Warner’s concern about U.S. military readiness.

On the “Target USA” podcast, Warner, D-Va., said: “Conflict in the 21st century may more often be waged in cyberspace. We’ve seen the Chinese hack into Equifax and OPM [Office of Personnel Management]. We’ve seen the Russians attempt to disrupt our elections. I worry that cyber, misinformation, disinformation and fake news may be the tools of conflict in the 21st century, and I’m not sure we’re ready for that.”

White pushed back against Warner’s remarks, but acknowledged that the Department of Defense is restricted because of political wrangling.

“The president has demonstrated by the fact that we elevated cyber command to a full command that we have an involving threat in cyberspace, so we are ready and we are preparing,” White said……
Jan 19

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #61 will be on Thursday, 15 February 2018, beginning at 9:00AM via Conference Call / WebEX.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979       Access Code: 1869945

3. **Senate Resolution (SB0550) Passes First Committee** – The Senate Environmental Preservation and Conservation committee met on Tuesday, January 16, 2018, and among other business, favorably passed Senate Resolution 550 (attached) by Senator Doug Broxson that supports an indefinite extension of the oil drilling moratorium currently codified in Federal Law. The committee unanimously approved the resolution with little debate. The resolution states that: “State of Florida must maintain a united front in supporting an extension of the current moratorium on drilling in the Gulf of Mexico east of the Military Mission Line. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that to allow drilling east of the Military Mission Line would mean loss of range areas and possible relocation of aircraft and bases to other unrestricted range areas. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate supports an indefinite extension of the restriction, specified in the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006, oil and gas leasing in all areas east of the Military Mission Line established at 86°41’ W. longitude and indefinite extension of the Act's ban oil and gas leasing within 125 miles of the Florida coastline in the Eastern Planning Area and in a portion of the Central Planning Area.” See articles on Oil Drilling below in the CLIPS.

4. **Senator Nelson Files “Florida Coastal Protection Act”** – Senator Bill Nelson filed Senate Bill 2292 (115) on January 10, 2018, to create a permanent ban on drilling off Florida. The bill (attached) states that its purpose is “To amend the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to prohibit oil and gas preleasing, leasing, and related activities in certain areas of the Outer Continental Shelf off the coast of Florida, and for other purposes.” See articles below in the CLIPS.

5. **National Defense Strategy (NDS) Released** – Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis released the Department’s National Defense Strategy today. The NDS outlines how the DoD plans to carry out the National Security Strategy (NSS) that President Trump released late last year. The National Military Strategy (NMS) will follow from the Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff as the third major strategy document. According to reports from Aaron Mehta at Defense News, “The Pentagon’s new National Defense Strategy lays out a world where great-power competition, rather than counter-terrorism, will drive the department’s decision making and force structure. “Inter-state strategic competition, not terrorism, is now the primary concern in U.S. national security,” the 11-page unclassified summary of the strategy reads. Instead, “the central challenge to U.S. prosperity and security is the reemergence of long-term strategic competition,” primarily from China and Russia.” Click this link to see the 11-page summary of NDS – https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf. See article below in the CLIPS.
6. **FDSTF Grant Window Re-opens in February** – The Task Force will accept additional limited applications for possible funding in FY2019 which begins July 1, 2018. The Task Force will except applications for projects that have developed since our last application window in August and are of such a nature as waiting for possible funding in FY2020 would make them outdated / obsolete. The Task Force will need justification provided in the application. Selected projects will compete with projects already submitted for in person presentation before the Task Force on May 17, 2018 in Tallahassee FL. Applications will be accepted between February 15 and March 2, 2018. The Task Force will only accept applications using our on-line form (do not use prior forms) at this link: [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/FY-2018-2019-FDSTF-Grant-Funding-Application-Form_distributed.pdf](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/FY-2018-2019-FDSTF-Grant-Funding-Application-Form_distributed.pdf).

7. **Military / Veteran Related Bills Filed This Week** – 2018 Session began on January 9, 2018. To review or track House Bills (HB), go to [www.myfloridahouse.gov](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov); for Senate Bills (SB), go to [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov). For both sites, insert the bill number at the top of the page if you would like current status throughout session. Bills filed this week are below and the current summary of all related bills filed to date is attached.

- No New Bills Filed This Week

8. **Attachments:**
- SB0550 – Gulf of Mexico Range Complex
- Senate Bill 2292 - Florida Coastal Protection Act
- Military and Veterans Bills Filed to Date

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**Oil Drilling / Gulf Range**

No more offshore drilling off Florida? Not so fast

LEDYARD KING, THE NEWS-PRESS, Published 8:00am ET Jan. 13, 2018 | Updated 10:23am ET Jan. 13, 2018  
WASHINGTON – So the Trump administration takes months to create an offshore oil and gas drilling plan that includes Florida.

Gov. Rick Scott immediately objects and requests a meeting with Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke.

Within days, Zinke flies to Tallahassee and, after a 20-minute meeting with the GOP governor, removes Florida from the drilling program.

Simple, right?

Not to the oil and gas industry that’s eager to tap into the mineral-rich eastern Gulf of Mexico. And not to congressional lawmakers in Florida who oppose offshore drilling and don’t think Zinke’s verbal promise at a Tallahassee airport is enough.


A day after Zinke made the announcement with Scott at his side, Nelson was on the floor of the Senate on Wednesday asking what the secretary meant by taking Florida “off the table.”

“What exactly does off the table mean?” Nelson said. “The whole eastern Gulf, half of it? 125 miles off the coast? Does it mean both coasts of Florida? Does it mean just one? What about the Straits of Florida? Okay, Secretary Zinke, what about the seismic surveys? You all have said you're proceeding with that. Are those off the table too?”

If Florida’s offshore oil rush ever happens, only one side of the state is likely to see it

BY JENNY STALETTOVICH, January 14, 2018 07:00 AM, Updated January 14, 2018 08:43 AM

The offshore drilling rigs that pepper the central Gulf of Mexico off Louisiana and Texas tap some of the nation’s richest oil and natural gas reserves.

That proven and profitable productivity is why the energy industry has pushed for decades to open vast Gulf waters off Florida’s West Coast to exploration and drilling.

But it’s far less likely for rigs to rise off Miami Beach, Islamorada or anywhere else along Florida’s heavily populated Atlantic coast — and that was the case even before the Trump administration last week pulled state waters “off the table” after a Tallahassee meeting that seemed intended to boost Gov. Rick Scott’s rumored run for U.S. Senate.

There is one big reason why: Money.

Even industry experts see little chance of making much of it plumbing the depths of the Florida Straits and Atlantic coast, at least barring the discovery of some unexpected mother lode or a skyrocketing upturn in oil and gas prices.

“I’ve been involved in the oil and gas industry a long time, but even I am sitting back scratching my head,” said David Dismukes, head of Louisiana State University’s Center for Energy Studies. “If you look at where crude is trading now, we’re not in a favorable environment for high-cost risks.”

Florida’s Gulf waters have long been considered the next offshore frontier for the energy industry. It’s a thoroughly studied region that could be easily and economically connected to an existing network of
pipelines, supply ships and refineries. Florida’s Atlantic coast, on the other hand, represents an expensive gamble in a region with a history of losing bets.

The last time the shelf along the nation’s east coast was explored was in 1984, and most previous drilling efforts, including some off the Florida Keys more than a half century ago, were shut down and classified as “dry holes.” Florida’s east coast — packed with hotels and condos — boasts no pipelines or refineries to support offshore projects……

Senate committee advances moratorium on oil drilling in part of eastern Gulf

MITCH PERRY, 1-16-2018
http://floridapolitics.com/archives/253704-senate-committee-advances-moratorium-oil-drilling-part-eastern-gulf

A Senate committee approved a resolution calling Congress to keep in place a moratorium against oil drilling in the eastern part of the Gulf of Mexico.

The military uses the area in question for air and sea training.

Tuesday’s vote by the Committee on Environmental Preservation and Conservation comes a week after the Donald Trump administration announced that they would exclude Florida from an earlier proposed expansion of offshore oil and gas drilling in the eastern Gulf and the state’s Atlantic coast.

Sponsored by Gulf Breeze Republican Doug Broxson, the resolution asks Congress to maintain the moratorium, which is in place from east of the Military Mission Line, which runs south of Hurlburt Field in Okaloosa County to Key West. The moratorium is set to expire in 2022.

In 2006, current Florida Sen. Bill Nelson and former Sen. Mel Martinez successfully brokered a deal to ban drilling off Florida’s Gulf Coast through the year 2022. Last year, Nelson filed legislation to extend the ban an additional five years, to 2027.

Noticing several members from environmental groups were supporting the bill, Palm Coast Republican Travis Hutson questioned whether the legislation intended to protect the country, and not against oil and gas industries.

Adamant his legislation was not aimed at hurting those industries, Broxson said one of the counties in his district, Santa Rosa, produced 90 percent of all energy that’s “ever been produced in the state of Florida.”

“If you look at my record, I am very conscious of our debate that we have and how we keep this country strong, and we have to have energy. I am a very pro-energy purpose,” Broxson said, adding that he’s also pro-jobs and pro-military.

“Protecting and enhancements of our military efforts is paramount,” said Fort Lauderdale Democrat Gary Farmer. “If it has the added effect of doing some environmental protection, so be it.”

Destin Republican Mel Ponder filed a companion resolution (HR 319) in the House.

Scott 'completely opposes' Florida offshore oil drilling but mum on Nelson's ban

By BRUCE RITCHIE and MARC CAPUTO, 01/18/2018 01:51 PM EST
TALLAHASSEE — Gov. Rick Scott said Thursday he is "completely" opposed to offshore oil drilling but didn't commit to supporting federal legislation that would ban drilling off Florida's coast — a position backed by the Democrat he may challenge for Senate this year, Bill Nelson.

"I haven't seen that proposal, but I've been clear: I oppose offshore drilling," Scott told reporters after a Cabinet meeting on Thursday morning, adding later that "I completely oppose offshore drilling."

But Scott hasn't always held that position, and when he first announced on Jan. 4 that he was opposed to oil drilling off Florida’s shores, Democrats cast his newfound position as an election-year conversion.

Scott voiced some support for oil drilling in 2010, when he first ran for office, but has since either avoided the issue or stated on rare occasions only that he opposes drilling unless it can be done safely — which environmentalists say is not possible.

Nelson, a three-term senator, has long opposed oil drilling off Florida. But in the spring of 2010, he tentatively endorsed a plan by then-President Barack Obama to allow for some exploration off Florida’s shores as long as the drilling was 125 miles away or more. The proposal, opposed by some Florida environmentalists, was part of a broader alternative-fuels energy package by the Obama administration.

Nelson said at the time that he wanted the military, which performs drills in the Gulf, to sign off on the plan. But then on April 20, 2010, the Deepwater Horizon oil rig blew up off Louisiana and polluted Gulf Coast beaches. Serious talk of oil drilling off Florida died in state political circles.

Though Nelson was criticized for his initial support for the 125-mile oil-drilling buffer in 2010, his office now says he “never endorsed such a plan.”

Nelson last week filed federal legislation, S. 2292 (115), to create a permanent ban on drilling off Florida. That proposal and Scott’s new position on oil drilling came after Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke on Jan. 4 announced a federal plan to allow for more oil exploration along coastal states. A week later on Jan. 9, Zinke met with Scott and announced Florida was being taken "off the table," a move that Nelson denounced as a publicity stunt before filing his legislation to ban drilling.

Other states want the same exemption as Florida, with some considering a lawsuit against the Trump administration. If Zinke’s favor for Florida is thrown out of court and if more offshore oil drilling is allowed off the state in the future, the administration plan Zinke initially announced could still allow him to institute a 125-mile buffer — the same that Nelson once supported.

Scott has yet to say what he thinks of the 125-mile buffer. But if he's opposed, Republicans are prepared to cast him as being more of an opponent to offshore oil drilling than Nelson, an argument that outrages Democrats who say the Republican has far less of a pro-environment record than Nelson.

When asked Thursday whether he supports Nelson’s legislation, Scott instead described the events following Jan. 4 and stated a slightly stronger position against drilling.

"I want to thank [Zinke] for coming down and taking Florida off the table with regard to offshore drilling. So I completely oppose offshore drilling," Scott said before leaving after a five-minute media availability.

Scott has also not publicly stated a position on whether he supports extending a moratorium on oil drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico beyond 2022. The moratorium was placed in federal law in 2006 to protect military training missions in the eastern Gulf.

There are also 12 Florida co-sponsors of the Marine Oil Spill Prevention Act, H.R. 2261 (115), to extend the moratorium from 2022 to 2027. Nelson introduced the measure on the Senate side, S. 74 (115).

The Florida Defense Support Task Force also supports extending the moratorium. A state Senate committee this week passed a resolution, FL SR550 (18R), calling on Congress to extend the moratorium.
Florida Democrats warn oil drilling plans may still be alive
By Alex Leary, 1-19-2018

WASHINGTON -Florida Democrats seized Friday on remarks from a Trump administration official that no final decisions have been made on oil drilling.
"BREAKING: Key administration official admits Florida is not 'off the table' for drilling," read an email blast from Sen. Bill Nelson, who has battled with Gov. Rick Scott over the issue.

But it's not quite that clean.
During a House Natural Resources Committee hearing this morning, Walter Cruickshank, the Trump administration's director of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, was pressed on the Florida exemption to a broad offshore drilling plan and said that "we have no formal decision yet on what's in or out of the five-year program."

But Cruickshank repeatedly said Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's statement about Florida "stands for itself" and noted Florida had been treated differently in the past.

After that exchange, Rep. Darren Soto, D-Orlando, sought clarity. Cruickshank said the entire program would be evaluated but again said Zinke's statement stands and would be taken into account.
"Cruikshank simply said BOEM will finish the legally-required analysis of the planning areas, as is always done for all planning areas," Interior spokeswoman Heather Swift told the Tampa Bay Times.

NAS Whiting Field
Land Swap in Northwest Florida Solves Navy's Encroachment Problem, Advances Economic Growth

http://mailchi.mp/defensecommunities/president-softens-stance-on-border-wall-funding-253473?e=28cebe069c

The needs of Escambia County in northwest Florida and Naval Air Station Whiting Field came together when encroachment began to threaten one of the installation’s auxiliary landing fields and officials at the Greater Pensacola Chamber realized the site presented a prime opportunity for economic development. When the Navy signaled it would be interested in swapping the airstrip for an unencumbered replacement, the chamber started scouting alternate sites and worked with the Navy to gain congressional authorization for the contemplated exchange. Later this year, the chamber expects to realize “a 20-year ambition” when Escambia County transfers a new landing field to the Navy in return for its original site.

A case study on the land swap will be featured as one of six “Innovators” at Installation Innovation 2018 in San Diego from Feb. 12-14. For more information about the Forum and to register, visit the IIF website.
**Corry Station**

**Partnerships Matter at IWTC Corry Station**

Courtesy Story, Center for Information Warfare Training, 01.10.2018

**PENSACOLA, Fla.** – Maritime security challenges require cooperative solutions and strong partnerships. They require navies, like the United Kingdom’s, that are willing to patrol international waters and share critical information with regional partners to combat criminal activities around the globe. We must continue to work as a unified team, and when this occurs, the world’s waters become a safer place.

One example of this type of strong partnership between the U.S. Navy and Royal Navy is evident everyday at Information Warfare Training Command (IWTC) Corry Station.

Chief Cryptologic Technician Paul Thomas, a Royal Navy sailor, serves at IWTC Corry Station through the Personnel Exchange Program (PEP). Thomas is billeted as an instructor, fully integrated with the U.S. military and civilian staff.

According to Thomas, the U.S. and U.K. navies share a common naval heritage and legacy of cooperation and partnerships since the first half of the 19th century. “During WWII, our nations collaborated along with other Allies to decrypt the German ‘Enigma’ cipher. Poland was able to initially break the code and shared that ability with their French and British Allies,” shared Thomas. “The ‘codebreaking’ ability was improved within Bletchley Park and information was then shared across this network of partners as an invaluable source of military intelligence throughout the rest of the war.”

"The Navy's Personnel Exchange Program is just one example of the U.S. Navy working closely with the Royal Navy to increase security and prosperity worldwide," said Cmdr. Chad Smith, commanding officer of Information Warfare Training Command Corry Station. "Chief Thomas is a seasoned maritime warfighter, and truly vital to the training and readiness of our information warfare force.”

**Eglin AFB**

**Oyster reef complete, uses shells from local restaurants**

By Staff report, Posted Jan 12, 2018 at 3:33 PM, Updated Jan 12, 2018 at 5:05 PM

**EGLIN AFB** — The largest oyster shell reef in Choctawhatchee Bay watershed, coming in at 1,700 feet in Alaqua Bayou, has been completed through the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance of Northwest Florida State College in partnership with Eglin Air Force Base.

Using shells collected from local restaurants, the reef will reduce shoreline erosion, provide habitat for juvenile oysters and enhance the ecosystem for fish, crustaceans and more, according to a press release from CBA. Because each oyster can filter up to 50 gallons of water per day, the reef will improve water quality in the bayou.
Throughout 2017, CBA and nearly a dozen restaurants in Okaloosa and Walton counties recycled oyster shells for the reef. Participating restaurants included the Shrimp Basket, Whole Foods, The Bay, Back Porch, O’Quigley’s, Crab Trap, Kenny D’s, Captain Dave’s, Half Shell in Destin, Shunk Gulley and AJ’s in Grayton Beach.

It took more than a year to collect the oyster shells, which were combined with fossilized shells to construct the reef. Actual construction of the reef took seven months, according to Erika Zambello, the CBA’s communications and marketing director.

After the oyster shells were dried, they were bagged by volunteers including high school students, NWF State baseball players, church groups and CBA staff and AmeriCorps members. The shell bags are now stacked as a pyramid and the top of the reef, which runs from 1 foot to 2 feet high, is visible even during high tide.

The CBA estimates that 13,000 bags of oyster shells were used for the Alaqua Bayou reef. Each bag weighed 20 to 30 pounds, while bags of fossilized shells weighed in at 30 to 40 pounds……

**Lockheed awarded $7.5M contract to move F-35 support to Florida**

By Allen Cone | Jan. 18, 2018 at 3:33 PM

Jan. 18 (UPI) -- Lockheed Martin has received a $7.47 million contract to move an F-35 support center for three partner nations from Fort Worth, Texas, to Eglin Air Force Base in northwest Florida.

The contract, announced by the Department of Defense on Wednesday, is for the relocation of the F-35 Australia, Canada, United Kingdom Reprogramming Laboratory, or ACURL, which handles packing, shipping, installation, integration and testing of the aircraft for Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom.

The move is expected to be completed by March 2019.

The contract also provides for initial spare parts for the nations at Eglin Air Force Base and in Fort Worth.

The Partner Support Complex at Eglin Air Force Base is a U.S.-owned operation that handles testing for the F-35 Lightning II, a fifth-generation aircraft.

Testing for Australia, Canada and Britain is housed in one building, while work for Norway, Italy, Denmark, Netherlands and Turkey is done elsewhere on the base.

The staff at Eglin assigned to the work started with 24 civilian employees but is expected to grow to about 100 personnel. The unit reports to the 53rd Electronic Warfare Group Wing.

The Naval Air Systems Command, Patuxent River, Md., handled the new contract.

**NAS Jacksonville**

**Fire department gets new crash truck**

By Reggie Jarrett, Editor, Jax Air News, Posted: Wed, 01/17/2018 - 9:08am

First Coast Navy Fire and Emergency Services department has a new fire-fighting tool to respond to airfield emergencies aboard Naval Air Station (NAS) Jacksonville.

The department has acquired a Striker T-3000 Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) truck, also called a crash truck, to be used with an older crash truck it had since 2013.

The fire department received two of the $800,000 trucks, one for NAS Jacksonville and one for Naval Station Mayport, said Fire Chief Mark Brusoe. “It gives us enhanced movement on the airfield,” he said. “Combined with the other crash trucks we have, it enhances our capability quite a bit.” ARFF trucks are used for airfield emergencies.

“We’re here strictly for the airfield,” said Station Chief Jeff Harrell.

“We handle any kind of emergency with an aircraft, whether it’s a helicopter or a fixed wing aircraft.”

The new crash truck doubles the water capacity of the older truck. “It carries 3,000 gallons versus 1,500 gallons,” said Harrell.

MacDill AFB

Vultures drawn by fish killed during cold snap pose hazard for MacDill flights

By Howard Altman | Times Staff Writer, Published: January 16, 2018

TAMPA – The recent cold snap has been more than just an inconvenience for Floridians. It’s been tough on fish and potentially hazardous to flights at MacDill Air Force Base.

The National Weather Service says temperatures in early January fell to as low as 35 degrees on Jan. 5 and 40 degrees three days earlier. As a result, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has received more than 110 calls as of Jan. 11 about fish kills across the state, according to spokeswoman Kelly Richmond.

Popular game fish like snook, jack crevalle and pompano are particularly susceptible to death and disease as a result of the cold, said Richmond.

But the folks at MacDill had concerns beyond the cost to the environment.

The more fish die, the more that scavengers like vultures show up to feed on the carcasses. The more vultures, the greater the chance flight operations will be affected.

Base wildlife biologists estimate around 1,000 fish, mostly tilapia and some snook, died as a result of the sudden temperature change.

On Thursday, base officials posted a notice on the MacDill Facebook page urging people to clean up any dead fish they find.
Cape Canaveral AFS

U.S. missile-deterrence to get upgrade from Florida launch

Marco Santana, Contact Reporter, Orlando Sentinel, 1-17-2018

If North Korea — or any country for that matter — launches a missile, a satellite scheduled to head into space from Florida today will be on the front lines of defense.

The U.S. Air Force will launch the latest member of the military’s next-generation missile-warning system aboard a United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket today.

A 40-minute launch window for the Space Based Infrared System satellite, built by Lockheed Martin, opens at 7:52 p.m.

The U.S. Air Force's fourth Space Based Infrared System (SBIRS) Geosynchronous Earth Orbit (GEO) satellite built by Lockheed Martin was encapsulated on Jan. 9 ahead of its launch aboard a United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

“Its job is to sit up there, stare at the earth and look for bright plumes that come from a rocket launch,” said Todd Harrison, director of aerospace and security projects with the Center for Strategic and International Studies. “It’s our first line of detection for missiles that might be launched at the U.S. or U.S. forces overseas, allies and partners.”

The rocket will take off from Space Launch Complex 41 on Cape Canaveral. Weather forecasts give the launch a 90 percent chance of favorable weather conditions.

The launch will mark the first for United Launch Alliance from Florida this year, following a SpaceX launch and preceding another from Elon Musk’s company that’s expected before month’s end.

“It’s part of our nuclear deterrence so that adversaries know they won’t succeed,” Harrison said. “It shows other countries that we will spot it, we will shoot it down, so don’t even bother trying.”

United Launch Alliance and its close relationship with the U.S. military has been a target of billionaire CEO Elon Musk’s upstart SpaceX……

Patrick AFB

Patrick AFB Technical Applications Center Airmen Travel to Earth’s Southernmost Point

By Susan A. Romano, AFTAC Public Affairs  //  January 18, 2018

BREVARD COUNTY • PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA – With 24 hours of daily sunlight in their favor, a team of seismic technicians traveled to the southernmost point on Earth to conduct annual maintenance of the equipment they use to monitor global nuclear treaties.
Six members of the Air Force Technical Applications Center made the trek from their home base at Patrick AFB, Fla., to Antarctica to troubleshoot and replace seismometers that contribute to the International Monitoring System.

The team also conducted full inventories at the sites and replaced generator starter batteries used to power the stations. The seismic equipment is used to detect activity caused by naturally-occurring events such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions or lightning strikes, as well as man-made events such as mining activity or nuclear explosions.

Staff Sgt. Jeremy Hannah, a geophysical maintenance supervisor, served as the team lead during the five weeks the team was deployed. He and his fellow seismic maintainers flew from the United States to New Zealand, then on to McMurdo Station in Antarctica, a 14+ hour trek from one hemisphere to another, including flights aboard an Air Force C-17 and a Bell 212 helicopter…..

**US Southern Command**

**Southern Command chief in favour of jointmanship in Indian armed forces**

Sandip Dighe| TNN | Updated: Jan 15, 2018, 10:37 IST


**PUNE**: Lieutenant General D R Soni, the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Army Southern Command, said jointmanship in the armed forces is important to fight the enemy, as no single service can fight a war alone today.

Talking to media on the sidelines of a wreath-laying ceremony at the Bombay Engineering Group and Centre on Sunday, Soni said, "The next war is not going to be fought by either the army, the navy or the air force alone. War can never be fought by a single force. It has to be a joint endeavour. Integration of armed forces is a gradual process. But it is a sure process and it is happening. We firmly believe we must fight together to ensure that no enemy can stand in front of us."

A doctrine of the Indian armed forces released last year too called for a joint approach. "The nature of future warfare requires a harmonious and synergetic application of land, air and sea forces. Joint operations are the most essential requirements of future wars and we have to focus on the seamless application of all available resources to shock, dislocate and overwhelm the belligerent," the doctrine says……

**Energy**

**Coronal Energy Closes $235M Financing For Florida Portfolio**

Posted by Joseph Bebon, January 15, 2018

https://solarindustrymag.com/coronal-energy-closes-235m-financing-florida-portfolio
Coronal Energy, an independent power producer focused on utility-scale solar and storage projects, has closed $235 million in total financing, which includes tax equity and debt, for its finished Gulf Coast Solar Center portfolio.

The Gulf Coast Solar Center is a 120 MW, three-site portfolio in northwest Florida built for utility Gulf Power in cooperation with the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force. It has been fully operational following an August 2017 “flip the switch” ceremony with project stakeholders.

Finance partners include Marathon Capital, which served as Coronal’s exclusive financial advisor for placement of the tax equity funding for the portfolio; U.S. Bankcorp Community Development Corp. (USBCDC); and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp. (SMBC).

“It was a pleasure to work with the Coronal and USB teams on the Gulf Coast Solar portfolio financing, which supported a landmark transaction for Coronal,” says Matt Shanahan, managing director at Marathon Capital. “Closing an already complex utility-scale solar tax equity financing in the midst of looming tax reform required a collaborative and creative effort by all parties.”

The 120 MW Gulf Coast Solar Center includes three sites: a 30 MW project at Eglin AFB Reservation, a 40 MW project at NAS Whiting Field’s NOLF Holley, and a 50 MW project at NAS Pensacola’s NOLF Saufley. Spanning more than 900 acres and comprising more than 1.5 million solar panels, the Gulf Coast Solar Center portfolio generates enough electricity annually to power roughly 18,000 homes and reduce CO2 emissions by 3.5 million tons over the 25-year life of the project, according to Coronal Energy. Construction of the portfolio created nearly 450 jobs, with 98% of that workforce hired locally.

**Defense Industry**

**DoD Wants to Expand Collaboration With Industry**

Jan 12, 2018 | 2:23 pm
https://www.meritalk.com/articles/dod-wants-to-expand-collaboration-with-industry/

The Pentagon, well aware that private sector innovation has outstripped its own in key technologies, is expanding its courtship of industry with a new pilot program that encourages academic industry collaboration on what its calls “use-inspired basic research.” The program will concentrate on development projects aimed at creating applications that can be implemented in the field.

The Department of Defense (DoD) last week announced an award competition for the pilot, the Defense Enterprise Science Initiative (DESI), which is designed to put teams of university and industry researchers to work on finding “novel solutions to challenging defense and national security problems,” according to a DoD announcement. In the process, the Pentagon also hopes to accelerate the process of research, development, and acquisition in order to put new devices and applications to use quickly.

The initial competition for grants under the program will focus on sensing, mobility, and autonomy, three areas where DoD has lagged behind commercial innovation. As laid out in a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) issued by DESI and the Air Force Office of Scientific Research, a DESI project essentially will follow a three-step process. Industry will identify a national security challenge, then collaborate with a university research team, which will “invent or discover knowledge” that can lead to a new way to solve the challenge. Finally, the industry team will develop the research results into something DoD can acquire and use.
Tampa simulator company wins $40M defense contract

Eric Glasser, WTSP 4:47 PM. EST January 12, 2018

TAMPA, Fla. -- A Tampa company has been awarded a $40 million contract to help foreign military pilots learn how to fly C-130 transport planes.

Those are the big boys that transport everything from equipment to soldiers and even fly into hurricanes.

The 5-year deal with the company named CAE could also benefit our local economy.

Located just north of Tampa International Airport, you'd never know what goes on inside the nondescript building, and that’s probably the way they like it since some of what CAE does is top secret.

But for this story, the company let us past security to show you why they just landed a $40 million defense contract.

The five-year deal will help foreign militaries learn to fly C-130 aircraft using CAE’s massive flight simulators.

“Obviously, the U.S. Air Force wants to make sure they're properly trained so they can support not only their missions, but support missions in which the U.S. needs assistance,” said CAE USA’s President Ray Duquette.

Every button knob and switch inside the simulator is identical to the real thing.

The C-130 has been a versatile go-to workhorse for more than 50 years, transporting people, equipment, even flying into storms.

One of the big reasons foreign militaries will send pilots to CAE for their training is so they don't have to use a real aircraft in their countries……

Air Force to Launch Lockheed-Developed Multi-Mission Satellite Onboard ULA-Built Rocket

Posted By: Scott Nicholason: January 16, 2018In: Industry News, News

The U.S. Air Force will launch a Lockheed Martin-built multi-mission satellite aboard a United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket from the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in California on Thursday, Jan. 18.

ULA said in a report the Space Based Infrared System Geosynchronous Earth Orbit Flight-4 satellite was built to offer missile warning, missile defense, battlespace awareness and technical intelligence that can help the military meet current national security demands.

The Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center’s Remote Sensing Systems Directorate leads the SBIRS team which also includes the Air Force Space Command, prime contractor Lockheed Martin and payload integrator Northrop Grumman.
Prospect of Shutdown Looms Ahead of Friday Deadline

Dan Cohen, “On Base”, 1-16-2018
http://mailchi.mp/defensecommunities/president-softens-stance-on-border-wall-funding-253453?e=28cebe069c

The pace of negotiations over bipartisan agreements to raise the statutory spending caps and address the fate of “Dreamers” is expected to accelerate this week as Friday’s deadline to pass a fourth continuing resolution (CR) to keep the government running approaches. Last week progress over both issues was upended after President Trump made disparaging comments about Haitian immigrants and African countries during a White House meeting with lawmakers. Failure to strike a deal on both fronts creates the conditions for a government shutdown when the existing stopgap runs out Friday at midnight.

Defense hawks in the House have threatened to withhold their support for another stopgap unless a two-year agreement that significantly lifts the cap on defense spending is reached. The votes of the 34 GOP members of the House Armed Services Committee will be critical as support from the Republican Conference for each CR has gradually declined since the first stopgap was passed.

While Democrats in the House appear likely to oppose a CR if it doesn’t extend legal protection for hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States as children, it’s not clear whether the Senate’s Democratic caucus is willing to force a showdown over the issue. The Republicans will need at least nine Democrats to pass a new CR in that chamber.

The dynamics add up to an unusually uncertain outlook, with many lawmakers reluctant to predict how events will play out, reports the Washington Post.

Trump: Budget Impasse Will Hurt Military Most

STEVE HIRSCH AND BRIAN EVERSTINE, 1/18/2018

The House approved a stopgap spending measure late Thursday evening in an effort to keep the government open past midnight on Friday when the existing continuing resolution expires. The bill would fund the government through Feb. 16, but a similar deal is looking unlikely in the Senate, reported the New York Times.

President Trump on Thursday pointed to the dangers to the US military if Congress fails to reach a budget agreement. The government has been operating under a series of three temporary spending measures since October when the fiscal year began because Congress has not been able to pass a budget. Defense hawks have expressed concern that repeated continuing resolutions are stifling defense efforts, something military leaders continue to echo.

Speaking at the Pentagon Thursday morning, Trump accused Democrats of trying to close the government but said if the government shuts down, “the worst thing is what happens to our military.”

Trump pointed to benefits of his administration’s tax cuts and tax reform, saying he was “sure the Democrats would like to blunt that by shutting down government.”
“But again,” he said, “the group that loses big would be the military. And we're never letting our military lose at any point. We're going to fund our military. We're going to have a military like we've never had before because we just about ... never needed our military more than now.”

Meanwhile, House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) said Thursday the US military is beyond its breaking point and “woefully under equipped,” requiring bipartisan commitment to long-term support in a Washington that is currently focused on melodrama.

During a brief appearance at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Ryan said there are “good faith” negotiations to make sure budget agreements reflect a commitment to the health of the military. Ryan, who did not take audience questions and hurried back to the Capitol as Congress faces a funding deadline before a possible Friday shutdown, said the US is in the “most complex security environment we have seen since World War II” and the Air Force is the smallest in its nation’s history……

Other Of Interest

SASC Schedules Confirmation Hearing For Air Force, Navy Installation Nominees

Dan Cohen, “On Base”, 1-17-2018
http://mailchi.mp/defensecommunities/president-softens-stance-on-border-wall-funding-253465?e=28cebe069c

The Senate Armed Services Committee will hold a confirmation hearing Thursday for four DOD nominees, including two service installation and energy chiefs:

• John Henderson to be assistant secretary of the Air Force for installations, environment and energy; and
• Phyllis Bayer to be assistant secretary of the Navy for energy, installations and environment.

Henderson, who had been commander of the Army Corps of Engineers’ Omaha District until last July, was nominated by President Trump last August but never received a confirmation hearing from the committee. Bayer initially was nominated by Trump on Dec. 1 but the committee returned her nomination to the president at the end of the congressional session after failing to schedule a confirmation hearing for her. The White House resubmitted Bayer’s nomination to the Senate last week. She most recently served as chief of staff in the office of the assistant secretary of defense for readiness.

Trump also resubmitted his nomination of Alex Beehler for assistant secretary of the Army for installations, energy and environment last week after the committee returned it at the beginning of the year.

‘Warrior caste’: Is a public disconnect hurting military recruiting efforts?

By: Charlsy Panzino, 1-18-2018
Military leaders are looking for the best ways to recruit the next generation of troops amid a growing divide between the military and civilians.

About 80 percent of new military recruits come from families with a history of service, but that number is shrinking.

According to the Defense Department, 15 percent of young adults have a parent who served, a drop from 40 percent in 1995.

There’s also a declining rate of family members who served who are recommending joining the military to their children.

In the late 1990s, more than 80 percent of service members recommended serving, according to research by Booz Allen Hamilton and Blue Star Families, a nonprofit organization that serves those in the military community.

In 2017, only 40 percent of those serving recommended that path to their children……

**FSUPC announces 2 new engineering programs**

By ERYN DION, News Herald Reporter, Posted Jan 18, 2018 at 7:25 PM, Updated Jan 18, 2018 at 7:26 PM


**PANAMA CITY** — For the first time since 2011, the Florida State University Board of Trustees convened at FSU Panama City for a regular board meeting, bringing with them approval for two new, in-demand programs.

This fall, a new undergraduate mechanical engineering program and graduate-level structural engineering program will begin taking students. Both programs are designed to fit into the area’s current needs and serve as a catalyst for future economic growth.

On Thursday, Glen McDonald with Bay Defense Alliance, Becca Hardin with the Bay Economic Development Alliance and FSU PC Dean Randy Hanna caught the board up on some of the major developments and drivers happening around Bay County in the last year-and-a-half, including the Eastern Shipbuilding Coast Guard contract, addition of GKN Aerospace and planned new Reaper Wing at Tyndall Air Force Base. Each one of those discussions, Hanna said, focused on engineering and the engineers the university would be able to produce for the workforce.

“We have electrical engineering, and we have a great civil engineering program,” Hanna said. “Our community has asked for a mechanical engineering program.”

That program is an expansion of the FAMU-FSU mechanical engineering program on the Tallahassee campus, while the systems engineering program was developed in conjunction with Naval Support Activity Panama City. Dean Murray Gibson, who leads the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering, said there are about 150 engineers currently working at NSAPC, and this program is critical both to their advancement in their careers and in retaining them and keeping them at the Panama City station…..

**National Defense Strategy released with clear priority: Stay ahead of Russia and China**

By: Aaron Mehta, 1-19-2018

WASHINGTON – The Pentagon’s new National Defense Strategy lays out a world where great-power competition, rather than counter-terrorism, will drive the department’s decision making and force structure.

“Inter-state strategic competition, not terrorism, is now the primary concern in U.S. national security,” the 11-page unclassified summary of the strategy reads. Instead, “the central challenge to U.S. prosperity and security is the reemergence of long-term strategic competition,” primarily from China and Russia.

The National Defense Strategy, released Friday, is the second of three interlocking documents that will drive America’s strategic posture. In December, President Donald Trump unveiled his National Security Strategy, which drives the administration’s overall national security posture.

The NDS focuses on the Pentagon’s goals within the NSS and is driven by Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis. That will be followed later this year by the National Military Strategy, written by Gen. Joe Dunford, the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, which explains how the Pentagon will operationalize the NDS.

Speaking ahead of the document’s release, Elbridge Colby, deputy assistant secretary of defense for strategy and force development, said the document was thematically driven by the idea that the “central challenge facing the department of defense and the joint force [is] the erosion of U.S. military advantage vis a vis China and Russia.”

But while great-power competitors are very much front of mind, Colby added that “this is not a strategy of confrontation, but it is a strategy that recognizes the reality of competition and the importance of ‘good fences make good neighbors.’”
Jan 26

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #61 will be on **Thursday, 15 February 2018**, beginning at **9:00AM** via Conference Call / WebEX.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979       Access Code: 1869945

3. **Florida Congressional Delegation Pushes for Oil Moratorium** – In a letter sponsored by Senator Rubio and Representative Dunn (attached), but signed by the “entire Florida congressional delegation in urging Defense Secretary Jim Mattis to ensure that the recent Interior Department offshore proposal does not “adversely affect military readiness and training activities off of Florida’s coasts.””  See article in the CLIPS.

4. **Governor’s Base Commanders Meeting (BCM)** – Governor Rick Scott hosted the quarterly BCM on Thursday, January 24, 2018 in Orlando at Naval Support Activity Orlando. More information will be sent to Task Force members in a separate e-mail.

5. **Governor Scott Attends Community Leaders Celebration for MQ-9 Reaper Wing** – According to a press release from the Governor’s Office, “Yesterday, Governor Rick Scott attended the Community Leaders Celebration for the new MQ-9 Reaper Wing at Tyndall Air Force Base. This new wing will create 1,600 new jobs in Bay County and will invest $260 million in construction projects. The new wing will host a headquarters, a mission control element, and a launch and recovery element with 24 assigned aircraft.” The Task Force’s own Tom Neubauer was instrumental in getting the Governor to attend the event that included local military and community leaders (photo attached). For more, see article below in the CLIPS.

6. **Florida Senators Ask President to Move Carrier to Mayport** – In a letter (attached) to President Trump this week, Senators Rubio and Nelson tried to make a case for the Navy to move aircraft carriers to Naval Station Mayport. The request is not new and has been opposed by the Navy in the past due to the lack of nuclear maintenance infrastructure at Mayport. See article below in the CLIPS.

7. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Announces Award Program** – According to their announcement, “The ADC Defense Community Awards program highlights the accomplishments of outstanding defense community leaders in front of key decision-makers from Congress and the Department of Defense. This is your opportunity to honor someone who makes a difference through their support for America’s defense communities.” Deadline to submit nominations is March 1, 2018. For more on the program, go to [https://www.defensecommunities.org/awards/](https://www.defensecommunities.org/awards/).

8. **FDSTF Grant Window Re-opens** – The Task Force will accept additional limited applications for possible funding in FY19 which begins July 1, 2018. The Task Force will accept applications for projects that have developed since our last application window in August and are of such a nature as waiting for possible funding in FY20 would make the proposal outdated or obsolete. The Task Force will need justification of the emerging need provided in the application. Selected projects will compete with projects already submitted for in-person presentation before the Task Force on May 17, 2018 in Tallahassee FL. Applications will be accepted between February 15 and March 2, 2018. The Task Force will only accept applications using our on-line form (do not use

9. Military / Veteran Related Bills Filed This Week – 2018 Session began on January 9, 2018. To review or track House Bills (HB), go to www.myfloridahouse.gov; for Senate Bills (SB), go to www.flsenate.gov. For both sites, insert the bill number at the top of the page if you would like current status throughout the session. Bills filed this week are below and the current summary of all related bills filed to date is attached.
   ■ No New Bills Filed This Week

10. Attachments:
   ■ FL CODEL letter to SecDef
   ■ Photo of MQ-9 Celebration
   ■ Aircraft Carrier Request Ltr
   ■ Military and Veterans Bills Filed to Date

News Clips of Interest:

Oil Drilling

Rubio, Dunn Lead Entire Florida Delegation in Ensuring Florida's Military Capabilities Are Unaffected by Offshore Drilling Proposal

PRESS RELEASE, JAN 19 2018
Washington, D.C.—U.S. Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) and U.S. Representative Neal Dunn (R-FL) today led the entire Florida congressional delegation in urging Defense Secretary Jim Mattis to ensure that the recent Interior Department offshore proposal does not “adversely affect military readiness and training activities off of Florida’s coasts.”

In addition to Rubio and Dunn, the letter was signed by U.S. Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL), and U.S. Representatives Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), Vern Buchanan (R-FL), Kathy Castor (D-FL), Charlie Crist (D-FL), Carlos Curbelo (R-FL), Val Demings (D-FL), Ron DeSantis (R-FL), Ted Deutch (D-FL), Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), Lois Frankel (D-FL), Matt Gaetz (R-FL), Alcee Hastings (D-FL), Al Lawson (D-FL), Brian Mast (R-FL), Stephanie Murphy (D-FL), Bill Posey (R-FL), Francis Rooney (R-FL), Thomas Rooney (R-FL), Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), Dennis Ross (R-FL), John Rutherford (R-FL), Darren Soto (D-FL), Debbie Wasserman-Schultz (D-FL), Daniel Webster (R-FL), Frederica Wilson (D-FL), and Ted Yoho (R-FL).

Trump unhappy over Zinke's Florida offshore drilling exemption: report

BY BRETT SAMUELS - 01/21/18 06:16 PM EST


President Trump made it clear to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke that he was upset by the decision to exempt Florida from expanded offshore drilling, Axios reported Sunday.

Zinke did not coordinate with anyone, including the White House, before making his decision, and the move has likely hurt Zinke's image within the administration, Axios reported.

However, sources told the news outlet the issue has not ruined Zinke’s relationship with Trump.

The Hill has reached out to the White House for comment.

Zinke said earlier this month that he won’t allow offshore drilling in waters near Florida through 2024.

The decision came after Zinke met with Florida Gov. Rick Scott (R) in Tallahassee earlier in the day to discuss the governor's objections. It was a day after Zinke proposed opening nearly all of the nation’s coasts to drilling.

Since then, numerous other lawmakers from coastal states — including New Hampshire, Washington, New York and California — have asked for a similar exemption.

Zinke’s initial proposal to expand offshore drilling off both of the nation's coasts is the first step in the process for crafting a plan for lease sales. After gathering public comment on the proposal, Interior will craft another proposal, before finalizing the areas that will be available for drilling.

Rep. Dunn, Florida Delegation send letter to Sec. Mattis on offshore drilling

WJHG/WECP, Posted: Mon 6:11 PM, Jan 22, 2018, Updated: Tue 5:00 AM, Jan 23, 2018

WASHINGTON, D.C. (WJHG/WECP) - Congressman Neal Dunn and Senator Marco Rubio are leading the entire Florida delegation to ensure the Sunshine State is kept off the table for offshore drilling. They've sent a letter, signed by all 29 Florida lawmakers, to Defense Secretary James Mattis. The letter urges Mattis to take note of the unique asset that is the Gulf test and training range, and the role it plays in ensuring military readiness. Representative Dunn says the coast a unique asset for the military to train in, and that it needs to be protected beyond the moratorium of 2022.

"We have recently succeeded in getting all of these seismic and sonar testing out of the Gulf range. But we want to extend that beyond 2022, so the entire Florida delegation signed onto the letter to help James Mattis, Secretary Mattis, get to the point where he's actually encouraging the president to do the same," Representative Dunn said.

Among other locations, the letter cites the Eastern Gulf of Mexico Planning Area, where "Any encroachment on this range through drilling or pre-drilling activities could prove detrimental to our nation’s security and military’s readiness including utilization by joint U.S. Forces for multiple training evolutions.".....

Florida delegation seeks DOD input to prevent military impact from potential coastal drilling

by Jean Gossman, Tuesday, January 23, 2018

Every member of the Florida congressional delegation signed a letter spearheaded by U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) and U.S. Rep. Neal Dunn (R-FL) seeking Defense Department (DOD) Secretary Jim Mattis’ support in making sure that a recent Department of Interior proposal does not impair military readiness and training off Florida’s coasts.

The lawmakers expressed their concern that drilling and seismic testing could go forward under Interior’s draft National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program (National OCS Program) for 2019-2024 despite Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke’s recent statement that Florida is “off the table” for new drilling.

Florida’s Eastern Gulf of Mexico (EGOM) Planning Area, South Atlantic Planning Area, and Straits of Florida Planning Area “are all home to strategically-vital military activity and training areas that will only become more important with future advancements in aircraft and weapons technologies,” the letter said.

The delegation requested that DOD assess the three areas and collaborate with Interior on an interagency agreement so that areas that should be avoided in geological and geophysical activities can be identified for exclusion prior to the proposed five-year program periods.

According to the letter, this process would enable DOD to proceed with “its long term investments in the military ranges off of Florida’s coasts that are vital to our military readiness and national security.”

The letter highlighted the three planning areas of value to DOD. An existing restriction on EGOM allows “unique testing and training of military capabilities” afforded DOD within the 180,000 square mile Joint Gulf Range Complex, along with 17 miles of adjacent dedicated shoreline and 724 square miles of nearby land ranges, the letter said……
The best defense...
Andrew P. Corty | 1/26/2018
http://www.floridatrend.com/article/23821/the-best-defense

Florida's 22 major military installations and the related defense industry pump billions of dollars into the state’s economy while providing 124,500 Department of Defense jobs and thousands more indirectly. The state’s population of retired veterans is also substantial, and many service men and women try to make their final posting in Florida so that they can live and work here full time when they retire.

The lure of Florida is obvious.
It’s warm, there are plenty of job opportunities, beautiful beaches are a short drive away from most areas, and there’s no income tax. There are other advantages as well, ranging from our seven V.A. medical centers to favorable college tuition rates.

See a map of all the state’s military bases, ranging from the Naval Air Station in Pensacola to the Fourth Fleet in Mayport, then down to the Air Force base in Homestead and, of course, Key West. Florida is the only state with three unified commands — the U.S. Central Command and the Special Ops Command, both at MacDill in Tampa, and the Southern Command in Doral. We have almost as many generals as the Pentagon (well, almost).

According to Bruce Grant, vice president of Enterprise Florida, there’s nothing more critical than protecting the Joint Gulf Range Complex, an area of some 180,000 square miles off Florida in the Gulf of Mexico. Oil drilling is prohibited there as the Air Force and Navy use the area for practice. You can imagine how an array of oil derricks could interfere with Department of Defense exercises in the Gulf.

That’s why it’s so important to continue prohibiting oil drilling off our coast — to say nothing of the damage it would do to our tourism industry……

BRAC

Congressman doesn't anticipate another BRAC

WMAZ, January 23, 2018, 5:59 PM EST

Another round of base realignment and closures isn't likely to happen anytime soon, a Georgia congressman said Tuesday.

In an exclusive interview with 13WMAZ, U.S. Rep. Jody Hice said current federal lawmakers are more interested in rebuilding the nation's military, not depleting it by closing some installations and shifting missions around.

Hice said the military buildup is being lead by President Donald Trump and that those efforts negate the need for another Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC).

"I say that primarily because we have the commander-in-chief that we have right now who is committed to building our military," Hice said. "We have sustained so many cuts over the last eight years that have been devastating to our military and we certainly aren't living in a safer world at this point."

Two weeks ago, Hice was appointed to the House Armed Forces Committee. Hice said he's already met with high-ranking Air Force officials and other congressional members to discuss military needs, including Robins Air Force Base…..
Moon: Navy Boulevard near Pensacola Naval Air Station is not a good welcome to military

The comment didn't really seem appropriate for the story, which was about a possible return of the TV antiquing show "American Pickers" to Florida, and maybe even Pensacola.

Retired Marine Steve Lind wrote in the comment section to the story:

"We don't care. What we care about is the appalling condition of Navy Blvd between the front gate and GBH/Barrancas Blvd. Warrington has absolutely NOTHING to offer the young Marines and sailors who attend school at NATTC."

I had two thoughts:

What's that have to do with antiquing?

And he's absolutely right.

Really, it's embarrassing. That one-mile stretch from Navy Boulevard to Gulf Beach Highway — which starts at the Bayou Grande Bridge that separates civilian society from Pensacola Naval Air Station — is a mangy-looking welcome mat for the young sailors and Marines who are stationed here.

Coming off base, it's their first view of the Pensacola Metropolitan Area. A view tainted by empty lots choked with weeds and trash, boarded up buildings and broken business signs and abandoned gas stations……

Hurlburt Field

Hurlburt airman earns Silver Star for valor in Iraq

HURLBURT FIELD – An airman with the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron has earned the Silver Star, the U.S. military’s third-highest decoration for combat valor, for his actions in an October 2016 firefight in Iraq.

Staff Sgt. Christopher C. Lewis, a Special Tactics operator based at Hurlburt Field, was presented with the medal during Friday ceremonies at the installation hosted by Lt. Gen. Brad Webb, commander of the Air Force Special Operations Command.

"Chris epitomizes what we all strive to be in this command. I am extremely proud of him,” Webb told the crowd assembled for the medal presentation, according to an Air Force story published Friday.

Lewis was embedded with a Navy SEAL team as a combat controller during the 2016 offensive effort to gain control of the city of Mosul from Islamic State fighters. On Oct. 20, as he and his team were escorting Kurdish forces into Islamic State-held territory, they were ambushed from three separate
locations. As Lewis and his team worked to break contact with the enemy in what would become a 10-hour firefight, the .50-caliber machine gun on his vehicle became jammed.

“In the midst of withering grenade, mortar, and small arms fire, Lewis systematically engaged the enemy in multiple locations from the open turret. He held this vulnerable position for hours despite direct enemy fire impacting within inches of him,” according to an official Air Force account of his actions.

“While the fight raged all around him, Lewis directed F-15Es and B-52s to conduct airstrikes within 400 meters of his team, eliminating enemy defensive fighting positions and fighters moving toward their position. After successfully engaging multiple targets and suppressing enemy fire, Lewis identified, engaged and destroyed an enemy vehicle-borne improvised explosive device barreling toward his team at high speed — exploding within 100 meters of the convoy,” the Air Force account noted……

Eglin AFB

Eglin airman earns Airman’s Medal for surf rescue

By Special to the Daily News, Posted Jan 19, 2018 at 12:01 AM, Updated Jan 19, 2018 at 5:45 AM

EGLIN AFB – A 20th Space Control Squadron airman who saved three people from possible drowning last spring was honored with an Airman’s Medal earlier this month.

The medal was presented to 1st Lt. Dominic Vicino on Jan. 10 for his actions in Miramar Beach on March 31 of last year. Swimming was prohibited on that day because of life-threatening rip currents, but Vicino saw two people about 100 yards offshore waving their arms to signal they were in trouble.

“I realized they were in distress, so I dropped my belongings and bolted for the water in a dead sprint,” said Vicino, a 24-year-old weapons and tactics officer. Vicino fought through dangerous waves and rip currents to reach the people and carry them back to shore. Then he re-entered the water and rescued a distressed lifeguard.

“I’m just glad I happened to be in the right place at the right time,” he said.

Vicino credits his strong swimming skills to playing water polo for 15 years and to the Air Force Academy’s water survival training……

Tyndall AFB

State and local leaders celebrate arrival of new reaper wing at Tyndall Air Force Base

By Megan Bell | Posted: Tue 9:49 PM, Jan 23, 2018  |  Updated: Wed 4:55 AM, Jan 24, 2018

PANAMA CITY, Fla. (WJHG/WECP) - State and local leaders gathered at Gulf Coast State College Tuesday evening to celebrate the new addition of an MQ-9 Reaper Wing coming to Tyndall Air Force Base.

Governor Rick Scott and Congressman Neal Dunn were there, along with other state and local leaders and officials from Tyndall.
The wing is expected to bring about 1,600 new jobs and more than $250 million of military construction. Officials say Tyndall was chosen out of hundreds of bases, for a variety of reasons.

"The real value for the wing coming here is a quality of life for the military members who are now in places across the country, desert locations and nice parts of the country but it's the same. They're looking for a place where quality of life could be different, improved, and where there will be leadership opportunities where they can grow and this is a place where that can happen," Bay Defense Alliance President Tom Neubauer said.

Surrounding restaurant and shop owners say the new addition could also bring a business boom to the area.

**NS Mayport**

**Mayport’s newest ship stuck in Canada until at least middle of March**

By Joe Daraskevich, Posted January 22, 2018 05:46 pm | Updated 09:53 am


The next few months will be much colder than expected for the crew of the USS Little Rock as it rides out frigid temperatures in Montreal, Canada instead of acclimating to the warmer climate of Northeast Florida.

The littoral combat ship was scheduled to arrive at its home port of Mayport Naval Station this month after it was commissioned Dec. 16 in Buffalo, N.Y.

But weather delays have now set back the arrival date until at least mid-March, according to the Navy. It’s been ice-bound in Montreal since arriving Christmas Eve.

“The temperatures in Montreal and throughout the transit area have been colder than normal and included near-record low temperatures,” said Lt. Cmdr. Courtney Hilson, a spokeswoman for Naval Surface Force Atlantic……

**Senators send letter to Trump asking to bring aircraft carrier to Mayport**

By Joe Daraskevich Posted January 25, 2018 06:19 pm | Updated 07:16 pm


The uphill battle to bring a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to Mayport Naval Station continued Thursday when U.S. Sens. Bill Nelson and Marco Rubio sent a letter to President Donald Trump asking for funding in 2019 to help make the dream a reality.

The Navy promised to bring a nuclear carrier to Mayport in 2009 after decommissioning the USS John F. Kennedy two years earlier. The conventionally powered Kennedy was the last carrier to call Mayport home.
But the project came to a halt in 2012 when President Barack Obama released a budget that didn’t include the funds necessary to continue modifications to the Mayport basin.

The latest request from Nelson, D-Fla., and Rubio, R-Fla., comes after the state’s entire congressional delegation sent a letter to the Department of Defense in March asking to include funding for the project in the 2018 budget.

MacDill AFB

Honorary commanders immersed in MacDill’s mission

By Airman 1st Class Adam R. Shanks, 6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs / Published January 22, 2018

MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – As a branch of the military, the Air Force relies on partnerships. These partnerships can be amongst Airmen, or in some cases between Airmen and their local community.

At MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, the Honorary Commander program does just that – bridge the gap between the military and local civic leaders.

On January 18, more than 30 civic leaders from the Tampa Bay community received an immersion of the 6th Air Mobility Wing and 927th Air Refueling Wing’s mission, by diving into the minds of both Operations Groups.

Col. April Vogel, commander of the 6th AMW, gave opening remarks to the honorary commanders, giving them insight on what they would see and experience during their visit.

“Today, you’ll see young Airmen, some even in their early 20s, maintain and operate assets that directly affect missions around the world,” said Vogel. “We want to open our doors to you, so you can see firsthand what goes on behind the scenes.”

After the introduction to MacDill’s mission, the honorary commanders visited a boom operator simulator created to train and refresh Airmen around the primary objective of rapid global mobility, in-flight refueling…….

MacDill crews shift from Islamic State battle to join winter fight against Taliban

Howard Altman, Times staff writer, Published: January 23, 2018, Updated: January 23, 2018 at 07:56 AM

Now that the fight against the largely defeated Islamic State is winding down, the U.S. Air Force is turning its efforts toward the Taliban and moving aircraft and crews to Kandahar Airfield in Afghanistan.

Crews and a KC-135 Stratotanker aerial refueling jet from MacDill Air Force Base are part of that effort, Air Force officials say.

"There are presently several MacDill crew deployed here and within the past month, there were MacDill KC-135s operating from Kandahar airfield in support of operations across Afghanistan," said

AFCent, the Qatar-based forward flying operation of MacDill-based U.S. Central Command, on Tuesday announced the shifting priorities. AFCent has realigned aircraft and airmen to Kandahar to provide the air power required by Afghan and U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

The new strategy is part of the Operation Freedom’s Sentinel and Resolute Support missions to help Afghans defend themselves and to continue ongoing counterterrorism efforts……

Cape Canaveral AFS

Government Shutdown Leaves NASA, SpaceX Programs in Limbo

By Eileen Guo, on January 21, 2018
https://www.inverse.com/article/40390-government-shutdown-for-space

As politicians in D.C. do their best to end the government shutdown that started on Friday, plans for space exploration go on — sort of.

Government functions that are not funded through the appropriations process, like the U.S. Postal Service, Social Security, and Medicare will continue, as well as activities that are funded by outside fees or are otherwise considered to be “essential.”

This is confirmed by an FAQ from NASA, which says that employees should stay at home during a government shutdown unless they receive alternative guidance.

A SpaceX rocket launches from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, which will be affected by the shutdown.

Operations that fall under this category include the military, NOAA’s National Weather Service, and NASA’s operation of the International Space Station (ISS). The space walk by NASA astronauts Mark Vande Hei and Scott Tingle, scheduled for Tuesday, will go on as planned, but if the shutdown continues into next week, they may not be broadcast because NASA TV is likely not considered mission essential.

Zeb Scoville, NASA’s spacewalk flight director, explained in a press conference on Thursday that both ISS crew members as well ground support staff, from engineers to mission control, will continue in the job “to make sure we’re both meeting the program’s objectives but also making sure we’re keeping the crew members safe there and giving them the support they need.”

SpaceX’s operations, meanwhile, have already been affected. An engine test on the SpaceX triple-core Falcon Heavy rocket that it aimed to carry out on Monday will be pushed back. While the company does not depend on government funding, the Kennedy Space Center, where the test would be carried out, does……
Air Force Successfully Launches New Satellite From Cape Canaveral
By 45th Space Wing, 1-24-2018

CAPE CANAVERAL AIR FORCE STATION, Fla., Jan. 24, 2018 —
The Air Force successfully launched the fourth Space Based Infrared System Geosynchronous Earth Orbit satellite on a United Launch Alliance Atlas V Evolved Expendable launch Vehicle from Space Launch Complex 41 here, Jan 19.

“The successful launch of SBIRS GEO Flight-4 is the reward for years of hard work put in by our combined government and industry team,” said Air Force Col. Dennis Bythewood, director of the Remote Sensing Directorate. “Putting this fourth SBIRS GEO satellite on-orbit is the capstone event for the original SBIRS baseline constellation, and I’m proud of everyone involved. Without their perseverance and dedication to the mission, this wouldn’t have been possible.” ….

Homestead AFB
Homestead Reservists authorized free childcare during UTA
By Maj. Roxy Hambleton, 482nd Force Support Squadron / Published January 25, 2018

HOMESTEAD AIR RESERVE BASE, Fla. -- One of the biggest stressors for any working parent is the issue of childcare for their children. The same applies for Citizen Airmen on Unit Training Assemblies. But Homestead Air Reserve Base has a program to provide a safe, fun, and convenient place to drop your child off and to clear the stress of childcare during UTAs.

The Homestead Child Care Program, an Air Force Reserve Command-funded program, has been available to Homestead Reservists for several years. This program offers free childcare during the UTA for all DEERS-enrolled children under the age of 13.

“Without a program like this, many of our Airmen would not have the ability to attend UTA due to childcare issues,” said Chief Master Sgt. Frederick Becking, 482nd Fighter Wing Command Chief.

“This program,” said Becking, who runs the program, “is our family taking care of your family. The 482nd Fighter Wing is trying to provide another avenue, another means, to have our Airmen be mission ready, because you can’t be mission ready when you are worried about your child three hours away.”

The current program has 18 slots available on a first-come, first-served basis. Every month the reservist must request care for the following month. There are months when all 18 slots fill up quickly and other months when there are slots left unclaimed, according to the base coordinator for the program, Tech. Sgt. Savannah Key……
Defense Industry

Unpredictable Pentagon Spending Causing Vendors to Leave Marketplace; Research and Development Stagnant

By: Ben Werner, January 22, 2018 5:33 PM

Congressional spending has become so unpredictable, a panel of Pentagon experts said the defense industrial base is shrinking and the weapons systems of tomorrow are not being developed today.

Speaking Monday at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a panel of experts responded to the findings of a report quantifying how defense spending cuts, enacted by the Budget Control Act of 2011, has caused a dramatic number of defense industry suppliers to leave the market while chilling industry’s research and development activities.

“Though the defense budget had been declining in the years leading up to sequestration in FY 2013, the enactment of sequestration and budget caps marked a severe market shock that had a considerable impact on the defense industry,” said the report, co-produced by CSIS and the Aerospace Industries Association, and released in late December.

With less defense spending, the CSIS report found fewer contracts were being awarded. Before the Budget Control Act of 2011 fully took effect, the average annual number of DoD contract obligations in fiscal years 2011 and 2012 only dipped by five percent when compared to fiscal years 2009 and 2010. After 2013, defense obligations dropped by 23 percent.

Between 2009 and 2015, the report found spending cuts caused the total number of prime defense industry vendors to drop by roughly 20 percent, or about 17,000 vendors.

The cyclical nature of department budgeting, including delays in getting new spending approved, is a problem for all but the largest vendors, said Eric Chewning, deputy assistant secretary of Defense for manufacturing and industrial base policy, as a member of the panel discussion……

Space industry hit hard by military spending downturn

by Sandra Erwin — January 22, 2018
http://spacenews.com/space-industry-hit-hard-by-military-spending-downturn/

WASHINGTON – The defense spending downturn that started in 2010 was tough on the space sector, according to a new study by the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Pentagon contracts for space systems dropped from nearly $10 billion in 2009 to just over $6 billion in 2016. Especially steep were cutbacks in space research and development contracts — from $6 billion to about $3 billion.

When the Budget Control Act’s across-the-board spending cuts — known as sequestration — started take effect in 2013, Pentagon contract obligations plummeted by 15 percent compared to the prior year. And annual defense contracts fell on average 23 percent between 2013 and 2015.
Even though military spending collapsed between 2009 and 2016, it was not all bad news for the defense industry. Some segments of the business, like ship and aircraft manufacturing, saw fluctuations but came out OK. Others are in free fall, like ground combat vehicles.

In the space industry there were some unique circumstances. CSIS analysts pointed out that much of the Pentagon’s spending on space activities shifted from actual products — like rockets and satellites — to launch services. Over the post-Budget Control Act downturn, contracts for space products plummeted by 56 percent, R&D fell by 47 percent, but during that same period, annual average service contracts grew 258 percent. That happened because in 2013 the Air Force renegotiated its agreement with United Launch Alliance under the Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle (EELV) program to acquire launch vehicle services.

**Defense Industrial Base Review Will Have Legs, Official Says**

Dan Cohen, “On Base”, 1-24-2018
http://mailchi.mp/defensecommunities/president-softens-stance-on-border-wall-funding-253501?e=28cebe069c

The Trump’s administration’s inter-agency review of the nation’s defense industrial base will not end with the delivery of a report in April, according to a senior defense official. “I expect this won’t be a one-time exercise,” Eric Chewning, deputy assistant secretary for manufacturing and industrial base policy, said at an event Monday at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). The federal government will need to follow up by addressing a number of recommendations, he noted, reported National Defense Magazine.

Chewning also commented on the national defense strategy released last week, pointing out that it reflects an “important reframing” of how DOD looks at the industrial base. The strategy’s use of the term “national security innovation base” instead of “defense industrial base” is significant, he said. It is meant to include prime contractors, but also emerging companies, universities and any organization “that directly or indirectly helps create the tools we rely on for national security,” Chewning said.

The event focused on a recent report by CSIS and the Aerospace Industries Association that found that defense spending cuts imposed since the 2011 Budget Control Act became law resulted in a dramatic decline in the number of defense industry suppliers. “Though the defense budget had been declining in the years leading up to sequestration in fiscal 2013, the enactment of sequestration and budget caps marked a severe market shock that had a considerable impact on the defense industry,” it said.

**DoD Budget**

**Weekend Talks Fail to End Government Shutdown**

Dan Cohen, “On Base”, 1-22-2018
http://mailchi.mp/defensecommunities/president-softens-stance-on-border-wall-funding-253481?e=28cebe069c

Negotiations among Senate leaders since the government partially shut down Saturday failed to strike a compromise over a continuing resolution needed to reopen the government. Lawmakers appeared to make some progress, however, and talks are expected to continue ahead of a procedural vote Monday on a stopgap that would run through Feb. 8, reported CQ. “We have had several conversations. Talks will continue, but we have yet to reach an agreement on a path forward that would be acceptable to both sides,” Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) said Sunday night.
Talks have centered around a proposal to extend government funding for three weeks in return for a commitment to bring an immigration bill addressing the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program and border security to the Senate floor, but the two sides have not yet found a viable way to carry that out.

**US government shutdown to hamper DoD acquisitions**

by Ashley Roque in Washington, DC, 22nd January 2018 - 12:01 GMT


The Pentagon's acquisition efforts on some top priority issues will be in a holding pattern while US lawmakers struggle to craft a deal to reopen the government.

On 19 January lawmakers worked into the night to cobble together a compromise that would keep the government open while also addressing hot button topics like immigration and security along the southern US border.

However, by midnight no deal had been put in place and the government officially shut down.

As of 22 January, lawmakers had yet to reach a deal and nonessential government employees will be staying home until they do. For the DoD, the closure means that only those in uniform or dubbed ‘essential’ will be heading into work but without an idea of when they will be paid.

‘Folks who are in military, overseas, folks here at home will go to work. They just don't automatically get paid,’ Mick Mulvaney, White House budget director explained on CBS Face the Nation Sunday.

‘What has to happen is Congress has to go back after the shutdown is over and vote to pay them for the time during the furlough,’ Mulvaney added……

**Other Of Interest**

**Defense Strategy Focuses on Great Powers Competition**

Dan Cohen, “On Base”, 1-22-2018


The Pentagon’s main focus will be staying ahead of other world powers, primarily China and Russia, under the new national defense strategy (NDS) unveiled Friday, marking a contrast to the Obama administration’s approach, which put a greater emphasis on counterterrorism. “We will continue to prosecute the campaign against terrorists, but great power competition — not terrorism — is now the primary focus of U.S. national security,” Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said in a speech at Johns Hopkins University’s Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies.

The 11-page, unclassified summary of the document also calls for building a larger, more agile military and reforming the department’s acquisition processes to field equipment more quickly. The NDS is the second of three linked documents intended to guide the nation’s strategic posture. In December, President Trump released the overarching national security strategy. The NDS focuses on DOD’s goals within the first document and is driven by Mattis, reports Defense News. That will be followed later this year by the national military strategy, which will be crafted by Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Joseph Dunford and outline how the military will carry out the NDS.
Friday’s document cites Mattis’ three priorities for the department — restoring readiness while building a more lethal force, strengthening alliances and attracting new partners, and reforming DOD’s business practices. The third priority will include an effort “to reduce excess property and infrastructure, providing Congress with options for a Base Realignment and Closure,” according to the document. The streamlining effort also will be aimed at reducing management overhead and the size of headquarters staff. “We will reduce or eliminate duplicative organizations and systems for managing human resources, finance, health services, travel and supplies,” it adds.

Defense Community Awards Season Opens

Dan Cohen, “On Base”, 1-22-2018
http://mailchi.mp/defensecommunities/president-softens-stance-on-border-wall-funding-253481?e=28cebe069c

ADC has opened the nominations process for the 2018 Defense Community Awards, a way to highlight the accomplishments of outstanding defense community leaders in front of key decision-makers from Congress and DOD. ADC will present this year’s awards at a luncheon during the 2018 Defense Communities National Summit, June 18-20 in Washington. Awards honor community or state, military, base redevelopment and congressional leaders whose accomplishments demonstrate vision, innovation and excellence. Specific categories are:

- Community or State Leadership (2017 winner: Utah State Sen. Jerry Stevenson)
- Military Leadership (2017 winner: Col. Robert Lyman, commander, 628th Air Base Wing and Joint Base Charleston)
- John Lynch Base Redevelopment (2017 winner: Ivy Owen, executive director, Fort Chaffee Redevelopment Authority)
- Congressional Leadership (Note: We plan to honor one member of the House and Senate under this category.)

“The Defense Communities Awards program is an opportunity to share the stories of outstanding defense community leaders and for them to be acknowledged for the hard work they put into supporting defense communities and our nation’s military,” said Tim Ford, CEO of ADC.

Award criteria and other information are available on the ADC website. The deadline for nominations is March 1.

Climate Change a High Priority for Navy Installations, Nominee Says

Dan Cohen, “On Base”, 1-22-2018
http://mailchi.mp/defensecommunities/president-softens-stance-on-border-wall-funding-253481?e=28cebe069c

Phyllis Bayer, President Trump’s nominee to be assistant secretary of the Navy for energy, installations and environment, told lawmakers that climate change and sea level rise would be one of her top priorities if she gains confirmation. “It’s affecting the infrastructure and it’s adding to the expense of the department’s infrastructure costs and maintenance,” Bayer told the Senate Armed Services Committee during a Thursday hearing that also included the president’s nominee to oversee installations and energy for the Air Force, John Henderson.
Bayer told the panel she would look further into climate change than required by the fiscal 2018 defense authorization bill, which calls for a DOD report on the 10 installations most threatened by the issue, reported the Washington Examiner. In addition, Maine Sen. Angus King (I) urged her to commit to preparing a study of how the Navy’s global assets would be affected by sea level rise. Such a study would make clear that rising sea levels are a “practical, dollars-and-cents problem” and not an abstract problem, King said.

“Exactly, senator, it’s a real problem,” Bayer replied.

Walt Disney World Offers Discounted Tickets to Military Members

By Brandon Lopez, Published at 10:07 PM EST on Jan 21, 2018

Walt Disney World is saying thank you to members of the military by offering them a discount on theme park tickets.

Select U.S. military personnel have the option of purchasing a discounted 4-day military promotional ticket or a 5-day military promotional ticket.

Tickets are available now through December 15th. The 5-day ticket is $246 plus tax, while the 4-day ticket is $226 plus tax. Guests have the option to add the park hopper option for just $40 more, plus tax.

Memory Maker, which is a product that allows you to get your park photos and videos, is also available for a discounted price of $99.

Only six tickets can be purchased by anyone service member or their spouse.

For a full list of who is eligible to purchase the military discounted tickets, as well as additional terms and conditions, including blackout dates, click here.

Floridians Are Getting Too Fat to Be Soldiers, Military Study Warns

JERRY IANNELLI | JANUARY 22, 2018 | 8:00AM

These days, the U.S. Army predominantly recruits from Southern states. According to 2013 enlistment data, Georgia and Florida have two of the nation's highest per-capita rates of locals joining the Army.

However, a study released earlier this month by researchers at the Citadel, one of the military's major universities, issues a warning. Though the United States might not be done in by North Korean rockets or Russian disinformation campaigns, the American empire might just crumble because Floridians and Southerners are getting too fat.

"A cluster of 10 states from the south and southeastern regions (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas) produced male or female recruits who were significantly less fit and/or more likely to become injured than recruits from
other U.S. states," researchers worried. "Compared with the 'most fit states,' the incidence of injuries increased by 22 percent and 28 percent in male and female recruits from the 'least fit states,' respectively."……

**Over 2 dozen local students nominated to attend military academies**

By Jim Thompson, Posted at 12:01 AM, Updated at 7:15 AM

**NICEVILLE** — More than two dozen area high school students got one step closer Tuesday to their dreams of serving their country after earning nominations to the nation’s military service academies. In return for promising some years of military service following their graduation, they each will receive a college education valued at more than a half-million dollars.

“I hope to become the best pilot in the Air Force,” an excited Zach Brown said after learning he had been nominated to the Air Force Academy.

Zach’s nomination made a bit of local history, as he became the first student ever from Okaloosa County’s Baker High School to earn a nomination to a service academy.

The students, from a host of high schools, were nominated by Rep. Matt Gaetz, Florida’s Republican 1st District congressman. Gaetz’s nominations were based in part on interviews with the students conducted by a panel of service academy alumni and former and current military personnel. Also factored into the nominations were the students’ academic records and their demonstration of citizenship and leadership qualities, Gaetz said.....

**Announcing Veterans Lodge in DeFuniak Springs**

From Diane Pickett and Julie Smith, January 24, 2018
https://defuniakherald.com/uncategorized/announcing-veterans-lodge-defuniak-springs/

Diane Pickett, long time resident of DeFuniak Springs and owner of a large tract of land at the intersection of I-10 and U.S. 331 announced the sale of her property and future plans for the development of the Veterans Lodge, founded by Julie Connell Smith. The impact for DeFuniak Springs and Walton County will be historic and transformational in terms of bringing economic diversity and jobs to the City of DeFuniak Springs and Walton County, Fla.

According to local economic experts, veterans have been and continue to be a vital component in developing Northwest Florida’s economy. In a recent NW FL Daily News article, former Florida State Senator Don Gaetz stated “You get the kind of economic development that is supported by the infrastructure you have. In northwest Florida, the human capital in veterans is definitely part of that infrastructure.” The Veterans Lodge will provide veterans returning to northwest Florida, as well as existing retired veterans, a setting to receive transitional assistance, job training programs, business services, rehabilitation and long-term wellness care. Serving as a model humanitarian project, it can be duplicated throughout the United States.

Veterans Lodge is an unprecedented and significant commitment to the present and future welfare of our veterans. The primary focus will be on veterans’ abilities, not disabilities, serving as an icon for others to follow in both private and public partnerships. It will be a place where veterans know their wounds —
whether visible or invisible — are a symbol of their courage and sacrifice. Veterans Lodge will help veterans get their lives back by providing them with enriching therapy, abundant education alternatives and a strong sense of community. The ultimate goal will be to create a network of Veterans Lodge locations across the United States in areas with high concentrations of servicemen and women. The Founder and CEO, Julie Connell Smith conceived Veterans Lodge as an environment where veterans can safely begin transforming back to civilian life……
Feb 2

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #61 will be on **Thursday, 15 February 2018, beginning at 9:00AM** via Conference Call / WebEX.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   **Call-In Number:** 800-501-8979  
   **Access Code:** 1869945

3. **Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) Quarterly Meeting** – FDA held its quarterly conference call meeting on January 30, 2018. Of interest was the upcoming BOEM public meeting in Tallahassee FL on February 8, 2018 at the Four Points by Sheraton on Tennessee St from 3:00PM – 7:00PM ET. Staff as well as several members from the panhandle plan to attend and talking points (attached) were shared with interested FDA members. Additionally, we discussed the Task Force strategic plan, the annual report, and the open grant application window, among other business.

4. **Florida House and Senate Military Affairs Committees Met This Week** – The House Subcommittee on Local, Federal and Veterans Affairs favorably passed HB29 from Representative Ponder (see current version at [http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=62435&SessionId=86](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=62435&SessionId=86)) that includes several items of interest to military and veterans such as “revises licensure eligibility requirements, waiver of certain licensure fees, and prelicensure course requirements for certain military members, their spouses and veterans; designates "Medal of Honor Day"; establishes educational leadership certification requirements for certain individuals” according to the House summary. The Senate Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee favorably forwarded its companion bill (SB1884 - available at [http://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2018/01884](http://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2018/01884)) sponsored by Senator Doug Broxson.

5. **DoD Releases Climate Change Study** – DoD released a study this month (attached) that was requested in 2015 that, according to Dan Cohen stated that “About half of more than 3,500 military facilities worldwide — including installations and associated sites — experienced impacts from six categories of climate change-related risks …. The highest number of reported impacts resulted from drought, 782 sites, followed closely by wind, 763 sites, and non-storm-surge-related flooding, 706 sites. Reported impacts included those affecting facilities in surrounding communities that provide support services to the installation.” The study includes impacts at several Florida installations. See article below in the CLIPS.

6. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Installation Innovation Forum** – Several members of the Florida Defense Alliance as we as Task Force Staff and Principi Group (TPG) members will attend the ADC Installation Innovation Forum February 12-14, 2018 in San Diego. For more information on the forum, go to [https://installationinnovation.org/](https://installationinnovation.org/).
7. **FDSTF Grant Window Re-opens** – The Task Force will accept additional limited applications for possible funding in FY19 which begins July 1, 2018. The Task Force will accept applications for projects that have developed since our last application window in August and are of such a nature as waiting for possible funding in FY20 would make the proposal outdated or obsolete. The Task Force will need justification of the emerging need provided in the application. Selected projects will compete with projects already submitted for in-person presentation before the Task Force on May 17, 2018 in Tallahassee FL. Applications will be accepted between February 15 and March 2, 2018. The Task Force will only accept applications using our on-line form (do not use prior forms) available at this link: [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/FY-2018-2019-FDSTF-Grant-Funding-Application-Form_distributed.pdf](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/FY-2018-2019-FDSTF-Grant-Funding-Application-Form_distributed.pdf).

8. **Military / Veteran Related Bills Filed This Week** – 2018 Session began on January 9, 2018. To review or track House Bills (HB), go to [www.myfloridahouse.gov](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov); for Senate Bills (SB), go to [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov). For both sites, insert the bill number at the top of the page if you would like current status throughout session. Bills filed this week are below and the current summary of all related bills filed to date is attached.

- **No New Bills Filed This Week**

9. **Attachments:**
- Oil Drilling / Military Mission Talking Points
- Sea Level Rise Report
- TPG End of Month Report
- Military and Veterans Bill Update

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**Oil Drilling / Gulf Range**

Clarify mixed signals on drilling

Editorial: Posted Jan 27, 2018 at 2:01 AM
Twenty-four of Florida’s 27 members of Congress — 12 Democrats and 12 Republicans, including both senators — sent a letter this week to the Interior Department, seeking clarity and affirmation of Secretary Ryan Zinke’s statement earlier this month that drilling in federal waters near Florida’s shores was “off the table.”

The subject of this overwhelmingly bipartisan opposition is the Trump administration’s draft five-year plan, issued in early January, to open the Eastern Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean off Florida to exploration and drilling.

That proposed expansion is part of a radical, nationwide plan to open more than 90 percent of the total Outer Continental Shelf to exploration and possibly drilling; currently, 94 percent of the shelf is protected. (The Eastern Gulf has been off limits since 2006 under a congressional moratorium.)

When Zinke met with Florida Gov. Rick Scott on Jan. 9, the secretary publicly stated that drilling off the state’s shores wasn’t an option. Sen. Bill Nelson, a Democrat, dismissed Zinke’s comment as a “political stunt” intended to boost Republican Scott’s image in a likely campaign for the Senate (against Nelson).

Nelson had reason to be skeptical.

Days after Zinke’s statement, the acting director of Interior’s Bureau of Ocean Energy Management told a congressional committee that there has “been no formal decision on what’s in, or out, of the five-year program.” Walter Cruickshank said Zinke’s statement was not an “official action,” though it would be “reflected in the proposed program.” Nevertheless, Cruickshank stated, “We are following the process, conducting a full analysis of all areas included in the draft proposed program.”

Not knowing whom or what to believe, Florida’s congressional delegation — including Nelson’s Republican counterpart, Sen. Marco Rubio — wrote Zinke to “reiterate our strong opposition to any attempt to open up the Eastern Gulf of Mexico to oil and gas drilling.”

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**NAS Pensacola**

**Security forces get hands-on training at NAS Pensacola**

by Jasmine Anderson, 2-1-2018


**PENSACOLA, Fla. (WEAR) —** Navy security forces at NAS Pensacola got some hands-on training Wednesday. The exercise was coordinated by the U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

Personnel received a mock 911 call of an armed man on base with a hostage The training took forces through negotiations and the aftermath if those negotiations fail.

Coordinators say the training is designed to enhance the readiness of security forces to respond to threats on base.

"Everything executed to what we were expecting, we actually had a little bit extra training that happened due to the length of the scenario. So we are definitely happy," said Trent Hathaway, installation mission readiness officer.

U.S. Fleet Forces Command coordinates training sessions on bases across the nation.
SANDESTIN — Eglin Air Force Base could be a source of significant military contracts with its “NexGen Eglin” strategy to rebuild, renovate and redevelop aging infrastructure, attendees at a two-day Air Force “contracting summit” learned Monday.

NexGen Eglin is designed to bring the nation’s largest Department of Defense installation up to 21st-century standards. The base was established more than 80 years ago, and currently, 452 of its 1,181 facilities are more than 50 years old, according to Air Force Capt. (ret.) Nathan Nelson.

“The infrastructure is inadequate for the mission of the 21st century,” said Nelson, director of military affairs in the office of U.S. Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., who represents Northwest Florida in Congress. Those inadequacies are beginning to limit the research, development, testing and evaluation missions at Eglin, according to a 2017 Eglin report on NexGen.

Nelson was one of the Monday speakers at the 2018 Air Force Contracting Summit at the Sandestin Hilton. The summit, organized by the Defense Leadership Forum, a group of congressional leaders, Pentagon officials, military base commanders and business representatives, aimed to networking opportunities for companies seeking new or additional defense contracts.

PANAMA CITY BEACH, Fla. - If you hear some loud noises coming from the direction of Naval Support Activity Panama City, it's all part of normal training.

Units from the United States Navy will conduct readiness exercises over the next two weeks as part of the training, which is also known as Solid Curtain Citadel Shield. This training helps measure the units' readiness to respond to different hostile situations, such as a suspicious package scenario. The annual exercise is designed to enhance the readiness of Navy security forces and ensure different commands can interact seamlessly.

Some exercises may involve the use of the loudspeaker system for alerts and may be heard in nearby areas. There could also be delays in traffic flow near the base during the exercises.
ACMI becomes TELMOC; incorporates wide-range of training

By Sarah English, 325th Training Support Squadron / Published January 30, 2018

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – The Tyndall Enterprise Live Mission Operation Center, previously called the Air Combat Maneuvering Instrumentation, was renamed during the facility’s 40th anniversary celebration ceremony at Tyndall, Jan. 23.

U.S. Rep. Neal Dunn, M.D., who represents Florida’s 2nd Congressional District, was in attendance at the event.

“It was an honor to spend the day at Tyndall Air Force Base and help rename the facility that houses the TELMOC. The professionalism and dedication of our men and women to the mission of directing Air Combat Maneuvering Operations over the Gulf Test Range was the real focus of the day,” said Dunn.

The name change came after 40 years of ever-evolving technology advances in equipment, capability and requisite responsibilities. Calling the collective operation TELMOC is meant to capture the essence of the myriad operations in support of the Gulf Test and Training Range and its associated infrastructure……..

Florida's Two Senators Urge White House to Send a Nuclear Powered Aircraft Carrier to Mayport

By KEVIN DERBY, January 27, 2018 - 6:00am

This week, Florida’s two U.S. senators--Democrat Bill Nelson and Republican Marco Rubio--called on the Trump administration to bring a nuclear powered aircraft carrier to Mayport on the First Coast.

Nelson and Rubio wrote the president on the matter in a letter sent out on Thursday.

“The security, availability, and redundancy of our aircraft carrier fleet is critical to our national security in light of the increased global security threats,” Nelson and Rubio wrote. “The U.S. Navy has a long history of homeporting aircraft at least one aircraft carrier at Naval Station Mayport. Since the 2007 decommissioning of the conventionally powered U.S.S. John F. Kennedy, no aircraft carrier has been homeported at Mayport. In 2009, the US Navy officially announced its decision to homeport a CVN at Mayport, and the DOD’s 2010 Quadrennial Defense review supported the Navy’s decision.

“Despite the fact that the Navy has conducted a multi-year review process for building the appropriate facilities at Mayport for a CVN, and has carefully weighed the strategic, operational, and environmental consequences, to date, no action has been taken by the DOD or Navy to mitigate this risk,” the senators added. “Naval Station Mayport is an ideal location because it offers a strategic and operational value that enhances our national security posture. We strongly recommend you fund the necessary improvements at
Naval Station Mayport to include construction of nuclear propulsion maintenance facilities and a parking structure in your FY19 Presidential Budget.

“Strategic dispersal of our capital ships is a long held Navy requirement and only prudent considering the cost and strategic value to our national defense,” they wrote in conclusion. “The urgency of dispersing our East Coast fleet should not be underestimated. We appreciate your attention to this important matter and look forward to working with you to ensure the DOD’s budget in Fiscal Year 2019 reflects this urgency.”

Hampton Roads leaders say Navy carrier move is bad idea

Mike Gooding, WVEC 5:17 PM. EST January 30, 2018

NORFOLK, Va. (WVEC) – Florida Senators Marco Rubio and Bill Nelson are behind a new push to move a Navy aircraft carrier to Naval Station Mayport.

The pair co-authored a letter in an effort to get President Donald J. Trump to put money in next year’s defense budget.

Last March, the 29-member Florida Congressional delegation wrote another letter, saying the carrier fleet should be dispersed, as a matter of national security. But in April, the Chief of Naval operations Admiral John Richardson, said it’s very difficult to find money to relocate a ship.

Retired rear Admiral Craig Quigley of the Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance says making infrastructure improvements at Naval Station Mayport in Florida could reach $1 billion.

"The Navy wants to put its money in new ships and repair and modernization of existing ships, not redundant shore infrastructure," he said.

A carrier move would be very costly to the Hampton Roads economy.

In 2013, the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission projected that a carrier move would mean the loss of 3,200 crew members, 2,000 people in the air wing, and a total employment reduction of more than 10,400 jobs……

NAS Jacksonville

NAS Jacksonville runs active shooter drill

By Chris Parenteau – Reporter, Posted: 4:12 PM, February 01, 2018Updated: 7:45 PM, February 01, 2018

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. - Thursday morning was busy with training at Naval Air Station Jacksonville.

First responders, base leaders, sailors and civilians at NAS Jacksonville were all a part of an active shooter training designed to make the base as prepared as possible should something happen.

The training was modeled after real incidents that have happened at other military installations. Crews ran into a building to try to get people out as quickly as they could, determine how many shooters there were, find the shooters and then treat anyone who was injured.
The drill took place at the back entrance of the Navy Region Southeast building. Playing the role of a disgruntled former employee, a man followed a woman into the building and began shooting.

"Certainly, the Navy has seen a number of active shooter incidents in and around our facilities," said Capt. Michael Connor, executive officer of NAS Jacksonville. "So people take that to heart. We do these trainings and people take it very seriously."

Connor said the planning for this event took months, and took real events, such as the shooting in 2015 at the Washington Navy Yard, into consideration……

**MacDill AFB**

**Lethal 'Warthog' warplanes visit MacDill**

By: Lloyd Sowers, FOX 13 News, POSTED: JAN 30 2018 06:31PM EST, UPDATED: JAN 30 2018 06:42PM EST

HTTP://WWW.FOX13NEWS.COM/NEWS/LOCAL-NEWS/LETHAL-WARTHOG-WARPLANES-VISIT-MACDILL

**TAMPA (FOX 13) -** Some unusual and lethal warplanes are visiting MacDill Air Force Base.

They are called "Warthogs" but their official designation is A-10 Thunderbolt.

They were legendary tank killers in the Gulf War. Then it looked like they would be retired, but not now.

"You can kind of pick your poison with the A-10 because we have the capability to engage any enemy threat," says Lt. Col Josh Waggoner, who leads a squadron of A-10's from Indiana Air National Guard.

They're visiting to train at MacDill and Avon Park Air Force Bombing Range.

The plane was designed in the 1970s around its signature weapon - a .30 caliber Gatling gun that fires 100 rounds per second.

The first A-10s flew in the mid-1970s, but have been updated as new generations of pilots have flown them.

"It was built around the big gun in the 70's, but it executes just as effectively, if not better today," says Waggoner.

Some reports say it's likely the Warthogs will be flying through 2040.

**Howard Altman: MacDill is classroom as Niagara Falls unit learns in-flight refueling**

Howard Altman, Times staff writer, Published: January 31, 2018, Updated: February 1, 2018 at 08:59 AM


To people in the Tampa area, the old, gray four-engine KC-135 Stratotanker jets have been a familiar sight since the mid-1990s, when MacDill Air Force Base shifted from fighter training to aerial refueling.
But the planes are new to the folks up at the Niagara Falls Air Force Reserve Station, where they used to fly C-130 Hercules propeller-driven cargo planes but are slowly turning to a refueling mission because of ever increasing demand.

"We switched over to the KC-135s about six months ago," says Air Force Lt. Col, Chris Pfeil.

Pfeil, 46, spoke to me from a flight line at MacDill that’s reserved for visiting units. He is leading a contingent of three KC-135s from his base that have come down to Tampa to train with a squadron of A-10C Thunderbolt II close-air support jets.

Switching over from the lumbering Herks to the faster but still aging jets has been a challenge, said Pfeil, who has flown them for the past 16 years……

**US Central Command**

**CENTCOM Seeks Open Dialogue with the Private Sector**

By Maj. Gen. Mitchell L. Kilgo 1/29/2018


Synchronized efforts of capable partners is a mainstay of effective coalition, command, control, communications and computers mission support. The first “C” in our use of the acronym C5, coalition, reflects this warfighting norm.

For the U.S. Central Command’s communications and computers directorate, the J6, providing, operating and defending C5 environments in the most complex and volatile region of the world requires persistent coordination and collaboration across stakeholder communities — within the Defense Department, the interagency, private sector and international counterparts in the central region and beyond.

The breadth and depth of U.S. commitment to ongoing military and warfighting missions across Centcom’s area of responsibility reinforces the need to establish and maintain strong partnerships across stakeholder communities, and to enable those partners to play a greater role in mission support and execution.

Centcom Commander Gen. Joseph L. Votel refers to this increased reliance on partners in the conduct of warfighting missions as the “by, with and through” approach, stating, “We win the current fight and plan to win the next one by, with and through our partners.”

**US Special Operations Command**

**Veterans learning about Adaptive Sports ahead of 2019 Warrior Games**

Adam Winer, Jan 30, 2018, 7:06 PM


TAMPA — In advance of the Warrior Games coming to Tampa, the Wounded Warrior Project is teaching veterans in the Tampa Bay Area more about "adaptive sports."
The Department of Defense announced at the beginning of the year that the Warrior Games, a competition established in 2010 to help veterans rehabilitate through adaptive sports, would be taking place in Tampa next year in part because the Tampa area is home to many military veterans.

The Warrior Games in 2019 will be hosted by U.S. Special Operations Command, headquartered at the MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, and will feature competitions in sports like cycling, archery, shooting, track and field, swimming, volleyball and basketball.

Adaptive Sports, also known as parasports or disabled sports, are sports activities adapted for people with physical disabilities, such as sitting volleyball or wheelchair basketball, in which the traditional rules are tweaked in order to embrace disabilities…..

Cape Canaveral AFS

Port Canaveral OKs $17.9M contract to help develop its 'spaceport' for SpaceX, Blue Origin

Port Canaveral will be spending nearly $18 million on the first phase of a cargo berth project that will help provide facilities for the commercial space industry.

That will include areas for the recovery and reuse of rockets.

This project is part of $78.96 million in proposed projects related to a "spaceport" component of Port Canaveral's 30-year master plan that port commissioners unanimously approved last week.

At the same meeting, port commissioners unanimously approved a staff recommendation to award a $17.92 million contract to Orion Marine Construction Inc. of Tampa for improvements to North Cargo Berth 8. Orion was the low bidder from among 12 contractors seeking the project.

Port officials say North Cargo Berth 8 could be used by commercial space companies like SpaceX and Blue Origin to support their operations. The berth also is designed as a "heavy lift" operation that can support other types of cargo movements.

The $78.96 million in proposed spaceport projects listed in the port master plan includes:

- $43.26 million in projects at North Cargo Berth 8.
- $11.20 million to create work boat lay berth areas for spaceport operations.

Luis Ajamil, chief executive officer of Miami-based Bermello Ajamil & Partners, the consulting firm that prepared the master plan for the port, stressed the importance of the spaceport area in his presentation to port commissioners last week…..

Patrick AFB

Germany awards Medal of Honor to 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick
Members of the Patrick Air Force Base 920th Rescue Wing were honored Friday in Germany after saving two German citizens, whose vessel caught fire last July about 500 nautical miles off of Cape Canaveral.

The medal is the organization’s highest recognition awarded to individuals, crews or organizations who either took part in the rescue of Germans, or to German crews who took part in a rescue under extremely difficult or challenging circumstances.

The German Maritime Search and Rescue Service presented the 920th Rescue Wing with the Medal of Honor for Rescue in Distress in a special ceremony.

This is the first time the medal has been awarded in 20 years.

Col. Kurt Matthews, 920th Rescue Wing commander, and a contingent of six unit representatives accepted the award on behalf of the wing and the 80 Reserve Citizen Airmen who participated in the rescue effort.

“The rescue was a culmination of skill and teamwork that involved many throughout the 920th RQW, the Coast Guard, the AFRCC and the 45th Space Wing, who provided critical support to allow our aircraft to launch and recover,” said Col. Matthews.

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**Energy**

**Gulf Power: Solar project on track**

By Staff report, Posted Jan 30, 2018 at 2:54 PM, Updated Jan 30, 2018 at 3:51 PM

EGLIN AFB — One year after Gulf Power joined with Eglin Air Force Base and Naval Air Station Pensacola to install the first panels on the largest solar arrays in Florida, the utility company is on its way to providing solar-generated electricity to 18,000 homes in Northwest Florida.

The Gulf Coast Solar Center comprises some 1.5 million solar panels installed on the Eglin reservation and at two airfields at NAS Pensacola. The three installations were tied into the electrical power grid last spring.

“In the months since the three fields went online, they’ve been harnessing enough sun energy to be on track to meet our generating expectations to power roughly 18,000 homes annually across Northwest Florida,” Gulf Power spokesman Rick DelaHaya said in a news release.

“Our latest data shows we’re well on our way, despite the stormy weather we experienced last summer and fall,” DelaHaya added.

Clouds and fog can impede solar generation.

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**Defense Industry**

**Lockheed Martin moves F-35 lab from Fort Worth to Florida**
The F-35 Australia, Canada, United Kingdom Reprogramming Laboratory (ACURL) is moving from the Fort Worth facility of Lockheed Martin Corp. (NYSE: LMT) to Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. The Bethesda, Maryland-based defense contractor received $7.5 million from the U.S. government earlier this month for support that includes packing, shipping, installation, integration and testing. The move is expected to be complete by March 2019.

"The system was developed and built in Fort Worth, with a plan to transition the laboratory to Eglin Air Force Base, Florida for operational use by the countries," Lockheed Martin said in a statement to the Dallas Business Journal. "The transition will not impact any positions at our Fort Worth facility."

ACURL builds, manages and tests Mission Data for the F-35, the company said. The Department of Defense said 70 percent of the work will be performed at Eglin Air Force Base — which is on the coast of the Florida panhandle in between Pensacola and Tallahassee — and 30 percent of the work will be performed in Fort Worth.

The new $7.5 million award is technically a modification to a previous contract. In April 2015, the company received $150.6 million from the U.S. government to build, test, modify, and field F-35 mission data files for Australia and the United Kingdom. At the time, $82.9 million came from Australia and $67.7 million came from the United Kingdom.

**Lockheed Martin's Orlando unit grabs $80.2M Hellfire contract to make 11,000 missiles**

A global defense company's Orlando unit landed a major deal for production of a powerful missile on Jan. 30.

*Lockheed Martin's* Missiles & Fire Control in west Orlando won an $80.2 million contract from the U.S. Army to ramp-up production of its Hellfire missiles. Lockheed Martin will increase production to up to 11,000 missiles per year. All of the work will be performed in Orlando, according the the U.S. Department of Defense.

The contract has a Sept. 30, 2021, completion date.

Lockheed Martin's Missiles & Fire Control in Orlando has more than 4,000 employees and often grabs big contracts for its Hellfire missile. Last year, the company won $548 million to make more than 7,000 Hellfire missiles.

Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) was not the only firm to score a contract with local work, either.

*Andromeda Systems* Inc. got an $18.5 million contract to perform logistics services for the U.S. Navy. Most of the work will take place in California, but a small part will happen in Orlando. The contract has a February 2023 completion date.

While Andromeda does not have job openings in Orlando, Lockheed Martin does. The company has more than 600 jobs available, calling for software engineers, financial analysts, flight simulation software engineers, cyber event designer and more……
DoD Budget

Trump plans to ask for $716 billion for national defense in 2019 - a major increase

By Greg Jaffe, Damian Paletta, The Washington Post, Posted January 27, 2018 02:21 pm

WASHINGTON - President Donald Trump is expected to ask for $716 billion in defense spending when he unveils his 2019 budget next month, a major increase that signals a shift away from concerns about rising deficits, U.S. officials said.

The proposed budget is a victory for Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, who recently unveiled a strategy that proposes retooling the military to deter and, if necessary, fight a potential conflict with major powers such as China and Russia.

And it represents a setback for deficit hawks such as Mick Mulvaney, director of the Office of Management and Budget, who last year pressed for an increase in defense spending that could be offset by cuts to domestic programs.

The $716 billion figure for 2019 would cover the Pentagon’s annual budget as well as spending on ongoing wars and the maintenance of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. It would increase Pentagon spending by more than 7 percent over the 2018 budget, which still has not passed through Congress……

Week ahead: House tees up new vote on defense spending bill

BY ELLEN MITCHELL AND REBECCA KHEEL - 01/29/18 06:00 AM EST 6

House lawmakers in the coming week will again vote on a massive bill to fund the Pentagon for fiscal 2018.

The fiscal 2018 defense appropriations bill, which the House Appropriations Committee reintroduced on Thursday, is expected to come to the floor as early as Tuesday.

The vote is mostly symbolic, as the House has twice passed defense appropriations for the fiscal year. The Senate has not voted on a defense spending bill, however, because Congress has yet to agree on a top-line dollar figure for defense and nondefense funding.

House leadership earlier this month promised defense hawks and conservatives another vote on the bill in exchange for their votes on a stopgap spending measure needed to avert a government shutdown.

"It is past time that this essential, must-pass Department of Defense funding bill is enacted into law," Appropriations Committee Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-N.J.) said in a statement last week. "Congress must act responsibly and quickly to get these dollars out the door and where they are needed as soon as possible."

The bill is "virtually the same" as the previous fiscal 2018 defense bills, according to a committee release…..
Budget Impasse, Continuing Resolutions Pose Problems for DoD

By Jim Garamone, DoD News, Defense Media Activity, Jan. 30, 2018
https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1427852/budget-impasse-continuing-resolutions-pose-problems-for-dod/

WASHINGTON – The Defense Department still doesn’t have a budget and is still operating under a continuing resolution, the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said to the Defense Writers Group here today.

As the fight continues on Capitol Hill over the government budget, DoD officials are getting ready to submit the president’s defense budget request for fiscal year 2019, Air Force Gen. Paul J. Selva noted.

“There ought to be more than just a little bit of irony in your mind that we are trying to deliver a proposed budget on time to the Hill, when we don’t actually know what we are going to get for ’18,” he said. “This is called gambling.”

When the department is under a continuing resolution, it cannot start any new programs or any new spending streams, Selva said. “This means training continues reasonably unabated as long as there is money, but you can’t refresh any of the equipment that is used up in training, and you can’t buy new,” he explained……..

Other Of Interest

Strengthen Educational Opportunity for Military Families

Peter Murphy, Posted: Jan 27, 2018 12:01 AM
https://townhall.com/columnists/petermurphy/2018/01/27/strengthen-educational-opportunity-for-military-families-n2440334

Our nation’s security and the education of its children are two critically important issues that coincide with the need to ensure quality educational opportunities for children of active-duty military. Recent studies have found that providing additional education alternatives for children of military families can contribute to their quality of life and ultimately the retention of needed, experienced personnel.

One of the most important factors in military “readiness” – especially given the nature of an all-volunteer force – is the quality and experience of the men and women who wear the uniform in defense of our nation. That’s why the Commander-in-Chief, military brass and Congress need to ensure that quality-of-life issues in the military are continually addressed and challenges mitigated for our military personnel and their families, with a focus on strengthening educational opportunity.

There are approximately 750,000 school-age children whose parents are active-duty military personnel, about 80 percent of whom are educated in public school districts near the assigned base of their parents. The Department of Defense (DOD) itself operates 57 schools on 15 out of the more than 200 bases in the U.S., which serve only about 4 percent of military-connected children. Another 7 percent of military children are homeschooled – the latter percentage being twice the national average.
Alarming, 70 percent military personnel surveyed by Military Times agreed that moving between states as part of their service added challenges to their children’s education. The implications of this and other survey findings are significant given the average age of military enlistees is 27 and, for officers, 34.5 – the very years common to have school-age children or younger…….

50 percent of US military bases report climate extremes, new Pentagon study says

by Travis J. Tritten | Jan 29, 2018, 6:24 PM

About half of U.S. military facilities around the world have experienced climate extremes and threatening weather, according to a new Pentagon survey obtained and published Monday by a climate security think tank.

The survey, which was the first of its kind and was shared with Congress, said about half of the 3,500 sites it contacted reported effects from six key categories of extreme weather, such as storm surge, wildfires and droughts. The study was requested by Congress in 2015 and completed this month.

The nonpartisan Center for Climate and Security posted the full report on its website Monday. It provides a wealth of data and begins to paint a preliminary “picture of assets currently affected by severe weather events ... as well as an indication of assets that may be affected by sea level rise in the future.” The report on the survey was conducted by the Pentagon’s undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics.

The results do not point to specific effects of climate change but do identify particular bases where extreme weather is already reported as a problem, said John Conger, a senior policy adviser with the Center for Climate and Security who helped kick off the survey effort during his time as an assistant secretary of defense…..
Feb 9

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #61 will be **NEXT WEEK** on Thursday, 15 February 2018, beginning at 9:00AM via Conference Call / WebEX. We are not planning to have a closed session. Meeting books are in the mail for Task Force members and e-books will be available on our website at: [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/meetings/](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/meetings/).

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979  
   Access Code: 1869945

3. **Tri-County Fly-in** – The annual panhandle area Tri-County trip to Washington DC was held February 5-6, 2018. Local defense support organizations, FDA, TPG and Bruce Grant attended and supported the event which included meetings with Congressman Matt Gaetz, congressional staffers and senior defense officials including AssSecDef Lucien Niemeyer.

4. **Florida Legislative Resolutions Moving Without Resistance** – Both houses of the Florida Legislature introduced resolutions supporting indefinite extension of the moratorium on oil drilling east of the Military Mission Line (MML) in the Gulf of Mexico. HB319 by Representative Mel Ponder was adopted by the House on January 31, 2018 and SB550 by Senator Doug Broxson has cleared all committees and was adopted on the floor on February 8, 2018.

5. **Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Public Meeting in Florida** – BOEM held a public meeting in Tallahassee FL on February 8, 2018. Staff and members of the FDA from the Panhandle attended. The meeting was to discuss the current draft lease plan for 2019-2024 (see at [https://www.boem.gov/National-OCS-Program/](https://www.boem.gov/National-OCS-Program/)). Governor Rick Scott led on this issue and received assurances from DOI Secretary Ryan Zinke last month that “Florida was off the table”, however, DOI has not yet removed the lease sales east of the Military Mission Line (MML) from the plan. The process BOEM uses (attached) to complete the plan has time to make a change, but there is no legal forcing function to keep the eastern Gulf of Mexico free from leases east of the MML leaving many uncomfortable. Finally, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Secretary Noah Valenstein sent a letter on February 8, 2018 to Ms. Kelly Hammerle at BOEM echoing Governor Scott’s opposition to the continued development of the 2019-2024 lease plan. In the letter, Secretary Valenstein highlights the military argument in conjunction with the environmental reason for Florida’s opposition stating that FDEP “remained concerned by the potential impacts of OCS oil and gas activities on marine and coastal environments and the biological resources and critical habitats associated with them, as well as the military activities critical to our nation's security. Therefore, Florida does not support the proposed lease sales offshore Florida as outlined in the Draft Proposed Program.” See several articles below in the CLIPS.

6. **Florida Center for Cyber Security Publishes Report** – According to the Center’s website, “The Florida Center for Cybersecurity is proud to share *The State of Cybersecurity in Florida* report. FC^2 contracted with Gartner to conduct the study and document their findings in *The State of Cybersecurity in Florida*, a report that
comprehensively reviews the state's cyber threat environment, workforce supply and
demand, education and training opportunities, and research initiatives. The report also
examines the cyber readiness of Florida's businesses, agencies, and organizations in 12
critical areas against industry standard as well as national averages. We hope the data and
insights presented in The State of Cybersecurity in Florida will be a valuable resource for
policymakers and stakeholders as we work together to make Florida "The Cyber
State." This is the report we discussed last November in Orlando when the Task Force
focused in Cybersecurity. The report is attached or you can see it at
http://thefc2.org/documents/state-of-cybersecurity-report.pdf and article on the report
below in the CLIPS.

7. Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Installation Innovation Forum – Several
members of the Florida Defense Alliance as we as Task Force Staff and Principi Group
(TPG) members will attend the ADC Installation Innovation Forum February 12-14, 2018
in San Diego. For more information on the forum, go to
https://installationinnovation.org/.

8. FDSTF Grant Window Re-opens – The Task Force will accept additional limited
applications for possible funding in FY19 which begins July 1, 2018. The Task Force
will accept applications for projects that have developed since our last application
window in August and are of such a nature as waiting for possible funding in FY20
would make the proposal outdated or obsolete. The Task Force will need justification of
the emerging need provided in the application. Selected projects will compete with
projects already submitted for in-person presentation before the Task Force on May 17,
2018 in Tallahassee FL. Applications will be accepted between February 15 and March
2, 2018. The Task Force will only accept applications using our on-line form (do not use
prior forms) available at this link:  https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-
content/uploads/FY-2018-2019-FDSTF-Grant-Funding-Application-
Form_distributed.pdf.

9. Military / Veteran Related Bills Filed This Week – 2018 Session began on January 9,
2018. To review or track House Bills (HB), go to www.myfloridahouse.gov; for Senate
Bills (SB), go to www.flsenate.gov. For both sites, insert the bill number at the top of the
page if you would like current status throughout session. Bills filed this week are below
and the current summary of all related bills filed to date is attached.
■ No New Bills Filed This Week

10. Attachments:
■ BOEM Lease Process
■ FDEP Letter to BOEM
■ State of Cybersecurity Report
■ TPG Bi-weekly Conference Call Memo
■ Military and Veterans Bill Update

Terry
Terry McCaffrey
Executive Director
Florida Defense Support Task Force
News Clips of Interest:

Oil Drilling / Gulf Range

Drilling moratorium is a national security issue


A well-trained military is an effective military — and a well-trained military needs a place to train. One of America’s most important military testing and training facilities is the Gulf Test Range, with 120,000 square miles of overwater airspace from the Florida Panhandle to the Florida Keys. It is a critical space for America’s military to train on military technology. Unfortunately, air training operations are currently constrained to the northern portion of the Gulf of Mexico, due south of Eglin Air Force Base. This constrictive geographical limitation has resulted in substantial aircraft congestion, and a sharp reduction in mission-critical training flights.

America’s pilots are unable to fly often enough, long enough, or far enough. Recent studies have revealed that aircraft congestion has kept at least 80 training missions per year from taking place, and has prevented numerous F-35 and F-22 warfighters from undertaking mission-relevant training.

The Florida DMV requires teenagers to drive 50 hours before they are eligible to take their driving test. F-22 pilots who defend America from foreign adversaries need training, too, and test flights are a crucial part of that training.

In 2006, the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act halted oil and gas exploration east of the Military Mission Line, the “outer boundary” so to speak, of the Gulf Test Range. The “GOMESA moratorium,” as it is called, remains in effect until June 2022. Yet despite its clear language, the Gulf is still an area of acute interest to energy producers, who have been emboldened by the Department of the Interior’s recent push for new drilling sites.

Anthony Kurta, acting undersecretary of defense, has said the moratorium “is essential for developing and sustaining our nation’s future combat capabilities.” He’s right. While energy independence is a worthy goal, if it comes at the expense of national security, it will be a Pyrrhic victory at best.

This year, we fought for improvements to the Gulf Test Range, and successfully secured $27.4 million in new funding. This is money well spent: it will allow the brave men and women of our military to test and train on current- and next-generation technology. Some of America’s most advanced munitions are so specialized that they can only be tested in two places in the world: the Gulf Test Range, or off the Australian coast. Clearly the latter option is not viable.
Extending the drilling moratorium is of paramount importance to America. The fundamental purpose of the government is to defend and protect the United States. When we jeopardize military readiness, we jeopardize our national security — to say nothing of the potential environmental catastrophes offshore drilling can cause. Florida’s Gulf Coast remembers the horrific Deepwater Horizon oil spill all too well. The best way to prevent accidents like that from happening again is to prevent further drilling.

For America’s national security, for the environment, and for the men and women who defend our freedom, we cannot in good conscience allow the moratorium to expire in 2022.

DEP head formally opposes offshore drilling in Florida

JIM ROSICA, 2-8-2018

Noah Valenstein, Florida’s Secretary of Environmental Protection (DEP), on Thursday sent a letter to the feds in opposition of any exploratory drilling for gas or oil off the state’s coasts.

The move comes after Gov. Rick Scott “secured a commitment from (U.S.) Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to take Florida off the table for future consideration for offshore oil drilling,” a DEP press release said.

No other state got such treatment, leading “environmental groups who oppose the administration’s oil-drilling plan (to) denounce the decision as a political move meant to bolster Gov. Scott’s intention to run for Senate next year,” according to National Public Radio.

Moreover, since then “a senior Interior Department official said Florida’s coastal waters had not been excluded after all,” the New York Times reported.

But Scott just this week told the Tampa Bay Times “the right thing happened. There’s not going to be offshore drilling.” Scott, a Navy veteran, called Zinke “a man of his word. He’s a Navy Seal and I believe they’re going to do exactly what they committed.”

Just in case, Valenstein wrote to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management’s Kelly Hammerle that the state “oppose(s) the inclusion of any lease sales in Florida’s coastal and offshore areas.

“Florida’s coastal and offshore areas have high environmental, economic and military value not only for Florida, but also for the nation,” he said. “These areas provide great economic impact for our citizens and provide each resident with recreational opportunities that are unique to Florida.

“(W)e’ve remained concerned by the potential impacts of oil and gas activities on marine and coastal environments and the biological resources and critical habitats associated with them, as well as the military activities critical to our nation’s security,” Valenstein added.

Offshore drilling foes, supporters say Florida still in play

Jim Turner, News Service of Florida, 6:38 p.m Thursday, Feb. 8, 2018

TALLAHASSEE – Supporters and opponents of oil drilling closer to Florida’s shoreline refused Thursday to accept U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke’s declaration that the state wouldn’t be part of a White House plan to expand exploration.
The federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management held the only Florida open house on a proposed five-year program to open more waters to oil and gas exploration. But participants in competing press conferences doors away at a Tallahassee hotel agreed on one thing: Zinke’s stance on a Florida exemption isn’t final.

“Why are the environmentalists here? Why are they raising hell about this issue if no means no? It’s because, you know what, no is never no,” said Barney Bishop, a Tallahassee consultant and offshore drilling proponent. “You all don’t know about the discussions that are being held in private. No, publicly, can mean a whole lot of things in private.”

Zinke flew to Tallahassee International Airport on Jan. 9 and, after a brief meeting with Gov. Rick Scott, announced that Florida waters were removed from plans to open previously protected parts of the Atlantic Ocean and the eastern Gulf of Mexico to offshore oil and gas drilling.

The announcement, hailed by Scott and environmentalists, has drawn questions about whether the quick decision was made to further Scott’s political career. Meanwhile, governors in some other coastal state have made their own inquiries about getting exemptions from the White House plan.

Opponents of the plan on Thursday held a “people’s hearing” to gather public comments they will submit to the federal bureau……

**Environmentalists suspicious of Gov. Scott's deal to block oil drilling off Florida coasts**


Environmentalists are suspicious of a deal between Gov. Rick Scott and the U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to exempt Florida from plans to expand offshore oil and gas drilling. Pro-drilling groups said they should be.

Officials from the federal agency held an informational session in Tallahassee Thursday on a draft plan the Interior Department released in January to open all waters in the Gulf of Mexico and along the Atlantic seaboard to drilling.

Before that meeting started though, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection released a letter re-stating Scott’s opposition to the plan. Pro-drilling interests countered with a news conference to encourage the Scott and Trump administration to continue the discussion.

Kevin Doyle of the Consumer Energy Alliance said Scott and Zinke should keep “the conversation” going while Zinke’s staff develops a final draft of the plan. He was backed by Julio Fuentes of the Florida State Hispanic Chamber and Tallahassee businessman Barney Bishop. They said the U.S. needs to explore all avenues of energy development and dismissed Scott’s comments that he expects Zinke to keep his word about the Florida exemption……

**Cybersecurity**

**Florida Center For Cybersecurity Releases First State Of Cybersecurity In Florida Report**
TAMPA, Fla., Feb. 8, 2018 /PRNewswire/ – The Florida Center for Cybersecurity today released The State of Cybersecurity in Florida, a comprehensive review of the state's cyber threat environment, workforce needs, education and training opportunities, and research activity as well as an in-depth examination of the cybersecurity posture of Florida's businesses and organizations. The Center contracted with Gartner to independently conduct the study and document their findings in the report, which is intended to facilitate decision making for policymakers and stakeholders in industry, academia, defense, and government.

The Florida Center for Cybersecurity is proud to release "The State of Cybersecurity in Florida," a comprehensive resource for policymakers and stakeholders in industry, government, academia, and defense.

"Good decisions come from good information," remarked Sri Sridharan, director of the Florida Center for Cybersecurity. "For this report, Gartner looked at many aspects of cybersecurity—from education, workforce demand, and economic factors to technical issues such as incident response capability. Our goal was to take a broad look at the cybersecurity landscape in Florida and compile information that stakeholders across the state can use as they make decisions impacting their organizations."

"We believe there is a much-needed shift taking place, with organizations that traditionally may have been reactive when it comes to cybersecurity now becoming proactive," noted Sridharan. "That shift, coupled with the state's commitment to cybersecurity, is sure to yield huge dividends for Florida," he said.

To view the full report, visit the Florida Center for Cybersecurity's website at thefc2.org/news/soc.aspx.

BRAC

Inhofe says nation needs to bolster missile defense

By James Beaty | Managing editor, Feb 7, 2018


U.S. Sen. Jim Inhofe has not wavered in his strong opposition to another round of military base closures or realignments by BRAC, the Base Realignment and Closure Commission — especially with threats from North Korea and others.

Far from reducing its military, Inhofe thinks the U.S. needs to bolster its missile defense mechanisms as North Korea continues to move forward on its missile program.

“They have the horsepower to get one all the way to McAlester, Oklahoma,” Inhofe said of North Korean missiles.

The senator said the North Koreans did not have the capability prior to last Nov. 28 — but now he thinks they do. He has little use for arguments that North Korean missiles may be inaccurate or for dismissive statements regarding what size payload North Korean missiles can handle.

He sees the accuracy argument regarding a North Korean missile as one of “whether it hits in Poteau or in McAlester.”

It points to the need to need to build up the nation’s missile defense system, the senator said…….
Congress Should Cut Defense Costs with BRAC Round Six

BY SARAH ANDERSON, 2-8-2018
HTTP://WWW.FREEDOMWORKS.ORG/CONTENT/CONGRESS-SHOULD-CUT-DEFENSE-COSTS-BRAC-ROUND-SIX

Responsible spending is not something Congress has proven itself to be good at, under Republican or under Democratic leadership. The Bipartisan Budget Act, the absolutely atrocious cap-busting deal proposed by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R- Ky.) and Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) which busts the Budget Control Act caps by more than twice what the previous two deals combined did, proves this.

To say that setting trends toward returning to trillion dollar deficits seen in the Obama years, this time under total Republican control of the federal government, is a bad look would be a massive understatement. But, that is exactly what Senate leadership is pushing to happen, and what all taxpayers should kick and scream in protest of.

In light of the impending deal, which would increase defense spending above the caps for FY 2018 by $80 billion and for FY 2019 by $85 billion, we must realize that total defense spending for those two years together will be over $1.4 trillion. This is an exorbitant amount of money. As Rep. Mo Brooks (R-Ala.) said on the House floor on Wednesday evening of the proposed spending deal, “There is a narrow path between adequate national security funding, and avoiding a national insolvency that decimates our military and risks American lives,” and this spending deal undoubtedly crosses it.

Despite the lack of leadership in Congress on top-line spending numbers, there is still room for fiscal controls inside of the top line. Waste, fraud, and abuse is rampant throughout the federal government, and the Department of Defense is no exception. A 2015 report identifying $125 billion in waste was hastily hidden by the Pentagon, in an effort to maintain their high levels of funding.

More recently, as the audit of the Pentagon is currently underway, findings earlier this week revealed that the Defense Logistics Agency cannot account for more than $800 million of its spending. There is reason to believe that this is not the only case of its kind.

Where waste is identifiable, however, is with unneeded military property. The Base Realignment and Closure Program, or BRAC, is a process completed by the Department of Defense (DoD) to assess military infrastructure and determine where to shift resources to most effectively use taxpayer dollars. This program has been effective in the past, with the first four rounds of BRAC saving $8 billion annually, and the most recent fifth round in 2005 saving $4 billion annually. The Department of Defense (DoD) itself matches these estimates, indicating in a March 2016 report that the first five rounds of BRAC have saved more than $12 billion annually……

NAS Pensacola

Air Force grounds 22 planes at Pensacola NAS after reports of hypoxia issues

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Published 12:34 p.m. CT Feb. 8, 2018 | Updated 1:54 p.m. CT Feb. 8, 2018
The Air Force has grounded some training flights at Pensacola Naval Air Station because of hypoxia-related issues experienced by pilots at other bases flying the same type of aircraft, an Air Force spokesman said Thursday.

Randy Martin, a spokesman for the Air Force's San Antonio-based 12th Flying Squadron, said the Air Force has 22 T-6 Texan II A aircraft at Pensacola NAS.

The Air Force uses the aircraft to train combat systems officers as part of its 479th Fighter Group, which is housed at the Pensacola Navy base.

Earlier this month, the Air Force announced it was grounding its entire fleet of T-6 Texan II A aircraft after reports of pilots experiencing hypoxia due to a loss of oxygen in flight.

The Air Force's Air Education Training Command said it made the decision to ensure the aircrew's safety after a cluster of unexplained physiological events occurred at Columbus Air Force Base in Mississippi, Vance Air Force Base in Oklahoma and Sheppard Air Force Base in Texas.

Whiting Field Naval Air Station, which provides primary flight training for 60 percent of all Navy, Marine and Coast Guard pilots, flies a different version of the T-6 Texan II. Whiting officials have said pilots flying that version of the aircraft have not experienced the unexplained physiological events……

**NAS Whiting Field**

**Whiting Field pilot training continues, despite grounding of Air Force T-6 Texans**

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Published 1:15 p.m. CT Feb. 5, 2018 | Updated 1:39 p.m. CT Feb. 5, 2018


Pilot training at Whiting Field Naval Air Station is continuing as usual, despite problems with the Air Force's version of a popular training plane used at Whiting, Navy officials said on Monday.

Jamie Link, spokeswoman for Whiting Field, said Whiting's Training Air Wing Five trains its pilots in the T-6 Texan II B.

"It's a different variant than the Air Force flies. Our training is continuing completely as normal," she said.

The Air Force grounded its fleet of T-6 Texan II A training planes on Wednesday after reports of pilots experiencing hypoxia due to a loss of oxygen in flight.

In a news release, the Air Force's Air Education Training Command said it was grounding training flights in the T-6 Texan II A "to ensure aircrew safety after a cluster of unexplained physiological events occurred at Columbus Air Force Base in Mississippi, Vance Air Force Base in Oklahoma and Sheppard Air Force Base in Texas within the last week."

Air Force Maj. Gen. Patrick Doherty said the grounding was necessary to ensure pilot safety……
**Corry Station**

IWTC Corry Station Commences Saturday Scholars Program

Story by Glenn Sircy Center for Information Warfare Training, 02.03.2018

PENSACOLA, Fla. - Information Warfare Training Command (IWTC) Corry Station staff and student volunteer mentors met onboard Naval Air Station Pensacola Corry Station chapel for Saturday Scholars Program orientation, Feb. 3.

Corry Station's partnership with the Escambia County School District Saturday Scholars Program continues a 33-year-old tradition of participating in two mentoring sessions per year.

Chief Information Systems Technician Bill Kelley, IWTC Corry Station's Saturday Scholars coordinator, and Cmdr. Chad Smith, commanding officer of IWTC Corry Station, welcomed everyone and thanked them for volunteering as local community goodwill ambassadors.

"I truly believe you will get more out of this great opportunity than the students will," said Smith to the group of volunteers. "I want you to be totally committed to this great program for the next five weeks, and have fun while giving back to the community."

“The short time you spend with these children will impact them for the rest of their lives, serving as one of many steps they will take towards a successful future,” added Kelley.

Representatives from Escambia County School District (ECSD) also attended the orientation and thanked the staff and student volunteer mentors……

**NS Mayport**

Multiple Mayport ships depart for 6-month deployment Wednesday

By Joe Daraskevich, Posted Feb 7, 2018 at 10:50 AM, Updated Feb 7, 2018 at 10:58 AM

A group of amphibious ships based at Mayport Naval Station left port Wednesday morning along with Marines, multiple medical teams and air squadrons for a regularly scheduled deployment to Europe and the Middle East.

About 4,500 sailors and Marines from the Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group and 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit will conduct maritime security operations, crisis response and theater security cooperation for the next six months, according to the Navy.

The amphibious assault ship USS Iwo Jima, the amphibious transport dock ship USS New York and the dock landing ship USS Oak Hill make up the group of ships that left Wednesday.

Components of Naval Beach Group 2 are on the ships along with Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 28, Tactical Air Control Squadron 22 and two fleet surgical teams, according to the Navy.
“Our sailors and Marines have been conducting exercises and integrating with each other since last summer in preparation for this moment,” said Capt. Jack Killman, commodore of the amphibious group. “The training has made us a stronger, more effective team, and we look forward to providing military commanders a versatile, amphibious presence able to accomplish a variety of missions at anytime and anywhere.”

The USS Iwo Jima participated in air defense exercises, general quarters drills, non-combatant evacuation operations and detainee operations during training last year to prepare for this deployment and to gauge how the crew would respond in a real-life situation.

The ship had to adjust its training schedule to assist with hurricane relief off the coast of Key West but completed a final training exercise from Oct. 28 to Dec. 9.

**NAS Jacksonville**

**NAS Jacksonville Neighbors Could Notice More Noise During Training**

By: Mark Jackson, February 2, 2018 6:31 PM


**Jacksonville, FL** - Starting Tuesday February 6th, residents in neighborhoods surrounding NAS Jacksonville will notice an increase in aircraft activity and noise when training gets under way through February 20th.

The training is in support of aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman and embarked Carrier Strike Group 8 staff which will depart Naval Station Norfolk to begin Composite Training Unit Exercise.

The strike group will be graded on their performance on simulated surface and sub-surface threats. Some ship movement simulations will occur as well.

The exercises are not in response to any specific threat, but are part of regularly scheduled training. In addition to the possibility of increased noise levels, there may be increased traffic in the area and some residents may notice an uptick security activity associated with training exercises.

**MacDill AFB**

**MacDill hosts Community Day**

Story by Airman 1st Class Caleb Nunez, 6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs, 02.02.2018

https://www.dvidshub.net/news/264469/macdill-hosts-community-day

The city of Tampa is the third most populous city in the state of Florida with a population of approximately 400,000 thousand residents. With MacDill contributing more than 133,000 military personnel, retirees and their families to that figure, it is important to foster an environment of mutual support to allow for great working relationships and trust.

In an effort to convey MacDill’s continuous involvement with the local community, Airmen from different squadrons came together to host Community Day at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, Jan. 29, 2018.
Community Day included a military working dog demonstration along with various stations showcasing MacDill’s mission, including a KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft static display for the veterans, retirees and church groups in attendance.

“This was my first time participating in an event like this,” said Jim Belesky, a former Army flight engineer during the Vietnam War. “It was really cool to talk with current service members and learn about what they do here.”

This unique opportunity for the Tampa community to interact with Airmen is valued by both the community and the service members who participate in such events……

Cape Canaveral AFS

Thousands expected to descend on Space Coast for SpaceX Falcon Heavy launch

Emre Kelly, Florida Today, WTSP 5:03 AM. EST February 05, 2018
http://www.wtsp.com/tech/science/space/thousands-expected-to-descend-on-space-coast-for-spacex-falcon-heavy-launch/514754672

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. – Thousands are expected to descend on the Space Coast for Tuesday's inaugural SpaceX Falcon Heavy launch, crowding spots from beaches to arched causeways to witness the world's most powerful rocket lift off from Kennedy Space Center.

The demonstration mission from pad 39A, which includes a 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. launch window, has already generated remarkable buzz online for an uncrewed mission. That will translate to thousands of visitors, hundreds of media employees and even celebrity visits, according to area officials.

"It will be a historic event, so we expect the community to fill up in terms of hotel rooms and any kind of lodging," said Eric Garvey, the Space Coast Office of Tourism's executive director. He estimates up to 100,000 people could visit for the three-core rocket's launch, but combining that with area residents could boost the number to half a million.

"We already have a lot of seasonal guests in town," Garvey said, noting that even last Wednesday's Falcon 9 launch from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station generated sizeable crowds.

His advice? Try the beach – and get there early.

"My preferred spot is the beach at Cocoa Beach or Cape Canaveral," he said. "Plan to get there with plenty of time to relax and enjoy the show."…..

SpaceX Falcon Heavy rocket launches successfully

By Chris Ciaccia | Fox News, 2-6-18

SpaceX's Falcon Heavy rocket launched successfully on Tuesday, making history as the world's most powerful rocket and putting a proverbial feather in Elon Musk's cap.

Containing 27 engines, the rocket has a thrust able to generate more than 5 million pounds, akin to the equivalent of 18 Boeing 747 aircraft. It will be able to lift a payload of more than 64 tons (141,000 pounds) into orbit, twice as much as the Delta IV Heavy, at one-third the cost, according to SpaceX. The
payload the Falcon Heavy is carrying is a Tesla Roadster and a dummy pilot, codenamed Starman, playing the David Bowie song of the same name.

The flight was originally scheduled for 1:30 pm EST, but was pushed back to 3:45 pm EST due to wind shear. It fired from Launch Complex 39A at Kennedy Space Center in Florida. SpaceX said that when the rocket achieves lift off, "it will be the most powerful operational rocket in the world by a factor of two." The company added that "Falcon Heavy’s side cores are flight-proven—both previously supported independent Falcon 9 missions in 2016."

The second stage of Heavy fired three times and put it on an elliptical orbit around the Sun that extends out as far as Mars. There is an "extremely tiny" chance it could crash into the Red Planet, Musk said in comments obtained by The New York Times, but that is unlikely to happen…….

Patrick AFB

Patrick Airmen take to Space Coast shores for beach clean-up effort

By Airman Zoe Thacker, 45th Space Wing Public Affairs / Published February 05, 2018
http://www.patrick.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/1432864/patrick-airmen-take-to-space-coast-shores-for-beach-clean-up-effort/

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. -- Airmen from Patrick Air Force Base gathered at the base’s beach house on Feb. 3 in a clean-up effort of community beaches.

The event, hosted by Patrick’s Airman Leadership School Class 18-2, provided an opportunity to any Airmen who were interested in volunteering.

Senior Airman Dali Ramos, a client systems technician at the Air Force Technical Applications Center, conversed with fellow classmates and came up with an event to directly support the community and base’s beach house.

“We were all able to put together an event where everyone can contribute,” said Ramos. “As a result, I was able to grow and develop the skill of setting up an event. I will utilize this in my position as a new staff sergeant to set up more opportunities to volunteer.”

The future staff sergeants teamed up with their leadership to show that even a small event like a beach clean-up can build team morale, not only for Patrick’s Airmen, but for the Space Coast area as well, said Ramos.

“We want to teach the community the importance of camaraderie, and how to band together efficiently to complete a mission,” said Ramos. “Our community relies on us to defend and honor our values as Airmen in the United States Air Force. The event will help build trust between us and the community.”…….

Reserve Airmen support SpaceX Falcon Heavy milestone launch

By Maj. Cathleen Snow, 920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs / Published February 07, 2018
PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (AFNS) -- Reserve Airmen are used to supporting milestone rocket launches, and have supported manned spaceflight launches through the years; however, they have never supported a rocket toting a car.

SpaceX's CEO Elon Musk’s cherry red Roadster from Tesla, his electric car company, was the payload on the Falcon Heavy demonstration mission from Launch Complex 39A that lifted off from NASA’s Kennedy Space Center, Florida, Feb. 7, 2018.

Before the majority of Space Coast rocket launches, 920th Rescue Wing HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters take off hours prior to the launch to provide aerial surveillance and clear the launch hazard area, an area considered potentially unsafe for marine traffic in the event of a launch anomaly.

Maj. Paul Carpenter, HH-60G pilot, said, “Today’s range clearing operation is reminiscent of how we operated in the Space Shuttle era (1981-2011) because of the large amount of propellant on Falcon Heavy and SpaceX’s unique feat of landing the first stages safely on land. Instead of just clearing one area for the rocket’s ascent, we have two areas to keep an eye on – one for ascent and one for return.”

The Falcon Heavy will be able to lift more payload than any other American rocket since the Saturn V, the NASA rocket used for the Apollo moon landings, according to a SpaceX press release.

“The Falcon Heavy will likely be the first of several vehicles that gets the United States back into manned spaceflight,” Carpenter said…….

Avon Park

Troops laud the low-flying ‘Warthog,’ but it’s running out of time and money

By Howard Altman | Times Staff Writer, Published: February 5, 2018


AVON PARK — From the cockpit of his A-10 Thunderbolt II fighter jet, a pilot speaks words known to warm the hearts of U.S. ground troops under fire.

"I’ve got 100 rounds 30 Mike Mike," says the pilot, seeking permission to let loose a short burst from the aircraft’s 30 mm Gatling gun — rounds powerful enough to stop a tank.

This flight is just an exercise over central Florida scrubland for an airplane affectionately known as the Warthog. It’s something of a throwback for the Air Force with its single seat and simple mission: Support troops on the ground.


Sullivan should know. He sees all manner of aircraft in his current position and used to call in air strikes flown by A-10s when he held the dangerous job known as JTAC, or Air Force joint terminal attack controller.

A squadron of 10 Warthogs from the 122nd Fighter Wing of the Indiana Air National Guard is flying in and out of MacDill Air Force Base to drill at Avon Park. The exercise comes as the A-10 returns to combat in Afghanistan for the first time in four years.
But the airplane’s future faces dangers beyond the battlefield. The simplicity of mission that endears it to the troops counts as a strike against the A-10 as new planes are designed to perform a number of tasks……

**Energy**

**Joint Gulf Power, Air Force project yields largest solar operation in Florida**

by Chris Galford, Published on February 02, 2018

A year after completion of the first panels on the largest solar photovoltaic arrays in Florida, a Gulf Power and military project have reached a generating capacity of 120 MW—and the ability to cut carbon emissions by 139,000 tons annually.

In all, the Gulf Coast Solar Center consists of 1.5 million solar panels split between NAS Pensacola’s Saufley Field, NAS Whiting’s Holley Field, and Eglin Air Force Base Reservation. They represent the largest solar project east of the Mississippi, and for Gulf Power’s own employees, were used as a cross-training exercise for those working in coal and natural gas generation. Those workers were on site during construction, serving as observers, liaisons and progress reporters.

“In the months since the three fields went online, they’ve been harnessing enough sun energy to be on track to meet our generating expectations to power roughly 18,000 homes annually across Northwest Florida,” Kimberly Blair, Gulf Power spokesperson, said. “Our latest data shows we’re well on our way, despite the stormy weather we experienced last summer and fall. Cloudy, foggy days can impede solar generation.”

The panels have been actively feeding the grid since last summer, after a gradual activation throughout May, June, and July.

**Defense Industry**

**Lockheed to Get $10.7 Billion for F-35s in Budget Plan**

By Anthony Capaccio, February 5, 2018, 11:45 AM EST Updated on February 5, 2018, 12:47 PM EST

The Pentagon intends to ask Congress to approve $10.7 billion to buy 77 Lockheed Martin Corp. F-35 jets in the fiscal year set to begin Oct. 1, according to U.S. officials.

The proposal for the Defense Department’s costliest program will be included Feb. 12 as part of a fiscal 2019 base defense budget plan of about $597 billion. That’s the bulk of a $716 billion national security request expected from President Donald Trump, which also covers the Energy Department’s nuclear weapons programs and smaller agencies.

The fiscal 2019 request disclosed by the officials, who asked not to be identified before the budget is submitted to Congress, will be a victory for Lockheed, the No. 1 U.S. defense contractor: It’s close to the 80 planes the Obama administration had projected for fiscal 2019 in its final report on major weapons
systems two years ago. Before that, the Pentagon had reduced the number of planes projected for the year to 90 from 100.

Under former President Barack Obama, the rate of anticipated F-35 production was reduced both because of the fighter’s persistent technical problems and constraints on Defense Department funding. The F-35 is expected to end its 16-year-old development phase this year…..

Showtime for Falcon Heavy rocket, but Florida already reaps its benefits

By Howard Altman | Times Staff Writer, Published: February 6, 2018, Updated: February 6, 2018 at 07:47 AM


Even if his biggest rocket blows up today — something Elon Musk has joked about in tweets — the founder of SpaceX already has helped revitalize a Florida aerospace industry nearly wiped out by the shutdown of the space shuttle program.

It will help if SpaceX’s Falcon Heavy rocket launches successfully from the Kennedy Space Center and pushes its cargo — a red Tesla Roadster made by the other company Musk is known for — toward a destination in orbit around Mars.

But there appears to be no stopping the resurgent aerospace industry as it climbs past $20 billion a year in state impact with more than 150,000 high-paying jobs, according to Space Florida, an industry organization.

Many of the jobs are in the Tampa Bay area, home to more than 2,400 aerospace-related companies with about 16,000 employees and sales of more than $2 billion per year in Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas and Polk counties, Space Florida says.

What’s more, U.S. Special Operations Command at MacDill Air Force Base is looking to the commercial space industry to help launch small satellites for better commando communications…..

DoD Budget

Trump military agenda could cost nearly $700B extra over 10 years

By Scott Mauclone @smaucioneWFED, February 5, 2018 6:15 pm

https://federalnewsradio.com/defense/2018/02/trump-military-agenda-could-cost-nearly-700b-extra-over-10-years/

President Trump’s military agenda may cost the United Stated an extra $683 billion over the next 10 years.

A Feb. 5 Congressional Budget Office report takes into account the cost of Trump’s plans to expand the military during his time in office compared to the Obama administration’s plans.

Trump’s goals include increasing the Navy fleet to 355 ships. The current naval fleet is 279 and is planned to reach 308.

The goals increase Army end strength from 460,000 to 540,000, add five more fighter squadrons to the Air Force and increase Marine Corps end strength by 13,000.
The military would need at least $342 billion to reach those goals. Additionally, the military would spend an extra $50 billion annually by 2027 to maintain those goals.

The increase in Navy ships would cost $20 billion per year and would continue to grow, the larger Army would cost $22 billion a year and the extra Air Force squadrons would cost $8 billion a year.

Other funds would go toward rebuilding readiness, which is an explicit goal of Defense Secretary James Mattis.

**Senate reaches budget deal with huge defense boost**

By: Joe Gould, 2-7-2018


WASHINGTON – Senate leaders have reached a two-year deal that would set defense spending at $700 billion for 2018 and $716 billion for 2019.

Those top-lines, part of a deal announced by Senate leaders Wednesday afternoon, hews to those sought by Congressional defense advocates for 2018 and soon to be requested by President Donald Trump for 2019.

Not all of the details were announced immediately, as bipartisan talks continued, but sources close to them said spending limits for defense and non-defense combined would be raised by $300 billion over two years.

It’s was not immediately clear exactly how the deal will address budget caps and how much of the defense funding will be sought as cap-exempt wartime funding.

The emerging deal still may face opposition from House fiscal conservatives over increases to the non-defense side of the budget and from House Democrats who sought a vote on protections for young immigrants.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said in a Senate floor speech the agreement would, “unwind the sequestration cuts that have hamstrung the military and jeopardized our national security.”

**Other Of Interest**

**Legislation to Tackle Spouse Employment Issues**

By Amy Bushatz, Military.com, 2 Feb 2018


A new proposal would order the Pentagon to take a hard look at a series of military spouse employment issues and come up with action plans to address them.

The legislation, which Sen. Tim Kaine, a Virginia Democrat, plans to introduce Tuesday, would also expand a federal military spouse hiring authority and broaden the Pentagon’s transition program to include spouses, he announced Friday.

It would also put into law an expansion of Military OneSource resources to troops and families up to a year after leaving the service announced by the Defense Department late last year.
Military spouse unemployment, which is not federally tracked, sits as high as 25 percent, according to some estimates.

Frequent moves and unpredictable military deployment and training schedules make it difficult for spouses to hold jobs long enough to establish long-term, successful careers.

A bevy of Defense Department and non-profit programs look to address the issue by offering scholarships, job and career coaching, and DoD hiring preferences.

Now, Kaine hopes to begin addressing those issues by requiring the DoD to pull together information on some of the key challenges and current programs, according to a fact sheet released by his office Friday morning.

UWF ROTC hosts annual Land Navigation Competition

By Shameka Lewis, February 4, 2018

On Saturday, the University of West Florida’s Army ROTC Program held its annual land navigation competition, an orienteering event for JROTC programs from across Northwest Florida.

Pensacola High School, Crestview High School and J. M. Tate High School were among the 27 teams competing in this event, which featured teams representing all branches of the United States military.

“The purpose of this event is to build a community between the ROTC battalions and our company and to raise funds for our ROTC program,” Cadet Alexis Rivera said.

Lt. Col. Henry Delacruz, chair and professor of military science at UWF, said the purpose of the competition was to introduce JROTC members to the concepts of traveling without modern technology.

“This event helps us teach them a skill, like navigation,” Delacruz said. “Well, what happens if your phone goes down. Then you learn how to read a map, and that is what they are doing here. They have to find points without the use of their phones.”

JROTC teams arrived at 7:15 a.m. Competing teams had three hours to find specific points on our land navigation course in the nature trails behind the Nature Trail Boardwalk.

GEOINT 2018 Registration and Housing Now Open

By Gisuser, February 5, 2018

Premier annual intelligence conference attracts more than 4,000 attendees and offers unparalleled education and training opportunities

Herndon, Virginia (February 5, 2018)—The United States Geospatial Intelligence Foundation (USGIF) opened registration and housing for its GEOINT 2018 Symposium, taking place April 22-25 at the Tampa Convention Center in Tampa, Fla.

The GEOINT Symposium, hosted annually by USGIF, gathers the defense, intelligence, and homeland security communities and other users and producers of geospatial information for an exciting agenda of keynote speakers, panel discussions, and breakout tracks offering the unique opportunity to learn from senior leaders and subject matter experts.
“It’s fantastic to be returning to Tampa in 2018,” said USGIF CEO Keith Masback. “We had such a rich, vibrant event there in 2014, including great participation from CENTOM, SOCOM, and myriad international representatives thanks to the proximity of MacDill Air Force Base. There was a phenomenal vibe in 2014 and USGIF is excited to go back.”

USGIF has confirmed two GEOINT 2018 keynote speakers. Robert Cardillo, director of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, and Joseph D. Kernan, under secretary of defense for intelligence, will address the audience during the Symposium general session. Additionally, Washington Post foreign affairs columnist David Ignatius will participate and lead the audience through discussions with some of the speakers.

The theme of GEOINT 2018 is “Driving Data to Decisions and Action.” With exponentially increasing data being collected and stored, and subsequent intelligence to be gained, it is imperative we use the information effectively and efficiently to a purposeful end. GEOINT 2018 will explore the major drivers, themes, and innovations helping decision-makers and warfighters at the tip of the spear gain actionable intelligence from disparate data……

How we provide military veterans a one-stop shop for employment help

By Cindy Barth – Editor, Orlando Business Journal, Feb 6, 2018, 3:52pm
https://www.bizjournals.com/orlando/news/2018/02/06/how-we-provide-military-veterans-a-one-stop-shop.html

Helping military veterans find job opportunities is a personal mission for Priscila Kalagian.

A former veteran herself who served 18 years in the Army, Kalagian — director of Heart of Florida United Way’s Mission United — saw a disconnect in military personnel returning home after completing their service time only to struggle to find how the skills they learned in the Army, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard and Navy translated into the types of skills employers needed.

“How do you list your training as a weapons specialist or some other technical military specialist position on a resume?” Kalagian said. “It’s really hard for many veterans to figure that out, and we wanted to help make that transition easier.”

To do that, Mission United teamed up with Orlando-based JobPath last November to create a one-stop website — MissionUnitedJobs.org — to help veterans make the connections they need with employers looking to hire……

USF ranked a Top 10 cybersecurity school by the Military Times

By Adam Winer, 11:13 AM, Feb 7, 2018, 6:25 PM, Feb 7, 2018

TAMPA — The University of South Florida has made the 10 Top List of Military Times best Cybersecurity schools.

To make the second annual rankings, the Military Times had schools first participate in a recent survey of colleges.
"How schools fared in those rankings accounted for half of their performance on the cybersecurity list," writes the news organization online, adding, "we also factored in distinctions schools earned from the National Security Agency (NSA), in cyber defense and information assurance education, as well accreditations in computer science from global accreditor ABET. In addition, the rankings consider the proportion of a school’s degrees related to cybersecurity."

According to PayScale.com, an entry-level information security analyst with a cybersecurity background makes a median $65,184 per year, ranging from about $48,000 up to about $91,000.

The Military Times also reports that research by Burning Glass Technologies, a company that specializes in job market analytics, shows the number of cybersecurity job postings grew by 74% from 2007 to 2013, more than double the rate for all IT jobs.

USF is also home to Florida's Center for Cybersecurity, launched in 2014, to help position Florida as a national leader in cyber security through education, research, and community outreach, including the local military institutions like SOCom and the MacDill Air Force Base.

Other schools on the Top 10 List are:

- Syracuse University
- University of Nebraska at Omaha
- Dakota State University
- University of Maryland University College
- Lewis University
- Armstrong State University
- University of Southern California
- Texas A&M University
- Kennesaw State University (was missing from this article…added by Terry McCaffrey)
Feb 16

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #62 will be on **Thursday, 22 March 2018, beginning at 9:00AM** at the Marriott Courtyard, 610 Wells Rd, Orange Park, FL 32073. The Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) will meet at the same location on 21 March 18. The meeting will focus on NAS Jacksonville among other business.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979       Access Code: 1869945

3. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Installation Innovation Conference** – ADC held their “Installation Innovation” conference Feb 12-14 in San Diego CA. Members of the Florida Defense Alliance, local defense communities in Florida and staff joined more than 600 defense supporters, base commanders and federal leaders to discuss how to better support our military installations and missions all over the country. Assistant Secretary of Defense Lucian Niemeyer led discussions on his priorities for installations, energy and facilities. He stated that on the top of his list is ensuring our ranges for testing and training remain viable to ensure combat capability of our forces.

4. **Florida FY19 Defense Grant Programs Announced** – The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) is seeking application proposals from eligible applicants for the Florida Defense Reinvestment Grant (DRG) Program and the Florida Defense Infrastructure Grant (DIG) Program for Fiscal Year 2018-2019. Application proposals will be accepted by DEO until March 13, 2018 at 3:00 PM EST. For more details on the proposal process and requirements of the grant programs, please visit [http://www.floridajobs.org/military-community-programs](http://www.floridajobs.org/military-community-programs).

5. **FDSTF Grant Window Re-opens** – The Task Force will accept additional limited applications for possible funding in FY19 which begins July 1, 2018. The Task Force will accept applications for projects that have developed since our last application window in August and are of such a nature as waiting for possible funding in FY20 would make the proposal outdated or obsolete. The Task Force will need justification of the emerging need provided in the application. Selected projects will compete with projects already submitted for in-person presentation before the Task Force on May 17, 2018 in Tallahassee FL. Applications will be accepted between February 15 and March 2, 2018. The Task Force will only accept applications using our on-line form (do not use prior forms) available at this link: [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/FY-2018-2019-FDSTF-Grant-Funding-Application-Form_distributed.pdf](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/FY-2018-2019-FDSTF-Grant-Funding-Application-Form_distributed.pdf).

6. **Military / Veteran Related Bills Filed This Week** – 2018 Session began on January 9, 2018. To review or track House Bills (HB), go to [www.myfloridahouse.gov](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov); for Senate Bills (SB), go to [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov). For both sites, insert the bill number at the top of the page if you would like current status throughout session. Bills filed this week are below and the current summary of all related bills filed to date is attached.  

   ■ **No New Bills Filed This Week**
News Clips of Interest:

Gulf Range / Oil Drilling

Training Range Modernization Part of Air Force Plan to Restore Readiness

https://mailchi.mp/defensecommunities/president-softens-stance-on-border-wall-funding-253593?e=28cebe069c

Senior Air Force officials on Wednesday described the service’s infrastructure investment plans for the remainder of fiscal 2018, in written testimony submitted to the House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee for a hearing on the Air Force’s readiness posture. The service plans to allot $2 billion for military construction, with the bed-down of new missions, combatant commander needs, and strengthening the nuclear security enterprise ranked as the highest priorities.

“In addition, we are funding the construction at the Utah Test and Training Range and the Nevada Test and Training Range so units can use the full range of capabilities available with the F-35A. We also continue to modernize our operational training infrastructure with a blend of live, virtual, and ‘synthetic’ platforms,” according to the testimony. In addition, the service is dedicating $38 million toward a state-of-the-art virtual test and training center.

Those plans depend on DOD receiving a full-year appropriation in time to carry out its intentions before the end of fiscal 2018, the statement noted.
DoD skips BRAC request in 2019 budget

After years of pleading with Congress to close down excess bases in the United States to save money, the Defense Department is backing off its request for 2019.

For the first time in half a decade, the Pentagon isn’t asking Congress to close some of the 22 percent excess infrastructure it is paying to keep open.

DoD estimates it would save about $2 billion a year if it could conduct another round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC).

Congress has not been particularly amenable to another round since the last round in 2005.

“We’ve asked for it a number of times in the past without much success, and so I think we’re looking at doing two things going forward,” DoD Comptroller David Norquist said during a Feb. 12 press briefing at the Pentagon. “One is working with Congress to find common areas where we can make reforms and changes that don’t create the same types of obstacles. The other is that we are undergoing a financial statement audit that includes a look at property and assets and investments and improving the accuracy of the data behind it. And there’s a view of being able to take advantage of the data coming out of that process to help us make better decision making on real property.”

One of Defense Secretary Jim Mattis’ main priorities is to bring business reforms to the department, those reforms include instilling budget discipline and using resources effectively, something BRAC is likely to help out with.

The $716 billion budget for 2019 does continue to grow the military, however, so it is possible DoD may use some of the facilities it considered excess.

While DoD is not asking to close bases, it is trying to recapitalize on some facilities that have withered due to neglect.

Pentagon drops effort to close unneeded military bases that cost $2 billion per year

Military leaders have pleaded with Congress for years to allow the closure of tens of thousands of excess military bases around the world, a move that Defense Secretary Jim Mattis says could save the services $2 billion annually.

But lawmakers had blocked shuttering any facilities under the Base Realignment and Closure program. On Monday, the Pentagon announced that it has given up on the effort for now and did not even mention the so-called BRAC program in its newly released 2019 budget request.

“We did not ask for that in this budget. We’ve asked for it a number of times in the past without much success,” said David Norquist, the Pentagon comptroller.
Instead, Norquist said the Pentagon will take another tack and focus its attention on other opportunities across the river on Capitol Hill.

NAS Pensacola

**Pensacola-area Navy pilot completes goal of flying 52 different types of planes in one year**

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, mnelsongab@pnj.com, Published 11:00 a.m. CT Feb. 10, 2018


In one whirlwind year, Pensacola Navy pilot Ryan Rankin managed to fly 52 different types of aircraft. The busy Pensacola Naval Air Station instructor pilot started 2017 with the daunting goal of flying a different plane each week of the year.


"It was definitely a wild year," said Rankin, who scheduled flights in his off hours and used his military leave time for the project.

His travels took him as far away as Poland, where he flew a 1922 Polikarpov Po-2. The Polikarpov was the oldest plane he flew and it provided his favorite flight of the year…..

**Pensacola Naval Air Station's military dogs are some of the busiest in the military**

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Published 6:00 a.m. CT Feb. 15, 2018 | Updated 12:46 p.m. CT Feb. 15, 2018


Figo, Heky and Hero are dogs with a critically important mission — protecting the U.S. Navy from explosives and other threats.

The two Belgian Malinois and one German shepherd are just three of the numerous military working dogs housed at Pensacola Naval Air Station, home of one of the busiest Navy kennels in the country.

Kennel Master Roberto Garcia said the dogs and their handlers provide security for the Pensacola base and other military bases around the region.

Despite all of the high-tech security equipment available to the military, dogs remain a critical part of ensuring bases are safe, Garcia said.

"They are one of the most reliable resources for finding explosives," said Garcia, who handles the 10-year-old Belgian Malinois named MWD (military working dog) Heky.

Like the sailors who care for them, Heky and his kennel mates have very structured lives.
"There are times when we just let them be dogs and play, but it is mostly training. When it is time to work, they have to be ready to work," Garcia said.

Although the dogs share a kennel building, they remain in separate kennels and don't get to interact with each other outside of structured training. Their home is the kennel, they do not go home with their handlers.....

### Hurlburt Field

**Hurlburt-based airmen to receive Bronze Star**

By Jim Thompson | Posted Feb 12, 2018 at 2:58 PM, Updated Feb 12, 2018 at 2:58 PM


**HURLBURT FIELD** — Five Special Tactics airmen will receive the Bronze Star, the military’s fourth-highest combat medal for extraordinary heroism, in Tuesday morning ceremonies at the University of Alabama at Birmingham Hospital. The Bronze Star recognizes either heroic achievement, heroic service, meritorious achievement or meritorious service in a combat zone.

The airmen, all part of the 720th Operations Support Squadron of the Hurlburt Field-based 24th Special Operations Wing, are being honored for their roles in a Special Operations Surgical Team (SOST) deployed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. The operation, which includes a number of partner nations, is aimed at the military defeat of ISIS, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

The medal presentation will be aired 11 a.m. CST on Facebook Live at [www.facebook.com/AirForceSpecialTactics](http://www.facebook.com/AirForceSpecialTactics).

A SOST comprises six mobile surgical specialists with advanced medical and tactical training. Among the airmen set to be honored Tuesday, all medical professionals, are: Maj. Justin Manley, a surgeon; Lt. Col. Ben Mitchell and Capt. Cade Reedy, both emergency room technicians; and Lt. Col. Matthew Uber, a nurse anesthetist. Two other airmen who were part of the deployment — Maj. Nelson Pacheco, an emergency room nurse, and Tech. Sgt. Richard Holguin, a respiratory therapist — have already received their Bronze Stars.

The fifth medal to be awarded Tuesday will go to Maj. Jonathan Chin, another SOST airman who was on a different deployment......

### NS Mayport

**US Navy awards contract for Ticonderoga-class USS Philippine Sea upgrade**

Navy Technology, 14 February 2018


The US Navy has awarded a new contract for the modernisation and overhaul of its Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser, USS Philippine Sea (CG 58).

If options are exercised, the docking selected restricted availability (DSRA) contract’s cumulative value would be approximately $72m.
Under the terms of the deal, BAE Systems will carry out the upgrade work for ten months at the company’s shipyard in Jacksonville, Florida, and at nearby Naval Station Mayport.

BAE Systems Jacksonville Ship Repair general manager Todd Hooks said: “We have extensive experience with the navy’s Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruisers and specifically with the Philippine Sea.

“We will utilise our cruiser experience to accomplish the DSRA and return the ship back to the fleet ready for continued service.”

Upgrade work onboard the $1bn US Navy vessel is expected to commence in April this year and will be completed in February next year.

NAS Jacksonville

Navy aviators set to start controlling unmanned aircraft from Jacksonville

By Joe Daraskevich, Posted Feb 11, 2018 at 5:01 PM, Updated Feb 12, 2018 at 9:47 AM

Since the dawn of aviation, pilots have been able to rely on the simple method of looking through an aircraft’s window to determine the weather ahead.

That’s no longer an option for a relatively new squadron at Jacksonville Naval Air Station.

This year a small group of aviation pioneers are ready to take the controls of drones as long as F-16s with wingspans the size of Boeing 757s as the future of maritime intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance is expanding.

The first 20 crew members of Unmanned Patrol Squadron 19 (VUP-19) have passed through the training program and are now instructing others.

Soon they will be operating 48-foot-long MQ-4C Tritons with 131-foot wingspans from a building at Jacksonville NAS as the aircraft fly around the globe with nobody on board.

The first members of the Jacksonville-based squadron will be the inaugural group in the Navy to regularly control the drones, and they’ve developed a schoolhouse-type setting on base where others in the squadron are following their example.

US Special Operations Command

Trump seeks 11 percent SOCOM budget increase

Howard Altman, Times staff writer, Published: February 12, 2018, Updated: February 12, 2018 at 05:44 PM
http://www.tampabay.com/article/20180212/ARTICLE/302129494/1071

President Donald Trump’s proposed military budget includes a nearly 11 percent spending increase for U.S. Special Operations Command headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base.

The measure, if approved by Congress, would bump up the command’s budget by 10.9 percent, from a total of $12.3 billion in Fiscal Year 2018 to $13.6 billion, according to Navy Lt. Phillip Chitty, a
SOCom spokesman. The proposed budget includes a $9.1 billion base and an additional $4.6 billion in war funding.

SOCom is responsible for fielding trained and equipped Navy SEALs, Army Rangers, Green Berets, Delta Force, Marine Raiders and Air Force commandos while providing billions of dollars a year in special operations-specific good and services.

One of the largest proposed increases is in SOCom’s procurement budget, which would jump nearly 40 percent to $3.1 billion.

The request, however, would see a 6.5 percent decrease in the amount of money spent on research, development, testing and evaluation, to $602 million. The President’s proposal also calls for a 45 percent cut in military construction, to $357 million……

Cape Canaveral AFS

Port Canaveral Road Work Grant Will Increase Capacity, Facilitate Traffic

By Eleanor Lamb, February 13, 2018 10:00 AM, EST
http://www.ttnews.com/articles/port-canaveral-road-work-grant-will-increase-capacity-facilitate-traffic

Gov. Rick Scott’s recently awarded $8.245 million grant to the Canaveral Port Authority will expand the port’s cargo and cruise businesses through several roadway improvement projects.

The grant, announced Feb. 6, will finance increased roadway capacity for the port’s north side cargo roads, new intersection signals and additions to the roadway network. The project also will include new signage throughout the port to help people navigate the facility.

Port Canaveral, which functions as a cruise and cargo port, is governed by the five-member Canaveral Port Authority Board of Commissioners and John Murray, who serves as port director. A captain in the U.S. Coast Guard, Murray led container fleet Hapag-Lloyd USA before joining the port in February 2016.

The Canaveral Port Authority Board of Commissioners voted 5-0 Feb. 7 to authorize the port to accept the award and enter into an agreement with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity……

Patrick AFB

A-10s and Pave Hawks Join Forces for CSAR Training in Florida

by Mike Killian, 2-14-2018

Recently, Florida’s Space Coast took notice of an unusual flock of birds prowling their skies. Pave Hawks and C-130s are a common and expected sight, assets of Patrick Air Force Base and the U.S. Air Force Reserve 920th Rescue Wing, but not A-10s, who came to Florida to hone their Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) skills alongside the 920th’s Guardian Angel airmen of the 301st Rescue Squadron.
“Operation Space Coast” kicked off on Jan. 22, beginning a two-week exercise with six A-10 Thunderbolt II’s from the “Red Devils” 107th Fighter Squadron / 127th Wing from Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mi., joining the 920th for various multi-airframe CSAR simulations.

An A-10 Thunderbolt II from the “Red Devils” 107th Fighter Squadron / 127th Wing from Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, flying CSAR training ops with 920th Rescue Wing Airmen in central Florida recently for “Operation Space Coast”.

“In Michigan during the winter months it becomes difficult to train due to the weather, and this year we joined Airmen here at Patrick Air Force Base to ensure our pilots remain current with their training requirements,” said Capt. Jason Davenport, a 127th Wing A-10 pilot. “It also gave us an opportunity to train out of our comfort zones, in new environments and with people we could be working with during future operations.”

The “Red Devils” are one of the oldest flying units in the U.S. Air Force, first organized as the 107th Aero Squadron at Kelly Field, Texas, in August 1917 in response to the U.S. entry into World War I....

**Homestead AFB**

**Here's why those fighter jets are roaring over South Florida**

Skyler Swisher, Contact Reporter, 2-14-2018

The U.S. Air Force is training to station fighter jets in Fort Lauderdale as part of its mission to protect President Donald Trump when he visits Mar-a-Lago, a spokesman for the North American Aerospace Defense Command said.

Low-flying jets roared over South Florida as part of military exercises Wednesday morning, sparking concern and questions on social media.

Part of their objective was to practice flying out of Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport to intercept planes, said Michael Kucharek, a NORAD spokesman.

“We train as we would fight,” he said. “We have the best interest of the nation at heart. We have to create as realistic scenario as we can and that comes in many forms.”

During previous Trump visits, planes enforcing flight restrictions have been based at Homestead Air Reserve Base. Moving the jets to Fort Lauderdale will improve response times, Kucharek said......

**US Southern Command**

**USSOUTHCOM officials conduct annual METOC conference**

Story by Airman 1st Class Frankie Moore, 355th Fighter Wing 02.06.2018

Officials from the U.S. Southern Command held their annual SOUTHCOM Meteorological and Oceanographic conference here, Feb. 6.
The 2-day-long gathering brought meteorology and oceanography specialists together from various sections of the Department of Defense to discuss operations, lessons learned from 2017, and ways to move forward in the future.

“USSOUTHCOM is a very joint-driven environment,” said U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Anthony Carvalho, 612th Air Base Squadron joint METOC officer. “The importance of this meeting is for all of us to see what we can do to better aid each other.”

Conferences such as these help create a better working relationship among the DoD entities, especially during times of crisis.

“Our group cohesion during Hurricanes Maria and Irma last fall shows that these gatherings are beneficial,” said U.S. Air Force Maj. Shane Gillies, 25th Operational Weather Squadron operations officer.

By sharing information from each other’s collection of experiences, the individual departments will be able to understand how they can work together more effectively to support those in need……

**SOUTHCOM Commander: USCG ‘Irreplaceable’ in Drug Interdiction Ops**

by Bridget Johnson, February 16, 2018


The U.S. is able to intercept about a quarter of the vessels headed for these shores bearing illicit cargo, the Senate Armed Services Committee heard at a Thursday hearing to get updates on Northern and Southern Command and their battle against drug trafficking.

“We have pretty good situational awareness on an awful lot of the trafficking that is occurring,” Adm. Kurt Tidd, commander of U.S. Southern Command, testified. “And that’s based on very close partnership with a variety of countries in the region, most notably with Colombia. Of the known tracks that we are aware of — and we think we’ve got a pretty good handle — we are only able to intercept about 25 percent, about one quarter.”

Ranking Member Jack Reed (D-R.I.) mused about whether “if we can invest more in Coast Guard, presumably we could intercept more than 25 percent of the ships.”

Tidd replied that “security in our theater is a team sport.”

“I’ve said before on a number of occasions, in the U.S. SOUTHCOM region, my maritime force has white hulls and orange stripes. And, frankly, if it were not for the United States Coast Guard and the significant effort by the commandant, we would not have a maritime presence,” Tidd told senators.

This isn’t a matter of downplaying the “very significant importance of the region,” he noted, but “just a matter of strategic priorities and availability of forces… we run out of forces before we run out of mission.”……

**Defense Industry**

**Lockheed Martin plans to expand Orlando division by 255,000 SF**
Global defense contractor Lockheed Martin Corp. will expand in west Orlando as it continues to grab big contracts with work in Central Florida.

The Bethesda, Md.-based company declined to share details until Feb. 14, when it breaks ground at 2 p.m. on its planned new 255,000-square-foot Research and Development II building on the property of the Missiles & Fire Control facility at 5600 Sand Lake Road. The new building is will open in 2019 and lead to job growth.

Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs, Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Executive Director Cissy Proctor and Lockheed Martin Missiles & Fire Control Executive Vice President Frank St. John will attend tomorrow's ceremony.

Lockheed Martin is expected to expand its workforce in Orlando as the company was approved for a $3.5 million incentive package from Orange County and Florida last year to create 500 jobs by the end of 2022. Currently, Lockheed Martin has more than 650 job open on its website, calling for software and system engineers, program managers and more……

DoD Budget
The Trump Military Buildup Has Begun with DoD’s Proposed Budget

For years, the U.S. military has had to do more with less, but the Defense Department’s proposed budget for fiscal 2019 would add nearly 26,000 service members across the active-duty force, National Guard and reserves.

The Army would see the biggest jump, growing by 11,500 active-duty soldiers, 500 National Guardsmen and 500 reservists, budget documents show. The Navy would grow by 7,500 active-duty sailors and 100 reservists; the Air Force would add 4,000 active-duty airmen, 500 reservists and 200 National Guardsmen; and the Marine Corps would increase by 1,100 active-duty Marines, officials said.

The plus-up reflects the National Security Strategy’s requirements that the Defense Department reverse the post-Iraq and Afghanistan drawdowns that led to the U.S. military in 2016 being the smallest it had been before World War II, said Defense Department Comptroller David Norquist.

By fiscal 2023, the U.S. military expects to add a total of 56,600 service members, Norquist said Monday at a Pentagon briefing. The additional troops will allow the Defense Department to add units such as the Army’s Security Force Assistance Brigades as well as recruit pilots, maintainers, and cyber security experts, he said.

Under current plans, the Marine Corps would only grow by 1,400 active-duty Marines over the next five years, despite the Corps’ internal force structure review, which recommended that the service increase its active-duty end strength from 185,000 to at least 194,000 Marines……
Despite Massive Budget Deal, Winter Still Calls For Six More Weeks of CR

Dan Cohen, “On Base”, 2-12-18
https://mailchi.mp/defensecommunities/president-softens-stance-on-border-wall-funding-253581?e=28cebe069c

Last week’s two-year budget agreement will provide a huge windfall for the Pentagon with the department’s base budget jumping by $165 billion through September 2019 over the statutory budget caps. But before defense officials can start spending the extra funds, lawmakers will need to rewrite the 12 fiscal 2018 appropriations bills and clear an omnibus spending package. The continuing resolution (CR) approved by the House and Senate in the early morning hours of Friday, and signed into law by President Trump, gives Congress until March 23 to complete the task.

Of course, the funding largesse means negotiations over the spending bills should be less contentious than usual, with many winners and few losers, reports CQ. The $700 billion now slated for national defense this year exceeds not only the president’s FY 2018 request but funding levels in both chambers’ spending bills as well.

In FY 2018, the statutory cap on defense spending will rise by $80 billion, resetting the cap at $629 billion. After adding in $71 billion for the department’s overseas contingency operations (OCO) account, which is exempt from the budget caps, total defense spending will reach $700 billion. Next year, the cap will increase by $85 billion to $647 billion; with $69 billion for OCO, total defense spending would be $716 billion in FY 2019.

Other Of Interest

Executive created investment hoax involving Richard Branson, Tampa tech company alleges in lawsuit

Margie Manning, Dec 15, 2017, 1:47pm EST

Nitro Solutions has filed a lawsuit against Tampa consulting firm Eye C Solutions and its owner Lisa Monnet, saying Monnet was behind a “malicious and multi-week hoax and campaign” to deceive and defraud Nitro.

Monnet, who was Nitro’s interim CEO from August to mid-November, told Nitro she had connections to wealthy investors including Richard Branson, the businessman and philanthropist best known for founding Virgin Group, but that was untrue, according to the Nitro lawsuit, filed Dec. 7 in Hillsborough County Circuit Court.

Nitro, maker of artificial intelligence and cybersecurity products, delayed product pilots and held off other investments due to those claims, the lawsuit said.

“The lawsuit is false allegations and we will file a countersuit,” Monnet told Tampa Bay Business Journal.
No legal response had been filed on behalf of Monnet or Eye C Solutions as of midday Dec. 15, and her attorney did not return multiple calls for comment.

Nitro has since hired Ashby Green, a local finance industry veteran, as its new CEO. Green was the TBBJ's CFO of the Year in 2017. Monnet was a TBBJ Business Woman of the Year Entrepreneur finalist in 2014.

**Employment terms**

Pete Slade, Nitro founder, president and chief technology officer, called Monnet “a strong and proven effective leader” when the company issued a press release on Aug. 3, saying Monnet was appointed CEO effective immediately. Monnet was described in the release as a serial entrepreneur who served as a senior advisor to the intelligence community and Department of Defense. She’s also president of the Tampa Bay Defense Alliance.

Nitro hoped Monnet’s ties to the defense industry would help the company grow in that sector, Slade, the former CEO, told TBBJ at the time…..

**Senate Bill Aims To Make Dent In Military Spouse Unemployment**

Dan Cohen, “On Base”, 2-12-18

The Defense Department would explore a variety of options for supporting the career goals of military spouses, under legislation Sens. Tim Kaine (Va.), Kirsten Gillibrand (N.Y.) and Patty Murray (Wash.) introduced last week. It calls for DOD to:

- study the impact of frequent moves on spouse employment and offer recommendations for countering the harmful effects;
- develop a plan to allow military spouses to launch small businesses on military installations, and consider ways to increase participation of military spouse-friendly businesses in DOD contracts;
- identify ways to boost the availability of child care, including relying on subsidy programs; and
- find ways to boost spouses’ use of the My Career Advancement Account program, which provides scholarships for training and education.

In addition, the measure would adjust federal hiring authority so agencies can hire military spouses faster, reported Army Times. To speed hiring of staff for child development centers, it would require DOD to issue interim authorization while the formal vetting process is under way. The legislation also would allow spouses to attend transition assistance programs with their service member; currently they can only attend when space is available.

In an op-ed in the Richmond Times-Dispatch, Kathy Roth-Douquet, CEO of Blue Star Families, explains why the bill is urgently needed.

**U.S. Coast Guard Medevacs Woman from Carnival Cruise Ship 240 Miles East of Florida Coast**

By Space Coast Daily // February 13, 2018
BREVARD COUNTY • MELBOURNE, FLORIDA – The Coast Guard medevaced a 75-year-old woman from a cruise ship, Tuesday 240 miles east of Jacksonville.

According to the U.S. Coast Guard, watchstanders at Coast Guard 7th District received a notification at 5 a.m. from the crew of the cruise ship Carnival Pride.

Pride stating a female aboard was suffering an illness and required emergency medical assistance.

The watchstanders directed the launch of a Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter and an HC-130 Hercules aircraft crew to assist.

The Jayhawk crew hoisted the patient and the ship’s nurse and took them to Holmes Regional Medical Center at 1:15 p.m.
Feb 23

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #62 will be on **Thursday, 22 March 2018**, beginning at **9:00AM** at the Marriott Courtyard, 610 Wells Rd, Orange Park, FL 32073. The Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) will meet at the same location on 21 March 18. The meeting will focus on NAS Jacksonville among other business.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979  Access Code: 1869945

3. **Judge T. Pat Maney Announced His Retirement for this Year** – Many of you know Judge Maney who served on the Task Force member from November 2011 – July 2015. The Judge was instrumental in establishing Veterans Courts in Florida. He has a very interesting story; see article below in the CLIPS.

4. **Groundbreaking Set for New State Veterans’ Nursing Home** – In a press release today, the FL Department of Veterans Affairs announced the new home in Port St. Lucie. According to the release, “The Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs is hosting a Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Ardie R. Copas State Veterans’ Nursing Home in Port St. Lucie on March 20, 2018 at 2 p.m. The new 120-bed state veterans’ home will be located near 10700 SW Tradition Parkway in the Port St. Lucie community of Tradition. Parking will be adjacent to the ceremony site. A reception will immediately follow the ceremony at Tradition Town Hall, 10799 SW Civic Lane. In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony and reception will take place at Tradition Town Hall.”

5. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Opens Award Nominations:** ADC has opened the nominations process for the 2018 Defense Community Awards, a way to highlight the accomplishments of outstanding defense community leaders in front of key decision-makers from Congress and DOD. ADC will present this year’s awards at a luncheon during the 2018 Defense Communities National Summit, June 18-20 in Washington. Awards honor community or state, military, base redevelopment and congressional leaders whose accomplishments demonstrate vision, innovation and excellence. Specific categories are: Community or State Leadership, Military Leadership, and Congressional Leadership. This program is an opportunity to share the stories of outstanding defense community leaders and for them to be acknowledged for the hard work they put into supporting defense communities and our nation’s military. Award criteria and other information available on the ADC website and deadline for nominations is March 1.

6. **FDSTF Grant Window Open** – The Task Force will accept additional limited applications for possible funding in FY19 which begins July 1, 2018. The Task Force will accept applications for projects that have developed since our last application window in August and are of such a nature as waiting for possible funding in FY20 would make the proposal outdated or obsolete. The Task Force will need justification of the emerging need provided in the application. Selected projects will compete with projects already submitted for in-person presentation before the Task Force on May 17, 2018 in Tallahassee FL. Applications will be accepted between February 15 and March 2, 2018. The Task Force will only accept applications using our on-line form (do not use

7. Military / Veteran Related Bills Filed This Week – 2018 Session began on January 9, 2018. To review or track House Bills (HB), go to www.myfloridahouse.gov; for Senate Bills (SB), go to www.flsenate.gov. For both sites, insert the bill number at the top of the page if you would like current status throughout session. Bills filed this week are below and the current summary of all related bills filed to date is attached.
   - No New Bills Filed This Week

8. Attachments:
   - Military and Veterans Bill Update

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News Clips of Interest:

Gulf Range / Oil Drilling

Federal oil drilling lease sale off Florida coast sparks environmental opposition

By BRUCE RITCHIE and BEN LEFEBVRE, 02/16/2018 06:52 PM EST

TALLAHASSEE – An Interior Department plan announced Friday to open a huge swath of the Gulf of Mexico to oil drilling, including a smaller area off Florida's Gulf Coast for oil and gas drilling, left environmentalists adamantly opposed.

But an oil industry representative and the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management pointed out that the area off Florida has never been off limits to drilling. It covers 944,640 acres and at its closest is 125 miles from the Panhandle coast.
Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's proposal in January to open federal waters off Florida to drilling appears to be fueling controversy for the lease sale — even though the sale area lies outside an area closed to drilling until 2022 under federal law.

"There is a pattern here — Zinke is saying, 'Drill everywhere and drill anywhere regardless of what the environmental impacts are going to be,'" said Sierra Club Florida chapter director Frank Jackalone. "Zinke and [President Donald] Trump just don't care about the damage they do to our fisheries, our marine life and our coast."

"This massive lease sale is more supporting evidence for why Florida needs to be permanently protected from offshore oil and gas exploration," Holly Parker, Florida regional manager for the Surfrider Foundation, said in an email.

Zinke reversed course in January on the proposal to open previously closed areas, citing opposition from Gov. Rick Scott.

But environmentalists note that the area still is being analyzed by the BOEM as part of the 2019-2024 drilling plan……

Relax, Florida: Interior Dept. announcement isn’t opening up our shores to oil drilling

By Alex Leary, 2-17-2018

WASHINGTON – The Interior Department late Friday afternoon announced a major sale of oil lease locations in the Gulf of Mexico, but it would put rigs no closer to Florida.

"These are lease sales in an area currently open to drilling, outside the current moratorium," explained Ryan Brown, spokesman for Sen. Bill Nelson. "This is the sale that was finalized under the Obama administration. Doesn't allow drilling any closer to Florida."

John Tupps, a spokesman for Florida Gov. Rick Scott, said: "Our office has spoken with the Department of Interior. They have confirmed that their press release does not affect Secretary (Ryan) Zinke's commitment to not expand offshore oil drilling off Florida's coast."

Some politicians misread the news. Here's a statement from Philip Levine, a Democratic candidate for governor:

"Floridians will not be fooled by the Trump administrations relentless efforts to drill off our coast. As I've said, we are prepared to take on anyone, and I mean anyone, who threatens Florida's coasts."

Since Gov. Rick Scott struck a deal with Secretary Zinke in January to keep Florida "off the table" in any drilling plans, there have been been moments of doubt that the deal would hold.

BRAC

Military Matters: Base Realignment and Closure put off

By Chuck Leonard, Wednesday, Feb 21st 2018, 6:31 am EST, Wednesday, Feb 21st 2018, 6:41 am EST
(WTVM) – Four words that military towns hate to hear are Base Realignment and Closure, better known as BRAC.

This is how the Pentagon decides what stays and what goes as far as U.S. military bases.

A new round of these considerations was scheduled for next year, but have now been put off.

Back in 2005, Georgia lost two Army posts, Fort McPherson and Fort Gillem, along with a Navy School in Athens.

“What they said is that BRAC is not happening in 2019,” said State Representative Dave Belton, chair of the House Military Affairs Working Group. “That does not mean it won’t happen in 2021, but for 2019 the Pentagon has given up on BRAC. That’s a great win for Georgia.”

“That doesn’t mean that we’re out of the woods. For example, although they’re announcing some troop increases at Fort Benning, Fort Gordon and For Stewart, they’re also announcing they’re going to kill the J-Stars mission at Robbins Air Force Base,” continued Belton. “So, there still could be some realignment in missions, personnel and money, and we ought to make sure that Georgia can replace the mission at Robbins Air Force Base.”

As far as budgets, Representative Belton also says for the first time in decades, Congress settled on a two-year continuing resolution that provides the military $1.4 trillion dollars through 2021.

NAS Pensacola

Strengthening Military Outreach, UWF Forms Office Of Military Engagement

Pulse Staff, February 19, 2018

As part of its continuing support and dedication to serving the military, the University of West Florida has formed a new Office of Military Engagement. UWF President Martha D. Saunders has named retired U.S. Navy Capt. Chris Middleton as the president’s military liaison, serving as the primary point of contact between her office and military and defense organizations.

“I am happy to take this step toward enhancing our military outreach,” Saunders said. “We have common values to serve the public, grow the region and provide the foundations for future success.”

Middleton will be charged with strengthening relationships with Florida’s defense industry, developing a strategic plan for the Office of Military Engagement and planning and executing University-sponsored military outreach events. He will also coordinate meetings with University leadership and senior military leaders in order to create opportunities and partnerships that will enhance the symbiotic relationship between UWF and the local military community.

“I am proud to serve the President and the University in growing our common work with military partners,” Middleton said. “We can accelerate our strategic ambitions together. I look forward to the engagements.”
Pensacola Naval Hospital becomes outpatient only, will no longer deliver babies

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Published 4:08 p.m. CT Feb. 22, 2018 | Updated 4:58 p.m. CT Feb. 22, 2018

The oldest naval hospital in the country is preparing for some big changes as it transitions to an outpatient center.

Pensacola Naval Hospital, which opened in 1826, will stop providing obstetrics services in July.

"It is a little sad," said Capt. Amy Branstetter, the hospital's commanding officer.

Branstetter, who started her career as a labor and delivery nurse at the Pensacola hospital, said the hospital averages about 30 deliveries a month. That is a relatively small number of deliveries that can easily be taken care of by other area hospitals, she said.

The Navy's reorganization of the hospital, which will start in July, includes sending about 100 positions for active duty sailors to Portsmouth Naval Medical Center in Virginia, Camp Lejeune Naval Hospital in North Carolina and other locations where their skills are needed, she said.

The changes will also impact the hospital's cardiology and gastroenterology departments. Surgical procedures that cannot happen on an outpatient bases will need to take place at hospitals on Eglin Air Force Base, Mississippi's Keesler Air Force Base or elsewhere in the community, Branstetter said……

Eglin AFB

Ambitious project comes to fruition for Florida Ducks Unlimited

Tony Adame, Pensacola News Journal, Published 6:00 a.m. CT Feb. 19, 2018
http://www.pnj.com/story/sports/outdoors/breathe/2018/02/19/ambitious-project-comes-fruition-florida-ducks-unlimited/323509002/

Take these 700,000 people, all over the world, moving toward one purpose.

They make things happen. They want our planet to be a better place.

Boil them down to their smaller groups — like the Florida Ducks Unlimited District One chapter that covers Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton counties — and you can get a grassroots idea of what it means to be part of a group dedicated to the "conservation of wetlands and associated upland habitats for waterfowl, other wildlife, and people."

"It's all volunteers, all people with a lot of stuff going on in their lives with full-time jobs and families," said Hank Reynolds, the Florida Ducks Unlimited District One chairman. "And we do a lot of stuff, banquets, golf tournaments and various types of fundraisers, and a lot of that money goes to conserving the big wetlands that are mostly in the Midwest, northern parts of the United States and in Canada where ducks live and breed … but I think we decided we wanted a local project, too, that we could invest our time and energy in instead of all the money going to bigger projects."

And it was a local project they found — within a worldwide organization that counts 700,000 members — an ambitious undertaking to help the once-almost extinct, now-thriving species of wood ducks, a
beautiful species recognizable by their majestic coloring through the beak, head and neck that live in Florida year-round.

The goal of the project? Create duck boxes that could serve as nesting areas for the wood ducks throughout the region.

The years-long project came to fruition on Feb. 10 with the first round of 50 duck boxes set up by Ducks Unlimited along the Yellow River — 30 boxes placed strategically in coordination with spots marked by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

The second set of 20 boxes will go out on Feb. 24 in ponds and creeks in the area that surrounds the Eglin Air Force Base range……

**Tyndall AFB**

**Does Tyndall AFB have an environmental pollution problem?**

By Jennifer Holton | Posted: Mon 10:24 PM, Feb 19, 2018 | Updated: Tue 4:56 AM, Feb 20, 2018


TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (WJHG/WECP) - It’s a troubling claim— a recently released report from ProPublica.org is pointing the finger at Tyndall Air Force Base for decades of procrastination involving pollution at more than 100 sites.

One includes the base’s elementary school.

Years before it was an Air Force base, part of Tyndall’s property was used as an Army Gunnery School for World War II training, using lead-based ammunition. Years later, lead shot littered what is now the school grounds.

Amy Mason taught at the school for 33 years. She says students used to find the pellets outside.

"Kids would find them everywhere, they would play with them,” Mason said. “We didn't have any idea what they were.”

Tyndall spearheaded several clean-up efforts, most recently in 2015 and 2016, but Environmental Protection Agency Project Manager Robert Pope says work is stalled.

"Right now the Air Force is in a contract dispute with one of their major investigation and clean-up contractors,” Pope said……

**Fighting fire with fire**

By Airman 1st Class Delaney Gonzales, 325th Fighter Wing Public Affairs / Published February 20, 2018

http://www.tyndall.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/1445993/fighting-fire-with-fire/

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – The faint smell of smoke fills the air around base, to some this may create a sense of uneasiness, however, in this instance fire is a beneficial tool for Tyndall and the environment it protects. Prescribed burns, also called controlled burns, are essential for maintaining the ecological balance of the woodland encompassing the base.
“A prescribed burn refers to the controlled application of fire to forests to help maintain and restore healthy ecosystems that depend on fire such as the longleaf pine ecosystem that Tyndall Natural Resources is actively restoring on base,” said Melanie Kaeser, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ecologist.

The U.S. Air Force Wildland Fire Branch carries out prescribed burns through modules, which are stationed in various locations across the country.


Preparation, training, and safety precautions are key to a successful burn.

Before prescribed burns begin, firefighters receive an operational briefing where they receive information about weather, potential hazards, expected fire behavior, overall plan of implementation and a thorough medical plan in case of injury.

Tyndall strives to be a good steward of the environment. Prescribed burns conducted here aid the ecosystem by helping plants and wildlife flourish…….

## NS Mayport

### 2018 Team Navy Trials commence

Story by Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael Lopez, 02.19.2018


**JACKSONVILLE, Fla.** – The Team Navy trials for the 2018 Department of Defense (DoD) Warrior Games kicked off Feb. 20, at Naval Station (NAVSTA) Mayport, where over 70 seriously wounded, ill and injured Sailors and Coastguardsmen will compete for a spot to represent the Navy in this year’s DoD Warrior Games.

Navy Wounded Warrior-Safe Harbor (NWW-SH) and NAVSTA Mayport are hosting the trials, in which athletes will qualify in eight adaptive sports: archery, cycling, wheelchair basketball, shooting, sitting volleyball, swimming, track and field. The top performing athletes will fill 40 competitive spots and five alternative spots on Team Navy.

“We hope the trials and the DoD Warrior Games pull athletes out of whatever they may be struggling with,” said Lt. Cmdr. Therese Pederson, Navy Region Southeast Warrior Games Trials coordinator. “We hope this gives them something to focus on while achieving success in a sport that they may not have thought they could do before.”

Both first time and returning athletes from all over the country will be competing in the trials to participate in sports they’re familiar with while also trying their hands in sports they’ve never attempted…….

## NAS Jacksonville

### DCMA Boeing Seattle delivers sixth P-8A aircraft to RAAF

AIR FORCE TECHNOLOGY, 19 FEBRUARY 2018

DCMA Boeing Seattle delivers the sixth P-8A Poseidon aircraft to the RAAF. Credit: DCMA Boeing Seattle.

Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) Boeing Seattle has delivered the sixth P-8A Poseidon military aircraft to the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF).

Conducted under the cooperative Poseidon programme, the current delivery is the contracting office’s first foreign military aircraft international direct delivery.

Aircraft receipt inspections had been previously carried out at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida, US, by the Australian Air Force’s 11 Squadron, following which the P-8A jets were delivered from the air station to its Edinburgh base.

The sixth RAAF aircraft has been directly delivered to Australia from Seattle as was requested to the Navy Joint Project Office by the country’s AIR 7000 Project Office, on behalf of the RAAF’s 11 Squadron and 92 Wing.

DCMA Boeing Seattle P-8 international programme integrator Air Force captain Rachel Del Grosso said: “After initial discussions brought up an opportunity to provide significant cost and schedule savings to the RAAF with a direct DCMA delivery to Australia instead of delivery to Jacksonville, Florida.

“Soon, planning began with our leadership, P-8 Joint Program Office DAPML, Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) PMA-290, and AIR 7000 Project Office in Canberra, Australia.”

**Navy Poseidon aircrew finds fishermen stranded at sea for 8 days**

By TYLER HLAVAC | STARS AND STRIPES, Published: February 21, 2018


The Navy has rescued three fishermen who had been adrift for more than a week in the South Pacific.

A 19-foot skiff was reported missing Feb. 12 after failing to return from a fishing expedition near Chuuk Lagoon in Micronesia. The boat carried food and water but no radios or safety equipment.

Sailors from Patrol Squadron Eight traveled to Guam from Kadena Air Base, Japan, to join the search at the request of U.S. Coast Guard Sector Guam, a Navy statement said.

After searching on Tuesday for three hours, a P-8A Poseidon aircrew spotted the survivors, and dropped a search-and-rescue kit that included food, water, medical supplies and communications and signaling equipment.

The fishermen were picked up by a police vessel a few hours later.

“It was incredibly rewarding to be a part of saving lives — it’s what everyone joins the Navy to do,” Lt. Miles Schumacher, the Poseidon’s tactical coordinator, said in the statement. “We successfully demonstrated the capability of the [maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft] community to react quickly and effectively to operational requirements in the farthest corners of the globe. Hopefully this is just the first of many successful rescues by P-8A Poseidon aircrews.”

The Jacksonville, Fla.-based Patrol Squadron 8 is currently deployed to the 7th Fleet. The squadron consists of seven P-8A Poseidons — the Navy’s newest maritime patrol aircraft — operated by 12 combat aircrews.
Chief of Norwegian navy visits NAS Jax

By Reggie Jarrett, Jax Air News Editor, Posted: Wed, 02/21/2018 - 3:06pm

Chief of the Royal Navy of Norway Rear Adm. Nils Anreas Stensønes made a brief stop at Naval Air Station (NAS) Jacksonville on his way to fly out to USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) Feb. 15.

Stensønes, along with four other members of the Norwegian navy, flew out of NAS Jacksonville aboard a C-2 Greyhound to the Truman to observe the Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX). He would spend a few hours on the Truman before flying on to the Royal Norwegian Navy frigate HNoMS Roald Amundsen (F 311), which was participating in COMPTUEX.

Stensønes began his United States trip Feb. 7 in Washington, D.C., where he met with Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer and Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson.

“The high point of the trip is visiting the carrier battle group,” Stensønes said.

“My purpose was to observe our frigate integrate with the Harry S. Truman Battle Group and see how that was going.”

MacDill AFB

Planning begins for Warrior Games coming to Tampa in 2019

Howard Altman, Times staff writer, Published: February 19, 2018

TAMPA – Army Gen. Raymond A. "Tony" Thomas III, the commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, had a court-side epiphany last July at the United Center in Chicago while watching the annual Department of Defense Warrior Games.

So impressed with what he saw and so confident in massive support from the Tampa Bay community, Thomas decided right then to try to bring the games here in 2019, according to Army Col. Cary Harbaugh, who was sitting next to him.

"He turned to me and said, ‘Can we do this?’ and I said, ‘Yes sir, we can. Why not?’" recalled Harbaugh, who runs SOCom’s Warrior Care Coalition, an advocacy program designed to improve troops’ quality of life and mission readiness, and transition back to civilian life.

In December, the Pentagon awarded the games to SOCom, which has decided to stage them off-base next year to offer greater access to a community that already is showing tremendous interest. And now the real work of putting on a major sporting event that will bring some 300 athletes and about 1,200 family members here is under way.

The command has to find places to hold events such as wheelchair basketball and seated volleyball, shooting and archery, swimming and track and field. For bike races, Harbaugh envisions a route along somewhere like Tampa’s Bayshore Boulevard.
To pull the whole thing off, SOCom will need at least 800 volunteers. And funding. And, of course, there are the entertainers for the opening night ceremony. Last year it was country musicians Kelly Clarkson and Blake Shelton…..

US Special Operations Command

SOCOM budget expected to grow by almost $2 billion by 2019

BY ALEX HOLLINGS 02.19.2018

Senior officials from the United States’ Special Operations Command addressed lawmakers on Capitol Hill on Friday to discuss funding and expectations for the nation’s special operations forces in the years to come.

“Special operations forces played an integral role as part of the joint force in the destruction of ISIS’ physical caliphate in Syria and Iraq,” SOCOM commander, Army Gen. Raymond A. Thomas III, said to the House Armed Services Committee’s emerging threats and capabilities subcommittee.

“We continue to have outsized effects around the globe, defeating our enemies, training, equipping and enabling our friends and allies, rapidly transforming the organization to be prepared for all future threats and caring for our fallen, wounded and ill and their families.”

Owen West, assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low-intensity conflict, also addressed the subcommittee, explaining that SOCOM’s budget accounts for only 1.9 percent of the overall defense budget, but offers a disproportionate level of operational capability in exchange, including a presence in over 90 nations around the globe.

“This capital expenditure fuels the current fight, but it must also result in long-term competitive advantage,” West told the House panel before addressing SOCOM’s growing budget request over the coming years.

SOCOM’s budget for fiscal year 2017 rang in at approximately $11.8 billion, but is expected to grow to $12.3 billion in 2018 and further to $13.6 billion in 2019. That growth, SOCOM officials claim, will help to ensure the United States maintains the high ground in a number of active and potential conflicts around the world. However, both West and Thomas also addressed the importance of being fiscally responsible to ensure the U.S. gets the most bang for their budgetary buck……

Cape Canaveral AFS

Vice President Mike Pence: Government, commercial space industry must collaborate

Marco Santana, Contact Reporter, Orlando Sentinel, 2-21-2018

KENNEDY SPACE CENTER – President Donald Trump’s general deregulatory approach has made its way into the space industry, with industry and government leaders saying that’s how the U.S. can lead the world in space exploration and innovation.
Vice President Mike Pence said Wednesday that the government should streamline rules and regulations that govern launch permitting.

That would mean companies approved to launch in Florida, for instance, would also be allowed to launch in California without having to wait for a West Coast permit.

“The government has figured out how to acknowledge drivers licenses across state lines so there is no reason we can’t do the same for rockets,” said Pence, who made the comments during a National Space Council meeting at Kennedy Space Center.

The meeting was the second of the council since Trump reinstated the advisory body in September.

As part of the gathering, Pence officially appointed a 29-member user advisory group, one that includes astronauts, former government officials and top executives of some of the industry’s largest companies, including Lockheed Martin, Boeing and SpaceX……

**Patrick AFB**

**Launch support contract awarded by 45th Space Wing for Cape Canaveral**

By James LaPorta | Feb. 21, 2018 at 1:26 PM


Feb. 21 (UPI) – Space Coast Launch Services has been awarded a contract by the U.S. Air Force for launch operations support facilities and systems in Cape Canaveral.

The deal, announced Tuesday by the Department of Defense, is valued at more than $11.8 million and is a modification to a previous contract.

The modified contract taps Space Coast Launch Services LLC, out of Patrick Air Force Base, Florida to provide "operations, maintenance and engineering support to critical launch, spacecraft and ordnance facilities and support systems."

Specifically, the contract services will support the Air Force's 45th Space Wing, whose mission is to assure access to space and to support global operations.

Work on the contract will occur at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida, and is expected to be completed in September 2018.

No funds are being obligated at the time of award, the Pentagon said in a press release.

**For Combat Rescue Units, Space Launch Once Again a Priority**

By Oriana Pawlyk, Military.com, 22 Feb 2018


**PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Florida** – They've rescued civilians in the mountains of Afghanistan, evacuated the American embassy in South Sudan, and gone into combat zones to save their fellow service members.
Now, members of the Air Force Reserve's 920th Rescue Wing here are gearing up for their first human spaceflight support mission in almost a decade.

They have roughly nine months to perfect a strategy to mobilize to a U.S. space capsule in time to retrieve the astronauts aboard.

Members from the wing, which includes the 308th Rescue Squadron -- one of the Air Force's "Guardian Angels" personnel recovery units, will stay on alert for space launches and landings anywhere in the world……

**US Southern Command**

**U.S. and allies look to military intervention in Venezuela**

By W. T. Whitney Jr., February 20, 2018 1:00 PM CST


The Bolivarian social and political movement first led by former Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez and holding state power since 1999 has long faced U.S. assaults. They’ve ranged from U.S. support for an unsuccessful military coup in 2002, backing for violent street disturbances, U.S. money assigned to political opponents, and U.S. economic sanctions against Venezuelan political leaders. Now the U.S. government may be on the verge of blocking Venezuelan oil sales in the United States.

One avenue for altering Venezuela’s government seems to be closing. Political forces rooted in Venezuela’s business class and mobilized against Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro are flailing. But another has yielded results. Years of shortages at the hands of bankers and commercial interests have led to suffering and distress such that serious destabilization, their goal, may be at hand. Terrible inflation and real hardship for most Venezuelans may be the cue for military intervention billed as humanitarian.

It’s evident from Secretary of State Rex Tillerson’s visit February 1-8 to Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, and Jamaica that the United States sees action ahead, and soon. In Austin, Texas, en route, he noted that, "The corrupt and hostile regime of Nicolas Maduro in Venezuela clings to a false dream and antiquated vision for the region that has already failed its citizens.” He noted that, “In the history of Venezuela and in fact the history in other Latin American and South American countries, oftentimes it’s the military that handles that, that when things are so bad that the military leadership realizes they just – they can’t serve the citizens anymore, they will manage a peaceful transition.”……

….. Admiral Kurt Tidd, head of the U.S. Southern Command, met with Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos and other officials in Bogota on February 8-9. Venezuela presumably was on the agenda. Testifying before the Senate Armed Forces Committee in 2017, Kidd opined that, “The growing crisis in Venezuela could eventually require a regional response.”…. 

**NAS Key West**

**A Case for Wild Flamingos Calling Florida Their Home**

By JOANNA KLEIN, FEB 21, 2018

In 2015, Conchy the flamingo showed up at Florida’s **Naval Air Station Key West**, and he wouldn’t leave. Normally managers on the grounds lethally remove feathered troublemakers — it can be very dangerous with birds flying around million-dollar fighter jets — but Conchy was a charmer. Instead, they called the zoo.

The zoo slapped a satellite tracker on one leg and a band on the other. They nursed Conchy back to health. But when it came time to release him, the state asked: Did Conchy even belong here?

You see **pink flamingos** in Florida on T-shirts, hotel signs, **lottery tickets** and even the **opening credits of Miami Vice**. But it’s very rare to spot one like Conchy in the wild. Over the past 70 years or so, as more American flamingos seem to be showing up in the Sunshine State, a debate has emerged about the origin of these birds. Most think they’re escapees from captive populations, introduced to the state starting in the 1920s and 1930s. But others think they could be a returning population from Mexico, Cuba or the Caribbean reclaiming a lost part of its natural territory.

In South Florida, some joke that only two kinds of animals exist — introduces or **invasive species you lose**, or endangered ones you protect. And resolving whether flamingos were ever native to Florida is important for wildlife management because the state says they’re not.....

**Defense Industry**

**Fighter jets and laser finders: Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman score $26.4M defense contracts**

By Matthew Richardson  – Feb 16, 2018, 3:01pm EST Updated Feb 16, 2018, 3:45pm  

Two global defense firms grabbed contracts valued at a combined $26 million with work in Orlando, according to the U.S. Department of Defense.

Bethesda, Md.-based **Lockheed Martin** Corp. (NYSE: LMT) landed a $14 million contract on Feb. 15 from the U.S. Navy. The company's aeronautics division will provide parts for the stealth jet fighter F-35 for the government of Israel. While most of the work for the three-year contract will be performed in Texas, a chunk of it will be done in Orlando, Melbourne and 16 other places throughout the U.S.

Some parts and design take place inside Lockheed Martin's Missiles & Fire Control facility in west Orlando. Lockheed Martin, which has more than 14,000 workers in Central Florida, **recently announced plans to build a $50 million, 255,000-square-foot research and development center to support its influx of contracts.**

Lockheed Martin is not the only major defense firm snapping up big contracts. Falls Church, Va.-based **Northrop Grumman Corp.** (NYSE: NOC) won a two-year, $12.4 million contract from the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency on Feb. 15. Northrop Grumman's Laser Systems center in Apopka will perform services on the laser range finder device — military-grade support equipment that enhances accuracy for targeting enemies, scooping out a field and providing night vision.

Both Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman are hiring dozens of workers — mostly engineers — according to their websites. **Lockheed Martin has 640 jobs available**, and **Northrop Grumman has 200 jobs available**.....
DoD Budget

Let Pentagon carry over FY18 budget boost so money isn’t wasted, key lawmaker says

By: Joe Goud, 2-21-2018

https://www.navytimes.com/congress/budget/2018/02/21/let-pentagon-carry-over-fy18-budget-boost-so-money-isnt-wasted-key-lawmaker-says/

WASHINGTON – A top defense appropriator wants to waive Congress’ use-it-or-lose-it rules to let the Pentagon use its fiscal 2018 funding boost in next year’s budget, too, arguing there isn’t enough time to efficiently spend the money.

Rep. Kay Granger, chairwoman of the House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee, told Defense News on Wednesday that Congress must act to fix an “artificial deadline,” or the military risks losing funds afforded by a new budget deal.

“I couldn’t be more proud of what the Congress approved for defense, but we certainly don’t want to waste that and we don’t want to lose it,” said Granger, R-Texas.

Still, the path for such a measure is unclear, as Democrats are signaling they will drive a hard bargain in ongoing negotiations on how to spend the added $80 billion provided to defense by the recent budget deal.

Because Congress has yet to reach a final budget agreement for FY18, which began Oct. 1, 2017, the military has been operating at 2017 spending levels. Appropriators are expected to propose an omnibus spending bill before the latest funding patch expires March 23……

DoD Now on Track to Rebuild, Restore Military, Spokesperson Says

By Jim Garamone, DoD News, Defense Media Activity, 2-22-2018

https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1448088/dod-now-on-track-to-rebuild-restore-military-spokesperson-says/

WASHINGTON, Feb. 22, 2018 – The Bipartisan Budget Act puts DoD on track to rebuild, restore and modernize the U.S. military, Dana W. White, the Pentagon’s chief spokesperson, said today.

The act lifts the spending caps for fiscal years 2018 and 2019, allowing the department to climb out of a readiness trough and providing funding necessary to modernize the force.

“The bipartisan measure will allow Congress to appropriate DoD funds at the level requested … by the president for both F.Y. ’18 and ’19,” White said.

Hand-in-hand with this is the need for the department to be a good steward of taxpayer dollars, she said. This is one of Defense Secretary James N. Mattis’ top priorities.

“We want to maximize the value of every tax dollar we receive,” White said.

Congress still has some work to do. Right now, the department is still operating on a continuing resolution. The appropriations committees need to produce either individual bills for the departments or an omnibus bill covering the entire government. The deadline for this is March 23. If the bills are passed,
the department will still have the time to obligate fiscal 2018 funds by the end of the fiscal year Sept. 30….

Other Of Interest

Air Force is Empowering Installations to Address Community Issues, Wilson Says

Dan Cohen, February 22, 2018
https://www.defensecommunities.org/blog/active-base-issues/air-force-is-empowering-installations-to-address-community-issues-wilson-says/

At a meeting last week of the Air Force Civic Leader Program, Secretary Heather Wilson told participants the service is trying to delegate more authority to installation commanders to help them address local issues affecting their mission. “You can expect from us a lot more local control, a lot more authority at the wing commander level without having to deal with too much bureaucracy above them so they can get after the problems that are at the highest priority in their communities,” Wilson said at the three-day conference at Joint Base Andrews, Md.

She also highlighted two of the highest priorities for military families — the quality of local schools and the ease at which spouses can transfer professional credentials when they move. “The most important thing for us when we look at bases is the mission — we are values driven and mission focused,” Wilson said. “What matters most to our airmen in regards to their communities is quality of life, which includes world-class schools and reciprocity for licensure.”

Quality-of-life attributes can directly impact the mission, reported Air Force Public Affairs. For example, 62 percent of airmen agreed that improved schools opportunities could support aircrew retention, according to an Air Force survey. “Airmen care a lot about the education their children receive,” said Wilson. “The base commander and the local school district must work together to meet the needs of their community and become a base of choice for airmen because they’ve heard that the schools are fantastic.”

She said both the Air Force and the Department of Labor are working on improving the portability of professional licenses and certifications.

The Air Force Civic Leader Program is an Air Staff-level initiative made up of community leaders selected by headquarters, major commands and the National Guard Bureau. Members are unpaid advisers who serve as advocates for Air Force issues and community liaisons; they provide feedback to senior leaders about public attitudes toward the service.

Military Families Could Send Kids to Private School under School Choice Proposal

Dan Cohen, February 23, 2018

Claiming that many military families are unhappy with the quality of local schools, Education Secretary Betsy DeVos on Thursday said she supports a proposal to allow service members to tap $1.3 billion in federal funds to send their kids to private schools or pay for other education services. “An education savings account would afford them a much different dynamic and approach to be able to get their
education in the way that best works for them,” DeVos said at the Conservative Political Action Conference, reported Army Times. The proposal calls for setting up education savings accounts with money that can be used to pay for private school, private instruction, therapy for special needs students, textbooks and other services. Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.) is expected to introduce legislation shortly to offer school choice to military families, according to the story.

T. Patterson Maney to retire in May

By TOM McLAUGHLIN, Posted at 12:01 AM, Updated at 6:48 AM

On Aug. 21, 2005, in a town 12 miles west of Kabul, Afghanistan, something happened that would forever alter the course of history in Okaloosa County.

A roadside bomb planted by insurgents that day blew up an SUV carrying Army Reserve Brig. Gen. Patt Maney and four others.

While all survived the attack, the blast severely injured the general, known better to Okaloosa residents as County Judge T. Patterson Maney, who would spend nearly two years at Walter Reed U.S. Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., recovering from severe, head, neck and back injuries.

Maney returned triumphantly, if at first tentatively, to the bench in May 2007. In that same month this year he will set aside his gavel on the day before he reaches 70, the state mandated retirement age for judges.

“When I leave I hope people will say I was fair and patient and followed the law,” Maney said……
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #62 will be on Thursday, 22 March 2018, beginning at 9:00AM at the Marriott Courtyard, 610 Wells Rd, Orange Park, FL 32073. The Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) will meet at the same location on 21 March 18. The meeting will focus on NAS Jacksonville among other business.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979   Access Code: 1869945

3. **Service Secretaries Say Quality of Life Matters** – In a letter (attached) from the Department of Defense, Service Secretaries note that quality schools and other services in local communities will matter in future BRAC type decisions. According to the release (available at [https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Releases/News-Release-View/Article/1449706/service-secretaries-say-quality-of-schools-reciprocity-of-licenses-should-be-co/source/GovDelivery/](https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Releases/News-Release-View/Article/1449706/service-secretaries-say-quality-of-schools-reciprocity-of-licenses-should-be-co/source/GovDelivery/)), “A letter signed by all three military service secretaries outlining ways state leadership can better support service members was sent to the National Governors Association on Friday, Feb. 23. The letter encouraged state leadership to look at the quality of schools near bases and if reciprocity of professional licenses is available for military families.” The work of the FDA and the Task Force has made Florida a leader in these areas.


5. **ADC Award Nomination Deadline Extended** – The 2018 Defense Community Award program extended its nomination deadline from March 1st an additional week to March 8th. The program highlights the accomplishments of outstanding defense community leaders in front of key decision-makers from Congress and DOD. ADC will present this year’s awards at a luncheon during the 2018 Defense Communities National Summit, June 18-20 in Washington. Award criteria and other information available on the ADC website.

6. **FDSTF Grant Window Closes Today** – The Task Force will accept additional limited applications for possible funding in FY19 which begins July 1, 2018. The Task Force will accept applications for projects that have developed since our last application window in August and are of such a nature as waiting for possible funding in FY20 would make the proposal outdated or obsolete. The Task Force will need justification of the emerging need provided in the application. Selected projects will compete with

7. Military / Veteran Related Bills Filed This Week – 2018 Session began on January 9, 2018. To review or track House Bills (HB), go to www.myfloridahouse.gov; for Senate Bills (SB), go to www.flSenate.gov. For both sites, insert the bill number at the top of the page if you would like current status throughout session. Bills filed this week are below and the current summary of all related bills filed to date is attached.

   - No New Bills Filed This Week

8. Attachments:
   - Service Secretary Letter to Governors
   - TGP End of Month Report
   - Military and Veterans Bill Update

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News Clips of Interest:

Oil Drilling / Gulf Range

Zinke: Bill Nelson should be thanking me for protecting Florida from drilling

By Alex Leary, 2-26-2018
WASHINGTON – Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has a message for Democratic Sen. Bill Nelson and other critics of his decision to exempt Florida from the administration's offshore oil drilling plan: You should be thanking me.

"There's a federal moratorium off Florida. And in Florida, every member, both Republican and Democrat, were vehemently against offshore. … It's not capricious or arbitrary."

Zinke's decision was sharply criticized by Nelson as a political stunt to aid Gov. Rick Scott, and now officials in other states have said they should be exempt as well.

"You would think the opposition would have thanked me … Senator Nelson would have said hey, 'Thank you Interior for taking it off the table.' I guess in a political environment people criticize me for no matter what I do. It's OK. I'm going to do the right thing."

Responds Nelson:

"This shouldn't be about politics, this is about protecting Florida's coastline. Gov. Scott and the Trump administration both have a history of supporting expanding drilling off of Florida's coast. And just days after Sec. Zinke puts out a plan to open up nearly all of the waters off of Florida's coast to drilling, he and Scott hold a hastily put together press conference in the Tallahassee airport to tell Floridians: Don't worry, Florida will be safe – and we're supposed to take their word on it? If Florida really is safe, why do the maps that Interior is using at its public meetings still show Florida's waters open to drilling? I have fought my entire life to keep drilling away from Florida's coast and I'm certainly not going to stop now. If Sec. Zinke really wants to 'take Florida off the table' he could do so right now, by simply rescinding the current five-year drilling plan."

BRAC

Quality-of-Life Issues May Affect Future Basing Decisions, Services Tell Governors

Dan Cohen, Posted on Feb 26, 2018 03:06 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=7ee518de2d

Officials may consider the quality of local schools and the ability for military spouses to transfer professional credentials following a transfer when deciding where to locate military missions, the three service secretaries told the National Governors Association in a letter sent Friday. “We will encourage leadership to consider the quality of schools near bases and whether reciprocity of professional licenses is available for military families when evaluating future basing or mission alternatives,” stated the letter signed by Army Secretary Mark Esper, Navy Secretary Richard Spencer and Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson.

The secretaries also highlighted a related issue in the letter — the extent to which school systems ease the burden of transition for military children regrading transferring credits and joining sports teams and clubs after the start of the school year. “Some school systems recognize this and accommodate military families during transfers. These schools should be commended and emulated,” they wrote.

The letter comes as the nation’s governors opened their winter meeting Saturday in Washington. It noted that the drawbacks to military service most commonly cited by families include students’ difficulty assimilating into local school systems following a duty station transfer, the quality of schools available, and the ability of spouses to obtain jobs and sustain careers. Eliminating barriers for spouses to transfer professional licenses, for example, would improve military families’ quality of life, according to the secretaries.
“We realize improving schools and changing laws or regulations regarding professional licensure will take time. Over the long term, however, leaders who want to make a difference for the military and our missions will make the most impact if we focus on what matters. Reciprocity on licensure and the quality of education matter,” the letter concludes.

**Climate Change**

**Military on front line of battle with sea level rise**

By Tom McLaughlin, *mclaughlin@nwfdailynews.com*, 2-24-2018


Politicians in Tallahassee and Washington D.C. may choose to ignore the potential menace of sea level rise, but the United States military doesn’t have that luxury.

With nearly 562,000 installations on 4,800 sites scattered across the globe, America’s armed forces rely heavily on safe, secure infrastructure, free from outside threats. The Pentagon has come to recognize sea level rise as a direct threat to the 1,774 of their sites that occupy 95,471 miles of the world’s coastline, a threat that could change the course of armed service history.

“The Department of Defense pays attention to climate change and sea level rise because we have to think of stability in regions where we operate as we pay attention to what our future missions might be,” said John Conger, who served as President Barack Obama’s Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations and Environment. “It’s happening and we’re going to have to deal with it.”

“How are we going to deal with it?” Conger asked.

This year, for the first time, the Secretary of Defense is conducting a military-wide climate change/sea level rise threat assessment.

Each of the five branches of service will be required to provide a list of its 10 most threatened installations and suggestions for mitigating against whatever dangers exist, said Conger, now a senior policy advisor for the Center for Climate and Security.

Florida is home to 21 military installations, more than half of which are close to the coast. A handful of these bases are listed as vulnerable in nearly every study of the potential impact of rising seas on coastal Florida.

Kennedy Space Center, associated with the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on Florida’s east coast, already is experiencing beach erosion near its main launch complex.

In 2016, the Union of Concerned Scientists reported findings of an in-depth study on rising seas and the potential impact on 16 bases in nine states. Among the bases scrutinized were Naval Air Station Key West in the Florida Keys, Naval Station Mayport near Jacksonville and Eglin Air Force Base in Northwest Florida…..

**Corry Station**

**IWTC Corry Station Overhauls SLQ-32 Course, Saves Navy Money**

Courtesy Story, Center for Information Warfare Training, 03.01.2018
PANSCOLA, Fla. -- Information Warfare Training Command (IWTC) Corry Station recently completed a major revision to its AN/SLQ-32(V)3 Maintenance Course.

The revision to the course combined the SLQ-32(V)3 and SLQ-32(V)4 courses of instruction into one nine-week course. The course teaches first accession Sailors, fleet returnees, and civilians how to maintain and troubleshoot the SLQ-32(V)3 and AN/SLQ-32(V)4 electronic warfare suites.

During the revision process, instructors and the course supervisor provided 2,356 corrections to 47 presentations, 36 tests, two trainee guides and one instructor guide.

“The (V)4 course of instruction contained components that were no longer used in the system,” said Cryptologic Technician (Technical) 1st Class John Payne, the course supervisor. “By combining these two courses of instruction we more than double the amount of (V)4 technicians going out to the fleet and saving the Navy money in the process.”

In the updated course, Sailors spend 240 hours in the lab environment running diagnostic tests, identifying faults and correcting faults within the systems. This type of training gives these future technicians the hands-on experience that prepares them to correct the systems in the fleet……

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Eglin AFB

‘The Triangle’ poses unique local air traffic challenges

By Jim Thompson | Posted Feb 24, 2018 at 12:01 AM, Updated Feb 24, 2018 at 6:37 AM

FORT WALTON BEACH – It’s informally known as “The Triangle,” and it encompasses some of the most complex airspace in the nation.

Bounded roughly by Eglin Air Force Base (which includes Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport), the Air Force Special Operations Command’s Hurlburt Field and Destin Executive Airport, the skies above this part of Northwest Florida are teeming with military, commercial and private aircraft.

An informal training area for private pilots lies to the east of The Triangle, and banner-towing airplanes and tour helicopters buzz along its beaches. Boat-towed parasails don’t routinely pose any hazard, but pilots coming into the area are routinely advised to watch out for them, anyway.

Within all that, Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport handles 800,000 commercial airline passengers each year, along with considerable business traffic. Destin Executive Airport handles 65,000 “operations” — takeoffs are considered a single operation, as are landings — each year, in a mix of private and business aircraft, including large numbers of private pilots bringing family and friends to the local beaches for vacation……

7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) welcomes seven new partners in an induction ceremony

Story by Spc. L’Erin Wynn, 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 02.23.2018
https://www.dvidshub.net/news/267224/7th-special-forces-group-airborne-welcomes-seven-new-partners-induction-ceremony
EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – The 2018 7th Special Forces Group Honorary Commanders Program officially started with an induction ceremony here, February 23. The purpose of the Honorary Commanders Program is to increase public awareness and understanding of missions, policies, programs and the people of 7th SFG(A).

The program brings together community leaders of the Northwest Florida area who have close ties to the community and are aware of its concerns and partner them with a military officer who has command of a unit on 7th SFG(A).

"We believe you will enjoy this experience and gain a better understanding of 7th SFG(A), our mission, and the men and woman who keep Northwest Florida and this country safe," said Col. Robert Connell, deputy commanding officer of 7th SFG(A), to the audience. "I look forward to getting to know you all, and welcome again to 'The Family Business.'"

Newly inducted honorary commander of Group Support Battalion, Marian McBryde, said that her new responsibility is simple.

"We're here for each other and it’s my honor to be a liaison to my community for [7th Special Forces Group (Airborne)]. At the end of the day, we’re here to support.”

"We have had such a tight relationship with the military," said McBryde. "It's this tight knit bond that we want to foster and grow in getting to know what happens on a daily basis."

Serving as an honorary commander provides community and business leaders the opportunity to immerse themselves with a specific unit and gain valuable insight about the unique missions and lives of Soldiers of 7th SFG(A)…..

Okaloosa County wants to build sports complex on Air Force property

by Christopher Saul, 3-1-2018

OKALOOSA COUNTY, Fla. (WEAR) – A new sports complex may be coming to Okaloosa County, but two things need to happen for the idea to become a reality. First, the Air Force would have to approve a lease on their property. Then, the group would have to find an investor.

The piece of land is what's known as orphan property. When the Air Force approved Spence Parkway the piece of property was separated from the rest of the testing area.

The Air Force can't use it for testing, and is thinking about opening up the property to the business community, said Niceville Chamber of Commerce President Tricia Brunson.

"We started looking at it because we have a vision for the 2025 committee that has been looking for quite some time at a way to diversify our economy. And by that I mean enhance what we already have," she said.

The Niceville Baseball Park has four fields and is about 13 acres. To give you an idea of how big the parcel by Spence Parkway is - about 20 of those complexes could fit inside the land.

The Chamber thinks a sports complex on the land wouldn't harm the mission at Eglin Air Force Base and bring out-of-towners into the area…..
Panhandle Residents Worry About Losing Florida's History

BAY COUNTY, Fla. – Most people know St. Augustine is the oldest city in the United States. But a lot of the state's history is still a mystery, waiting to be discovered.

When people think of Florida, they usually picture beaches palm trees and amusement parks.

Most know a little about the state's rich history, dating back to Spanish explorer Juan Ponce De Leon.

But what they've forgotten is he was not the beginning of Florida's history.

"A lot of things wind up buried under the ground that we don't even know are there until we actually go in and dig and learn about them," said Archeologist, Teresa Brown.

Brown is part of a team of archeologist that study the history of the people that lived on what is now Tyndall Air Force Base.

"There were a lot of Native American peoples out here well before the Europeans showed up," said Brown.

Brown and her team have uncovered a treasure trove of history on Redfish Point.

What's left of a shell ring, is evidence of a village where the old golf course clubhouse now stands.

"They would eat the shell fish around here, throw the shells out back," Brown said, "and it kind of builds up into this pile of shells and because the villages were usually circular or horseshoe shaped, the shells kind of build up into this horseshoe shape that we find after the village has been gone for thousands of years."

According to local anthropological enthusiasts, there used to be signs of Native American settlements all over the panhandle……

325th MDG renovations to improve patient care

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – The 325th Medical Group’s renovation continues as they push toward a medical mall concept aimed at improving patient flow, while enhancing convenience and ambience of clinical spaces to better serve their customers.

The $54 million project will overhaul nearly every aspect of the medical clinic, including complete new layouts of all three floors and all of the group’s departments. This will also include moving Mental Health into the main building and the addition of a state-of-the-art veterinarian clinic behind the main building.

“Right now we are in phase one,” said Mike Palase, 325th MDG facility manager. “We are expecting to be completed in June of 2019. We are currently working on progressive collapse upgrades in the entire building, building the new dental clinic, education and training section, pharmacy, mental health and much more.”
Approximately 120 contracted employees are renovating the facility, working everything from electrical, plumbing, sheetrock, framework and many more pieces of the construction puzzle.

“We will also be constructing a covered area in the drop-off location at the front of the building,” Palase said. “Right now, that section is open to the elements, but the new canopy will keep them covered as they enter the facility.”

The 325th MDG is asking for patience as they work to modernize their facilities to improve overall efficiency…..

**NS Mayport**

**Dire consequences of losing a carrier**

By The Virginian-Pilot Editorial Board, Feb 28, 2018

[https://pilotonline.com/opinion/editorial/article_ab976ad7-1729-5117-9521-0806368c0b54.html](https://pilotonline.com/opinion/editorial/article_ab976ad7-1729-5117-9521-0806368c0b54.html)

MEMBERS OF the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission are concerned that Florida may successfully swipe one of the U.S. Navy aircraft carriers now stationed here.

Their worry is more than justified since it may be a question of when, not if, the Pentagon proceeds with dispersement of its Atlantic carrier fleet.

The U.S. Navy now operates 11 carrier groups: six stationed at Naval Station Norfolk; two at Naval Base San Diego; two at Naval Base Kitsap in Bremerton, Wash.; and one at U.S. Fleet Activities Yokosuka in Japan. The division allows the service to balance its power between the Atlantic and Pacific.

The idea of moving one of the carriers from Norfolk to Naval Station Maypoint in Jacksonville dates to 2008 and was included in the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review, which stated that it would help the Navy “mitigate the risk of a terrorist attack, accident or natural disaster” in Hampton Roads.

The Navy last had a carrier — the conventionally powered USS John F. Kennedy — stationed at Mayport in 2007, and it set a tentative goal of locating one of the nuclear-powered vessels in Florida by 2019.

Such a move makes some practical sense. One need only consider the catastrophic attack at Pearl Harbor in 1941 to recognize the potential folly of locating so many of the nation’s most important ships in one port.

Spreading the carriers out, placing them in more than one East Coast location, would seem to have strategic benefit, though there exists here a support infrastructure for these vessels that is unrivaled on the East Coast…..

**US Central Command**

**Centcom Undertaking Realignment to Meet Future Concerns**

By Terri Moon Cronk, DoD News, Defense Media Activity, 2-27-18


WASHINGTON, Feb. 27, 2018 – Based on military progress in the campaign to defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, [U.S. Central Command](https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1452399/centcom-undertaking-realignment-to-meet-future-concerns/) is undertaking an operational alignment and rebalancing effort
to achieve three specific goals, Centcom commander, Army Gen. Joseph L. Votel told the House Armed Services Committee today.

However, the commander said, “We remain very clear-eyed regarding both the permanence of that progress and the challenges that we face in the future.”

The first goal, he outlined, is to complete major combat operations in Iraq and Syria and bring the campaign to defeat ISIS to a responsible close. Military success in the campaign up to this point presents Centcom with an opportunity to reposition some of its resources from Iraq and Syria to Afghanistan, he said, “in a manner that keeps the pressure on ISIS but also sets us up to break the stalemate in Afghanistan.”

“We retain sufficient capability to continue our efforts against ISIS,” he emphasized, “despite the increasingly complex situation across Syria and especially in the northwest province of Afrin.”

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**Cape Canaveral AFS**

**Port Canaveral Awarded $1M Grant for Security Projects**

*By Karen Thuemer, February 26, 2018*


The Canaveral Port Authority has been awarded $1 million in federal funding to bolster Port security programs and critical infrastructure. Port Canaveral is one of 33 US ports to have been awarded direct grants by FEMA for FY’17 which will be used for direct support of maritime security risk mitigation.

“Port Canaveral is a vital gateway for commerce, tourism and trade. Last year, nearly five million cruise passengers were served and six million tons of cargo moved across our docks,” said Captain John Murray, Port CEO. “This grant will help us to further enhance our capabilities and commitment to port security and ensure the safety of passengers, cargo, visitors and employees.”

Port Canaveral will use the $999,101 grant award to implement multiple security projects at the Port, including upgrading security hardware, deploying new technologies and cyber security enhancements around the Port. Plans include use of technology for verifying Transportation Worker Identification Credentials (TWIC) to align with soon-to-be upgraded U.S. Coast Guard security regulations.

The Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) is a competitive grant program authorized by Congress to support maritime transportation infrastructure security. Funding is made available by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to strengthen infrastructure and support efforts to build and sustain core capabilities. Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Port Security Grants have helped the nation’s seaports enhance measures to increase security and protect vital transportation hubs and maritime borders…..

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**Defense Industry**

**Air Force space laboratory invites companies to pitch ideas**

*by Sandra Erwin, February 25, 2018*
WASHINGTON – The space-focused branch of the Air Force Research Laboratory is seeking proposals from the private sector “to advance the technology and scientific knowledge supporting all aspects of space systems,” said a solicitation posted Feb. 23.

The request from the AFRL Space Vehicles Directorate comes as U.S. Air Force senior leaders continue to push for faster technological change and innovation in the space business. They warn that rival nations threaten to erode the United States’ ability and freedom to operate in outer space and have asked military laboratories to gin up fresh ideas.

The space directorate is interested in industry pitches on everything from launch, payload adapters, on-orbit systems, communications links, ground systems and user equipment. AFRL is especially keen on attracting bids from small businesses but the project is a “full and open competition.”

The solicitation explained that the United States military operations depend heavily on space systems to support combat forces around the world. And it pointed out that innovative technologies are need to ensure U.S. space systems can operate under any circumstance, even under enemy attack.

“Traditionally, space systems have operated unhindered in an uncontested environment. However, as space becomes increasingly competitive, congested and contested, new concepts, approaches, technologies and architectures are required,” said the announcement.

The AFRL Space Vehicles Directorate is located at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico. It is one of the nation’s premier sites for space research and development. “Our mission is to develop and transition innovative high-payoff space technologies supporting the war fighter, while leveraging commercial, civil and other government space capabilities,” states the agency’s website…..

Northrop Grumman lands $150.3M contracts for Advanced Hawkeye aircraft, continues local hiring frenzy

By Matthew Richardson – Staff writer, Orlando Business Journal, Feb 23, 2018, 11:44am

Global defense firm Northrop Grumman Corp, grabbed couple of major U.S. government contracts to increase production of its Advanced Hawkeye aircraft, according to the U.S. Department of Defense.

The Falls Church, Va.-based company won two contracts totaling $150.3 million on Feb. 22 with the U.S. Navy.

One deal, worth $99.7 million, involves the full-rate production of the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye Aircraft under order Lot 7. Work for the four-year contract will take place in Melbourne and four other locations throughout the U.S.

The second contract, valued at $50.6 million, is also for the full-rate production of the Advanced Hawkeye Aircraft, under Order Lot 6. Most of the work for the one-year contract will happen in Melbourne, while the rest will take place in eight other locations within the U.S.

Northrop Grumman (NYSE: NOC) has 180 jobs available, according to its website. More than 160 jobs are open in Melbourne, 10 in Orlando and two in Apopka. The company is looking for analysts and various engineers in software, mechanical and cyber security.
Northrop Grumman may be increasing its workforce to support its work for the E2 program. The E-2D and E-2C program received more than 164 contracts last year, totaling more than $480 million, but not all of that work was done in Melbourne. The program currently supports about 800 jobs in Melbourne.

**Jet fighter and heavy lifts: Lockheed Martin, Readiness Management Support land $695.7M contracts**

By Matthew Richardson – Staff writer, Orlando Business Journal, Mar 1, 2018, 1:05pm


A couple of big defense firms with a major presence in Central Florida won contracts totaling $695.7 million in value, according to the U.S. Department of Defense.

Cape Canaveral-based Readiness Management Support — a subsidiary of Cape Canaveral's IAP Worldwide Services Inc. — won a shared contract valued at $547 million from the U.S. Army on Feb. 28. Readiness Management Support will compete for services on the contract with Arlington, Va.-based PAE Government Services Inc. The five-year contract, which ends in 2023, involves heavy lift, material handling equipment and personal transportation services throughout the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility.

IAP Worldwide has six job openings listed on its website, calling for a project accountant, senior subcontracts administrator, contract manager, quality assurance and training specialist, senior procurement manager and salesforce analyst.

Meanwhile, Bethesda, Md.-based Lockheed Martin Corp. (NYSE: LMT) got a $148.7 million contract with the U.S. Navy on Feb. 28 to perform additional recurring logistics services for the F-35 Logistics II Joint Strike Fighter aircraft for the U.S. Air Force, Marine Corps, Navy and foreign military sales. While most of the work will take place in Fort Worth, Texas, a large chunk will happen in Orlando where Lockheed Martin has more than 7,000 workers. The contract is short, with its completion date set for April 2018.

Lockheed Martin is hiring in Orlando, too, with more than 600 job openings listed, calling mostly for software engineers.

Military contracts contribute to the local economy in the form of jobs and subcontractor opportunities, and Central Florida is a major player when it comes to defense contracts. The region snags about $4 billion in government contracts each year because the nation’s Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines simulation operations are based in Central Florida Research Park. That work helps make Orlando the modeling, simulation and training capital of the world, according to the Orlando Economic Partnership.

**DoD Budget**

The Pentagon shifted $20 billion from OCO to base budget. Here's what it included.

By: Aaron Mehta, 2-24-2018

WASHINGTON – The Pentagon’s decision to shift $20 billion from wartime funding into the base budget now has some clarity.

During the Feb. 12 budget rollout of the fiscal 2019 budget request, there was a discrepancy of about $20 billion between what the printed materials said would be in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds and what Pentagon Comptroller David Norquist said were the correct figures.

That was the result of government printers not being able to keep up with last minute changes following the congressional budget deal worked out days before, Norquist explained, but there were few details available on what exactly would be shifting out of the OCO account and into the base budget.

Now, the Pentagon has provided more clarity on those funds. According to Defense Department spokesman Christopher Sherwood, the money breaks down into two categories — $16.3 billion of operation and maintenance (O&M) funding and $1.1 billion for “non-DoD classified activities.” It is unclear exactly what that last category covers, but the Air Force budget request annually includes “non-blue” funding, money that passes through the service without it being able to use the funds.

It should be stressed these $20 billion are not new funds being added by the department; the intent was for the DoD to have this money under OCO initially in its FY19 request. OCO funds are exempt from the funding caps imposed by the Budget Control Act, part of why critics have called the funding mechanism a “slush fund” for the Pentagon.

That $16.3 billion for O&M breaks down like this:

- Army — $5.0 billion, including $4.25 billion for Operating Forces, $0.5 billion for Administration and Service-wide Activities, and $0.25 billion for Mobilization.
- Navy — $6.2 billion, including $2.8 billion for ship depot maintenance, $1.6 billion for Navy flight operations, $1.2 billion for Marine Corps flight operations, and $0.7 billion for ship operations.
- Air Force — The Air Force realigned $4.8 billion for weapon system sustainment, which includes contractor logistics support and depot maintenance.
- U.S. Special Operation Command (USSOCOM) realigned $0.3 billion of their Operating Forces budget.

Recommendations from Defense Base Study Expected in April

The administration’s study of the health of the nation’s defense industrial base remains on course to issue recommendations in April. Working groups already have internally presented interim findings, reports Defense News. “Now we are taking those findings and turning them into recommendations for addressing those risks. We’re still in the process of that, and we’re on track to do that in mid-April,” Jerry McGinn, principal deputy director for DOD’s office of manufacturing and industrial base policy, said Monday. Working groups from DOD and other agencies have been examining the defense sector to recommend ways to cover gaps and weaknesses. “We have a lot of known risk areas,” McGinn told reporters.
The late Rep. Don Hahnfeldt may live on through the Florida statutes. A veterans bill bearing Hahnfeldt’s name is clearing hurdles in the legislature. The bill eases professional fees and requirements for active duty military members and veterans, and their family members. It passed the House earlier this month and is making its way through Senate committees. Though the measure originally was nameless, House lawmakers unanimously renamed it Feb. 14.

“This is in honor of a man who we and the members of the Florida House had the great privilege and honor to serve with,” said Rep. Mel Ponder, R-Destin, one of the bill’s sponsors, on the House floor. “A man who served our nation and one I referenced … as ‘The Skipper,’ a man who we all loved dearly in this House and we’re looking to rename this bill in his honor — the Don Hahnfeldt Veteran and Military Family Opportunity Act.”

The bill passed unanimously with a 115-0 vote in the House minutes after lawmakers voted to rename it. Its passage was followed by a standing ovation.

Honoring Hahnfeldt

Hahnfeldt, of the Village of Bridgeport at Lake Miona, died Christmas Eve of cancer. He was 73.

Hahnfeldt was known in The Villages for his history of service — both in the military and in the community. He served 32 years as a naval submarine commander. In retirement, Hahnfeldt was the VHA president from 2009 to 2012 and served on the Sumter County Board of Commissioners from 2012 to 2016.

He was elected to the Florida House in 2016 and immediately earned the respect of his colleagues…..

…. The Bill

The bill helps fast-track the careers of veterans and active duty military members and their families. It waives certain professional fees and licensing requirements for veterans, active military and their spouses working in some fields regulated by five Florida government divisions in professions ranging from teaching to cosmetology, veterinarians and electrical contractors…..

Pentagon Needs to Prepare for Threat of Sea-Level Rise, Panel Says

Dan Cohen, Posted on Feb 28, 2018 02:05 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=a56aa0d0d7

As rising sea levels pose risks to coastal installations and military readiness over the remainder of the 21st Century, the military will need to make its infrastructure more resilient and work closely with its host communities, according to a new report from the Center for Climate and Security.

“A number of coastal military bases and training sites are already experiencing the effects of sea level rise, tidal flooding and storm surge, and recent research shows that these effects are accelerating and will
continue to do so more quickly than previously thought,” said Heather Messera, who chaired the panel of retired flag and general officers that wrote the report. “Now is both the operationally practical and fiscally responsible time to act,” Messera said, reported Inside Climate News.

The panel calls for DOD to integrate climate impact scenarios into its long-range plans for upgrading its infrastructure to mitigate flood risks. As the military develops plans for dealing with climate-related effects at installations, it also should include neighboring communities in its planning efforts. Such efforts will require policymakers to determine how military and civilian communities can best work together, according to the report. The panel highlights the efforts underway in the Hampton Roads, Va., region as the level of collaboration that can be established among the services and the communities that support them.

“Sea level rise and extreme weather adaptation and resilience for the Department of Defense requires a ‘whole of government and community’ approach, both inside and outside the fence line, across the full extent of federal, state, local government and society writ large. DOD takes this ‘responsibility to prepare’ seriously — the threat is real — but it can’t do it alone, and it has no time to waste,” said retired Rear Adm. Ann Phillips.

Military and Veterans Resource Center partners with Veterans Florida to provide free business class to veterans

University of West Florida | news@uwf.edu, 3-1-2018

The Military and Veterans Resource Center at the University of West Florida, in partnership with Veterans Florida, recently launched a master advanced class that is designed to help entrepreneurial veterans start a business in the Panhandle area. In addition to the training, the enrolled veterans will have the opportunity to compete for $40,000 in cash and in-kind service donations during a business plan pitch contest. The contest will be on May 5, following the completion of the class. It will be judged by a panel of local business leaders.

“This is a real opportunity to add and grow small businesses in the Pensacola and Panhandle area,” said Robert Foster, program coordinator and a 40-year serial entrepreneur and veteran from the Vietnam War era.

Foster collaborates with Dr. Justin Davis, UWF professor in the Department of Management and Management Information System and entrepreneur, Lloyd Reshard, retired Air Force research scientist and serial entrepreneur, and Kelly Massey, regional director with the Florida Small Business Development Center Network with experience in Fortune 500 human resources and manufacturing to ensure the delivery of a real-world, practical and sustainable blueprint for success to students. Classes cover marketing, manufacturing, channels, raising capital, customer validation, sales, culture and other relevant topics. The class is funded by a grant from Veterans Florida.
Mar 9

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #62 will be on **Thursday, 22 March 2018, beginning at 9:00AM** at the Marriott Courtyard, 610 Wells Rd, Orange Park, FL 32073. The Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) will meet at the same location on 21 March 18. The meeting will focus on NAS Jacksonville among other business.

2. **Call In Number** –
   - **Call-In Number:** 800-501-8979  
   - **Access Code:** 1869945

3. **Oil Drilling in the Gulf** – At the Northwest Florida Defense Coalition Fly-In, Secretary Niemeyer spoke to the group about the ongoing process and engagement between DoD and the Department of Interior. Data is still being collected and discussions continue on the MML and drilling exclusion zones. A required DoD report on MML is due to Congress in March.

4. **U.S. Army Looking for a Place to House a New “Futures Command”** – This week there has been news that the Army is considering 30 cities to establish “Futures Command” as early as this summer. According to news reports, the new HQ will not be a normal military operation, needs to be housed in a large metropolitan area with access to academia and will take up some leased office space. According to reports, the Army has 30 locations in the mix, but we do not know if any Florida locations are being considered. See article below in the CLIPS or click on this link: [https://breakingdefense.com/2018/03/army-studies-30-cities-for-futures-command/](https://breakingdefense.com/2018/03/army-studies-30-cities-for-futures-command/).

5. **Defense State Liaison Office Releases Key Issues for 2018** – Mr. Eric Sherman, Southeast Region State Liaison, shared the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense’s 2018 Key Issues (attached). Mr. Sherman noted the great work Florida is doing on behalf of spouse and service member licensure. According to Mr. Sherman, “The DoD continues to address military family quality of life concerns through the Key Personnel and Readiness Key Issues (also attached for your convenience). I also refer you, for education perspective, to the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children, now F.S. 1000.36, which this office helped Florida draft and pass into law in 2008.”

6. **Defense Grant Application Window Still Open** – The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) is seeking application proposals from eligible applicants for the Florida Defense Reinvestment Grant (DRG) Program and the Florida Defense Infrastructure Grant (DIG) Program for Fiscal Year 2018-2019. Application proposals will be accepted by DEO until March 13, 2018 at 3:00 PM EST. For more details on the proposal process and requirements of the grant programs, please visit [http://www.floridajobs.org/military-community-programs](http://www.floridajobs.org/military-community-programs).

7. **Military / Veteran Related Bills** – 2018 Session is scheduled to end on March 9, 2018, pending passage the timing of the budget bill (attached) which is the only bill required to be passed under the Florida Constitution. We anticipate final budget passage on Monday, March 12, 2018. The Legislature has passed a military-friendly bill that ease professional licensing fees and requirements for military members, veterans and military spouses. The
Legislature has also passed resolutions in both Houses that support extending the current moratorium on oil exploration and drilling east of the Military Mission Line in the Gulf so as to protect the gulf ranges for military training and testing. To review or track House Bills (HB), go to www.myfloridahouse.gov; for Senate Bills (SB), go to www.flsenate.gov. For both sites, insert the bill number at the top of the page if you would like current status throughout session. Only bills that are still active as of today are attached.

- No New Bills Filed This Week

8. Attachments:
- DSLO Key Issues for 2018
- 2018-2019 Florida Budget (Awaiting Final Vote by Legislature)
- Military and Veterans Bill Update

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News Clips of Interest:

BRAC

Despite skipping BRAC request, Pentagon should still cut infrastructure costs, says Reed

By: Joe Gould, Mar 3, 2018  

WASHINGTON – The Senate Armed Services Committee’s top Democrat, Jack Reed, said Thursday the Pentagon must find ways to economize even though it did not ask for a new round of base closures in its $686 billion budget request for fiscal 2019.
“You can’t operate at this level and not find savings, and it’s their responsibility to come up with some savings,” Reed, of Rhode Island, told reporters. “I’d seriously look at a BRAC, if they propose it,” using an acronym for the base realignment and closure process.

If there are facilities the Pentagon can consolidate, outside of a BRAC round, it should do so, said Reed. He and SASC Chairman John McCain, R-Ariz., unsuccessfully sought approval for a BRAC in the annual defense policy bill last year.

Lawmakers typically have expressed concern about the local economic fallout of base closures, and arguments against a new BRAC have used the 2005 round’s upfront costs. Sen Jim Inhofe, the SASC’s No. 2 Republican and Readiness Subcommittee chair, opposed a Trump administration request in 2017.

Reed said base closures are still worth a conversation in Congress, even in an election year. But he added that talks would be hamstrung because Defense Secretary Jim Mattis did not ask for base closures in his FY19 budget request…..

Another BRAC Now

By Christopher A. Preble, March 2, 2018 2:52PM
HTTPS://WWW.CATO.ORG/BLOG/ANOTHER-BRAC-NOW

Last month, Congress authorized a massive increase in defense spending as part of a two-year budget deal. In 2018 alone, the Pentagon will receive an additional $80 billion, increasing the topline number to $629 billion. War spending will push the total over $700 billion. Though such a windfall might prompt Defense Department to ignore cost-saving measures, the White House pledged that “DOD will also pursue an aggressive reform agenda to achieve savings that it will reinvest in higher priority needs.” Noticeably absent, however, was another Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), even though Secretary of Defense James Mattis, and at least four of his predecessors, have called for such authority in order to reduce the military’s excess overhead, most recently estimated at 19 percent.

Congress’ unwillingness to authorize a round of base closures should surprise no one. But congressional inaction doesn’t merely undermine military efficiency. In the most recent Strategic Studies Quarterly, ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, Rep. Adam Smith (D-WA) and I explain how the status quo is actually hurting military communities.

To be sure, closing a military base can be disruptive to surrounding economies, and for some communities it may be economically devastating. But such cases are the exception, not the rule. Evidence shows that most communities recover, and some do so quite rapidly. A 2005 study by the Pentagon Office of Economic Adjustment researched over 70 communities affected by a base closure and determined that nearly all civilian defense jobs lost were eventually replaced.8 The new jobs are in a variety of industries and fields, allowing communities to diversify their economies away from excessive reliance on the federal government.

Rep. Smith and I are not alone in our assessment of the impact that congressional inaction on BRAC has on local communities and our military. In June of last year, over 45 experts from various think tanks of differing ideological and political bents signed onto an open letter urging Congress to authorize a BRAC round.

In a 2016 letter to congressional leaders, then-Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work explained that “local communities will experience economic impacts regardless of a congressional decision regarding BRAC authorization. This has the harmful and unintended consequence of forcing the Military Departments to consider cuts at all installations, without regard to military value… . Without BRAC, local communities’ ability to plan and adapt to these changes is less robust and offers fewer protections than under BRAC law.”…..
Smith, Preble Make the Case for a New BRAC Round

Dan Cohen, Posted on Mar 06, 2018 03:15 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e02d33ce307ef7&id=9096f3f33

A new journal article argues that DOD needs to conduct another BRAC round as a way to both free up spending for higher priority requirements and increase military effectiveness. The authors — Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.), ranking member on the House Armed Services Committee, and Christopher Preble, vice president for defense and foreign policy studies for the Cato Institute — highlight the ability of base closure communities to recover from BRAC, pointing to the reuse of the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard and Bergstrom AFB, Texas. In the absence of BRAC, active communities are forced to endure a “death-by-a-thousand-cuts approach” as the services are forced to allocate resources to maintaining unneeded infrastructure.

To counter arguments against authorizing a new round, “Congress needs to take steps to require an emphasis on savings and efficiencies, increase congressional oversight by placing controls on cost growth, and expedite executing and completing recommendations,” the authors state.

NAS Pensacola

Navy corpsmen provide early hours clinic for Pensacola Naval Air Station students

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, 11:00 a.m. CT March 3, 2018 | Updated 7:46 a.m. CT March 4, 2018

Arriving before 4 a.m. most days, Navy Corpsman Spencer Martin opens a small medical clinic near a Pensacola Naval Air Station barracks.

Young sailors and Marines start showing up for treatment as soon as the doors open.

The corpsman in the Community Clinic is part of a Navy pilot program designed to make it easier for some military members to access medical care.

The surgeon general of the Navy decided to test the program in Pensacola because of the large number of students going through training programs at the Pensacola NAS Naval Air Tactical Training Center and at the Center for Information Warfare Training on Corry Station, said Cmdr. Ron Fancher, who supervises the remote clinics.

"It is a very high tempo for these students with their classes, so we are here for them early. The can get seen without having to miss classes," said Fancher, a family nurse practitioner.

The setting also benefits the corpsmen Fancher helps to train at Pensacola Naval Hospital by giving them experience treating patients in a one-on-one clinical environment. Through the telemedicine cart, which can instantly send magnified images of the inside of the ear, throat, eye or skin rash, the corpsman can consult with experienced Navy hospital staff on more complicated cases.

But most of the young and normally very healthy patients who come to the Pensacola NAS clinic have sore knees, ankles or elbows related to their physical training and marching, said Martin, the corpsman who opened the clinic on a recent weekday....
NAS Pensacola Adds Cutters, Solar Farm and Cybersecurity Partnerships

By Micheal Moline, March 7, 2018

The Coasties are coming.

They’re the 152 officers and crew members aboard the U.S. Coast Guard cutters Decisive and Dauntless, due to make their home port at the Pensacola Naval Air Station by August, expanding the military’s already considerable presence in the local economy.

That’s not all. Military-support organizations including the Florida Defense Alliance and a new group, the First Place Partnership, have been hard at work building bridges between local businesses and the military, which contributes an estimated $7.8 billion in total economic impact to the region.

Apart from the impending arrival of those ships, recent milestones include development of a massive solar generation facility on military land plus a cybersecurity initiative.

Retired U.S. Navy Capt. Keith Hoskins, the former commander of NAS Pensacola who chairs the partnership, is so bullish on the area that he retired there in 2016……

Hurlburt Field

AF officials announce creation of Info Ops tech school

Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs / Published March 05, 2018

WASHINGTON (AFNS) – Air Force officials have announced the creation of a new Information Operations technical training school, which is expected to open in fiscal year 2019.

The standup of a dedicated training school at Hurlburt Field, Florida, follows the Air Force’s creation of the Information Operations career field and Air Force specialty code in late 2016.

“Information Operations is not new to the Air Force,” said Col. Ziggy Schoepf, 14F career field manager. “However, this is the first time that the Air Force has codified this capability in a dedicated officer career field. With the creation of the career field and a dedicated schoolhouse, the Air Force is acknowledging the importance of Information Operations to the future of warfare.”

Prior to the creation of the 14F Information Operations AFSC, Airmen from various AFSCs served in IO positions as career broadening experiences for a limited period. Because these Airmen returned to their core AFSC following their service in IO positions, the Air Force was limited in its ability to sustain institutional knowledge and practice of IO tactics, techniques and procedures.

Creation of the 14F AFSC enabled the service to standardize education and training for Airmen, building a foundation to cultivate IO expertise and improve a commander’s ability to operate in more pervasive and connected information and operational environments……
Flying Jennies support special forces Emerald Warrior training

By Tech. Sgt. Ryan Labadens, 403rd Wing Public Affairs / Published March 06, 2018

HURLBURT FIELD, Fla. -- Reserve Citizen Airmen from the 815th Airlift Squadron participated in Emerald Warrior 2018, a special operations joint training event here Feb. 26 to March 9 involving units within the U.S. Special Operations Command and Air Force Special Operations Command.

The 815th “Flying Jennies,” a tactical airlift squadron assigned to the 403rd Wing at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, provided C-130J Super Hercules aircraft in support of day and night training missions.

“We had special operations people flying with us to perform different types of jumps out of the aircraft, like high-altitude low-opening (HALO) and high-altitude high-opening (HAHO). Plus we’d do on-loads and off-loads where we’d try to get people and equipment on and off the aircraft as quickly as possible between takeoffs and landings,” said Master Sgt. Chris Sentilles, 815th AS loadmaster.

David Patterson, Emerald Warrior 2018 air operations planner, said that this 11th iteration of Emerald Warrior consists of joint training involving each branch of the U.S. military, as well as military personnel from allied nations. Conventional and special operations forces from the Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps participated in training scenarios alongside North Atlantic Treaty Organization partner forces during the two-week exercise.

“The number one objective here is command and control integration with partner nations,” said Patterson.

Lt. Col. Stuart Rubio, 815th AS commander, said he was proud of how well the Flying Jennies were able to step up and help out with Emerald Warrior……

24th SOW gets new commander

By Jim Thompson, Posted Mar 8, 2018 at 5:23 PM, Updated Mar 8, 2018 at 5:23 PM

HURLBURT FIELD – The Air Force’s only Special Tactics wing, a precision-strike and personnel recovery ground force, is under new command.

Col. Claude K. Tudor Jr., most recently the acting director for clandestine operations in the Department of Defense at the Pentagon, took command Thursday of the 24th Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt Field.

The 24th SOW had been commanded since July 2016 by Col. Michael E. Martin, now a brigadier general-select. Martin will go to Arlington, Virginia, where he will serve as director of the Air Force’s Integrated Resilience Office.

“Claude, you’ve got a hungry, ready-for-action wing that’s ready to get after it,” Martin told Tudor during the change-of-command ceremony.

The 24th SOW, established in 2012 as the Air Force’s first Special Tactics wing, has become the most highly decorated group of airmen since the Vietnam War. Medals earned by 24th SOW airmen include dozens of Bronze Stars, three Silver Stars and one Air Force Cross……
Only Half of F-35s Available for Flight, Program Head Says

By Hope Hodge Seck, Military.com, 2 Mar 2018

News that two-thirds of the Navy's aging F/A-18 Hornets were stuck on the flightline lit up headlines last year. But the defense department's brand-new 5th-generation fighter program is also struggling to ensure that its shiny new aircraft are flyable, the three-star director of the program this week.

Of the 280 operational F-35s purchased to date by U.S. and international partners, only 51 percent are currently available for flight, Vice Adm. Mat Winter, director of the F-35 Joint Program Office, told reporters Wednesday at a round-table event.

Winter added that availability rates are lowest for aircraft purchased in early lots, which were beset with a number of hardware and software issues that later production lots addressed. Low-rate initial production lots 2 through 4 have availability rates between 40 and 50 percent, Winter said. The most recent LRIP lots, 9 and 10, which include aircraft that are still rolling off the production line, have the highest availability rates, 70 to 75 percent, he said.

"If you can afford to buy something, but you have to keep it in the parking lot because you can't afford to own and operate it, then it really doesn't do you much good," Winter said.

Top-notch fire training facility opens

By Ilka Cole, Team Eglin Public Affairs / Published March 06, 2018

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. -- Firefighters from the 96th Civil Engineer Group rappelled from the top of their new structural training facility to cut the ribbon marking its official opening here March 1.

The new fire training facility, dubbed “The Assistant Fire Chief” replaces the previous burn house.

“This is truly a state of the art facility. We’re very proud to cut the ribbon today and put it into service,” said Mark Giuliano, Eglin fire chief. “Our firefighters have been eager to use it since the day it was done, but we held off. We wanted the people who helped support us to take a look at it first.”

The training facility allows for multiple diverse firefighting scenarios to provide realistic training opportunities.

Inside the building, walls can be moved to change the configuration of the rooms creating the various scenarios to meet the training needs. Firefighters can put out actual live fires and experience high fire temperatures first-hand in the first and second floor burn rooms.

“It won’t be the same scenario every time, live fire training isn’t a luxury, it’s a necessity. Firefighting is dangerous work,” said the fire chief.

To prepare for dangerous operations, the facility supports high-angle rescue operations, laddering, rappelling, roof penetration, helo deployment training simulations, and floor collapse.
The $680,000 training facility is also equipped with 5,000 pound rappelling anchors and the only four-story fire training elevator shaft in Northwest Florida…..

**VPS lease with Air Force extended to 2063**

By TONY JUDNICH, Posted Mar 8, 2018 at 12:01 AM, Updated at 6:58 AM


CRESTVIEW – Okaloosa County’s lease of 130 acres of Eglin Air Force Base land that contains the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport will be extended by 25 years and expire on July 30, 2063, instead of in 2038.

The extension was part of a lease amendment that the County Commission unanimously approved on Tuesday. The revised agreement includes a new payment structure that eventually might lead to an estimated overall savings of more than $7 million for the county.

In an agenda request to the commission, county Airports Director Tracy Stage noted that the commission in November 2015 approved a proposal that outlined the restructuring of the rent provisions with a modified performance-based approach.

The proposal recommended a fixed-base rent of $400,000 per year for a term of 50 years and an additional payment of 50 cents per enplaned passenger for every passenger above 400,000 enplanements, Stage said.

The Air Force, however, rejected that proposal…….

**Tyndall AFB**

**Tyndall Mission Defense Team declared fully operational**

By Staff Sergeant Sergio A. Gamboa, 325th Fighter Wing Public Affairs / Published March 05, 2018


TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – Tyndall’s Mission Defense Team was announced Fully Operational Capable at Feb. 15, 2018.

The MDT is responsible for mission assurance at the base level and focuses on defensive cyber operations of Air Force weapons systems.

In May 2017, the Air Force announced the Cyber Squadron Initiative. This initiative was set forth to train small teams from existing manpower that focus on defensive cyber operations of Air Force weapons systems.

“We were tasked with determining what cyber systems are truly key to the wing’s mission and learning the in-and-outs of those systems,” said 2nd Lt. Gilmore, 325th CS MDT officer in charge. “With that knowledge we were able to posture our cyber defense effectively and efficiently.”

Mission Defense Teams across the Air Force will lessen risks to their corresponding base while improving the cyberspace mission.
"Air Force core missions are cyber dependent, and the complexities and threats in this environment have grown exponentially," said Lt. Gen. William J. Bender, the Air Force chief information dominance officer and chief information officer, in a 2017 statement. "We are leaning forward to tailor the cyber force by leveraging industry partners and the joint information environment to perform basic information technology services, thereby enabling Airmen to move away from a unitary focus on IT service delivery toward a holistic cyberspace approach that includes active mission defense and mission assurance."

The 325th CS dedicated hard work and time in making sure Tyndall and its cyber assets are ready when needed…..

**NS Mayport**

**Mission impossible: Jennifer Poth aims to reform military golf facilities**

By: Martin Kaufmann | March 4, 2018 4:46 pm


On Sept. 11, 2001, Jennifer Poth recalls that she was preparing for a road trip with the Texas A&M women’s golf team when terrorists struck in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania. In short order, she watched some of her classmates called up for active duty.

Because of a congenital adrenal disorder, Poth was unable to follow her father, John, a retired Air Force colonel, into the military.

“But since I was little, I’ve always tried to figure out a way to serve in our military community,” Poth said.

That thought lingered even after she graduated and headed east to Jacksonville, Fla., eventually landing a job as a ShotLink producer with the PGA Tour…..

…..From her visits to military bases, Poth paints a fairly comprehensive picture of decay: courses showing their age, rundown practice facilities, deteriorating clubhouses, cart fleets exposed to the elements year-round because there’s no shelter in which to store them.

“They’re going to stay that way because there’s just not the dollars to get them to a respectable level that our service members and their families deserve,” Poth said.

She is determined to start the repair job with work on Windy Harbor Golf Club at Naval Station Mayport in Jacksonville. Her plan calls for renovations to the practice area, two on-course restrooms – “They look like a gas station restroom,” she said – and the cart barn…..

**As Florida pushes for an aircraft carrier, Virginia lawmakers fear offshore drilling could bolster their case**

By Todd Corillo, Posted 10:30 Am, March 6, 2018, Updated At 04:29pm, March 6, 2018

NORFOLK, Va. - The debate over where Navy aircraft carriers along the East Coast should be stationed continues and now the potential for offshore drilling is entering the fray.

In late January, Florida Senators Marco Rubio and Bill Nelson sent a letter asking for money to be included in the 2019 budget to support upgrades to Naval Station Mayport to allow a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to be stationed there.

The last aircraft carrier to call Florida home was the former USS John F. Kennedy (CV 67), a conventionally powered aircraft carrier during the 2000s.

Costly upgrades needed to permanently host a nuclear-powered carrier in Florida are a major reason the Navy has not moved a carrier there.

Now with the debate over opening the waters off Virginia to oil drilling continuing, lawmakers in Virginia fear that allowing drilling could benefit Florida's case.

Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke said he plans to exempt Florida from the offshore drilling plan.

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**NAS Jacksonville**

**USTA Florida, Naval Air Station Jacksonville Bring XGLOsive Blacklight Tennis to Military**

Laura Bowen, Mar 6, 2018

USTA Florida and Naval Air Station Jacksonville have joined forces to bring a special XGLOsive blacklight tennis event to the base on April 20, 2018. The special event, Lights Out NAS, is free and open to all current and former military members and their guests, ages six and older.

“Military outreach is something we absolutely need to do more of,” said Laura Bowen, executive director of USTA Florida. “Tennis is a family affair, and we are excited and proud to give military families in Florida an opportunity to play tennis and have fun together.”

Lights Out NAS will be held on Friday, April 20, from 8:30-10:30 p.m. Sessions are open to both youth and adult participants, ages six and older. Base access is required to attend.

No experience needed, but you must register in advance. Each participant will receive a glow-in-the-dark t-shirt.

**MacDill AFB**

**Laser weapons may one day be added to tanker jets like those at MacDill**

Howard Altman, Times staff writer, Published: March 5, 2018, Updated: March 5, 2018 at 11:16 AM

TAMPA – One day, all the old, gray flying gas stations called KC-135 Stratotankers, like the 19 now based at MacDill Air Force Base, may be equipped with laser weapons to ward off attackers.
That’s the vision of Air Force Gen. Carlton Everhart, head of Air Mobility Command, which oversees flying branch operations at MacDill.

With the U.S. military looking closely at potential conflict with nations like Russia and China — nations with advanced air defense systems — Everhart launched a study of how to ensure that planes like the KC-135 will survive in the future.

Such a fight would be a major change from the past 17 years, when the United States and its allies have owned the skies above Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and other battlefields and delivered ordnance against enemies unable to take down aircraft.

The KC-135s have no armor, no weapons and rudimentary communications systems that would render them easy targets against advanced foes…..

**MacDill supports Patriot Sands**

By Airman 1st Class Scott Warner, 6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs / Published March 06, 2018


**MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla.** – Between Feb. 27 and March 3, 2018, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida hosted Patriot Sands, a joint-force exercise to train contingency response personnel and maintain operational proficiency.

Patriot Sands is an annual, five-day training exercise that the Air Force Reserve Command and other affiliations use to improve operational readiness through joint cooperation.

Among the forces involved were the AFRC, Air Mobility Command, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Coast Guard, the Florida Advanced Surgical and Transportation team, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

“We use the exercise Patriot Sands to maximize efficiency by identifying limiting factors in our training process,” said Lt. Col. Anita West-Werner, the commander of the 512th Contingency Response Squadron at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware. “Throughout Patriot Sands, we develop and maintain unit readiness and evaluate our capability to rapidly deploy by air, as well as operate in austere conditions.”

During the exercise, the 512th CRS operated as the lead unit at MacDill.

In addition to the 512th CRS, the 46th Aerial Port Squadron and 712th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron from Dover AFB sent personnel, four C-17 Globemaster III and a C-5 Galaxy to MacDill……

**US Central Command**

**Putin appears to target Tampa during speech touting advancements in Russia’s nukes**

Howard Altman, Times staff writer, Published: March 1, 2018, Updated: March 1, 2018 at 06:25 PM


**TAMPA** – During his annual state of Russia speech, President Vladimir Putin unveiled what he called a devastating new intercontinental ballistic missile.
To illustrate how it works, he showed the audience a video that ended with warheads raining down on the United States — specifically, what appears to be the Tampa Bay area.

For one local expert in Russian military operations, the speech was reminiscent of the depths of the Cold War. And it left some wondering why Putin would choose Tampa to make his point.

The speech had "a little bit of Back to the Future flavor," said Greg Celestan, a retired Army lieutenant colonel from Tampa who was a Russian expert in the U.S. Central Command intelligence directorate and spent time in the former Soviet Union as a U.S. Army liaison to its military.

"This is a type of speech that I would have expected 30 years ago. This reminds me of the song, Don’t You Forget About Me," Celestan said.

Russia was recently singled out for criticism during congressional testimony by Army Gen. Joseph Votel, commander of CentCom, which is headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa. Votel called the Russians both firefighters and arsonists in the ongoing Syrian civil war.

Celestan, however, doesn’t see any specific reason why Putin would want to attack Tampa. He noted that Russia has sent representatives to an international coalition CentCom created after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks…..

**US Special Operations Command**

**SOCOM's new mission is countering WMD threats**

Matthew Cox, Military.com, Mar. 02, 05:14 PM


U.S. Special Operations Command may now lead the effort to stop terrorists from obtaining mass-casualty weapons, such as dirty bombs, but experts in the SOF community warn that operators can’t do it alone.

U.S. Strategic Command recently passed the leadership role in counter-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction mission to SOCOM, a move that has SOF leaders scrambling to figure out where it fits into this complex mission.

Michal Lumpkin, former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict, said he worries that SOCOM will try to take on too much of the mission.

Special Operations personnel are known for being “solution people,” he said. “They solve problems. They fill gaps, seams, and voids.”

“But every gap, seam, and void is not theirs to fill, so the interagency has to do their part,” Lumpkin told an audience Feb. 28, 2018, at National Defense Industrial Association’s 29th Annual Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict Symposium. “So, one of the things that I always fear is we would maybe get out in front of the headlights farther and faster than we should and accept too much of the mission.”

Lumpkin took part in a counter-proliferation panel discussion, where all the panelists agreed that chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons are quickly becoming one of the top threats to the United States and its allies……
Special Ops Command to Release New Operating Concept

By Yasmin Tadjdeh, 3/5/2018


Marine Corps Special Operations Command will soon release a new operating concept — known as MARSOC 2030 — that will look at how "Raiders" will fight twelve years into the future, said the organization’s commander March 1.

"Among the large set of trends that we see during conflict … [is] the convergence of two broad themes — regional competition and instability,” said Maj. Gen. Carl E. Mundy III. “These will likely be the factors that … [policymakers use] to shape the employment" of special operations forces.

Explosive population growth in areas with traditionally poor governance and limited resources will foment instability across entire regions, including urban areas, he noted during a panel discussion at the National Defense Industrial Association’s Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict Symposium and Exhibition which was held in Arlington, Virginia.

Megacities will become even more “dense, disordered knots of activity and exert outsized influence" over the international security environment, he added.

“Nonetheless, we believe that SOF — and MARSOC as part of that — will be expected to execute missions within this context of regional competition and instability,” he said. “The complexity of the operating environment will challenge the ability of leaders at all levels first to sense and understand what’s happening around them, and second to make sound decisions that lead to action.”

The concept — which is expected to be released publicly in the coming days — has been crafted by the command over the past 18 months, Mundy said. It has been informed by a series of internal war games. Out of those, four themes coalesced out of hundreds of observations, he noted.

Cape Canaveral AFS

SpaceX Falcon 9 boosts Spanish communications satellite into space


Lighting up the night sky, a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket making the program's 50th flight thundered away from Cape Canaveral early Tuesday, shattering the overnight calm with a crackling roar as it boosted a Spanish communications satellite toward orbit in the California rocket builder's fifth flight so far this year.

Running more than a week late because of testing and scheduling issues, the Falcon 9's nine Merlin 1D engines ignited and throttled up to liftoff thrust at 12:33 a.m. EST, pushing the booster away from pad 40 at the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station atop a brilliant plume of fire visible for miles around.
With the engines generating 1.7 million pounds of thrust, the slender 229-foot-tall rocket initially climbed straight up, then arced over to the east and shot away over the Atlantic Ocean, rapidly fading from view as it accelerated toward space…..

Patrick AFB

As Tempo Rises, Most Active Reserve Rescue Unit Wants New Aircraft

By Oriana Pawlyk, Military.com, 4 Mar 2018

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Florida – Reserve airmen of the 920th Rescue Wing are doing their part to keep aircraft here up to snuff, as they await the arrival of a new combat rescue helicopter and HC-130 recovery planes.

And while leaders at the base are craving more modern planes, they're still years away from formal delivery. For the most active Reserve unit -- and the only Reserve rescue wing in the Air Force -- officials said they need and want the best to be ready for the missions they are already tasked to do.

The 920th overall is responsible for 18 percent of all Air Force rescue missions, and officials here expect that percentage to rise in years to come.

The Air Force "needs to field out" the new helicopters, "and we're towards the end of that fielding," said Col. Kurt Matthews, commander of the 920th Rescue Wing. The commander also said the HC-130J Combat King II model -- intended to replace HC-130P/Ns across the fleet -- is long overdue.

"My concern is, we're already flying an aircraft that's beyond its normal lifespan, and for helicopters it's a lot different than fixed-wing," Matthews said in a follow-up interview…..

Col. Leo J. Kamphaus Jr. Promoted to Command 920th Maintenance Group At Patrick Air Force Base

By Senior Airman Brandon Kalloo Sanes, 920th Rescue Wing // March 5, 2018

BREVARD COUNTY • PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA – Freshly promoted Col. Leo J. Kamphaus, Jr., assumed command of the 920th Maintenance Group, at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida March 3.

After a brief ceremony recognizing his promotion from the rank of lieutenant colonel to colonel, he ceremoniously took command of the maintenance group during this month’s Unit Training Assembly.

The maintainers are responsible for sustaining aircraft, including HH-60G Pave Hawk Helicopters and HC – 130 P/N King aircraft, capable of supporting long-range search-and-rescue missions anywhere in the world.

“I'm glad Col. Kamphaus is joining the 920th because he has all the qualities I'm looking for in a leader,” said Col. Kurt Mathews, 920th Rescue Wing commander.
“He wants to be here, he has the experience and he’s a team builder. He truly cares about the mission and the people; I’m confident he’s going to do the right thing… He’s going to be an outstanding part of the team.”

US Southern Command

SOUTHCOM: Storm Response Illustrates Need for Airlift in its Region

Brian Everstine, 3-5-2018

The intense need for help across the Caribbean during hurricane response efforts in 2017, especially an immediate requirement for airlift, shows to the overall Defense Department that US Southern Command needs assets continuously deployed to its area of responsibility, the head of the command said Monday. SOUTHCOM forces were stretched thin throughout late 2017, responding to locations such as the US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and St. Maarten. These storms also hit Miami, meaning SOUTHCOM forces were responding in other areas while their own families needed to deal with storms at home, SOUTHCOM boss Adm. Kurt Tidd said during a Pentagon briefing on Monday. When Hurricane Maria hit Dominica and Puerto Rico in September, the biggest need was for airlift, especially rotary wing, to get aid to areas that were cut off, Tidd said. Air Mobility Command itself flew more than 3,000 humanitarian assistance disaster relief missions throughout the year, mostly focused on storm response, AMC Deputy Commander Maj. Gen. Thomas Sharpy said. Tidd said that this intense response “continues to justify the requirement to keep a certain amount (of aircraft) in theater,” Tidd said. “When a crisis hits, you can’t have too much.”

Admiral Highlights Southcom’s Strengthened Partnerships

By Lisa Ferdinando, DoD News, Defense Media Activity, 3-5-2018
https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1458513/admiral-highlights-southcoms-strengthened-partnerships/

WASHINGTON, March 5, 2018 – U.S. Southern Command is strengthening interagency cooperation as well as partnerships in Latin America and the Caribbean to address evolving security threats, Navy Adm. Kurt W. Tidd, the commander of U.S. Southern Command, said at the Pentagon today.

“Drug traffickers, human smugglers, terrorist supporters, arms dealers and money launderers are not new to this region, but they operate in new and surprising ways, compared to years past,” Tidd told reporters in a press briefing.

New approaches are needed in dealing with these threats, he said, as “relying solely on what worked in decades past to find and disrupt them is not enough.”

The criminal and extremist elements are well-financed and are increasingly sophisticated and adaptive, he said. They are leveraging all means available to move “lethal narcotics, people, weapons and dirty money into and out of Latin America and the U.S. homeland,” he said.
“Extremist networks like [the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria] reach deep into our hemisphere, inspire would-be terrorists to conduct attacks in the region or to attempt entry into the United States to do our citizens harm,” he said……

SOUTHCOM Commander: More Than 100 ISIS Members in Trinidad and Tobago

Homeland Security Today, March 6, 2018
https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/southcom-commander-more-than-100-isis-members-trinidad-tobago/

There are more than 100 members of the Islamic State operating on the dual-island nation of Trinidad and Tobago in the Caribbean, the admiral in charge of U.S. Southern Command said Monday.

“There are individuals who have been radicalized, where this pernicious message has taken root. That’s a concern to the government of Trinidad and Tobago. They have focused on it and so I think it’s an area that we all have to take under consideration,” Adm. Kurt Tidd told reporters at the Pentagon.

Tidd said other nations in the Caribbean are starting to realize Islamic extremism could be a serious problem in the region.

“I think there was an unwillingness to acknowledge that perhaps they had a problem with radicalization from these extremist messages,” the admiral said. “Now it is a matter of routine conversation that we have in which we recognize, as we saw in our own country, in San Bernardino and in Orlando, as we saw in Nice and as we’ve seen in other countries sadly throughout Europe and the rest of the world, it’s all too easy for radicalization to occur and so it’s something that we must have our eyes open to and be on the lookout for.”

Defense Industry

DoD Boosts Hypersonics 136 % In 2019: DARPA

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR. on March 01, 2018 at 1:39 PM

WASHINGTON – The Pentagon will ramp up research on hypersonic weapons with a stunning 136 percent increase in the 2019 budget request. Here’s the breakdown of the $257 million:

- $139.4 million, the lion’s share, goes to the Air Force-DARPA collaboration on rocket-propelled hypersonics, Tactical Boost Glide (TBG), which will produce an “operational prototype” by 2023;
- $14.3 million goes to Air-Force work on jet-propelled hypersonics, the Hypersonic Air-breathing Weapon Concept (HAWC), which DARPA is hoping the Navy will join.
- $50 million goes to a new joint venture with the Army called Operational Fires (OPFIRES), part of the Army’s new emphasis on long-range artillery and missiles; and
- $53 million goes to the Advanced Full Range Engine (AFRE) for future hypersonic vehicles.

DARPA wanted more money, director Steven Walker said bluntly, particularly to build up an R&D infrastructure currently half the size of China’s. But, he said, this budget is “a good first step.”
Walker ranged widely over DARPA’s portfolio in his breakfast with the Defense Writers’ Group, from artificial intelligence, where he denied the US is falling behind China, to DNA mapping, where he admits China is ahead; to his recent visit to Ukraine, where DARPA is working on some information warfare projects, he said……

Military contractor cuts 229 more metro Orlando-area jobs

By Veronica Brezina – Staff Writer, Orlando Business Journal, Mar 7, 2018, 2:57pm

McLean, Va.-based DynCorp International LLC is firing off its second round of layoffs.

The global defense firm, which provides aviation services and logistics for the U.S. military, notified the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity on Feb. 23 that will lay off 229 workers on March 30.

The layoffs are a result of DynCorp losing an 11-year, $10 billion contract that instead was won by Palm Bay-based AAR Airlift Group.

"DynCorp. has not been awarded the new Worldwide Aviation Support Services contract for the U.S. Department of State's Bureau for International Narcotics & Law Enforcement Affairs, Office of Aviation," said a letter from DynCorp.'s contract director Mario Troncoso issued a letter to Florida, adding that the contract loss is resulting in the company's closure of its Brevard County operations. DynCorp has more than 14,000 workers throughout more than 100 locations.

Most of the impacted workers were analysts, aircraft inspectors, project managers, and technicians in maintenance and aviation.

The first notice of the layoffs was made on Feb. 16, when the company announced plans to lay off 50 employees on March 16……

DoD Budget

Pentagon's new problem after years of crying poverty: Spending all the cash

By DAVID S. CLOUD, MAR 01, 2018 | 1:05 PM

After complaining for years that it was starved for cash, the Pentagon now says it may have more money than it can possibly spend.

The windfall is due to a budget deal between Congress and the White House last month that promises an added $80 billion for defense this fiscal year, including a requested $19.6-billion hike for "operations and maintenance" — an all-purpose Pentagon account used to fund troop training, ammunition, maintenance of tanks, warplanes and ships, and other daily needs.

Defense Secretary James N. Mattis pushed for a sharp increase in the account this year, arguing that years of budget wrangling had degraded the military's readiness to wage war.
Congress is still finalizing 2018 appropriations levels for the Pentagon, a delay that has generals and admirals worried about spending all the promised cash in the five months remaining before the end of the fiscal year.

"We have a year's worth of money … and five months to spend it," Gen. Glenn Walters, assistant commandant of the Marine Corps, said at a Senate Armed Services Committee budget hearing.

Critics say that giving the military more money than it can absorb invites waste and abuse, noting that the Pentagon has a long history of overpayments, cost overruns and fiscal shenanigans.

"They cried wolf and now they have more than they can possibly put to use," said Mandy Smithberger, director of the Center for Defense Information, a policy organization critical of Pentagon budget practices. "I think it's dangerous because you are going to see a use-it-or-lose-it kind of spending."

Pentagon officials are worried about giving money back after claiming that mandatory spending caps since 2011, known as a sequester, had affected training, planning and maintenance. There is no guarantee Congress or the White House will prove so generous next year……..

Senate Panel Urges Appropriators to Offer DOD Flexibility in Spending FY’18 Funds

The seven members of the Senate Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee are asking Senate appropriators to provide defense officials more leeway in spending the department’s fiscal 2018 budget allocation, with the department likely to have less than six months to use the extra funds afforded by last month’s bipartisan budget agreement. The lawmakers propose waiving the one-year limitation on spending operation and maintenance funds and the “80/20 rule,” which restricts officials from obligating more than 20 percent of one-year appropriations during the last two months of the fiscal year, reports Defense News. “Either of these two exceptions will ensure that service secretaries will have the flexibility to obligate funds in an efficient manner to restore readiness and execute the National Security and Defense Strategy,” according to the readiness panel’s March 5 letter. The request echoes a similar proposal House appropriators are considering.

Omnibus Could Be Ready for Vote Next Week

House and Senate appropriators are racing to complete work on the $1.3 billion fiscal 2018 omnibus in time to go to the House floor by the end of next week. But contentious policy add-ons are complicating the process, reports CQ. Lawmakers are close to wrapping up the defense spending measure. “Some two or three things have been kicked upstairs to the chairman and ranking member. I don’t think they are major,” said Sen. Richard Durbin (D-III.), ranking member on the chamber’s defense appropriations panel.

The two-year budget deal reached last month provides an additional $143 billion for discretionary programs above statutory spending caps — $80 billion for defense and $63 billion for nondefense accounts — making deliberations over funding easier. As a result, the topline for
national defense is $629 billion, with an additional $71 billion available in the overseas contingency operations account. The existing continuing resolution funding the government runs through March 23.

**Other Of Interest**

**How Would School Choice Work for Military Families?**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Mar 05, 2018 02:15 am
[https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=af90b39556](https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=af90b39556)

Late last month, Education Secretary Betsy DeVos said she supports a proposal to offer military families education savings accounts (ESAs) that could be used to pay for K-12 education for their children at public, private or online schools. But so far, it’s not clear how the federal government would provide school choice for service members. The Heritage Foundation has proposed redirecting federal impact aid funds into ESAs for military families, which amounts to $1.2 billion under the Education Department’s fiscal 2018 budget. But a little more than one-half of that figure is for students who live on Indian lands, leaving $515 million for military-connected students. That works out to less than $1,000 per military child for education, according to an analysis by Army Times.

A system that shifts impact aid funds toward ESAs would harm school districts serving military children, says Eileen Huck, deputy director of government relations for the National Military Family Association (NMFA). “Trying to recast [impact aid] as a voucher program really goes against the entire purpose of the program, and would be financially devastating to a large number of school districts,” Huck said. “It’s a misconception that it’s a per capita [program], that this is money per military kid. It’s really to offset the loss of revenue that a school district has when it has federal land within its boundaries.” NMFA has supported school vouchers for military children in states with voucher programs, she said.

**Bill to cut college tuition fees for military clears Legislature**

DREW WILSON, 3-5-2018

The Senate last week unanimously passed a House bill to help cut fees tacked on to college tuition for students who are active duty service members.

**HB 75**, sponsored by Destin Republican Rep. Mel Ponder, would give Florida College System institutions, formerly known as community colleges, the option of waiving all or part of their fees for active duty students who are also receiving Military Tuition Assistance.

Panama City Republican Sen. George Gainer shepherded HB 75’s companion bill, **SB 460**, in the Senate.

“I am optimistic about the opportunity this bill provides for institutions in the Florida College System to have a presence on military installations in Florida,” Ponder said in a news release. “It also promotes the use of our excellent Florida colleges by active duty service members using Military Tuition Assistance to advance their education.”
Gainer added that the proposal “is a great step in ensuring our active duty service members are not financially punished for taking advantage of the Florida College System, which I know to be some of the best colleges in the nation.”

Tuition fees are levied per credit hour for things such as student activities, capital improvement or transportation. Fees at Florida colleges can run up to 50 percent of the cost of the tuition portion, which generally comes in under $100 per credit hour.

Army Studies 30 Cities For Futures Command

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR. on March 06, 2018 at 3:55 PM
https://breakingdefense.com/2018/03/army-studies-30-cities-for-futures-command/

WASHINGTON: The Army is studying 30 cities as possible sites for the Futures Command it’s standing up this summer — but the winning city may hardly notice.

“It’s not going to be an 800-person command,” Army undersecretary Ryan McCarthy told reporters. The plan is to “lease….a couple floors in a high-rise, as opposed to a massive building that we own.” As technology and the economy changes, he added, the command may well need to move “10 to 15 years from now.”

The new HQ, he emphasized, needs to be small, unbureaucratic, and able to blend in to the hoodies-and-sneakers culture of civilian innovators from both the private sector and academe.

“We need them,” McCarthy said on the sidelines of the annual McAleese/Credit Suisse defense conference here. “We’re trying to get them excited about working with us, a culture that they don’t necessarily have an affinity to.” He recounted an awkward experience on a recent visit to Chicago to make an announcement about the Army Research Laboratory. McCarthy was in French cuffs and business suit, the Army officers were in their dress blues, and the local innovators were in their hoodies, staring at the Army delegation as if it came from Mars. The new Futures Command HQ must be able to bridge the gap between the two cultures……

Students and Alumni gather to celebrate 70 years of FAMU ROTC

By Deja Allen | Copyeditor and Staff Reporter, On March 7, 2018

Integrity, leadership, and legacy were among the many values recognized during the Florida A&M Army Reserve Officer Training Corps 70th anniversary week held from Feb 24 - Mar 3.

Beginning in 1948, The FAMU ROTC was implement as a part of the Florida Normal & Industrial College for Colored Students Morrell Act of 1890 in efforts to recruit African-Americans into the military. However, as the number of participants began to grow, The Rattler Battalion quickly became more than a means of military recruitment, but an impactful influence that extends past the highest of seven hills.

“This program has really become one of the premier leadership platforms for not just FAMU but also for the local community and for the nation.” said Professor of Military Science, LTC Edwin H. Escobar.
The annual week of events honored the outstanding progress of the FAMU ROTC while strengthening the program’s alumni network and educating all students on the development and leadership opportunities available.

Last Tuesday, the Rattler Battalion brought army style fitness to the quad with an obstacle course along with rock climbing, tug-o-war, and other engaging actives. The following evening, the Beta Nu chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. collaborated with ZipSweat Fitness to commemorate the program by hosting their staple event “BN Shape” in the FAMU Recreation Center.

Senior ROTC cadet and Spring 17 initiate of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., Rudsheld Rickie Plaisir said that these events are important to the lineage of the program and showcase the standards members are taught to live by……

Military members earning college credits with cyber analysis course

by David Gonzalez, 3-8-2018

PENSACOLA, Fla. (WEAR) – The University of West Florida is teaming up with the National Security Agency to help military members earn degrees in cybersecurity.

Active military members who complete the NSA's Joint Cyber Analysis Course will now be able to earn college credit at UWF.

Dr. Leonard Reinsfelder, commandant for NSA's National Cryptologic School, said the NSA trains about 1,300 military members in cybersecurity every year.

"The National Security Agency is not a degree-granting institution, so those young men and women as they learn really leading-edge technical things are not now getting academic credit for that," Dr. Reinsfelder said. "Through the graces of the University of West Florida, that work has been reviewed and can now be applied towards a certificate or degree from the University of West Florida.

Students will be able to earn up to 30 hours toward a bachelor's degree in computing and information sciences with an emphasis in cybersecurity, or 15 credit hours toward an associate degree……

Why Congress Should Modernize Impact Aid for Children of Military Families

Jonathan Butcher / @JM_Butcher / March 08, 2018

Kathleen Jones and her family were “trying to figure out the next chapter in their lives.”

Her husband spent 28 years in the military, so the Jones family was making adjustments in Arizona for life after military service. Doctors diagnosed both of their boys as being on the autism spectrum, so finding the best services for Samuel and Zachary was going to be important.

The first school they found helped with Zachary’s dyslexia. “They were very accommodating,” Jones says. But when they decided to settle in a different county, the new schools “looked good, and looked on paper that it was everything that my boys needed, but it was not,” she says.
The new school provided Samuel with computer equipment to help with his needs, but the teachers did not know how to train him to use the hardware. Meanwhile, the school had no additional resources to help Zachary.

“They would agree to things in theory; but in practice, it was never enough. It never worked,” Jones says. Fortunately for the Jones family, Arizona was the first state in the U.S. to allow students the option to use education savings accounts. With an account, students leave a public school and the state deposits a portion of a child’s funds from the state education formula into a private account that parents can use to buy educational products and services for their children…..
Mar 16

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #62 will be **NEXT WEEK** on Thursday, 22 March 2018, beginning at 9:00AM (agenda attached) at the Marriott Courtyard, 610 Wells Rd, Orange Park, FL 32073. The Florida Defense Alliance (FDA) will meet at the same location on 21 March 18. The meeting will focus on NAS Jacksonville among other business. Additional meeting information for Task Force members will be provided in separate e-mail. E-Books for the meeting will be available early next week on our website at [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/meetings/](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/meetings/).

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979  Access Code: 1869945

3. **FL Session Ends** – Session ended on Monday with passing of the budget bill. Although there were more than 20 military friendly bills introduced, only a handful made it through session, and two HB29 and HB75 have already been signed into law by Governor Scott. According to [http://floridapolitics.com/archives/258799-rick-scott-jax](http://floridapolitics.com/archives/258799-rick-scott-jax), “HB 29, the “Don Hahnfeldt Veteran and Military Family Opportunity Act”, waives professional fees and licensure requirements for military members, both active and retired, and their spouses. The bill is named after Don Hahnfeldt, a former submarine commander and state representative who died unexpectedly before the 2018 Legislative Session. ….  HB 75 will allow Florida state colleges to waive fees for active duty members using military tuition assistance.” Bruce Grant will provide a comprehensive report at the Task Force meeting next week.

4. **Task Force Member Resigns** – CW5 Derrick Fritts has notified the Task Force of his desire to resign due to military commitments that will preclude his ability to serve the Task Force for the remainder of his term. Chief Fritts was appointed to the Task Force on July 1, 2015. In his resignation letter, Chief Fritts noted that he “just received orders which begin March 31, 2018 and they will take me completely out Florida for one year (March 2019). Only 5 months after that, I will be in the EUCOM theater (Germany) for another year. The OPTEMPO for our unit is pretty high, some of the highest I can remember since 2001, when it all began.” We wish him God Speed on his deployments. Staff will be working with the Speaker’s office to designate a replacement for Chief Fritts as soon as possible.

5. **Attachments:**
   - Task Force Meeting #62 Agenda

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News Clips of Interest:

Gulf Range / Oil Drilling

Zinke clarifies offshore drilling stance, Florida's exemption

By Alana Austin | Posted: Mon 9:43 PM, Mar 12, 2018
http://www.wjhg.com/content/news/476619523.html

WASHINGTON (Gray DC) -- No new drilling off Florida. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke renewing his stance that the Sunshine State is off the table after the Trump administration announced plans to lift offshore drilling bans.

Our Washington Correspondent Alana Austin spoke to Zinke and Senator Bill Nelson, who still has doubts.

"Well, Florida - what I said is no new oil and gas platforms," said Zinke.

Zinke reaffirming comments he made that oil drilling won't happen off the Florida coastline.

Zinke made those comments after receiving pushback from Florida lawmakers and the governor, upset over the Trump administration's plans to allow new oil rigs off California, Alaska, and the Eastern Seaboard.

Zinke says the plan was simply a starting point.

"Local communities and this President has made it clear that the voice of America matters and local communities and states' voice matter," said Zinke.

Now, governors from other coastal states like Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina want the same exemption.....

Offshore-drilling ban not rock solid with voters, poll finds


TALLAHASSEE — It has been almost an article of faith in Florida politics: People do not want oil drilling off the state’s coasts.
But poll results released Thursday suggest that a drilling ban might not have enough voter support to go into the Florida Constitution.

The poll, conducted by the Tallahassee-based firm Clearview Research, found that 54 percent of voters support a proposed constitutional amendment that would ban offshore oil and gas drilling in state waters, while 42 percent oppose the idea. Constitutional amendments require 60 percent voter approval to pass.

Clearview Research this month polled 750 likely general-election voters about a series of proposals being considered by the Florida Constitution Revision Commission, including a proposed drilling ban.

“Somewhat surprisingly, a ban on offshore oil drilling does not poll as high as one might have guessed given Florida’s history on this issue,” Clearview Research President Steve Vancore said in comments released with the results.

The Constitution Revision Commission, which meets every 20 years and can put measures directly on the November ballot, will start a series of sessions Monday in Tallahassee to take up the drilling ban and nearly three-dozen other proposed amendments. It will decide this spring which proposals will go before voters.

Florida law has long prevented oil and gas drilling in state waters, but the proposed constitutional amendment would create a more-permanent ban. Republican and Democratic politicians have fought drilling, arguing that it could endanger the state’s beaches. Drilling supporters say it should remain an option, at least in part to help meet energy needs……

Cyber

Gulf Coast cyber efforts rolling into Washington

By Dr. Barbara George, March 12, 2018 10:41 am

Tides are changing in the Gulf Coast as a recent increase in support from the Homeland Security Department (DHS) and the National Security Agency (NSA) further solidifies the future of the flourishing cybersecurity industry in Pensacola, Florida. With a strong cyber workforce graduating from the University of West Florida (UWF) and ample funding, the Pensacola area is in the perfect position to grow its economy with cybersecurity. Through strategic partnerships, community investment and government interest, the area is developing into the nation’s new hotbed for cyber innovation and becoming a target for government contractors looking forward in a tough federal acquisition environment.

Those in the Washington, D.C., area will have an opportunity to engage with leaders of the cyber activities in Florida on March 13 when the Washington Cyber Roundtable (WCR) hosts a roundtable discussion focused on the growing cyber opportunities in Pensacola fueled by DHS and the military. The event will feature Brad Nix, the former acting director of the U.S. Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT) at DHS and Chris Middleton, the director of strategic innovation and military liaison at UWF.

“The cyber activities in Pensacola are unmatched anywhere else in the country,” said George Meyers, managing partner of the Meyers Group and chairman of the WCR. “You have this rare trifecta of industry, academia and government eagerly working together which creates an environment where cyber companies and professionals can thrive. That’s why WCR is bringing the conversations in Pensacola to Washington. Too often businesses in and around the Beltway only focus on what’s in their own backyard. It’s evident funding for cyber efforts is emerging on the gulf coast through a variety of sustainable
channels and the time has come for Washington government contractors to look south and embrace Pensacola.”

DHS is growing its partnership with UWF because of the university’s commitment to making the region the new “Cyber Coast” with the creation of the Center for Cybersecurity, multidisciplinary cybersecurity programs and research projects and facilities. These efforts led to the UWF’s recognition last year as the National Center of Academic Excellence Regional Resource Center for the Southeast Region by joint sponsorship between DHS and the NSA…..

**BRAC**

**Absent BRAC, DOD Could Use Some Authority for Realignment, Smith Says**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Mar 15, 2018 04:00 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=65f31ce9b3

With the prospect of Congress authorizing a round of base closures in the near future considered poor, lawmakers should consider alternate legislation to provide DOD limited flexibility to realign facilities and shutter others short of full BRAC authority, Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.), ranking member on the House Armed Services Committee, said Wednesday. “Most people have surrendered on the idea of getting another BRAC round anytime soon,” Smith said during an event at the Cato Institute. But “the military is particularly hamstrung right now in their ability to move assets,” he said.

Smith told the audience he would attempt to include language in the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill providing officials some flexibility to move military assets, reported Inside Defense. “Personally that’s what I’m going to advocate in the NDAA this year is to get some language in there to give people like the [U.S.] Transportation Commander greater flexibility,” Smith said.

Smith ascribed the Trump administration’s decision to forego requesting a new BRAC round in its fiscal 2019 budget request to the high political hurdle communities have erected to stave off additional base closures. “Very small groups of interest have developed an enormous amount of power to stop things from happening that they don’t want to happen. So BRAC has become more difficult because communities have organized more strongly to try and prevent it,” Smith said.

**NAS Pensacola**

**Rep. Gaetz holds open forum at NAS Pensacola discussing Hezbollah, drug trafficking**

by Christina Leavenworth, 3-13-2018

PENSACOLA, Fla. (WEAR) – A panel discussion was held on Monday at NAS Pensacola regarding the terrorist group Hezbollah and it's infiltration in Latin America.

U.S. Representative Matt Gaetz brought together experts to have an open discussion of what needs to be done to diminish the threat.
Gaetz said, "There are more Lebanese Hezbollah in Latin America than in Lebanon. We're seeing an increased presence in the Western hemisphere."

Gaetz feels the group is too close for comfort.

"Our adversaries are taking a foothold in Venezuela, Columbia, and Peru. We don't want to see our hemisphere become a permissive environment because that threatens our homeland," he said.

Joseph Humire is a leading expert on Hezbollah growth in Latin America. He said the group makes money trafficking massive amounts of drugs, mostly heroin and cocaine. He said that's why local organizations need to know about the threat.

"More likely than not, they won't come in at the federal level. They will come in through the local level, present themselves in communities," said Humire.

Gaetz said, "We are seeing more and more cocaine move through the Caribbean and Florida Straights. That's why it's so important to pre-position Coast Guard assets in Pensacola and in Destin. If we see more of it move into the Gulf of Mexico, we will have the assets to do that."….

NAS Pensacola raises pennant for FY 2017 Retention Excellence Award

Story by Gregory Mitchell, Naval Air Station Pensacola, 03.15.2018

As a result of winning the award, along with flying the Retention Excellence pennant, the command will display a gold anchor until the release of the following FY award announcement.

The Retention Excellence Award is given annually to those commands that have met or exceeded the Chief of Naval Operations' (CNO) retention goals. This is the first time in seven years for NAS Pensacola to receive this distinguished honor.

“For the command to receive this award is an amazing accomplishment,” said NAS Pensacola Commanding Officer, Capt. Christopher T. Martin. “This is the result of the tireless efforts put on by our entire staff to encourage Sailors to continue honorably serving their country.”

Programs such as Career Development Boards (CDBs) and Career Waypoints or C-WAY, a program used by the Navy for processing reenlistment quotas, to Family Care Plan, Command Sponsorship and even the Command Ombudsman factor into the CNO's criteria……

NAS Whiting Field

Florida DEP Presents 2017 Plant Excellence Awards

Occupational Health and Safety, Mar 13, 2018

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection recently presented 2017 Plant Operations Excellence Awards to five northwest Florida utilities for their commitment to operational excellence. Three drinking water and two domestic wastewater facilities were honored during the annual Focus on Change Seminar. The drinking water facility award recipients were Naval Air Station Whiting Field.
Destin Water Users Inc., and Bay County Water Treatment Plant, and the wastewater facility recipients were the Military Point Regional Advanced Wastewater Treatment Facility and the Rivercamps on Crooked Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant.

"On behalf of DEP and the state of Florida, I am proud to recognize NAS Whiting Field, Destin Water Users, Bay County Water, Military Point Regional, and Rivercamps on Crooked Creek for their commitment to operational excellence," said Michael Fuller, administrator of the Panama City branch office of DEP's Northwest District. "We are fortunate to have such outstanding community partners working alongside us, safeguarding Florida's natural resources and ensuring clean and dependable water for our residents."

Each year, the department presents awards to domestic wastewater and drinking water facilities around the state that demonstrate excellence in operation, maintenance, innovative treatment, waste reduction, pollution prevention, recycling, or other achievements. The awards recognize facilities that demonstrate a special commitment to excellence in management and have an impeccable history of recordkeeping compliance…..

**Corry Station**

**IWTC Corry Station Concludes 65th Saturday Scholars Graduation**

Story by Glenn Sircy, Center for Information Warfare Training 03.10.2018


**PENSACOLA, Fla.** – Over 50 students from Myrtle Grove Elementary School graduated from Saturday Scholars in a ceremony held at Myrtle Grove Elementary School, March 10.

Information Warfare Training Command (IWTC) Corry Station staff and students continued a long tradition of partnering with the Escambia County School District (ECSD), and volunteer mentors spent five Saturday mornings mentoring students in several core subjects, which included math, reading and computer science.

They also had an opportunity to participate in fun physical fitness activities and a trip to the National Naval Aviation Museum. Overall, each student received a total of 24 hours of one-on-one mentoring that totaled over 1,200 volunteer hours from IWTC Corry Station’s staff and students.

The program, in its 33rd year with a command from Naval Air Station Pensacola Corry Station, supports a session at a different school each spring and fall, with this spring marking the 65th session.

During the ceremony, Chief Information Systems Technician Bill Kelley, IWTC Corry Station's Saturday Scholars coordinator, and Cmdr. Chad Smith, commanding officer of IWTC Corry Station, welcomed everyone; thanked the students, parents, teachers and school district officials for the wonderful volunteer opportunity; and thanked their mentors for giving back to the community…..

**Hurlburt Field**

**Hurlburt Field Hosts 24th Special Operations Wing Change of Command**
Hurlburt Field, Fla. - A torch is being passed and a new leader is stepping into command.

On March 8th, Hurlburt Field announced a change of command to the Special Operations Wing.

News 13's Peyton LoCicero was at the ceremony and has more.

The 24th Special Operations Wing bid farewell to it's current commander. During the ceremony, Col. Michael E. Martin, who presides over the 24th Special Operations Wing, passed the command to a fellow airman.

"Claude, you've got a hungry, ready for action wing, that's going to get after it," said Col. Michael E. Martin, Former Commander 24th Special Operations Wing.

Local dignitaries, military men and women, along with family and friends gathered to witness the change of command at Hurlburt Field.

"I distinctly remember early on in his command, his goal was to be a special Operations Group Command. (Looks at Col. Tudor) Do you remember that," asked Lt. Gen. Brad Webb, Commander of AFSOC.

The 24th Special Operation Wing is the only wing in the Air Force dedicated to Special Tactics airmen.

With nearly 24 years of service under his belt, Col. Claude K. Tudor, Jr. is familiar of the dedication and honor it will take lead…..

Information operations officers get their own school

By: Stephen Losey, 3-14-2018

Air Force officers in the newly formed 14F information operations career field will get their own technical training school in late fiscal 2019.

In a March 5 release, the Air Force said the new school will be set up at Hurlburt Field in Florida. It will be a 14- to 15-week-long Initial Skills Course and will consolidate and integrate content from several related training courses.

The information operations career field, created in October 2016, includes airmen who use a variety of “information-related capabilities” to “influence, disrupt, corrupt or usurp the decision making of selected audiences to create desired effects,” according to a directory of Air Force specialty codes.

The website for the Air Force’s Air University said the capabilities used by the career field include electronic warfare, computer network operations, psychological operations, military deception and operations security…..

Eglin AFB

Stuck in traffic, Crestview style
CRESTVIEW — Just how long does it take to get from one end of Crestview to the other in the afternoon?

We drove from the overpass at Duke Field to Airport Road along State Road 85 at the north end of town at two different times on a weekday afternoon. The first trip started at 2:10 p.m. and ended at 2:28 p.m., while the second trip took twice as long, starting at 4:40 p.m. and ending at 5:16 p.m.

Crestview resident Donna Simpler has been commuting to her job in Fort Walton Beach from the north end of Crestview since 1985. Her commute, which she says can be up to an hour and 15 minutes, used to be much shorter.

“The most aggravating part is when you get to Duke Field, all the way to Walmart, and you’re stuck,” she said. “When I was a kid, I rode my bicycle all over Crestview. There was no traffic.”

Simpler has tried using alternate routes, such as taking 285 from Niceville, or taking PJ Adams to go around the southern end of Highway 85. But she found that neither route shortened her commute.

Solutions to the traffic problem in Crestview have been discussed for years with little to show for it. One idea that’s been discussed at length is a bypass around the city.

But a project of that scope can be difficult to get approved. It’s not only the city that has to agree to the project, but the Okaloosa County Commission and Florida Department of Transportation as well…..

Lack of Spare Parts Is Keeping F-35s on the Ground

The logistics system designed to keep the F-35 fleet flying often doesn’t, with more than a fifth of grounded planes sitting idle waiting for spare parts. The result is fewer airplanes available for training—and increasingly, combat—as the system struggles to keep an ever-growing number of jets flying.

*Aviation Week & Space Technology* reports that parts shortages and bureaucracy are hampering efforts to keep the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter in the air. In particular, it includes an anecdote about an Air Force major whose helmet had a broken plastic clip, a problem that would have grounded him for two weeks as he waited for a replacement. It was only when the issue was escalated to the Joint Program Office, which runs the F-35 program, that rules were bent to fix the problem.

The single anecdote speaks volumes about the F-35 program’s logistics system. The program is designed to centralize the repair and spare parts program as much as possible, to increase efficiency and reduce costs. Instead of every F-35 base stocking plastic clips, helmets, or even engines, a centralized, global computer system would keep track of all working and spare F-35 parts worldwide, sending them to bases worldwide in a timely manner as needed. Repairs are done at a handful of depots to minimize costs and maximize efficiency.

On paper that sounds like a great idea, no doubt inspired by the just-in-time nature of companies such as Amazon and UPS. Together, the two companies can ship millions of types of goods globally from a handful of distribution centers, overnight on a consumer’s whim, often for completely trivial reasons. In practice, the F-35 program needs two weeks to ship a plastic helmet clip to someone who needs it more urgently than the typical Amazon Prime customers needs their latest impulse buy…..
Big Plans In Store For Camp Blanding Museum

By LINDSEY KILBRIDE • MAR 13, 2018

Florida lawmakers have approved more than $1.6 million for expanding and renovating the military museum at Camp Blanding in Clay County.

Post Commander Colonel Matt Johnson said the museum is losing artifacts like clothing items, because the building isn’t climatized. The state money would, among other things, go toward building a storage and restoration center, which would also be a place for college students to study history. He said the property has many old structures that have yet to be excavated.

“Camp Blanding became the fourth largest city in Florida during World War II. There were a lot of soldiers, a lot of civilians out here supporting them. I think there were 23 chapels, eight movie theaters,” he said. “So you have a lot of old structures here where university students could benefit.”

The improvements are planned to be rolled out in four phases, with the $1.6 million earmarked for phase one and another yet-to-be determined phase. The total cost is estimated to be $4.7 million……

Military to Award Service Members Humanitarian Service Medal for Hurricane Response

BY: Jack Heretik, March 13, 2018 4:35 pm

The Humanitarian Service Medal has been authorized by the Joint Staff to be awarded to service members who were part of relief efforts after Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria struck the United States and Caribbean in 2017.

Each branch of the U.S. armed services is to determine its own set of requirements for who qualifies for the award, according to the Department of Defense.

Members of the military are often called upon to respond in the wake of natural disasters, with one of the most notable cases in recent years being in response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005. In 2017, the military was called upon immediately as the storms struck…..

MacDill AFB

MacDill opens unique scar treatment clinic for service members

By Senior Airman Rito Smith, 6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs / Published March 13, 2018
MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. -- The 6th Medical Group officially opened up their new capabilities to treat burns and scars March 9, 2018 at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. Maj (Dr.) Thomas Beachkofsky, a board-certified dermatologist assigned to the 6th MDG, opened a scar clinic in an effort to minimize the impact of these life changing events. The clinic specializes in scarring from chemical burns, thermal burns, blast injuries, traumatic amputation, and surgery.

Although his primary motivation is to improve the quality of life for wounded warriors, he can apply his practice to helping anyone with unwanted or symptomatic scarring regardless of the cause.

"Wounded warriors are often young, motivated, goal-oriented, and otherwise healthy before having their lives suddenly impacted by traumatic injury and scarring," said Beachkofsky. "They are used to being in control of their lives, these individuals often want to return to the fight as soon as possible and want to resume normal daily activities without impediment from their injuries."

Beachkofsky began his training in laser and procedural dermatology in 2011 during his dermatology residency at the 59th Medical Wing under the supervision of Col. (Dr.) Chad Hivnor. Subsequently, he went on to become the director of their laser clinic and was responsible not only for the care of his patients, but also the medical education of those dermatology residents and other medical providers that rotated with him.

Upon his arrival to MacDill AFB this past summer, he wasted no time obtaining the necessary supplies and equipment to make these resources available locally and has now officially opened the clinic with these capabilities……

Once home to B-17s, MacDill again welcomes 'Memphis Belle'

By: FOX 13 News staff, POSTED: MAR 13 2018 05:05PM EDT, VIDEO POSTED: MAR 13 2018 06:24PM EDT, UPDATED: MAR 13 2018 06:29PM EDT
Http://Www.Fox13news.Com/News/Local-News/Memphis-Belle-Macdill-Afb

TAMPA (FOX 13) - Over the years, there have been plenty of remarkable airplanes in the skies over MacDill Air Force Base. But it’s been years since B-17 bombers rumbled down the South Tampa runways, so it was a special treat for airmen and their families when the ‘Memphis Belle’ herself arrived Tuesday.

The original Memphis Belle flew 25 World War II combat missions over Europe and her crew returned to the U.S. as heroes. That part of the story is well-known thanks to the popular 1990 movie. But many people don’t know that the bomber’s crew trained here in Tampa before picking up their plane in Maine and heading overseas.

During the war, MacDill Air Force Base – then known as MacDill Field – was an Army Air Corps bomber training base. The Memphis Belle’s crew, along with many others, got to know each other and their aircraft by flying practice missions out of the airfield.

"If you were living in Tampa in the 1940s, you would have seen hundreds of these aircraft flying overhead," offered MacDill historian Stephen Ove.

After the Memphis Belle made its triumphant return to the States, the plane was again stationed at MacDill, giving rookie crews a chance to train on the most famous bomber of the war…..
Cape Canaveral AFS
ULA, SpaceX secure nearly $650 million in Air Force launch contracts
Emre Kelly, Published 12:02 a.m. ET March 15, 2018 | Updated 12:08 a.m. ET March 15, 2018

Industry titans United Launch Alliance and SpaceX recently secured nearly $650 million in Air Force launch contracts, the Department of Defense said Wednesday.

Colorado-based ULA was awarded a $355 million contract for its launch services to deliver two Air Force Space Command spacecraft, labeled AFSPC-8 and AFSPC-12, to orbit. The missions are expected to launch from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station by June 2020 and March 2020, respectively.

"United Launch Alliance is honored to be selected to launch these critical national security satellites for our country," the company said in a statement Wednesday. "Reliably launching our customer's missions remains our top priority like we have for the more than 125 successful missions we have launched."

SpaceX, meanwhile, secured a $290 million contract to launch three next-generation Global Positioning System satellites for the Air Force, known as GPS III. The first is expected to launch from the Space Coast by March 2020, either from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station's Launch Complex 40 or Kennedy Space Center's pad 39A…..

Patrick AFB
Reserve Rescue Aircrews to Air Force: Don't Forget About Us
By Oriana Pawlyk, Military.com 10 Mar 2018

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Florida -- There may be darker days ahead for the Air Force's most active Reserve unit as a looming pilot shortage and shortfalls in related career fields create challenges throughout the force.

Reservists here who train for combat search and rescue missions anywhere in the world say they're preparing to feel the brunt of the shortfall, and have a message for the Air Force: don't forget about us.

"Especially in the rated career fields -- pilots, navigators, loadmasters, flight engineers -- we're starting to see the same challenges as the active-duty," Col. Mike LoForti, commander of the 920th Operations Group, said.

Military.com on Feb. 20 toured hangars and facilities used for the combat-search-and-rescue mission and spoke with officials here about the 920th's evolving operations….
NAS Key West

Navy jet crashes off Key West, killing 2 crew members

By: Lolita C. Baldor, The Associated Press, 3-14-2018

WASHINGTON — A U.S. Navy fighter jet crashed Wednesday off the coast of Key West, Florida, killing its two crew members.

The F/A-18 Super Hornet was on approach to land at the naval air station around 4:30 p.m. EDT, and crashed into the water about a mile east of the runway.

The pilot and weapons system officer ejected and were recovered, but U.S. Naval Air Forces reported late Wednesday night that both had died. Their names are being withheld pending notification of next of kin. The cause of the crash is also under investigation.

Defense Industry

Jets and jobs galore: Lockheed Martin grabs huge contract with local F-35 work – its biggest one in 2 years

By Matthew Richardson – Staff writer, Orlando Business Journal, Mar 14, 2018, 1:19pm

Lockheed Martin Corp. landed one of its biggest contracts of the year for its F-35 jet fighter program, and some of the work is being performed in Orlando.

The Bethesda, Md.-based defense giant won a $1.4 billion contract from the U.S. Navy on March 13 to build and deliver more than 200 F-35 air systems.

Lockheed Martin will perform low rate initial production for the F-35 Lightning II air systems in support of the Air Force, Marine Corps., Navy, non-U.S. Department of Defense participants and foreign military sales. Approximately 214 F-35 air systems will be built for non-U.S. Department of Defense and foreign military sales customers. While most of the work will take place in Forth Worth, Texas, smaller parts will happen in Orlando, as well as five other locations in the U.S. and overseas.

The contract work has a quick turnaround, as all services are expected to be completed by December.

Lockheed Martin Corp. (NYSE: LMT) often grabs big contracts for its F-35. The last time the company nabbed a deal this big with work in Orlando was in 2016, which was valued at $7 billion.

The defense firm has more than 7,000 employees in Orlando with two locations — its east Orlando Rotary & Mission Systems campus and its west Orlando Missiles & Fire Control campus. Both campuses perform work on the F-35, supporting more than 1,000 jobs. Lockheed Martin also may be looking to add more workers specifically for the F-35 program. More than 620 jobs are open in Orlando for Lockheed Martin, and nearly 400 are for its Missiles & Fire Control facility. Job titles are mainly for various engineers.
WASHINGTON, March 12, 2018 – Speaking at a forum here today on issues surrounding the president’s fiscal year 2019 defense budget request, the three service secretaries agreed that the Defense Department’s most crucial need is continued investment in people.

Army Secretary Mark T. Esper, Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer and Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson told the Center for Strategic and International Studies that the American military’s most crucial advantage is its people and that investment must continue to attract and retain them. Kathleen Hicks of CSIS moderated the discussion.

All three service leaders said the fiscal 2018 budget goes a long way toward repairing the damage done by the Budget Control Act spending cuts and that the 2019 request will begin the road to modernization.

“At the end of the day, people are what makes everything work, and we really have to focus on this,” Spencer said……
Mar 23

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #63 will be on **Thursday, 19 April 2018**, beginning at **9:00AM** via conference call / WebEX.

2. **Call In Number** –
   - Call-In Number: 800-501-8979
   - Access Code: 1869945

3. **Vying for Army’s “Futures Command”** – Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy sent a letter (attached) to Secretary of the Army, Mark Esper, last week to recommend Orlando as the best location for the Army’s newest command HQ. Other locations have begun to emerge as would be competitors, including Atlanta Georgia, according to an article publish this week in The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. According to the article, the Georgia Congressional Delegation including all Senators and members of Congress have written a similar letter to Army Secretary Esper. The article stated that “the Pentagon would consider 30 cities in deciding where to lease office space for the future site of the command. That list will be narrowed to 10 and then finally to four finalists.” However, at this point, it is unknown which 30 locations are being considered and if either Orlando or Atlanta are even on their initial list. According to TPG, we believe the list is quickly moving from 30 to 10. See article below in the CLIPS or at https://www.myajc.com/news/state--regional-govt--politics/georgia-congressmen-push-atlanta-future-site-new-army-command/kzK4IAEIjLoY0XJ2xkchKO/.

4. **Congress Passes Omnibus Spending Bill** – Although not everyone is happy due to the size of the spending bill, Congress passed the Omnibus that prevents another Government shutdown and precludes another Continuing Resolution (CR). However, President Trump has rumored that he may Veto the bill. According to Dan Cohen, “The defense portion of the fiscal 2018 omnibus spending bill released Wednesday provides $230 billion for operations and maintenance (O&M), a 6 percent increase over last year’s allocation. The account includes a $580 million boost for facility sustainment, restoration and modernization programs above the administration’s budget request, according to a bill summary from the Senate Appropriations Committee.” See the bill summary (attached) and more below in the CLIPS.

5. **Attachments:**
   - Congresswomen Murphy Letter to SecArmy
   - FY-18 Omnibus MILCON Summary
   - Executive Summary – Jan Base Commanders Mtg

*Terry*

Terry McCaffrey
Executive Director
Florida Defense Support Task Force

PHONE (850) 878-4578
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News Clips of Interest:

Gulf Range / Oil Drilling

Debate swirls over possible oil drilling, exploration off Florida’s coast

By Dinah Voyles Pulver, Posted Mar 18, 2018 at 5:39 PM, Updated Mar 18, 2018 at 11:23 PM

Whether or not drilling in federal waters off Florida’s shores is on the table or off remains murky, but chances are growing that Floridians will get to vote this fall on an amendment to the state’s constitution to ban drilling in the state’s offshore waters.

Locally, the city of New Smyrna Beach is the only city that has gone on the record opposing offshore drilling, and City Commissioner Jake Sachs is watching closely the five-year federal offshore drilling and exploration planning process and the drilling ban proposed to the state’s Constitution Revision Commission. The two issues are unfolding simultaneously.

It would be “awesome” if the drilling ban makes it on to the ballot in the fall,” said Sachs. “I’m sure the voters would say no (to drilling) overwhelmingly.”

The Department of the Interior unveiled a five-year plan for offshore exploration and development in January. The plan proposed opening more than 90 percent of the nation’s total outer continental shelf acreage to exploration and development, and allowing the largest number of lease sales in United States history.

After immediate and angry opposition from Florida, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke quickly flew to a meeting with Gov. Rick Scott in Tallahassee, then announced on Twitter that drilling was off the table in Florida.

But his remarks were immediately criticized by both supporters and opponents of the energy plan, and set off a debate that continues to roil. It infuriated elected officials in other states who oppose opening new leases or expanding drilling, and Zinke has been mired in controversy over his position on Florida ever since.

Comments by Zinke and members of his staff in meetings elsewhere in the country have offered little clarity to the debate…..
Zinke’s stand on Florida drilling unclear, state ban could go to voters

By Dinah Voyles Pulver, Posted Mar 18, 2018 at 5:39 PM, Updated Mar 19, 2018 at 12:12 PM

Whether or not drilling in federal waters off Florida’s shores is on the table or off remains murky, but chances are growing that Floridians will get to vote this fall on an amendment to the state’s constitution to ban drilling in the state’s offshore waters.

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Florida may vote to ban oil and gas drilling in state waters

AP, Mar 20, 2018

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — Florida voters may get a chance to ban oil and gas drilling in waters near the state’s coast.

A powerful panel that can alter the Florida Constitution gave preliminary approval on Tuesday to a proposed ban. The Florida Constitution Revision Commission will take a final vote by May on whether to put it on the 2018 ballot.

Sixty-percent of voters must vote yes in order for the amendment to take effect. If adopted, oil and gas drilling would not be allowed up to nine miles off the coast in the Gulf of Mexico and up to three miles off the Atlantic coastline.

The 37-member panel meets every 20 years and is allowed to propose changes to the state constitution. The commission held its first meeting a year ago.
Eglin AFB

Air Force EOD tech receives Airman’s Medal for saving double amputee from flood

By: Charlsy Panzino, 3-17-2018


A torrential rainstorm after Christmas in 2015 caused a vehicle in Missouri to wash off the road near where Tech. Sgt. Philip Dyer was staying.

Dyer, an explosive ordnance disposal instructor with the 366th Training Squadron Detachment 3 at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, was visiting his family in rural Missouri when the storm began.

The rain eventually flooded the single road and bridge to and from Dyer’s location, according to an Air Force news release.

Dyer and his brother continued to check the road and bridge to see if it was passable since Dyer’s family was stuck in the town on the other side of the bridge.

Around 8 p.m., Dyer and his brother saw a vehicle had washed off the road, becoming half submerged in the water.

“The only thing keeping it from washing away was an old barbed-wire fence,” said the airman, whose actions would earn him the Airman’s Medal, the Air Force’s highest non-combat award.

Dyer and his brother watched as the driver of the vehicle struggled against the current to rescue his wife, a double leg amputee, from the vehicle. The driver pulled his wife out and onto the roof of their vehicle.....

Eglin again hosting Archaeology Day

By Jim Thompson, Posted Mar 18, 2018 at 2:00 PM


EGLIN AFB – Some places in plain sight, and others more secluded, the 464,000 acres of the Eglin reservation include historic sites and artifacts stretching from 10,000 years ago to the 20th century, according to one of the base’s civilian cultural resource managers.

Showcasing that history, and the Air Force’s efforts to preserve and protect it, are a couple of reasons the base has hosted an annual Eglin Archaeology Day, said cultural resources manager Ben Aubuchon. According to Aubuchon, there are a few thousand archaeological and historic sites on the Eglin reservation.

This year’s Archaeology Day is scheduled for 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday at Jackson Guard — headquarters for Eglin’s natural resources operations — at 107 Highway 85 North in Niceville.

“A lot of people are surprised” to learn about the historic resources on the base, and the Air Force’s efforts to preserve and protect them, Aubuchon said.

The archaeological and cultural richness of the reservation stretches from evidence of prehistoric Indian settlements to the mid-20th-century origins of the Air Force base. A number of buildings on the base are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including Camp Pinchot on Garnier Bayou near
Tyndall AFB

Flyover Coming to U.S. Highway 98 at Tyndall Air Force Base Main Entrance

By: Kirsten Mitchell, Posted: Mar 16, 2018 07:50 PM EDT, Updated: Mar 16, 2018 07:50 PM EDT


TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. - Thousands of people drive through Tyndall Air Force Base daily. That's why the Florida Department of Transportation is trying to improve traffic flow on U.S. Highway 98.

A 19 million dollar state funded project will transform a mile long portion of 98. Included in the project is a flyover at the base's main entrance intersection where traffic on 98 will move above Tyndall traffic below.

"The purpose of the flyover is to remove the traffic light, you can have continuous traffic moving east and west on U.S. 98 and this also allows the base to facilitate their needs in the north and south parts of the base," said Florida Department of Transportation Public Information Director Ian Satter.

The Florida Department of Transportation said anytime they can remove a stoplight or stop sign it's a benefit to drivers and helps improve traffic flow.

Tyndall clinic renovations on track

By COLLIN BREAUX, News Herald Reporter, Posted Mar 19, 2018 at 6:00 AM


TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE — To modernize the facility and create a “medical mall” concept, the 325th Medical Group clinic at Tyndall Air Force Base is undergoing $54 million worth of facility renovations to consolidate operations into one facility.

The phased work started last summer, and is meant to correct the “inefficient use” of space for current operations and “antiquated infrastructure” of the old clinic, 325th Medical Group Facility Manager Michael Palase said. The first phase is scheduled to finish this fall, and the whole project is anticipated to wrap up next summer.

“If you were to go into our building today, the entire second and third floor are under renovation,” 325th Medical Support Squadron Commander Joanna Rentes said. “And about two-thirds of the first floor are under renovation. We have a new building being constructed that will bring our mental health people into [the main] facility and our vet clinic into a new modern facility closer to our building.”

Rentes said the renovations are going well since there’s teamwork between the Army Corps of Engineers and contractors. Palase said ongoing patient care hasn’t been hindered by the upgrades.

The current facility was built in 1965 to serve as a hospital and transitioned to a clinic — which ended overnight stays — in 1999. The new layout the renovations will achieve is expected by officials to have a big impact.
**MacDill AFB**

**Students flock to MacDill to see innovation in action**

Howard Altman, Times staff writer, Published: March 21, 2018, Updated: March 21, 2018 at 07:17 PM


TAMPA – Inside the cavernous hangar of an Air Force base famous for ancient aircraft, Lennard High School junior Antonia Reyes-Garzon scooted across the concrete floor on a homemade hovercraft.

"This is very cool," Reyes-Garzon, 17, said Wednesday over the loud roar of the leaf-blower motor that powered the hovercraft.

Reyes-Garzon was among 1,300 students from 25 schools who took part in the third annual MacDill Air Force Base STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) Day. The event, held inside Hangar 3, is designed to expose teens to skills needed to keep America "the world’s engine of scientific discovery," according to base officials.

At Lennard High, those efforts are being led by science teacher Jim Reve, 55, a former Lockheed Martin employee who worked on the Titan space program.

During the past few years, Reve has helped his students develop the hovercraft, an electric go-cart, a robotic device and an underwater drone……

**Cape Canaveral AFS**

**USAF awards $642m EELV launch services contracts to SpaceX and ULA**

AIRFORCE TECHNOLOGY, 19 MARCH 2018


The US Air Force (USAF) has awarded two new launch services contracts, with a total value of nearly $642.43m, to Space Exploration Technologies (SpaceX) and United Launch Alliance (ULA) for the evolved expendable launch vehicles (EELVs).

Of the two awards, SpaceX has secured a $290.59m firm-fixed-price contract to provide the launch services that would help deliver three GPS III missions (1 base and 2 options) to the intended orbit.

Planned to be launched between late next year and 2020, the GPS III missions will deliver sustained, reliable GPS capabilities the US warfighters and their allies, in addition to the civil users.

The other firm-fixed-price contract, valued at $351.83m, has been awarded to ULA for launch services to deliver Air Force Space Command (AFSPC)-8 and AFSPC-12 satellites to the intended orbit.

The AFSPC-8 mission comprises two identical Geosynchronous Space Situational Awareness Program (GSSAP) satellites, GSSAP 5 and GSSAP 6, and is planned to be launched in 2020 into a geosynchronous orbit…..
Patrick AFB

Florida Fish and Wildlife Will Issue Fishing Citations On PAFB, CCAFS Starting April 1

By Staff Sgt. Christopher Stoltz, 45th Space Wing Public Affairs // March 18, 2018

BREVARD COUNTY • PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA – Beginning April 1, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission will begin writing citations for illegal fishing practices, including those who violate the law on Patrick Air Force Base and Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

Disobeying state fishing laws can result in criminal charges and even jail time, depending on the severity of the offense. For reference, fishing without a license is a non-criminal offense and is punishable by a $50 fine plus the cost of the license.

Furthermore, citations involving size and bag limits of saltwater fish are misdemeanor (criminal) offenses that typically carry penalties including fines up to $500 and/or 60 days in jail.

“Fishing in Florida generally requires a license as required by state law,” said Captain Travis Franklin, FWC area supervisor for Brevard, Indian River and Osceola counties.

Memorial set for Patrick airmen killed in Iraq search and rescue crash

J.D. Gallop, FLORIDA TODAY, Published 11:32 a.m. ET March 21, 2018 | Updated 5:28 p.m. ET March 21, 2018

A memorial service will be held at Patrick Air Force Base next week to honor the two Air Force Reserve airmen killed in a military helicopter crash March 15 in western Iraq, according to the 920th Rescue Wing.

Master Sgt. William Posch, 36, and Staff Sgt. Carl Enis, 31, were part of the 308th Rescue Squadron assigned to Patrick Air Force Base. Both were among the seven combat search and rescue airmen killed when their HH-60G Pave Hawk crashed during an operation near the Syrian border.

Department of Defense officials said the crash remains under investigation but did not appear to be the result of any enemy combatant activity.

Patrick officials said the memorial service will take place on the base at 2:33 p.m. March 27, in Hangar 750. The time will mark the moment the crash took place in Iraq on March 15.

Pentagon to Spend $1.1B on Military Space Programs

By Stephanie Mlot, 03.22.2018, 11:00am EDT
More than six weeks after President Trump submitted his FY19 budget, it remains unclear how much the Pentagon plans to spend on space programs.

According to SpaceNews, the number rounds out to about $12.5 billion—$1.1 billion higher than last year.

That extra cash is reportedly earmarked for space programs run by the Army, Navy, Office of Secretary of Defense, and Defense Information Systems Agency. The remaining (majority) $11.4 billion is allocated to the Air Force.

The Department of Defense, in charge of the U.S. Armed Forces, proposed a fiscal 2019 budget of $686 billion in total.

Addressing an audience of service members at the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar in San Diego last month, Trump floated the idea of launching a “space force” to fight cosmic enemies.

“My new national strategy for space recognizes that space is a warfighting domain, just like the land, air, and sea,” he said.

The US already boasts an Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Air Force. There’s plenty of room and funding for another division, right?

Probably not in the fiscal year 2019…..

**Defense Industry**

**Lockheed lands $200 million contract for work that will be driven by Orlando ops**

Marco Santana, Contact Reporter, Orlando Sentinel, Mar 15, 2018, 1:00PM


Lockheed Martin has landed a $200 million contract that could provide work to some of the company’s Central Florida employees for as many as eight years.

Under the deal, the defense giant will provide the U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command, which is based in Okaloosa County in northwest Florida, a module that provides aircrew instruction on fully networked trainers that simulate missions and logistics for the agency’s weapons systems.

The company will also provide engineering and cybersecurity support for AFSOC’s trainers.

An increase in cyberattacks has made contractors such as Lockheed something of a first line of defense, said Victor Torla, Lockheed’s Orlando-based business development director.

“As we consider those evil actors, it’s up to Lockheed Martin and our teams to make sure the government networks are protected and the infrastructure is protected,” he said.

The Air Commando Training and Support program, or ACTS, will include training on Lockheed’s Super Hercules C-130J military transport aircraft, along with the hybrid-like CV-22, which combines vertical takeoff, hover and landing of a helicopter with the long range and high speeds of airplanes…..
Lockheed Martin, SAAB Defense and Security win a combined $607M in defense contracts

By Matthew Richardson – Staff writer, Orlando Business Journal, Mar 19, 2018, 2:19pm

A couple of global defense firms were awarded big U.S. military contracts for work on F-35 parts and U.S. Army training support, according a report from the U.S. Department of Defense.

And some of that work that will take place in Orlando, helping contribute to the local economy with jobs and subcontractor opportunities.

Bethesda, Md.-based Lockheed Martin Corp. (NYSE: LMT) on March 15 won a $482 million contract from the U.S. Navy to deliver air vehicle spares for the F-35 Lightning II for various military customers. Most of the work on the four-year contract happen in Fort Worth, Texas, but Lockheed Martin's west Orlando and Melbourne offices will get a piece of the action, as will its 16 other U.S. offices. The U.S. F-35 program provides $24 billion in annual economic impact as thousands of jobs and supplies support the aircraft's design, production and maintenance.

Lockheed Martin in Orlando has more than 7,000 employees between its two local campuses: Rotary and Mission Systems in east Orlando, which focuses on flight and maintenance simulation training; and Missiles and Fire Control in west Orlando, which specializes in weapon targeting equipment and other support devices. Already, Lockheed Martin has more than 600 jobs open, calling mostly for engineers......

DoD Budget

Defense Bill Offers Flexibility for Readiness, Facilities Funding

Dan Cohen, Posted on Mar 22, 2018 03:45 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=23d9111336

The defense portion of the fiscal 2018 omnibus spending bill released Wednesday provides $230 billion for operations and maintenance (O&M), a 6 percent increase over last year’s allocation. The account includes a $580 million boost for facility sustainment, restoration and modernization programs above the administration’s budget request, according to a bill summary from the Senate Appropriations Committee. The bill also includes an additional $550 million for the services to improve military readiness, including increased training, depot maintenance, and base operations support.

With only the last six months of the fiscal year left to spend a larger budget, appropriators are providing the Pentagon limited flexibility to use the O&M funds, which are supposed to be spent in the same year they are allocated. One adjustment increases the cap on spending in the last two months of the fiscal year from 20 to 25 percent. The bill also changes the reprogramming threshold from $15 million to $20 million, and modifies the guidelines for realignments between readiness budget line items from requiring prior approval to written notification, reports Defense News.

“These flexibility changes will allow for smarter execution of the $230 billion in base and OCO [overseas contingency operations] funding provided for the operation and maintenance accounts by avoiding the ‘use it or lose it’ dilemma and allowing more timely execution of readiness line items that have been affected by fact-of-life changes or emergent requirements,” the summary states.
Military construction funding in FY 2018 would reach $10.1 billion, a $2.4 billion boost above last year’s level and $308 billion above the budget request, according to a [bill summary](https://www.myajc.com/news/state--regional-govt--politics/georgia-congressmen-push-atlanta-future-site-new-army-command/kzK4IAEljYoY0XJ2xkchKO/). The measure funds 201 milcon projects.

**Other Of Interest**

**Georgia congressmen push Atlanta as future site of new Army command**

By Jeremy Redmon - The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Posted: 11:48 a.m. Thursday, March 15, 2018

Georgia’s congressional delegation is urging the Pentagon to locate a new command focused on modernizing the U.S. Army in Atlanta, citing the city’s proximity to technology companies, universities, military bases and the world’s busiest airport.

The Army Futures Command is part of the military’s efforts to restructure how it researches, develops and acquires new equipment.

“Modernizing the Army is critical to maintaining readiness and global superiority in support of our national defense,” Georgia’s congressmen and senators wrote in a letter this week to Army Secretary Mark Esper. “Your serious consideration of Atlanta as a future home for Futures Command is greatly appreciated.”

The Army said Thursday there are “multiple locations under consideration.”

“The Army Futures Command Task Force stationing team is using a comprehensive set of criteria, such as availability of talent, accessibility, proximity to innovation centers, cost of living (among other criteria) in order to develop a recommendation for senior army leaders,” Col. Patrick Seiber, a spokesman for Army Futures Command Task Force, said in an email. “The recommendation is scheduled to be submitted in the next six months. The headquarters will not be fully established in the new location until 2019.”

Army Times reported this month that the Pentagon would consider 30 cities in deciding where to lease office space for the future site of the command. That list will be narrowed to 10 and then finally to four finalists……
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #63 will be on Thursday, 19 April 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EDT via conference call / WebEX.

2. **Call In Number** –
   - Call-In Number: 800-501-8979
   - Access Code: 1869945


4. **Florida Designates March 29th as Vietnam Veterans Day** – According to a press release from the Governor’s office, “Gov. Rick Scott has signed a proclamation designating March 29, 2018 as Vietnam Veterans Day in Florida. The Sunshine State is home to nearly 500,000 Vietnam-era veterans, the state’s largest veteran demographic group. Vietnam Veterans Day is observed annually as part of the Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017, signed into law by President Donald Trump last year. The act encourages Americans to display the U.S. flag each March 29 in honor of Vietnam veterans.” A copy of proclamation is attached.

5. **Attachments:**
   - Governor’s Proclamation for Vietnam Veterans Day in FL

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**Terry McCaffrey**
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News Clips of Interest:

Gulf Range / Oil Drilling

Is Florida off the table for oil drilling? Public remarks confuse the question

By Alex Leary, 21 Mar 18

WASHINGTON — Political theater or not, the takeaway in January was clear: Florida would not be part of a broad Trump administration proposal to expand offshore oil drilling.

"Florida is obviously unique," Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke declared Jan. 9, standing at the Tallahassee airport with Gov. Rick Scott. "For Floridians, we are not drilling off the coast of Florida, and clearly the governor has expressed that it's important."

Scott, a Republican poised to run for U.S. Senate, emphasized that Florida was "off the table" and his office later boasted in a press release, "Gov. Scott fought to protect Florida's coastline."

But in the months since, Zinke has made confusing public remarks, fueling critics who contend Florida isn't in the clear.

"Florida did not get an exemption," Zinke said Thursday before the House Committee on Natural Resources, after being questioned by a California Democrat opposing any plans affecting her state. But then Zinke explained why Florida was effectively exempt, noting bipartisan political opposition and a moratorium on eastern Gulf drilling until 2022 that prohibits activity within at least 125 miles.

A couple of days before that, Zinke was before a Senate panel and stated that, "Florida is different" — only to moments later say, "Florida is still in the process."…..

Frustrated Gaetz votes against budget, including Gulf Test Range funding

By Jim Thompson, Posted Mar 23, 2018 at 4:18 PM, Updated Mar 23, 2018 at 4:18 PM
http://www.newsherald.com/news/20180323/frustrated-gaetz-votes-against-budget-including-gulf-test-range-funding/1

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A $1.3 trillion federal spending bill that includes $30 million for upgrades to the Gulf Test Range was passed by Congress late this week without the support of a frustrated Rep. Matt Gaetz. Gaetz is one of the strongest voices in Congress for improving the massive military testing area in the eastern Gulf of Mexico.

The 120,000-square-mile range is used by a wide array of military units, including Eglin Air Force Base’s 33rd Fighter Wing and 96th Test Wing, and the Air Force Special Operations Command at Hurlburt Field. The Gulf Test Range accommodates high-altitude supersonic air combat training, air-to-air missile testing, drone targeting, hypersonic weapons testing and space launches.
Gaetz, R-Fort Walton Beach, represents the area of Northwest Florida that includes Eglin, Hurlburt and other military installations.

The $30 million outlay for the Gulf Test Range will be used to update its automated communications gear, which provides data on the performance of munitions, other military equipment and military personnel. It has not been comprehensively updated since at least the early 1970s. As a result, training and evaluation of munitions tested on the range has not been as effective as it might have been.

Since the 1970s, development of communications and data collection equipment aboard aircraft and onboard munitions has outpaced the range’s telemetry capabilities. In some instances, the telemetry equipment does not recognize the munitions and equipment operating in the range.

**NAS Pensacola**

**The Blues Are Back, And Free Practice Shows Begin This Week**

Northescambia.com, March 26, 2018

http://www.northescambia.com/2018/03/the-blues-are-back-and-free-practice-shows-begin-this-week

The Blues are back in town….The U.S. Navy Blue Angels returned home from Texas Sunday and buzzed the beach from west to east. Free practice shows begin this week at NAS Pensacola.

The world-famous Blue Angels are based at NAS Pensacola, and can be seen practicing over the museum at NAS Pensacola select days throughout the year. Practices last about 55 minutes, and admission to is free and open to the public.

The outside viewing area for the Blue Angels practice is located on the museum flight Line north of the museum. Signs are posted to direct visitors to viewing and parking locations, including limited parking for handicapped visitors. Open bleacher seating is available for seating 1,000 people. Chair service is provided at each practice session, a limited quantity of chairs are available for a fee of $3 per chair good for that day’s practice session. Concessions (bottled water, sport drinks, light food and treats) and merchandise are also available. Chair service, concessions and merchandise are provided by the Naval Aviation Museum Foundation and proceeds support the museum and foundation programs.

**Corry Station**

**CIWT and IWTC Corry Station Leaders Mentor, Inspire Youth on the Diamond**

Story by Glenn Siricy Center for Information Warfare Training, 03.23.2018

https://www.3dvidshub.net/news/270495/ciwt-and-iwtc-corry-station-leaders-mentor-inspire-youth-diamond

**PENSACOLA, Fla.** – Command Master Chief Mike Bates and Cmdr. Chad Smith not only inspire and mentor Sailors on a daily basis, both are also very active in shaping local kids through youth sports.

Bates, the command master chief for the Center for Information Warfare Training, and Smith, the commanding officer for Information Warfare Training Command Corry Station, are currently coaches for youth baseball teams for the Perdido Bay Youth Sports Association.
Bates coaches the 12-year-old and under Brewers, and Smith coaches the 14-year-old and under Royals. Bates also serves as the 10-year-old and under commissioner. They both agree coaches can be enormously influential in the lives of children. Kids spend many hours with their coaches; kids listen to coaches coaches are role models; coaches can fill a parenting role; and coaches have the power to shape lives.

As coaches, Bates and Smith bring an extensive background in competitive sports and military order and discipline to their teams. Most importantly, they know this is an opportunity to positively influence young lives, and for that reason, both take their coaching positions very seriously……

Hurlburt Field

GOVERNOR VETOES SCHOOL BUS FUNDING AIMED AT REDUCING TRAFFIC

Written by Claudia Newton, March 27, 2018

Florida Gov. Rick Scott vetoed a budget measure that would have provided $1 million to Okaloosa County School District for purchasing 10 new school buses to alleviate traffic congestion near a local U.S. Air Force base.

Ted Corcoran, president and CEO of the Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce, said the school buses servicing Florosa Elementary students were specifically meant to reduce traffic on a stretch of U.S. Highway 98, the main thoroughfare to the school that also passes by Hurlburt Field.

The area's traffic congestion was a “military readiness issue” that the 10 additional buses would have resolved, added Tracy Dewar, deputy wing commander at Hurlburt AFB.

Line item 115 A, which began as House Bill 3031 introduced last November by Rep. Mel Ponder, allotted the funds to purchase the dedicated school buses. Gov. Scott said on March 16 that he vetoed the bill because funding for new school buses was already available through the Florida Education Finance Program. “School districts have the local flexibility to support such initiatives based upon their priorities,” he said.

Okaloosa County School District is also considering changes to the bell schedule, but its buses have to run three tiers of routes: Elementary school, middle school and high school. Community members decided that Florosa Elementary was so out of the way that it made more sense to purchase the school its own buses so it could set its own schedule and avoid conflict with traffic around the air base, Corcoran explained…..

A new Federal Aviation Administration tracking system could endanger missions

By Jim Thompson, Posted Mar 27, 2018 at 6:25 PMUpdated Mar 27, 2018 at 6:25 PM

HURLBURT FIELD – A Federal Aviation Administration plan to make air traffic control more efficient could compromise the security of military aircraft, according to a recent report from the federal Government Accountability Office.

The FAA is moving from radar-based tracking of aircraft to satellite-based tracking. In addition to monitoring commercial and private aircraft, the new system also tracks military planes and supplies detailed information — such as velocity and airframe dimensions — that might allow identification, origin and destination of the aircraft.

The new tracking equipment can also be purchased by civilians.

A dramatic illustration of the problem involves an AC-130J Ghostrider gunship that reportedly was tracked recently from Hurlburt Field, headquarters of the Air Force Special Operations Command, across the country to Seattle. According to a March 21 report in The War Zone (part of Time Inc.’s The Drive website), the aircraft was tracked on its nearly 2,300-mile flight by a network of civilians with equipment that received signals from the satellite-based tracking system known as Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast Out (ADS-B Out).

“This technology is nothing new,” Hurlburt’s 1st Special Operations Wing’s public affairs unit wrote in an email responding to an inquiry about The War Zone report. “Every stateside aircraft uses this technology, including commercial aircraft. All flight plans are filed ahead of time with the FAA.”

The aircraft tracking change to ADS-B Out is part of the FAA’s wide-ranging NextGen initiative to improve the U.S. air traffic system. As part of NextGen, the FAA has set a deadline of Jan. 1, 2020, for all aircraft operating in American airspace to be equipped with ADS-B Out equipment….

Eglin AFB

Lack of spare parts hampers F-35 program

By Jim Thompson, Posted Mar 25, 2018 at 6:41 PM Updated Mar 25, 2018 at 6:41 PM

EGLIN AFB – Problems with repairing parts and acquiring spare parts for the F-35 Lightning II could jeopardize pilot training for the next-generation stealth fighter jet, according to U.S. Rep. Matt Gaetz.

Without a quick solution for the spare parts issue, “Eglin will begin missing pilot graduation goals,” said Gaetz, R-Fort Walton Beach, whose congressional district includes Eglin Air Force Base.

The issue has also attracted the attention of U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio.

In a Thursday email, the senator’s press office said Rubio’s staff “recently met with the commander of the 33rd Fighter Wing at Eglin Air Force Base to discuss the maintenance and availability issues the wing is facing.”

The email noted that Rubio “will work with the Air Force to find a solution to ensure F-35 pilot training continues to grow in Florida.”

Eglin is one of two F-35 training sites, the other being Arizona’s Luke Air Force Base. The spare parts problem, comprising both a shortage of parts and problems with the quick repair of broken parts, has been widely reported in the aviation press…..

NS Mayport
Readying the Fleet to Own the Fight

By Vice Adm. Richard Brown, Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Posted March 23, 2018
http://www.public.navy.mil/surfor/Pages/Readying-the-Fleet-to-Own-the-Fight.aspx#.Wrp_KS7wbIU

Our Navy’s enduring mission is to protect and defend America and its national interests worldwide. As the largest contingent of the Nation’s maritime warfighting force, it is critical our surface ships continue to “own the fight” by being the best, the fastest, the toughest and the smartest warships operating around the globe.

Remaining the world’s preeminent Surface Force requires we put trust in, and responsibility on, our commanding officers to ready their ships for sea. More specifically, to ready their ships for combat at sea. This demand for combat-ready ships requires me, as commander, Naval Surface Forces (SURFOR) and commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet (SURFPAC), to ensure our commanding officers and, by extension, their ships remain the “center of gravity” for everything we do. The responsibility placed on each of them to prepare their ship, their crew and themselves for combat makes for a tremendously challenging and rewarding assignment. However, our ships cannot be successful without the full support of the SURFPAC (and counterpart Naval Surface Forces Atlantic) staff. As such, I dedicate my service as SURFOR to do everything I can to make sure we set our commanders and their ships up for success.

As the Surface Type Commander, my mission – and that of my staff – is “supporting Combatant Commanders and Navy Component Commanders by providing combat-ready Naval Surface Forces which are forward deployable, fully trained, properly manned, capably equipped, well maintained, and combat-sustainable.” It is a lofty mission, but a completely achievable one when all stakeholders – me, my staff, the commanding officers, the crews of our warships and the supporting array of training, maintenance, and personnel management professionals – are pulling in the same direction and focused on the three fundamental principles which have guided me to success in every ship and strike group I have commanded. They are Good Stewardship, Professional Development, and Safety……

Fourth Ship to be named USS Indianapolis during Crest Unveiling

Story by Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael Hendricks, 03.23.2018

NAVAL STATION MAYPORT, Fla. (NNS) – Rear Adm. Sean Buck, commander U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet, representing the U.S. Navy, Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett, and the ship’s sponsor Jill Donnelly, unveiled the crest for the newest addition to the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) community, USS Indianapolis (LCS 17), March 23.

The crest was created through a logo and design competition held by the ship’s commissioning committee and was open to “any Hoosier, past or present.” From these submissions, five were selected and sent to the U.S. Navy in December 2017.

A crest is used to identify a ship or command and its elements usually symbolize the city or state for which it is named. Specifically identified elements with roots that stem from the namesake city are:

- The checkered flags symbolize the winning spirit of Indianapolis and it’s racing heritage.
- The horizontal and vertical white lines intersecting with the center circle are taken from the flag of
the namesake capital city and are symbolic of its moniker "Circle City" and the States "Crossroads of America".
- The red circle with the star in the middle located in the center of the shield commemorates the capital city namesake.

USS Indianapolis is a Freedom class LCS that is currently being constructed in Marinette, Wisconsin. Once construction is complete and the ship has gone through all its appropriate trials, it will be homeported at Naval Station Mayport, Fla.....

Three fishermen rescued offshore and transported to Navy Station Mayport

The United States Navy and Coast Guard rescued three stranded fishermen Tuesday. The 7th district Coast Guard sent a helicopter rescue crew after receiving an emergency alert Tuesday morning, according to the United States Coast Guard (USCG).

The alert came from fishing vessel Barbara Lynn at 3:30 a.m. 63 miles southeast of Brunswick, Georgia.

The crew of the USS Hue City spotted orange flares, flashing lights and the three stranded fishermen within one mile of the ship’s last known location.

The USS Hue City crew transported all three fishermen safely to Naval Station Mayport.....

MacDill AFB

$50 million center under construction at MacDill to house Army Black Hawk copters

TAMPA – MacDill Air Force Base is one step closer to hosting 23 Army helicopters and more than 300 additional personnel.

A ground-breaking ceremony was held Monday to mark the start of construction on a $50 million, 92,000-square-foot Aviation Support Facility for the Army Reserve Aviation Command.

The facility, being built by Hensel Phelps Construction Co., will host more than 260 military personnel and another 60 civilians, said Army Brig. Gen. Scott Morcomb, head of the Army Reserve Aviation Command.

It is expected to open in October 2019.

"This will be our most modern, capable facility in the country," Morcomb said.
It will serve as a new home for A and F Companies of the Army’s 5th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment. The regiment flies UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters, providing medical evacuation and battlefield transportation services.

Members have seen action in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere since the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Morcomb said some personnel are expected to be sent overseas next year……

MacDill hosts largest STEAM Day

By Airman 1st Class Scott Warner, 6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs / Published March 26, 2018
http://www.mcchord.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/1476587/macdill-hosts-largest-steam-day/


“We are very proud to have the largest STEAM Day in the Air Force,” said Col. April Vogel, 6th Air Mobility Wing commander. “We welcomed more than 1,300 students from the state of Florida and as far away as Ohio.”

What started as STEM Day in 2016, evolved to incorporate the arts in 2018 and become what is now known as STEAM Day. During that span, attendance increased and MacDill welcomed new attractions such as Thunder Bug, the Tampa Bay Lightning’s mascot, and Raymond, the Tampa Bay Rays’ mascot, .

Highlights of the day included the U.S. Special Operations Command’s tactical assault light operator suit, also known as TALOS or the “Iron Man” suit, several tactical explosive ordnance robots, a Secured All-around Flotation Equipped boat static display, and a KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft static display along with other technological advancements from various units around the base……

Patrick AFB

For Patrick Air Force Base, a familiar loss, and dedication to mission

J.D. Gallop, FLORIDA TODAY, Published 2:03 p.m. ET March 26, 2018 | Updated 6:32 p.m. ET March 26, 2018

They were Air Force reservists, known for keeping their humor, dedication to family and country as they took flight to save lives in far-flung places, from Texas to Iraq.

But Tuesday, nearly 1,000 service members and guests from across the nation will crowd into a Patrick Air Force Base Hanger to watch a private procession honoring a familiar loss, and saluting the lives and service of Indialantic resident Master Sgt. William Posch, 36, and Staff Sgt. Carl Enis, 31, of Tallahassee.

Both reservists - part of the elite 308th Rescue Squadron assigned to the airbase – were among the seven combat search and rescue airmen killed March 15 when their HH-60G Pave Hawk crashed during an operation near the Syrian border.

And while the shock still resonates with the men and women who served with them, many are ready to give the pair a “warrior’s tribute” at the seaside air base as the two are memorialized. The deaths were also seen as a reminder of the demands of combat rescue missions where first responders not only pull
wounded warriors out of perilous conditions but can themselves encounter the dangers of the battlefield at any given moment……

Homestead AFB

USAF weighing beddown options for Air Force Reserve Command F-35 base

Courtney Albon, March 23, 2018

The Air Force is considering four bases as options to host 24 F-35As for the Air Force Reserve and will host a series of meetings in April to support its beddown decision.

In a March 22 Federal Register notice of its intent to develop an environmental impact statement, the service states Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, TX, is its preferred alternative and Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, AZ, Whiteman Air Force Base, MS, and Homestead Air Reserve Base, FL, as reasonable alternatives.

The squadron would include 24 aircraft and two backup jets. The aircraft would replace 24 F-16s if based at Homestead ARB or NAS Fort Worth JRB or 24 A-10s if either Davis-Monthan AFB or Whiteman AFB are chosen.

Bases in 4 states being studied as locations for F-35 unit

By: The Associated Press, 3-25-2018

TUCSON, Ariz. – Military bases in Arizona, Florida and Missouri are being studied by the Air Force along with one in Texas already identified as the preferred location for basing an Air Force Reserve squadron of 24 F-35 fighters.

A notice published Wednesday in the Federal Register says Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base is the preferred alternative and that the “reasonable alternatives” being studied for environmental suitability are Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Arizona, Homestead Air Force Base in Florida and Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri.

The notice says the Air Force plans to conduct evening public meetings at each location in late April.

If F-35s are assigned to Davis-Monthan and Whiteman, they would replace A-10 attack jets. They would replace F-16 fighters at Homestead or Fort Worth.

US Southern Command

Admiral Tidd Renews U.S. Commitment to Colombia

Yolima Dussán/Diálogo | 26 March 2018
U.S. Navy Admiral Kurt W. Tidd, commander of U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), reaffirmed U.S. support to Colombia in the fight against organized crime and in peace building. During his visit to Colombia on February 9th and 10th, Adm. Tidd held several meetings with the top leadership of the Colombian Armed Forces, headed by the General Command of the Military Forces, the National Police, and the Ministry of Defense.

“Our Armed Forces have stood alongside each other for decades,” Adm. Tidd said in a press briefing. “We continue to play a role in U.S. assistance to the Colombian people as they embrace the opportunities of the post-accord era.”

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos and Minister of Defense Luis Carlos Villegas also held meetings with the SOUTHCOM delegation in Bogotá. Colombian Vice President Oscar Naranjo, a retired general with the Colombian National Police, and Colombian National Army General Alberto José Mejía, commander of the Colombian Military Forces, traveled with the delegation to the town of Tumaco, where they held cooperation conferences…..

**Defense Industry**

**Northrop Grumman's Advanced Hawkeye nets $13.8M in local work**

Matthew Richardson – Staff writer, Orlando Business Journal, Mar 26, 2018, 2:25pm

Global Defense firm Northrop Grumman Corp, has added to its growing list of contracts for its E-2D military aircraft.

The Falls Church, Va.-based firm won a $13.8 million contract from the U.S. Navy on March 23 for its Advanced Hawkeye aircraft. Northrop Grumman Systems Corp., in Melbourne is the division completing the services for the two-year contract.

The firm will provide program and engineering support for the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye weapon system trainer development, integration and verification for the government of Japan under the Foreign Military Sales program. More than 50 percent of the work will take place in Melbourne, with the rest happening in Virginia and Japan.

This marks the fourth contract this year for Northrop Grumman Corp.'s (NYSE: NOC) E-2D program, totaling $175.8 million. Last year, the firm won more than 100 E-2D and E-2C contracts, totaling more than $400 million. The program also supports 800 jobs in Melbourne……

**Surprise addition of military satellites to DoD budget irks commercial industry**

by Sandra Erwin — March 27, 2018
http://spacenews.com/surprise-addition-of-military-satellites-to-the-dod-budget-irks-commercial-industry/

WASHINGTON – Commercial satellite operators were blindsided last week when they discovered a $600 million line in the $1.3 trillion omnibus budget for fiscal year 2018 to fund two new wideband communications military satellites.
This action directed by Congress — as the Pentagon did not request the satellites — is worrisome to commercial companies that have spent years trying to persuade the military to spend less money on building custom satellites and more on broadband services from the private sector. Executives argue that commercial systems offer more capacity and cybersecurity at less cost than government-owned satellites.

“We see increasing momentum in DoD exploiting commercial,” said Ken Peterman, president of government systems at ViaSat, a satellite broadband services provider based in Carlsbad, California.

It’s still not clear whether the new funding for government satellites will slow down that momentum. Since the omnibus budget release, “there has been an outcry on social media and online forum,” Peterman told SpaceNews. “This is an almost shameful display of putting a political agenda ahead of the national agenda and ahead of our warfighters.”

The additional money would fund the 11th and 12th satellite of the Wideband Global SATCOM constellation, manufactured by Boeing.

Peterman called it a waste of taxpayer resources and a “political earmark that was driven into the budget and blindsided DoD in a significant way.”

**Tampa Bay innovators Sofwerx shed light on SOCOM's private sector collaborations**

By Margie Manning – Finance Editor, Tampa Bay Business Journal, Mar 29, 2018, 2:05pm


Sofwerx, a Ybor City organization designed to bring innovation to the battlefield, is racking up a track record of accomplishment.

In the two years since it was formed, Sofwerx has 16 completed projects and has 27 active and ongoing projects, said Tambrein Bates, Sofwerx director, at the Synapse Innovation Summit, a two-day event at Amalie Arena designed to highlight the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Tampa Bay and to bring together innovators from all industries and stages of development.

Tambrein Bates is director of Sofwerx in Ybor City.

Sofwerx brings ideas from the private and academic sector to United States Special Operations Command, in a partnership between SOCOM at MacDill Air Force Base and the Doolittle Institute, a nonprofit in Fort Walton Beach.

Sofwerx “takes your ideas and brings them to the war fighters on the ground,” said Col. Josh Potter of SOCOM’s transnational threats division.

**DoD Budget**

**Continuing Resolutions Have Cost Billions In Inefficiency For DOD**

By Nick Zazulia | March 27, 2018

With the U.S. debt sitting over $20 trillion and the Defense Department on the Government Accountability Office’s annual "high-risk list", efficient use of money is wise.

“About $4 billion burned in a trash can,” which is how U.S. Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer described what continuing resolutions have cost the Navy.

Spencer’s isn’t the only branch of the military that has suffered at the hands of temporary appropriations. Secretaries from the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Army also testified about the importance of consistent, predictable funding.

“We cut 30,000 people out of the Air Force, reduced (the force) by 10 fighter squadrons and (reduced) weapons systems sustainment,” said Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson. She said the defense budget sequester “did more damage to the United States Air Force and our ability to defend the nation than anything our advisories have done in the last 10 years — we did it to ourselves.”

The Air Force and Army both discussed an attempt to save money going forward by reducing their reliance on contractors. One way to do that is through additional automation.

“Right now, we have a lot of intelligence analysis, a lot of people watching full-motion video,” Wilson said. “That’s not a good use of money or time. And in that case, time is money.”

A number of Defense Department partners are working on artificial intelligence solutions for analyzing footage and data in ways that would allow a reduction of contractor reliance, at least eventually.

However, as long as there is no long-term budget, an inability to plan for the future will breed costly inefficiency.

Omnibus Includes $235M to Upgrade, Replace Dilapidated Schools on Bases

Dan Cohen, Posted on Mar 28, 2018 03:05 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=11244e1465

Lawmakers included $235 million in the fiscal 2018 omnibus spending bill signed into law last week to construct, renovate or expand elementary and secondary public schools on military installations. The funding represents the latest tranche of funding Congress has allocated since FY 2011 to DOD’s Public Schools on Military Installations program for repairing or replacing schools having the most serious capacity or condition deficiencies. The program is administered by the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA). A local educational agency or state is required to provide matching funds to receive a DOD grant under the program, according to the measure. … Meanwhile, the omnibus includes $57.8 million for OEA’s various grant programs supporting communities and states addressing BRAC and mission changes, defense industry cutbacks and compatible land use issues. The allocation matches the administration’s FY 2018 budget request and is roughly in line with the agency’s baseline funding over the past decade. … Congress also included language in the $1.3 trillion spending package barring any of the funds from being used “to propose, plan for or execute” a new BRAC round. With lawmakers already prohibiting the Pentagon from launching a round of base closures in the defense authorization bill, the provision is superfluous but not unexpected as it has been included in past appropriations bills.
President Donald Trump, who has boasted he’s rebuilding the military by supporting the largest budgets the Pentagon has seen in years, has worked recently to funnel money from the Defense Department budget for construction of a border wall that he once said would be paid for by Mexico.

Trump spelled out the idea in a tweet posted two days ago that said “building a great Border Wall, with drugs (poison) and enemy combatants pouring into our Country, is all about National Defense. Build WALL through M!”

The Washington Post reported that Trump had discussed the matter with Defense Secretary James Mattis and lawmakers on Capitol Hill in a private effort to seek military funding for the wall to augment $1.6 billion Congress had approved for it. He raised the issue with House Speaker Paul Ryan, who offered little reaction to the idea, the paper said.

Defense experts told the San Antonio Express-News late Tuesday that the Pentagon can’t reprogram money already allocated in a pair of budget blueprints that will raise military spending to $700 billion this year and $716 billion for the fiscal year that starts in October. Congress, they said, would have to approve any such movement of the money……

**Other Of Interest**

**Army Futures Command taking charge of conjuring up new capability**

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. — The Army Futures Command (AFC) will take charge of the Army’s processes for conjuring up materiel designs for modernized capability going forward, which means taking some elements from some of the major commands and moving them over to the new organization, Army Undersecretary Ryan McCarthy told Defense News in an exclusive interview just ahead of the Association of the U.S. Army’s Global Force Symposium.

The Futures Command is being established to take on the Army’s top modernization priorities, six to be exact: Long-Range Precision Fires, Next-Generation Combat Vehicle, Future Vertical Lift, the Network, Air-and-Missile Defense and Soldier Lethality.

The new command, which will reach an initial operational capability in the June timeframe, will also be based in a city and have a four-star commander, McCarthy said. When the command stands up at that time, its location and leader will be announced, he added.

The Army is getting very close to whittling down the cities under consideration from 30 to just 10, and will make a decision in just a few short months where Futures Command will be housed, he said…..
The United States defense establishment has not stopped ringing alarm bells on what they say are rising threats posed by Russia and China, and their warnings are prompting fear among members of Congress. Last week, US military officials and lawmakers highlighted hypersonic missiles as a particular area of concern.

“Right now, we’re helpless,” Republican Senator James Inhofe, a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, was quoted by The Hill as saying in advocating for more funding for hypersonic missiles.

The talk on Capitol Hill comes after Russian President Vladimir Putin boasted that Russia now has intercontinental ballistic missiles that are invulnerable to Western anti-missile systems.

“We don’t have any defense that could deny the employment of such a weapon against us, so our response would be our deterrent force, which would be the triad and the nuclear capabilities that we have to respond to such a threat,” Hyten told the Senate Armed Services Committee last week.....
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #63 will be on **Thursday, 19 April 2018**, beginning at **9:00AM EDT** via conference call / WebEX.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   **Call-In Number:** 800-501-8979  
   **Access Code:** 1869945

3. **Governor Scott signs military friendly legislation into law** – Governor Scott has signed two bills that help keep Florida the most military friendly state in the country. According to an article in the Tampa Bay Times, “Gov. Rick Scott came to USAA’s headquarters in Tampa Monday morning for a ceremonial signing of two laws designed to keep Florida "the nation's most military friendly state." Scott signed bills designed to reduce fees for Florida military, veterans and their families.” See the entire article below in the CLIPS.


5. **OPPAGA Review of FDA, Task Force and Defense Grants** – The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) is currently conducting a review of FDA, Task Force and Defense Grants for the fiscal years 2014-2015, 2015-2016, and 2016-2017. During their review, OPPAGA may call Task Force members, grant recipients, base representatives and a host of other stakeholders in the military and defense community to collect information and make evaluations on the programs and judge their effectiveness and value to the state’s taxpayers.

6. **2018 REPI Report Released** – According to an article from Dan Cohen, “DOD’s Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration program — a critical tool for combating encroachment that can limit or restrict military training, testing and operations — has protected 516,413 acres in 93 locations across 31 states. Those efforts have relied on $452 million in REPI funds, $316 million in funding from the military services and $716 million from non-DOD partners, according to its 2018 Report to Congress.” Florida has benefited from REPI over the years as well. See attached report.

7. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Washington Summit Registration is Open** – For Task Force or FDA members who are interested in attending the ADC Defense Communities National Summit in Washington DC, registration is now open at an “Early Bird” discounted rate. The theme of this year’s Summit is “Strengthening America’s Defense Infrastructure”. The Summit will take place at the Washington Hilton, located at 1919 Connecticut Avenue from June 18-20, 2018. ADC has secured a
block of rooms for the discounted rate of $249. To make your reservation call the hotel at (202) 483-3000 and mention the ADC Defense Communities National Summit or click on this link to register as well as make your accommodations at [https://www.adcsummit.org/#register](https://www.adcsummit.org/#register).

8. **Attachments:**
   - TPG March EOM Report
   - TPG Bi-Weekly Conference call memo
   - Homestead ARB EIS
   - 2018 REPI Report

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**Terry McCaffrey**  
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Florida Defense Support Task Force

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**Oil Drilling / Gulf Range**

**Senator Nelson Tours Military Testing Range in Tyndall T-38 Talon**

By: Erin Morgan, Updated: Apr 03, 2018 08:05 PM EDT  

PANAMA CITY, Fla. - Tuesday afternoon, Senator Bill Nelson received a bird's eye view of one of the military's most important training assets.

Senator Nelson flew in the back seat of one of Tyndall's T-38 Talons, and was given a tour of the military's gulf testing range, the Gulf Range Complex, which is off the coast of Tyndall Air Force Base.

"We're going out to do a profile with two jets, of how you would try to kill the other guy if you've already shot your missiles and you're trying to shoot him with your gun -- they're going to show me that maneuver," Nelson said.

The Gulf Range Complex encompasses hundreds of square miles of the Gulf of Mexico, and serves as a test and training area for several area military bases including Tyndall and Eglin Air Force bases.
"This is the largest testing and training area for the United States Military in the world," Nelson said. The Trump Administration has launched a new off-shore oil and gas exploration leasing program, and right now the Gulf Range is excluded from any potential off-shore leasing, but the moratorium ends in 2022.

Nelson and the rest of Florida's congressional delegation is opposed to any drilling that threatens the military's mission……

NAS Pensacola

T-45 Goshawk squadrons back to operational status at NAS Pensacola

by Jasmine Anderson, Mar 31, 2018

PENSACOLA, Fla. (WEAR) – The T-45 Goshawk squadrons are back to full operational status at Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola.

For the past year, Training Air Wing Six has fluctuated between grounded status and being under strict operational limitations.

That was due to hypoxia concerns in pilots.

Military officials say a team designed several contamination detection apparatuses to test air quality and improve safety.

Officials say the results have restored confidence in the safety of the T-45s.

NAS Pensacola raises awareness about sexual assault

by Jasmine Anderson, 4-4-2018

ESCAMBIA COUNTY, Fla. (WEAR) – Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola turned its focus to preventing sexual assault. April is Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention month.

The military's theme is "Protecting our People Protects our Mission". The base tied blue ribbons around poles and trees in observation Tuesday.

Leaders of the Major Commands aboard NAS signed a pledge to support victims and raise awareness.

"Awareness is the key to prevention. And that's our goal is to raise our voices for prevention," said Lillie Johnson/NAS Pensacola.

Navy installations all over the southeast held ceremonies at the exact same time Tuesday morning.

Hurlburt Field

AFRC nominates Grandy for 2017 Key Spouse Award
ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. -- Air Force Reserve Command has selected Mrs. Amanda J. Grandy as the command's nominee for the 2017 Key Spouse of the Year Award.


The U.S. Air Force Key Spouse Program (KSP) is an official Air Force Unit Family Readiness Program designed to enhance readiness, personal/family resiliency and establish a sense of Air Force community. Key Spouses are commander-appointed and serve as a vital resource to command teams in an effort to support Air Force families. The strategic vision is to increase resiliency and unit cohesion amongst military members and their families throughout the military life cycle. For here for more on the Key Spouse Program.

Eglin AFB

Air Force admits it can’t afford massive operating costs of F-35 fleet, may reduce order

BY ALEX HOLLINGS 04.03.2018

According to a new internal assessment produced by the U.S. Air Force, the branch may be forced to cut their plans for a fleet of F-35 Joint Strike Fighters by more than a third due to the high cost of operating and maintaining the aircraft.

While this report does not represent anything close to a final decision regarding the total number of aircraft being ordered, it does offer a glimpse into the exorbitant costs associated with keeping what has been touted as the most advanced fighter platform in the sky. According to the estimates within the report, which was first revealed by Bloomberg News, the Air Force may soon face a decision between finding a way to cut operating costs of the F-35 program by a whopping 38%, or they’ll be forced to reduce their standing order for aircraft by 590 jets. This revelation has compounded concerns about the number of delivered F-35 platforms that have been listed as “non-operational” — which is nearly half of them.

Considering the Air Force planned to field a total of 1,763 F-35s by the program’s completion, cutting that order by 590 would not only represent a significant reduction in operational forces, but could also drive up the per unit cost of building each aircraft, effectively stymying at least some of the saving associated with reducing the order in the first place. It would seem that the Air Force may be stuck between a rock and a hard place, except that in this case, both the rock and the hard place represent billions of dollars in taxpayer money.

The Department of Defense currently plans to procure a total of 2,456 of the fifth generation fighter. Current projections place the overall cost of delivering these aircraft to be at around $406 billion, making the F-35 the most expensive weapons platform ever built, but even that massive number is currently dwarfed by cost projections for operational maintenance on the aircraft, which is estimated to be $1.1 trillion over the aircraft’s service life. That would break down to costing the Air Force alone somewhere in the neighborhood of $3.8 billion per year to keep the F-35s flying……
Military kids appreciate April’s Month of the Military Child

LYNN HAVEN – April is the Month of the Military Child, a time when children in military families are recognized for their sacrifices. But for Mosley High students Kyra Kooley and Mason Kooley, being a military child is less a sacrifice than a way of life.

“I appreciate it, but I don’t feel like I’m really doing anything,” said Mason, 17. “That’s all [my father]. Everybody else that is serving, of course, they can’t do that without the support of their family.”

Their father, Master Sgt. Jerrad Kooley, serves in the U.S. Air Force and has been on a one-year deployment in Korea since last summer.

This month, the Kooleys and thousands of other children across America will get a little extra support. U.S. bases will host family events, the Bay District School Board will have a special ceremony at its April 10 meeting, and supporters will don purple April 13 during Purple Up!, a visible representation of support for Florida’s 50,000 military children and their families.

Purple might seem an unlikely color, but Purple Up! has become established tradition at places including The University of Florida’s IFAS Extension offices……

Defense bill to fund new Tyndall firehouse

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE – Funding for a new firehouse at Tyndall Air Force Base was secured as part of a recently approved federal spending bill, according to U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Florida.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Rubio secured funding which “will directly benefit the Panhandle,” according to a statement from his office sent March 22. Out of those projects, $17 million was secured for the firehouse.

In a Monday phone interview with The News Herald, Rubio spoke about details of the funding and how they will benefit the Northwest Florida region. Rubio said the current firehouse “is kind of outdated.”

Tyndall spokesman Don Arias declined to comment on the funding and political aspect but wrote in an email to The News Herald a new firehouse is needed.

“According to our base civil engineer, the current facility provides only 63 percent of the required space per the (Air Force) Design Guide and has several life-safety, OSHA, and NFPA discrepancies,” Arias wrote. “Valuable fire-fighting vehicles and equipment trailers are forced to be parked outside, exposed to the harsh Florida sun and extreme humidity, causing them to need repairs more frequently. The cramped and austere living and working conditions imposed on our firefighters may lead to retention problems for the career field, leading to high personnel turnover and gaps in experience levels.”
The current firehouse was built in 1965 and replacing it would “increase square footage to shelter vehicles, equipment and personnel” and “also improve flight line views and vehicular access for flightline and base-side operations,” Arias further wrote.

No timetable has been given on when there could be a new firehouse.

**NS Mayport**

**Report names Naval Station Mayport as most aggressive polluter of St. Johns River**

Author: WTLV, Published: 4:37 PM EDT March 30, 2018, Updated: 4:37 PM EDT March 30, 2018


A report from the Florida Research and Policy Center names Naval Station Mayport and others as lead contributors to the pollution in the St. Johns River.

This report states that Florida waterways had excess pollution dumped into them 270 over 21 months. Florida ranks the tenth worst in terms of waterway pollution during this time period in the nation.

All Florida waterways should be clean for swimming, drinking water, and wildlife,” said Jennifer Rubiello, state director with Environment Florida. “But industrial polluters are still dumping chemicals that threaten our health and environment, and they aren’t being held accountable.”

“The St. Johns River is impaired and vulnerable. Industrial waste and effluent violations, without consequences, won’t fix themselves,” said Shannon Blankinship, Advocacy Director with the St. Johns Riverkeeper. “I have seen people fishing, swimming and boating in every single location this report lists as a major violator. These pollutants are toxic to our water, hazardous to our health, and dangerous to the ecosystem.”

The St. Johns River was dumped into a total of 21 times, 12 times by Naval Station Mayport during this 21-month period. Two of those times saw pollution levels over 100% the allowable dumping amount and one time the pollution exceeded 500% the allowable amount.

**USS Little Rock Finally Leaves Montreal After 3 Ice-Bound Months**

By Joe Daraskevich, The Florida Times-Union 3 Apr 2018


An icy pit stop that lasted about three months is finally over for the crew of the USS Little Rock after the ship left Montreal on Saturday to continue its journey to Naval Station Mayport.

The Navy's newest Freedom-class littoral combat ship would have arrived in Northeast Florida in January if it weren't for colder-than-normal temperatures late in December, said Lt. Cmdr. Courtney Hilson, a Naval Surface Force Atlantic spokeswoman.
She said the crew has been training in Canada since the ship docked Christmas Eve, and crew members have been concentrating on readiness and certifications because any drills in open water had to be delayed until the ship could leave.

"We greatly appreciate the support and hospitality of the city of Montreal, the Montreal Port Authority and the Canadian Coast Guard," said Cmdr. Todd Peters, commanding officer of the Little Rock. "We are grateful for the opportunity to further enhance our strong partnerships."

The Little Rock was built in Marinette, Wis., and completed a series of trials in Lake Michigan before it was handed over to the Navy. The vessel was commissioned Dec. 16 in Buffalo, N.Y.

Safety was the main factor in the decision to have the Little Rock's crew wait out the Canadian winter, Hilson said. She said ice in the St. Lawrence Seaway has now melted away enough to allow a safe passage to the Atlantic Ocean.

The ship, along with its crew of about 70, will visit several ports on the way to Florida and is expected to arrive at Mayport later this month. It will be the third ship in Mayport's Littoral Combat Ship Squadron Two, where the USS Milwaukee and USS Detroit have been operating since late 2016……

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**MacDill AFB**

**KC-135 aircrew supports Red Flag 18-2**

Story by Senior Airman Janelle Patiño, 92d Air Refueling Wing 04.04.2018

Aircraft from all over the nation flew in and out of the Nevada sky during Red Flag 18-2, an exercise organized at Nellis and hosted north of Las Vegas on the Nevada Test and Training Range.

Red Flag gives Airmen an opportunity to experience realistic combat scenarios to prepare and train for future conflicts or war. In support of this, Airmen from Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington, and MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, flew to Nellis to represent the Tanker Task Force.

During the fast-paced exercise, fighter jets quickly burn fuel on every mission held over the 2.9 million acre NTTR. That is where KC-135 Stratotankers support by performing in-air refueling, which saves fighter jets a trip home.

“If tankers weren’t a part of this exercise, it would be less effective. The daily mission would not get done in a timely manner,” said 1st Lt. Marc Galera, 384th Air Refueling Squadron pilot. “We are here to help enable fighters accomplish their mission instantaneously by allowing them to stay airborne longer.”

A team of KC-135 pilots and boom operators from Fairchild and MacDill make the Tanker Task Force mission happen during Red Flag 18-2. Pilots assume responsibility of the aircraft by taking the aircrew to where fuel is needed while boom operators offload fuel to help fighter jets remain airborne longer to continue fighting the fight……

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**US Central Command**

**F-35B visits CENTCOM as it prepares to enter theater**

Story by Lance Cpl. Taryn Escott, Defense Media Activity - Marines, 04.05.2018
MACDILL AFB – The F-35B Lightning II aircraft arrived at U.S. Central Command on MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., April 4, 2018. The purpose of the two-day visit was to inform CENTCOM senior leadership on the capabilities and limitations of the F-35B platform before it enters the CENTCOM area of responsibility.

The F-35B is fully operational, ready for combat and will make its first combat deployment aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Essex as part of the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit increasing air dominance capabilities and meeting the demands of the complex CENTCOM environment.

“For all the versions of the F-35, we combine a very robust sensor package and probably the best group of sensors that’s being flown on any aircraft in the world right now in terms of how varied they are in their capabilities,” said Lt Col. Chad Vaughn, an F-35B pilot stationed at Marine Aircraft Group 11, out of Yuma, Ariz. “This version of the F-35B, specifically because of its short take off and vertical landing capabilities, opens up a lot of basing options, specifically expeditionary basing operations that we haven’t had in the past.”

The jet can conduct full spectrum combat operations from simple to complex for the Amphibious Readiness Group and the 13th MEU. The F-35B provides strategic attack capabilities that allow it to destroy or neutralize adversary targets that threaten ARG/ MEU Marines, Sailors and other U.S. or coalition assets.

“What we want to do is make sure this jet helps out the entire MAGTF, specific for MAGTF operations, obviously the Marine rifleman but everybody we’re supporting on the ground,” said Vaughn.

Advanced avionics equip the pilot with real-time access to battle-area information with overall coverage. With this technology, commanders in the air, on land or sea are able to receive data collected from the F-35B’s sensors that will empower them with a high-fidelity view of ongoing operations…..

US Special Operations Command

SOCOM Supply Snafu Results in Millions of Dollars in Excess Gear

By Richard Sisk, Military.com 2 Apr 2018

U.S. Special Operations Command has 4,420 more handheld radios than it needs and millions’ worth of other excess gear, the Pentagon's Inspector General's office reported Monday.

In all, SOCOM has about $26.3 million worth of equipment developed for special operators, or Special Operations-Peculiar (SO-P) gear, that exceeds the command's requirements, the IG's office reported.

"Excess equipment could result from USSOCOM erroneously buying more equipment than authorized, from distributing equipment incorrectly, or from a failure to dispose of equipment replaced by newer models,” the IG's report said.

The report said SOCOM was unaware "that the U.S. Army Special Operations Command had 17,571 handheld radios according to its property records but was allocated only 13,351 in the capability documents, for an excess of 4,220 radios."

The IG evaluation ultimately looked at five types of SO-P gear: Binocular Night Vision Device; Future Assault Shell Technology-Helmet; Next Generation Tactical Communication Capability (Handheld
Cape Canaveral AFS

SpaceX Dragon Sends NASA Cargo to International Space Station

By Shelby Rogers, April 03rd 2018
https://interestingengineering.com/spacex-dragon-sends-nasa-cargo-to-international-space-station

For the second time in company history, SpaceX has reused both a rocket booster and a payload. It sent up a used Dragon cargo craft on a return trip to the International Space Station on April 2. The craft successfully lifted off at 4:30 p.m. EDT from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station using a pre-flown Falcon 9 rocket.

According to SpaceX's Dragon mission manager Jessica Jensen, this marks the company's tenth pre-flown "What's neat about this is that it's becoming the norm," Jensen said.

However, while recycled rockets might be becoming the norm thanks to this launch, the company won't be landing its Falcon 9 after today. SpaceX announced they'd skip a landing for this particular Falcon 9 has already flown on another resupply mission to the ISS. (That flight took place in August of 2017.) Rather than reuse the rocket, SpaceX said it would gather data on the trip during its fall……

Patrick AFB

Patrick Air Force Base community welcomes home fallen hero

AFR / Published April 03, 2018

The Patrick Air Force Base community came out in full force to honor Master Sgt. William Posch upon his arrival at the base April 4. He was killed in action last month in Iraq.

Both civilian and military personnel stood shoulder-to-shoulder lining the streets during Posch's dignified transfer to honor an American hero and his family for their ultimate sacrifice. As his motorcade passed by, those in uniform rendered a salute while civilians placed their hand over their heart.

Posch, 36, an Indialantic, Florida, resident, was one of two Pararescuemen the 920th Rescue Wing lost March 15, 2018. Staff Sgt. Carl Enis, 31, of Tallahassee, was the other.

Both men were assigned to the 308th Rescue Squadron at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. The squadron of elite Guardian Angel Airmen serve as highly trained rescue specialists, on and off the battlefield, providing life-saving trauma care and search and rescue as part of the 920th Rescue Wing - one of the most deployed units in the Air Force Reserve.
Among the motorcade escorts were: Brevard County Sheriff deputies, Patriot Guard Riders and Jacksonville Ocean Rescue life guards. Posch served as a lifeguard after graduating high school.

Posch had 18 years of service, the last ten of which were with the 920th RQW. Among his decorations were the Air Medal with silver oak leaf cluster; an Aerial Achievement Medal and the Air Force Commendation Medal with Valor. He was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal with Combat Device posthumously.

**Homestead AFB**

**Homestead Air Reserve Base may get 24 new fighter aircraft**

Written by Katya Maruri on April 3, 2018


The Homestead Air Reserve Base, which currently utilizes F-16C planes to carry out Air Force Reserve Command related missions, might permanently gain up to 24 new F-35A aircraft, which combine stealth, sensor fusion and unprecedented situational awareness in combat, according to a notice of intent issued by the U.S. Air Force.

The Homestead Air Reserve Base, which is one of four locations Air Force officials are analyzing, will undergo an impact study to evaluate the environmental consequences that could result from the use here of these aircraft.

If the base meets specific environmental standards, said Laura McAndrews an Air Force spokesperson, the aircraft would be used for the ongoing missions currently being conducted from the base.

“Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona; Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, Fort Worth; Homestead Air Reserve Base, Florida; and Whiteman AFB, Missouri, will be considered as reasonable alternatives during the environmental analysis process, which must be completed before the Air Force makes a final basing decision,” she said.

To help decide which base would be the best option, Ms. McAndrews said, “The Air Force uses a deliberate, repeatable and standardized process to identify potential locations for our missions.” “The process,” she said, “begins with a clear definition of operational requirements; from these we develop selection criteria that are used to screen the enterprise of installations down to a handful of candidate bases.”

Once a detailed site survey and National Environmental Policy Act-required environmental analysis are completed, the Air Force will consider the potential environmental impacts at each location before making a final basing decision.

Depending on when the environmental analysis is complete, Ms. McAndrews said, the process can take up to two years.

Details: The Air Force plans a public scoping meeting on use of the F-35As from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. April 17 at the Homestead Reserve Air Base, 1601 N Krome Ave.
Military exercise could mean low-flying jets over South Florida this morning

Sun Sentinel staff, 4-4-2018

It’s possible that people around the Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach areas will see low-flying jets streaking in the sky Wednesday morning.

It’s part of a military training exercise scheduled to take place between 8:30 and 9:30 a.m., according to the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD).

The training involves aircraft from the U.S. Air Force, Civil Air Patrol and the National Guard, which will be using an F-15 jet that is scheduled to take off from Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport.

The training exercise itself is set to take place in the airspace in and around West Palm Beach.

There were low-flying aircraft over South Florida in February when the Air Force was training to station fighter jets in Fort Lauderdale as part of its mission to protect President Donald Trump during his visits to Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach.

Energy

Energy Cost Savings from Rooftop Solar at Tyndall AFB Homes Enable Community, Home Enhancements

BUSINESS WIRE, April 05, 2018 11:28 AM Eastern Daylight Time

TYNDALL AFB, Fla. – Balfour Beatty Communities, a leading provider of property management, development and related real estate services for the multifamily, military and student housing markets, today announced first year energy cost savings resulting from the rooftop solar program implemented at Tyndall AFB Homes have totaled nearly $70k. Tyndall AFB Homes is a Balfour Beatty Communities owned and managed housing community serving active duty Air Force families at Tyndall AFB in Florida.

As part of the solar program, photovoltaic panels were installed on rooftops throughout the Tyndall AFB Homes community, with a total system capacity of 1.4 megawatts. The system contributes more than 35 percent of the community’s total annual power needs and, since reaching full operational status in May 2017, has exceeded energy savings expectations. The system’s installation required no out-of-pocket cost for the Air Force, and protects the on-base housing community from fluctuating power costs and the need to rely on local electrical utility providers.

Balfour Beatty Communities has taken the savings realized to date in the rooftop solar program and reinvested them into community improvements at Tyndall AFB Homes that directly benefit the Air Force families living there. These improvements have included roofing upgrades and both playground and community pool enhancements……
Defense Industry

USAF gears up for huge Red Air contracts

Jamie Hunter, Published: March 16th, 2017
http://www.combataircraft.net/2017/03/16/usaf-gears-up-for-huge-red-air-contrac

The US Air Force plans to release a solicitation to industry for a massive 40,000 hours of contracted aggressor support training at 12 different bases. It comes following a year-long experiment at Nellis AFB, Nevada, for Draken International.

The multi-award contract, which is expected in January 2019, is huge and will have the existing contractor air service providers scrambling to win contracts.

The USAF says it will release a draft solicitation to industry in July as it seeks to provide the additional adversary air and support at 12 different bases. Nellis AFB alone will take 11,250 hours of the requested flight hours from the planned total 36,231 hours annually.

As well as Nellis, other installations that will benefit from additional red air comprise Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina; JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii; Holloman AFB, New Mexico; Eglin AFB, Florida; JB Langley-Eustis, Virginia; Tyndall AFB, Florida; Kingsley Field, Oregon; Luke AFB, Arizona; Hill AFB, Utah and Tucson Airport, Arizona.

GKN Bought Out in Hostile Takeover

By: Brady Calhoun, Updated: Mar 30, 2018 05:17 PM EDT

Panama City, Fla. - Changes are coming for a Welsh Company that local economic officials hoped would make a big splash in Bay County.

GKN, an engineering company that is in the process of opening an aerospace facility near the Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport, was purchased by Melrose Industries. The $2.8 billion dollar deal is being described as a hostile takeover in the British media.

GKN is expected to bring more than 100 new jobs and $150 million in economic impact to the county.

Despite the takeover, Economic Development Alliance President Becca Hardin, said the new branch will open. She added that a contract is in place, equipment was moved to the site and the hiring process is ongoing.

"We've been working very closely with our GKN partners. It's a topic we're tracking every day," Hardin said. "At the end of the day we're moving forward. It's business as usual."

The increased use of contractor owned, contractor operated (COCO) adversary aircraft has been building for several years. Air Combat Command (ACC) has conducted an analysis of Adversary Air (ADAIR) capabilities to fill a ‘significant gap’ in its training requirements. The service reportedly suffered from a shortage of adversary 3,000 sorties at Nellis AFB, Nevada, during 2016 and that number is expected to rise as F-35 training ramps up…….
Global defense firm Lockheed Martin is wrapping up a busy March by landing two contracts totaling $34.3 million, according to the U.S. Department of Defense.

The Bethesda, Md.-based firm's Space Systems Co. scored a $27 million contract with the U.S. Navy on March 29 to provide engineering and technical support services for the Trident II Missiles System.

Lockheed Martin has been stacking up its missile contracts, with much of the work happening in Central Florida.

Work for the four-year contract will take place mostly in Sunnyvale, Calif. and Cape Canaveral — the main locations for Lockheed Martin's Fleet Ballistic Missile program. The services on the rocket would be for the United Kingdom's military. Lockheed Martin's Fleet Ballistic Missile program in Cape Canaveral supports more than 600 jobs and is adding 300 more from California by the end of 2019.

The 2018 omnibus appropriations bill Congress passed two weeks ago includes some significant plus-ups to what’s been one of the most neglected areas of the Defense Department budget in recent years: the funding lines that pay for maintenance and repair of the military services’ buildings, airfields and other facilities.

In some cases, it provides enough money to prevent the existing, multibillion dollar backlog in deferred maintenance projects from getting any worse. In others, it will only slow the rate at which the backlog is growing.

Among the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force, the package provided $9.9 billion in facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization (FSRM) funding for 2018 — 58 percent more than the services received in 2017, and modestly higher than the amounts they requested for 2018.

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| Facilities Sustainment, Restoration, Modernization (FSRM) spending in 2017 and 2018
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Service-by-service, the amounts of the increases varied widely, but the biggest bump, by far, went to the Air Force, whose facility officials have previously described an FSRM funding approach that largely required it to “wait for things to break” instead of performing preventative maintenance. Its 2018 appropriation more than doubled over the year before, climbing from just under $1.7 billion to $3.4 billion.....

**Other Of Interest**

**Gov. Scott signs bills designed to keep Florida ‘military friendly’**

By Howard Altman, 4-2-2018


Gov. Rick Scott came to USAA's headquarters in Tampa Monday morning for a ceremonial signing of two laws designed to keep Florida "the nation's most military friendly state."

Scott signed bills designed to reduce fees for Florida military, veterans and their families.

The Don Hahnfeldt Veteran and Family Opportunity Act reduces professional licensing fees and requirements for certain military members, veterans, and their spouses.

The Don Hahnfeldt Veteran and Family Opportunity Act was named after State Rep. Don Hahnfeldt, a veteran and a member of the Florida House of Representatives who passed away last year.

Scott also signed HB 75, authorizing state colleges to waive student fees for active duty military service members. This bill will also help make higher education more affordable for our military men and women.
Bay District Schools observes Month of the Military Child

By Stephanie Byrne | Posted: Mon 4:46 PM, Apr 02, 2018 | Updated: Tue 4:55 AM, Apr 03, 2018

BAY COUNTY, Fla. (WJHG/WECP) - April marks Month of the Military Child nationwide.
Bay District Schools will observe the month with activities to recognize the sacrifice made by military-dependent children.

There are reportedly about two million children of active duty military with more than 80 percent of them being enrolled in public schools.

Military-dependent students represent all branches of the military throughout Bay District Schools.

Schools will allow students to wear purple on specific days to show support for their peers.

Bay District Schools will observe "Purple Up! Day" on April 13th, but some schools will be choosing their own day to wear purple.

The day was proposed in the 1980s.

"Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger recognized April as Month of the Military Child to highlight the contributions, the courage, and patriotism of our military-dependent children," Lynda Brown, School Liaison Officer for Naval Support Activity Panama City, explained……

Battle over school choice for military families heats up

Dan Cohen, Posted on Apr 04, 2018 03:05 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=c6fde32460

A coalition of groups organized by the conservative Heritage Foundation is trying to galvanize support for a measure to provide military families the option of establishing education savings (ESAs) accounts to pursue alternative educational opportunities. The legislation, introduced by Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.), would allow military families to redirect a portion of their Impact Aid allocations into an account to pay for private school tuition, textbooks, tutoring, online courses and other educational expenses. In a letter to lawmakers, the groups state that military families have little choice in where they live or what schools their children attend. They also cite a lack of high-quality education options for military kids.

“[But] this is a problem Congress can solve. Armed with a military ESA, parents can send their children to a private school, take individual classes at a public school, school at home, use an online learning program, hire a private tutor, and eventually use any surplus to help pay for college,” the letter states, reports Politico. “And by providing education choice through ESAs, the military will possess a key tool to both attract and retain military families that will help reduce turnover, save valuable resources, and retain institutional knowledge and skills necessary to defeat the enemy.”

H.R. 5199 has 55 Republican co-sponsors.

The battle lines over the proposal to offer school choice to military families are stark. A commentary published in the Washington Post points out the disconnect between the legislation’s apparent momentum and the level of opposition from military families. “The Military Child Education Coalition, the Military Impacted Schools Association, the Military Officers Association of America and the National Military Family Association all oppose the idea of taking federal money from the public schools that over 80
percent of all military families use, to give vouchers to a few,” writes Carol Burris, executive director of the Network for Public Education.

In a rebuttal to the piece in the Post, Lindsey Burke, director of education policy at the Heritage Foundation, cites a national poll by EdChoice showing that 72 percent of military respondents favored ESAs.

**Okaloosa water tower gets special paint job**

By staff report, Posted Apr 4, 2018 at 12:01 PMUpdated Apr 4, 2018 at 12:01 PM

**CRESTVIEW** – An Okaloosa County water tank is now decked out in red, white and blue, noting the special relationship between Eglin Air Force Base, Hurlburt Field and the communities that surround them.

Two years ago, the Association of Defense Communities named the area around Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field as one of its Great American Defense Communities. The ADC serves nearly 300 communities across the country — every major defense community in the United States — as a liaison between those communities, military officials and industry.

The Great American Defense Communities program was designed by the ADC in conjunction with Congress “to recognize and celebrate communities whose exceptional commitment to improve the lives of service members, veterans and their families as a model for all communities,” according to the ADC’s website. Communities chosen for the recognition “become part of a growing collection of best practices that are defining the gold standard for all to follow.”

The Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field communities were nominated for the award by the Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County. Following the announcement of the award, local officials from the county and military decided that the water tower planned for State Route 85 in Crestview would be a good place to display the Great American Defense Communities logo, advertising the communities’ status…..
Apr 13

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #63 is **NEXT WEEK** on Thursday, 19 April 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EDT via conference call / WebEX. Agenda is attached. There will be no Closed Session. E-books will be available on our web site at [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/EBook-FDTSF-Meeting-63.pdf](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/EBook-FDTSF-Meeting-63.pdf)

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979 Access Code: 1869945

3. **Navy Region SE Commander Speaks on Economic Impact of Military in Florida** –
   

4. **GAO Publishes Report on Privatized Military Housing** – The Government Accountability Office (GAO) published a report (attached) on Military Housing Privatization. According to Dan Cohen at ADC, “Developers of privatized housing projects face a range of issues that could affect their financial condition and future sustainment, including changes in the number of personnel at an installation, the need to maintain aging infrastructure and unforeseen project expenses.” See article below in the CLIPS.

5. **Task Force Member Recognized by ADC** – The Association of Defense Communities announced their annual award winners today and among them is our own **Mr. Tom Neubauer** who was selected for the Community Leadership Award for his work with the Bay Defense Alliance. According to their release, the Community Leadership Award “recognizes an individual whose outstanding leadership helps build a military-community partnership to enhance the mission of an active installation. A nominee may be an elected or appointed (non-military) official at the state, regional or local level, a volunteer, or the chief executive officer of a local redevelopment authority (or equivalent organization).” The release also mentioned that the “winners will be recognized during the 2018 Defense Communities National Summit, June 18-20, in Washington, D.C.” For the full release, go to [https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&amp;u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&amp;id=92610df175](https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&amp;u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&amp;id=92610df175).

6. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Washington Summit Registration is Open** –
   
   For Task Force or FDA members who are interested in attending the ADC Defense Communities National Summit in Washington DC, registration is now open at an “Early Bird” discounted rate. The theme of this year’s Summit is “Strengthening America’s Defense Infrastructure”. Keynote speakers include Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla.); Lucian Niemeyer, assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment; and Air
Force Secretary Heather Wilson. The Summit will take place at the Washington Hilton, located at 1919 Connecticut Avenue from June 18-20, 2018. ADC has secured a block of rooms for the discounted rate of $249. To make your reservation call the hotel at (202) 483-3000 and mention the ADC Defense Communities National Summit or click on this link to register as well as make your accommodations at https://www.adcsummit.org/#register.

7. Attachments:
   - FDSTF Mtg #64 Agenda
   - GAO Report on Military Housing Privatization

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News Clips of Interest:

Oil Drilling / Gulf Range
Exemptions to Expanding Coastal Energy Exploration Possible, Zinke Says

Dan Cohen, Posted on Apr 12, 2018 02:50 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=9849e6c288

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke on Wednesday indicated he would consider requests from East Coast governors to exclude their states from the administration’s plan to permit drilling in most U.S. continental shelf-waters. “States matter, the local voice matters, you matter and the governor matters,” Zinke told Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-Maine) at a House Appropriations subcommittee hearing. “I’m sure Maine is going to be very happy with the draft proposal.”

Like Pingree, Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-N.J.) asked the secretary to consider his state’s concerns about a proposed expansion of offshore oil drilling, reported CQ. “I hope in the coming weeks … that you recognize concerns that many of us have on the East Coast … that we don’t want oil drilling in the neck of our woods,” Frelinghuysen said. Zinke’s decision to exempt Florida from the plan shortly after it was announced in January spurred demands from other coastal states for similar treatment.
Cyber

Educating a generation of cyber warriors

By Eric Barton × 04/10/2018 at 11:31 am

When the USS John S. McCain collided with an oil tanker off Malaysia in August of 2017, it became the fourth naval ship in less than a year to suffer such an accident. A theory emerged that hackers were to blame.

As an examination into the matter continues, Admiral John Richardson, chief of naval operations, has indicated that investigators are considering the possibility of a “cyber intrusion or sabotage.”

It’s the kind of scenario that will likely become all too common in the near future, and the need to plan for such situations is why FIU has become an international research and educational hub for cybersecurity, says Sundaraja Sitharama Iyengar, director and Ryder professor of the School of Computing and Information Sciences within the College of Engineering & Computing.

Previously, concerns about cybersecurity were confined to those working in IT fields. But in recent years, a cybersecurity industry has evolved as those who need to worry about hacking run all the way from governments and corporate executives down to public utilities, mom-and-pop businesses and ordinary individuals. In response, FIU has added new degree programs and expanded its cybersecurity courses across disciplines to bring in business and criminal justice students as well as the more traditional computing and engineering students.

“We are creating cyber warriors,” Iyengar says. “These cyber warriors from FIU will learn to protect us from cyberattacks and then go on to train the world.”

The need for cybersecurity and the industry being built around it is something Iyengar foresaw 26 years ago. In a series of academic papers long before the internet became well known, Iyengar predicted computers would one day be connected and that those communications would be susceptible to attacks……

BRAC

Going BRAC-less: What to Do with the US Military’s Excess Property

BY NORTON A. SCHWARTZ AND KENNETH, APRIL 10, 2018

After six straight years of fruitless pleas for permission to close unneeded bases, the Pentagon is changing tack. Though Defense Secretary James Mattis testified in October that almost 20 percent of the Pentagon’s real property is surplus and a burden, the 2019 defense budget proposal doesn’t formally request a new BRAC round. Instead, Defense Department Comptroller David Norquist suggested in February that he would be looking for new ways to work with jobs-conscious lawmakers and new ways to use the excess property.
Fortunately, the Pentagon, and particularly the services, do not have to look far to find a second path that may be amenable to lawmakers, particularly those who support such efforts. Enhanced use leases — essentially, deals to allow private developers access federal property — were added to the Pentagon’s toolkit in the 1990s and have been used successfully for decades. The services even have “playbooks” for EULs. Defense leaders and lawmakers should embolden the services to find more of these win-win opportunities.

The Pentagon and Congress should also go a step further to identify areas – to include entire installations – where communities and the private sector could purchase unneeded military land, fully titled. While there are many benefits to leasing, some opportunities require a complete transfer of property for the deal to have a sound business case……

DOD Looks to Congress for Direction on Eliminating Unneeded Capacity

Dan Cohen, Posted on Apr 13, 2018 05:37 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156e255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=92610df175

During a hearing Thursday of the House Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee, DOD’s installations chief acknowledged the department’s recent failure to secure lawmakers’ support for a new round of base closures and reached out to find common ground on an approach that would allow the military to rightsize its infrastructure.

“We realize we have asked for six years and for six years, Congress has said no. We can’t keep doing that. We have to work with you on a common way forward that will allow us to make prudent reductions in our infrastructure,” Lucian Niemeyer, assistant secretary for energy, installations and environment, told the panel during his opening remarks.

While emphasizing the need to ensure “our basing infrastructure is ideally sized to increase the lethality of our forces,” Niemeyer said officials are undertaking a comprehensive review of how and where they base new forces and capabilities — including hypersonic systems, autonomous vehicles and cyber forces — called for in the National Defense Strategy. “All of these concepts which are called for, and this country desperately needs, need to have a basing infrastructure that will allow us to deploy and train them effectively,” he said.

In the absence of requesting a BRAC round this year, the department is looking at ways to use it facilities more efficiently. Officials, for example, are assessing whether an optimal number of personnel are assigned to each building as part of their effort to determine how much excess infrastructure DOD is carrying.

“Our efforts will allow us to work with Congress further on fair, objective and transparent options for future base realignments and closures,” Niemeyer said.

Beyond several comments and questions from Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (R-Neb.), BRAC was not an overarching topic during the rest of the hearing. A webcast can be found on the committee website.

NAS Pensacola

Experts repair sections of historic Battery San Antonio at Pensacola Naval Air Station
A National Park Service team of historic preservation experts has turned its attention to Battery San Antonio at Pensacola Naval Air Station.

The Maryland-based team transitioned to the project earlier this week after doing major repairs at Fort Pickens on Gulf Islands National Seashore.

The more than 230-year-old, Spanish-built Battery San Antonio presents unique challenges for the preservationists because of its age.

"This is the oldest part of the fort system in this area. It is actually listed as a historic landmark, the highest rating there is," said Eric Hutchinson, a masonry expert who will be working on the battery's walls for the next several weeks……

Eglin AFB

Air Force moving to address F-35 spare-parts problems

By Jim Thompson, Posted Apr 8, 2018 at 11:00 AM

EGLIN AFB – The Air Force is taking a three-pronged approach to addressing spare-parts issues threatening the F-35 stealth fighter jet program at Eglin Air Force Base and elsewhere, according to its Air Education and Training Command.

Last month, U.S. Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., whose district includes Eglin AFB, said problems with acquiring spare parts and repairing parts for the F-35 could seriously compromise the base’s role in training pilots for the next-generation fighter jet.

“While we’ve not been late in graduating any pilots yet, I’ve been told that we are rapidly approaching the inability to accomplish the mission,” Gaetz said.

Questions posed at various levels of Air Force command following Gaetz’s comment went unanswered until a few days ago. The deputy director of public affairs at AETC, which has broad responsibilities for training across the Air Force, responded via email late last week to questions initially posed to Eglin’s public affairs office……

Gulf Power teams up with Eglin Air Force Base to save tortoises

NORTHWEST FLORIDA (WJHG/WECP) - Gulf Power is helping Eglin Air Force Base save thousands of gopher tortoises.
These tortoises are at risk of being buried alive under new developments across Florida. So Gulf Power and Eglin Air Force Base are teaming up to give them a second chance before they get on the endangered species list.

The funds that Gulf Power provides, allows the tortoises to be rescued, transported, and relocated to the air force base. Eglin began taking in the gopher tortoises last year and they hope to help more than 6,000 before the year 2023.

**NSA Panama City**

**The eyes have it**

By COLLIN BREAUX, News Herald Reporter, Posted Apr 12, 2018 at 6:33 PM Updated Apr 12, 2018 at 6:33 PM

http://www.newsherald.com/news/20180412/eyes-have-it

NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY PANAMA CITY — New technology in use at the Navy Experimental Diving Unit will help monitor biological conditions before and after dives.

NEDU — a Naval Support Activity Panama City tenant unit that does biomedical research and saturation dives — is using special eyewear called Tobii Pro Glasses 2 that monitors a user’s retina location and headgear called Artinis Brite23 that tracks blood flow and oxygen levels in the brain during training. The technology measures the effects of diving, which can take divers hundreds of feet deep and later cause physical problems.

When a diver or other user puts on the Tobii Glasses and aims at computer model targets using an air gun — one of the training exercises — what they see and the location of their retina (identified by a circle) is pulled up on a computer screen in real time. While NEDU personnel have been able to note decompression sickness — one of the more visible effects of diving — the new equipment allows researchers to monitor conditions that aren’t so noticeable, such as eye movement and visual patterns.

The Artinis hasn’t been used in testing but is scheduled for that in June……

**Tyndall AFB**

**Teacher of the Year takes flight**

By Stephanie Byrne | Posted: Mon 8:30 PM, Apr 09, 2018 | Updated: Mon 10:53 PM, Apr 09, 2018

http://www.wjhg.com/content/news/Teacher-of-the-Year-takes-flight-479210233.html

PANAMA CITY, Fla. (WJHG/WECP) - For some teachers, they hope to encourage their students to reach for the heavens and be brave enough to try new things.

Cathy Felty, Media Specialist for Margaret K. Lewis School and Bay District Schools' 2018 Teacher of the Year, decided to lead by example.

"I can't believe I get to do this," Felty exclaimed.

Felty isn't afraid to try new things. In fact, she took her courage to new heights Monday afternoon when she rode as a passenger in a T-38 jet at Tyndall Air Force Base.

Lieutenant Brian Miller, who oversees the Fam Flight program at Tyndall, said the flight would last an hour.
Felty had to receive training before taking off. She learned safety protocol including how to use her parachute and helmet.

Lieutenant Miller said she would feel about five to six G's (in terms of G-force)…..

**Tyndall Beach Clean-up**

Story by Senior Airman Cody Miller 325th Fighter Wing Public Affairs 04.10.2018
[https://www.dvidshub.net/news/272549/tyndall-beach-clean-up](https://www.dvidshub.net/news/272549/tyndall-beach-clean-up)

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. --The 325th Civil Engineer Squadron Natural Resources Flight will be hosting the “Tidy Up for Turtles Beach Clean-Up” on Saturday, April 21, 2018.

“We hope to clean at least six miles of the beach, three miles of Crooked Island West, and three miles of Shell Island,” said Rebecca Johnson, 325th CES Natural Resources Flight wildlife technician. “We ask that all participants bring work gloves and good walking shoes. Additionally, sunscreen, a hat and a water bottle would also be recommended.”

Although this is the first year that this specific clean-up event will be hosted, Tyndall does have other beach clean-up opportunities planned. The 325th CES is scheduled to sponsor an annual beach clean-up in September that correlates with International Coastal Clean-up Day.

There is no sign-up for the event and volunteers only need to show up at the NCO Beach House at 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

In addition to having the beaches remaining in pristine condition for Airmen and their families, volunteers can reflect on their service with a larger sense of purpose…….

**NS Mayport**

**Navy’s first Triton spy planes will deploy to Guam later this year**

By WYATT OLSON | STARS AND STRIPES, Published: April 10, 2018

The Navy’s first two operational MQ-4C Triton spy planes are slated to deploy to Guam later this year, a Navy official said Monday.

The service will send two more Tritons to Guam by 2021 for surveilling Pacific Ocean hotspots, Triton program manager Capt. Dan Mackin told reporters Monday at the Navy League’s Sea Air Space exposition in Maryland.

The high-altitude drones will be able to provide combat information to expeditionary and carrier strike groups and can communicate directly with the Navy’s manned P-8A Poseidon aircraft.

The addition of the land-based drones, which weigh about 16 tons and have a 131-foot wingspan, comes at a crucial time in the Pacific…….
USS Little Rock arrives in Mayport
By Allyson Henning - Reporter, Nick Jones – Producer, Posted: 12:13 PM, April 11, 2018, Updated: 7:53 AM, April 12, 2018

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. - The USS Little Rock will arrive at its Naval Station Mayport homeport for the first time Thursday.

Its arrival comes just over six months after it was commissioned by the U.S. Navy in Buffalo, New York, but it was trapped on the St. Lawrence River for three months due to icy conditions.

The crew of about 70 sailors continued to train while at port in Montreal. It began its journey toward Mayport last Saturday.

Lockheed Martin and Fincantieri Marinette Marine delivered the ship that was later commissioned as the USS Little Rock to the Navy in September.

The Littoral Combat Ship 9 vessel cost an estimated $568 million, according to the Congressional Research Service.

This is not the first ship in the U.S. Navy to be named Little Rock. The original ship carrying that name, a light cruiser commission just after the end of World War II, docked in Jacksonville back in 1962, according to the USS Little Rock Association. 

NAS Jacksonville

'Mad Foxes' Welcomed Home At NAS Jacksonville

By WJCT NEWS • 4-10-2018

The "Mad Foxes" of Patrol Squadron Five (VP-5) returned home to a big homecoming of family and friends at Naval Air Station Jacksonville Wednesday, after completing a six-month P-8A Poseidon deployment to the U.S. 4th Fleet and U.S. 6th Fleet.

Operations included numerous counter-narcotics missions resulting in the seizure or disruption of over 33,000 kilograms of illegal narcotics with a street value of over $2 billion, according to NAS Jacksonville.

During this time, the "Mad Foxes" were also the first U.S. crew to respond to the multi-national search for the missing Argentine submarine, the ARA San Juan, in addition to flying humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions in the Caribbean in the wake of Hurricane Maria.

While in the sixth Fleet AOR, VP-5 operated out of 11 different countries across Europe and the Middle East from their primary base of operations in NAS Sigonella, Italy. 

Fleet Readiness Center Southeast detachments pass aviation maintenance inspections with flying colors
JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – With respective grades of 98.9 and 95.6, Sailors at Fleet Readiness Center Southeast’s detachments at Naval Air Station Jacksonville and Naval Station Mayport should be beaming after their units aced major inspections recently.

FRCSE, as the Navy aviation maintenance, repair and overhaul facility is known, employs civilians to do in-depth work on military aircraft at its headquarters aboard NAS Jacksonville. Sailors at their detachments perform the more frequent, day-to-day maintenance required – and the Navy inspectsthem every 18 months for safety, quality and efficiency.

“These inspections are so important,” FRCSE Command Master Chief Donald Henderson said. “Not only does it give us an honest assessment of what kind of job we’re doing, it ensures that we are sending the very best equipment possible to our warfighters on the front lines.”

Lt. Cmdr. Derek Tindell, the officer in charge of Detachment Mayport, credited his Sailors……

US Central Command

CENTCOM In Tampa: Ready “For An Attack On Syria.”

By James Williams - April 10, 2018
https://www.newstalkflorida.com/featured/centcom-tampa-ready-attack-syria/

Tampa is 6,654 miles from Syria but whatever President Donald Trump has planned for retaliation for the chemical attack that happened this past weekend, will go through MacDill Air Force Base the home to U.S. Central Command. Defense Secretary James Mattis, himself a former CENTCOM boss in Tampa will contact Joseph Votel, a four-star general in the United States Army who has been commander of CENTCOM since March 2016.

This morning at the Pentagon, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and CENTCOM, in charge of U.S. forces in the Middle East, were compiling target lists and attack options to be presented to President Trump and his national security team within hours, defense officials told News Talk Florida.

According to multiple media reports, there were at least 42 people were killed in air strikes on rebel-held Douma late Saturday and local aid groups said more than 500 cases were brought to medical centers “with symptoms indicative of exposure to a chemical agent”.

The Syrian troops backed its Russian and Iranian allies, dismissed U.S. allegations of its responsibility as fabrications.” But in his strongest language yet President Trump pointed the finger of blame directly at Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad and Russian President Vladimir Putin……

US Special Operations Command

Special Operations Leaders Update Senators on Efforts
WASHINGTON, April 11, 2018 – U.S. special operations forces are relevant to all the nation’s security priorities, the vice commander of U.S. Special Operations Command told a Senate Armed Services Committee panel today.

Air Force Lt. Gen. Scott A. Howell, representing Soicom commander Army Gen. Raymond A. Thomas III, told the committee’s emerging threats and capabilities subcommittee that the nearly 3,000 special operations forces members are deployed in more than 90 countries, and are postured, ready and relentlessly focused on winning today’s fights.


Cape Canaveral AFS
This U.S. Air Force Commander Helps Elon Musk’s Interns Launch SpaceX Rockets

By Ainsley Harris, 04.09.18

U.S. Air Force Brigadier General Wayne Monteith always intended to follow his father and stepfather into military service, but imperfect eyesight quashed that plan. Instead, he got an MBA, then joined the Air Force as a nuclear weapons officer. After moving over to space operations, Monteith flew military satellites before being tapped to run 45th Space Wing at Patrick Air Force Base, which adjoins Cape Canaveral in Florida, in August 2015.

A lot has happened in space innovation since Monteith’s promotion. Perhaps most famously, Elon Musk’s SpaceX successfully launched and landed its Falcon 9 rocket, setting the stage for a new era of cheaper, reusable rockets. More broadly, the space business as a whole has taken off, with a flurry of new startups and investment.

None of that accelerated pace of innovation would’ve been possible without parallel changes in how the Air Force manages its Cape Canaveral operations. Monteith, who oversees all commercial and U.S. government launches from the Cape, sat down with Fast Company to discuss speed, safety, and getting to know billionaire rocket entrepreneurs like Musk and Blue Origin founder Jeff Bezos. Musk, for one, has talked engineering with Monteith into the wee hours—just two space nerds, hanging out with a SpaceX rocket on its landing pad at 2:30 a.m. “They’re really pushing the bounds of what we believe is possible,” Monteith says…..
Patrick AFB

Schiess tapped to lead 45th Space Wing; Monteith to retire

Air Force Brig. Gen. (select) Doug Schiess will take over leadership of the 45th Space Wing in August, replacing Brig. Gen. Wayne Monteith, who has announced plans to retire after completing a rare three-year command as "Shark 1."

"After serving in uniform 28 years, this was not an easy decision to make," Monteith wrote in a Facebook post. "But the timing is right and, for me, there will never be another opportunity as phenomenal as serving with you at the 45th Space Wing."

Monteith on Aug. 23 will turn over command to Schiess, who knows his way around Patrick Air Force Base and Cape Canaveral Air Force Station as a former commander of the 45th Operations Group.....

Avon Park

AT2 Supporting Air Force O&M Including Threat Systems

AT2, LLC, Severn, Maryland, has been awarded an $8,609,909 firm-fixed-price contract for Air Combat Command and Air Force Global Strike Command primary training ranges operations and maintenance support (OM&S) services. This contract provides for OM&S of range threat, scoring, and feedback systems, as well as provides for target, road, grounds, and limited facility maintenance. Work will be performed at Dare County Range, North Carolina; Poinsett Range, South Carolina; Grand Bay Range, Georgia; Avon Park Range, Georgia; Snyder Range, Texas; Belle Fourche Range, South Dakota; Holloman Ranges, New Mexico; Mountain Home Ranges, Idaho; and Guam Range, Guam. Work is expected to be complete by Dec. 31, 2022. This award is the result of a competitive acquisition and six offers were received. Fiscal year 2018 operations and maintenance funds in the amount of $5,923,747 are being obligated at the time of award. Headquarters Air Combat Command, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia, is the contracting activity.

NAS Key West

Branch Health Clinic Key West opens American Red Cross office

Story by Yan Kennon, Naval Hospital Jacksonville, KEY WEST, FL, 04.09.2018
Naval Branch Health Clinic Key West hosted the grand opening of an on-site American Red Cross office on Monday, April 9. In attendance were about 40 service members, retirees, family members, volunteers, as well as leaders from the American Red Cross, the Keys community, Naval Air Station Key West, and major commands located aboard the air station.

The new Red Cross office, located at NBHC Key West, will provide: emergency communications and messaging for military members and their families; resiliency and reconnection workshops for military members, veterans, and families; disaster preparedness support; and information and referral services. Office hours are Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

It joins a world-wide network of Red Cross offices providing emergency communications and other services to members of the U.S. military and their families.

“The American Red Cross office on-site at our clinic will enhance the services offered to our patients,” said Cmdr. Duneley Rochino, NBHC Key West officer in charge. “This is part of a strong network of support — in both the community and the military — for local service members and families.”

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DoD Budget

Congressman to Mattis: Prepare for ‘a lean future’ as national debt continues to rise

By: Joe Gould, 4-12-2018

WASHINGTON – The Pentagon’s two-year budget boost may be as good as it’s going to get for the military, the House Armed Services Committee’s top Democrat warned Defense Secretary Jim Mattis on Capitol Hill on Thursday.

The comments come amid new government estimates that the U.S. budget deficit will exceed $1 trillion in two years, as tax cuts and spending increases signed by President Donald Trump do little to boost long-term economic growth.

As Mattis testified on the administration’s 2019 budget request, HASC Ranking Member Adam Smith, D-Wash., pointed to the downward pressure that growing deficits and budget caps could create in 2020 and beyond.

“While 2018 and 2019 are great, I hope you are also planning for a lean future, because we are looking at a trillion-dollar deficit this year,” Smith said, adding that the US national debt is approaching $22 trillion.

CBO pegs the 2019 deficit at $981 billion and at more than $1 trillion each year thereafter, for a total of $12.4 trillion through 2028…. 
Other Of Interest

Economic impact of defense in Florida? It’s big, naval regional commander says

DANNY MCAULIFFE, 4-9-2018

The Sunshine State is a hotbed of military activity and in turn, defense spending takes up a decent-sized portion of the state’s economic tally, according to one of the Navy’s top-ranking members.

Rear Admiral Babette “Bette” Bolivar, commander of Navy Region Southeast, spoke to the Economic Club of Florida Monday in Tallahassee. She’s one of two female regional commanders overseeing the 11-unit shore-based organizational structure.

As expected, much of her discussion focused on economics.

Citing figures from an Enterprise Florida-conducted study of defense spending, Bolivar said that military activity was responsible for $84.9 billion of Florida’s Gross State Product, a little more than 9 percent of all economic activity in 2016.

The figure factored in procurement, salaries, and pensions or transfer payments “for all those retired veterans who come to settle in the state,” Bolivar said.

Defense spending, Bolivar said, “increased jobs in every Florida county.”

Service Members, Veterans Groups Oppose School Choice Measure

Dan Cohen, Posted on Apr 09, 2018 02:30 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=897d231528

A consortium of 32 military, veterans and uniformed services organizations is taking a stand against legislation to provide military families the option of establishing education savings accounts (ESAs) to pursue alternative educational opportunities. Diverting funding from the federal Impact Aid program to fund the vouchers would harm the ability of school districts to provide a quality education to military children, according to a letter the Military Coalition sent last week to the leaders of the House Armed Services and Education and Workforce Committees.

“Military families place a high value on the quality of their children’s education. We urge you not to reduce funding to a program critical to ensuring military children receive the best possible education,” the letter concludes. H.R. 5199, introduced by Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.), would allow military families to redirect a portion of their Impact Aid allocations into an account to pay for private school tuition, textbooks, tutoring, online courses and other educational expenses.

Army Doesn't See New Futures Command Building in Its Future

By Anthony Capaccio, April 10, 2018, 4:00 AM EDT Updated on April 10, 2018, 10:15 AM EDT
The U.S. Army expects to pick a location by June for its planned Futures Command, but it doesn’t intend to build a costly new facility, according to Army Secretary Mark Esper.

“Some folks’ expectation is that Futures Command will be as big as some of the other,” existing command operations, Esper said in an interview. “It won’t be, but what we do want to do is put it in a location where we have access to really good civilian talent” and “good industry and academia” expertise with opportunities to recruit them.

The plan for a new command to oversee and consolidate weapons acquisition for the Army has sparked interest in communities eager to make a pitch for government facilities. But Esper said in the interview Monday that “what we are really looking at is office space, not a new installation.”

“As we winnow down the list, part of the discussion may be” that some locations “want to offer us a better deal in terms of location space and cost,” said Esper, a West Point graduate and officer in the 101st Airborne who went on to become a congressional aide and, most recently, vice president for government relations with defense contractor Raytheon Corp……

**Housing Projects Face a Variety of Potential Challenges, GAO Finds**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Apr 10, 2018 03:07 am

Developers of privatized housing projects face a range of issues that could affect their financial condition and future sustainment, including changes in the number of personnel at an installation, the need to maintain aging infrastructure and unforeseen project expenses. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) highlighted the list to show that a policy change implemented in 2015 that has gradually reduced the rate of increase in service members’ basic allowance for housing (BAH) is not the only reason a project may be struggling.

Large-scale reductions in the number of service members assigned to an installation or the inactivation of units can hurt a project’s occupancy rate and result in revenue and cash flow challenges, the congressional watchdog agency found. The loss of a brigade combat team at Fort Knox, Ky., in 2014, for example, caused the occupancy rate of the post’s privatized housing project to drop from 95 to 70 percent, posing challenges to its financial health.

Some housing projects have taken over responsibility for the associated utility infrastructure, resulting in oversight and maintenance that has been more costly than expected in some cases and reduced cash flows, according to the report. Projects typically are not structured to absorb the cost of maintaining aging infrastructure, Air Force officials told GAO. After becoming aware of the problem, the Air Force decided to stop transferring utility infrastructure to developers in subsequent projects. In fact, some project owners have asked the military departments to take back the infrastructure.

Unexpected expenses, including from weather-related damage or litigation, also can create a challenge for some projects. The Navy’s Mid-Atlantic project, for example, has experienced unforeseen expenses stemming from water intrusion, mold and related litigation. Navy officials’ projections that a significant amount of sustainment work would not be required in the first five to 10 years of its projects have not been borne out, according to the report.
The military departments and developers pointed to BAH calculations prepared by DOD that do not appear to reflect local conditions as another factor that can affect project finances.
Apr 19

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #64 is scheduled for **Thursday, 17 May 2018,**
   **beginning at 9:00AM EDT** at the Residence Inn Marriott Tallahassee, 600 W. Gaines
   Street, Tallahassee, FL 32304.

2. **Call In Number** –

   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979 Access Code: 1869945

3. **HASC Looks at Massive Cuts to DoD Support Agencies** – According to an article by Dan
   Cohen, HASC Chairman Mac Thornberry has proposed language for the 2019 NDAA that
   would close the “Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) and six other defense support
   agencies” by 2021. According to Cohen, “The draft language is intended to cut overall
   spending on DOD’s support activities — primarily civilian resources management, logistics
   management, services contracting and real estate management — by 25 percent, or $25
   billion, annually and reinvest the savings in warfighting. The Pentagon’s so-called fourth
   estate accounts for 15 to 20 percent of its budget, and employs about 200,000 civilians and
   600,000 contractors.” See article below in the CLIPS.

4. **Another State Starts Defense Grant Program** – The Florida model continues to be
   replicated around the nation. According to an article by Dan Cohen, “The Missouri House
   has approved a measure creating a grant program to help communities attract new or
   expanded military missions and to strengthen military installations ahead of a BRAC round.”
   See article below in the CLIPS.

5. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Washington Summit Registration is Open** –
   For Task Force or FDA members who are interested in attending the ADC Defense
   Communities National Summit in Washington DC, registration is now open at an “Early
   Bird” discounted rate. According to ADC, the **EARLY BIRD PRICING ENDS TODAY, April 20th**
   (registration costs may increase by $100). The theme of this year’s Summit is
   “Strengthening America’s Defense Infrastructure”. Keynote speakers include Sen. James
   Inhofe (R-Okla.); Lucian Niemeyer, assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations
   and environment; and Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson. The Summit will take place at
   the Washington Hilton, located at 1919 Connecticut Avenue from June 18-20, 2018. ADC
   has secured a block of rooms for the discounted rate of $249. To make your reservation call
   the hotel at (202) 483-3000 and mention the ADC Defense Communities National Summit or
   click on this link to register as well as make your accommodations
   at [https://www.adcsummit.org/#register](https://www.adcsummit.org/#register).

6. **Attachments:**
   - None

*Terry*

Terry McCaffrey
Executive Director
Florida Defense Support Task Force

PHONE (850) 878-4578
CELL (850) 266-1865
News Clips of Interest:

Oil Drilling / Gulf Range

Victoria Principal and Oceana Unite Against Offshore Drilling

NEWS PROVIDED BY Oceana, Apr 13, 2018, 14:50 ET

WASHINGTON, April 13, 2018 – Today, actress, author and businesswoman Victoria Principal announced that she will double the impact of individual gifts by matching donations to Oceana up to $50,000 to help protect U.S. coasts from the dangers of offshore oil and gas.

President Trump's Department of the Interior aims to expand oil and gas leasing to nearly all U.S. waters, including the eastern Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic, Pacific and Arctic oceans, in the largest potential offshore leasing plan ever proposed. Principal, a dedicated environmentalist, is supporting Oceana's fight against these radical and shortsighted attempts to expand offshore drilling activities.

According to a recent Oceana economic analysis, the Trump administration's offshore drilling plan threatens more than 2.6 million jobs and nearly $180 billion in GDP for only two years'-worth of oil and just over one year's-worth of gas at current consumption rates.

"Oceana successfully protected much of the Atlantic and Arctic from new drilling in the past, but now those protections are at risk," Victoria Principal said. "Oceana knows how to win victories for our oceans, and I am making this commitment to encourage people across the country to join me in the fight to protect our coasts."

Echoing the importance of this partnership, Jackie Savitz, Chief Policy Officer, North America, said:

"This partnership comes at a crucial time. Oceana thanks Victoria Principal for her dedication and support to this critical campaign. Her generous gift-matching will help us maintain momentum and continue our aggressive strategy to win the fight against dirty and dangerous offshore drilling."

As of today, opposition and concern over offshore drilling activities includes:

- Approximately 250 East and West Coast municipalities
- Governors from Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, California, Oregon and Washington
- Over 1,600 local, state and federal bipartisan officials
- An alliance representing over 42,000 businesses and 500,000 fishing families
- New England, South and Mid-Atlantic fishery management councils
- Commercial and recreational fishing interests such as Southeastern Fisheries Association, Snook and Gamefish Foundation, Fisheries Survival Fund, Southern Shrimp Alliance, North Atlantic Marine Alliance, Billfish Foundation and International Game Fish Association
- California Fish and Game Commission, California Coastal Commission, California State Lands Commission and California Senate

**Upgrades for CRIIS military test range systems**

By John Keller, April 18, 2018


EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – Test range experts at Rockwell Collins in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, will provide upgrades, equipment, and support for the U.S. Air Force next-generation military test ranges under terms of a $15.2 million order announced Monday.

Officials of the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center at Eglin Air Force base, Fla., are asking Rockwell Collins to provide the third production lot of the Common Range Integrated Instrumentation System (CRIIS) system for installation at U.S. Air Force, Navy, and Army test ranges throughout the United States.

CRIIS is replacing the Advanced Range Data System (ARDS) in use at major U.S. military test ranges, and will support a variety of platforms, including advanced fifth-generation combat aircraft.

The order calls for Rockwell Collins to provide an additional nine Configuration-4 light production pods; 15 Configuration-4 heavy production pods; 12 Configuration-5 1553 production pods; five Configuration-5 fiber channel production pods; 14 Configuration-6 production pods; 16 portable test sets; one lot general production data; one remote ground station; four central control centers; 10 mission room equipment; and eight reference receivers.

The CRIIS system will implement the U.S. military's vision of common test and training infrastructure for improved operational realism. Rockwell Collins won an $83 million contract one year ago for modification, integration, and support of the CRIIS, including design, development and testing of system and block upgrades. This modification brings the total cumulative face value of the contract to $328.7 million….

**BRAC**

**In lieu of BRAC, DoD plans big spending to demolish crumbling facilities**

By Jared Serbu @jserbuWFED, April 17, 2018 7:31 am


When the Defense Department decided not to ask Congress to authorize a round of base closures as part of this year’s budget, it was a recognition that doing so would be an exercise in futility. After all, lawmakers have rejected those requests each year since 2012.
But Defense officials say that doesn’t mean they’ve changed their minds about the need to get rid of some of the military’s excess real estate, either through the traditional base realignment and closure (BRAC) process, or some other means that Congress finds more palatable.

“We realize that we have asked for six years, and for six years, Congress has said no. We can’t keep doing that,” Lucian Niemeyer, the assistant secretary of Defense for energy, installations, and environment told the House Appropriations Committee last week. “We have to work with you on a common way forward that will allow us to make prudent reductions in our infrastructure. We must ensure that our basic infrastructure is ideally sized to increase the lethality of our forces while minimizing the costs of maintaining unneeded capacity.”

In a report to Congress last October, the Pentagon estimated that it would have 19 percent more base infrastructure than it can put to military use, even assuming it had a force that was as large as the one that existed in 2012, prior to the last military drawdown.

In addition to seeing that excess facility footprint as wasteful and inefficient, DoD believes it simply can’t afford to adequately maintain the buildings and other facilities throughout its $1 trillion real estate portfolio. Although Congress gave the department a significant plus-up in maintenance funding this year, it’s already accumulated a backlog of $116 billion in unfunded repair projects……

**NAS Whiting Field**

**NAS Whiting Field recognized for environmental excellence**

by Digital Staff, Monday, April 16th 2018


NAS AIR STATION WHITING FIELD, Fla. (WEAR) – NAS Whiting Field received the Chief of Naval Operations Environmental award for Environmental Quality, Non-Industrial Installation.

"I am very proud of the great work our Environmental team does every day to ensure we're good stewards and partners in the local area. NAS Whiting Field strives for excellence in promoting best practices in safeguarding our natural resources. Congratulations to the entire team!" NAS Whiting Field Commanding Officer, Capt. Paul Bowdich said.

The annual Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Environmental Awards Program recognizes Navy ships, installations and people for outstanding performance in promoting environmental stewardship. The program showcases accomplishments in Natural Resources Conservation, Cultural Resources Management, Environment Quality, Sustainability, Environmental Restoration, Environmental Excellence in Weapon System Acquisition, and Environmental Planning, according to the website for the Office of the Secretary of the Navy in Washington, DC.

The CNO Environmental Awards are the first of three levels within the DoD competition. All CNO winners advance to the Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Environmental Awards competition. Following that level, is the Secretary of Defense level (SECDEF) Environmental Award.

A total of 61 nominations from commands around the world were received in nine award categories.
**Eglin AFB**

Okaloosa approves lighting rules to protect sea turtles

By TONY JUDNICH, Posted Apr 17, 2018 at 6:23 PM, Updated Apr 17, 2018 at 6:23 PM


SHALIMAR – Okaloosa County is no longer the only county in the Panhandle without a lighting ordinance to protect sea turtles such as loggerheads and greens during the nesting season.

The County Commission voted 4-1 Tuesday to adopt a law that will lead to turtle-friendly exterior building lighting on county-owned properties, as well as on new construction on both county-owned and private parcels.

The purpose of the ordinance “is not to do away with lighting altogether, but rather direct it to areas where it is needed and away from the nesting zone of the beach,” according to county information.

The regulations are expected to reduce the harmful effects on of artificial lighting on the turtles. Such lighting can deter nesting females from coming ashore to lay their eggs and can disorient turtle hatchlings.

The new lighting rules apply to properties in the county’s “sea turtle conservation zone,” which runs south of U.S. Highway 98 and Santa Rosa Boulevard and between the easternmost and westernmost boundaries of the Gulf Islands National Seashore on Okaloosa Island……

**Tyndall AFB**

Tyndall Holds Change of Command

By: Megan Myers, Updated: Apr 13, 2018 08:19 PM EDT


PANAMA CITY, Fla. - Leadership changed Friday at Tyndall Air Force Base. The base community turned out for change of commands ceremonies.

The end of one leaders journey marked the start for another.

During Fridays ceremony, Colonel Gregory Krane gained command of the 101st Air Operations Group from Colonel Michael Valle. Valle Gained command of the 601st Air Operations Center from John Ferry. The change held a special purpose.

"It is really important because we have a 24 hour mission, 365 days a year, to protect our country," said Valle. While the airmen might see their role as following the orders of the new leaders ... the new leaders say their job is to protect both the country and the men and women who serve.

"It's a huge day, very excited for today, to be able to be in command and take charge and be in charge and take care of such an outstanding group of men and women," said Krane.

The 601st AOC is in charge of detecting aviation threats to the U.S. The AOC is run mainly by the Florida Air National Guard's 101st Air and Space Operations Group. Brigadier General Brian Simpler said it's great to see the officers take a hold of these units.
"They have a very important mission, defending our homeland and taking care of our citizens here in the united states when there's a natural disaster. they've been doing an outstanding job here and we're very proud of them," Simpler…..

F-22 Raptor skids across runway at Navy’s Top Gun school

BY: GARRETT REIM, 18 APRIL, 2018
HTTPS://WWW.FLIGHTGLOBAL.COM/NEWS/ARTICLES/F-22-RAPTOR-SKIDS-ACROSS-RUNWAY-AT-NAVYS-TO...-

A Lockheed Martin F-22A Raptor skidded on its belly across the runway of NAS Fallon near Reno, Nevada on 16 April after a takeoff mishap.

The cause of the crash is unknown. The pilot was reportedly able to exit the aircraft without major injuries and the incident is under investigation. The aircraft is assigned to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Base's 3rd Wing near Anchorage, Alaska, but was in Nevada for mock dogfighting against fighter aircraft in the Navy Strike Fighter Tactics Instructor program, also called Top Gun.

Images on social media show the aircraft resting on the tarmac with its landing gear retracted. Pictures posted later on the Facebook page “Air Force Forum,” which is not officially associated with the US Air Force, show the aircraft being hoisted off the runway and onto its landing gear with a crane. Those posts also said that the aircraft suffered from a left engine flameout while the plane was taking off and raising its landing gear, though those claims have not been independently verified.

News of the mishap was first reported by The War Zone. NAS Fallon and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The crash at NAS Fallon comes after the USAF recently, in December 2017, returned to service an F-22A Raptor damaged six years ago. That aircraft skidded across the runway of Tyndall AFB, Florida in 2012 when a trainee attempted a touch-and-go landing, but mistakenly retracted the landing gear before pushing the throttle to military power. In addition to repairing scratches to the skins of the wing and the stabilator, the USAF replaced the skins and doors of the central and aft fuselage of that aircraft at a cost of about $35 million……

NS Mayport

Navy May Not Deploy Any Littoral Combat Ships This Year

By: Megan Eckstein, April 11, 2018 5:04 PM • Updated: April 11, 2018 10:05 PM

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – The Navy may not deploy any of its Littoral Combat Ships this year despite previous plans to deploy one to the Middle East and two to Singapore in 2018, due to a confluence of maintenance availabilities that has most of the LCS fleet sidelined this year.

Three of the Navy’s four original LCSs are in maintenance now, and four of the eight block-buy ships that have commissioned already are undergoing their initial Post Shakedown Availabilities (PSA), Cmdr. John Perkins, spokesman for Naval Surface Force Pacific, told USNI News.
In addition to the deploying ships themselves being in maintenance, so too are the training ships that will be required to help train and certify the crews. The Navy upended its LCS training and manning plans in 2016 when then-SURFOR commander Vice Adm. Tom Rowden announced a change to a blue-gold crewing model and a ship reorganization: hulls 1 through 4 serve in San Diego as a test division, to help test mission module components and get them fielded; the remaining ships are divided into divisions of four ships each, responsible for either surface warfare, mine countermeasures or anti-submarine warfare. Within each division, the first ship has a more experienced crew that is responsible for training and certifying the rest of the crews, and the other three ships are deployable assets. Due to this model, not only does the deployable ship have to be in the water and ready for operations, but so does the training ship……

MacDill AFB
AMC civic leaders visit MacDill

Story by Airman 1st Class Ashley Perdue, 6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs, 04.11.2018
https://www.dvidshub.net/news/273380/amc-civic-leaders-visit-macdill

MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – Beginning April 11, 2018, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, was host to a three-day base tour for more than 30 Air Mobility Command civic leaders throughout various AMC communities.

“Our civic leaders are critical to what we do in AMC and they help us become a part of the community,” said Maj. Gen. Sam C. Barrett, Director of Operations, Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration, Headquarters Air Mobility Command, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. “Civic leaders are integral to supporting our Airmen, our resources, understanding our mission, and not to mention, they help our Airmen feel welcomed within the community.”

During the visit, civic leaders had a packed itinerary; visiting Airmen throughout base that make MacDill’s mission happen.

The tour began on the water with the 6th Security Forces Squadron’s Marine Patrol Unit and the Joint Communications Support Element. They were given a tour of the restricted coastal area surrounding MacDill as well as a quick briefing about the typical duties of Marine Patrol…..

Cape Canaveral AFS
SpaceX launches NASA's planet-hunting TESS mission from Cape Canaveral

James Dean, FLORIDA TODAY, Published 7:11 p.m. ET April 18, 2018 | Updated 7:58 p.m. ET April 18, 2018  

Stargazers have always wondered: Are we are alone in the universe?

“And until 25 years ago, the only planets we knew about were the eight in our own solar system,” said Paul Hertz, director of the Astrophysics Division at NASA headquarters. “But since then we’ve found thousands of planets orbiting other stars, and we think that all the stars in our own galaxy must have their own family of planets.”
A NASA spacecraft launched Wednesday evening from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station is expected to discover thousands more families of so-called exoplanets circling bright, nearby stars, some of which might have the ingredients needed to support life.

The $337 million Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite mission, or TESS, roared from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station at 6:51 p.m. atop a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket, and was deployed 49 minutes later in an orbit stretching between Earth and the moon.

Over two years, four ultra-sensitive cameras mounted on the 800-pound TESS spacecraft built by Orbital ATK will detect the faintest of shadows as planets — ranging from Earth-like rocky ones to gas giants — cross, or transit, their host stars.

Team Orlando

Florida Tech Students Set To Showcase Science and Engineer Projects in New Statewide Design Invitational

By Zach Clark // April 17, 2018

BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA – Seniors from Florida Institute of Technology and nine other Florida universities will showcase their science and engineering projects Thursday at the inaugural 2018 Florida-Wide Student Engineering Design Invitational.

The event will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the University of Central Florida’s College of Engineering and Computer Science in Orlando. The host university designation will rotate among partners in the years to follow.

The Design Invitational was developed by the engineering deans from the 10 universities to showcase the collective strength of engineering and computer science programs in Florida and the impact these institutions have in providing thousands of skilled engineering and technology graduates who enter the workforce prepared to meet the demands of the state’s rapidly-growing innovation economy.

In addition to Florida Tech and UCF, other partners are Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Florida A&M – Florida State University, Florida Atlantic University, Florida International University, University of Florida, University of Miami, University of North Florida and University of South Florida.

Florida is ranked the nation’s best state for higher education by U.S. News & World Report, and its universities are the nation’s No. 1 workforce supplier to the aerospace and defense industry, according to Aviation Week. With 65,000 open STEM jobs in Florida, highly skilled graduates are in demand.

Defense Industry

Draken International flying high with Florida Poly

By Kevin Bouffard, Posted Apr 14, 2018 at 11:52 AM, Updated Apr 14, 2018 at 12:04 PM
LAKELAND — Draken International continues to soar to new heights.

It even impressed one of the 21 Americans who have flown the highest of all — former astronaut Thomas Stafford, who flew to the moon on Apollo 10.

“I had heard and read a little bit about you (Draken), and having been here, I’m very, very impressed,” said Stafford, who gave the featured speech at a Friday evening dinner announcing two new company milestones.

Draken, headquartered at Lakeland Linder Regional Airport, has a fleet of more than 100 formerly military fighter aircraft that it contracts out to the U.S. military for training exercises, or “adversary support.” That means Draken planes and pilots play the role of the “bad guys” in military exercises against U.S. aircraft.

The company employs 120 full-time pilots and mechanics and another 40 people under part-time contracts.

John Baum, the company’s vice president of strategy and security, earlier announced the expected arrival beginning next month of 34 more supersonic fighter planes it recently purchased from the South African and Spanish armed forces.

The 22 Spanish Mirage F1Ms, a well respected French-made jet fighter, and the 12 Atlas Cheetahs, similar to the Mirage, should greatly expand Draken’s opportunities for adversary support contracts, Baum said.

The supersonic fighters are classified as third generation military aircraft, but after arrival, Draken will upgrade them with advanced avionics to the fourth generation, he said. The U.S. military is beginning to fly fifth-generation fighters, such as the F-22 and F-35.

**DoD Budget**

**Years of sequestration caused need for larger budget**

by: Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Ignacio D. Perez | published: April 13, 2018


WASHINGTON, April 12, 2018 — Though the increased funding in the fiscal year 2019 budget deal is welcome, it will not fully restore the damage to DoD facilities caused by years of sequestration spending cuts, a senior Defense Department official told Congress today.

Lucian Niemeyer, assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment, testified at a hearing of the House Appropriations Committee’s subcommittee on military construction, veterans affairs and related agencies.

Many DoD facilities have degraded significantly from reduced investments, and the department has a $116 billion backlog in facilities requiring attention, Niemeyer said. “A lot of our facilities are either in fail or poor condition,” he told the House panel. “This will ultimately result in the DoD facing larger bills in the future to go ahead to restore or replace facilities that deteriorate prematurely. The stark reality is that it is too costly to buy ourselves out of this this backlog.”

Strategic Goals

Niemeyer said he and his team set forth strategic goals to confront the challenges posed by years of underfunded facilities and infrastructure accounts:
-- Find new innovations and avenues to eliminate waste in DoD installations and infrastructure;
-- Continue to ask for adequate funding for installation and infrastructure accounts to meet mission
requirements and to address risks to safety and readiness;
-- Protect test and training ranges from incompatible development, along with being able to properly train
troops by simulating different terrains from around the world;
-- Implement programs to ensure the mission through energy-resilient forces and facilities;
-- Seek new opportunities for third-party partnerships;
-- Work with the military contract community to develop smarter contracts and manage contracts smartly;
-- Provide for the safety and welfare of the department’s people and resources through premier
environmental stewardship and occupational safety programs; and
-- Collaborate with the communities around the nation providing for quality of life for troops and their
families.

“These guiding principles will allow us to ply the resources requested in the [fiscal year 2019] budget to
achieve real results,” Niemeyer said.

DoD’s Underfunded Maintenance Backlog Exceeds
$116 Billion, Official Says

By Terri Moon Cronk, April 18, 2018
https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1497582/dods-underfunded-maintenance-backlog-exceeds-116-
billion-official-says/

WASHINGTON – The requested $10.5 billion in military construction and family housing programs in
the president’s fiscal year 2019 budget request makes significant progress to recapitalize facilities, but it
will not reverse the impacts of six years of sequestration, the assistant secretary of defense for energy,
installations and environment said today.

“We currently have an underfunded maintenance backlog exceeding $116 billion; 23 percent of the
department's facilities are in poor condition, [and] another 9 percent are in failing condition,” Lucian
Niemeyer told the House Armed Services Committee’s subcommittee on readiness.

“My frank assessment [is that] it may be too costly to buy ourselves out of this backlog,” he said. “We
must work to remove unneeded capacity to fund higher priorities. As noted in the National Defense
Strategy, we continue to reduce excess infrastructure and will work with Congress for options for base
realignment and closures. These efforts will be enhanced by a careful evaluation we are undertaking of
how and when we base new forces and new capabilities.”

Other Of Interest

Major bill aims to slash Pentagon bureaucracy

By: Joe Gould, 4-17-2018

WASHINGTON – The chairman of the House Armed Services Committee has targeted most Pentagon
support agencies for a 25 percent cut, proposing seven be shuttered entirely.
If adopted, it could lead to thousands of defense civilian job cuts and massive changes for defense contractors.

Texas Republican Rep. Mac Thornberry announced the proposal Tuesday, aimed at eliminating bureaucratic waste to reap more than $25 billion to reinvest in war fighting. The moves come after he and other pro-defense lawmakers won a two-year budget deal that boosts defense to $700 billion in fiscal 2018 and $716 in fiscal 2019.

The proposal netted swift condemnation as “foolish and shortsighted” from the American Federation of Government Employees, which represents 700,000 workers in the federal government.

“Proposing across-the-board budget cuts and eliminating agencies that support the war fighter is counterproductive to our national security mission and disruptive to the lives of civilian employees, many of whom are veterans, whose jobs could be eliminated if Congress approves these cuts,” said AFGE National President David Cox.

On Tuesday, Thornberry unveiled at a news conference legislative language aimed at taming what he sees as uncontrolled growth within the Defense Department’s “fourth estate” agencies, which are supported by 200,000 civilian personnel and 600,000 contractors, at a cost of more than $100 billion per year.

Thornberry Proposes Massive Cuts to Support Agencies

Dan Cohen, Posted on Apr 18, 2018 05:00 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=d855a9f7b39

DOD’s Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) and six other defense support agencies would be eliminated by Jan. 1, 2021, as part of a proposal to streamline Pentagon bureaucracy unveiled Tuesday by House Armed Services Chairman Mac Thornberry (R-Texas). The draft language is intended to cut overall spending on DOD’s support activities — primarily civilian resources management, logistics management, services contracting and real estate management — by 25 percent, or $25 billion, annually and reinvest the savings in warfighting. The Pentagon’s so-called fourth estate accounts for 15 to 20 percent of its budget, and employs about 200,000 civilians and 600,000 contractors.

The plan, which could cut thousands of the department’s civilian jobs, is slated for inclusion in the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill. “All of the savings and efficiency have to stay within DOD to get more capability into the warfighter faster,” Thornberry said, reported Defense News. “To summarize the whole thing from my perspective, it is reduce the overhead to put more resources at the tip of the spear.”

Along with OEA, the proposed legislation would eliminate:

- Washington Headquarters Service
- Defense Information Systems Agency
- Defense Technology Security Administration
- Defense Human Resources Activity
- Defense Technical Information Center and
- Test Resource Management Center.

It calls for the Pentagon’s chief management officer to submit a plan by March 1, 2020, describing which of the agencies’ functions would be transferred to other elements of the office of the secretary of defense (OSD). The chief management officer could transfer “only such functions and personnel … as are necessary to carry out an essential function not otherwise carried out [by OSD],” the draft bill states. Functions and personnel that are not transferred to other components would be eliminated by Jan. 1, 2021.
The legislation calls for four other agencies to be reformed as well:

- Defense Finance and Accounting Service — would be streamlined;
- Defense Contract Audit Agency and Defense Contract Management Agency — their functions would be reviewed to determine if they could be more efficiently performed by the other agency, or by transferring them to another element of DOD or a commercial provider; and
- Defense Logistics Agency — would become more efficient and transparent.

In all three cases, the chief management officer would be required to submit a plan for carrying out the changes by March 1, 2020; actions would need to be implemented by Jan. 1, 2021.

Thornberry’s plan mirrors the recommendations of a study commissioned by the Defense Business Board in 2015, which concluded the department could save $125 billion over five years by eliminating administrative waste in its business operations. Top Pentagon officials ultimately shelved the study, reported the Washington Post.

**Missouri Bill Would Establish $300,000 Community Grant Program; EDF Unifies Subsidiaries under New International Brand**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Apr 18, 2018 04:00 am

https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28c3be069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=d855a97b39

The Missouri House has approved a measure creating a grant program to help communities attract new or expanded military missions and to strengthen military installations ahead of a BRAC round. The grants may be for used community-installation partnerships, promoting the value of an installation, economic diversification, research into factors that could help the community attract military investments, and programs to improve the quality of life for military families, according to a summary of HB 2339. The bill, which authorizes up to $300,000 in annual grants, is now being considered in the Senate. … EDF Renewable Energy along with more than a dozen other international subsidiaries of EDF Energies Nouvelles will now operate under the brand EDF Renewables, the company announced last week. Meanwhile EDF Renewables North America is organizing around three primary lines of business — grid-scale power, distributed solutions and asset optimization, according to a press release.

**The US Air Force is short more than one-quarter of the fighter pilots it needs, according to a government report**

Christopher Woody, 4-17-2018


Air Force officials have been warning about the force's dire pilot shortage, and a recent Government Accountability Office report illustrates just how bad the shortfall has gotten.

The report assesses the gaps between the actual number of fighter pilots that the Air Force, Marine Corps, and Navy have and the number of positions they are authorized to have.
Each service branch reported fighter-pilot shortages that have grown worse in recent years. "Service officials attributed these gaps to aircraft readiness challenges, reduced training opportunities, and increased attrition of fighter pilots due to career dissatisfaction," the report says.

The Air Force had at least 92% of its fighter-pilot positions filled between 2006 and 2010, an 8% gap, and 104% of what it needed in 2011, a 4% surplus. But the gap has grown since 2012 and is currently the biggest of the three military branches, at 27%.

The Air Force, which has undertaken a number of training and retention initiatives, projected its shortfall to last through fiscal year 2023…..
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #64 is scheduled for **Thursday, 17 May 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EDT** at the Residence Inn Marriott Tallahassee, 600 W. Gaines Street, Tallahassee, FL 32304.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   **Call-In Number:** 800-501-8979  
   **Access Code:** 1869945

3. **Army Releases List of Cities for “Futures Command” Sans Florida** – According to an article by Dan Cohen at ADC, the Army released its short list that did not include any Florida locations. According to Cohen, “The Army has named 15 cities as candidates to host the headquarters for its new Futures Command — Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, New York City, Philadelphia, Raleigh, N.C., San Diego, San Francisco or Seattle. “We want this headquarters to be located near leading academic and commercial institutions to harness the best talent possible in emerging technology and innovation,” Undersecretary Ryan McCarthy told the leadership of the House Armed Services Committee in an April 17 letter, reported Defense News. Officials previously said the command, dedicated to the service’s modernization priorities, would not be located on an Army post.”

4. **New Discussions on BRAC and Other DoD Cuts** – Although some are saying BRAC is the best way to save the most money, this week there has been a lot of discussion in Congress that seems to be leaning toward an end to BRAC as we know it and entering a new era of defense programs or authorities that will allow the service to shed excess capacity without BRAC. This includes a suggestion from HASC Chair Thornberry to get rid of DoD organizations and programs that support communities after a BRAC. ADCs Dan Cohen noted in his article entitled “With No BRAC in Sight, OEA Unneeded, Thornberry Indicates”, that Chairman Thornberry stated “Thirteen years after the last BRAC round, we should ask if OEA has done its work and can be closed”. Since his initial comments that would shutter several DoD offices, other legislators have spoken up for OEA. According to Dan Cohen’s article “Leaders on Senate Panel Recognize OEA’s Critical Role”, posted today, he notes that “The chairman and ranking member of the Senate Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee both expressed their support for the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) during a hearing Thursday on the administration’s fiscal 2019 budget request for military construction.” See multiple articles in the CLIPS.

5. **Florida National Guard and 502(f) Funding** – On the last FDSTF conference call, Mr. John Patrick Walsh mentioned working with DoD to utilize 502(f) (federal funding) for special disaster response operations. General Calhoun asked his staff to provide a quick background summary on the 502(f) and what the discussions/initiatives are with the Council of Governors on the matter that follows (diagram attached). Title 32 United States Code 502(f) is an authority to utilize federal funding (not stand alone "extra" funding) for the National Guard to conduct "additional training & other duty" or "SecDef approved missions". This is primarily used for NG Soldiers and Airmen to train for their federal "wartime" mission. Current law does not allow for state led disaster response to be conducted in 502(f), nor is there a formalized process for governors to request 502(f) authorization for NG
responding to a disaster. Several states have asked the CoG to work with DoD and DHS to establish a process for governors to quickly request and receive 502(f) during extreme and widespread response efforts. 502(f) (federal) funding was provided for Hurricane Harvey response for EMAC units to muster, mobilize and conduct movement to Texas; however, units transitioned to State Active Duty (SAD) before being employed into the operation. 502(f) funding was provided for Hurricane Irma but with slightly different conditions than Harvey. FLNG was allowed to mobilize 10% (planning and coordination cells) of the entire force in 502(f) status for 3 days prior to the storm. Also, EMAC units could muster and mobilize under 502(f) but had to transition to SAD prior to movement. For Florida, there was no issue with coordinating EMAC because Florida is able to "cash-flow" supporting states in State Active Duty; however, 502(f) would be beneficial for the following reasons:

- EMAC Supporting states would not have to front funding from existing state budgets, and this would allow more states to volunteer EMAC support.
- When Florida provides EMAC forces to other states, this would alleviate the state to state reimbursement requirement.

Several states have asked the CoG to work with DoD and DHS to establish a process for governors to quickly request and receive 502(f) during extreme and widespread response efforts. Although this was not a Florida issue for Matthew or Irma, states need a way to mobilize their guard rapidly for major disasters when they don't have enough state cash on hand to meet requirements.

6. Congress Moving on 2019 Defense Bills – According to an article by ADC’s Dan Cohen on Apr 25, “The Senate Armed Services Committee will mark up its version of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill the week of May 21” and the “The House Military Construction-Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee will mark up its FY 2019 spending bill Thursday at 9 a.m”. As the House Armed Service Committee begins mark-up of the 2019 defense authorization bill, they have included language that would create a community grant program. According to Dan Cohen’s Apr 26 article, “The draft legislation would establish the Defense Community Infrastructure Program and would allow DOD to award grants to states and local governments to address “deficiencies in community infrastructure projects or facilities which are located outside of military installations but which support military installations.” The department first would need to determine the assistance “will enhance the military value, resiliency or military family quality of life” at the installation.” This new DoD grant program looks a lot like Florida’s DIG program. HASC National Defense Authorization Bill and the MILCON Subcommittee draft legislation are attached and see multiple articles below in the CLIPS.

7. Attachments:
- 2019 Draft MilCon Bill
- Draft House Mark-up NDA
- Federal 502(f) Funding

Terry McCaffrey
Executive Director
Florida Defense Support Task Force
News Clips of Interest:

Oil Drilling / Gulf Range

U.S. Air Force Awards Booz Allen Spot on $998 M IDIQ Contract to Bolster the 96th Test Wing’s Test Capabilities

BUSINESS WIRE, Apr 26, 2018 Updated 23 hrs ago

MCLEAN, Va. – Upholding the United States’ supremacy against adversaries requires adopting new and innovative technologies. The 96th Test Wing (TW) is the U.S. Air Force test and evaluation hub headquartered at Elgin Air Force Base, Florida. The 96TW verifies the performance of air-delivered weapons, navigation and guidance, command and control and Air Force Special Operations Command systems before deploying them on the front lines. To help the military keep pace with the ever-evolving threat landscape, the Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC) has awarded Booz Allen Hamilton (NYSE: BAH) a spot on a $998 million indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity (IDIQ) multiple-award contract to provide technical engineering support to the Test & Evaluation Technologies for Ranges, Armaments & Spectrum (TETRAS) effort.

“As the defense community continues to spearhead next-generation weapons programs, it is critical to identify, and solve potential vulnerabilities in system design during the development phase in order to keep both soldiers and civilians safe,” said Rex Jordan, vice president at Booz Allen. “Backed by our team’s deep technical expertise in engineering and applied science, we look forward to expanding our partnership with the Air Force to establish testing mechanisms that will ensure the tools our soldiers depend on perform seamlessly when unforeseeable events arise that threaten U.S. national security.”

This work builds on Booz Allen’s more than 35 years of supporting the Air Force’s continual transformation. Read more about these efforts, here…..

Cyber

Senate confirms new head of Cyber Command, NSA
The Senate unanimously confirmed Lt. Gen Paul Nakasone as the commander of U.S. Cyber Command and director of the National Security Agency in a voice vote Tuesday.

Nakasone will take over as the head of the military’s preeminent cyber war-fighting organization, Cyber Command, and take the reins at the NSA, the nation’s premier signals intelligence agency, under what is a dual-hat arrangement.

During his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee in March, Nakasone advocated that Cyber Command be prepared to “impose costs” on adversaries in retaliation to cyberattacks. His hawkish approach to cyberspace was welcomed by members of Congress who have been critical of previous administrations for a lack of cyber deterrence policies.

Nakasone went on to say cyber readiness would be his top priority if confirmed and that he must be able to assess the ability of cyber teams to perform their missions in combating the exponential growth in cyberthreats to the nation……

Florida wants to build a cybersecurity sector. The question is how?

Malena Carollo, Times staff writer, Published: April 27, 2018, Updated: April 27, 2018 at 05:51 AM

TAMPA – In 2014, the Florida Center for Cybersecurity was established by the Legislature with several purposes in mind:

Lawmakers tasked "FC2" with bringing high-paying jobs to Florida, attracting companies in industries such as defense, health care, finance and transportation, and educating and training a cybersecurity workforce.

So how many companies has the center brought to Florida? FC2 can’t quantify that. How many college graduates has it helped place at local companies? The agency can’t say that, either.

Instead, executive director Sri Sridharan said it’s time to set new benchmarks for his taxpayer-funded agency that better reflect the field’s changing landscape.

"Cybersecurity is an evolving science," he said. "It’s extremely dynamic, fast-moving, changing and evolving all the time.

"What was described four years ago, many of those things have evolved in terms of the mandate from the Legislature."

The industry is changing and growing so fast, it seems, that there’s no lack of ideas for how to make Florida a player in cybersecurity.

FC2 and its staff of 12 offers funding and support for cybersecurity programs at state universities, expanding educational offerings in the field and hosting conferences and events to raise awareness about the industry……
DOD Installations Chief Lays out Path toward Future BRAC Decision

DOD opted not to include a request for a new round of base closures when it submitted its fiscal 2019 budget proposal earlier this year, but by no means have defense officials given up on the prospect of asking for a BRAC in the future. On Wednesday, the department’s installations chief told lawmakers that because the administration had just released its National Defense Strategy, it didn’t make sense to include a request for a new round. “We weren’t really in good conscience ready to ask Congress for an authorization for BRAC this year,” Lucian Niemeyer, assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment, told the House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee.

Instead, officials decided to take a pause. “We’re looking at the National Defense Strategy; we would like to reevaluate to what degree we think moving forward base closures might help us carry out the defense strategy to become more lethal,” he said in response to a question from Rep. Joe Courtney (D-Conn.).

The department is using the pause to reassess its most recent calculation of how much excess infrastructure it is carrying. Niemeyer told Courtney there were “some concerns” about the report DOD released last year that estimated 19 percent of its capacity was excess. The department is embarking on an effort with the services to take a closer look at how fully their facilities are being utilized. “We’re trying to get it to be an enterprise look. … and make sure we are optimally occupying our facilities.”

When officials are confident they have a good handle on “exactly where we have excess,” they will brief the defense secretary. Niemeyer did not volunteer how long the process would take or what the next steps may be, however.

He also reiterated the argument that a new BRAC round would not only help DOD save money but it also would provide an opportunity for the military “to get more lethal” by consolidating forces and realigning its installations. Unmanned systems, cybersecurity and other new missions were not significant factors during the last base closure round. “How do we lay in those new technologies onto our existing Cold War basing structure? Do we even know what a base of the future really should look like?” Niemeyer asked.

BRAC Provides Larger Target for Costs Savings, Experts Say

Two former DOD officials who appeared before the House Armed Services Committee Wednesday to testify about Chairman Mac Thornberry’s proposal to trim 25 percent from the budgets of defense support agencies emphasized the difficulty in achieving the savings target when many activities, such as combat support and intelligence, would be shielded from the cuts aimed at the department’s fourth estate.

Reaping significant savings would require the Pentagon to shed some of its excess capacity or make other cuts lawmakers have resisted in the past, they said. “I think Congress will have to take a careful look at whether they are open to issues like … what has typically been off the table with BRACs or education or commissaries because you have to get agencies that are large to achieve that kind of savings,” said
Preston Dunlap, the former chief of staff for DOD’s Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation office, reported the *Washington Examiner*. … The seven support agencies targeted for elimination in the draft bill released by Thornberry obligated $6.8 billion to contractors in fiscal 2017. The Defense Information Systems Agency was responsible for the largest share, $3 billion, and the Office of Economic Adjustment had the smallest share, $5.2 million, according to an analysis by *Bloomberg Government*. Total contract obligations have dropped slightly since FY 2014, when they were $7.5 billion.

**Pentagon Reform Plan Would Prevent Future Savings, Analysts Say**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Apr 24, 2018 04:15 am

[https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=f9d7c89ecd](https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=f9d7c89ecd)

Two analysts argue that House Armed Services Chairman Mac Thornberry’s proposal to eliminate seven defense support agencies as part of an effort to cut $25 billion in annual spending from Pentagon overhead would have the paradoxical impact of hampering DOD’s ability to trim waste in the future. By shuttering the Office of Economic Adjustment, the plan would make it more difficult to close unneeded facilities, state William Hartung, director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy, and Miriam Pemberton, a federal budgeting expert and an associate fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, in separate op-eds.

“Going after military waste, Rep. Thornberry wants to shut down the agency whose job it is to help the Pentagon get rid of expensive bases it doesn’t need or want. Tell me what sense this makes,” Pemberton says. OEA has helped communities convert excess military bases into new civilian uses while replacing most of the lost civilian jobs, both point out.

“Eliminating the agency will enable waste writ large, on a scale larger than anything that might be saved by reducing bureaucracy alone,” Hartung says. He describes the proposal as “a faux reform plan that is the policy equivalent of rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic.”

**With No BRAC in Sight, OEA Unneeded, Thornberry Indicates**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Apr 25, 2018 05:15 am

[https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=743e46e9fb](https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=743e46e9fb)

In an op-ed published Tuesday in *Military Times*, House Armed Services Chairman Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) explains his proposal to eliminate the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) as part of an effort to streamline overhead by noting that the Pentagon hasn’t conducted a BRAC round in over a decade. “The Office of Economic Assistance [sic] is charged with helping communities affected by base closures, which hasn’t happened since 2005,” Thornberry writes. He makes no mention of the agency’s multitude of programs aimed at active-base communities or its defense industry adjustment efforts.

“Thirteen years after the last BRAC round, we should ask if OEA has done its work and can be closed,” Thornberry adds.

During a live conversation on Facebook on Tuesday with Citizens Against Government Waste President Tom Schatz, Thornberry said OEA and the six other defense support agencies he proposes eliminating are redundant: “I think most of them are duplicative, they slow down decision-making; and if there are central functions, they can be transferred to other places.”
In the op-ed, he characterizes the seven agencies as “largely analog agencies struggling to operate in a digital world.” The solution is to assign the newly created DOD chief management officer (CMO) direct authority over the fourth estate. “The CMO will be empowered to rationalize redundant functions like logistics, human resources, real estate management and services contracting. The CMO will be asked to reduce the overall size of these functions by 25 percent in two years,” Thornberry states.

His proposal does offer the Pentagon an opportunity to provide input to lawmakers. “To guard against unintended consequences, DOD is given one legislative cycle to come back to Congress and suggest changes,” Thornberry states. He plans to attach his proposal to the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill, which the Armed Services Committee will mark up May 9.

Leaders on Senate Panel Recognize OEA’s Critical Role

Dan Cohen, Posted on Apr 27, 2018 05:15 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=0f9ba1c831

The chairman and ranking member of the Senate Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee both expressed their support for the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) during a hearing Thursday on the administration’s fiscal 2019 budget request for military construction. Their remarks followed in the wake of a proposal by House Armed Services Chair Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) to eliminate OEA and six other defense support agencies as part of a broader initiative to trim spending on Pentagon overhead by 25 percent.

At the outset of questioning the witnesses, Chairman John Boozman (R-Ark.) told Lucian Niemeyer, assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment, he was pleased to see that his prepared testimony included language highlighting the role played by OEA. “OEA’s work is important in the state of Arkansas. And we are currently engaged with OEA on several joint land use studies for installations. I believe maintaining support for this office is crucial and I’m glad you view their work in collaboration with local communities as important and essential as I do,” Boozman said.

Niemeyer’s written testimony touched on the agency’s role in preserving DOD’s testing and training ranges, strengthening defense supply chains and promoting alliances between installations and their surrounding communities. “Maintaining support for this office is crucial to the continued ability of our installations to safely and securely operate while responding to fluctuations in military activities, and keeping faith with our service members and families by addressing quality of life issues in local defense communities,” he stated.

At the conclusion of the hearing, ranking member Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii) said he wanted “to echo the chairman’s enthusiasm” for OEA. “From the policymakers’ perspective, I think it’s at least pretty nearly unanimous,” Schatz said. A webcast of the hearing can be found on the committee’s website.

NAS Pensacola

NAS Pensacola observes Alcohol Awareness Month with 3 years free of alcohol-related incidents

By Ensign Mike Orlando Delarosa, 04.19.2018
PENSACOLA, Fla. – Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola reached another milestone with more than three years free of alcohol-related incidents (ARIs). April is Alcohol Awareness Month and service members are reminded of the importance of alcohol awareness and drinking responsibly. NAS Pensacola follows the Navy’s National Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention’s (NADAP) “Keep What You’ve Earned” campaign.

Service members are encouraged to utilize the Pier Pressure mobile application which gives service members the tools they need to proactively manage their drinking habits and keep what they’ve earned.

The command Drug and Alcohol Program Advisor (DAPA), Aviation Boatswain Mate Chief Petty Officer Kelsey Deer, takes pride in reaching the three-year mark free of ARIs.

“I believe it’s actually the Sailors that just want to do the right thing,” Deer said. “The commanding officer is great because he rewards them at every milestone we achieve. It’s been pretty rewarding.”

Something that is unique to NAS Pensacola is the partnership with Escambia County and their underage drinking task force. Service members are able to take part in the task force to uncover different businesses that may be allowing underage people to purchase alcoholic beverages…..

**Corry Station**

**IWTC Corry Station Warrant Officer Saves Neighbor’s Life**

Story by Glenn Sircy, Center for Information Warfare Training 04.14.2018


PENSACOLA, Fla. – During a recent Saturday afternoon, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Kevin Schneider saved the life of one of his neighbors in Cantonment, Florida, April 14.

Schneider, a cryptologic warfare officer, has served in the Navy for 25 years. He is currently an instructor and legal officer for the Information Warfare Training Command (IWTC) Corry Station onboard Naval Air Station Pensacola Corry Station, Florida, where he’s served since Dec. 2016.

Schneider and his wife, Lorah, were on their way to an early dinner date and while driving down the street of their Bristol Park neighborhood, they witnessed a few people next to a car parked along the street.

“When we approached the people and vehicle, the scene seemed a bit chaotic,” shared Schneider. “I stopped my car and asked the group if they needed any help.”

At that time, Norma Hickerson said, “Yes please, we need help!” Norma is the wife of Ernest Hickerson, the 78-year-old man that was experiencing a life-threatening medical emergency.

Schneider was told Ernest had been cutting his lawn when the medical emergency occurred, roughly a minute prior to Schneider’s arrival.

“Kevin and Lorah immediately exited their vehicle and Schneider took charge of the situation,” said Norma. “I could immediately tell Kevin was a gift from God, because in a split second, Kevin took emergency actions to help my husband while also helping me to remain calm.”.....
IWTC Corry Station Welcomes Connected Corpsmen in the Community

PENSACOLA, Fla. – With coordination and manning from Naval Hospital Pensacola (NHP), Information Warfare Training Command (IWTC) Corry Station’s students and staff now have access to a clinic onboard Naval Air Station Pensacola Corry Station, Florida, called Connected Corpsmen in the Community (CCC).

The clinic allows for walk-ins Monday-Friday from 5 - 8 a.m. and expands the access and convenience of care for active duty service members assigned to IWTC. The services offered at the clinic include treatment for minor on-the-job injuries including sprains, strain, joint pain, minor cuts, blisters, insect bites and removal of stitches as well as upper respiratory infections, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

The benefit of this type of care is two-fold. First, students and staff members can return to training and miss fewer hours away from their training. Second, appointments open up at the surrounding health care venues for those that require more extensive care, creating shorter lines and more appointment availabilities……

Hurlburt Field

Air Commando earns SECDEF award for environmental work

An Air Commando, here, earned a Secretary of Defense-level award for his environmental work on base and in the community, April 16, 2018.

Frederick Javier, a physical scientist with the 1st Special Operations Civil Engineer Squadron, was awarded the 2018 Secretary of Defense Environmental Award for Environmental Quality by Col. Tom Palenske, commander of the 1st Special Operations Wing.

“Mr. Javier’s dedication to the mission, community and environment are unsurpassed,” said Palenske. “His efforts have greatly assisted in saving money, eliminating waste and thinking innovatively to keep our community clean.”

Javier is the program manager for hazardous waste, recycling, environmental training and environmental planning here. Additionally, due to manning shortages, he voluntarily led the air, water, wastewater, tanks, cultural resources and natural resource programs for extended periods of time during the past year.

“Mr. Javier’s superior accomplishments across numerous environmental areas epitomize a DoD environmental thought leader making significant and lasting impacts,” said Martin Tabor, chief of environmental for the 1st SOCES, and Javier’s direct supervisor. “Through hard work and innovation, he took each program to new heights of excellence.” …..
**Eglin AFB**

Lockheed Martin hypersonic missile may achieve speeds of 3,800 miles per hour – or one mile per second

By John Keller, Editor, April 19, 2018


EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – U.S. Air Force airborne weapons experts are looking to Lockheed Martin Corp. to develop and test a hypersonic missile able to achieve speeds of about five times the speed of sound after launch from jet fighters and bombers.


The Air Force is asking Lockheed Martin to develop and integrate an air-launched hypersonic conventional stand-off strike weapon for fighter and bomber aircraft.

The hypersonic conventional strike weapon will provide a prompt precision-strike capability against high-value, time-critical fixed and relocatable surface targets, Air Force officials say.

**Ribbon-cutting signals completion of Eglin VA clinic expansion**

By Jim Thompson, Posted Apr 26, 2018 at 6:11 PM, Updated Apr 26, 2018 at 6:15 PM


EGLIN AFB – A little more than 15 months after construction began, the completed expansion of the Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic outside the base’s west gate was marked with a ribbon-cutting ceremony Thursday.

The clinic expansion features 11 exam rooms, two procedure rooms, a central area for doctors, nurses and other medical professionals, special exam rooms geared to the needs of women and other improvements. The prime contractor for the work was a Northwest Florida service-disabled veteran-owned firm, ESA South Inc. of Cantonment in Escambia County.

“I’m extremely glad that we are here today celebrating this expansion,” said Bryan Matthews, director of the VA’s Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System. “A lot of people put a lot of hard work into getting us to this point.”

The expanded area of the clinic will be open to patients Monday, according to Dr. Robert Mishra, chief medical officer for the Eglin VA outpatient clinic and the VA clinic in Panama City…..

**Tyndall AFB**
Air Force Reports Second Mishap in 8 Days for Alaska-Based F-22s

By Oriana Pawlyk, Military.com 23 Apr 2018

The U.S. Air Force is investigating what caused two F-22 Raptors from the same Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, unit to experience mishaps within days of each other.

An F-22 from the 90th Fighter Squadron, 3rd Wing, experienced engine failure April 6 during a routine training flight at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, days before another F-22's belly skid at Naval Air Station Fallon, Nevada, Air Force officials told Military.com on Friday.

"We can confirm that a 3 WG F-22, assigned to the 90th Fighter Squadron, recently experienced an in-flight engine failure while operating out of Tyndall. The aircraft was able to land safely," said 2nd Lt. Brigitte Brantley, a public affairs officer for the 673rd Air Base Wing. The Drive website first reported the engine failure last week.

Brantley said the pilot in the Tyndall accident was unhurt and able to land the twin-engine stealth fighter "without further incident."

No other aircraft were damaged during the landing.

"The aircraft was participating in regularly scheduled training at Tyndall, executing typical training maneuvers when the failure occurred," she said.

The F-22 remains at Tyndall while officials conduct a safety investigation board report, Brantley said......

NS Mayport

HURRICANE EXERCISES TAKING PLACE AT NAVAL STATION MAYPORT

By: Mark Jackson, April 23, 2018 8:06 PM

Jacksonville, FL - Naval Station Mayport is taking part in three weeks of natural disaster preparedness exercises, concentrating on the upcoming Atlantic hurricane season. The exercises will help train personnel on how to act and what to do in case a major hurricane develops.

“How do we move ships, clear contractors and ship repair agencies out of the basin, so they don’t lose gear? How do we prepare the helicopters to fly them off and where do they go?”

These exercises will make sure those questions can be answered, providing personnel with a better ability to handle a real hurricane when the time comes, says Naval Station Mayport Emergency Manager Steve Millican. Millican says as many as 5,000 people at Naval Station Mayport have never been through this training before.

He says the fictitious storm will originate just east of the Leeward Islands, then travel all the way up the eastern seaboard where it will make simulated landfall in the Virginia area, wreaking havoc in the heavily populated areas surrounding Washington, DC.....
Mayport ship plays role in seizure of 1,000 pounds of cocaine

By Joe Daraskevich, Posted Apr 26, 2018 at 10:33 AM, Updated Apr 26, 2018 at 9:16 PM

A ship based at Naval Station Mayport played a large part in the interception in the Pacific Ocean April 7 of a suspected drug-smuggling boat with more than 1,000 pounds of cocaine on board.

Four people were pulled from the water and taken into custody on Mayport’s Cyclone-class patrol coastal ship USS Zephyr after the high-speed motor boat the Zephyr was chasing caught fire, according to the Navy.

Air patrol detected the low-profile go-fast vessel and reported it to Joint Interagency Task Force-South. The Zephyr then moved to intercept the vessel as cargo was tossed into the water, according to the Navy. The boat caught fire and the people on board jumped in the water.

A Coast Guard team launched a boat from the vessel to pull the people from the water, and it took about 90 minutes to extinguish the blaze, according to the Navy.

“There was no doubt in our minds what needed to be done to salvage the evidence needed for a successful prosecution even if it meant laying Zephyr alongside a burning hull, with the intense heat and acrid smoke hindering our 90-minute firefight,” said Lt. Cmdr. Grant Greenwell, the commanding officer of the Zephyr.

Once the fire was out, a law enforcement team was able to recover about 1,080 pounds of cocaine, according to the Navy.

The Zephyr is a 174-foot vessel that can travel up to 40 mph, according to the Navy. The crew is generally four officers and 24 enlisted sailors…..

MacDill AFB

MacDill Reservists provide medical care for underserved regions of Alaska through Arctic Care 2018

Story by Maj. Joseph Simms, 927th Air Refueling Wing/Public Affairs 04.19.2018

Two medical professionals assigned to the 927th Air Refueling Wing, MacDill Air Force Base Florida, are part of a joint and multinational contingent currently supporting, Arctic Care 2018, an Innovative Readiness Exercise based out of Kotzebue, Alaska.

Major Vashun Rodriguez, a flight surgeon assigned to the 927th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, and Captain Roxanne Buffano, an optometrist assigned to the 927th Aerospace Medicine Squadron, are providing medical and vision care for residents of Northwest Alaska through April 24.
Kotzebue is one of 12 villages in the Maniilaq Service Area receiving care through the efforts of Reserve Citizen Airmen participating in Arctic Care 2018. To serve the outlying villages, providers such as Rodriguez and Buffano were transported via UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters to communities where many residents have not seen a medical professional in years.

“A few days ago, we flew into a remote village 83 miles above the Arctic Circle named Kivalina, where there typically is no provider throughout the year,” said Rodriguez. “If a resident here has an issue, they would need to be flown out to the nearest medical facility where they are evaluated, and if they need further treatment, they would need another trip to Anchorage or a location with a larger medical facility.”

US Special Operations Command

USSOCOM inducts six new members into Commando Hall of Honor

Story by Michael Bottoms, U.S. Special Operations Command 04.19.2018

U.S. Special Operations Command inducted six former special operators into the USSOCOM Commando Hall of Honor located at the USSOCOM headquarters, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, April 18, 2018. More than 100 people attended the ceremony and watched as each inductee received a medal from U.S. Army Gen. Raymond A. Thomas III, USSOCOM commander, and Sgt. Maj. Patrick McCauley, USSOCOM command sergeant major.


Cape Canaveral AFS

Air Force: 'Future is very bright' for Cape Canaveral launches, 45th Space Wing

Emre Kelly, FLORIDA TODAY, Published 4:14 p.m. ET April 19, 2018 | Updated 3:45 p.m. ET April 20, 2018

COLORADO SPRINGS – Air Force officials are confident that the Space Coast will be home to a bright future thanks to its role as one of the most active spaceports in world.

“The future is really bright – extremely bright,” Gen. John Raymond, commander of Air Force Space Command, told FLORIDA TODAY on Thursday at the 34th Space Symposium in Colorado Springs. “Assured access to space is absolutely essential to our national security.”
Raymond reiterated what the local unit, the 45th Space Wing, has coming down the pike: The “Drive to 48,” or a target of supporting up to 48 launches a year, which translates to one a week on average. That could come as soon as 2020 as Blue Origin enters the manifest along with SpaceX, United Launch Alliance, Orbital ATK, NASA and possibly others.

“That will represent almost 50 percent of the world’s launches from that one place,” Raymond said, noting that the infusion of autonomous operations into launches will help make that possible. SpaceX’s Falcon 9, for example, supports the Autonomous Flight Termination System, which can automatically destroy a rocket if deemed dangerous or straying from its path. In return, it has reduced cost and staffing requirements for the Air Force……

Patrick AFB

Reserve Citizen Airmen support planet hunting mission

By Senior Airman Brandon Kalloo Sanes, 920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs / Published April 19, 2018

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – The 920th Rescue Wing, Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, supported a successful SpaceX rocket launch out of Space Launch Complex 40 (SLC-40) at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla., April 18.

The Air Force Reserve unit is regularly tasked with clearing the area surrounding the Space Coast launch sites, ensuring safety and security for Space Coast launches.

The 920th RQW Chief of Safety and seasoned pilot, Lt. Col. Bruce Schuman, flew the HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter used to clear the Eastern Range. Schuman said the mission went very well because of extensive preparation and ideal weather conditions.

“It’s a very important mission for the Reserve because it keeps the public safe,” Schuman said. “This was an unmanned flight, but eventually there will be manned spaceflights again and we look forward to supporting those as well.”

According to SpaceX’s website, the Falcon 9 rocket propelled NASA’s Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite, which is expected to find new planets ranging in size and structure.

US Southern Command

Partner Nations Bolster Air Defense to Counter Narcotrafficking

Julieta Pelcastre/Diálogo | 24 April 2018

Hundreds of Colombian and foreign officers and noncommissioned officers trained with the Colombian Air Force (FAC, in Spanish) through its National Air Defense System School (ESDAN, in Spanish). In the last five years, 1,830 officers participated in ESDAN’s airspace control program. The objective is to bolster defense systems and effectively detect illegal drug flights in Colombia, Central America, and the
Caribbean. The training events are held at FAC’s 1st Air Combat Command in the central region of Cundinamarca.

“Colombia is a world leader in the fight against narcotrafficking because of its record,” FAC Lieutenant Colonel Juan Diego Páez González, director of ESDAN, told Diálogo. “Our military forces have wide-ranging knowledge and experience that we share with other countries to keep this threat from impacting regional security.”

In 2018, FAC will offer 10 courses to enhance regional knowledge, tactics, techniques, and procedures in air defense. The training program is part of the U.S.-Colombia Action Plan on Regional Security Cooperation for Central America and the Caribbean, an initiative of U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) and the Colombian Ministry of Defense…….

**Colombian president visits, thanks SOUTHCOM for its support**

Courtesy Story, U.S. Southern Command, 04.25.2018
https://www.dvidshub.net/news/274473/colombian-president-visits-thanks-southcom-its-support

MIAMI – Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos visited U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) April 25 to thank command personnel for their steadfast support to his country’s security efforts.

During the visit, Santos presented the Department of Defense’s geographic unified command with his country’s Orden de San Carlos (Order of San Carlos) Medal for SOUTHCOM’s unwavering support for Colombia’s peace and security throughout the years. President Santos praised the strong cooperation and joint efforts between Colombia and the U.S., particularly through SOUTHCOM. Colombia is and will remain the strongest U.S. strategic partner in the region.

The Colombian government established the decoration in 1954 to recognize civilian and military recipients of Colombian and foreign nationality for “distinguished service to the nation, especially in the area of international relations.”

President Santos’ administration has implemented a national strategy aimed at ending more than 50 years of internal conflict, disrupting transnational criminal groups operating within its borders, and improving the safety and quality of life of its people. President Santos reached a landmark peace agreement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Plan Colombia, and now Peace Colombia, were crafted by the nation’s democratic leaders, carried out by its security forces and financed primarily by its citizens with assistance from democratic and defense partners like the U.S……

**The Pentagon is poised to send the LCS to thwart narcotics**

By: Joe Gould and David B. Larter, 4-26-2018

WASHINGTON – The military is poised to decide whether it will use the littoral combat ship to stop illegal drug shipments from South and Central America to the United States.

The move, amid pressure from lawmakers and the military command covering the Southern Hemisphere, would signal a new intensity in combating the importing of illegal drugs amid a tidal wave of opioid deaths in the U.S. It would also mean a program that has seen near-constant churn as the Navy has
struggled to integrate the ship into the fleet may see more changes — if it does have to gear up for a new mission.

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Joe Dunford told lawmakers at an April 12 hearing that the Pentagon was reviewing what role the littoral combat ship could play in supporting counter-narcotics operations in U.S. Southern Command, something SOUTHCOM boss Adm. Kurt Tidd has asked for.

The Pentagon is still evaluating the right mix of Coast Guard cutters and littoral combat ships for Latin America and the Caribbean. Mattis said at the time he was awaiting Dunford’s feedback……

**NAS Key West**

‘This Was an Education’: President Trump On His Visit To Key West

By Ted Scouten, April 19, 2018 at 6:00 pm
http://miami.cbslocal.com/2018/04/19/president-trump-visit-key-west/

MIAMI (CBSMiami) – For the first time in 55 years, a sitting U.S. President touched down in Key West Thursday. Cheering supporters greeted President Donald Trump when he arrived at the Naval Air Station Key West aboard Air Force One.

During Mr. Trump’s 2-hour visit, he took a tour of the Joint Interagency Task Force South which battles drug trafficking along with partner countries and agencies.

“This was an education. We’re talking about drugs and stopping these drugs and other things, human trafficking and other forms of trafficking,” said the President.

The president used his visit to also push his border wall, saying this is proof that it is needed.

“Drugs are flowing into our country. We need border protection, we need the wall. Democrats don’t want to approve a wall because they think it’s good politically, it’s not,” said President Trump. “Looking at what’s happening in California with sanctuary cities where the people are really going the opposite way. They don’t want sanctuary cities. And there’s a little bit of a revolution going on in California,” he said……

**Big Pine Key brush fire burns 100 acres, and still has hotspots**

BY GWEN FILOSA, April 23, 2018 10:01 AM, Updated April 23, 2018 07:25 PM

Gable McKechnie, whose family was displaced by Hurricane Irma seven months ago, came home Sunday to find flames and heavy smoke choking her Big Pine Key neighborhood.

"We've barely recovered from Irma," McKechnie said Monday, showing a visitor her four horses, pony and miniature donkey named Rocky on her two-acre lot. "We lost three of four barns."
The McKechnies had to move from Summerland Key after Irma because the landlord wanted the home. So now they live in an RV parked on the Big Pine lot they had used only for their animals. They got a call Sunday afternoon that the brush fire near their home was getting worse…..

**Defense Industry / Workforce**

**Kaine: Skilled workers, not just money, needed to expand the Navy fleet**

Hugh Lessig, Contact Reporter, Daily Press, April 18, 2018 9:31 AM

The **Navy needs support from Congress to expand its fleet, but it won’t get far without a skilled labor force.** That’s a concern for Sen. Tim Kaine.

The Virginia senator plans to convene an event in Hampton Roads in early June to discuss regional workforce issues in light of ambitious plans. The fleet stands at about 280 ships now, and the Navy hopes to achieve a 355-ship fleet by the mid-2030s through a combination of new construction and extending the life of current vessels.

“We talk about what 355 means for the budget, and there are a whole series of issues there, but there is a real workforce need,” Kaine said Tuesday at meeting of the Senate Armed Services sea power panel. “Folks who are going to be building these ships are in pre-K right now.”

Kaine, the son of a Kansas ironworker, has supported skilled trades during his time in the Senate. He has visited The Apprentice School at Newport News Shipbuilding and co-chairs a Senate caucus that focuses on career and technical education…..

**Lockheed Martin lands $1 billion deal for hypersonic missile**

Marco Santana, Contact Reporter, Orlando Sentinel, April 19, 2018, 13:30AM

Lockheed Martin landed a nearly $1 billion deal with the U.S. Air Force to develop a hypersonic cruise missile that can travel five times the speed of sound — that’s more than 3,800 mph — fending off competing bids by defense giants Northrop Grumman, Boeing and Raytheon.

The $928 million deal will be led by the company’s Huntsville, Ala.-based space division. An Orlando-based team that will take advantage of the local team’s “expertise in aircraft integration” also will be involved, a spokeswoman said in an email.

The contract puts the company in the middle of a weapons race that has seen China and Russia aggressively pursue hypersonic missiles.

According to CNBC, Air Force Gen. John Hyten told an armed services committee that the U.S. needed to develop the system as a deterrent to other countries…….
Defense industry needs 5 percent annual budget growth to stay healthy, says new AIA report

By: Joe Gould, 4-25-18

WASHINGTON – The American defense-industrial base needs Pentagon budgets to grow at least 5 percent per year to remain healthy and stable, the industry’s leading trade group said in a report released Wednesday.

The report by the Aerospace Industries Association blames Budget Control Act cuts and Congress’ repeated deferral to continuing resolutions for a steep drop in the market’s number of prime vendors. It’s unclear exactly how smaller suppliers have been impacted, but “the detrimental impact of budget cuts have been felt throughout the supply chain,” the report reads.

Recent years marked by brief government shutdowns and lengthy continuing resolutions have yielded waste, disrupted major programs at key milestones and driven inefficient spending practices at the Department of Defense by forcing it to spend money faster, the report argues. That hurt the industrial base and produced a magnified effect at lower tiers of the supply chain.

“We can fix whatever acquisition problems we see, but if we don’t have stable, robust, balanced spending, our free-market economy will not be able to respond to DoD’s needs in a timely, effective way,” John Luddy, AIA’s vice president for national security policy, told Defense News. “It doesn’t all boil down to money, but it starts with that.”

The 5 percent figure intentionally hews to Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joe Dunford’s calls for sustained budget growth through 2023 to maintain the country’s military edge over competitors Russia and China, Luddy said.

Jeff Bezos says he liquidates a whopping $1 billion of Amazon stock every year to pay for his rocket company, Blue Origin

Prachi Bhardwaj, 4-25-2018

Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos spends a tiny fraction of his net worth to fund Blue Origin, the aerospace company he started in 2000.

For a man worth $127 billion, that tiny fraction amounts to $1 billion a year, which he gets by liquidating Amazon stock, Bezos said at an Axel Springer awards event in Berlin, Germany, hosted by Business Insider's US editor-in-chief, Alyson Shontell.

"The only way I can see to deploy this much financial resource is by converting my Amazon winnings into space travel," he said in an interview with Axel Springer CEO Mathias Dopfner. "Blue Origin is expensive enough to be able to use that fortune."

Bezos said he planned to continue funding the company through that annual tradition long into the future.
DoD Budget
DoD’s Underfunded Maintenance Backlog Exceeds $116 Billion, Official Says
by: Terri Moon Cronk | DoD News | published: April 19, 2018

WASHINGTON – The requested $10.5 billion in military construction and family housing programs in the president’s fiscal year 2019 budget request makes significant progress to recapitalize facilities, but it will not reverse the impacts of six years of sequestration, the assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment said today.

“We currently have an underfunded maintenance backlog exceeding $116 billion; 23 percent of the department's facilities are in poor condition, [and] another 9 percent are in failing condition,” Lucian Niemeyer told the House Armed Services Committee’s subcommittee on readiness.

“My frank assessment [is that] it may be too costly to buy ourselves out of this backlog,” he said. “We must work to remove unneeded capacity to fund higher priorities. As noted in the National Defense Strategy, we continue to reduce excess infrastructure and will work with Congress for options for base realignment and closures. These efforts will be enhanced by a careful evaluation we are undertaking of how and when we base new forces and new capabilities.”

Senate Panel Postpones Defense Bill Markup; Milcon Spending Bill to Be Marked up in House This Week

The Senate Armed Services Committee will mark up its version of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill the week of May 21, two weeks later than previously planned, a committee aide said Monday. James Inhofe (R-Okla.) is expected to lead the markup for Chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.), who is recovering from brain cancer and surgery last week to treat an intestinal infection related to diverticulitis, reported CQ. McCain has not been in Washington since late last year. Meanwhile, six House Armed Services’ subcommittees will mark up their portions of the annual defense policy bill on Thursday, with the full committee’s daylong markup scheduled for May 9. … The House Military Construction-Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee will mark up its FY 2019 spending bill Thursday at 9 a.m., the committee announced.

House Democrats Say School Choice Provision Could ‘Derail’ Defense Bill

Dan Cohen, Posted on Apr 24, 2018 04:00 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=f9d7c89ecd

House Democrats say a school choice provision they say is intended to pay for single service academies could “derail” a defense authorization bill in the House this week.

Democrats say they are “very concerned” about the provision, which would allocate $5 billion for the “Academy Program” under the military construction and veterans affairs spending bill. They argue that the Academy Program is not a priority and that it would divert funds that could be used to pay for current obligations. … The Senate authorization bill includes $3.4 billion for the Academy Program, but the House bill allocates $5 billion.

House Appropriations Committee Chair Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) said the Academy Program is a priority and that it would be funded in the final version of the bill.

House Armed Services Chairman Mac Thornberry (R-Texas), who is also a cosponsor of the Academy Program, said he is confident the provision will be included in the final version of the bill.

The Academy Program would fund military service academies, which are located at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, New York; the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado; the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland; and the U.S. Marine Corps’ Command and General Staff College in Quantico, Virginia.

The Academy Program would also fund the National Defense University, which is located in Washington, D.C., and the U.S. Army War College, which is located inCarlisle, Pennsylvania.

Democrats say the Academy Program is not a priority and that it would divert funds that could be used to pay for current obligations. They argue that the Academy Program is not a priority and that it would divert funds that could be used to pay for current obligations.

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The Academy Program would also fund the National Defense University, which is located in Washington, D.C., and the U.S. Army War College, which is located inCarlisle, Pennsylvania.
Democratic members of the House Armed Services and the Education and Workforce committees on Tuesday vowed to oppose the inclusion of language in the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill providing military families the option of establishing education savings accounts to pursue alternative educational opportunities. The Democratic lawmakers are concerned that legislation, H.R. 5199, giving military families the ability to redirect a portion of their Impact Aid allocations into an account to pay for private school tuition, textbooks, tutoring, online courses and other educational expenses could be wrapped into the annual defense policy measure, which is being marked up this week by six House Armed Services subcommittees.

“The inclusion of any proposal that would send public resources to private schools is opposed by the Democratic caucus and could potentially derail any NDAA bill that contains such [a] measure,” 41 Democrats wrote in a letter to the chairs of the two panels. “Any amendment that diverts resources from public schools would be detrimental to the majority of military-connected students,” they said.

Instead the Democrats said Armed Services Chair Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) and Education and the Workforce Chair Virginia Foxx (R-N.C.) should look at other ways to assist military families, reported the Hill. “Congress should work to fully implement ESSA [Every Student Succeeds Act], monitor the educational achievement of military-connected students through the new subgroup data in ESSA, support the implementation of the Military Interstate Children’s Compact Commission, and focus on the support military families need,” they wrote.

DOD Could Fund Off-Base Infrastructure Projects under Proposed Authority

Dan Cohen, Posted on Apr 26, 2018 04:15 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=0d942aee80

Defense communities could pick up critical financial assistance for infrastructure projects which support neighboring installations under a new authority the House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee included in its mark of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill. The draft legislation would establish the Defense Community Infrastructure Program and would allow DOD to award grants to states and local governments to address “deficiencies in community infrastructure projects or facilities which are located outside of military installations but which support military installations.” The department first would need to determine the assistance “will enhance the military value, resiliency or military family quality of life” at the installation.

The language calls for DOD to establish criteria for the eligibility and selection of states and municipalities. It would require participants to contribute at least 20 percent of the total project cost in most cases; the department would be able to waive the cost-share requirement for rural communities. A transportation project, a school, hospital, police, fire, emergency response or other community support facility, or a waste, wastewater, telecommunications, electric, gas or other utility infrastructure project would be eligible for the program.

DOD would be required to provide Congress 14 days before obligating funds “a comprehensive description of how the assistance will address deficiencies in the project or facility, a certification of military need” and, if applicable, certification that the state or local agency will meet the cost-share requirement.

The department’s only existing program helping communities pay for infrastructure needed to support an installation is the Defense Access Roads program. It is designed to pay for defense-related transportation needs affecting a surrounding community if they are sudden, unusual or unique, and state and local
authorities are unable to address the requirement. The eligibility criteria, however, require traffic to
double, an unrealistic standard for urban areas already saddled with severe traffic delays.

The subcommittee is scheduled to mark up its section of the policy bill Thursday.

Other Of Interest

Boeing, Lockheed, ULA corner the government-funded space market. SpaceX moving up

by Sandra Erwin — April 22, 2018

WASHINGTON – Attracting new players to compete for national security and civil space contracts
has been a longtime goal of the Congress, the Pentagon and NASA. But as the numbers show, only a
handful of contractors command the bulk of federal dollars spent on space programs.

The U.S. government invested $83 billion in space platforms and hypersonic technologies between
fiscal years 2011 and 2017, according to Govini’s new report, Space Platforms & Hypersonic
Technologies Taxonomy. Lockheed Martin, United Launch Alliance — a joint venture between
Lockheed Martin and Boeing — and Boeing captured more than half of all contract obligations,
Govini estimated. SpaceX took the fourth spot in 2017, leading the trend of “new space” companies
that are moving to compete for government contracts.

ULA is the big winner based on how much its market share has increased over the six years. Govini
calculated ULA’s average obligation value per contract went from $10.1 million in 2011 to $23.6
million in 2017 and grabbed 49 percent of the total launch market. “ULA leveraged its presence in
the medium-lift market subsegment to capture $14.6 billion in federal unclassified contracts from
FY-11 through FY-17,” the study noted. “This growth in market share made it the top vendor in our
analysis.”

Looking at the top 15 space contractors, little fluctuation occurred over the past six years. Three
companies dropped out: Iridium, Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory and General Dynamics.
Newcomers to the top 15 include Raytheon, Harris and United Technologies. UT became a top-15
vendor 2017 selling booster technology for NASA’s Space Launch System. Raytheon moved into the
top 15 by winning hypersonic vehicle development contracts……

Military veterans bring valuable assets to the workforce in Central Florida

STEVE DEBENPORT, By CareerSource Florida, Apr 23, 2018

The talent pool in Central Florida runs deep and wide, continuously filled with local high school, college,
university, and trade-school graduates, as well as those exiting the military.

Emerging industries like advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and tech –fueled by growth in Lake Nona,
Research Park, Heathrow, and NeoCity and BRIDG – are gaining a foothold in the Central Florida region
as companies like Deloitte, ADP, Verizon, and Amazon expand their presence in the area, creating jobs
for that talent.
It’s a classic case of supply and demand, and it looks as though demand may be gaining. That is good news for job seekers throughout the metro area and those looking to relocate here.

In addition to a wealth of world-class education institutions, it may be surprising to learn that Central Florida is home to an abundant veteran population – one that is all too ready to transition from the disciplined, cutting-edge, tech-savvy military to the civilian workforce.

“Veterans typically bring a wealth of transferrable skills, in addition to the soft skills they developed in training, to any position for which they might apply,” says CareerSource Central Florida Veterans Program Manager Annmarie O’Brien.

Students at DoD-run schools score among nation’s best in reading, math assessments

By: Karen Jowers, 4-24-2018

Students in fourth and eighth grades in Defense Department schools turned in strong performances on a 2017 national assessment, scoring at or near the top of the charts of participating states in reading and mathematics.

All the Department of Defense Education Activity students’ scores ranked in the top three states or jurisdictions in the nation in the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what students know and can do in various subject areas. The scores range from 0 to 500; in early 2017, students were tested in math and reading.

“We are extremely proud of our students’ performance on the NAEP 2017 reading and mathematics assessments,” DoDEA director Thomas Brady said in a statement announcing the results. “Our students led the nation in sustained student performance excellence.”
May 4

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #64 is scheduled for **Thursday, 17 May 2018**, beginning at 9:00AM EDT at the Residence Inn Marriott Tallahassee, 600 W. Gaines Street, Tallahassee, FL 32304. If you have not let Michelle know if you are attending, please do so ASAP!

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979  
   Access Code: 1869945

3. **Air Force Releases Assessment of Test Capabilities** – The USAF completed an assessment of the services test centers and capabilities for Congress in March 2018. The report (attached) primarily covers Air Force Test programs at Edwards AFB, CA as well as the 96th Test Wing at Eglin AFB FL. The main three findings of the report are: 1) Funding for critical sustainment, restoration, and modernization of test capabilities, 2) Development and growth of hypersonic infrastructure and test capabilities, and 3) Increased workforce recruitment and retention. Of note, the report covers the threat of Oil Drilling and Exploration (pg 26-27), encroachment issues in the gulf including oil drilling, spectrum and airspace (pg 36-39), and range enhancement in the gulf (pg 29-30) as primary requirements.

4. **TPG Met with Key CODEL Staffers** – Over the last two weeks, TPG met with Military Liaison Assistants (MLA) from Senators Nelson and Rubio, as well as Representatives Gaetz, Murphy, Wasserman Shultz, Diaz-Balart, Curbelo, and Rooney. Overall the meetings were valuable for staff and TPG noted that they were very interested and want more frequent contact. TPG presented the SWOT report and the FDSTF Strategic Plan. They received good feedback for the products and the issues raised for our installations (more details in the attached April EOM on pages 17-18).

5. **Is Your Installation’s Water Contaminated?** – According to an April 28 Article from Bryant Clerkley, “The Department of Defense released a study that says 126 military installations across the country have contaminated water that causes cancer and birth defects.” Three of the installations are in NW Florid; NAS Pensacola, Whiting Field and Eglin Air force Base. Clerkley noted that “DOD conducted groundwater testing and found that military, private and public drinking water systems could pose a threat.” See the report attached.

6. **Nelson, Rubio and Rutherford Write SecNav** – Three members of the Florida Congressional Delegation sent a letter to Navy Secretary Richard Spencer on April 26th (attached) about the Navy’s decision to move three ships out of Mayport. According to an article by Mark Jackson, “The lawmakers say moving these ships from their homeport appears to be a violation of law” and also “hurts the sailors and their families.” See full article below in the CLIPS.

7. **Other States Continue to Expand Defense Industry Support** – Connecticut is the next state, following Missouri and Virginia, to directly target defense industry workforce development in their state. Connecticut will provide $85 million to help bolster the shipbuilding workforce that supports the Naval ship building industry at Groton. Without the workforce, the state could lose the shipbuilding contracts. According to an article in the Hartford Current, “Gov. Dannel P. Malloy announced Tuesday the state will provide nearly
$85 million in grants, incentives and loans to help General Dynamics Electric Boat add nearly 1,900 employees over 17 years and expand its Groton site to accommodate the sub builder’s rising workload.” See article below in the CLIPS.

8. **Another DoD Assessment of Offshore Oil Drilling Areas Ordered** – Last week the DoD ordered another comprehensive review of military mission compatibility with offshore oil drilling in all Offshore Continental Shelf (OCS) areas. The tasker (attached) will be the “most comprehensive review” of the areas done to date. They have asked for the OCS areas to be color coded in four categories: 1. Unrestricted (Green): No DoD-requested restrictions on oil and gas infrastructure or related activities. However, DoD requests early and prior consultation if oil and gas activity is contemplated in these areas, 2. Site Specific Stipulations (Yellow): Areas where, with specific stipulations, above-surface oil and gas infrastructure may be feasible. Examples of currently used stipulations include: “hold harmless” provisions; electromagnetic emission controls; site evacuation protocols; location precoordination; density limitations; and planned periods of lease operations. Attachment 2 provides further details on examples of OCS lease stipulations, 3. No Permanent Oil & Gas Surface Structures (Orange): Areas where subsurface oil and gas infrastructure may be compatible; e.g., where scheduled temporary surface activities from a drillship or moveable platform are pre-coordinated with DoD and subsurface and seabed infrastructure remains in place, and 4. No Oil and Gas Activity (Red): Areas where any oil and gas development infrastructure and activity would jeopardize DoD testing, training, and operations.

9. **Attachments:**
   - DoD Water Contamination Report
   - Mayport Letter
   - USAF Test Center Assessment
   - TPG End Of Month Report
   - Bi-weekly TPG conference Call Memo
   - BOEM’s Gas Leasing Draft Proposed Program (DPP) Tasking Memo

**Terry**

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News Clips of Interest:

**Oil Drilling / Gulf Range**

**Buchanan, Nelson condemn offshore drilling changes**

By Jim Turner, Posted Apr 27, 2018 at 11:11 PM, Updated Apr 27, 2018 at 11:25 PM

**TALLAHASSEE** – Members of Florida’s congressional delegation from both sides of the political aisle denounced a White House proposal Friday that they say would weaken offshore oil-drilling regulations.

The Interior Department labeled the proposed changes to what is known as the 2016 Well Control Rule as “our common-sense approach,” which “could reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens while ensuring that any such activity is safe and environmentally responsible.”

The American Petroleum Institute said the revisions to a “technically flawed” rule will make offshore operations safer.

But Florida lawmakers pointed to economic damage that the deadly 2010 Deepwater Horizon explosion and oil spill inflicted on the state’s tourism industry and environment, particularly in the Panhandle. Those lawmakers questioned if the risk is worth reducing safety regulations.

Rep. Vern Buchanan, R-Longboat Key, criticized the proposal by the Interior Department’s Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement as “reckless and unacceptable.” The proposal would alter 44 provisions and delete another 15 involving well-control regulations…..

**Cyber**

**People Are Leaving Silicon Valley and Orlando Might Be the Next Hot Spot**

By Jeff Barrett, CEO, Barrett Digital@barrettall, Mar 8, 2018

It costs $2000 to rent a U-Haul in San Francisco. Rent one anywhere else and it's roughly $100. This year the Bay Area will lose more people than any other region in the country. The reason is a variety of factors; affordability, access to opportunity and technology making it increasingly easier to work from anywhere.

The consolidation of talent bubble in Silicon Valley has burst. It was a great run. Where do people and companies go next?

When you're considering where to relocate, which I'm in the process of doing myself, access (both to capital and talent) is key. What I look for in a destination city are strong existing companies, a large talent pool and capital that exists but may not be investing in tech yet.

**Think Outside of Conventional Tech Hubs**
I toured Orlando in January. In the last six years the city has grown 16.31 percent. And at first blush you may think theme parks, retirees and tourism. But they have the largest university in the country, based on enrollment, in UCF. Downtown is young. And there's a pipeline of talent both from universities and strong existing companies like Disney, Lockheed Martin and EA Sports.

Orlando has already seen the Silicon Valley exodus pay dividends, with fast-growing Fattmerchant. The young payment processing company is growing rapidly. Founder Suneera Madhani and her brother Sal Rehmetullah, who worked in Silicon Valley, intentionally chose to plant their flag in Orlando……

**BRAC**

**BRAC Round Could Help Foster Growth of Unmanned Systems, Niemeyer Says**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Apr 30, 2018 03:30 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=5b608bd9a7

Since being sworn in as assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment last year, Lucian Niemeyer has said DOD needs to conduct a new round of base closures not simply to reduce its spending on unneeded infrastructure but also as a way to ensure new missions are based in locations that are best suited to support them. So it was hardly surprising that Niemeyer pointed to the potential benefit offered by a new BRAC round when North Dakota Sen. John Hoeven (R) asked him last week about the most significant infrastructure challenges to increasing the number of flights of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) in the United States and the size of the UAS fleet.

“I would say making sure we’ve got a basing strategy in place,” he responded during a hearing led by the Senate Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee. Many of DOD’s unmanned aircraft are overseas and the department doesn’t have a plan in place for basing them if they no longer were needed to support ongoing conflicts, he said. “I think we still have work to do around the country where best to place those and what locations would best support their continued training and development to the next generation of capabilities for that system.”

A BRAC round would provide DOD leaders the opportunity to assess how they could best support the development of UAS, Niemeyer added. “I would love to be able to take a look at the entire enterprise for unmanned systems through a process where I could pick those locations that are most ideally suited for us to be able to support those systems long term. Right now for us the Base Realignment and Closure process allows that enterprise look at emerging technologies like that and where best to place them,” he said.

Another challenge to expanding testing and training of UAS is the number of locations with restricted airspace, Niemeyer told Hoeven. That limitation could be eased when the Federal Aviation Administration releases an updated plan to open up the national airspace to unmanned systems.

**Mixed Report Card: Economic Performance of BRAC 2005 Closure Communities Is Average**

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 02, 2018 04:05 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=ce28c333ba

Approximately five years after the closure of 23 installations in the 2005 BRAC round, 11 of the 20
affected communities had unemployment rates at or below the national average of 4.9 percent in 2016, according to a recent report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO). Seven communities had unemployment rates a little higher than the average — between 4.9 percent and 6.0 percent — and two had unemployment rates above 8.0 percent. The Portland-South Portland, Maine, statistical area — home of the former Naval Air Station Brunswick — recorded the lowest unemployment rate, 3.0 percent.

The closed installations were represented by only 20 communities because three closures were in the Atlanta region — Fort Gillem, Fort McPherson and Naval Air Station Atlanta — and two were in southern Mississippi — Naval Station Pascagoula and Mississippi Army Ammunition Plant.

Measuring the communities’ per capita income growth rates from 2006-2016 revealed a similar distribution — 11 closure communities had annualized real per capita income growth rates higher than the national average of 1.0 percent, with the other nine falling below 1.0 percent.

In many cases the analysis is too broad to draw any conclusions about the success of community efforts to recover, or replace the lost economic activity, following the BRAC 2005 closures. For installations located in larger statistical areas, the economic indicators don’t closely reflect the conditions in the surrounding community. And in a number of instances, redevelopment has not yet begun.

“While our assessment provides an overall picture of how these communities compare with the national averages, it does not isolate the condition, or the changes in that condition, that may be attributed to a specific BRAC action,” the report states.

**Measuring Effectiveness of Base Closure Could Support DOD’s Case for New Rounds, GAO Concludes**

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 03, 2018 03:33 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=3832ddd20e

The Pentagon’s case for conducting a new round of base closures could be stronger if it had measured whether the goals of the 2005 round of base closures — reducing excess infrastructure, transforming the military and promoting jointness — were achieved, according to a recent report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO). Instead officials from DOD and the services tracked their progress completing the BRAC Commission’s recommendations by the September 2011 statutory deadline and measured the cost savings associated with them. The congressional watchdog agency found that the department did not have the necessary data to calculate how much excess infrastructure was disposed of during the 2005 round.

With no way to evaluate whether the last BRAC round achieved its goals, DOD cannot demonstrate whether the services’ realignment and closure actions improved their efficiency and effectiveness, preventing it from showing Congress that the benefits of a future BRAC round would outweigh the upfront implementation costs, the agency said.

In March 2013, GAO recommended that “in the event of any future BRAC round, DOD identify appropriate measures of effectiveness and develop a plan to demonstrate the extent to which the department achieved the results intended from the implementation of the BRAC round.” But DOD opposed the recommendation, stating that military value should be the primary driver for BRAC. In the new report, GAO calls for Congress to “consider, in any future BRAC authorization, a requirement for DOD to identify appropriate measures of effectiveness and to track the achievement of its goals.”
DOD opposed that recommendation as well, stating it would “subvert the statutory requirement that military value be the priority consideration,” according to the report. Its recommendation does not, however, undermine the department’s reliance on military value as the primary selection criteria for its candidate BRAC recommendations, GAO notes.

“If Congress would like to increase its oversight for any future BRAC round, requiring DOD to identify appropriate measures of effectiveness and track achievement of its goals would provide it with improved visibility over the expected outcome,” the agency states.

**Lawmakers May Consider BRAC-Lite Proposal**

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 04, 2018 04:05 am

https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156e255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=d2cd1923c6

A plan permitting the Defense Department to shutter small bases or “tangential facilities,” provided the affected communities do not oppose the move, may be introduced as an amendment to the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill, Rep. Rob Wittman (R-Va.) said at a Navy League luncheon in Norfolk Thursday. “They would have to say that it’s excess inventory and we don’t need it,” he said. “And the localities would have to say that it’s OK to do that.”

Wittman, who chairs the House Armed Services’ SeaPower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, said he would favor the proposal as “it brings everybody to the table to discuss excess capacity.” The Pentagon needs to shed unneeded facilities, he added. “[However] if we get rid of facilities in strategically centered locations — that is, population centers — you will never ever get them back.”

Craig Quigley, executive director of the Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance, said the new approach shouldn’t threaten any local facilities, reported the Virginian-Pilot. “Conceptually, it’s hard to argue with that idea of the military and host community both thinking a facility should close,” Quigley said. “From a Hampton Roads perspective, I’m hard pressed to think of an example of this.”

**NAS Pensacola**

**Pensacola NAS: Stop aiming laser pointers at military aircraft**

From staff reports, pnj.com, Published 12:31 p.m. CT May 3, 2018 | Updated 3:45 p.m. CT May 3, 2018


Pensacola Naval Air Station is warning people not to target military aircraft with laser pointers.

In a news release issued Thursday, the base said it has seen a recent increase in the number of incident involving laser pointers being aimed at aircraft.

"Pointing lasers at aircraft can not only temporarily blind pilots, but cause permanent damage as well. The canopy Plexiglas magnifies the intensity of the laser, which can compromise the vision of pilots and even require medical treatments," the Navy said in the release.

The Navy said pointing a laser at an aircraft can bring a fine of up to $250,000 and five years' imprisonment.
Eglin AFB

Changes coming to Armament Museum

By Jim Thompson, Northwest Florida Daily News © April 28, 2018

EGLIN AFB – The Air Force Armament Museum is continuing its move back to the future.

Last year, the museum unveiled a touch-screen kiosk system to deepen visitors’ understanding of its static aircraft and munitions displays. By June of this year, the museum hopes to unveil its first digitally interactive exhibit, an upgrade to its existing Medal of Honor exhibit. By the end of the year, visitors should be able to interactively explore World War I at the Armament Museum, according to director David Fitzpatrick.

Current plans also call for the Armament Museum to add interactive capabilities to its World War II section by the end of 2019, Fitzpatrick said, with similar upgrades to its Vietnam-era exhibits coming after that. For the longer term, according to Fitzpatrick, the museum is considering adding a “modern conflict” section, beginning with Desert Storm and continuing into the present-day conflicts involving American troops in the Middle East…….

7th Group hosting Community Day

By Jim Thompson, Posted May 3, 2018 at 11:32 AM, Updated May 3, 2018 at 11:42 AM

EGLIN AFB – Want to learn what life is like for an Army Special Forces soldier, and get an up-close look at the equipment they use?

The 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne), an Army unit based at Eglin Air Force Base and headquartered near Crestview, is hosting another one of its free Community Day events on May 8. From 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. that day, area residents and others interested in learning about the 2,500-soldier group will get a chance to meet and talk with troops, tour a number of static displays, witness a free-fall parachuting demonstration, and get a briefing from the unit commander, Col. Patrick Colloton.

“He’ll go over everything they’ll be able to see and do,” said Maj. Kimbia Rey, 7th Group’s public affairs officer.

Community Day is an annual event at 7th Group, and it routinely attracts a large crowd. Last year, Rey said, more than 1,000 people came to the group’s compound, located at the western end of 77th Special Forces Way off State Road 85 north of Crestview…..

Tyndall AFB

Runners Survived Zombie Attacks During 5K

My Panhandle, Updated: Apr 28, 2018 11:28 PM EDT

PANAMA CITY, Fla. - Tyndall Air Force Base was infested with zombies Saturday afternoon as they attempted to survive The Running Dead 5K Fun Run.
Participants ran for survival through obstacles and obstructions with military aircraft, infected storage containers, a school bus, dirt mounds and more.

The runners job was to protect their flags strapped around their waist, which zombies tried to "bite" off. Those that escaped the hordes received a "I'm a Survivor" token!

"Spring time, summer, doesn't matter. Get off the couch, have some fun, show your community partnership, military, downtown, our sponsors, everyone comes together. Retired, civilian, active duty, capital A airmen having fun together in the sun. No better life than that," said runner Nyron Alexander.

After the race, runners were treated to refreshments and a screening of The Walking Dead.

**NS Mayport**

**Florida Lawmakers Reach Out To Navy Secretary Over Mayport Ship Maintenance**

By: Mark Jackson, April 27, 2018 7:31 PM


**Jacksonville, FL** – U.S. Senators Marco Rubio and Bill Nelson and Florida U.S. Representative John Rutherford have sent Navy Secretary Richard Spencer a letter regarding recent decisions to remove certain ships from Mayport for ship maintenance. The lawmakers say moving these ships from their homeport appears to be a violation of law. The two Republicans- Rubio and Rutherford- and Democrat-Nelson- believe the move hurts sailors and their families.

The ships in question are three Patrol Craft ships: USS Zephyr, USS Shamal and USS Tornado. The lawmakers say policy changes in the last year have led to the ships and their sailors being removed from Naval Station Mayport for a Docking Phased Maintenance Availability, or DPMA. Current law requires that work to be done locally if the maintenance is less than ten months long and adequate competition exists, and according to the lawmakers, that was the case with these vessels. They say recent action taken by the Navy’s Southeast Regional Maintenance Center increased the timeline for the USS Zephyr to more than ten months, and that’s a pattern that’s been taking place recently.

Senators Rubio and Nelson and Congressman Rutherford contend the Navy’s actions impact quality of life for sailors and families and lessen the local ship repair and maintenance workforce. They contend that the Jacksonville ship repair industrial base has already seen reduced ship counts and further removals will only exacerbate the problem.

The lawmakers are asking for clarification on several issues, including if firms at Mayport are qualified to do the work required, and if so, they want to know if those firms were solicited for bids. They’d also like to get background on any of the Mayport firms found to be unqualified. If the firms are unqualified, then under law, the work would be able to be performed elsewhere.

**MacDill AFB**

**Headed to AirFest at MacDill? Here’s what you’ll need to know**
The Tampa Bay AirFest at MacDill Air Force Base, coming up May 12 and 13, should be a lot of fun for those who enjoy seeing F-18s, F-22s and A-10s, and a host of private aerobatic acts buzzing overhead.

But it’s going to be a long, hot couple of days out there, folks, with about 150,000 people expected to attend. So here are some dos and don’ts you’ll want to know about before you head to this free event.

Gates open at 8 a.m. each day, but I’ve seen people start lining up at 5 a.m.

Do not bring your drones, balloons, guns or comfort animals. Do not bring your guns, knives or medical marijuana. Do not wear big, heavy chain jewelry, or come dressed up like a service member or cop. Unless, of course, you are a service member or cop, then please do come dressed as such. But still leave the Mr. T bling at home…..

US Central Command

USCENTCOM hosts 100 MacDill AF IMAs


In celebration of U.S. Air Force Reserve’s 70 years of service, IMA Airmen from USCENTCOM, U.S. Special Operations Command, U.S. Special Operations Command Central, and the 927th Air Refueling Wing shared professional military education opportunities, offered mentorship and fostered networking capabilities.

As IMAs, these Citizen Airmen hone their craft during their daily occupations and bring their expertise to share in their military service.

“IMAs serve a very unique role as they step in whenever their active-duty counterpart has to leave on a temporary duty assignment, or deployments for example,” said Chief Master Sgt. Mark Catledge, the Air Force IMA senior enlisted advisor assigned to USCENTCOM. “They perform their duties the same as active-duty, and ensures that their unit’s mission goes on.”

The assembly was joined by Chief Master Sgt. Ericka Kelly, the command chief of Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command, Robins AFB, Georgia…..

US Special Operations Command

WWC Awarded USSOCOM Training and Exercise Program Contract

Newswire.com - April 30, 2018

http://www.digitaljournal.com/pr/3753931
TAMPA, Fla. – WWC (Wittenberg Weiner Consulting LLC) was awarded the largest contract to a women-owned small business in the history of the US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). The five-year, $200 million Enterprise-Wide Training and Exercise Program Support (UEWTEP II) contract provides management and subject matter expert support to USSOCOM worldwide. With this award, WWC is set to become the largest defense contractor headquartered in Tampa, based on the latest published numbers in the Tampa Bay Business Journal.

The organization has focused on creating employment opportunities for all members of the military community and was recognized with the 2017 Hiring Our Heroes Small Business Award for Veteran and Military Spouse Employment from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation for its efforts. WWC’s owners are fierce advocates of Tampa’s role as a center of gravity for government defense firms.

“WWC and the defense industry are important economic engines in the Tampa Bay region. The award to WWC of the largest contract to a women-owned small business in the history of the US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) highlights how these small businesses spearhead efforts to increase high wage jobs and expand Tampa Bay’s economy,” said U.S Representative Kathy Castor. “Tampa is a community that cares about those who serve and their entire family. So, it is important to note that WWC has focused on creating employment opportunities for all members of the military community and was recognized with the 2017 Hiring Our Heroes Small Business Award for Veteran and Military Spouse Employment by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. It is a great example of what many of us have been championing - finding a fit for military spouses who are forced to move about often and who, despite great experience and education, sometimes have difficulty finding that right slot with existing companies. This great news for WWC can be an inspiration for other military spouses to continue working to find or create their own paths to success.”

Cape Canaveral AFS
Blue Origin Launches New Shepard Space Capsule on Highest Test Flight Yet

By Tariq Malik, Space.com Managing Editor | April 29, 2018 02:47pm ET

Blue Origin, the private space company founded by billionaire Jeff Bezos, launched its passenger spaceship New Shepard on a test flight Sunday (April 29), carrying a dummy astronaut and experiments on their highest spaceflight yet.

The New Shepard 2.0 rocket and capsule, which have both flown in space before, lifted off from Blue Origin's West Texas launch site at 1:06 p.m. EDT (1706 GMT). Despite several hours of delays (thunderstorms thwarted a 9:45 a.m. EDT launch target) and countdown holds for last-minute checks, the flight appeared to go flawlessly.


Blue Origin's New Shepard 2.0 rocket and capsule launch to space during a successful test flight from West Texas on April 29, 2018.

Blue Origin launched New Shepard to a target altitude of 351,000 feet (106,984 meters), Bezos said after the launch. That's almost 66 miles (107 km), slightly higher than the company's typical target of 62 miles (100 km) — the altitude widely accepted as the boundary line for space,
"Apogee of 351,000 feet (66 miles, 107 kilometers), and that's the altitude we've been targeting for operations," Bezos said on Twitter after the launch. "One step closer."

Jeff Bezos’ Blue Origin updates progress on Cape rocket facilities

Paul Brinkmann, Contact Reporter, Orlando Sentinel, April 30, 2018, 4:15PM

Tucked away in Blue Origin’s coverage of its launch in Texas on Sunday were some details on progress being made at the company’s new facilities in Cape Canaveral.

Blue Origin is currently hiring and gearing up its rocket factory near Kennedy Space Center – where it plans to build its New Glenn orbital rocket – and at its operations at Launch Complex 36.

“Things are coming together nicely for the New Glenn maiden flight for the end of 2020,” said Ariane Cornell, Blue Origin’s Head of astronaut strategy and sales. “When New Glenn takes off, with 3.85 million pounds of thrust, you are going to feel it. It’s gonna make a rumble.”

Blue Origin, founded by Amazon CEO and founder Jeff Bezos, held a successful eighth launch Sunday of its smaller, sub-orbital rocket – New Shepard – in West Texas. As Cornell narrated the launch over an hour or so, she also spoke briefly about Cape Canaveral.

She said the company is “basically completely redoing the pad for a large rocket” and installing a large propellant fuel tank farm to store the natural gas used in the rocket’s BE4 engines.

Patrick AFB

Reserve Citizen Airmen earn Rescue Mission of the Year award

Story by Tech. Sgt. Lindsey Maurice, 920th Rescue Wing/Public Affairs, 04.27.2018

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – Thirty-three 920th Rescue Wing Reserve Citizen Airmen from the 920th Rescue Wing out of Cocoa Beach (Brevard County) were recently honored with the 2017 Jolly Green Association Rescue Mission of the Year award for their actions July 7, 2017 in saving two German sailors stranded in the Atlantic Ocean approximately 500 miles off the coast of Florida.

The unique and intricate mission, which involved more than 30 hours of collective flying between the unit’s HH-60 Pave Hawks and HC-130N Kings, eight air refuelings transferring 16,600 pounds of fuel, a precisely executed open-ocean rescue insertion, and a highly technical nighttime shipboard patient exfil resulting in two lives saved, led to it being deemed the most significant rescue mission of the year.

“Please extend my congratulations to the crews of Air Force Rescue 05/06/235/237 and the associated Guardian Angel teams,” wrote Lt. Gen. Mark Nowland, deputy chief of staff for operations, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, in a congratulatory letter. “My heartfelt thanks goes out to the warriors who live by the motto, ‘These things we do, that others may live.’ I am especially proud of the teamwork displayed by
multiple aircrews and Guardian Angel teams in performing the most outstanding U.S. Air Force rescue mission in 2017.”

**Homestead AFB**

**Ecosteel USA proposes $240M steel mill complex in Homestead**

Amanda Rabines, May 03, 2018 01:45PM


Ecosteel USA, a construction and engineering firm and building supplier, is proposing a $240 million steel mill complex on about 124 acres of county-owned land in Homestead, outside the Homestead Air Reserve Base.

The Ecosteel facility would be an “eco-friendly steel mill,” meaning it would use an electric furnace to melt scrap steel into billets. The company said it expects to produce about 1,000 tons of steel a day, and would include a rebar mill.

The California company is getting help from a group of local investors including Julio Gimenez, son of Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Gimenez. The mayor recused himself from negotiating with Ecosteel, according to the Miami Herald. Miami-Dade County Commission Chairman Esteban “Steve” Bovo has the authority to reject the proposal. Ecosteel needs the commission’s approval to move forward.

Ecosteel’s proposal comes just two months after President Trump announced tariffs on imported steel and aluminum. While developers in New York and other parts of the country are bracing for the financial impact of the tariffs, builders in South Florida aren’t as concerned because of the region’s strict building codes requiring structures be built with concrete and rebar — which is often domestically sourced.

Ecosteel’s proposal states that a local steel mill would reduce the need for trips to Jacksonville and Alabama, where most contractors get their rebar, beams and other supplies.

**NAS Key West**

**Gov. Scott Directs DEO to Enhance Workforce Housing in the Florida Keys**

Press Release, Governor’s Office, 5/2/2018


**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** — Governor Scott today directed the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) to propose enhanced workforce housing in the Florida Keys as part of the continued efforts to recover from the tremendous impact Hurricane Irma had on the Keys. Hurricane Irma destroyed much of the housing that served the workforce population and the proposed Keys Workforce Housing Initiative will allow local governments to grant additional building permits for rental properties. This initiative will be presented to the Florida Cabinet at the next meeting.

Governor Scott said, “Hurricane Irma left a devastating impact on our state, especially in the Florida Keys and since the storm we have been working hard to rebuild even stronger than before. For business owners across the Keys, the availability of affordable workforce housing has been a challenge that was
compounded by Hurricane Irma. The Keys Workforce Housing Initiative will provide much-needed access to workforce housing, allowing businesses the opportunity to grow while providing a plan to ensure Keys residents can evacuate safely before a storm.”

DEO is charged with reviewing local development decisions in the Florida Keys due to its legislative designation as an Area of Critical State Concern. State law requires that growth be limited in the Keys to ensure that residents can evacuate safely within 24 hours in advance of a hurricane. To meet the increased demand for workforce housing, the innovative Keys Workforce Housing Initiative will require new construction that participates to commit to evacuating renters in the 48-hour window of evacuation…..

….Representative Holly Raschein said, “Hurricane Irma pushed the affordable housing problem in the Florida Keys to a critical state, decimating an already strained stock of housing for our workforce. I have discussed this concern with Governor Scott and the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) both in Tallahassee and during the Governor’s many visits to the Keys as he’s lead us through our recovery efforts. The plan Governor Scott has directed DEO to bring before Cabinet is a creative solution to the most pressing recovery challenge still facing the Florida Keys and I encourage all Cabinet members to support this proposal.”

Wes Maul, Director of the Florida Division of Emergency Management, said, “Our agency’s primary goal is the safety of Florida residents during disasters. The Keys Workforce Housing Initiative ensures the safety of tourists and residents of the Keys during major storms, while allowing critical economic development activities to continue. We appreciate DEO’s partnership in this endeavor.”

**Defense Industry**

**Boeing to acquire KLX for $4.25 billion**

By Emon Reiser – 5-1-2018

https://www.bizjournals.com/southflorida/news/2018/05/01/boeing-to-acquire-klx.html

The world's largest aerospace company has agreed to purchase Wellington-based KLX Inc. in a $4.25 billion deal announced early Tuesday.

Boeing Co. (NYSE: BA) plans to buy the local company at about half a billion dollars above KLX's reported market value with the goal of expanding its aircraft services business. The all-cash transaction comprises $63 per share of KLX (Nasdaq: KLXI) and the assumption of $1 billion in debt. It's expected to close by the third quarter of 2018 and is subject to regulatory approvals.

KLX would merge with Boeing subsidiary Aviall, and the new KLX Aerospace Solutions headquarters at 3760 W. 18th St. in Miami is "expected to continue to remain the principal operating location," the companies said. Prior to the announcement, the 500,000-square-foot facility at Countyline Corporate Park was slated to have 700 employees by the end of the year.

Boeing's buyout includes KLX Aerospace Solutions, while KLX Inc.'s Energy Services Group is expected to be divested in order for the deal to close.

"The combination of Aviall and KLX Aerospace facilitates the broadest scope of parts and products to support all customer fleet types for the commercial, military and defense and business and general aviation markets," said Amin Khoury, KLX chairman and chief executive officer. "This business combination will enable us to deliver industry-leading value-added service solutions for our customers, and outstanding growth opportunities for our suppliers."....
Lockheed opens new F-35 facility
By: Daniel Cebul, May 1, 2018

WASHINGTON – Lockheed Martin celebrated the formal opening of a new manufacturing facility in Pinellas Park, Florida yesterday to support the increasing F-35 production rate.

The facility, which is expected to create more than 80 new jobs by mid-2019, will assemble canopies and bulkheads for the F-35 Lightning II fighter.

“This is an exciting day for us in Pinellas Park,” said André Trotter, program director and general manager of the Lockheed’s Pinellas Park branch. “Continued growth and success of the F-35 program is vital to our national security. The hard-working men and women who produce critical components for the F-35 program are what make all of this possible.”

On Monday Lockheed received a $1.4 billion contract to sustain the global F-35 enterprise. The new Pinellas Park facility will contribute in Lockheed’s efforts to produce and sustain the growing F-35 fleet, totaling 1,763 aircraft in the program of record.

High-tech defense contractor Kratos expands workforce, footprint in Orlando
Marco Santana, Contact Reporter, Orlando Sentinel, 1 May 2018, 10:30AM

A growing need for high-tech flight simulators and weapons trainers has helped grow a defense firm’s Orlando workforce, with employment expected to surpass 300 by the end of the year.

To accommodate recent growth in employees and projects, San Diego’s Kratos Defense and Security Solutions’ Orlando-based tech and training division has expanded into a 50,000-square-foot building.

The facility sits alongside the company’s 100,000-square-foot building, with an additional 40,000 square feet of land also available for potential future expansion.

The expansion has happened because the company has managed to gain a foothold in the competitive military defense market, which has a smaller number of companies battling for contracts, said Jose Diaz, senior vice president for the company’s Orlando operations……

Other Of Interest
House Panel Asks for Air Force’s Basing Plan for Tanker Mission
Dan Cohen, Posted on May 01, 2018 02:30 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156e255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=f95e266cae
The House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee is interested in how the Air Force intends to provide the necessary force structure to support its air refueling requirements, according to report language in the panel’s mark of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill. The panel directs the Air Force to brief the House Armed Service Committee following the completion of a mobility capability and requirements study called for in the FY 2018 defense policy bill that includes an assessment of the military’s tanker requirement.

The lawmakers direct the Air Force to hold the briefing by March 1, 2019, and cover:

- current and future laydown plans for air refueling locations;
- overview of air refueling operations, including air refueling wing locations, number of sorties fulfilled, and locations or missions the sorties supported;
- assessment of how the Air National Guard can be leveraged to support current and emerging air refueling requirements;
- description of the long-term plan to maintain adequate refueling capability to meet current and emerging requirements; and
- the Air Force’s plans for the KC-135 aircraft that are replaced by the next-generation Boeing KC-46.

Military ships sail into Port Everglades for 28th annual Fleet Week

REBECCA VARGAS, APRIL 30, 2018

PORT EVERGLADES, FLA. (WSVN) - Ships from the U.S. Navy, Marines and Coast Guard sailed into Port Everglades as South Florida celebrated Fleet Week.

“It’s an opportunity for us to show the community what we do and how we do it,” said U.S. Navy Adm. Brad Skillman.

Now in its 28th year, Fleet Week saw the arrival of ships like the USS Kearsarge. The amphibious assault ship, based in Norfolk, Virginia, usually goes out on seven month deployments in the Indian Ocean.

“It’s about 2,500 marines, helicopters, a tilt-rotor aircraft and jets, and we bring all the landing craft,” Skillman said.

The ship was the first to assist Puerto Rico after it was ravaged by Hurricane Maria.

“Kearsarge acted as the command center, and had helicopter support and they put people out to clear roads, inspect and restore hospitals, and make sure that there was public safety available in Puerto Rico,” Skillman said.

Those same marines, Navy sailors and Coast Guard servicemen are spending their week guiding some 9,000 people who signed up for tours throughout the two Navy ships and three Coast Guard vessels.

The USS Detroit from the Naval Station in Mayport, Florida making its debut on the East Coast. One of the newest, fastest and most technologically advanced ships in the U.S. Navy……

Connecticut, Electric Boat OK $85M Deal For Expansion To Support 1,900 New Jobs
Gov. Dannel P. Malloy announced Tuesday the state will provide nearly $85 million in grants, incentives and loans to help General Dynamics Electric Boat add nearly 1,900 employees over 17 years and expand its Groton site to accommodate the sub builder’s rising workload.

“Our state’s partnership with General Dynamics Electric Boat will ensure that thousands of good-paying manufacturing jobs continue to grow for years to come,” Malloy said at a ceremony at New London’s Fort Trumbull State Park, with EB’s shipyard as the backdrop across the Thames River.

Jeffrey Geiger, president of Electric Boat, told reporters that state support is an important part of a plan to ramp up submarine production. The U.S. Navy “had real questions and concerns about whether or not the work can be executed given the significant increase,” he said.

“The message this sends is not insignificant, that the whole community up here is rallying around being able to ensure we can produce … what the Navy needs,” Geiger said.

Employment is expected to grow to nearly 19,000 by the mid-2020s, Geiger said. As many as 2,200 jobs are to be filled this year, with 1,000 in Rhode Island and 1,200 at Groton-New London…..

Trump to meet with Jeff Miller this week on VA secretary position

by Gabby Morrongiello, May 01, 2018 04:43 PM

President Trump will meet this week with former House Veterans Affairs' Committee Chairman Jeff Miller, a top contender to lead the Veterans Affairs agency, a senior White House official told the Washington Examiner Tuesday.

The former Republican congressman from Florida has been discussed as a potential successor to ousted VA Secretary David Shulkin given his experience on the House panel and the likelihood that he would avoid major controversy during the Senate confirmation process.

Miller served eight terms in Congress before retiring in 2017, three years after he took the lead on passing a $16 million VA reform bill out of the lower chamber. The bill was later signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2014.

He also served as an informal adviser to then-candidate Trump on veterans issues during the 2016 election, and was heavily involved in drafting a white paper on VA reforms that the Trump campaign issued months before the election.

A senior White House official said Trump and Miller would meet later this week, presumably after the president returns from his trip to Dallas for the National Rifle Association's annual convention. The same official said another candidate whose name has appeared in the media — former Cleveland Clinic CEO Toby Cosgrove — does not currently have a meeting scheduled with Trump…..
May 11

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #64 is **NEXT WEEK** on Thursday, 17 May 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EDT at the Residence Inn Marriott, 600 W. Gaines Street, Tallahassee, FL 32304. The meeting will focus on FY2019 Grant Awards among other business. Additional meeting information for Task Force members will be provided in separate e-mail. E-Books for the meeting are available on our website at https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/EBook-FDSTF-Meeting-64.pdf.

2. **Call In Number** –

   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979        Access Code: 1869945

3. **Zinke Reiterates that Florida is “Off the Table”, but Industry Still Pushing for Access** – According to an article Thursday in the Tampa Bay Times, Secretary of the Department of Interior (DOI) Ryan Zinke told the Senate Appropriations Committee that ““I'm committed to … no new oil and gas platforms off the coast of Florida. They are still in the process legally, but I'm committed to that." According to the article, Governor “Scott recently told the Tampa Bay Times that he's spoken directly with President Trump (who's said to be unhappy with the way Zinke handled the situation) and gotten assurances that Florida will not be part of a final plan.” So far, no one has explained what “Florida is off the table” means, which leaves many wondering what will occur since the DOI continue to plan for new lease sales east of the Military Mission Line (MML) as soon as the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) moratorium on exploration and drilling expires in 2022. In another article yesterday from The Hill, it was reported that “In a report sent this week to pair of House committees, the Defense Department’s Undersecretary for Research and Engineering Michael Griffin called the eastern Gulf “irreplaceable,” and said that any drilling there would need significant restrictions in order to not disturb military operations.” At the same time, the oil industry seems thrilled that DoD has not definitively pushed for an extension of GOMESA and seems to always leave an opening for drilling by use of language such as “significant restrictions would be needed” rather than just leaving it as “incompatible” that led to GOMESA in 2006. Immediately after Zinke’s remarks and release of the DoD report, the National Ocean Industries Association released a statement that pushes cooperative access to the area east of the MML hoping that “critical military operations and essential energy development can co-exist and thrive in the eastern Gulf of Mexico as well.” See several articles below in the CLIPS.

4. **Defense Support Agencies May be Safe** – According to an article by Dan Cohen, Congressman Thornberry has backed off on his proposal to shutter agencies. According to the article (below in the CLIPS), “House Armed Services Chair Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) would spare many of the seven support agencies he proposed eliminating last month, and instead require the Pentagon’s chief management officer (CMO) to scrutinize defense agencies and field activities to determine whether they are effective or carry out functions that are duplicative of those carried out by other DOD organizations, under language in the draft fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill he released Monday”. See NDAA final mark up (attached) or several articles on the 2019 NDAA in the CLIPS for more details.
5. **HASC Offers Alternative BRAC Proposal** – The Final Markup of the 2019 NDAA also includes a proposal that would allow state governors to initiate base realignment or closure action. According to the provision, a governor would send a proposal to DoD to reduce or close an installation and include a redevelopment plan. According to Dan Cohen’s article on the topic, “If the Pentagon accepts a governor’s recommendation to close or realign an installation, it would need to inform the congressional defense committees when it submits the annual budget.” In addition, the HASC Mark-up requests that DoD provide a detailed assessment of excess infrastructure using a more comprehensive analytical model that will be due by 2020, essentially forecasting no BRAC will be forthcoming from the House in the next several years. See several articles below in the BRAC section of the CLIPS for more.

6. **Florida HASC Members Provide Statements on 2019 NDAA Passage** – The HASC passed their Mark-up of the 2019 NDAA out of committee Thursday morning with a vote of 60-1. According to Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy’s office, Rep. Stephanie Murphy, “authored numerous provisions in the NDAA to support departing servicemembers as they transition to civilian life; to enable more small businesses to obtain low-interest loans; to strengthen Orlando’s modeling, simulation, and training community and its cyber community; to protect Israel against rocket and missile threats; and to enhance the Department of Defense’s efforts to combat the opioid epidemic.” Congressman Matt Gaetz, also a member of the HASC, released a statement as well. Rep Gaetz stated “The FY2019 NDAA passage in the House Armed Services Committee is a tremendous victory for Florida’s First Congressional District. We have continued our effort to enhance military test ranges, including the Gulf Test Range. We have also secured funding for a new Air Traffic Control Tower at NAS Whiting Field, and we have secured SPACE-A travel for veterans with service-related disabilities on military flights. This is a great bipartisan first step. I look forward to the House passing this bill, and continuing to rebuild our great military”. See the full press releases from Rep. Murphy and Rep Gaetz below in the CLIPS in the “NDAA” section.

7. **Office of Economic Demographics and Research to Review Task Force** – Legislation enacted in 2013 directs the Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR) and the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) to analyze and evaluate 20 state economic development incentive programs on a recurring three-year schedule. The OPPAGA review is ongoing, but staff has been notified that the EDR review is also requested for the same period. EDR’s charter is to evaluate the economic benefits/return on investment of each program. In 2015 EDR conducted a review of FY11-12, FY12-13 and FY13-14 defense grants including DRG, DIG, MBP and Task Force grants. As EDR prepares for its review of FY 14-15, FY15-16 and FY16-17, they made available their 2015 report (attached or see at http://edr.state.fl.us/Content/returnoninvestment/AnalysisofDefenseSpaceIncentives.pdf).

8. Attachments:
   - 19 NDAA Chairman’s Mark Final
   - EDR’s 2015 Analysis of Defense and Space Incentives

_Terry_  
Terry McCaffrey
News Clips of Interest:

Oil Drilling / Gulf Range

Florida remains off table for Trump oil drilling plan, Zinke says

By Alex Leary, 5-10-18

WASHINGTON – Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke maintained Thursday that Florida remains exempt from the Trump administration's plan to open up coastal waters to oil drilling — a move that continues to infuriate officials in other states.

"You have to admit it, it looked very political, right, meeting with the governor," Maryland Sen. Chris Van Hollen told Zinke at a Senate Appropriations Committee hearing.

Van Hollen asked the secretary if the Florida carve-out is still in effect.

"Yes," Zinke replied. "I'm committed to … no new oil and gas platforms off the coast of Florida. They are still in the process legally, but I'm committed to that."

In January, just days after a 5-year plan was announced, Zinke flew to Tallahassee and met with Gov. Rick Scott — a fellow Republican and now candidate for U.S. Senate — to say that Florida's coasts would be "off the table."

Under fire for that, Zinke pointed to widespread political opposition in Florida and an existing moratorium on new drilling in the gulf.

"Florida's a little different," he said Thursday.

But Zinke has been inconsistent on delivering that message, stressing that Florida is still part of the review process. Some argue he hurt Florida by cutting the deal with Scott.

Scott recently told the Tampa Bay Times that he's spoken directly with President Trump (who's said to be unhappy with the way Zinke handled the situation) and gotten assurances that Florida will not be part of a final plan.
Zinke suggested to Van Hollen that Maryland could breathe easy, too.

Training Range Infrastructure Inadequate, Committee Warns

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 10, 2018 03:30 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e02d33ce307ef7&id=a60ce1419c

The Pentagon needs to take a close look at its training ranges – including land, sea and airspace – to determine where they need to be modernized, as the infrastructure has not kept pace with advances in combat and weaponry, according to report language in House Armed Services Chair Mac Thornberry’s portion of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill. “Modern war demands extensive training on weapons employment and target identification, as potential adversaries possess complex air defenses and highly sophisticated electronic countermeasures. However training ranges lack sufficient capability and capacity to support full-spectrum training requirements, including the replication of near-peer adversaries capabilities,” according to the committee. To ensure DOD’s training range infrastructure is keeping up with competitive demands, the committee directs the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to assess:

- the extent to which DOD has identified the current capacity of training range infrastructure to meet the military services’ demand for range access;
- the extent to which DOD has evaluated the training range infrastructure to determine whether it is sufficient to conduct training against near-peer adversary capabilities; and
- the extent to which DOD has developed a comprehensive strategy and investment plan to improve the availability and sufficiency of training ranges to meet the department’s training needs.

The committee also directs GAO to brief it by Feb. 1, 2019, on the findings of its review.

NOIA Welcomes DOD Report on Eastern Gulf of Mexico Operations

Press Release, Contact: Nicolette Nye, (202) 465-8463, nnye@noia.org, Thursday, May 10, 2018
http://www.noia.org/noia-welcomes-dod-report-eastern-gulf-mexico-operations/

“NOIA welcomes the report on Preserving Military Readiness in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico, which not only provides a template for future coordination and consultation between the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of the Interior (DOI), but also is a starting point for a productive and cooperative relationship between the offshore energy industry and DOD. The report shows there is a lot of ocean out there and while there will be devils in the details, the overall message from the Pentagon should be interpreted as cooperation and coordination. In addition, as companies are allowed to explore and evaluate oil and natural gas plays, it is likely that areas of high potential will be more clearly defined and thus allow for additional military operations.

“The report identifies areas in the Gulf of Mexico where energy development activities can occur and as importantly, the very limited areas where DOD recommends they cannot. Military operations and energy development have co-existed and thrived in many areas in the Gulf of Mexico for decades under a 1983 Memorandum of Agreement between DOD and DOI, as evidenced by the roughly one-third of current Gulf leases including military training stipulations and restrictions. The report concludes that, with similar
stipulations and restrictions mutually agreed on by DOD and DOI, critical military operations and essential energy development can co-exist and thrive in the eastern Gulf of Mexico as well.”

Pentagon warns against offshore drilling in eastern Gulf of Mexico

BY TIMOTHY CAMA - 05/10/18 04:14 PM EDT

Offshore oil and natural gas drilling in the eastern part of the Gulf of Mexico would likely be incompatible with military training and testing, the Pentagon is warning lawmakers.

In a report sent this week to pair of House committees, the Defense Department’s Undersecretary for Research and Engineering Michael Griffin called the eastern Gulf “irreplaceable,” and said that any drilling there would need significant restrictions in order to not disturb military operations.

The Navy and Air Force use the eastern Gulf to test laser weapons, long-range strike weapons, new vessels and mine warfare, among other activities, and drilling rigs could hamper operations.

The eastern Gulf, the report said, “is an irreplaceable national asset used by DOD to develop and maintain the readiness of our combat forces, and is critical to achieving the objectives contained in the National Defense Strategy.”

“Simply stated, if oil and gas development were to extend east of the [Military Mission Line], without sufficient surface limiting stipulations and/or oil and gas activity restrictions mutually agreed by the DOD and [Department of the Interior], military flexibility in the region would be lost and test and training activities would be severely affected,” it stated.

The report is likely to provide significant fodder to Florida leaders, Democrats and others who want to keep the eastern Gulf closed to oil and gas drilling.

Congress has blocked drilling until 2022 in a swath of the Gulf that is slightly larger than everything east of the Military Mission Line, a line of longitude that runs through Florida’s panhandle.

But in an aggressive offshore drilling plan proposed in January, the Trump administration considered allowing companies to lease drilling rights in that area in 2023 and 2024……

U.S. military seeks rules for drilling in eastern Gulf of Mexico

Timothy Gardner, Jessica Resnick-Ault, MAY 10, 2018 / 7:30 PM / UPDATED 16 HOURS AGO

WASHINGTON/NEW YORK (Reuters) - An expansion of oil drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico would interfere with U.S. military testing unless the Pentagon and another agency develop rules to govern the work, the U.S. Department of Defense said in a report this week.

The Defense Department concluded in a report it sent on Wednesday to U.S. lawmakers that drilling east of the Military Mission Line in the Gulf of Mexico, a demarcation more than 200 miles west of Florida, would harm military testing operations without the rules.
“Military flexibility in the region would be lost and test and training activities would be severely affected,” without mutually agreed restrictions between the Pentagon and the Interior Department on the drilling, said the report, a copy of which was seen by Reuters.

Industry groups interpreted the report with optimism.

The report confirmed that “collaboration between the Department of Defense and Interior will enable the successful coexistence of continued military training and expanded American oil production,” said Erik Milito, a director of upstream operations at the American Petroleum Institute.

Randall Luthi, the president of the National Ocean Industries Association, said the report showed, “There is a lot of ocean out there and while there will be devils in the details, the overall message from the Pentagon should be interpreted as cooperation and coordination.”

**Defense and energy can co-exist offshore, industry says**

By Daniel J. Graeber | May 11, 2018 at 5:54 AM

May 11 (UPI) -- Oil and gas operations in parts of the U.S. Gulf of Mexico can coexist with national defense priorities, industry supporters said of a Pentagon review.

The U.S. Department of Defense answered Congressional questions on oil and gas operations in the eastern waters of the U.S. Gulf of Mexico. That acreage is deemed critical and "irreplaceable" to U.S. military readiness.

In January, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke announced most of the nation's outer continental shelf was being considered for drilling, including off the coasts of Maine, California, Florida and Alaska.

The proposal was hailed by the oil and gas industry, but was met with criticism from elected officials from both political parties in the affected regions, along with environmentalists, fisheries groups and the Department of Defense.

By addressing the issue, the oil and gas industry said there was room to cooperate on national priorities like defense and energy dominance, one of President Donald Trump's goals.

"The report shows there is a lot of ocean out there and while there will be devils in the details, the overall message from the Pentagon should be interpreted as cooperation and coordination," Randall Luthi, the president of the National Ocean Industries Association, said in a statement.

Some of the region used for military training, meanwhile, runs up the eastern coast of Florida, a state at the center of the debate over Trump's offshore agenda. Shortly after the offshore plan was released, Zinke told Florida Gov. Rick Scott that Florida was removed from consideration, but officials at the Interior Department later said the state was still under drilling consideration.

The Defense Department's report identifies areas in the Gulf of Mexico that are off limits to drillers for national security purposes. The Pentagon's report said about 101,000 square miles of surface and airspace east of the so-called military mission line is off the table for energy development.

"Simply stated, if oil and gas development were to extend east of the military mission line, without sufficient surface limiting stipulations and/or oil and gas activity restrictions mutually agreed by the Departments of Defense and Interior, military flexibility in the region would be lost and test and training activities would be severely affected," the Pentagon's report read.
The military mission line extends south from the Eglin Air Force Base in the Florida panhandle.

**NDAA**

**Authority for Closing Smaller Facilities included in Chairman’s Mark of NDAA**

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 07, 2018 03:57 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=6c94c699d3

A new authority permitting the Defense Department to close or realign small installations outside of the BRAC process, with the consent of state and local officials, is included in House Armed Services Chair Mac Thornberry’s portion of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill. “The chairman’s proposal recognizes that there are small installations around the country that have outlasted their purpose and their continued operation places an undue burden on the taxpayers and on the local community,” according to a summary released Friday. On Base reported last week that the authority would be introduced as an amendment to the defense policy bill. The text of the chairman’s mark will be released today, ahead of the committee’s markup scheduled for Wednesday.

The proposal does not authorize a new round of base closures as Thornberry remains concerned that DOD “does not have a full and accurate accounting of its real property or a realistic assessment of its excess capacity,” according to the summary. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis told lawmakers he does not believe the department’s existing assessment of its excess infrastructure is accurate, it adds.

The chairman’s mark also includes Thornberry’s plan to cut overall spending on DOD’s support activities — primarily civilian resources management, logistics management, services contracting and real estate management — by 25 percent by FY 2021. A summary of the chairman’s mark issued by the committee’s Democrats indicates that Thornberry’s initial proposal to eliminate seven defense support agencies, including the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA), has been modified, however. That summary lists two agencies that would be eliminated entirely — Washington Headquarters Service and the Test Resource Management Center. Funding would be cut by a total of $442.5 million from 11 other activities and agencies, including OEA.

The Democrats’ summary says the spending reductions, which “are not justified by underlying analysis,” could harm military readiness, quality of life for personnel and efforts to eliminate wasteful spending. Cuts to OEA could affect support and grant programs for defense communities, it states.

**Three essential reforms to how the Pentagon does business**

By Frederico Bartels - - Monday, May 7, 2018

Defense Secretary James Mattis has made reforming how the Pentagon does business a top priority. His goal: To improve performance and affordability.

And Mr. Mattis does not have to go it alone. Deputy Secretary Patrick Shanahan also is concentrating on improving how the department operates. And House Armed Services Committee Chairman Mac Thornberry, Texas Republican, has proposed substantial changes to the Pentagon’s support agencies in an effort to focus the defense budget further toward lethality.
The Pentagon’s mission is to deter war and prevail in combat. It operates in an environment where every advantage counts and effectiveness is essential. Improving the department’s back-office operations is not just good business practice, it will produce cascading effects throughout all of the department’s operations — up to and including war-fighting.

The Heritage Foundation has identified many ways to wring greater efficiencies from Pentagon business operations. The three areas offering the greatest potential for savings and efficiencies are base infrastructure, competition for goods and services, and decreasing the number of military personnel performing commercial activities.

**Chairman’s Mark Calls for New Analysis of Excess Capacity**

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 09, 2018 05:30 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=d4dd4a8557

The Defense Department would be required to assess whether it has a surplus or deficit of infrastructure using a more deliberate method than the parametric analysis it relied on for its most recent estimates of excess capacity, under language in House Armed Services Chair Mac Thornberry’s portion of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill. The provision requires DOD to prepare and submit to lawmakers by February 2020:

- a force structure plan for each service that is based on an assessment of probable threats to national security, and end strength levels and major military force units required under the FY 2018 defense authorization bill;
- a “categorical model” of installation capabilities needed to carry out the force structure plans based on the infrastructure, real property and facilities capabilities required and the current military requirements of the major military units.

The second part of Section 2812 calls for DOD to:

- assess the requirements needed to carry out the force structure plans compared to existing infrastructure, real property and facilities capabilities; and
- identify any deficit or surplus in infrastructure for each military department, and for locations within the continental United States.

The summary of the chairman’s mark acknowledges it does not authorize a new BRAC round as Thornberry remains concerned that DOD “does not have a full and accurate accounting of its real property or a realistic assessment of its excess capacity.” Defense Secretary Jim Mattis told lawmakers he does not believe the department’s existing assessment of its excess infrastructure is accurate, it adds.

The Armed Services Committee will mark up Thornberry’s proposal, along with each of the subcommittee marks, in a marathon session starting today.

**A Primer on Mac Thornberry’s Fourth Estate Reforms**

MACKENZIE EAGLEN, MAY 9, 2018
As the annual markups of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) get underway for fiscal year 2019, lawmakers in the House are submitting amendments on topics ranging from surface warfare to improving electronic warfare capability. With this year’s spending levels locked down by the Bipartisan Budget Agreement of 2018, expect policy differences rather than budgetary fights to dominate conference discussions over the summer.

One bill in particular has stirred up a considerable amount of controversy: House Armed Services Committee Chairman Mac Thornberry’s (R-Texas) proposed reform package for the Pentagon’s so-called “fourth estate.” Despite the angst it has generated inside and outside of Congress, this package is just the latest in a nearly two-decade long string of similar (and often bipartisan) proposals targeting defense agencies and headquarters or management overhead that have failed to generate either traction or results.

Thornberry’s proposal advocates some useful initiatives, but the idea that these can be translated into immediate and deep cost savings and personnel cuts is a worn-out fallacy. This may be one reason why Thornberry already amended and watered-down his proposals, making most of them only voluntary for Defense Department compliance. While his original bill was more evolutionary than revolutionary, the kernels of originality within are worth airing on the Congressional floor. Too many of the best proposals from the bill were left behind when the Chairman shifted his stance, but he also used that opportunity to breathe some life into ideas long abandoned by Capitol Hill.

Speaking of blasts from the pasts, I’ve taken the liberty of adapting a trusty paradigm to better examine the nuances of the Chairman’s reform proposals.

**Murphy Secures Key Provisions for Country, Central Florida in Annual Defense Bill**

Contact: Javier Hernandez | Javier.Hernandez@mail.house.gov, May 9, 2018

WASHINGTON – The House Armed Services Committee advanced the Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which sets policy and authorizes funding for the U.S. military. U.S. Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy of Winter Park, Fla., secured numerous provisions in the bill to support our nation’s servicemembers and small businesses in central Florida. The House Armed Services Committee, on which Murphy serves, approved the bill early Thursday morning with strong bipartisan support. The full U.S. House of Representatives must now consider the bill.

“The United States has the most powerful military in the world, made up of brave Americans who risk their lives to defend liberty and protect this nation. As someone who used to work in the Pentagon, I know how important it is that our men and women in uniform have the resources they need to safely and effectively do their jobs,” said Murphy. “I’ve worked hard on the Armed Services Committee to ensure this bill supports our troops and veterans; combats emerging threats like cyber; and strengthens Orlando’s modeling, simulation, and training sector—all as part of a bipartisan effort to keep our country safe.”

In the bill, Murphy secured provisions to help departing servicemembers transition to civilian life; to enable more small businesses to obtain low-interest loans; to strengthen Orlando’s modeling, simulation, and training community and its cyber community; to protect Israel against rocket and missile threats; and to enhance the Department of Defense’s efforts to combat the opioid epidemic…..
Winning for Florida: Congressman Matt Gaetz Secures $41.9 Million for Test Range Enhancements

Press Release, Contact: Jillian Lane Wyant, Jillian.LaneWyant@mail.house.gov, May 10, 2018

Washington, D.C. — U.S. Congressman Matt Gaetz (FL-01) today applauded the U.S. House Armed Services Committee for completing the mark-up of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) early Thursday morning. During the mark-up, Rep. Gaetz secured numerous provisions including an amendment for SPACE-A travel benefits for veterans with service-related disabilities, and a $41.9 million increase in funding to military test ranges, including the Gulf Test Range.

Spanning the coast of Florida’s First Congressional District, the Gulf Test Range provides approximately 120,000 square miles of overwater airspace. It is used for high altitude, supersonic air combat training, as well as air-to-air missile testing, drone targeting, hypersonic weapons testing, and space launches. Additionally, the Air Force Special Operations Command, the 96th Test Wing, the 33rd Fighter Wing, and others all train on the Gulf Test Range.

In response to the NDAA passing out of committee with a vote of 60–1, Rep. Gaetz issued the following statement:

“The FY2019 NDAA passage in the House Armed Services Committee is a tremendous victory for Florida’s First Congressional District. We have continued our effort to enhance military test ranges, including the Gulf Test Range. We have also secured funding for a new Air Traffic Control Tower at NAS Whiting Field, and we have secured SPACE-A travel for veterans with service-related disabilities on military flights. This is a great bipartisan first step. I look forward to the House passing this bill, and continuing to rebuild our great military,” Rep. Gaetz said.

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BRAC

Congress May Consider Proposal to Close Military Bases

By Bill Bartel, The Virginian-Pilot, 5 May 2018
https://www.military.com/daily-news/2018/05/05/military-base-closings-may-again-be-considered-congress.html

NORFOLK – After years of resisting, Congress may consider a proposal to allow military base closings -- but under restrictive rules that give communities veto power, U.S. Rep. Rob Wittman said Thursday.

Wittman, a Westmoreland County Republican and senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, said during a Navy League luncheon at The Main hotel that he would support a proposal that addresses the military's concern that it's wasting money by keeping unneeded facilities.

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Hampton Roads federal lawmakers and community leaders have been skittish for years about any talk of closing military facilities -- particularly in a region where 40 percent of the economy is tied to defense and other federal spending. In 2005, a Base Realignment and Closure Commission or BRAC -- appointed...
to select facilities to shut down -- led to the closing of the Army's Fort Monroe and consideration of a recommendation to close Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach……

**High Hurdle Would Lie in Path of New Authority for Closing, Realigning Installations**

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 08, 2018 04:00 am  
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=60599279e6

The process for closing or realigning an installation under a new authority included in House Armed Services Chair Mac Thornberry’s portion of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill would need to start with a recommendation to the department from a governor that a facility in the state be downsized, a precondition that would preclude DOD from taking advantage of the authority in most cases. The governor’s notice would need to include statements of support from local governments that would be affected as well as a detailed plan for reusing or redeveloping the property.

If the Pentagon accepts a governor’s recommendation to close or realign an installation, it would need to inform the congressional defense committees when it submits the annual budget. That report would need to include:

- the reasons the defense secretary believes “it is in the interest of the United States” to accept the governor’s recommendation;
- a plan describing the required work, cost and timing for all actions needed to carry out the realignment or closure, including new construction or renovation of existing facilities; and
- a certification that the savings generated by the action will exceed the implementation costs within five years after the move is completed, an estimate of the annual recurring savings and the amount of time needed for the savings to exceed the implementation costs.

DOD would need to wait 90 days after it informs Congress to begin carrying out the closure or realignment. The provision also limits the department to spending $2 billion through FY 2029 for carrying out all closures and realignments for which it relies on the authority. Costs would include planning and design, construction, operations and maintenance, and environmental restoration, among other items. The authority would terminate at the end of FY 2029.

The provision for closing or realigning an installation outside of the normal BRAC process, Section 2702, would apply to any size facility, despite a description in the committee’s summary released last week indicating the authority would apply to small installations.

**NAS Pensacola**

**Laser strike spike: NAS Pensacola officials report increase in illegal activity**

by Hannah Mackenzie, May 5, 2018  

PENSACOLA, Fla. (WEAR) – Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola officials are warning those with laser pointers not to point them at aircraft. The warning comes after an increase in reported laser strikes in the area.
Depending on the intensity of the laser, it can temporarily blind, even cause permanent damage to pilots. "It can be amplified by the plexiglass on the aircraft and really become disorienting and distracting and damaging to the air crew," said Air Operations Officer Bill Schomer.

Over the past six weeks, NAS Pensacola pilots have reported two different incidents. Schomer said the pilots didn't suffer long-term effects, but this is not something to take lightly......

**Canadian Forces Snowbirds will perform at Pensacola NAS**

From staff reports, pnj.com, Published 4:35 p.m. CT May 9, 2018 | Updated 7:09 p.m. CT May 9, 2018

The Royal Canadian Forces 431 Air Demonstration Squadron — often called the Snowbirds — will visit Pensacola Naval Air Station later this month.

Canada's elite military flight demonstration team will have public demonstrations at the base from May 15 to 17, according to a news release from the National Naval Aviation Museum.

The Blue Angels' practice schedule for the week has been adjusted, and you view the updated schedule here.

**Hurlburt Field**

**Gunship Crews Practice Extra Vigilance amid Jamming in Syria**

By Oriana Pawlyk, Military.com 4 May 2018

HURLBURT FIELD, Fla. – The electronic jamming signals affecting AC-130 gunships over Syria may have crews checking and cross-checking their data, including target information, before they lock on with their cannons, according to a top commander here.

"Whether that's being man-made, or maybe it's a mistake inside the airplane, it's hard to say sometimes, but the process is, as you see those things pop up, the safety for the people on the ground is the primary concern," said Col. Tom Palenske, commander of the 1st Special Operations Wing and installation commander here.

Military.com spoke with Palenske, a former Army UH-1H crew chief, while accompanying Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson on a tour of Air Force Special Operations Command this week.

The systems in the AC-130 "Spooky" have a built-in check in the software to test and translate the latest aircraft operating update back to the crew. Palenske said if the system "sees an anomaly," it will flag it......

**Hurlburt Field retires special AC-130U gunship**
HURLBURT FIELD – Taking off with the rising sun, an AC-130U gunship took its final flight Tuesday, trailing history in its wake during a near-cross-country voyage from Hurlburt Field to Arizona’s Davis-Monthan Air Force Base.

Built in 1989 at Lockheed Martin’s Marietta, Georgia plant, the gunship is bound for Davis-Monthan’s 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group. Known unceremoniously as “The Boneyard,” the 309th AMARG now houses more than 4,400 retired military and other federal aircraft.

The retired gunship — the “Spooky” version of the AC-130U, officially known by the number 89-0511 — had been assigned to the 4th Special Operations Squadron, part of the Hurlburt Field-based 1st Special Operations Wing, since 1995. Its armament includes 40 mm and 105 mm cannons and a 25 mm Gatling gun.

During its nearly 30 years of service, the AC-130U gunship retired Tuesday had a handful of claims on aviation history, beginning early in its service life.

During testing, 89-0511 “set the record for the highest altitude ever flown by an AC-130U at 31,000 feet,” according to the public affairs office at the Hurlburt Field-based 1st Special Operations Wing.

In 2001, the gunship retired Tuesday was among the aircraft involved in “hit night,” the first night of attacks on Afghanistan in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the United States.

Eglin AFB

Gaetz, local officials focus on Crestview traffic

By Aaron Jacobs | @cnb_ajacobs | ajacobs@crestviewbulletin.com, Posted May 5, 2018 at 1:00 PM

CRESTVIEW – Unity between city, county and state was the theme at a Crestview meeting on traffic.

Okaloosa County commissioners, Crestview city council members and others attended the May 1 meeting at the Robert L.F. Sikes Public Library. As part of his Open Gaetz Day, Congressman Matt Gaetz took part as well.

The meeting came on the heels of the city and county unanimously passing a joint resolution to prioritize a bypass in the southwest part of Crestview and the adjoining Raspberry Road Connector project as the top priorities for Triumph funding for the county.

Triumph Gulf Coast is the organization overseeing funds received from BP in the Deepwater Horizon oil spill settlement. Okaloosa is among the eight Northwest Florida counties eligible to receive Triumph.

City and county officials hailed the agreement to tackle the traffic problem on State Route 85 as a step in the right direction.

“In 56 years here, I can verify we have never had the unity and workability and teamwork that we’ve had today,” Crestview City Councilman Joe Blocker said.

County Commissioner Nathan Boyles agreed, saying the joint resolution is necessary to secure Triumph dollars as well as state and federal funding.
With Older F-35s 'On Life Support,' Wing Struggles to Train Pilots

By Oriana Pawlyk, Military.com 7 May 2018

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – One of the busiest F-35 Joint Strike Fighter training units is hoping the U.S. Air Force can help relieve some of the pressures of training student pilots with ineffective resources.

The 33rd Fighter Wing, the leading training wing for F-35 student pilots, hopes it will receive additional F-35A aircraft, along with considerable upgrades to its existing fleet, to keep up with training demands, said Col. Paul Moga, commander of the 33rd Fighter Wing here.

"Right now, production is king. We've got to find ways to solve this aircrew crisis, and our contribution to that is getting our students through the training program as quickly as possible," Moga said, referring to the service's ongoing pilot shortage.

Military.com sat down with Moga, head of the F-35A Lightning II flying program, during a trip accompanying Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson to the base.....

NSA Panama City

Local teen wins state award for mentor work

By COLLIN BREAUX, News Herald Reporter, Posted May 10, 2018 at 8:30 PM, Updated at 9:30 AM

NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY PANAMA CITY - A local teen was recently named the 2018 Military Youth of the Year in Florida through the Boys & Girls Club of America.

Khaleel Anderson, 17, found out about the award April 13 and will head to Atlanta in June to for the Southeast regional competition. If he wins that, he’ll head off to the national competition.

Khaleel’s dad works as a contractor at Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division, a tenant unit at Naval Support Activity Panama City. He mentors other kids at the NSA PC Teen Center, where military kids frequently hang out and do activities, and has also helped out around base for holiday events and the annual Homeless Veterans Stand Down held in Panama City.

“I just want to give back,” said Khaleel, who lives in Lynn Haven and attends North Bay Haven Charter Academy. “Growing up I’d go to a lot of these events and see people putting it on and I wanted to give back too.”.......

Tyndall AFB

Tyndall Air Force Base Holds Ruck March

By: Megan Myers, Updated: May 04, 2018 09:15 PM EDT
PANAMA CITY, Fla. - Food is something that can easily be taken for granted. The Feeding America Organization says 41 million Americans struggle with hunger, and that includes 13 million children. Friday Tyndall Air Force Base held the Ruck March 5-K to help those in need. The event will be donates food to local food banks that help childhood hunger.

"For me as a mom this means a lot because i have a daughter in school and i see the things that they need," said Technical Sergeant Theresa Carter-Daniel, U.S. Air Force

This was the second year in a row for the 5k. The idea started with one goal in mind- to make a difference.

"A member of first air force noticed a student was going to school hungry and they wanted to do something about it," said Technical Sergeant Carter-Daniel.

Taking steps together to end hunger……

Ashley Lampley: Patience and stability at Tyndall

By ERYN DION, News Herald Reporter, Posted May 9, 2018 at 7:15 AM

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE – Children in military families may have heroes for parents but sometimes, they need a hero in the classroom too.

At Tyndall Elementary, “Lampley’s Little Learners” have Ashley Lampley, a 2nd grade teacher who knows exactly what a lot of her students are going through.

“I was a military kid,” Lampley said. “I moved like, eight times.”

Lampley graduated from Troy University last May and was almost immediately snapped up by a recruiter from Bay District Schools. Because she’d moved around so much growing up, she wasn’t afraid of moving to a new place, and she wanted to teach at Tyndall specifically because of their high number of military families.

“They end up moving around so much, a lot of times, school is the only structured, stable thing they have,” Lampley said.

Moving around so often as a kid, Lampley remembered how jarring it can be, starting in a new place, never knowing when you’ll have to leave again. She craved the structure of school, she said, and of knowing that she had somewhere to be every day and knowing what she was going to do and learn. Her teachers, she said, were like a beacon in the whirlwind of a military child’s life, and helped set her on the path to becoming an educator herself……

USMC Blount Island

KBR to Help Provide Combat-Ready Equipment to Marines Worldwide

Newswire | About: KBR, Mon May 7, 2018 5:52 AM|PR
https://seekingalpha.com/pr/17153519-kbr-help-provide-combat-ready-equipment-marines-worldwide
HOUSTON, May 7, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- KBR, Inc. (KBR) announced today that its global government services business has been awarded a contract modification by the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) to provide prepositioning and logistics support services for the USMC Blount Island Command. This modification is the ninth year of the contract, which was originally awarded in 2009. The USMC awarded this contract modification in two parts, the first in September 2017 as an undefinitized contract action and the second in April 2018.

Under the terms of the contract, KBR will continue to provide logistics services that include supply support, inventory management, IT support, preservation and packaging, organic support, shipping and receiving, and maintenance in and outside of the U.S. The work is expected to be performed over the next year.

KBR will primarily perform this work in Jacksonville, Florida, but will also support the USMC at various other locations, including Norway and Kuwait, as well as aboard 12 maritime prepositioned ships located in the Asia-Pacific and Diego Garcia regions……

FL National Guard / Camp Blanding

Florida Recruiting and Retention Battalion welcomes new commander

107th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, 05.05.2018


As Rodriguez said his goodbyes, he looked forward to his next assignment where he will assume duties as the deputy commander of the 50th Regional Support Group and Deputy G-1 in St. Augustine, Florida.

“I would like to thank the organization for this opportunity with a special thanks to my family for their support throughout my career, especially over the past two years,” said Rodriguez.

Rodriguez believes unit strength and personnel readiness are paramount to success and he intends to bring these initiatives to his new command. He then went on to say he will do everything he can to help Pelletier be successful in his new position.

Pelletier, whose career began in 1991, when he enlisted in the Florida National Guard as a Private First Class, went on to Officer Candidate School where he received his commission in 1994 from the Florida Military Academy……

Explore Florida's Clay County: Military history at Camp Blanding

Amy Aumick, Correspondent, May 8, 2018

Camp Blanding Museum and Memorial Park, founded in 1990, is located off of State Road 16 just outside the main gate of Camp Blanding. Camp Blanding is a historic National Guard installation around
Lake Kingsley, a 10,000-year-old sinkhole. The museum is housed in a 1940s-era guest barracks which is two stories chock full of World War II armament, as well as moving memorials.

Established in 1939 as a state-owned training reservation for the Florida National Guard, the Camp is now a Joint Training Site. Just before WWII, the expansion of the entire United States Army required Camp Blanding to be converted to a federal reservation. The camp once held a 2,800-bed hospital, and a German Prisoner of War Compound.

This museum is truly a labor of love. The Camp Blanding and Historical Associates, Inc. is not-for-profit corporation dedicated to promoting the historical mementos of WWII when Camp Blanding was considered its own town with troops and their families flowing through the encampment. Nearly all of the artifacts in the museum have been donated by private citizens or service people with Camp Blanding ties, including armored troop carriers, field ambulances and airplanes.

Outside, in the Memorial Park, you’ll find monuments honoring the Army Infantry Divisions, the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, monuments dedicated to recipients of the Medal of Honor and the Purple Heart and former prisoners of war. The park also contains the Florida Regimental Memorial, dedicated to the service and memory of Florida National Guardsmen……

**NS Mayport**

**Fourth Fleet celebrates 10-year anniversary at NAS Mayport**

By Roxy Tyler - Web producer, Posted: 12:47 PM, May 04, 2018Updated: 12:47 PM, May 04, 2018  

MAYPORT, Fla. - A big salute and congratulations go out to the U.S. Navy's 4th Fleet to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Fleet's re-establishment.

Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry joined the celebration and proclaimed May 5 as "4th Fleet Day" in the city.

The 4th Fleet was established in World War II. Its mission was to protect the vital Allied shipping in a South Atlantic that was being terrorized by Axis U-boats. It was also responsible for combating surface raiders and blockade runners.

In 1950, U.S. 4th Fleet was disestablished when responsibilities were switched to to U.S. 2nd Fleet.

On May 5, 2008, the 4th Fleet was reestablished.

Headquartered at Naval Air Station Mayport, the 4th Fleet is made up of 170 sailors and civilians and is responsible for U.S. Navy ships, aircraft and submarines operating in the Caribbean, and the Atlantic and Pacific oceans around Central and South America.

**NAS Jacksonville**

**New officer in charge finding his sea legs at Fleet Readiness Center Southeast Detachment Jacksonville**
JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – Cmdr. Mike Polito, a native New Yorker, is returning to the East Coast after spending the majority of his 32-year Navy career in the Pacific Northwest.

Polito took charge of Fleet Readiness Center Southeast Detachment Jacksonville on April 19.

“The butterflies in my stomach were going because I was taking over as officer in charge of a detachment on a base that I’d never been to and didn’t know anyone,” Polito said. “Since most of my career has been spent on the West Coast, it’s a completely new learning experience.”

Though he’s new to Naval Air Station Jacksonville, one thing not new to Polito is maintenance work.

Enlisting in 1985 and working his way up from a machinist’s mate aboard submarines, Polito earned his first of several college degrees and was commissioned as a Naval officer in 2001.

After several tours of duty with electronic attack squadrons, shore maintenance departments and aircraft carriers, Polito’s experience and education is broad. However, he retains the affable but business-oriented personality – along with the blue-collar work ethic and Long Island accent of his father……

MacDill AFB

MacDill Airmen help rescue 5 in Tampa Bay

It was Saturday, April 7, 2018 and for the 6th Security Forces Squadron marine patrol unit, it was like any other day. They were routinely conducting patrols around the 7.2 mile coastline of MacDill Air Force Base, Florida.

Every weekend, boaters make their way onto the water to enjoy the mid-70 degree weather. But on this day, water conditions were rough, swells reached heights of six to seven feet tall and winds were around 30 knots.

At approximately 2:08 p.m., Airman 1st Class Christian Britton and Senior Airman Michael Roper, both 6th SFS marine patrolmen, received a “PAN-PAN” alert from U.S. Coast Guard Sector St. Petersburg.

“The call we received said there was a capsized vessel with around five individuals in the water near Davis Island,” said Roper. “Britton and I immediately began heading over to help and we spotted a helicopter hovering over one spot in the water, so we knew that had to be it.”

The helicopter, piloted by Todd Curabba, the chief pilot with Tampa Police Department’s Aviation Unit, was providing aerial support to the Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office dive team who were on scene….

Navy Week hits Tampa with education, entertainment and memories for those who served

Howard Altman, Times staff writer, Published: May 7, 2018, Updated: May 7, 2018 at 02:36 PM
TAMPA – A Navy band played. A rear admiral and local politicians spoke.

But nobody had a bigger smile during the kickoff event for Tampa’s Navy Week aboard the SS American Victory than Robert Taylor.

"It’s a real honor to come onto the ship today," said Taylor, 93, of Tampa, who saw his own convoy disappear around him during World War II.

As a young Navy bosun’s mate on cargo vessels known as Liberty ships, Taylor made a dangerous transatlantic crossing to help resupply Russia — America’s ally at the time in the fight against Hitler’s Germany.

The Germans, he said, hit them with submarines, surface ships and aircraft. The attacks were so savage that most of the cargo ships went down to the bottom of the ocean…..

Air Force orders flying stopped for a day at MacDill, all other bases, after spate of fatal crashes

Howard Altman, Times staff writer, Published: May 8, 2018, Updated: May 8, 2018 at 04:33 PM

TAMPA – MacDill Air Force Base and Air Force installations around the world will have to take a one-day flying time-out in the wake of a spate of fatal air crashes.

The move will not affect this weekend’s Tampa Bay AirFest 18, said Air Force 2nd Lt. Allison Mills, a spokeswoman for the 6th Air Mobility Wing, the base host unit.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein on Tuesday ordered the pause in the wake of 12 fatal military aviation crashes since October 2017, according to Air Force spokeswoman Ann Stefanek.

The 11 crashes and one ground incident have claimed the lives of 35 military pilots and crew, according to an analysis by the newspaper Military Times. It’s the highest number of crashes in years, and the total number of deaths so far this year ties 2016’s deadly year with four months left in the current fiscal year.

The decision on when to stop flying is up to wing commanders, Stefanek said, but must be accomplished by May 21 at U.S. bases like MacDill. Mills said no time-out date has yet been set at the 6th Air Mobility Wing. Air Force Capt. Joe Simms, a spokesman for the 927th Air Refueling Wing, also based at MacDill, was not aware of the time-out until contacted by a reporter and could not immediately comment.

The two wings together fly 24 KC-135 Stratotanker aerial refueling jets.


Press Release, May 10, 2018

The growing missions at Tampa’s MacDill Air Force Base and the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) scaled a big hurdle today as the 2019 NDAA cleared the U.S. House Armed Services Committee this morning. U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor (FL-14) led efforts by the bipartisan Tampa Bay Congressional Delegation to include infrastructure investments at MacDill AFB. U.S. Rep. Castor also championed other investments for our military, their families and our community, including a boost in pay and expansion in the expertise and faculty at U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) Joint Special Operations University. In addition, the NDAA prohibits any Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) by the Department of Defense.

“MacDill AFB missions and service members are central to the Tampa Bay area’s economy and our national security. The 2019 NDAA includes $3.1 million for the KC-135 beddown to add flight simulator training at MacDill AFB and hopefully other infrastructure investments will follow,” U.S. Rep. Castor said. “In addition, a 2.6 percent pay raise for military members and authorization for JSOU to expand their expertise and faculty are vital to the needs of our Special Operators and the aircraft, Air Force personnel, and all the families and members of our patriotic community that support MacDill…..

US Special Operations Command

Army special operations generals tapped for promotion

Courtney McBride, May 09, 2018
https://insidedefense.com/insider/army-special-operations-generals-tapped-promotion

Several Army general officers were nominated for promotion on May 7.

Lt. Gen. Austin Miller, commander of Joint Special Operations Command and Joint Special Operations Command Forward, has been nominated for promotion to the rank of general. Miller has held his current position since March 2016.

While the Defense Department has not identified a billet for Miller, a potential destination is the top post at U.S. Special Operations Command. The current SOCOM commander, Gen. Tony Thomas, has held his post since March 2016. His predecessor, Gen. Joseph Votel, led SOCOM from August 2014 to March 2016 before departing to lead U.S. Central Command.

The Defense Department also announced yesterday that Air Force Lt. Gen. Scott Howell will assume command of JSOC.

Maj. Gen. Darsie Rogers has been tapped for a third star. Rogers heads Special Operations Command Central; he has held this position since October 2015.

Additionally, Maj. Gen. Bradley Becker, chief of the Office of Security Cooperation-Iraq, has been nominated for promotion to lieutenant general. Becker previously served as commanding general of the Military District of Washington.

Cape Canaveral AFS
United Launch Alliance Machinists Go On Strike

By Jeff Foust, SpaceNews Writer | May 8, 2018 02:00pm ET
https://www.space.com/40521-united-launch-alliance-machinists-strike.html

WASHINGTON – Nearly 600 United Launch Alliance workers at three sites voted Sunday (May 6) to reject the company's latest contract and go on strike.

Machinists who are members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, or IAM, turned down the proposed three-year contract, replacing one that expired May 6, and immediately went on strike. The union announced the strike vote but did not immediately offer additional details, such as the margin of the vote.

The strike affects ULA's main manufacturing facility in Decatur, Alabama, as well as launch sites in Cape Canaveral, Florida, and Vandenberg Air Force Base, California.

Picketing reportedly started immediately after the strike vote. "Be cautious when entering & exiting Cape Canaveral Air Force Station due to union strike activities," the U.S. Air Force's 45th Space Wing, which operates Cape Canaveral, tweeted late May 6. "Anticipate possible delays."

The union's negotiating team had recommended members reject the contract, citing various provisions it deemed unacceptable. Those issues ranged from increased health care costs and contributions to retirement plans to travel pay and procedures. "By voting for this contract, you are letting ULA take away many of your benefits and future money, as well as that of future generations of Machinists," the union advised its members.

US Southern Command

Brazil-U.S. Interoperability Builds Trust

Geraldine Cook/Diálogo | 8 May 2018

The complexity of security threats demand deeper collaboration between partner nations in the Western Hemisphere. As security cooperation becomes increasingly important, Brazil and the United States integrate their capabilities into more secure structures to protect communication.

For the first time, Brazil and the United States held the Command and Control Interoperability Board (CCIB), in Salvador, Brazil, April 9–12, 2018. More than 40 members of Brazilian military and U.S. government representatives, led by U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), met to discuss joint initiatives to validate command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, and operational requirements to meet cooperation goals and strategies.

“This forum is the first step in increasing interoperability between both countries. I’m sure we’ll continue to strengthen interoperability initiatives between our armed forces,” said Brazilian Army Major General Jayme Octávio de Alexandre Queiroz, deputy chief of Command and Control of the Armed Forces Joint Staff. “We have a long relationship with the United States, more so now as we participate in different activities, operations, and training events—the increase of technology and equipment makes it necessary to have this interoperability.”.....

Defense Industry
Melbourne's Harris Corp. credits F-35, F-16 for strong earnings

Marco Santana, Contact Reporter, Orlando Sentinel, May 4, 2018

Growth of high-profile military programs, such as the F-35 and F-16 fighters, helped fuel a strong quarter for Harris Corporation’s Melbourne-based electronics division, the company said Wednesday.

The division increased revenue by 10 percent year over year, going from $553 million to $609 million. Profit dipped slightly from $115 million to $112 million.

Last week, the company announced that it had delivered its one millionth component to Lockheed Martin for use in the F-35 Lightning II.

Overall, the company reported in its quarterly earnings revenue of $1.57 billion, an increase of 5.3 percent over last year.

Harris Chairman, President and CEO William Brown was optimistic about the future, mainly because the company also reported 27 percent growth in overall orders.

“Looking beyond 2018, our continued investment in innovation, strong customer positions and a well funded budget will enable us to accelerate top-line growth while maintaining best-in-class margins,” he said in a statement.

Harris Corporation specializes in communications technology and employs 6,600 in Florida.

DoD Budget

After Closed Hearing, DoD Says We’ve Lost Ground

Meritalk, May 8, 2018 | 12:35 pm
https://www.meritalk.com/articles/after-closed-hearing-dod-says-weve-lost-ground/

For the first time in more than eight years, the House Appropriations committee shuttered its doors when it discussed budget issues with top Pentagon brass late last month.

And the potential reason for the closed doors might be alarming to all who have presumed American military dominance as a foregone conclusion. In the minds of the country’s top Defense officials, we’re no longer ready.

The Department of Defense (DoD) conferred with the Senate Armed Services Committee a day after its closed budget hearing. The tone at the Senate hearing was ominous, and the discussions foreboding.

“The competitive military advantage we enjoy today is the result of capabilities developed by our Services in an era of unchallenged technological dominance. That era has now passed,” said Gen. Joseph Dunford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in his opening statement. “Seventeen years of combat and seven years of budget instability have forced us to postpone modernization investments for the sake of near-term readiness. Meanwhile, our adversaries’ investments in modernization have outpaced our own.”

It’s not the first year that Dunford and Defense Secretary James Mattis have discussed the effects that budget sequestration in 2013 have had on U.S. ability to project power, and again this year both men espoused the need to replenish a depleted force…..
Thornberry Scales Back Proposal to Eliminate Support Agencies

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 08, 2018 04:15 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=60599279e6

House Armed Services Chair Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) would spare many of the seven support agencies he proposed eliminating last month, and instead require the Pentagon’s chief management officer (CMO) to scrutinize defense agencies and field activities to determine whether they are effective or carry out functions that are duplicative of those carried out by other DOD organizations, under language in the draft fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill he released Monday. That text does not propose eliminating the Office of Economic Adjustment or four other agencies — the Defense Technology Security Administration, Defense Human Resources Activity, Defense Technical Information Center and Test Resource Management Center. The Washington Headquarters Service still would be eliminated under Thornberry’s plan, however. He also calls for transferring many functions of the Defense Information Systems Agency elsewhere.

Under the draft policy bill, the CMO would review defense agencies and DOD field activities and submit a list to lawmakers of the agencies which operate “efficiently and effectively,” and do not carry out any function that is duplicative of activities carried out by other defense elements. The CMO then would be required to develop a plan to eliminate agencies not included on that list, or transfer some or all of their functions to another organization.

Section 913 also clarifies the defense secretary’s authority to establish or terminate any defense agency or DOD field activity, with the exception of entities that are specifically established or terminated by an act of Congress.

The draft bill still includes language requiring the CMO to certify that spending by defense agencies and field activities on civilian resources management, logistics management, services contracting and real estate management will be cut by 25 percent by Jan. 1, 2021, by reducing or eliminating duplicative “cross-enterprise” functions. Section 911 would require the CMO to continue reviewing defense agencies and field activities every five years to identify opportunities to eliminate duplicative activities. The second iteration would expand the scope of the review to cover the military departments.

The Armed Services Committee will mark up Thornberry’s proposal, along with each of the subcommittee marks, on Wednesday.

Navy to Reactivate Second Fleet as 'Dynamic Response' in Atlantic

Sheri Evans, May 07, 2018

Headquartered at Naval Air Station Mayport, the 4th Fleet is made up of 170 sailors and civilians and is responsible for U.S. Navy ships, aircraft and submarines operating in the Caribbean, and the Atlantic and Pacific oceans around Central and South America.
The U.S. Navy's Second Fleet will be sent to the North Atlantic Ocean again, as the Pentagon plots ways to combat Russia's revanchist tendencies.

The announcement from Richardson was immediately followed by an announcement from the Office of the Secretary of Defense that it has offered to host a new NATO Joint Force Command for the Atlantic at Naval Station Norfolk.

But Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson said that re-establishing the fleet is a "dynamic response to a dynamic environment" and that any costs associated with setting up a new command structure would be worth it.

The fleet will be based in its previous home - Norfolk……

Tampa teen wins high honor as U.S. Air Force's Military Child of the Year

By Sean Daly, 3:03 AM, May 9, 2018, 6:27 AM, May 9, 2018

Part of the reason Eve Glenn is the Air Force’s Military Child of the Year is because she is a math whiz. Look at the big numbers behind her success.

Her father is a project manager in the U.S. Air Force, moving his family between Colorado, Germany and Florida. It is a constant tour that has seen Eve attend 11 different schools.

Her final stop before college is Tampa’s Robinson High School. At just 16 years old, the senior is the school’s valedictorian.

In between her straight-A studies, mentoring students in STEM subjects, her cheerleading passion, competitive Irish dancing and working out, Glenn has amassed close to 2,000 hours of volunteering to help families in need……

Executive Order to Spur Federal Hiring of Military Spouses

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 10, 2018 03:14 am

Federal agencies will be directed to increase their hiring of military spouses, under an executive order President Trump signed Wednesday at a White House event with First Lady Melania Trump and military spouses and mothers. A U.S. Chamber of Commerce survey estimated the unemployment rate for military spouses was 16 percent in 2017; overall unemployment in the United States was 3.9 percent as of April, reported Stars and Stripes. “We are going to change that, and we are going to change it as quickly as we can,” the president said. “It will go fast.”

In addition to encouraging agencies to apply more liberally a federal law that gives preference to military spouses for government jobs, it directs the Office of Personnel Management to increase awareness of the hiring preference and train agencies about how to employ it. It also calls for the federal government to better track how many military spouses it hires. “As a federal government, if we are going to be working
with our private sector and asking for others to hire military spouses, we need to lead by example,” said Jennifer Korn, a special assistant to the president.
May 18

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – There is **no meeting in June**. Task Force meeting #65 is on **Thursday, 19 July 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EDT** at the Hampton Inn & Suites Miami South – Homestead, 2855 NE 9th Street, Homestead, FL 33033.

2. **Call In Number** –
   - Call-In Number: 800-501-8979
   - Access Code: 1869945

3. **Florida CODEL met in DC on Drilling** – The Florida delegation met on Thursday, May 17 2018, to discuss the issues surrounding drilling in waters off the Florida Coast. The meeting was spurred by continued inconsistent statements and actions coming out of the Department of Interior who has told Governor Scott that “Florida is off the Table” but has not changed any planning to open up lease sales in the eastern Gulf of Mexico as soon as the original 2006 Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) restriction ends in 2022. According to a release from the News Service of Florida that “Visit Florida President Ken Lawson and Brig. Gen. Evan Dertien, commander of the 96th Test Wing at Eglin Air Force Base, are among scheduled panelists for a Florida congressional delegation hearing Thursday on drilling off the state’s coasts.” See article below in the CLIPS.

4. **OSD Releases Report on Gulf Range Usage** – Undersecretary of Defense Michael Griffin released a report (attached) to Rep Thornberry at the HASC and Rep Robert Bishop at the Committee on Natural Resources on May 9, 2018. The report states that “The eastern Gulf of Mexico (EGOMEX) is an irreplaceable national asset used by the Department of Defense (DoD) to develop and maintain the readiness of our armed forces and is critical to achieving the objectives contained in the 2018 National Defense Strategy.” Although the report states multiple times that oil drilling or exploration would severely impact current and future missions, it leaves the door open to new leasing activities by stating that “If oil and gas development were to extend east over the MML, without sufficient surface limiting stipulations and/or oil and gas activity restrictions mutually agreed upon by the DoD and the Department of the Interior (DoI), military flexibility in the region would be lost and test activities severely affected.”

5. **Task Force Members Invited to Energy Conference** – Staff has received the following invitation from Kimberly Conley, Senior Project Manager at NC Clean Energy Technology Center. “Dear FDSTF, I would like to invite you to an important event on improving the energy resilience of critical infrastructure facilities in Florida to hurricanes and other disasters. The U.S. Department of Energy's Southeast Combined Heat and Power Technical Assistance Partnership (CHP TAP) is convening a workshop titled: Florida Energy Resilience through CHP and Microgrids on **June 7th in Gainesville**. The topic of energy resilience is one that we are all mindful of, especially in the wake of Hurricanes Irma and Maria and their devastating impact on the state. There were, however, a number of critical infrastructure facilities, including as hospitals and water treatment facilities, with combined heat and power that were able to maintain full operations despite grid outages.” Ms. Kellie Jo Kilberg from the FDA is planning to attend. Go to [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/florida-energy-resilience-through-combined-heat-power-and-microgrids-workshop-tickets-44849642488](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/florida-energy-resilience-through-combined-heat-power-and-microgrids-workshop-tickets-44849642488) for more info on the conference.
6. **Army to Move CFT to Orlando** – We were notified on Thursday afternoon by Congresswomen Murphy’s staff that “Secretary Esper recently approved locations for each of the eight Cross Functional Team headquarters that will report up to Army Futures Command. The Synthetic Training Environment CFT will move to Orlando. According to the Army, the decision places the CFT at the location most suitable to support their current efforts…..the Synthetic Training Environment CFT will collocate with PEO-STRI in Orlando, FL. The CFT headquarters will begin relocating this summer; the exact timeline is TBD. The HQ will consist of a combination of approximately 32 Military and Department of the Army Civilians but will continue to draw on subject matter experts from around the Army to support their effort.”

7. **National Governor’s Association (NGA) Assesses the NDAA** – The NGA tracks provisions in the FY 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). They have released a memo (attached) that outlines several important items from the House Bill (H.R. 5515). The bill authorizes $717 billion for defense activities under the jurisdiction of the committee - $616.7 billion in defense base funding, $69 billion in the Overseas Contingency Operations account and $31.3 billion in other defense related accounts and mandatory spending.

8. **National Defense Industry Association (NDIA) Beginning a Chapter in Jacksonville** – NDIA is beginning a chapter in Jacksonville and will meet in the middle of June in Jacksonville. Staff has been asked to provide an overview of Florida’s Military and Defense programs and the Task Force Strategic Plan. The meeting will be held on June 13 from 1:00-5:00 pm at The River Club in Jacksonville. Currently other speakers expected to attend include Dr. Brett Ulander, NDIA FC Chapter President, Gen Craig McKinley, National Chair of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve and Past President and CEO of NDIA, and Frank Michael, NDIA Senior Vice President, Programs and Membership. For more information, go to [https://www.eventbrite.com/o/ndia-first-coast-chapter-15258435583](https://www.eventbrite.com/o/ndia-first-coast-chapter-15258435583).

9. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Washington Summit Registration is Open** – For Task Force or FDA members who are interested in attending the ADC Defense Communities National Summit in Washington DC, registration is now open. The theme of this year’s Summit is “Strengthening America’s Defense Infrastructure”. Keynote speakers include Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla.); Lucian Niemeyer, assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment; Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer, and Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson. The Summit will take place at the Washington Hilton, located at 1919 Connecticut Avenue from June 18-20, 2018. ADC has secured a block of rooms for the discounted rate of $249. To make your reservation call the hotel at (202) 483-3000 and mention the ADC Defense Communities National Summit or click on this link to register as well as make your accommodations at [https://www.adcsummit.org/#register](https://www.adcsummit.org/#register). According to the latest ADC e-mail, “Given interest in this event, availability of rooms in the block is very limited. If rooms are not available, the Courtyard by Marriott Washington DC/DuPont Circle and Churchill Hotel are located adjacent to the Hilton and currently have availability.”

10. **Attachments:**
   - OSD Report on Military Use for the Eastern Gulf of Mexico
   - NGA Memo on NDAA
News Clips of Interest:

Task Force

Task force OKs $1.3 million in grants to advance military

MICHAEL MOLINE, 5-17-2018
http://floridapolitics.com/archives/263969-task-force-oks-grants

A state task force on Thursday approved grants worth nearly $1.33 million for projects designed to support military installations and preserve Florida’s reputation as the most military-friendly state.

They included land and easement buys neighboring the Avon Park Air Force Range and Camp Blanding; development of a Bay County innovation center to advance amphibious warfare; and support for efforts to lure the MQ-9 Reaper drone wing to Tyndall Air Force Base, also in Bay County.

The programs are designed to help the state adjust as advances in technology revolutionize defense strategy, potentially rendering the military programs that comprise the state’s second-biggest economic driver obsolete.

“Our operations here are being devalued,” said Sen. Doug Broxson, the Pensacola Republican who chairs the Florida Defense Support Task Force.

“We’ve got to do a better job of communicating that to our members in the Legislature,” he said. “The people that represent this group are the eyes and ears of 20 major installations that are telling us what’s important to them.”

Florida enjoys one unique asset, however — the 120,000-acre military testing range in the Gulf of Mexico. It contributes an estimated $80 billion to Florida’s economy, and the task force is intent on protecting it from encroachment by oil exploration or other incursions…. 
Oil Drilling / Gulf Range

Gaetz amendment would enhance spending for Gulf Test Range

By Staff report, Posted May 11, 2018 at 10:03 AM, Updated May 11, 2018 at 4:15 PM

U.S. Rep. Matt Gaetz has won an early battle to secure funding for the nation’s military test ranges, including the Gulf Test Range that extends off the coast of Northwest Florida.

The final House Armed Services Committee markup of the National Defense Authorization Act, completed Thursday, included a $41.9 million increase for the military test ranges, a news release from Gaetz’s office said.

“The Gulf Test Range provides approximately 120,000 square miles of overwater airspace spanning the coast of Florida’s First Congressional District,” the news release said. “It is used for high altitude, supersonic air combat training, as well as air-to-air missile testing, drone targeting, hypersonic weapons testing, and space launches. Additionally, the Air Force Special Operations Command, the 96th Test Wing, the 33rd Fighter Wing, and others all train on the Gulf Test Range.

“The FY2019 NDAA passage in the House Armed Services Committee is a tremendous victory for Florida’s First Congressional District. We have continued our effort to enhance military test ranges, including the Gulf Test Range,” Gaetz said in the release.

Gaetz, R-Fort Walton Beach, also applauded the inclusion of numerous other provisions in the markup that could, if retained as the bill passes through Congress, benefit Northwest Florida.

Those provisions include:

- $10 million for refurbishing the North Field Air Traffic Control Tower at Whiting Field
- $60 million for F-35A spare parts
- $41.9 million for Test Range modernization
- $34.8 million for F-35A Integrated Training Center Academics Building at Eglin Air Force Base
- $28 million for F-35A Student Dormitory II

Gaetz spokesman Kavontae Smalls said the markup passed Thursday as a “final draft” that indicates the Armed Services Committee has approved final funding levels for the bill it will vote on and, upon passage, push forward for the full U.S. House to consider…..

Florida Delegation Holds Hearing on Oil Drilling

By NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA • 5-15-2018
HTTP://HEALTH.WUSF.USD.EDU/POST/FLORIDA-DELEGATION-HOLDS-HEARING-OIL-DRILLING#STREAM/0

Visit Florida President Ken Lawson and Brig. Gen. Evan Dertien, commander of the 96th Test Wing at Eglin Air Force Base, are among scheduled panelists for a Florida congressional delegation hearing Thursday on drilling off the state’s coasts.

Also scheduled to appear during the hearing in Washington are Mark Alderson, executive director of the Sarasota Bay National Estuary Program, and Ken Milito, director of upstream and industry operations for the American Petroleum Institute.
The hearing comes amid continued debate over plans by President Donald Trump’s administration to allow oil and gas drilling in federal waters off various parts of the country.

U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke appeared in January in Tallahassee and said drilling would not occur off Florida’s coasts. He repeated his stance last Thursday before the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee.

However, the administration’s stance has continued to draw questions as the waters off Florida’s coast haven’t officially been removed from the proposal.

The issue involves waters beyond the nation’s outer continental shelf --- a jurisdictional term describing submerged lands 10.36 statutory miles off Florida's West Coast and three nautical miles off the East Coast. Thursday’s one-hour hearing in the Rayburn House Office Building is set to begin at 8:30 a.m.

**Pentagon: Drilling, military not compatible in eastern Gulf**

Kellanish Energy, May 17, 2018

The Pentagon has warned Congress that opening the eastern part of the Gulf of Mexico to drilling for oil and natural gas under present rules is not compatible with military training and testing, Kellanish Energy reports.

Any drilling in that area would require major restrictions in order to not disturb military operations, said Michael Griffin, the U.S. Department of Defense’s Undersecretary for Research and Engineering, in a report submitted recently to two House committees.

He called the eastern Gulf “irreplaceable” for the military in the so-called Compatibility Assessment Report, according to Reuters.

The eastern Gulf is used by the Navy and the Air Force to test weapons and train, and rigs could interfere with those operations, he warned.

The Pentagon and the Interior Department would have to draft restrictions to make drilling compatible with military operations, he said.

The report is likely to be used by drilling opponents in Florida to block new offshore drilling in Florida.

At present, drilling is banned in the eastern Gulf off Florida’s west coast.

Congress has blocked drilling until 2022 in an area of the Gulf that is east of a line of longitude that runs through Florida’s panhandle. That Military Mission Line is about 200 miles off Florida’s coast.

The National Offshore Industries Association saw a positive side to the Pentagon’s report for drillers, according to The Hill. It argued it leaves the door open to allowing drilling in some areas and in some ways that were not available previously.

The American Petroleum Institute said it was confident federal officials can find ways for drilling to expand without harming the military……

**Florida congressional delegation gives thumbs-down to offshore drilling**
WASHINGTON – Florida's congressional delegation, citing the state's vibrant tourism industry, delivered a unanimous, bipartisan and stern message of opposition to offshore energy exploration during a hearing on Capitol Hill on Thursday.

Congressional Republicans and Democrats took turns blasting the idea of putting fossil-fuel development near the state's 825 miles of pristine beaches in order to boost energy production and oil company profits.

"Why should Florida suffer so they can make more money?" said Rep. Francis Rooney, R-Naples.

Rep. Alcee Hastings, D-Fort Lauderdale, and the Democratic co-chairman of the Florida's 29-member delegation, vowed to be the "last man standing against offshore drilling."

While Ken Lawson, president and chief executive of Visit Florida, the state's official tourism marketing arm, told lawmakers that the 2010 Deepwater Horizon explosion "will always serve as a stark reminder of what happens when we do not make our beaches, our waters and our environment our top priority."

BP's Deepwater Horizon oil rig exploded roughly 50 miles off the Louisiana coast in the Gulf of Mexico in April 2010, triggering an 87-day spill that released an estimated four million barrels of oil and gas. Along with 11 who died, 17 others suffered serious injuries and 115 people were evacuated from the rig, which sank.

The hearing comes as the Trump administration nears a decision on whether to allow seismic testing for fossil fuel deposits along the Atlantic Coast.

In January, the Trump administration dropped Florida from its plan to allow new offshore oil and gas drilling in most U.S. coastal waters.

The decision, in response to appeals from Florida Gov. Rick Scott, prompted calls for similar carve-outs from lawmakers in other coastal states like New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and North Carolina. But similar exemptions have not been provided......

Lawmakers Look to Add Policy Restrictions to NDAA on the House Floor

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 18, 2018 04:30 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=41716a9ca4

With the FY 2019 defense authorization bill set to be debated on the House floor next week, members are preparing to introduce amendments to the policy bill addressing a range of issues. Florida’s congressional delegation is considering proposing language to extend a moratorium on drilling activity in the eastern Gulf of Mexico that expires in 2022, reports CQ. The effort follows last week’s release of a DOD report concluding that oil and gas drilling in the eastern Gulf is incompatible with the military’s training and testing activities there. “Simply stated, if oil and gas development were to extend east of the [military mission line], without sufficient surface limiting stipulations and/or oil and gas activity restrictions mutually agreed by the DOD and DOI, military flexibility in the region would be lost and test and training activities would be severely affected,” the report stated. Florida officials previously obtained a pledge from Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to exclude the state from a plan he announced in January to permit drilling in most U.S. continental shelf-waters.
**NAS Pensacola**

Canadian Forces Snowbirds to Make Surprise U.S. Appearance

Jacob Norre, May 13, 2018

http://www.theavgeek.net/05/2018/jnorre/canadian-forces-snowbirds-to-make-surprise-u-s-appearance/

The Canadian Forces Snowbirds, 431st Air Demonstration Squadron, is set to make a rare appearance onboard Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola the week of May 14. NAS Pensacola is home to the U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Team Blue Angels, and the appearances will coincide to showcase both acrobatic routines in one week at the same location.

The Blue Angels routinely practice on NAS Pensacola during the week days in between their airshow schedule, but this week the schedule has been modified to accommodate both teams so thousands of spectators can attend. The surprise announcement came only one week before the Snowbirds are expected to arrive in Pensacola.

For any nearby AvGeeks interested in attending, there are two opportunities to watch the Snowbirds. On May 15, the Snowbirds will fly at 2:00 p.m. CST; the flight line will open one hour beforehand. On May 16, the Blue Angels will fly at 9:00 a.m. CST, followed by the Snowbirds at 2:00 p.m. CST. Just as the day before, access to the flight lines will open one hour before the flight. For individuals without Department of Defense ID, you must enter NAS Pensacola from the West Gate located on Blue Angel Parkway. Access to the base will require an ID for anyone over 16 years of age and no large bags are allowed on the flight line....

**NAS Whiting Field**

Escambia County commissioners describe their goals for the Navy's Beulah land

Jim Little, jwittle@pnj.com Published 2:23 p.m. CT May 11, 2018 | Updated 2:59 p.m. CT May 11, 2018


The end is in sight for Escambia County's project to build a [Navy training airfield in Santa Rosa County](https://www.pnj.com/story/news/politics/2018/05/11/olf-8-property-beulah-escambia-county-master-plan-lands-future/599406002/) to swap for Outlying Field 8 in Beulah.

Escambia County Administrator Jack Brown told the board of County Commissioners on Thursday during a Committee of the Whole meeting that the construction would likely be complete in November and the land swap with the Navy could happen in December or January.

Now, the County Commission must decide what it will do with the Beulah property.

The county will hire a consultant to develop a request for proposals for a professional planning company to develop a master plan for the project.

"One of the things that was talked about was a citizen's advisory committee, and I think the preference of the board was to have the master planner reach out to entities and stakeholders instead of having a citizen's advisory committee drive it," Brown said to the board Thursday……
Hurlburt Field

Distinguished Flying Crosses to be awarded at Hurlburt

By staff report, Posted May 10, 2018 at 4:12 PM, Updated May 10, 2018 at 4:12 PM

HURRBURT FIELD – Almost two dozen Air Commandos from the Air Force Special Operations Command will be presented with Distinguished Flying Crosses on Friday morning.

The ceremony, to be hosted by Hurlburt’s Field’s 4th Special Operations Squadron, is set for 10 a.m., according to a news release from the 1st Special Operations Wing’s public affairs office.


Also to receive Distinguished Flying Crosses are Tech. Sgts. Austin Parrent, Erik Petersen, Benjamin Narro, Gregory Matthews and Brett Laswell; Staff Sgts. Dale Trant, Andrew Portz, Dillon Dummit, Jordan Gelnett and Jerrel Williams; and Senior Airmen Cory Smith and Nicholas Snyder.

Created by Congress in 1926, the Distinguished Flying Cross is America’s oldest military aviation award. It is awarded to officers and enlisted member of the armed forces who distinguish themselves in combat by heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in an aerial flight.…

Eglin AFB

Advanced Data Sharing, Range Expansion on Eglin Test Wing's Agenda

By Oriana Pawlyk, Military.com 11 May 2018

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – The engineers and system developers with the Air Force's 96th Test Wing here work on a wide range of projects, from analyzing how bombs drop, to testing cruise missiles, to helping NASA in its effort to reach Mars.

Items currently on their agenda include improving the B61-12 nuclear gravity bomb precision tail kit; using cameras to map how warheads explode; developing drone swarming; testing hypersonics; improving Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile anti-jamming electronics; and developing advanced weather sensors on the AC-130 gunship.

Veterans wanted. Apply Now. Meaningful and exciting opportunities for transitioning military service members.

"We try to schedule a good balance here on all of the demands for the resources to try and accommodate as many customers as possible," said Steven Dietzius, technical director for the 96th's Air Force Test Center.
Cause of Eglin Air Force Base Climatic Lab fire released

By: WKRG Staff, Tara Dempsey, Updated: May 11, 2018 04:42 PM CDT

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (WKRG) – A report on the cause of the fire that broke out at the McKinley Climatic Laboratory, located at Eglin Air Force Base has been released.

The fire occurred on July 5, 2017 causing road closures and evacuations of up to a 1,000 feet around the facility.

The Air Force Materiel Command Ground Accident Investigation Board released the following report:

"Contractor workers were performing structural repairs when a fire broke out on July 5, 2017, resulting in an estimated $30 million in damage to an air-mixing facility at the McKinley Climatic Laboratory, located at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, according to a recently released Air Force Materiel Command Ground Accident Investigation Board report.

The Fort Walton Beach-based Reliance Test & Technology performs Operations and Maintenance services for the McKinley Climatic Lab as a prime contractor with the United States Air Force. At the time of the incident, a subcontractor, Universal Fabricators, Inc., was replacing heavily corroded structural I-beams to one of the two Air Makeup Units, which mix and condition temperature and humidity of air, which is then blown into the McKinley Climatic Lab to perform tests on aircraft and various equipment.

The report noted a contractor was using an oxy-acetylene torch to remove a corroded steel I-beam located in close proximity to coils which contained methylene chloride, commonly called R-30 refrigerant. Although stable at room temperature and pressure, R-30 can rupture or explode when exposed to heat…

NS Mayport

Navy sailors hailed as heroes after saving 2 teens at Mayport

Author: Melissa Guz, Published: 4:07 PM EDT May 11, 2018, Updated: 8:05 AM EDT May 12, 2018

Four Navy sailors are being hailed heroes after they saved two teenage girls at Naval Station Mayport Beach in Jacksonville, Florida, according to the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD).

The sailors -- identified as Chief Petty Officer Aniahu Desha, Seaman Gaston Yescas, Petty Officer First Class Sheldon Lucius and Petty Officer Third Class Joshua Essick who are not stationed at the base -- said they heard cries for help coming from the beach.

The sailors said they noticed the two teens off the shore and quickly entered the water and swam toward them.
"We'd just sat down, and some ladies came up the beach were yelling for help, seeing that the girls were out in the waves, needing help," Desha said in an article published by the DOD. "They were in trouble, so we just ran into the water and got them."

The sailors brought the two girls back to the shore safely, but one of the girls was unresponsive.

"When we got on shore, as soon as I picked her up, I noticed that she wasn't breathing," Desha said in the article. "I checked for her pulse -- there was no pulse. So we immediately started chest compressions and mouth-to-mouth."

Both Desha and Yescas conducted CPR on the unresponsive friend until emergency rescue personnel arrived.

She was revived…..

**Sailors aboard USS Zephyr return to Mayport**

By Ashley Spicer - Reporter, anchor, Posted: 4:59 AM, May 14, 2018Updated: 7:39 PM, May 14, 2018


**JACKSONVILLE, Fla.** - About 30 sailors aboard the USS Zephyr returned home to their families Monday after four months at sea patrolling the waters of the Pacific.

The Zephyr is 174 feet long and can go up to 40 mph. The crew is made up of four officers and 24 enlisted sailors.

"It’s a great feeling (being home)," sailor Quamar Ashley said. "I missed these guys a lot; so happy to be home holding them and my beautiful wife, as well."

The ship, based out of Naval Station Mayport, made headlines last month when it intercepted a suspected drug smuggling boat with 1,080 pounds of cocaine on board.

Photos from the Navy show the USS Zephyr during the mission.

The boat where the crew found the cocaine caught fire while speeding through the Pacific. The USS Zephyr was chasing it down at the time, according to the Navy.

It took the crew about 90 minutes to put the fire out. The Navy said the people on board jumped in the water, and the Coast Guard recovered the cocaine……

**USS Stark memorial service honors fallen sailors**

By Crystal Moyer, Roxy Tyler - Posted: 10:02 AM, May 17, 2018Updated: 10:46 PM, May 17, 2018


**JACKSONVILLE, Fla.** - Survivors of a missile attack on the Mayport-based frigate USS Stark 31 years ago gathered with fellow sailors and community members Thursday for a somber remembrance ceremony to honor the 37 lives lost.

"This is needed very much to remember the sacrifice, the love these men have for one-another," said Gunners Mate Missiles 3rd Class Bernard Martin.

Martin had just gotten off his shift aboard the USS Stark on the day of the attack.

"The morning of the attack I traded watches with another fellow and moved him in," Martin said.
The guided missile frigate USS Stark was on patrol in the Arabian Gulf when it was struck by two missiles fired by Iraqi fighter jets, puncturing large holes and starting a fire on board. Black smoke covered the air. The sailor that took Martin's place was killed in the attack. Martin was on a flight back to base….

**NAS Jacksonville**

**Members of the Blue Angels Arrive At NAS Jacksonville Monday**

By BILL BORTZFIELD • MAY 11, 2018


Two members from The Blue Angels will be arriving at Naval Air Station Jacksonville on Monday to discuss plans with representatives and the media for the upcoming NAS Jax Air Show on October 27 and 28. This weekend the Navy’s elite Flight Demonstration Team will be streaking across Tampa Bay skies at 2018 AirFest at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa. Jacksonville is the birthplace of the Blue Angels. The Navy Flight Exhibition Team performed its first flight demonstration June 15, 1946 at NAS Jacksonville, according to the Navy….

**MacDill AFB**

**Clouds can’t dampen crowd’s enthusiasm at packed MacDill Airfest**

Howard Altman, Times staff writer, Published: May 12, 2018, Updated: May 12, 2018 at 06:28 PM


**TAMPA** – With his 4-year-old son Tyler on his shoulders, Ryan Wick watched the Navy’s Blue Angels aerial demonstration team scream over the MacDill Air Force Base flight line at about 400 miles an hour. An hour or so earlier, the two struck a similar pose as an F-22 Raptor fighter jet performed maneuvers no other plane can make. For Wick, 41, a software engineer from Apollo Beach, it was a toss-up as to which of the two was his favorite act during the Tampa Bay AirFest 2018. "From a pure science and technology standpoint, watching how it hovers like a hovercraft and can stop midair, it is hard to beat the Raptor," said Wick. "But from a performance standpoint, what we just saw with the Blue Angels was amazing."

Wick and his son were among an estimated 90,000 who came out on an overcast day to see the Blue Angels’ six F/A-18 Hornets, the Raptor and an A-10 Thunderbolt II close air support jet from the Air Force A-10 Demonstration team.
There were also about 30 static displays, including a B-52, several helicopters and an MQ-9 Reaper drone.

It rained early and was cloudy and overcast most of the day, but the low clouds helped visibility…..

MacDill reviewing transportation plans after crowds jam roads for AirFest 2018

Howard Altman, Times staff writer, Published: May 17, 2018, Updated: May 17, 2018 at 06:02 AM

TAMPA – Tampa Bay AirFest 2018 pulled in a whopping 150,000 people and more over three days last week, including practice on Friday.

But that proved to be more people than the transportation plan could handle, delaying arrival by hours for some and preventing others from getting into MacDill Air Force Base at all.

It’s always been difficult to move so many people for an event held on an occasional basis, but this year organizers thought the use of shuttle buses from Hillsborough Area Regional Transit would help.

Not as they had hoped, it turns out.

"Is something wrong with the buses"? one person asked Saturday on the MacDill Facebook page, following up with this sad story:

"We are here at Britton (sic) Plaza and waiting for more than two and a half hrs. and only two buses show is 11:27 and still waiting ... So sad waiting two years for this show and wasting the time waiting for the bus. I decide to not drive into the Base to avoid the traffic at the end of the show but that was a bad decision." …..

Cape Canaveral AFS

3 reasons why SpaceX's latest launch is a big deal for Florida's Space Coast

By Matthew Richardson – Staff writer, Orlando Business Journal, May 15, 2018, 1:22pm

SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket may have looked, launched and landed the same way like its many other missions, but last week's launch was a test of what's ahead for the rocket company.

The Hawthorne, Calif.-based company used its Falcon 9 rocket to send Bangladesh's telecommunications device, the Bangabandhu 1 satellite, to space on May 11. The launch was a success and the landing was accomplished, but this Falcon 9 was a new Block 5 model — a sturdier version of the rocket.

The value of using the Block 5 model is so SpaceX can take its reusable rocket model to new heights and cut down on costs. It also may better open the door for SpaceX to see how its new model works and if that same method can be applied to its Big Falcon Rocket, which now is being built in Los Angeles……
Patrick AFB

920th Rescue Wing receives distinguished award
Thu, 05/17/2018 - 08:25
https://www.aimedandrescue.com/story/112884/920th-rescue-wing-receives-distinguished-award

Colonel Kurt Matthews, 920th Rescue Wing commander, has been presented with the Power and Vigilance Award, during the Combat Planning Council social at Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base, Texas. “I'm extremely proud of the efforts and accomplishments of the Citizen-Airmen of the 920th Rescue Wing, and was honoured to accept this award on their behalf,” said Matthews.

The Power and Vigilance Award is presented to the 10th Air Force unit which best exhibits the Numbered Air Force's vision as ‘The premier provider of affordable, integrated, flexible and mission-ready Reserve Citizen Airmen to execute power and vigilance in support of U.S. National Security’.

The 920th Rescue Wing distinguished themselves by performing two long-range rescues at sea, each approximately 500 miles out, and several mountain rescues. Reservists also assisted with rescues during Hurricane Harvey and conducted search and rescue missions after Hurricanes Irma and Maria, not to mention gearing up for human spaceflight rescue, among multiple overseas deployments, and many other notable achievements.....

US Southern Command

Central American Firefighters Train with U.S. Service Members
Kay Valle/Diálogo | 15 May 2018
https://dialogo-americas.com/en/articles/bomberos-de-centroamerica-capacitan-con-militares-de-los-ee-uu

At the end of April 2018, Central American firefighters gained additional knowledge and experience through a U.S. Southern Command- (SOUTHCOM) sponsored exercise, under Joint Task Force Bravo’s (JTF-Bravo) leadership. The Central America Sharing Mutual Knowledge and Experience exercise (CENTAM SMOKE) took place April 23rd–27th.

The exercise took place at the Soto Cano Air Base in Comayagua, Honduras, JTF-Bravo headquarters, and was led by JTF-Bravo’s 612th Air Base Squadron Fire Department. A total of 30 firefighters from Honduras, Guatemala, Panama, El Salvador, Belize, and Nicaragua participated in the training.

The objective of CENTAM SMOKE is to develop the capacities of firefighter brigades of countries in the region, improve their firefighting skills, and present them with new scenarios. Additionally, the exercise seeks to standardize firefighting techniques to promote combined efforts against natural disasters.....

Energy

DOD Needs to Expedite Awards Process for Utilities Privatization, Committee Indicates
Dan Cohen, Posted on May 11, 2018 05:30 am
The process carried out within the Defense Department to complete the procurement process for awarding utilities privatization contracts is taking too long, the House Armed Services Committee says in report language attached to the chairman’s mark of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill. In some instances it has taken more than five years from initial feasibility review by a military department to the award of a contract to a utility provider.

“After two decades of experience with utilities privatization, the committee is concerned that procedures have not improved. The department’s protracted process for awarding privatization contracts deters potential utility providers from considering such a contract,” the lawmakers stated.

To overcome past challenges with the utilities privatization program, the committee directs the Government Accountability Office to submit a report to the House and Senate Armed Services committees by Sept. 30, 2019, which addresses:

- the specific steps of the utility privatization process, the average amount of time to complete each step and the contributing factors for the time each step takes;
- the extent to which best practices have been identified and are shared between the services and the Defense Logistics Agency, and other stakeholders to improve the process; and
- recommendations to improve the process.

**DoD Budget**

**In Brief: Defense Budget Peaks in 2019, Underfunding the National Defense Strategy**

Mackenzie Eaglen, @MEaglen, May 17, 2018

AEI’s newest research paper “Defense Budget Peaks in 2019, Underfunding the National Defense Strategy” delves into President Donald Trump’s second defense budget and future spending plans. Despite claims that this was a banner year for defense, the report highlights several stark conclusions:

- President Trump’s budget for national defense in fiscal year 2019 (PB19) represents the highest Pentagon topline in real terms since 1986 for base spending and 2012 when factoring in Overseas Contingency Operations. This budget matches Reagan-era toplines in form, but not in substance.
- The $700 billion in enacted defense spending for 2018 is a substantive increase over 2017 enacted and 2018 requested spending. However, the $716 billion topline for 2019 just keeps pace with inflation.
- The administration’s first five-year budget, the Future Years Defense Program, suggests the overall fiscal outlook for defense spending will flatline in 2020 and beyond.
- PB19’s changes are evolutionary, not revolutionary—it does not buy the force required to execute the National Defense Strategy. The budget allocates 87 percent of new funding above last year’s appropriations to military personnel and operations and maintenance, with most of the remainder going toward research and development.
- Congress, which primarily drove increases to the defense budget in 2017 and 2018, should adjust PB19’s allocation of funding to better balance investments in capability with consummate increases to capacity and readiness.
**Other Of Interest**

**Pentagon Survey Played Down Climate Change Threat**

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 14, 2018 04:30 am
https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?zx=dn3nugrc3tz9#inbox/1635e9c09d0c30b5

A Pentagon survey concluding that about half of military facilities worldwide experienced impacts from climate change-related risks de-emphasized the threat installations face as a result of climate change and rising sea levels, according to a draft version of the report obtained by the Washington Post. The final survey, which was submitted to Congress in January, represented the department’s first comprehensive attempt to survey installation officials about the effects of climate change.

Overall the December 2016 draft was far more direct in its discussion of climate change and the issue of sea-level rise, according to the Post, with numerous references to “climate change” omitted or altered to “extreme weather” or “climate” in the final version. One deleted sentence, for example, stated, “The changing climate could increase risk to the 420 endangered species that live on our installations, potentially leading to training and operating restrictions.”

The revisions “change the feeling of urgency in the report, but not its fundamental conclusion — that our military installations are clearly experiencing climate impacts,” said John Conger, director of the Center for Climate and Security. Conger helped lead the survey when he served as DOD’s top installations official under President Obama.

“As highlighted in the report, the effects of climate are a national security issue with potential impacts to missions, operational plans, and installations,” DOD spokeswoman Heather Babb said in a statement. “DOD continues to focus on ensuring its installations and infrastructure are resilient to a wide range of threats, including climate. The department has a proven record of planning and preparing for such threats,” she said.

**Why Isn’t the Army Looking at Existing Facilities to Host New Command, Lawmakers Ask**

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 15, 2018 03:44 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=572342036d

The Army last month named 15 large metropolitan areas, rather than any of its installations, as candidates to host the headquarters for its new Futures Command because officials want the command to leverage the talent from academic institutions and the private sector. But the House Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee believes officials should consider placing the headquarters at an existing post, according to the report accompanying the fiscal 2019 milcon spending bill the full committee approved last week. In turn, lawmakers direct the Army to submit a report within 30 days after the measure becomes law describing how the 15 locations were selected and identifying current Army sites where Futures Command could be established.
Senate Panels to Mark up Milcon, Defense Spending Bills in June

Dan Cohen,

Posted on May 15, 2018 03:00 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156e255f5e02d33ce307ef7&id=572342036d

The Senate Appropriations Committee has released its tentative schedule for marking up fiscal 2019 spending bills. The military construction-VA measure is scheduled to be marked up the week of June 4; the defense measure, the week of June 25. The schedule does not specify whether both subcommittee and full committee markups will take place in the same week.

U.S. Rep. Brian Mast of Treasure Coast named to House Veterans Affairs Committee

Ali Schmitz, Treasure Coast, Published 3:13 p.m. ET May 16, 2018 | Updated 3:31 p.m. ET May 16, 2018


He announced the assignment on Facebook Wednesday.

“I’m really excited to have the opportunity to serve our veterans on the Veterans Affairs Committee,” Mast said in a statement. "Our first-of-its-kind office in the West Palm Beach VA has resulted in more than 100 new cases that we’re taking a look at to help veterans in our community, and being on this committee will give me an even better platform to advocate for my fellow veterans.”

Mast is rumored to be one of several candidates being considered for the position of Veterans Affairs secretary by the Trump administration.

Mast didn't deny the rumors last week, saying only “it is an honor to be considered to serve my fellow veterans and their families at the highest possible level."

Mast's spokesman declined to comment further on the search Wednesday.

Mast, an Army veteran who lost both legs and a finger while in Afghanistan, is the first member of Congress to open a satellite office in a VA facility.
May 25

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – There is **no meeting in June**. Task Force meeting #65 is on **Thursday, 19 July 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EDT** at the Hampton Inn & Suites Miami South – Homestead, 2855 NE 9th Street, Homestead, FL 33033.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   **Call-In Number:** 800-501-8979  
   **Access Code:** 1869945

3. **Congressman Dunn Supports F-22 Upgrade** – Congressman Dunn has drafted an amendment to the 2019 NDAA (attached) to push for upgrade of Block 20 F-22 aircraft used for training to Block 35 capability which are combat coded.

4. **Florida Attempt to Ban Drilling in Eastern Gulf Blocked** – According to an article in the Tampa Bay Times on Wednesday, a bipartisan amendment to the House version of the 2019 NDAA to put a permanent ban on drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico has been blocked and will not be allowed to come up for a vote. The amendment was introduced by Rep. Castor from Tampa and Rep. Rooney from the Naples area. The article notes the military need for unrestricted access to the gulf stating “They sought to attach the amendment to the defense authorization bill, and saw leverage in a new Defense Department report that questioned the impact of drilling activity with military missions in the area”… “The environmental and economic reasons not to drill are paramount, but DOD gives our argument greater urgency,” Castor said. "The only way to fully ensure the readiness of our military and protect Florida's economy and environment is to extend the moratorium permanently.” See several articles about recent congressional action to protect the Gulf from the Florida CODEL below in the CLIPS.

5. **Representative Murphy gets Priorities in 2019 NDAA** – According to staff from Rep Murphy’s office, “Today, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the FY19 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) in an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote of 351-66. Rep. Stephanie Murphy (FL-07) secured numerous amendments to the NDAA to help departing servicemembers transition to civilian life; to enable small businesses to obtain low-interest loans; to strengthen Orlando’s world-leading modeling, simulation, and training community and cyber community; to protect Israel against rocket and missile threats; and to enhance the Department of Defense’s efforts to combat the opioid epidemic.” See attached.

6. **Florida Named Best State for Military Retirement** – Florida was named the best state for military retirement in a 2018 study conducted by “WalletHub”. The study which “uses a data set of 27 key metrics, ranging from veterans per capita to number of VA health facilities to job opportunities for veterans” found Florida as number one followed by Virginia, New Hampshire, Alabama and South Carolina in the top five. The worst location according to the
report was Washington D.C. See the article below in the CLIPS or to review the entire study results go to https://wallethub.com/edu/best-states-for-military-retirees/3915/.

7. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Washington Summit Registration is Open** – For Task Force or FDA members who are interested in attending the ADC Defense Communities National Summit in Washington DC, registration is now open. The theme of this year’s Summit is “Strengthening America’s Defense Infrastructure”. Keynote speakers include Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okl.); Lucian Niemeyer, assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment; Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer, and Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson. The Summit will take place at the Washington Hilton, located at 1919 Connecticut Avenue from June 18-20, 2018. ADC has secured a block of rooms for the discounted rate of $249. To make your reservation call the hotel at (202) 483-3000 and mention the ADC Defense Communities National Summit or click on this link to register as well as make your accommodations at https://www.adcsummit.org/#register. According to the latest ADC e-mail, “Given interest in this event, availability of rooms in the block is very limited. If rooms are not available, the Courtyard by Marriott Washington DC/DuPont Circle and Churchill Hotel are located adjacent to the Hilton and currently have availability.”

8. **Attachments:**
   - Congressman Dunn NDAA Amendment for F-22 Upgrade
   - Florida Memorial Day Resolution
   - Rep Murphy NDAA Priorities

**Terry**
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**News Clips of Interest:**

**Oil Drilling / Gulf Range**

State House delegation opposes offshore drilling

By Jim Thompson, Posted May 18, 2018 at 7:15 AM
WASHINGTON, D.C. – Members of Florida’s delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives are unanimously opposed to any expansion of oil and gas exploration in the Gulf of Mexico, according to Rep. Matt Gaetz.

That opposition has formed along two fronts, said Gaetz, the Republican congressman from Fort Walton Beach. One concern is the potential adverse impact of drilling on the state’s tourism industry. A second is the threat that expanding opportunities for oil and gas exploration could pose for the military’s Gulf Test Range.

Tourism and the military are cornerstones of the state’s economy.

“I’m encouraged ... that the entire Florida delegation is united against it,” Gaetz said Thursday.

Currently, oil and gas leasing in the Gulf is prohibited within 125 miles of the Florida coastline under terms of the federal Gulf of Mexico Energy and Security Act of 2006. However, that ban is set to expire in 2022.

Gaetz and the rest of the bipartisan 27-member Florida delegation met Thursday with representatives of the state’s tourism industry, its substantial military presence, environmental interests and the American Petroleum Institute.

The meeting, arranged by the delegation’s leadership — Democratic Rep. Alcee Hastings and Republican Rep. Vern Buchanan — at the urging of the rest of the delegation, came amid continuing mixed signals from the Trump administration regarding the future of oil exploration in the Gulf.

At least twice since the beginning of this year, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has indicated drilling would not be allowed off the coast of Florida. However, the area remains in a Trump administration proposal that would open federal waters along parts of America’s coast to oil and gas exploration.

Gaetz said after Thursday’s hearing that he has talked with President Donald Trump about the proposed expansion of oil and gas exploration, and is optimistic Trump understands the state’s concerns....

Florida congressmen pushing to stop offshore drilling

By Samantha-Jo Roth | May 18, 2018 @7:23 PM

WASHINGTON – In just four years, a ban on drilling off the eastern Gulf is set to expire. But the Sunshine state’s congressional delegation is determined to make sure that doesn’t happen.

- Offshore drilling ban for Gulfcoast set to expire 2022
- Florida Congressional Delegation fighting to stop that
- Plans call to extend or make permanent the ban

“Twenty-seven members, the third largest delegation in Congress is standing together,” said Rep. Darren Soto, D-Kissimmee. "That spells a good sign for us keeping oil drilling off our shores.”

“We saw what happened with the Deepwater Horizon spill and how even when there isn’t significant damage to our beaches, even the specter of that possibility causes a dramatic drop in our tourism,” said Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-District 23 in southeast Florida.

The Trump Administration is rapidly working to reduce regulations, with the goal of expanding offshore oil exploration to maintain the U.S.’s ranking as the leading producer of oil and natural gas.
“The oil states, Texas, Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi Republicans are very much against the moratorium, and they have very strong influence with the oil and gas industry there and I’m fighting them,” said Rep. Francis Rooney, R-District 19 in southwest Florida.

At least twice since the beginning of this year, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke had indicated that drilling would not be allowed off the coast of Florida. But, the area is still included in a Trump Administration proposal that would open federal waters along parts of America’s coastline to oil and gas exploration……

Florida Delegation Playing Hardball to Extend Offshore Drilling Moratorium

Jeremy Dillon, Posted May 21, 2018 4:00 PM

Emboldened by a Defense Department report that expressed worries about unfettered offshore drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico, Florida’s House delegation is preparing to throw its weight around to win a multiyear extension of a moratorium off its coasts.

The bipartisan commitment from the third largest congressional delegation, reached last week, may affect the $708.1 billion defense authorization bill that is being considered by the Rules Committee Monday and Tuesday ahead of a vote as soon as Wednesday.

That must-pass defense measure as well as a comprehensive public lands energy bill moving out of the House Natural Resources Committee could be a vehicle for an amendment to extend the moratorium.

“I don’t see any light between Democrats and Republicans on this very passionate issue,” said GOP Rep. Vern Buchanan, the co-chairman of the Florida delegation. “We are the third-largest delegation, and we have a lot of clout when we are united.”

The delegation’s decision last week followed a May 10 Pentagon report concluding that offshore drilling activities without Defense Department input would put at risk the national security mission bolstered by military activity in the region. The report urged an open line of communication with agencies identifying drilling sites.

**Hoping to extend**

The existing moratorium runs through 2022 and prevents any offshore oil activities in the eastern Gulf. Florida is pushing for an extension of at least five years, with an eye toward permanent extension if possible.

Republicans in the delegation have so far prevented the House Natural Resources’ public lands energy bill from reaching the House floor because it does not address the issue, Republican Rep. Francis Rooney said.

“To us in Florida, it’s existential,” Rooney said of the moratorium.

Rooney, along with GOP Rep. Matt Gaetz, met with House Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop of Utah and other oil state Republicans for about three hours on the evening of May 16 to hash out differences and find a path forward for both the energy bill and a measure to address Florida’s concerns. Department of Interior and DOD officials were also present, Bishop said…..
Oil drilling ban in eastern gulf is shot down

By Alex Leary, 5-23-2018

WASHINGTON – A bipartisan Florida effort to permanently ban oil drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico has been blocked from consideration.

"House Republicans blocked my bipartisan amendment to ban oil drilling off the coast of Florida late last night – meaning they will not allow a vote at all," said Rep. Kathy Castor, D-Tampa, who teamed up with Rep. Francis Rooney, R-Naples.

They sought to attach the amendment to the defense authorization bill, and saw leverage in a new Defense Department report that questioned the impact of drilling activity with military missions in the area.

"The environmental and economic reasons not to drill are paramount, but DOD gives our argument greater urgency," Castor said. "The only way to fully ensure the readiness of our military and protect Florida's economy and environment is to extend the moratorium permanently."

"Despite recent declarations by Interior Secretary Zinke and Governor Rick Scott, they did nothing to press Speaker Ryan and House Republicans to allow a vote and end the push to drill once and for all. Their election year conversion on offshore drilling has been interesting but shallow. We are not going to give up, however, and I thank U.S. Rep. Rooney for his consistent leadership."…..

2019 NDAA

Administration Takes Exception to Defense Bill’s Attempt to Disband Support Agencies

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 23, 2018 03:30 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e02d33ce307ef7&id=e555a09051

The White House opposes several of the reforms in the House’s fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill intended to streamline Pentagon bureaucracy, including language that would eliminate the Washington Headquarters Services and reorganize the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA). Overall, the Statement of Administration Policy issued by the Office of Management and Budget on Tuesday supports H.R. 5515, while objecting to about 40 individual provisions.

Rather than eliminating the Washington Headquarters Services, the White House urges lawmakers to include it in the review the legislation calls for of defense agencies and field activities. That review would be carried out by the Pentagon’s chief management officer (CMO) and assess the efficiency and effectiveness of DOD support activities while looking for potential duplication. The bill directs the CMO to report to Congress on any recommendations to eliminate an agency or activity, or transfer some or all of its functions to another department entity.

Transferring all information technology contracting, acquisition, and senior leader communication services from DISA to other DOD elements “would increase the cost of acquiring information technology, weaken the department’s ability to secure its cyber networks, and inhibit DISA’s mission to provide seamless communication to warfighters and senior leaders,” according to the OMB statement.

The White House also objects to a provision that would expand the CMO’s authority, a key aspect of House Armed Services Committee Chair Mac Thornberry’s attempt to reform the department’s fourth
That section would authorize the CMO to carry out the elimination of agencies and activities, and to maximize efficiency across DOD for civilian resource management, logistics, services contracting and real estate management functions. The CMO would be required to certify that the department has achieved at least 25 percent savings from those functions by Jan. 1, 2021.

“Section 911 would create contradictory and conflicting authorities and relationships between the CMO and office of the secretary of defense principal staff assistants. While the department appreciates the congressional intent, the CMO has all of the necessary authorities required to oversee efficiency and effectiveness related to the business aspect of covered activities,” OMB states.

The House began debating H.R. 5515 Tuesday evening, adopting 98 amendments by voice vote and putting off roll call votes on four more controversial ones until Wednesday, reported CQ. Also on Tuesday night, the House Rules Committee was expected to allow votes on several other potentially contentious amendments. The chamber is expected to debate the bill through at least Wednesday.

### Senate Committee to Start Marking up Policy Bill

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 23, 2018 02:33 am

https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=e555a09051

The Senate Armed Services Committee is scheduled today to begin marking up its version of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill after its seven subcommittees advanced their portions of the measure Monday and Tuesday. The Military Personnel Subcommittee — the only panel to mark up its section in an open session — recommended a 2.6 percent military pay raise and an increase in troop levels in approving its portion of the annual defense policy bill, reported Stars and Stripes. Details will not be available until the full committee completes its markup.

The full committee’s markup, which also will be conducted behind closed doors, will extend into Thursday, and possibly into Friday.

### Action on the NDAA: House Expected to Finish Work Today; Senate Committee Reportedly Finishes Early

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 24, 2018 04:30 am

https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=586f54f68a

The House on Wednesday continued working through many of the 271 amendments made in order for the chamber’s debate of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill, with a final vote on the underlying legislation expected Thursday. Many of the most controversial amendments out of the more than 550 filed didn’t make it past the House Rules Committee, including two affecting defense communities — one permitting military families to create education savings accounts and another extending a moratorium on offshore drilling in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico. The House on Thursday will finish debating the remaining 76 amendments to H.R. 5515, the majority of which will be included in en bloc packages, reported CQ. … The Senate Armed Services Committee finished marking up its version of authorization bill Wednesday evening, a committee aide told CQ. The committee will issue a statement today with a detailed summary of the measure, which was written almost entirely in closed sessions.
Eglin AFB

Local nurse honored as part of a monument at Eglin Air Force Base

By Michael Fortuna, Daily Sun Staff Writer, May 23, 2018 Updated 6 hrs ago

Toward the end of the year, Linda Whitenton will experience something she didn’t think would happen in her lifetime: having her name and face etched onto a monument.

She is one of four nurses who will be recognized on a monument at the Air Force Armament Museum at Eglin Air Force Base near Fort Walton Beach.

Whitenton helped create the nursing program at Northwest Florida State College in Niceville, located near the base, and directed the nursing program at Pensacola State College.

“I was overwhelmed (when they told me),” said Whitenton, of the Village of Polo Ridge. “I had to laugh a little and cry a little. I’m still processing.”

She attended the groundbreaking ceremony May 4 at the museum. Whitenton will join Florence Nightingale, Army 1st Lt. Annie G. Fox and Army 1st Lt. Sharon Lane on the monument.

The monument should be finished sometime in September……

NS Mayport

Navy ships sent elsewhere for repairs leads to salvo from politicians

By Joe Daraskevich, Posted May 20, 2018 at 2:08 PM, Updated at 10:32 AM

From routine maintenance to engine overhauls, plenty of companies in Northeast Florida are ready to offer the necessary services when the military needs work done. So when that work goes elsewhere, it’s no surprise politicians get involved.

It starts when a hot topic — say, ship repair — drops on the plate of a senator or congressman. But then the process often plays out like a game of tag: Here’s a letter from Florida. Tag, you’re it. Now it’s your turn to send a letter back to us.

Recently the Navy decided to send three ships based at Naval Station Mayport to other places for maintenance. That prompted a letter from U.S. senators Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), Bill Nelson (D-Fla.) and U.S. Rep. John Rutherford (R-Jacksonville) because, according to them, the work could have been done here so the sailors could be with their families and the ship repair facilities could stay busy.

When the lawmakers learned the patrol craft ships USS Zephyr, USS Shamal and USS Tornado were getting maintenance work done somewhere else it was time to start the process. On April 26, they sent a letter to Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer.
“The Jacksonville ship repair industrial base has weathered years of reduced ship counts and it seems counter intuitive to exacerbate the situation by removing ships from the home port when competition exists,” the letter said.

The letter said moving the ships to other locations for maintenance appears to be against the law based on Title 10 of the U.S. Code as it relates to maintenance contracts of Navy vessels.

That specific section of the law states the secretary of the Navy needs to determine if there is adequate competition in the vessel’s home port before soliciting a contract in other places. If there is adequate competition, the secretary is supposed to first offer the contract to the repair facilities in the area, according to the law…….

NS Mayport Sponsoring Emergency Preparedness Fair Tuesday
By CYD HOSKINSON • 5-21-2018

The Navy wants to make sure its families in Jacksonville are ready for this year’s hurricane season.

Naval Station Mayport is hosting an emergency preparedness resource fair Tuesday that organizer Chantel Williams said will explain things like what to do if the base is evacuated.

“So they would need to know how to evacuate. If they don’t have the funds for that, how can they get funds for that? And once they return from the evacuation how to be reimbursed for it,” Williams said in explaining the exercise.

Williams said families and dependents will also find out what to pack, what to do with their pets and will know they won’t have to face the emergency alone. “You do have a big military community that you can rely on that will help you get ready for that,” said Williams.

Mayport’s emergency preparedness resource fair starts at 5 p.m. Tuesday at the Ocean Breeze Conference Center on base.

NAS Jacksonville

VP-8 "Fighting Tigers" Hold Change of Command

Courtesy Story Patrol Squadron EIGHT (VP-8), 05.18.2018
https://www.dvidshub.net/news/277559/vp-8-fighting-tigers-hold-change-command

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – Cmdr. Edward “Teddy” Kribs transferred command of Patrol Squadron (VP) 8 to Cmdr. Zachary “Stanger” Stang during a Change of Command ceremony held Friday, May 18 onboard Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida.

A Granite Bay, California native, Cmdr. Kribs was commissioned in the United States Navy in 1999 when he graduated from the United States Naval Academy and subsequently earned his wings to be a Naval Aviator in 2001. Following his initial sea tour at Patrol Squadron 46 in Whidbey Island, Washington, he completed a tour at Patrol Squadron 30 and was designated as the Weapons and Tactics Instructor (WTI) Program Manager and the Instructor Under Training/Standardization Pilot (IUT/Stan)
where he trained and qualified all incoming Fleet Replacement Squadron (FRS) Instructor Pilots. During this assignment to VP-30, Cmdr. Kribs also obtained a Master of Business Administration Degree from the University of Florida.

In 2009, Cmdr. Kribs reported to the USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) in San Diego, California, serving as the Operations Department Administrative Officer and Command Security Manager. He deployed twice, to 7th and 5th fleets, and earned qualifications as a Command Duty Officer Underway and an Officer of the Deck Underway.

He joined the “Mad Foxes” of Patrol Squadron 5 in Jacksonville, Florida, for his department head tour in 2011. While there, Cmdr. Kribs faced a tri-site deployment to 4th, 5th and 6th Fleets in 2011 and returned to 7th Fleet in 2012. His duties included Command Services Officer, Safety/NATOPS Officer, Training Officer, and Operations Officer while deployed to 7th Fleet and Maintenance Officer during the squadron’s transition from the P-3C Orion to the P-8A Poseidon.

US Special Operations Command

Annual SOFIC Conference Kicks Off in Tampa

By Yasmin Tadjdeh, 5/21/2018

Defense officials and industry have gathered in Tampa, Florida, to discuss technology needs as Special Operations Command adapts to an era of great power competition.

The Special Operations Forces Industry Conference — which is held annually in Tampa near the command's headquarters at MacDill Air Force Base — will feature high-profile speakers such as SOCOM Commander Gen. Raymond A. Thomas, III; James Smith, SOCOM’s acquisition executive; and Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment Ellen Lord. Program executive officers and program managers will also deliver presentations.

Nearly 12,000 attendees are expected to visit the Tampa Convention Center for this year’s conference, which is hosted by the National Defense Industrial Association. The event will feature more than 425 exhibiting companies.

SOFIC is a way to connect special operators and industry to help drive innovation that can be put into the hands of the warfighter, said retired Air Force Gen. Hawk Carlisle, NDIA’s president and CEO.

SOCOM Pursuing ‘Hyper-Enabled Operator’ Technologies

By Yasmin Tadjdeh, 5/22/2018

TAMPA, Fla. — Special Operations Command is launching a new effort to develop “hyper-enabled operator” technologies that will give service members enhanced capabilities, said the director of the command’s science and technology office May 22.

“The hyper-enabled operator is a concept, it is not a deliverable product,” said Lisa Sanders during remarks at the National Defense Industrial Association’s Special Operations Forces Industry Conference
in Tampa, Florida. The ultimate is goal to make warfighters as effective as possible in achieving their missions, she said.

The concept includes four technology pillars: communications, computing, data/sensors and human-machine interfaces.

More effective communication devices are needed to connect operators on the tactical edge and provide them with up-to-date information, Sanders said.

Computing and sensing capabilities are also critical to improving situational awareness by pushing data to dismounted troops, she noted.

“Then the last piece is really, really important as we get to this” hyper-enabled operator, she said. An effective human-machine interface is needed to leverage the new communications, computing and data/sensing technologies……

**Here’s what the top general at SOCOM in Tampa says he needs from the tech industry**

By Margie Manning – Finance Editor, Tampa Bay Business Journal, 5-23-18


Gen. Raymond “Tony” Thomas III, commander of the United States Special Operations Command, says new and more effective ways of doing business are needed in the fight against extremists.

Thomas called on the tech industry and academic representatives to work with the military in developing tools for the future battlefield, during the National Defense Industrial Association’s Special Operations Forces Industry Conference in Tampa on Tuesday.

Those tools will rely heavily on advanced technology such as machine learning and artificial intelligence, Thomas said.

SOCOM, based at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, was founded in 1987. There currently are about 9,000 special operations forces deployed across 90 countries……

**Team Orlando**

**FAA modifies restrictions on drone flights over US DoD locations**

AIR FORCE TECHNOLOGY, 22 MAY 2018


The US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has modified or established new specific airspace restrictions on drone operations over US Department of Defense (DoD) and national security locations.

The FAA has been using its existing authority under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations § 99.7 ‘Special Security Instructions’ to address potential threats posed by drone flights over the locations.

The US agency has used its authority at the request of the DoD and other federal security and law enforcement agencies.
Modified restrictions apply to unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) flights up to 400ft within the lateral boundaries of four sites across the US.

The four sites include Naval Support Activity Monterey in California, Naval Air Station Kingsville in Texas, Naval Support Activity Orlando in Florida, and Naval Support Activity South Potomac in Indian Head, Maryland…..

**Defense Industry**

**United Launch Alliance, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, Approve New Contract**

By Space Coast Daily  // May 20, 2018


**BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA** – Members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, which represents 230 workers at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, have accepted the company’s new four-year contract offer and will return to work after being on strike since May 7. The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers also represent 300 employees at Decatur, Alabama and about 80 employees at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

ULA, which is a joint venture between Boeing and Lockheed Martin, said the new contract covers 600 bargaining unit employees from District Lodges #75 and #166, which includes Locals #44, #610 and #2786 performing work on the Atlas V, Delta II, Delta IV and Vulcan Centaur product lines at both East and West Coast ULA launch sites and Decatur, Alabama, manufacturing facility.

The contract becomes effective at 12:01 a.m. on May 7…..

**Gov. Scott: Pratt & Whitney to Create 215 New Jobs and Expand in Palm Beach County**

News Releases, by Staff, On May 23, 2018


**JUPITER, Fla.** – Today, Governor Rick Scott announced that Pratt & Whitney, a leading global manufacturer of aircraft engines and auxiliary power units, will be expanding its site in Palm Beach County and creating 215 new jobs. In addition to these new jobs, since 2012, Pratt & Whitney has created 300 jobs for Florida families and employs a total of more than 1,300 Floridians.

Governor Scott said, “Today, I am proud to announce 215 new jobs for families in Palm Beach County. As Governor, one of the best parts of my job is meeting families across our state and over the past seven years, I’ve heard firsthand from them just how important our focus on job growth is to their success. Today’s exciting announcement shows why Florida is leading the nation in job growth and why we will never stop fighting to make sure that hard-working companies, like Pratt & Whitney, can grow and create jobs.”
David Carter, Senior Vice President of Engineering for Pratt & Whitney, said, “Pratt & Whitney is committed to expanding operations at our West Palm Beach facility and creating highly-skilled and good-paying jobs. We are thankful for the support we receive from the State of Florida and Palm Beach County as we add 215 positions to our employee base of 1,300 and $100 million in capital investment in addition to over $88 million we’ve invested in manufacturing and technology improvements to this site since 2012.”

Peter Antonacci, CEO of Enterprise Florida Inc., said, “Pratt & Whitney is a world leader in aviation technology and manufacturing. This expansion of the Pratt & Whitney footprint is a big win for Palm Beach County families.”

**Tampa Lands Another Corporate HQ as Resistacap Energy Comes to Tampa Bay**

**Andy Taylor, May 24, 2018**


Coming right after the major announcement of [The Mosaic Company moving its corporate headquarters from Minnesota to Hillsborough County](https://www.813area.com/business/tampa-lands-another-corporate-hq-battery-resistacap-energy-expanding-in-tampa-bay.html), the Tampa Hillsborough EDC has scored another victory. Resistacap Energy, who already has operations in Tampa Bay, has announced it is moving its corporate headquarters from Huntsville, Alabama to the Tampa Bay area.

It has been a major goal of Tampa Bay business community and local governments to continue to land corporate headquarters. Resistacap Energy will have an economic impact by spending $500,000 to expand their current facility in Westchase from 5,000 sq feet to 15,000 square feet. In addition to locating their headquarters and business operations in Tampa, the company will significantly expand its Tampa manufacturing operations in the region. Resistacap Energy expects to hire 100 people for their manufacturing and business operations.

Resistacap Energy specializes in proving batteries and battery pack applications to the medical, safety, military and aerospace industries, which makes them a perfect fit for the Tampa Bay area and Florida. It coincides with USF Health’s expansion into Water Street and an expected increase in medical research, not to mention the work that [Moffitt Cancer Center](https://www.moffitt.org) does requiring medical devices. While most know the impact MacDill Air Force Base has on the community, Tampa Bay is also home to a large number of defense contractors, particularly in Pinellas County.

In an interesting trend, many of the companies who are moving their headquarters to Tampa Bay already have significant business operations here and want to expand. This speaks well of the area and the business climate of Tampa Bay……

**Industrial Base Study Sent to White House; Workforce Issues Pose Threat to Health of Defense Industry**

**Dan Cohen, Posted on May 24, 2018 04:00 am**

[https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=586f54f68a](https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=586f54f68a)

The Pentagon has completed a study ordered by President Trump of the health of the nation’s defense industrial base, and it now is undergoing interagency review. The study, which will identify risk areas within the industrial base and supply chain, is expected to be released publicly when it is ready for
publication, reports Defense News. ... DOD last week released a separate study, the annual Industrial Capabilities report, which found that the nation’s defense industry continued to outperform other sectors in fiscal 2017. The report warned, however, that the industry faces significant long-term challenges, including an aging workforce and a lack of employees with science backgrounds, reported Defense News. Aerospace and defense firms are “faced with a shortage of qualified workers to meet current demands as well as needing to integrate a younger workforce with the ‘right skills, aptitude, experience, and interest to step into the jobs vacated by senior-level engineers and skilled technicians’ as they exit the workforce,” the report states.

Other Of Interest

Gov. Scott: $3.5 Million in Florida Defense Grants Awarded for Military Community

By Staff, May 21, 2018

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, Governor Scott announced nearly $3.5 million will be awarded to support community projects at military installations across the state. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) administers the Defense Infrastructure Grant Program and the Defense Reinvestment Grant Program, which protects Florida’s military bases by providing funding for local infrastructure and land acquisition needs, as well as assisting communities surrounding military installations in diversifying their economies. Florida’s military installations contribute more than $84.9 billion in economic impact and the defense industry supports nearly 800,000 jobs in the state.

Governor Scott said, “Florida is the most military-friendly state in the nation, and as a Navy Veteran myself, I am proud to announce our state will be providing nearly $3.5 million in additional defense grants dedicated to supporting Florida’s military communities. Our military installations are the backbone of many great Florida communities.”

Cissy Proctor, Executive Director of the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, said, “Defense communities play a large role in Florida’s robust economy. We are proud to invest in our military installations and the local communities they support.”

Defense Infrastructure Grants are awarded to communities for improving areas surrounding military installations. This will positively impact an area’s military value and its community. The 2018-2019 Defense Infrastructure Grants were awarded to defense partners in Bay, Brevard, Clay, Duval, Escambia and Santa Rosa counties.

Defense Reinvestment Grants are provided to communities to help support the needs of a military installation or to help expand the community’s non-defense economy. The 2018-2019 Defense Reinvestment Grants were awarded to defense partners in Bay, Brevard, Clay, Duval, Escambia, Hillsborough, Miami-Dade, Okaloosa, Orange, Santa Rosa and Walton counties.
2018’s Best & Worst States for Military Retirees

John S Kiernan, Senior Writer & Editor, May 21, 2018
https://wallethub.com/edu/best-states-for-military-retirees/3915/

Retirement is typically viewed as the end of the line — a time for rest, relaxation and the pursuit of interests long ago put on the back burner. But the story is far different for military retirees who must deal with the trials of reassimilation into civilian life. For starters, the average officer is only 45 years old — 42 for nondisability enlisted personnel — upon retirement from service. Many of those who reenter the job market face tough challenges during the transition while others struggle with more difficult problems, such as Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, disability and homelessness.

As such, military retirement can be a far more complicated issue than one might assume, given the extent to which state tax policies on military benefits vary, the relative friendliness of different job markets toward veterans, and other socioeconomic factors. This year, the military’s retirement system is also changing for new recruits and current personnel who opt in, going from a “defined benefit” to a “Blended Retirement System” that awards funds not just based on years served but also matches contributions to a “Thrift Savings Plan.”

With that in mind, WalletHub sought to help ease the burden on our nation’s military community by comparing the 50 states and the District of Columbia based on their ability to provide a comfortable military retirement. Our analysis uses a data set of 27 key metrics, ranging from veterans per capita to number of VA health facilities to job opportunities for veterans. Read on for our findings, commentary from a panel of researchers and a full description of our methodology.

Aaron Bowman, former commander of Naval Station Mayport, elected as City Council president

By Christopher Hong, Posted May 23, 2018 at 4:01 PM, Updated May 23, 2018 at 8:28 PM

City Councilman Aaron Bowman, a former Navy officer who once oversaw Naval Station Mayport, was chosen Tuesday to become the next president of the Jacksonville City Council.

Bowman, who ran unopposed, was unanimously elected by the 19-member council. He will take over the position from Anna Lopez Brosche in July.

The president has considerable influence over the council, holding procedural powers and choosing which members serve on committees. While the president cannot take any major actions without a majority of the council, past presidents have used the position to champion causes such as city beautification or improving access to the river.

Bowman said Wednesday that he will soon release a “strategic plan” for the council that includes having more influence on the city’s budget. He also said he wants to improve the council’s relationship with Curry’s administration, whose first-term honeymoon with the legislative body ended this year during the divisive debate over selling JEA, the city-owned water and electric utility.

While the acrimony over JEA has settled, Curry remains at odds with Brosche, who has hinted that she may run for mayor next year, and Councilman Garrett Dennis, another vocal antagonist of his administration.
Curry will likely have an ally in the president’s office when Bowman moves in. Bowman described Curry as a friend who he is “pretty well-aligned with.” If there’s something they don’t agree on, Bowman said he hopes it never becomes a public feud……
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – There is **no meeting in June**. Task Force meeting #65 is on **Thursday, 19 July 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EDT** at the Hampton Inn & Suites Miami South – Homestead, 2855 NE 9th Street, Homestead, FL 33033.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   **Call-In Number: 800-501-8979**
   **Access Code: 1869945**

3. **New Reaper Squadron Headed to Hurlburt Field** – According to an article in “MyPanhandle.com”, “According to Florida Senator Marco Rubio, another new air squadron is headed to the panhandle. Senator Rubio said that the air force has indicated it will house the new special operations command MQ9 Reaper Squadron at Hurlburt Field. This squadron will most likely look to compliment the Reaper mission on the way to Tyndall Air Force Base. That mission is expected to bring nearly 2,000 jobs to our area. Air force officials are currently conducting an environmental impact study with plans to start construction in 2020.” See article below in the CLIPS.

4. **Another State Looks to Create a Military Affairs Office** – According to an article by Dan Cohen for ADC, Ohio is planning to create an organization to support their military installations in the state. According to the article, “In an attempt to keep up with other states, Ohio should establish a military affairs office that reports to the governor, according to a new report from a task force chaired by state Rep. Rick Perales (R). The office would craft a strategy for growing the state’s defense presence, assess the strengths and weaknesses of its installations, pursue new missions, assist communities dealing with a closure or downsizing, and oversee a revolving loan fund to finance infrastructure projects linked to bases’ health, reports the Toledo Blade.” See full article below in the CLIPS.

5. **Can Oil Drilling and Military Missions be Compatible in the Gulf of Mexico?** – After the release of the most recent DoD report on oil drilling in the Gulf of Mexico and its detrimental effect on military testing and training in the Gulf Range Complex, supporters of drilling have repeatedly noted that their read of the report is that DoD is in favor of drilling in the Gulf. According to the report, “No other area offers the DoD a comparable combination of air space, water space, and existing infrastructure to support military activities” and “If oil and gas development were to extend east over the MML, without sufficient surface limiting stipulations and/or oil and gas activity restrictions mutually agreed upon by the DoD and the Department of the Interior (DoI), military flexibility in the region would be lost and test activities severely affected.” Oil drilling advocates take this as an open door that DoD supports drilling in the eastern Gulf. According to an article by Mark Alvarez, a US Army veteran and member of “Vets4Energy” who support drilling, he states “Unfortunately, fear-mongering continues to be evident, and the latest case is news coverage surrounding a recent report released by the Pentagon. Some news articles may lead you to believe that the report indicates resistance from the Department of Defense (DOD) against drilling; however when one actually reads the report, it is evident the DOD is ready and willing to collaborate with the oil and natural gas industry so long as offshore exploration does not interfere with military operations.” Unfortunately, his article does not address military weapons testing that would be incompatible with oil exploration and drilling nor the negative economic impacts
and reduction of national security that would occur with a loss of military testing capability currently conducted in the eastern Gulf ranges.

6. **Camp Blanding Earns Environmental Award** – Camp Blanding was recognized by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as the most environmentally friendly installation in the country for 2017. According to the press release, “The Military Conservation Partner Award is given annually to highlight the policies and work of the military installation that is best able to balance conservation and habitat development with their military training. This year, CBJTC was showcased as the most environmentally friendly installation for its work conserving and rehabilitating the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker, a bird native to the American Southeast considered to be endangered by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.” See below in the CLIPS.

7. **Next Governor’s Base Commanders Meeting (BCM) Set** – The Florida National Guard has announced that the next Governor’s Base Commanders Meeting will be held on July 23, 2018 at USSOUTHCOM in Doral. Staff will attend and brief ongoing issues being worked with FDA and FDSTF.

8. **U.S. Department of Energy to hold Conference in Florida** – The U.S. Department of Energy's Southeast Combined Heat and Power Technical Assistance Partnership (CHP TAP) is convening a workshop titled: Florida Energy Resilience through CHP and Microgrids on June 7th in Gainesville. The topic of energy resilience is one that we are all mindful of, especially in the wake of Hurricanes Irma and Maria and their devastating impact on the state. Ms. Kellie Jo Kilberg, FDA Chair, is planning to attend. Go to [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/Florida-energy-resilience-through-combined-heat-power-and-microgrids-workshop-tickets-44849642488](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/Florida-energy-resilience-through-combined-heat-power-and-microgrids-workshop-tickets-44849642488) for more info on the conference.

9. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Washington Summit Registration is Open** – For Task Force or FDA members who are interested in attending the ADC Defense Communities National Summit in Washington DC, registration is now open. The theme of this year’s Summit is “Strengthening America’s Defense Infrastructure”. Keynote speakers include Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla.); Lucian Niemeyer, assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment; Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer, and Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson. The Summit will take place at the Washington Hilton, located at 1919 Connecticut Avenue from June 18-20, 2018. ADC has secured a block of rooms for the discounted rate of $249. To make your reservation call the hotel at (202) 483-3000 and mention the ADC Defense Communities National Summit or click on this link to register as well as make your accommodations at [https://www.adcsummit.org/#register](https://www.adcsummit.org/#register). According to the latest ADC e-mail, “Given interest in this event, availability of rooms in the block is very limited. If rooms are not available, the Courtyard by Marriott Washington DC/DuPont Circle and Churchill Hotel are located adjacent to the Hilton and currently have availability.”

10. **Attachments:**
- None

_Terry_

Terry McCaffrey  
Executive Director  
Florida Defense Support Task Force
News Clips of Interest:

Oil Drilling / Gulf Range

Offshore Drilling Can Peacefully Co-Exist with Military Operations

By MARK ALVAREZ, May 29, 2018 - 5:00pm

Discussions surrounding offshore drilling continue to intensify as the Trump administration considers plans to expand the national Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) program.

Unfortunately, fear-mongering continues to be evident, and the latest case is news coverage surrounding a recent report released by the Pentagon. Some news articles may lead you to believe that the report indicates resistance from the Department of Defense (DOD) against drilling; however when one actually reads the report, it is evident the DOD is ready and willing to collaborate with the oil and natural gas industry so long as offshore exploration does not interfere with military operations.

This should be viewed as a positive step forward for the industry and a reaffirmed commitment that energy production and military training can peacefully co-exist. Safe seismic testing and offshore energy exploration continues to be one of the best ways to keep our nation secure while fulfilling our American citizens’ energy needs, all the while strengthening our economy.

It is undeniable that our country relies on energy. Nearly every moment of every day, from alarm clocks waking us up in the morning and washing our clothes, to driving to work and charging our cell phones. Energy also helps fuel important industries such as medicine, manufacturing, agriculture and even the arts. Despite our ever-increasing energy needs, our country continues to rely on foreign countries for our oil and natural gas supply…..

NDAA

John Rutherford touts defense bill as a win for Northeast Florida

The bill passed the House 351-66, and awaits Senate review.

Assuming the appropriations stay where they are, Rutherford is lauding some key points for the Jacksonville area.

“‘I am especially proud to see the bill included many major wins for Northeast Florida. This includes $111 million for military construction at Naval Station Mayport, three Littoral Combat Ships, as well as strong support for the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye, P-8A Poseidon, A-29, and MQ-4C Triton. It also reflects Congress’s commitment to the ship building and repair industry, which is critical to the First Coast economy. I was proud to fight for these programs, and I will continue to do so as we consider the Fiscal Year 2019 appropriations bills,’” Rutherford asserted.

There are gains that extend beyond the region, Rutherford said.

“The House has delivered on our promise to reinvest in our military, which has suffered from insufficient resources and budget uncertainty,” said Rutherford. “This bill responds directly to the deficient readiness levels of our armed forces, while also increasing capability and investments. The bill includes the largest pay increase for our troops in nine years, grows the size of our forces to suit our military needs, counters global threats like Iran, and reforms the Pentagon bureaucracy.”

Panama City Congressman looks to fund F-22 upgrades

By News Herald staff report, Posted May 24, 2018 at 4:48 PM

PANAMA CITY – Panama City Congressman Neal Dunn is looking to fund upgrades for the F-22 wing at Tyndall Air Force Base.

Dunn, R-Panama City, included an amendment to “modernize the F-22 training wing” to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2019 passed by the House, according to a news release from his office.

“Dr. Dunn’s amendment accelerates upgrades of the F-22 training aircraft to combat-ready F-22s as a priority of Congress as it appropriates funding based on the NDAA. Modernization of the F-22 aircraft will allow airmen at Tyndall to train on the aircraft they’ll actually fly in combat,” the news release stated. “This improves their military readiness, and will increase availability of combat-ready F-22 squadrons that can be called upon to support national defense.”

The NDAA still has to go through the Senate and a presidential signature before it’s official.

“We have the most highly trained and dedicated military in the world. But, if we are not giving them the resources to maintain their planes and train in the most realistic environments possible, we are doing them a disservice,” Dunn stated in the news release. “Over the last year we have begun to correct that problem by rebuilding our military and investing in our service members. Modernizing the training wing of F-22s at Tyndall is another step in that process and is essential to the safety and security of the airmen we ask to achieve air superiority over battlefields around the globe.”
A lack of detail in DOD’s National Defense Strategy hindered the Senate Armed Services Committee’s effort to put together its version of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill, which it marked up last week, reports CQ. For example, the degree to which the military needs to grow is left unclear, according to committee staff. The committee recommended boosting active-duty end strength by 7,000, or less than half of the number the administration requested. “One of the things the committee had asked for, which has not been produced in detail, is a force-sizing construct,” said one aide. “This is analysis that we don’t have in detail.” DOD’s request, which the House matched in the authorization bill it approved last week, called for adding 15,600 active personnel in FY 2019. … The committee’s move to redesignate the undersecretary of defense (USD) for personnel and readiness as the undersecretary for personnel is intended to focus the office on human resources responsibilities, including recruiting, retention and human capital management. Lawmakers believe revamping the office — and shifting its readiness responsibilities to other senior defense posts — will better focus leaders “to guide investments in necessary capabilities, readiness and posture for the future joint force,” reports Military Times. The House version, H.R. 5515, does not include a similar provision. Earlier this month, President Trump nominated the current USD for personnel and readiness, Robert Wilkie, for secretary of Veterans Affairs, meaning a Pentagon vacancy will be created if the Senate confirms him to the new position. … The bill is expected to go to the Senate floor next month, possibly as early as next week, when Congress returns from its Memorial Day recess. A summary of the measure can be found on the committee website.

**Senate Armed Services Committee approves $716 billion defense budget for fiscal 2019**

MilitaryAerospace.com, May 31, 2018

WASHINGTON – The Senate Armed Services Committee passed on Thursday a bill that would authorize $617.6 billion in base budget for the Defense Department and $68.5 billion in overseas contingency operations funds for fiscal 2019. ExecutiveGov reports. Continue reading original article

The Military & Aerospace Electronics take:

31 May 2018 -- The panel’s version of fiscal 2019 defense authorization would allocate $21.6 billion for the Energy Department’s defense-related initiatives, $7.6 billion for 75 F-35 fighter aircraft, and $65 million to develop a low-yield nuclear warhead.

The measure also would earmark $23.1 billion for 10 new ships, including a littoral combat ship, two Virginia-class submarines, and three Arleigh Burke-class destroyers.

The FY 2019 NDAA seeks to keep the U.S. military edge over potential adversaries, according to the bill’s summary. The House has voted 351-66 to clear its proposed FY 2019 $717 billion defense budget. Fiscal year 2019 begins on 1 Oct.
Excess Capacity Estimates Likely Inaccurate, GAO Finds

DOD’s recent analysis of its excess capacity suffered from analytical limitations and relied on unreasonable assumptions, resulting in estimates that cannot support decision making about future BRAC rounds, according to a new report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO). “Without improvements to DOD’s method of estimating excess capacity, DOD is not providing the information that Congress requires to make decisions concerning the management of excess infrastructure capacity within the department,” the congressional watchdog agency said. “Similarly, DOD does not have the information it needs to appropriately manage its infrastructure capacity and therefore cannot make informed decisions about what it needs to support its mission as land and infrastructure requirements of newer weapon systems are introduced,” the report concluded.

An October 2017 study by DOD estimated that 19 percent of its infrastructure was excess, ranging from a 6 percent excess in Navy infrastructure to a 29 percent excess in Army facilities. The DOD study — an update of one conducted in March 2016 — and the GAO report were mandated by the fiscal 2016 defense authorization bill.

GAO identified three key limitations in DOD’s analysis:

- the analysis offered no clear rationale for using a 1989 baseline for excess capacity — it does not offer an estimate of the amount of excess that existed at that time, and it fails to account for updated facility standards and requirements, and new weapons systems;
- it includes assumptions that may not be reasonable — for example, when the estimate for a particular installation category indicated a shortfall in capacity, DOD’s analysis showed only that no excess exists; also, officials assigned each installation to only one mission category even though most bases support multiple missions; and
- DOD and the military departments failed to use a representative sample of different types of installations to develop an excess capacity estimate, and the individual military departments did not follow a consistent approach in calculating excess capacity and accounting for joint bases.

Pentagon Still Lacks Accurate Property Inventory, Says Watchdog

Defense facility planners have made progress on behalf of the armed services toward accurate projections of needed infrastructure.

But a reliance on old, inconsistent methodology confined to generalities continues to prevent the Defense Department from providing Congress with inventory data specific enough for a practical analysis of where cost-saving cuts may be made, according to a Government Accountability Office report released last week.
The mandatory report analyzes the Pentagon’s own infrastructure and force structure plan delivered last October for consideration in the ongoing debate over whether Congress should accept the Pentagon’s recommendation for another round of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission first launched in 1990…….

Unnecessary Federal Spending on Infrastructure to Continue

Hayden Morse / Frederico Bartels / @FredericoBF / May 31, 2018
https://www.dailysignal.com/2018/05/31/unnecessary-federal-spending-on-infrastructure-to-continue/

A provision in the House version of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal 2019 would delay by at least two years a much-needed new round of Base Realignment and Closure. That delay would represent billions of taxpayer dollars that could have been saved, but instead would have to be allocated to infrastructure that isn’t fully utilized.

What is the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, and why is it so important?

BRAC is the best process available to the Pentagon to reduce unneeded infrastructure. It allows the Defense Department to have a holistic approach to its real estate, through the assessment of its whole inventory of installations and bases for their military value. The Pentagon then can recommend realignments or closures of bases or other installations. The process is the most feasible way to trim excess infrastructure from the defense budget…….

Policy Bill’s Requirement for New Excess Capacity Study Appears to Be ‘Delay Tactic,’ Analyst Says

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jun 01, 2018 05:31 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=bb11f597d1

Language in the House version of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill requiring DOD to prepare a new, more detailed infrastructure assessment likely will do little to change lawmakers’ opposition to a new round of base closures, according to an op-ed in the Hill by Frederico Bartels, a policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation. If nothing else, the pending study, due in February 2020, will provide Congress an excuse to postpone a decision on the need for a new BRAC. And while the requirements for the new study will allow for a more up-to-date assessment, the result is unlikely to change significantly from excess capacity studies the department prepared in March 2016 and October 2017. “Lawmakers are once again changing the parameters, in the hopes they will be able to avoid a new round of BRAC,” Bartels stated.

The provision’s requirement for DOD to identify installations with either a capacity shortfall or excess almost certainly will serve to trigger opposition to a new BRAC from lawmakers representing districts with bases cited in the study, he said. The lack of detail in DOD’s previous estimates of its excess infrastructure probably frustrated lawmakers but was needed to avoid signaling possible actions in a future BRAC round. The best way for Congress to learn more about the military’s excess capacity is to authorize a new round of base closures, Bartels emphasized.
“As it stands, Section 2812 is a delay tactic dressed up as a robust data call. The Pentagon has excess infrastructure. Whether that excess accounts for 22 percent of its holdings, or 19 percent, or even just half of that is largely irrelevant for starting a new round of BRAC,” he stated.

Don’t miss a panel discussion covering the trends, politics and policies that will define the year ahead on Wednesday, June 20 at the 2018 Defense Communities National Summit. Featured speakers include Bartels along with Blaise Misztal, director of national security at the Bipartisan Policy Center; Mackenzie Eaglen, resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute; and Todd Harrison, director of defense budget analysis at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Corry Station

IWTC Corry Station's NMTIs Prepare IW Sailors for the Fleet

Story by Glenn Sircy, Center for Information Warfare Training, 05.31.2018
https://www.dvidshub.net/news/278953/iwtc-corry-stations-nmtis-prepare-iw-sailors-fleet

PENSACOLA, Fla. – All training at Information Warfare Command (IWTC) Corry Station begins and ends with Navy Military Training (NMT).

NMT is a program conducted at Naval Education and Training Command (NETC) “A” and follow-on “C” schools designed to continue the professional and personal development of junior enlisted Sailors during their initial phase of naval service. This performance-based training process, provided by military instructors, enables a smooth transition from a highly structured recruit training environment experienced at boot camp to one of personal accountability and responsibility.

“We are like the bun of a cheeseburger. We are the first and last faces these Sailors interact with at Corry Station,” said Fire Controlman 1st Class Joel Abbott. “With this much visibility lies a large amount of responsibility in shaping these Sailors’ lives in a positive way, and the NMT program at Corry Station has and continues to exceed expectations.”

The core of the NMT program lies at the source, the instructors. From the moment they arrive, Sailors are looking for an appropriate role model to emulate and will follow leaders who gain their confidence and respect. IWTC Corry Station’s newest Sailors have volunteered to serve their country and are influenced by the actions of their leadership. Before any instructor can have the opportunity directly impact a Sailor’s life they must first be prepared to lead.

Navy Military Training Instructors (NMTI) are first selected from a pool of candidates and then screened for suitability. Those selected then complete the Navy Instructor Training Course prior to reporting to their ultimate duty station. Prospective NMTIs are assigned a mentor to guide them through the certification process unique to each command. In order to stay sharp and maintain staff proficiency and focus, commands conduct periodic military in-service training in support of NMT at least annually or as needed.

NMTIs are expected to provide balanced and reflective descriptions of the fleet environment in order to help build confidence and understanding of the challenges to come. They teach new Sailors an appreciation of the Navy’s unique role in forward operations and pass on their own enthusiasm and personal pride for their chosen profession……
New Reaper Squadron Headed to Hurlburt Field

By: David Huffman, Updated: May 25, 2018 10:35 PM EDT

Okaloosa County, Fla. – According to Florida Senator Marco Rubio, another new air squadron is headed to the panhandle. Senator Rubio said that the air force has indicated it will house the new special operations command MQ9 Reaper Squadron at Hurlburt Field.

This squadron will most likely look to compliment the Reaper mission on the way to Tyndall Air Force Base. That mission is expected to bring nearly 2,000 jobs to our area.

Air force officials are currently conducting an environmental impact study with plans to start construction in 2020.

Air Force to Get First Female Air Commando General

By Oriana Pawlyk, Military.com, 26 May 2018

HURLBURT FIELD, Fla. – In another milestone for women in the military, Air Force Special Operations Command will soon have its first female air commando brigadier general, who will become the command's director of operations, according to Lt. Gen. Brad Webb, commander of AFSOC.

Col. Brenda Cartier, currently commander of the 58th Special Operations Wing at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, will transition to Hurlburt in the summer.

"We have a vice wing commander who's female now, several group commanders. I can't tell you how many squadron commanders -- that should tell you something -- there's a lot. We're in the double digits of chief master sergeants and first sergeants on the enlisted side in AFSOC," Webb said…..

Drone squadron coming to Hurlburt

By Jim Thompson, Posted May 30, 2018 at 4:09 PM, Updated May 30, 2018 at 4:09 PM

HURLBURT FIELD – A drone squadron is coming to Hurlburt Field, making it the second Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) installation to host a drone unit, according to the Air Force’s public affairs office.

AFSOC’s active-duty MQ-9 Reaper drone personnel have previously been assigned only to New Mexico’s Cannon Air Force Base. The Hurlburt squadron is expected to be in place in late 2019, bringing an additional 60 personnel to the AFSOC headquarters installation, according to Air Force spokeswoman Laura McAndrews.

In part, the new squadron is aimed at improving opportunities for airmen in drone units, according to McAndrews.

“Establishing this squadron at Hurlburt Field provides the MQ-9 community with a second assignment option, which will result in increased retention and career growth opportunities while enhancing operations,” McAndrews said in an email.
The unit coming to Hurlburt Field is a Mission Control Element Squadron. Drone operations require two separate aircrews, a mission control element that is responsible for executing missions, and a second aircrew to handle takeoffs and landings.

There is already a drone unit at Hurlburt Field, but it is an Air Force Reserve unit, not an active-duty squadron. The 2nd Special Operations Squadron, part of the Air Force Reserve’s 919th Special Operations Wing located at Duke Field near Crestview, has been based at Hurlburt Field for four years. The 2nd SOS does not have any drones based at Hurlburt. Its personnel fly drones remotely in various places around the world……

**Eglin AFB**

**Older F-35s 'On Life Support,' But Training Chief Isn't Worried**

By Oriana Pawlyk. Military.com 30 May 2018

It's not unusual that the Pentagon's newest F-35 Joint Strike Fighter aircraft is already showing signs of aging after only a decade of service, the Air Force's head of training said last week. Lt. Gen Steven Kwast, head of Air Education and Training Command, said because of how complex the entire F-35 aircraft system is, setbacks are natural even as pilots begin training on the platform.

"When you take a look at the history of every program we've ever had, whether it was the B-1 or the F-16 [Fighting Falcon] or the F-15 [Eagle], when you rewind the tapes, every single one of them suffered from these same growing pains," Kwast said during a breakfast in Washington, D.C. on May 24.

"It's just natural for a system that complex, that capable, that not everything is perfect," he said, adding that's the same for a brand new-aircraft like the F-35.

Earlier this month, Military.com reported that some of the older-generation F-35As at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, were in bad shape, posing hindrances to training because of older software configurations, among other problems. The commander of the 33rd Fighter Wing, the leading training wing for F-35A student pilots, said it's one of his many concerns with training students on some of the oldest Block 2B planes.

"Everybody's aware that that fleet is on life support right now, and they need to kind of crank up the machine a little bit if they plan on extending the utility of this fleet another five or 10 years," said Col. Paul Moga, who also oversees the maintenance training units at Eglin……

**Tyndall AFB**

**Florida Air Base Hangar Turns Into A Raptor's Nest As F-22s Take Refuge From Alberto**

By Tyler Rogoway, May 28, 2018
Tropical storm Alberto has the panhandle of Florida in its sights as it is forecasted to make landfall on Memorial Day. That region is packed with American airpower, with NAS Pensacola, Eglin AFB, Tyndall AFB, and Hurlburt Field packed into a 100-mile arch. But being that it's the Gulf Coast, all of those bases have intricate, multi-tier contingency plans for quickly readying for the worst weather disasters mother nature has to offer. This time around, many of the highly prized F-22 Raptors belonging to 325th Fighter Wing at Tyndall AFB are taking cover in a massive hangar on the installation.

Stuffed inside that single hangar are 15 F-22s—roughly eight percent of the entire F-22 fleet—valued between about $3B and $5B depending on who you ask. Along with the F-22s are five gloss-black T-38A Talon trainers belonging to the 2nd Fighter Training Squadron.

These aircraft provide adversary support for Raptor pilots, including trainees—the wing includes the 43rd Fighter Squadron, which is the USAF's sole F-22 training unit. The Raptor has an insatiable appetite for aerial targets as it is so efficient at doling out air-to-air death. So the wing has T-38s on hand to economically feed F-22 pilots with the high volumes of adversaries needed to challenge their skills. The 325th Fighter Wing also includes the 95th Fighter Squadron, which is a combat-coded unit, as well……

Tyndall could soon be getting upgrades as military budget increases

By Megan Bell | Posted: Thu 6:33 PM, May 31, 2018 | Updated: Thu 7:04 PM, May 31, 2018

BAY COUNTY, Fla. (WJHG/WECP) - The National Defense Authorization Act was passed by the House of Representatives last week which means Tyndall Air Force Base could soon be getting some upgrades.

According to Congressman Neal Dunn, the act increases military funding by 2.6 percent and will help improve the military in several ways.

One of which would remove the F-22 training wings at Tyndall and upgrade them to combat-ready wings. So, training can be done in the same planes that will be used in actual combat.

The upgrade also gives Tyndall more F-22 units to use.

"This is a very efficient way to upgrade our air-superiority combat fighters and it gives us about 20 percent more F-22s that are combat ready," Dunn said.

The NDAA does still have to be passed by the Senate.

FL National Guard / Camp Blanding

Camp Blanding named top installation for conservation

Courtesy Story, Florida National Guard Public Affairs Office - 05.30.2018
https://www.dvidshub.net/news/278888/camp-blanding-named-top-installation-conservation

The Military Conservation Partner Award is given annually to highlight the policies and work of the military installation that is best able to balance conservation and habitat development with their military
training. This year, CBJTC was showcased as the most environmentally friendly installation for its work conserving and rehabilitating the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker, a bird native to the American Southeast considered to be endangered by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

While military training and habitat conservation may seem incompatible, preservation groups and post operations have come together to develop a mutually cooperative and fulfilling partnership.

“We got together with the military trainers and the conservationists and asked, what do the Soldiers need, and what do the birds need and we found out that they both needed the same thing,” said Paul Catlett, the Forestry Program Administrator at CBJTC. “They both needed freshly burned brush, which adds to the ecosystem, and also allows soldiers to use the grounds for their training.”

The project intended to rehabilitate the ecosystem of CBJTC has proven so effective that the post’s model serves as an example for similar military installations, resulting in CBJTRC relocating many endangered species to other underpopulated conservation areas. This relocation project moves animals like the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker to sites with dwindling local populations, in hopes of rebuilding endangered populations, and expanding habitats.

“We’ve gotten to the point now where we’re the first installation to receive these woodpeckers, and built their populations to the point that we can export them to other posts which need to build up their threatened populations,” said Catlett.

The program is part of an agreement between the military and U.S. Fish and Wildlife known as the Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances. The agreement commits organizations to enacting policies to restore dwindling wildlife stocks in an attempt to keep threatened animals off state and federal endangered species list…..

MacDill AFB

New base commander at sultry MacDill helped run South Pole airlifts

Howard Altman, Times staff writer, Published: May 31, 2018

One of the most frustrating aspects of covering the military is how often change takes place.

Just when you start to get to someone, boom, they move on.

The latest case in point is Air Force Col. April Vogel, commander of the 6th Air Mobility Wing at MacDill Air Force Base and the installation commander. Sometime toward the end of June, there will be a change of command ceremony at MacDill and Vogel will leave, to be replaced by another Air Force colonel.

Now, I will have to break in Air Force Col. Stephen P. Snelson.

For Snelson, MacDill will mark quite a change from his current job, in both aircraft and climate.

Currently stationed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington State, Snelson is vice commander of the 62nd Airlift Wing, which flies the C-17 Globemaster III cargo jets. In addition to moving troops and cargo around the world, the wing works with Operation Deep Freeze, providing airlift support for the National Science Foundation’s U.S. Antarctic Program….
US Special Operations Command

SOCOM, Industry Prepare for ‘Game of Drones’ Prototyping Contest

By Vivienne Machi, 5/29/2018

TAMPA, Fla. — Special Operations Command is gearing up for the final event in the ThunderDrone competition, which seeks unique and unconventional counter-unmanned aerial systems technologies through rapid prototyping.

The final event, dubbed “Game of Drones,” will see participants vie for three top spots, and up to $600,000 in prize money, in June at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada. About seven technologies have made it to the final stage and will compete for the top prize slots, said SOCOM Acquisition Executive James Smith in an exclusive interview with National Defense at the National Defense Industrial Association’s annual Special Operations Forces Industry Conference in Tampa, Florida.

“We are pretty optimistic about how those technologies will do at Nellis,” he said.

The ThunderDrone effort was first announced by Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson last summer during a media event at Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico. The Defense Department’s Strategic Capabilities Office, the Air Force and SOCOM’s SOFWERX office jointly organized and resourced the rapid prototyping events, or RPEs. Since then, two such events have taken place, one in the Ybor City neighborhood of Tampa, where SOFWERX is located, and the second at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

About 30 companies will be participating in the third ThunderDrone rapid prototyping event at Nellis, according to SOCOM officials. Over 100 companies and more than 400 individuals from government, academia and startup companies took part in the initial event in Ybor City.

Sierra Nevada Corp., headquartered in Reno, Nevada, is one of the companies that will participate in the final RPE at Nellis Air Force Base. Its expeditionary mobile aerial defense integrated system, or X-MADIS, is a self-contained, fully mobile and integrated counter-unmanned aerials systems capability that contains radar and electro-optical/infrared equipment built into a commercial off-road vehicle.

SNC partnered with Ascent Vision, a Belgrade, Montana-based precision technologies company, and Rada Electronic Industries, a Silver Spring, Maryland-based defense electronics system firm, on the platform, which was previously developed for an undisclosed Defense Department customer, said Jerry Coburn, SNC business development director.

The ThunderDrone rapid prototyping event was a “natural, easy way for us to pitch an already integrated capability,” Coburn said.

The initiative was initially geared toward finding new drone technology that can be used in an offensive capacity, said Tambrein Bates, SOFWERX director in an interview with National Defense. As the events moved along, however, the focus turned more toward counter-UAS capabilities, he added……
DOJ to settle in Orlando bombing range cleanup; 4,000 homes planned at 417 & 528

Paul Brinkmann, Contact Reporter Orlando Sentinel, 5-24-2018

The federal government has agreed to settle a lawsuit over the cost of cleaning up explosives on the 1,500-acre former Pinecastle Jeep Range, where soldiers once practiced firing machine guns, launching rockets, and dropping bombs, court records show.

Bulldozers and contractors have been clearing the property over the past two years that’s visible from the interchange of State Roads 417 and 528 near Lake Nona.

Hundreds of bombs and explosives have been found there over decades since World War II.

Details of the settlement haven’t been made public yet, but family who controls the property -- relatives of the late Miami businessman John Brunetti Jr. – still intends to finish cleaning up the land.

“The Brunetti Organization made a commitment as a controlling interest to complete this remediation, and they intend to see that through,” said the company’s attorney, Hubert Farbes of Denver. He said the cleanup may last another year……

NAS Key West

No Nest Zone: Low-Tech Method Keeps Threatened Birds Away From Navy Runways

By NANCY KLINGENER • 5-29-2018

A low-tech method is saving a threatened species of bird from getting sucked into jet engines at the Naval Air Station Key West airfield on Boca Chica Key.

Least terns like to lay their eggs on light-colored gravelly areas like beaches, because their speckled eggs blend in and are invisible to predators.

That was causing problems at Naval Air Station Key West, where the runways used by $70 million FA/18 Super Hornet jets are lined with light-colored gravel pathways.

“If you’re walking along the gravelly path of the runways or taxiways, if you’re really not paying attention, you will step on an egg,” said USDA wildlife biologist Rosamaria Gonzalez. “They’re so camouflaged.”

Gonzalez works at the Key West airfield as part of the Bird Aircraft Strike Hazard — or BASH — program. Her job, she says, is “saving birds and planes.” Every day she checks out the airfield and scares off the herons, egrets and ibis that show up there…. 

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 31, 2018 03:18 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=7c7745ffe2

The Defense Department should pursue a range of actions to enhance its installations’ energy security and efficiency, including investing in renewable energy, microgrids and smart technology, according to the report accompanying the fiscal 2019 military construction and Veterans Affairs spending bill the House Appropriations Committee approved earlier this month. Those types of projects would help shield mission-critical operations from disruptions to the power grid while saving money, the lawmakers stated. They praised installations in Hawaii for leading the way in increasing energy security and efficiency through efforts to develop net-zero energy facilities, demonstrating microgrid technology, and upgrading systems to improve energy and water efficiency.

The committee pointed to a January 2017 study commissioned by the Pew Charitable Trusts that concluded DOD could save hundreds of millions of dollars annually by investing in microgrids and renewables. The study found that microgrid power systems are more reliable than the stand-alone diesel generators typically used for backup power and could save from $8 million to $20 million over a 20-year period. It also found that DOD could save up to $1 billion a year simply by increasing the use of commercially available energy efficiency measures in its facilities, according to the report.

Defense Industry

Gov. Scott: Nearly $10 Million in New Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Projects to Propel Florida’s Thriving Economy

Gov Scott Press Release, May 30, 2018

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott announced nearly $10 million in awards for six Florida Job Growth Grant Fund projects. The Florida Job Growth Grant Fund, established by Governor Scott and the Florida Legislature last year, provides $85 million for improving public infrastructure and enhancing workforce training in Florida. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) has received more than 246 proposals requesting more than $866 million in funding. Today’s announcement reflects a total of nearly $70 million in funding awarded to 27 communities across the state to promote infrastructure and job training since 2017.

Governor Scott said, “Florida’s economic growth is continuing to outpace the nation because of our nonstop focus on creating jobs in every corner of our state. When we created Florida’s Job Growth Grant Fund, we knew that this targeted and transparent approach would pay huge dividends for local communities. I’m proud to award nearly $10 million more in funding, and look forward to these projects enhancing our ability to meet the growing infrastructure and workforce needs of Florida’s booming private sector.”

The six awarded projects include:
• **Eastern Florida State College** ($3,790,020) for training and certificate programs through the Florida Actively Collaborating with Training for Individuals in Vocational & Advanced Technology Educational Skills (Florida ACTIVATES) program to train Floridians in aerospace and advanced manufacturing.

• **Baker County** ($2,297,054) to create an access road to the Woodstock Industrial Park for advanced manufacturing and distribution projects.

• **St. Johns River State College** ($1,383,237) to expand an advanced manufacturing and robotics training program that will support local manufacturing training, economic development and job growth for Clay, Putnam and St. Johns counties.

• **Florida Gateway College** ($860,000) to enhance current workforce training programs for Aviation Powerplant Mechanics and Aviation Airframe Maintenance to fill a statewide need.

• **Charlotte County** ($800,000) for the Piper Road Extension and infrastructure improvements leading into one of Charlotte County’s largest industrial parks, the Punta Gorda Interstate Airport Park.

• **Florida State College at Jacksonville** ($710,352) to enhance the Northeast Florida Advanced Manufacturing & Logistic Job Growth program, which collaborates with more than 300 employers in the high-growth industries of advanced manufacturing and logistics.

These proposals were reviewed by DEO and Enterprise Florida (EFI) and chosen by Governor Scott based on their strong return on investment to the state and to meet the demand for a robust workforce or infrastructure needs. Return on investment was calculated to determine the best projects for the state and economic development in the regions.

Cissy Proctor, Executive Director of DEO said, “The Florida Job Growth Grant Fund is a powerful economic development tool that meets specific needs of growing businesses in Florida. We are excited about the opportunities these projects will provide for Florida communities and families in the Sunshine State.”

Peter Antonacci, CEO of Enterprise Florida said, “Each of these projects represents an opportunity to make Florida the best place for families and businesses to succeed. Enterprise Florida is pleased to continue working with DEO and our economic development partners to strengthen Florida’s workforce and infrastructure.”


### Other Of Interest

**STEM and R&D employment growing in Tampa Bay area, big on Florida’s Space Coast**

Richard Danielson, Published: May 29, 2018, Updated: May 29, 2018 at 05:55 AM  

With affordable housing and the highest percentage of workers employed in "advanced industries" of any Florida metro, the Space Coast has a shot — and not necessarily something as difficult as a moon shot — to become the next Silicon Valley, USA Today’s Florida Voices project reported last week.

In 2015, nearly 14 percent of the local work force in Brevard County — 28,550 employees — was in advanced industries, defined by the Brookings Institution researchers as those where research and development spending per worker ranks among the top 20 percent of industries and the share of workers with a high level of STEM knowledge exceeds the national average.
That covers 50 different industries — 35 in manufacturing, 12 in services, three in energy — ranging from aerospace to auto to medical device manufacture, and including pharmaceuticals, electric power generation, computer system design, software and telecommunications.

That placed the Palm Bay-Melbourne-Titusville area sixth nationally for the percentage of its work force in areas such as R&D and STEM, according to a 2016 Brookings study.

By comparison, the Tampa Bay area had 102,974 advanced industries workers in 2015, or about 8.1 percent of its total work force. That was good enough for only the No. 56 spot on the list of metros that Brookings examined.

**Ohio Needs State-Wide Military Affairs Office, Task Force Concludes**

Dan Cohen, Posted on May 31, 2018 03:00 am

https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156e255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=7c7745ffe2

In an attempt to keep up with other states, Ohio should establish a military affairs office that reports to the governor, according to a new report from a task force chaired by state Rep. Rick Perales (R). The office would craft a strategy for growing the state’s defense presence, assess the strengths and weaknesses of its installations, pursue new missions, assist communities dealing with a closure or downsizing, and oversee a revolving loan fund to finance infrastructure projects linked to bases’ health, reports the Toledo Blade.

A new office would help ensure the state is always prepared for the possibility of base closures, regardless of whether a new BRAC round is scheduled, Perales said. “It’s not about that 2021 BRAC. It could happen tomorrow, and if we’re not prepared, I guarantee other states will be prepared,” he said. Perales introduced a House bill creating an office of government and military affairs within the governor’s office, but because the current session is almost over, it’s unlikely to be enacted this year.

A new statewide office would help coordinate the various local military affairs committees that already exist but don’t communicate with each other, reported the Dayton Daily News.
Jun 15

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – There is **no meeting in June**. Task Force meeting #65 is on **Thursday, 19 July 2018**, beginning at 9:00AM EST at the Hampton Inn & Suites Miami South – Homestead, 2855 NE 9th Street, Homestead, FL 33033.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   **Call-In Number: 800-501-8979**  
   **Access Code: 1869945**

3. **New Army Futures Command Location Down to Five** – According to an ADC article out on June 6, 2018, the Army has narrowed the site selection for Army Futures Command down to five finalists, but only two had been named at publishing. Dan Cohen notes that “Evaluation teams from the Army are visiting Raleigh, N.C., and Boston as those cities are among five finalists to host the headquarters for the service’s new Futures Command. In Raleigh, the team will review the mix of academia and industry, and help it “better understand the socio-economic dynamics” of the region, Undersecretary Ryan McCarthy said in a May 25 letter obtained by Bloomberg News. The other three finalists, out of 15 chosen in April, have not been publicly identified. A final decision is expected by June 30.” According to TPG, the remaining three cities include Philadelphia, Austin and Minneapolis.

4. **Draft 2018 Military Friendly Guide** – The new draft Military Friendly Guide is complete and will be sent for printing on July 1, 2018. We will distribute them as soon as they become available. Hopefully we will have copies in hand to bring to the July Task Force meeting in Homestead.

5. **NDIA Meeting Held in Jacksonville** – A new chapter of the National Defense Industry Association (NDIA) is starting in Jacksonville and held there kickoff meeting on Wednesday, 13 June 2018. The meeting included attendance from other chapters around the state as well as NDIA National representatives who discussed the organizations mission and goals as well as how to organize and gain new members. EFI Staff provided a presentation on Florida’s military and defense programs as well as the Task Force Strategic Plan to inform business leaders on the State’s efforts to support installations around the state.

6. **Senate to Vote on NDAA Monday** – According to Dan Cohen, the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) is done with amendments and procedural issues on their version of the NDAA and it will be brought to the floor for a final vote on Monday. See article below in the CLIPS.

7. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Washington Summit is Next Week** – Several members of FDA, TPG and EFI Staff will be attending. The theme of this year’s Summit is “Strengthening America’s Defense Infrastructure”. Keynote speakers include Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla.); Lucian Niemeyer, assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment; Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer, and Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson.

8. **Attachments:**
   - TPG May End of Month Report
   - FY19 SASC NDAA Summary
   - FY19 HASC NDAA Summary
News Clips of Interest:

Oil Drilling / Gulf Range

API Taps Jeff Kottkamp to Help Lead Offshore Energy Exploration Campaign in Florida

By SUNSHINE STATE NEWS, June 6, 2018 - 12:45pm

The American Petroleum Institute (API) launched its “Explore Offshore” efforts on Wednesday, calling on expanding energy exploration efforts including in the eastern part of the Gulf of Mexico.

The national “Explore Offshore” campaign will be led by former U.S. Veterans Affairs Sec. Jim Nicholson, who led the Republican National Committee (RNC), and former U.S. Sen. Jim Webb, D-Va., who ran for the Democratic presidential nomination in the 2016 election cycle.

Leading the “Explore Offshore” efforts in Florida are former Lt. Gov. Jeff Kottkamp and Dr. Miriam Ramirez who served in the Senate of Puerto Rico. Kottkamp served under then Gov. Charlie Crist who has opposed drilling in the Gulf, even calling for a special legislative session on the issue. Crist held that special session after the massive oil spill in the Gulf in 2010. However, while Crist started drifting to the left and that and other issues to run for the U.S. Senate in 2010 with no party affiliation and eventually join the Democrats, Kottkamp has remained a conservative Republican…..
Senate Bill Calls for DOD to Improve Capabilities of Training Ranges

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jun 08, 2018 04:45 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=67b92f77af

The Pentagon would need to prepare and implement a strategic plan for addressing deficiencies in the ability of the military’s training ranges to support readiness requirements needed to carry out the National Defense Strategy, under language in the Senate version of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill. The provision, section 2832, first requires DOD to evaluate:

- the adequacy of existing training ranges, including “the ability to train against near-peer or peer threats in a realistic 5th generation environment”; and
- the adequacy of current training enablers to meet current and anticipated demands of the armed forces.

The strategic plan would include:

- proposals to enhance the capabilities of ranges to address any limitations on existing resources, including “climatically induced impacts or shortfalls”;
- goals and milestones for tracking actions under the plan; and
- projected funding requirements for implementing the plan.

The undersecretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment, who would have lead responsibility for developing and overseeing implementation of the plan, would be required to provide annual progress reports to Congress starting April 1, 2019, covering:

- progress made implementing the strategic plan;
- a description of additional actions taken to address limitations on training ranges and enablers; and
- assessments of individual ranges addressing the initial evaluations.

The House version of the defense policy bill, H.R 5515, includes report language directing the Government Accountability Office to assess the extent to which DOD has developed a comprehensive strategic plan to improve the availability and sufficiency of training ranges to meet its training needs.

“Training ranges lack sufficient capability and capacity to support full-spectrum training requirements, including the replication of near-peer adversaries capabilities,” the House Armed Services Committee states.

Cyber

Military Installations Shouldn’t Be National Cyber Bases, Scientist Says

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jun 13, 2018 04:45 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=553d7f449a

Unless they are focused on protecting DOD networks, national cyber units should not be housed on military bases, according to an op-ed in c4isrnet.com. Cyber units created to support federal, state and private sector resources need to be located in proximity to the nation’s critical IT infrastructure, including
large data centers, to allow for a rapid response capability, writes Jan Kallberg, a research scientist at the Army Cyber Institute at West Point and an assistant professor at the U.S. Military Academy.

“A cyber unit that is housed in an office building in St. Charles, Missouri, on an office floor in Federal Plaza, Manhattan, or along the I-75 corridor in northern Texas is closer to the action when it happens,” Kallberg says. “The cyber units of the future should be based where their ability to reach mission success is highest, no matter the locale.”

**BRAC**

**Senate Milcon Panel Would Cut Spending on Past BRAC Closures**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jun 08, 2018 04:15 am
[https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=67b92f77af](https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=67b92f77af)

Funding to clean up installations closed during past base closure rounds would drop by $32.5 million to $277.5 million in fiscal 2019, under the military construction-Veterans Affairs spending bill the Senate Appropriations Committee approved Thursday. The committee’s recommendation represents a $10 million increase over the administration’s budget request, but a sharp drop from the funding level in the companion bill advancing in the House. The House’s milcon spending bill — which is under consideration by the chamber this week as part of a three-bill “minibus” appropriations package — calls for increasing spending on cleanup and ongoing operations and maintenance at sites closed under BRAC by $12 million to $322 million next year.

Separately, the Senate’s milcon spending bill includes $10 million for identification, mitigation and cleanup across the military to address water contamination from the contaminants PFOA and PFOS. Overall, the measure recommends spending $10.3 billion on military construction and family housing programs in FY 2019, a $228 million jump from this year’s allocation. The administration asked for $10.5 billion for milcon programs in its budget request.

**House ‘Minibus’ Includes BRAC Prohibition**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jun 12, 2018 03:25 am
[https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=17a0d90125](https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=17a0d90125)

The Pentagon would be barred from using funds from the fiscal 2019 military construction-VA spending bill to propose, plan for or execute a new BRAC round, under an amendment approved by House lawmakers on Friday. Rep. John Ratcliffe (R-Texas), who sponsored the provision, has offered an amendment prohibiting BRAC for the past three years, according to a news release. Ratcliffe’s district includes Red River Army Depot.

The chamber later passed the underlying spending bill as part of a three-bill “minibus” that also included the energy-water and legislative branch spending measures. The milcon bill includes $10.3 billion for military construction and family housing programs, a $241 million increase above this year’s allocation. The minibus is the first of what House Republican leaders expect to be a series of three-bill packages intended to expedite passage of all 12 spending titles before Oct. 1, reports CQ.
NAS Pensacola

US Coast Guard Cutter 'Decisive' relocates to NAS Pensacola

by Renee Beninate, June 6, 2018

Dozens of bystanders watched as the US Coast Guard Cutter 'Decisive' make its new home at NAS Pensacola.

A crew of nearly eighty men and women originally set sail from Pascagoula, Miss.

"For the Coast Guard this is a big win and a big move for us, to come to a facility like this Navy base that has a lot of support for our people," said US Coast Guard Commander Blake Novak.

The ship is one of four 210-foot cutters expected to change duty stations to NAS Pensacola.

County Commissioner Doug Underhill said he's glad to welcome this crew, which is focused on fighting drug trafficking in the Caribbean, Florida and Gulf of Mexico.

"In my opinion there is no better place to do these missions," Commissioner Underhill said. "There's no way any community in this country should be a better partner to the people who defend our way of life than we are."

The coast guardsmen will not only secure our coast, they'll also bring business to the area……

Escambia County buys land near Pensacola Naval Air Station as buffer for base operations

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Published 12:11 p.m. CT June 11, 2018 | Updated 12:32 p.m. CT June 11, 2018

Escambia County is buying land near the entrance of Pensacola Naval Air Station as part of an ongoing effort to buffer the base from growth in the surrounding community.

Commissioners approved spending about $220,000 earlier this month to buy about one-fourth of an acre of undeveloped land off south Navy Boulevard and 45 acres of undeveloped land near the intersection of Blue Angels Parkway and Gulf Beach Highway.

Commissioner Doug Underhill, whose district includes the base, said the purchase is part of a larger effort to protect the base from encroachment.

By purchasing the land, the county is sending a message to the federal government that it is serious about supporting and protecting Pensacola NAS, he said.

The land purchases are being funded in large part by the state's Defense Infrastructure Grant Program, which is part of Enterprise Florida. The program, which began in 2007, was created to protect military missions around the state.

Steve Opalenik, community planning and liaison officer for Pensacola NAS, said the land purchase is important because it ensures property under flight paths frequently used by the base will not be developed.
"A lot of the land is near our west gate and right in our flight paths where there is a potential for accidents," Opalenik said.

He said the property at the front gate, off Navy Boulevard, will help with overall base security.

**Greater public access to Pensacola NAS added as defense budget amendment by Sen. Nelson**

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Published 3:22 p.m. CT June 13, 2018 | Updated 9:09 p.m. CT June 13, 2018


U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Florida, has added an amendment to the Defense Authorization Act requiring Pensacola Naval Air Station to address public access to its museum and cemetery.

The amendment to the 2019 act requires the Navy to present a plan for increased public access to both the National Naval Aviation Museum and Barrancas National Cemetery.

"The National Naval Aviation Museum is one of the largest tourist attractions between New Orleans and Orlando, attracting hundreds of thousands of visitors each year," Nelson said in an emailed statement.

"This amendment will help provide easier access for members of the public looking to visit this great museum, while at the same time providing the security necessary to keep all of our brave servicemen and women at NAS Pensacola safe," he said.

U.S. Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fort Walton Beach, has advocated for improved public access to the base and toured the base with Navy leaders last year in an effort to see how base security could be arranged to allow better access to non-sensitive areas like the museum, cemetery and National Park fort.

**Rubio supports defense authorization amendment for improved public access to NAS Pensacola**

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Published 11:26 a.m. CT June 14, 2018 | Updated 2:09 p.m. CT June 14, 2018


U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Florida, supports a Congressional effort to improve public access to Naval Air Station Pensacola, his office said Wednesday.

Rubio and Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Florida, worked together to amend the 2019 Defense Authorization Act to require the Navy to come up with a plan for improved public access to the base, said Anthony Cruz, a spokesman for Rubio.

"This was a joint Rubio-Nelson amendment. Our staff in Pensacola and DC are actively working with NAS Pensacola personnel," said Cruz, who added that two of Rubio's Washington-based staffers traveled to the base in March to discuss access issues.

U.S. Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fort Walton, has also advocated for improved public access to the Barrancas National Cemetery, the National Naval Aviation Museum and the base's historic forts.
NAS Whiting Field

NAS Whiting Field Welcomes New Command Executive Officer

By Lt. J.G. LUKE RAGUE, Posted Jun 5, 2018 at 3:12 PM, Updated Jun 5, 2018 at 3:12 PM

MILTON – Cmdr. Jim Brownlee became the Command Executive Officer of Naval Air Station Whiting Field in Milton, Florida on Monday, May 15, following an already distinguished career in Naval Aviation.

Brownlee was born in 1970 in Upper Black Eddy, Penn., a small town on the Delaware River where he spent much of his youth boating and fishing up and down the river.

“Not much has changed in town over the years,” Brownlee said, whose parents still live in the house they bought just after he was born. “When I visit, it really is like coming home.”

As a child, Brownlee was given his first exposure to flying in a Cessna by his parents, Rita and Art Brownlee. “It was my mom, sister and me along with the flight instructor,” Brownlee said. “I got to sit in the front seat and from that point on I wanted to fly.”

After high school, Brownlee attended the University of Nebraska at Kearney, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in airway science management in 1994. The degree required Brownlee to earn his professional pilot’s license, giving him a greater taste of life in the cockpit, and leaving him wanting more.

“Aviation was what drew me to the Navy,” Brownlee said, who by then had solid knowledge and experience in the profession to build upon.

Brownlee joined the United States Navy after college, reporting to NAS Pensacola for Aviation Officer Candidate School in 1995. After commissioning as an Ensign, Brownlee reported to NAS Corpus Christi, Texas to fly the T-34C Mentor II in Training Squadron Twenty-Eight (VT-28), followed by NAS Whiting Field, Florida to fly the TH-57 Sea Ranger in Helicopter Training Squadron Eight (HT-8).....

Corry Station

British Consul General in Miami visits IWTC Corry Station

Courtesy Story, Center for Information Warfare Training, 06.12.2018

PENSACOLA, Fla. – Information Warfare Training Command (IWTC) Corry Station hosted the British Consul General in Miami, David Prodger, onboard Naval Air Station Pensacola Corry Station, June 12.

One reason why Prodger came to the area was to see first-hand the benefits of the Navy’s Personnel Exchange Program (PEP), and to support the U.K.’s and U.S.’s special relationship.

Currently, Chief Cryptologic Technician Paul Thomas, a Royal Navy sailor, serves at IWTC Corry Station through the PEP. Thomas is billeted as an instructor, fully integrated with the U.S. military and civilian staff.
"The Navy's Personnel Exchange Program is just one example of the U.S. Navy working closely with the Royal Navy to increase security and prosperity worldwide," said Cmdr. Chad Smith, commanding officer of IWTC Corry Station. "There is a major return on investment from having Chief Thomas onboard. The experience that he brings to the classroom is in many cases more than most.”

As both the U.K. and U.S. build up their cyber capabilities, they both see some of the same challenges…..

**Hurlburt Field**

**Hurlburt Field making preparations for arrival of drone detachment**

by Digital Staff, June 1, 2018


**OKALOOSA COUNTY, Fla. (WEAR) –** Hurlburt Field is making preparations for the arrival of a drone detachment.

A statement from Air Force Special Operations Command says they're expecting an MQ-9 "Reaper" mission control element squadron.

The unit is assigned to the 27th Special Operations Wings Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico.

About 60 personnel will be stationed at Hurlburt Field by late next year. The drones are piloted remotely and will not be located here.

**Hurlburt Osprey makes ‘precautionary landing’ in Alabama**

By Jim Thompson, Posted Jun 5, 2018 at 5:30 PM, Updated Jun 5, 2018 at 5:30 PM


**HURLBURT FIELD –** An Air Force CV-22 Osprey assigned to the 1st Special Operations Wing made a precautionary landing Monday night in a field near Ashland, Alabama.

The landing, at about 11 p.m., was made “out of an abundance of caution,” according to a news release from the 1st SOW public affairs office. None of the five crew members was reported injured, according to the release.

The incident occurred during a routine training mission, the news release said.

According to Ashland Police Chief Joseph Stanford, an Air Force aircraft mechanic was on the scene Tuesday to repair the Osprey, a multi-mission tilt-rotor aircraft.

“I believe they had some kind of engine malfunction or vibration or something,” Stanford said.

The plane landed in a large field on the eastern edge of Ashland, Stanford said.

Ashland is a town of about 2,000 people in east central Alabama’s Clay County, 75 miles north of Montgomery and just east of Talladega National Forest.
“We appreciate all the help and support we are receiving from the community and emergency services here in Ashland,” Lt. Col. David Lucas, the 1st Special Operations Group’s deputy commander, said in the release.

Col. Tom Palenske, commander of Hurlburt Field’s 1st SOW, addressed the landing Tuesday afternoon in a post on his Facebook page. Palenske confirmed that the landing was the result of “a maintenance issue.”

**Change of command coming to 1st SOW**

By Jim Thompson, Posted Jun 7, 2018 at 5:40 PM, Updated Jun 7, 2018 at 5:40 PM


**HURLBURT FIELD** – Col. Thomas Palenske will turn over command of the 1st Special Operations Wing later this month to become the senior military assistant to the undersecretary of the Air Force.

In a ceremony scheduled for June 22 at Hurlburt Field, command of the 1st SOW will pass to Col. Michael E. Conley, currently the vice commander of the 27th Special Operations Wing at Cannon Air Force Base in New Mexico.

Palenske has led the 1st SOW since June 2016. The wing is one of three Air Force active-duty special operations wings and falls under the Air Force Special Operations Command headquartered at Hurlburt Field. The 1st SOW’s missions include rapid planning and execution of specialized and contingency operations, close air support and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) operations.

As the 1st SOW commander, Palenske has been responsible for preparing Air Force special operations forces for missions worldwide in support of Army, Navy, Marine and allied special operations forces. The majority of Palenske’s 32-year military career has been spent in Special Operations aviation assignments. He has flown a number of aircraft, including helicopters and the tilt-rotor multiple-mission CV-22 Osprey. He holds a command pilot rating and has logged more than 3,500 hours in the air.

Conley has been vice commander of the 27th SOW since 2016. Like the 1st SOW, the missions of the 27th SOW include execution and support of special operations missions, ISR operations and information operations.

As vice commander of the 27th SOW, Conley assists the commander, Col. Stewart Hammons, with planning and executing a variety of missions, including precision strike, surveillance and reconnaissance missions, with joint special operations forces.

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**Eglin AFB**

**Eglin Air Force personnel donate bounty of bears to Crestview Police Department**

From staff reports, Pensacola News Journal, Published 10:00 a.m. CT June 13, 2018


Airmen and civilian employees at Eglin Air Force Base donated nearly 1,000 stuffed Teddy bears and other critters to the Crestview Police Department. The collection drive was spearheaded by Staff Sgt.
Teara Nedimyer, the mother of 8-month-old Charlie, who oversaw the delivery of the stuffed animals from his mom’s arms.

“I have always wanted to host a Teddy bear drive for the police department,” she said in a March 8 Facebook message to the department. “I would love to get a good bundle of donations for the local community’s children that are in need of some comfort and a companion in a tiring or challenging time.”

Nedimyer placed collection boxes all over the base in early April.

“We collected on Eglin between 900 and a thousand Teddy bears,” Nedimyer said. “I would’ve been satisfied with a hundred or 200.”

The bounty of bears was given to the CPD on June 7. In addition to helping calm anxious children, some of the new stuffed animals still in packaging will become part of the Community Services Division’s annual Toy Run, where officers load a trailer with toys and games and head to Crestview public housing neighborhoods for distribution before Christmas…..

**Tyndall AFB**

**Dunn tapped to lead VA health subcommittee**

By COLLIN BREAUX, News Herald Reporter, Posted Jun 2, 2018 at 6:59 PM, Updated Jun 2, 2018 at 6:59 PM  

PANAMA CITY – During Congressman Neal Dunn’s first term, 40 percent of his constituents’ complaints have been about the VA.

The frequency of those health care concerns, paired with Dunn’s 11 years as an Army surgeon, have motivated the freshman U.S. Congressman to focus his political goals on veterans’ issues.

Dunn recently was appointed by House Veterans’ Affairs Committee Chairman Phil Roe to lead the subcommittee on health. He stopped by The News Herald office Thursday to talk about his new role and veteran-friendly legislation he’s pushed through while in office.

On that list, Dunn pointed to the VA Mission Act of 2018, which would replace the Choice Program and allow veterans more private care options, as an example of overhaul efforts that have received mixed reaction from Bay County veterans. The Mission Act has been approved by Congress but still has to be signed by President Donald Trump before it officially becomes law.

“I’m trying not to just rush in and make a lot of changes,” Dunn said of his role on the health subcommittee. “The first thing to do is take stock of what we’ve got. There’s a lot of numbers. You’re talking about the single largest hospital and health care system in the country.”

**FL National Guard / Camp Blanding**

**Florida Youth Challenge Academy graduates new cadet class**

By: Christy Turner, Action News Jax, Updated: Jun 12, 2018 - 8:13 PM  
More than 100 cadets at the Florida Youth Challenge Academy graduated Tuesday in front of their family and friends.

The program specifically targets teenagers, ages 16 to 19, who are more likely to drop out of high school. The Academy is operated by the Florida Department of Military Affairs and the Florida National Guard. It’s designed to teach the students adult responsibilities, values and basic lifestyle changes.

The graduation marks the completion of the rigorous in-residence phase, where students spent five-and-a-half months at Camp Blanding.

**NS Mayport**

**Future Mayport combat ship to be delivered in summer**

By Nick Jones - Digital producer, Posted: 3:47 PM, May 31, 2018Updated: 3:47 PM, May 31, 2018


**MAYPORT, Fla.** - The Littoral Combat Ship that will become the USS Sioux City has completed its acceptance trials and will soon be based out of Naval Station Mayport.

According to Lockheed Martin, the ship's manufacturer, the trials conducted May 20-24 in Lake Michigan included surface and air demonstrations of the ship's combat system.

Acceptance trials are a major milestone in a ship's development and measure a vessel's performance and general seaworthiness. Generally, they are the last phase of construction.

The future USS Sioux City is slated for delivery to the U.S. Navy sometime in summer.

**NAS Jacksonville**

**Fleet Readiness Center Southeast Sailor receives Clay chamber’s Vystar Award for Military Excellence**

Story by Clifford Davis, Fleet Readiness Center Southeast 06.01.2018


**JACKSONVILLE, Fla.** – A Fleet Readiness Center Southeast Sailor got an unexpected surprise when he was recognized May 24th by the very community he’s come to love and appreciate while stationed aboard Naval Air Station Jacksonville.

The Clay County Chamber of Commerce awarded Petty Officer 1st Class Patrick Paquet with its Vystar Award of Military Excellence at the chamber’s annual military appreciation luncheon.

“I thought I was just going to be a guest at the luncheon,” Paquet said. “To be chosen for something like this from the community is just amazing.”
A Riverside, California native, Paquet has served 12 years in the Navy as an aviation machinist’s mate. His current duties involve managing and tracking flights and briefing pilots and flight crews of aircraft arriving and departing the repair, maintenance and overhaul facility.

His tours have taken him to San Diego, Japan and Kuwait, among others. Northeast Florida has stood out, he said.

**US Navy officially inducts Triton UAV into service**

Gareth Jennings, London - Jane's Navy International, 04 June 2018

http://www.janes.com/article/80602/us-navy-officially-inducts-triton-uav-into-service

With the MQ-4C Triton now officially inducted into service, the type's first operational deployment will be flown out of Guam later this year. Source: Northrop Grumman

The US Navy (USN) has officially commenced operations of its Northrop Grumman MQ-4C Triton Broad Area Maritime System (BAMS) unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), it was announced on 1 June.

A ceremony to formally induct the high-altitude long-endurance (HALE) UAV into service with Unmanned Patrol Squadron (VUP)-19 – the navy’s first unmanned patrol squadron – was held the previous day at Naval Base Ventura County in Point Mugu, California.

VP-19 now has two Triton UAVs, which are housed in specially constructed to facilities designed to accommodate their nearly 40 m wingspans. With this milestone, VP-19 will undertake training and trials ahead of the platform’s inaugural overseas deployment, which will be to the Pacific island of Guam later this year. For this and later deployments, the Triton will operate in concert with the manned Boeing P-8A Poseidon maritime multimission aircraft.

The MQ-4C Triton has been developed from the Block 30 RQ-4N naval variant of the RQ-4 Global Hawk HALE UAV to provide the USN with a persistent maritime intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capability in support of a full range of military operations. Designed for high-altitude, long-endurance ISR tasks, the Triton has a range of about 2,000 n miles and, with an endurance of 24 hours, will be able to cover more than 2.7 million sq miles in a single mission. Its payload primarily comprises the AN/ZPY-3 multifunction active-sensor radar.

The USN has established the infrastructure to train its Triton operators at Naval Air Station (NAS) Jacksonville in Florida. Operators undergo training under the supervision of Patrol Squadron (VP) 30 at the 11,600 m² Integrated Test Center (ITC), which is also used for the training of P-8A Poseidon and P-3 Orion crews.

**NAVAIR to Develop Facilities Modernization Plan for 3 Depots**

By: Megan Eckstein, June 14, 2018 5:09 PM

https://news.usni.org/2018/06/14/navair-to-develop-modernization-plan-for-3-depots

CAPITOL HILL – Naval Air Systems Command will develop a facilities modernization plan to guide upcoming investments, much like its counterparts at Naval Sea Systems Command did with a shipyard optimization plan submitted to Congress in February.

New NAVAIR Commander Vice Adm. Dean Peters said in a House Armed Services readiness subcommittee hearing today that a bump in funding in Fiscal Year 2018 allowed NAVAIR to make some
repairs to the most critical test and support equipment at the three maintenance depots. But there is still a lot of work to be done to improve turnaround time and to modernize the depots.

For example, he told lawmakers, Fleet Readiness Center East at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C., has a water tower used to qualify nozzles for the T-64 engine. FY 2018 funding will allow that 50-year-old piece of equipment to be made more reliable – it was down for several months in 2017 and left FRC East unable to repair T-64 engines – but ultimately the Navy needs to replace the water tower system altogether with an airflow qualification system that the Air Force and virtually all others use for the engine nozzles.

Peters said the three depots have about 71,000 pieces of equipment, 800 of which are deemed critical – work stops if those items break. The critical equipment averages more than 25 years old, he said, with the facilities averaging 58 years old and half of them being older than 67 years.

An avionics maintenance facility at FRC Southeast at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Fla., has no air conditioning. A paint and strip facility at FRC Mid-Atlantic at Naval Air Station Oceana, Va., has to shut down every time it rains. And an environmental control ventilation system at FRC Southwest at Naval Air Station North Island, Calif., fails on a weekly basis…..

**MacDill AFB**

Tampa Bay Defense Alliance launches financial review amid conflicting stories about former president’s departure

By Margie Manning – Finance Editor, Tampa Bay Business Journal, 6-4-2018


A review of the finances of the Tampa Bay Defense Alliance is underway, after a leadership change at the organization.

Lisa Monnet, a businesswoman who has admitted she falsified a friendship with Virgin Group's Richard Branson to advance her career, no longer is president of the TBDA. She says she resigned in March, a little over two years since she was named president. Board minutes tell a different story, noting that TBDA board of directors voted to remove her from office in April.

Tim Jones, president and CEO of Tampa IT firm, Cybrix Group Inc., was appointed interim president of the TBDA and asked for a forensic financial analysis for the period from Jan. 1, 2016 to the present, Jones told TBBJ.

That’s roughly the time when Monnet was president of TBDA.

The change in leadership resulted in the cancellation of a $135,000 state grant, Jones said, although the organization has since picked up other state funding.

The Tampa Bay Defense Alliance, a nonprofit group that works with businesses and the military to support MacDill Air Force Base and more broadly the defense community in the Tampa Bay area, is the second organization to raise concerns about Monnet’s leadership. She also is in litigation with Nitro Mobile Solutions, a Tampa technology company where she was interim CEO for several months last year before leaving in mid-November.

In both cases, there are dramatically different accounts of the events that led to Monnet leaving the organizations…..
MacDill supports Swift Response 18

Story by Airman 1st Class Adam Shanks, 6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs, 06.08.2018

A KC-135 Stratotanker assigned to the 6th Air Mobility Wing, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida forward deployed to Pease Air National Guard Base, New Hampshire to rally in support of Swift Response 18, June 6, 2018, by providing in-flight refueling.

Four C-17 Globemaster III aircraft from the 62nd Airlift Wing at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington and four C-17s from the 437th Airlift Wing at Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina, carried more than 600 U.S. Army paratroopers from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to Eastern Europe to strengthen the interoperability of the U.S. Global Response force with both Allied and partner forces.

MacDill’s KC-135, piloted by Capt. Craig Wojtkiewicz assigned to the 50th Air Refueling Squadron, refueled a C-17 from the 437th AW over the Atlantic Ocean while en route to their drop zone. Refuelers help build “air bridges” across continents and oceans, enabling U.S. and Allied force to reach any corner of the planet.

Wojtkiewicz was evaluated throughout his trip to N.H. and the flying mission to support SR18…….

Cape Canaveral AFS

45th Launch Group commander assumes command of 45th Operations Group

By Airman 1st Class Dalton Williams, 45th Space Wing Public Affairs / Published June 01, 2018

CAPE CANAVERAL AIR FORCE STATION, Fla. -- Col. Steven Lang, commander of the 45th Launch Group assumes command of the 45th Operations Group, June 1, at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla. accepting the command from Col. Burton Catledge.

The change of command ceremony was presided over by Brig. Gen. Wayne Monteith, commander of the 45th Space Wing. Lang will be in command of both the 45th LCG and the 45th OG.

“To the men and women of the 45th OG, you are phenomenal at what you do,” said Lang. “I promise you that we will keep our laser focus on mission success, as we always have. We will wade through challenges with integrity, service, and excellence, like we always have at the 45th Space Wing. We can never forget that American space power begins right here at Cape Canaveral. ”

Monteith thanked Catledge for his outstanding leadership of the Airmen in the 45th Operations Group……

SpaceX launches communication satellite, ditches old booster

Marcia Dunn, Ap Aerospace Writer, Updated 3:23 am, Tuesday, June 5, 2018
CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) – SpaceX has launched another satellite for a Luxembourg communication company. But it ditched the recycled booster in the Atlantic following liftoff.

The Falcon 9 rocket blasted off early Monday from Cape Canaveral, Florida. The satellite operator, SES, tweeted, "What a beautiful start to the week!"

The powerful, hefty SES satellite, weighing in at 12,000 pounds (5,400 kilograms), will provide TV and data coverage across Asia, the Pacific and the Middle East.

The Falcon's first-stage booster previously flew last September. SpaceX is switching to a new and improved line of boosters, and so made no effort to recover this one.

SES was the first company to accept a ride on a used SpaceX rocket, back in March 2017.

SpaceX aims to lower launch costs by reusing rockets.

SpaceX plans major expansion at KSC with futuristic launch control center

James Dean, Florida Today, Published 1:54 p.m. ET June 8, 2018 | Updated 8:07 a.m. ET June 10, 2018

It will be an operational monument to Elon Musk's vision: a towering SpaceX launch control center, a 133,000-square-foot hangar and a rocket garden rising in the heart of Kennedy Space Center.

According to plans detailed in a draft environmental review published recently by KSC, SpaceX will undertake a major expansion of its facilities at the space center sometime in the not-too-distant future.

The review says SpaceX is seeking more room and a bigger presence "in its pursuit of a complete local, efficient, and reusable launch vehicle program."

The expansion would enable SpaceX to store and refurbish large numbers of Falcon rocket boosters and nose cones at the operations center down the road from NASA’s Vehicle Assembly Building.

"As SpaceX’s launch cadence and manifest for missions from Florida continues to grow, we are seeking to expand our capabilities and streamline operations to launch, land and re-fly our Falcon family of rockets,” said James Gleson, a SpaceX spokesman…..

US Navy to commission Virginia-class submarine Indiana in September

NAVAL TECHNOLOGY - 14 JUNE 2018

The US Navy’s newest Virginia-class fast-attack submarine, the future USS Indiana (SSN 789), is slated to be commissioned on 29 September.
The future USS Indiana was built as part of the Virginia-class Block III contract, which has seen the US Navy revise approximately 20% of its submarine design.

Indiana features a redesigned bow that replaces the original 12 individual Vertical Launch System tubes with two large-diameter Virginia Payload Tubes.

Each of the two Virginia Payload Tubes is capable of launching six Tomahawk cruise missiles……

**Patrick AFB**

**Florida health agency collecting data on Patrick Air Force Base cancers**

By: Tara Copp, 6-14-2018


The Florida Department of Health is gathering data from current and former residents who are concerned their cancers may be linked to living near Patrick Air Force Base, the agency confirmed Thursday.

The agency’s interest was first posted on a Facebook community page for Satellite Beach. Residents there have been tracking the issue since the Pentagon’s issued its first-ever public report this March on the levels of water contamination at current and former military installations, including Patrick.

Since then, the number of current and former residents coming forward to say they lived on or near the base and have cancer has grown.

“The department was contacted by a concerned citizen regarding an area in Brevard County and is currently working to gather more information related to their concerns,” said Florida Department of Health spokesman Devin Galetta. The county lies on Florida’s east coast and includes Patrick Air Force Base and Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

“For this is not a formal investigation, the department does recognize the importance of gathering and assessing any information to help us determine necessary next steps,” Galetta said. “Our current goal is to continue encouraging any concerned citizens in the community to provide further information to the local county health department to aid in that assessment.”
Avon Park

Governor and Cabinet Surpass 50K Florida Acres Preserved Through RFLPP

AGNET, JUNE 13, 2018
HTTP://SOUTHEASTAGNET.COM/2018/06/13/GOVERNOR-CABINET-ACRES-PRESERVED-RFLPP/

The Governor and Cabinet approved the preservation of more than 8,300 acres through four cost-effective conservation easements, which prevent future development of the land and allow agricultural operations to continue to contribute to Florida’s economy. The purchases are part of the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program (RFLPP), where the state partners with Florida’s farmers and ranchers to preserve active agricultural operations and their immense economic and environmental benefits. Today’s partnerships increase the total land preserved by the program to over 50,660 acres through 45 conservation easements.

Since 2011, the current Governor and Cabinet have approved the acquisition of 38 projects totaling more than 47,000 acres, a more than 1,000-percent increase in acres preserved by the program.

“We must continue to prioritize the conservation of our agricultural lands and world-renowned natural spaces,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam. “Through the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program, we partner with farmers and ranchers to preserve the invaluable pieces of our rural economy and environment to help preserve what makes Florida such a special place to live.”

Today’s easements include: Goolsby Ranch in Highlands County, Howze Ranch in Manatee County, Sampala Lake Ranch in Madison County and Rodman Plantation in Putnam County.

The Governor and Cabinet partnered with the United States Air Force to purchase the conservation easement for Goolsby Ranch in Highlands County, which will preserve the ranch’s 4,476 acres of working row crops, dairy and cattle operations. Goolsby Ranch is within the designated sentinel landscape of Avon Park Air Force Range, acting as a military base buffer, and is crucial for protecting military training missions. It is also located within the Bombing Range Ridge Florida Forever Project and connects neighboring conservation easements……

Homestead AFB

Air Force pilots refresh their survival training in the Florida Keys

BY DAVID GOODHUE, June 04, 2018 03:56 PM, Updated June 04, 2018 05:33 PM

Pilots with the 93rd Fighter Squadron based at Homestead Air Reserve Base finished the second phase of their two-day survival training Sunday in Key Largo.

The F-16 aviators spent Saturday navigating through the woods and brush in Homestead for land-based combat survival training and Sunday treading water, getting dragged by personal watercraft and hoisted up in a basket by the crew of a MH-65 Dolphin Coast Guard helicopter.

"It's good training. If anything happens we know what to do to survive," said Maj. Lindsey Lamb, 37, one of the reserve squadron's active duty pilots.
Pilots have to go through the training every three years to complement what they learned during an intense two weeks of combat survival training they received as new pilots……

**US Southern Command**

**Guardians of the South change guard**

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Alexis Ramos, Special Operations Command South, 06.05.2018


**HOMESTEAD AIR RESERVE BASE, Florida** - Special Operations Command South held a change of command ceremony in its headquarter building in Homestead Air Reserve Base, Florida, June 5, 2018.


Adm. Kurt W. Tidd, commanding general for U.S. Southern Command, was the presiding officer for the ceremony. U.S. Army Gen. Raymond A. Thomas III, commander for U.S. Special Operations Command, attended the event and was also a guest speaker.

Tidd praised the outgoing commander for everything he accomplished while leading SOCSOUTH but also recognized that moments with leadership changes are bittersweet.

“They are sweet because we get the opportunity to welcome a new commander, but it’s always a little sad because it’s time to say goodbye to a great leader,” said Tidd. “So while it’s difficult to say goodbye it’s a special honor to be here so that we can all recognize Collin and this fine team’s accomplishments and it paves the way for Tony taking the baton.”

Tidd then welcomed Fletcher as the incoming commander for SOCSOUTH……

**Tradewinds 2018 forges U.S.-Caribbean partnerships for regional prosperity**

By Digital Content Editor - June 13, 2018


**ST. KITTS** – U.S. forces, along with more than 20 Caribbean nation partners, took part in Exercise Tradewinds 2018, which kicked off in St. Kitts June 4, to conduct joint, combined, and interagency partner-nation capacity building.

The international exercise has been taking place in the Caribbean for more than 30 years. U.S. Air Force Col. Steven Cherrington, U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) exercise division chief and Tradewinds Phase I lead representative, said USSOUTHCOM is honored to facilitate this exercise to bring everyone together to build enduring relationships. “We’ve gone from five nations participating and now we’re up to 20 different ones, to include Canada, the United Kingdom,” said Cherrington. “It’s more of a whole government, a whole of the military, everybody responding to help those that are in need.”

Participants trained in areas including close quarters battle techniques, entry control point procedures, tactical room clearing, reflexive marksmanship live-fire incorporating rifles, pistols and shotguns, maritime disaster response, and aviation emergency response planning.
Partner nations’ coast guards also conducted live-fire training aboard U.S. Coast Guard fast response cutter USCGC Joseph Tezanos (WPC 1118), and local responders participated in a simulated earthquake exercise, which included the evacuation of more than 1,400 Ross University students.

In the final part of the exercise, participants responded to a simulated aircraft crash to assess emergency responders and determine areas for improvement. “We’ve partnered with United Airlines and the airport to go through an exercise to discuss all the different aspects of a crash or downed aircraft,” Cherrington said. “[We will focus on] how would they work through that with fire and rescue, local response, and international responses.”

Exercise Tradewinds 2018 ended with participants volunteering in the local communities to help local schools. The closing ceremony was held at the Governor’s mansion June 12.

**Defense Industry**

**Eastern Florida State College receives $2.6M grant for aerospace, manufacturing jobs**

Caroline Glenn, FLORIDA TODAY, Published 12:03 p.m. ET June 4, 2018 | Updated 12:28 p.m. ET June 4, 2018


Eastern Florida State College in Brevard County received a $2.6 million grant on Wednesday as part of Gov. Rick Scott's initiative to expand jobs in the aerospace and manufacturing industries.

Eastern Florida officials said the college will use the money to purchase advanced technology and computers and develop its robotics lab on the Palm Bay campus and a new mechatronics lab on the Cocoa campus in order to train students for aerospace, manufacturing and other high-tech jobs.

Eastern Florida President Jim Richey, whose tenure has seen the rise of new programs and facilities to meet Brevard County's high-tech job demands, said local businesses will benefit from this latest grant.

“It will play a significant role in helping us educate and train a new generation of high-tech workers, including for companies launching a new era of human spaceflight from NASA’s Kennedy Space Center,” Richey said, pointing to private companies vying to lead the Space Coast in commercial space exploration, including SpaceX and Blue Origin.

**Eastern Shipbuilding Breaks Ground in Port St. Joe on the Old Paper Mill Site**

By: Kirsten Mitchell, Posted: Jun 04, 2018 07:16 PM EDT, Updated: Jun 04, 2018 07:16 PM EDT


**PORT ST. JOE, Fla.** – Eastern Shipbuilding continues to expand in the Panhandle bringing jobs along for the ride.

This time they are headed to Gulf County to build on a piece of land that's been vacant for nearly 20 years.
"We have been fighting for this project for quite some time and our dream is becoming a reality," said Gulf County Commissioner, District 2, Ward McDaniel.

Gulf County officials and community leaders broke ground on the 20 acres that will be used for a new eastern shipbuilding facility in Port St. Joe.

The land used to be the location of the old St. Joe Company paper mill that opened in 1937. It later closed in 1999 and has been vacant ever since.

"We're here celebrating what we hope is a long standing relationship between Gulf County, the St. Joe Company and Eastern Shipbuilding," said Gulf County Economic Development Director Warren Yeager.

Part of the Gulf County expansion is connected to a new contract. Eastern will build ferries for the Staten Island Ferry Service. The company plans to build the ferry hulls in Bay County, then outline them in Port St. Joe. Eastern plans to use the new facility for ship repairs as well as build a 10,000 sq. ft. warehouse. Initially county officials hope for more than a hundred new jobs but expect that number to grow……

**Acquisition of Orbital ATK approved, company renamed Northrop Grumman Innovation Systems**

by Sandra Erwin — June 5, 2018

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Federal Trade Commission on Tuesday announced it has cleared Northrop Grumman’s $7.8 billion purchase of defense and space contractor Orbital ATK.

Orbital ATK will become Northrop Grumman’s fourth business sector, named Northrop Grumman Innovation Systems. The other three are Aerospace Systems, Mission Systems and Technology Services. With the addition, Northrop Grumman’s sales for 2018 should reach $30 billion.

As a condition for the approval of the merger, the company will have to supply solid rocket motors “on a non-discriminatory basis under specified circumstances,” the FTC ruled.

Ensuring competition in the solid rocket motors industry is a key issue for the Defense Department because only two manufacturers remain in the business, Orbital ATK and Aerojet Rocketdyne. The Air Force plans to acquire a new strategic intercontinental ballistic missile, the so-called Ground Based Strategic Deterrent, with Northrop Grumman and Boeing competing for the award. The intent was for both Orbital ATK and Aerojet to supply both prime contractors. The FTC decision requires Northrop Grumman to separate its solid rocket motors business with a firewall so it can continue to support Boeing.

It will be up to the Defense Department to ensure compliance with the firewall mandate.

Northrop Grumman announced the $9.2 billion deal on September 18. To buy Orbital ATK, it paid $7.8 billion in cash and assumed $1.4 billion in debt…..

**Northrop Grumman's Space Coast unit wins dual Hawkeye contracts worth $81.2M**

By Matthew Richardson — Staff writer, Orlando Business Journal, Jun 8, 2018, 3:52pm
Northrop Grumman Corp. is closing out the week with two more contracts for its Advanced Hawkeye military aircraft, according to a report from the U.S. Department of Defense.

The Falls Church, Va.-based global defense firm was awarded a $66.3 million contract by the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency on June 7. The company's Melbourne unit will provide power amplifier modules for the E-2 aircraft. All of the work will take place in Melbourne and has a completion date of June 15, 2023.

Additionally, the firm also was awarded a $15 million contract by the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency on June 7. The work for the contract is to provide high-voltage power supplies for the E-2 aircraft and has a June 15, 2023, completion date, as well.

Northrop Grumman is racking up contracts for its Advanced Hawkeye. Earlier this week, the firm's Melbourne unit won a $153.2 million contract from the U.S. Navy to perform services on the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye aircraft for Japan.

These contracts now total nearly a dozen work agreements for Northrop Grumman's E-2D and E-2C program this year, adding up to more than $300 million. The E-2D and E-2C programs received more than 164 contracts last year totaling more than $480 million, but not all of that work was done in Melbourne. The program currently supports about 800 jobs in Melbourne.....

Pratt opens military engineering facility at growing Fla. operation

By Howard French, hfrench@journalinquirer.com, 6-14-2018

EAST HARTFORD – Pratt & Whitney has established its latest engineering operation in Florida to work on developing new military engines more quickly and less expensively, Pratt officials said.

Dubbed “GatorWorks” in a nod to its location at Pratt’s growing West Palm Beach, Florida, facility, the new operation’s objective is to deliver advanced engines “in half the lead time and for half the cost of traditional procurement cycles,” Pratt Military Engines President Matthew Bromberg said.

The standard large engine development cycle takes roughly 20 years, Bromberg said. The Pentagon has asked for “rapid innovation, technology development, and new product introduction,” he said.

With GatorWorks, Bromberg said, Pratt is creating “an environment where our best engineers can reach their potential with all the tools they need, but without the unnecessary internal barriers that can sometimes slow them down.”

GatorWorks began operation early this year, he said, “focused on a family of advanced products in development.”

Pratt in May said it plans to add 215 employees to the Florida operation by 2020.

Company spokeswoman Jenny Dervin said Wednesday she doesn’t know how many of those new workers will be involved in the GatorWorks project. It’s based in West Palm Beach because Pratt is expanding that operation “with focus on engineering and new technologies specific to military engines,” Dervin said.
Pratt expanded engineering operations at its East Hartford headquarters in 2017, with its $180 million, 425,000-square-foot Engineering and Technology Center, where Pratt officials said more than 1,700 engineers will work on aerospace propulsion designs of the future……

**DoD Budget**

**Senate Panel Recommends Small Increase for Milcon Spending**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jun 06, 2018 04:47 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=4e2e7c1768

Spending on military construction and family housing programs would rise by $228 million to $10.3 billion, under the draft fiscal 2019 spending bill the Senate Military Construction-VA Appropriations Subcommittee approved Tuesday. The panel’s recommendation roughly matches the overall funding level for milcon in the bill the House Appropriations Committee advanced last month. The measure will be considered by the full Senate Appropriations Committee on Thursday, when the text of the bill will be released. The legislation would fund 169 milcon projects and provide $1.6 billion for construction, operation and maintenance of family housing, according to a [committee summary](https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=4e2e7c1768). The bill includes $498 million for unspecified milcon projects for the services to fund their highest priority unfunded projects, according to a [summary issued by the committee’s Democrats](https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=4e2e7c1768).

“While the Department of Defense did not take advantage of additional headroom provided by the 2018 budget deal to aggressively work to buy back years of using these accounts as bill payers — to the detriment of our service members and their families — this bill is an important step forward,” the Democrats’ summary stated.

The House is scheduled to take up a three-bill “minibus” package this week that will include the FY 2019 military construction spending title.

**Senate NDAA Set for Final Vote Monday**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jun 15, 2018 04:20 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=9f9816e916

The Senate is scheduled to vote on final passage of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill Monday evening, after the legislation cleared several procedural votes during debate Thursday. One of those votes was to limit debate on a substitute amendment to the measure that includes the Senate Armed Services’ version of the defense policy bill, S. 2987, and 45 amendments that have support from both parties, reported CQ. The Senate also rejected a vote to limit debate on an amendment that would have allowed Congress to review new regulations by the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, blocking it from advancing. Debate over the authorization bill never really got off the ground this week due to an impasse among Republican lawmakers over what amendments would receive votes on the floor.

**Other Of Interest**

**Pentagon Looks to Expand Civilian Hiring**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jun 06, 2018 05:09 am
Defense officials plan to increase civilian hiring as part of a new plan calling for reducing the department’s reliance on contractors and military personnel, and moving away from the use of caps on staffing levels. “While it may be appropriate for other federal agencies to reduce their civilian workforce, for the DOD, right-sizing will necessitate targeted growth to both restore readiness and increase the lethality, capability and capacity of our military force,” the business plan states. DOD sent the Office of Management and Budget a “workforce rationalization plan” which it said marks a “significant shift” in its approach to “workforce sizing, shaping and structuring,” reports Government Executive.

The department’s plan could conflict with congressional policy. The House version of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill calls for spending by defense agencies and field activities on civilian resources management, logistics management, services contracting and real estate management to drop by 25 percent by Jan. 1, 2021.

Coast Guard installs new district commander

By Dyke Hendrickson Special to The Daily News, 6-11-2018
http://www.newburyportnews.com/news/local_news/coast-guard-installs-new-district-commander/article_873b48e5-fd87-5cc5-8ee8-60a54ec4b9c98.html

BOSTON – The U.S. Coast Guard recently held its change-of-command ceremony as Rear Adm. Andrew J. Tiongson replaced Rear Adm. Steven D. Poulin as commander of the First Coast Guard District.

The First District is composed of New England, New York and northern New Jersey. This region monitors 1,225 miles of coast and includes more than 12,000 active duty, reserve, civilian and auxiliary personnel.

Newburyport’s Coast Guard station is on Water Street and includes a complement of about 25 active personnel.

Newburyport is the birthplace of the Coast Guard, and it is a Coast Guard City……

Veterans helpline expands to Tallahassee, Big Bend

Special to the Democrat, Published 1:42 p.m. ET June 11, 2018

With a veteran population of more than 23,000 living in Tallahassee, Crisis Center of Tampa Bay announced the Florida Veterans Support Line, 1-844-MyFLVet, has expanded to Leon County as well as to every county in Florida.

Florida has the third largest veteran population in the nation, with more than 1.5 million veterans living in the state. Through a simple phone call to 1-844-MyFLVet, Florida veterans who are struggling with issues like PTSD, substance abuse, relationship troubles and personal finances can connect confidentially to emotional support and community resources, 24 hours a day. Tallahassee area callers are connected with the 2-1-1 helpline.

As part of the statewide expansion of the Florida Veterans Support Line, the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay has created a revolutionary billboard appearing near MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa. “Stitches of
Duty” was stitched entirely of actual military gear donated by veterans. Watch the complete story here: https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/-mhECJ6K0qiM8I8viVwU2f?domain=youtu.be......

Rutherford announces funding to help military families, troops

By Nick Jones - Digital producer, Posted: 7:43 PM, June 13, 2018Updated: 7:46 PM, June 13, 2018

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – Congressman John Rutherford (R-FL) announced the successful inclusion of key funding in the Defense Appropriations bill for Northeast Florida, passed Wednesday by the House Appropriations Committee.

The $674 billion funds the Department of Defense including operations, equipment and quality of life programs for troops and military families, according to Rutherford's office. It includes a total of $606 billion in base discretionary funding, which is an increase of $17 billion from the year prior.

The legislation includes $144 billion to provide for 1,338,100 active-duty troops and 817,700 Guard and Reserve troops. The bill fully funds the increased troop count to 15,600 and the 2.6 percent pay raise for the military.

The bill also includes several of Rutherford's priority provisions, including three Littoral Combat Shipts, six E-2D Advanced Hawkeyes, 10 P-8A Poseidon aircraft, and four MQ-4C Triton unmanned aerial vehicles.

There is also funding for light attack procurement, which is key for the potential procurement of the A-29 Super Tucano aircraft, which are manufactured in Jacksonville.

The bill advances to the full House for future consideration.
Jun 29

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #65 is on **Thursday, 19 July 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EST** at the Hampton Inn & Suites Miami South – Homestead, 2855 NE 9th Street, Homestead, FL 33033.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979  
   Access Code: 1869945

3. **Task Force Gets New Chair** – Speaker of the Florida House, Richard Corcoran, appointed Representative Jay Trumbull to succeed Senator Doug Broxson as Chair on June 27th, 2018. By statute, Rep Trumbull’s chairmanship begins on July 1st. The staff congratulate Rep Trumbull on his appointment and thank Sen Broxson for the great leadership he provided the Task Force over the last year. Senator Broxson will remain on the Task Force and continue to make a positive difference for Florida’s military and defense communities.

4. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Washington Summit** – Several members of FDA, TPG and EFI Staff attended the conference. The theme of this year’s Summit was “Strengthening America’s Defense Infrastructure”. Keynote speakers included Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla.); Lucian Niemeyer, assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment; Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer, and Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson. Additional highlights were the recognition of Tampa as an “All American Defense Community” and Mr. Tom Neubauer being honored with the 2018 Community Leadership Award. See attached documents provided at the summit for additional information on BRAC and Defense Infrastructure. See attached summary and two additional documents provided for more details.

5. **Congressman Rutherford Gets Seat on Military Construction / Veteran Affairs** – According to a Jun 25th article, Rep. John Rutherford has been appointed to the Military Construction / Veteran Affairs Subcommittee in the House. The committee overseas defense spending on installations and veteran’s issues. See article below in the CLIPS.

6. **Congressman Murphy to Sit on NDAA Conference Committee** – Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy from Orlando was appointed by House leadership to the conference committee for the FY19 NDAA. She is the first freshman Democratic Member of the House Armed Services Committee to serve on the NDAA conference committee in 18 years.

7. **Attachments:**
   - Rep Trumbull Appointment
   - ADC Washington DC Summit Summary
   - ADC - Defense Infrastructure Report
   - ADC - “Beyond BRAC”
   - Senate NDAA Executive Summary
   - TPG Mid-month Report

*Terry*

Terry McCaffrey  
Executive Director
News Clips of Interest:

Task Force

Bay Defense Alliance president wins national leadership award

By Special to The News Herald, Posted Jun 21, 2018 at 7:15 AM

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Bay Defense Alliance President Tom Neubauer has been honored with the 2018 Community Leadership Award from the Association of Defense Communities (ADC).

Neubauer is a longtime member of the Bay Defense Alliance, which was formed by the Bay County Chamber of Commerce during the first round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) in the 1990s. The organization’s mission is to build community and state support for Tyndall Air Force and Naval Support Activity Panama City.

The alliance consists of community leaders and retired military personnel, including several former commanders of both installations. Neubauer is also vice chairman of Florida’s Defense Support Task Force, a group dedicated to strengthening Florida’s defense-friendly reputation and the state’s installations and ranges.

“There is no question Tom’s work has helped transform the Bay County area and strengthen the community’s ties to Tyndall Air Force Base and Naval Support Activity Panama City,” ADC President Bill Parry said. “Under his leadership, Bay Defense Alliance has become one of the best examples in the country of how to bring community leaders, military families and installation commanders together around the shared mission of supporting military readiness.”

Neubauer’s dedication to supporting the Bay County area’s military mission comes from being around the military all his life. He and his wife are former “Air Force brats” whose fathers flew in war time, giving them both the desire to volunteer, while also working full-time running a real estate company…..
Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) released the following statement today after the Senate passed the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019:

“One of the most important jobs of the federal government is to ensure our men and women in uniform have the tools and resources they need to defend our nation. The 2019 NDAA provides for our national defense, gives critical policy guidance to the Pentagon and continues to invest in restoring our nation’s military capabilities to the level required to confront the challenges ahead. It also ensures Florida’s many military bases have the construction authorities they need and approves a pay increase for our troops.

“Today’s vote also sends a clear message that Congress will protect the American people and our economy from the Chinese government’s efforts to use telecommunications companies for espionage and intellectual property theft. I urge Senate conferees and my colleagues in the House to keep the bipartisan ZTE provision in the final version of this bill.”

The legislation as passed includes the following key Rubio-sponsored amendments:

- The reinstatement of penalties imposed on ZTE for violating Iran and North Korea sanctions, and the extension of the policy guidance to the Pentagon and continues to invest in restoring our nation’s military capabilities to the level required to confront the challenges ahead. It also ensures Florida’s many military bases have the construction authorities they need and approves a pay increase for our troops.

- A plan from the Navy to allow increased public access to the National Naval Aviation Museum and Barrancas National Cemetery at Naval Air Station Pensacola

The 2019 NDAA supports over $187 million in military construction for Florida:

**Navy**
- Mayport LCS Support Facility $82,350,000
- Mayport LCS Operational Training Facility Addition $29,110,000
- NAS Whiting Field Air Traffic Control Tower (North Field) $10,000,000

**Air Force**
- Eglin AFB F–35A Student Dormitory II $28,000,000
- Eglin AFB F–35A Integrated Training Center Academics Building $34,863,000
- MacDill AFB KC135 Beddown Add Flight Simulator Training $3,100,000
Marco Rubio Helps Craft Military Construction, VA Appropriations Bill

By SUNSHINE STATE NEWS, June 27, 2018 - 2:45pm

This week, from his perch on the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee, U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., helped shape the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs (MilCon-VA) Appropriations Act to help support the military and veterans communities in the Sunshine State.

Rubio weighed in on the bill on Tuesday.

“As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I am proud to have fought for these critical provisions benefitting Florida’s military and veterans,” said Rubio. “The MilCon-VA bill includes meaningful funding for veterans programs and military construction projects across Florida, as well as funding for opioid treatment programs and PTSD research. The Sunshine State continues to carry a long and prideful tradition of supporting our servicemen and women, and I will continue to honor their service and sacrifices by fighting for them in Washington.”

Rubio included $1.8 billion for the VA’s homeless prevention programs and more than $400 million for Opioid Prevention and Treatment programs in the VA. The Florida Republican also wanted to impact VA medical facilities with “language directing the VA to ensure that physicians with revoked medical licenses are not conducting medical disability examinations on behalf of the Department” and directing the VA to address security deficiencies that GAO recently identified at two Florida medical centers by requiring the VA take steps to improve its overall risk management process.” The legislation also makes the VA come up with a plan to add more doctors in its Caribbean Healthcare System and explore how virtual reality can help veterans suffering from PTSD.

The bill also impacts Florida including the VA’s handling of Camp Lejeune Contaminated Water exposure claims and adding funding for Phase 2 of the Cape Canaveral Gravesite Expansion.

Rubio also added almost $175 million to help military constructions projects across the Sunshine State including adding LCS support and training facilities at Mayport, new buildings for F-35A crews at Elgin AFB and a KC135 Beddown flight simulator training and creates Eglin Air Force Base’s Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) Initial Joint Training Site.

House, Senate Panel Advance FY’19 Defense Spending Bills

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jun 29, 2018 04:00 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=9eab14142f

The House on Thursday easily passed a fiscal 2019 defense spending bill which would provide $606.5 billion for base defense and intelligence programs and $68.1 billion for the overseas contingency operations account, a total that is $20 billion above the current year’s allocation. The measure covers an increase in active-duty end strength of 15,600 across the four services. The base budget figure would represent a historic high in defense spending since World War II, after adjusting for inflation and excluding past spending on the recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, reported CQ.

On Wednesday the chamber adopted an amendment by Rob Wittman (R-Va.) and Joe Courtney (D-Conn.) to permit the Navy to contract for construction of two new aircraft carriers next year instead of
one, a move that could eventually save taxpayers as much as $2.5 billion, reported Defense News. On Thursday, though, the chamber rebuffed an amendment from the two lawmakers to shift more than $1 billion from other defense programs to the Virginia-class submarine program in an effort to accelerate the rate at which the Navy acquires new submarines. DOD opposed reallocating the funds, saying it would reduce planned purchases of other types of ships next year while raising shipbuilding costs over time.

Earlier Thursday the Senate Appropriations Committee advanced its own defense spending bill, which would provide almost precisely the same total amount of money, $675 billion, reported the Hill.

**BRAC**

**Senate Committee Sours on Prospect of New BRAC**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jun 18, 2018 01:40 am

https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=9bcd343203

The Defense Department is not ready for a new round of base closures as far as the Senate Armed Services Committee is concerned. DOD’s effort to transform the military, foster jointness and shed excess capacity during the 2005 round resulted in about 20 communities experiencing significant mission growth. In response, those communities made substantial investments in infrastructure and services to accommodate the expected influx of new personnel. “The committee believes that the Department of Defense must keep the promises that it made during the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure in regards to its current property, facilities and training spaces, as our military and associated communities are growing and modernizing based on these 2005 metrics,” according to the committee report accompanying the Senate version of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill.

The report indicates DOD needs to do a better job aligning its goals from BRAC 2005 with its infrastructure; one way to do that is by ensuring it adequately maintains its existing facilities. “The department must also continue improving existing infrastructure and pursuing military construction projects that effectively meet the demands of our future force, as opposed to asking this committee for a future complete overhaul of its posture at home,” it states.

The panel concludes by noting that a provision in the bill, S. 2987, prohibits the department from conducting a new BRAC round.

**BRAC Hiatus Won’t Extend Indefinitely**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jun 21, 2018 03:45 am

https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=1cc109a946

**Washington, D.C. —** With the Trump administration’s decision not to request additional base closures with this year’s budget submission, the Pentagon’s uphill battle to demonstrate the benefits of a new BRAC round to lawmakers has been placed on the back burner, but the discussion can be expected to return to Capitol Hill eventually. At some point, DOD will need to rebalance its infrastructure, Todd Harrison, director of defense budget analysis at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, told the audience Wednesday at the 2018 Defense Communities National Summit. “[That] will have to occur through a BRAC,” Harrison said.

That time likely could come when lawmakers realize the rising defense budget is not translating into a significantly larger force structure. The need to curb spending as the nation’s debt grows could provide a strong push in that direction as well. “Then BRAC will come back up,” Harrison said.
An additional factor at play is the dispute between the Pentagon and Congress over DOD’s estimate of its excess capacity. Lawmakers, along with a recent Government Accountability Office report, have called for a more precise estimate of the military’s unused capacity. In response, defense officials point out that is only possible when Congress authorizes a new BRAC round. Both sides have a point in this standoff, but lawmakers will be hesitant to jump into a new round in the absence of better data, said Mackenzie Eaglen, resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

“It certainly helps forestall the next BRAC round,” Eaglen said.

**Pentagon taking new view on excess base capacity**

Justin Doubleday, June 22, 2018


After declining to seek a base realignment and closure round in its latest budget request, the Pentagon is weighing new approaches to evaluating installations and dealing with excess property, according to a top Defense Department official.

Lucian Niemeyer, assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment, said Defense Secretary Jim Mattis has tasked his office with determining how to best approach excess capacity.

"We've been asking for six years for the ability to close bases," Niemeyer said June 18 at the Association of Defense Communities annual summit in Washington. "Obviously that has not been resonating with Congress. We have to take a fresh look."

Despite telling Congress last fall it was operating at 19 percent excess base capacity, DOD did not include a BRAC request in its fiscal year 2019 budget.

Niemeyer said DOD wants to take a "quality-based look" at BRAC, taking into account the direction from the National Defense Strategy. He suggested such an approach could involve determining where best to place the technologies and weapon systems the military will be fielding over the next decades.....

**NAS Pensacola**

**Coast Guard equipping ships with drones to aide in drug trafficking battle**

by Hannah Mackenzie, Friday, June 22nd 2018


**PENSACOLA, Fla. (WEAR) –** There's big news for the U.S. Coast Guard. Every ship in the National Security Cutter Fleet will soon be equipped with an unmanned aircraft - drones.

In 2017, the Scan-Eagle Unmanned Aircraft aided in the interdiction of $1.5 billion worth of cocaine and heroin off the coast of Central and South America.

"A lot of cities are struggling with drugs, and the primary use of this is to keep drugs off our streets," explained William Sasser.

Sasser of the Coast Guard said the main advantage of having an unmanned aircraft on every ship is minimizing the risk to the men and women on the front lines.
"The time frame in which we have to maintain eyes in an overt, where they actually know we're there, is very small now. We can be on them before they realize they're being tracked," Sasser said.

The aircraft weighs just 40 pounds and can fly up to 20 hours.

National Naval Aviation Museum Director Sterling Gilliam said it's an invaluable addition…..

**Hurlburt Field**

**Air Force eyes new cyber training facility in Florida**

By: Mark Pomerleau, 2-20-2018


The Air Force is outgrowing its current cyber and information operations training facility.

The demand for cyber training has increased substantially in recent years, so much so that the 39th Information Operations Squadron had to build another building adjacent to its headquarters in Hurlburt Field, Florida, in order to accommodate the influx of new students.

“Looking toward the future, we are building a $14.2 million, 36,000-square-foot schoolhouse facility at our main cyber formal training unit,” Maj. Gen. Christopher Weggeman, commander of 24th Air Force, wrote in prepared testimony before the Senate Armed Services Cyber Subcommittee in March.

A groundbreaking took place in August 2017 and construction is scheduled to be completed in late fiscal 2019.

The current schoolhouse is at capacity in terms of space for students and the tailor-made environment or maneuver space each student operates in. During a recent visit to the schoolhouse, Fifth Domain observed a classroom with wall-to-wall desks.

Moreover, each student is provided their own segmented working environment to practice on, which in the cybersecurity world is referred to as a sandbox……

**Hurlburt’s 1st Special Operations Wing gets new commander**

By Jim Thompson, Posted Jun 22, 2018 at 4:02 PM, Updated Jun 22, 2018 at 4:02 PM


**HURLBURT FIELD** – Air Force Col. Tom Palenske, who commanded the 1st Special Operations Wing for the past two years, got a standing ovation Friday morning from hundreds of Air Commandos and guests in a Hurlburt Field hangar as he relinquished command to Col. Mike Conley, former vice commander of the 27th SOW at New Mexico’s Cannon Air Force Base.

“We love you guys,” Palenske said on behalf of himself and his family as he stepped down Friday.

From the Air Force Special Operations Command, Palenske is headed to the Pentagon, where he will serve as the senior military assistant to the undersecretary of the Air Force.

Friday’s ovation was, in large part, a tribute to Palenske’s aggressive approach to working around outdated or burdensome Air Force instructions and other regulations. It was also a recognition of his use of social media for two-way communication with his airmen, their families and the community.
Palenske’s management approach was fueled by Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein’s push to move decision-making authority down to the squadron level. Among the changes made during Palenske’s command of the 1st SOW — much of it pushed by airmen taking advantage of the opening of informal communication channels with their commander — was the shortening of a pre-deployment checklist from 12 pages to three pages, a not-inconsequential change for the most-deployed wing in the Air Force.

**NSA Panama City**

**Command changes hands at Navy diving center**

By NEWS HERALD STAFF REPORT, Posted Jun 21, 2018 at 3:45 PM, Updated Jun 21, 2018 at 3:46 PM


**NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY PANAMA CITY** — Command of the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center (NDSTC) changed hands Thursday during a ceremony.


“Brasfield is reporting from Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division where he served as a special project officer,” Naval Support Activity Panama City, where NDSTC is located, reported in a news release. “He previously served as NDSTC executive officer from 2010-2013.”

Brasfield is a graduate of Auburn University where he received a bachelor’s degree in aviation management, and he also holds a master’s degree in defense analysis, special operations low-intensity conflict conferred by the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

NDSTC trains military divers and has more than 1,200 students each year in the 23 courses offered.

**FL National Guard / Camp Blanding**

**House Approves Bipartisan Murphy Measure to Strengthen DOD Counterdrug Efforts**

Contact: Javier Hernandez | For Immediate Release: June 28, 2018


**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. House of Representatives has unanimously approved a bipartisan measure authored by U.S. Representatives Stephanie Murphy, D-Fla., and Andy Barr, R-Ky., to increase funding for the National Guard counterdrug program by $3 million. This funding will be used by the Florida National Guard and other states’ national guards to combat the flow of illicit drugs into the United States and to reduce drug-related violence. The Murphy-Barr measure was included within the Fiscal Year 2019 Defense Appropriations Act, which the House passed today by a bipartisan vote of 359-49. This bill, which funds the Department of Defense, also includes a 2.6 percent pay raise for military servicemembers, the largest increase in nearly a decade.

“The drug trade is a threat to national security and public health, and I will not rest until our communities and our kids are safe from drugs,” said Murphy. “I’m proud the House approved my bipartisan measure
so the Florida National Guard and other states’ national guards can help law enforcement agencies and community-based organizations protect our communities and our families.”

Under the National Guard counterdrug program, the National Guard Bureau distributes the money it receives from Congress to the national guards in the states and the U.S. territories, using an allocation model that examines the nature and scope of the drug problem in each jurisdiction. With this funding, national guard units provide different forms of assistance to law enforcement agencies and community-based organizations, including analytical, reconnaissance, and training support. Each state uses its funding in a way that reflects the drug interdiction priorities of its governor, the capabilities of its national guard; and the needs of its law enforcement partners at the federal, state, and local levels.

The Florida National Guard receives about $10 million a year under this program, which it uses to reduce the supply of, and demand for, illegal drugs in the state. Since 2014, support provided by the Florida National Guard has been instrumental in over 2,000 arrests and the seizure of nearly $14 billion dollars in illicit drugs, property, and cash.

The Murphy-Barr amendment increases funding for the National Guard counterdrug program by $3 million, from $197 million to $200 million…..

**NAS Jacksonville**

**NAS Jacksonville on HHS/Department of Defense list of bases with contaminated ground water**

Author: Kenneth Amaro, Published: 5:40 PM EDT June 26, 2018, Updated: 7:41 PM EDT June 26, 2018  

Naval Air Station Jacksonville is not only one of the city's largest employers with more than 7,000 civilians and 9,000 active duty. It is also a big polluter. A report by Health and Human Services (ATSDR) and the Department of Defense reveals the Jacksonville base has polluted groundwater.

The pollution comes from the chemical found in the fire fighting foam, commonly known as PFOS and PFOA.

These chemicals are hazardous and do not degrade in soil or water; it can be absorbed by humans through drinking water, or through the soil or air.

According to the Department of Defense list of military bases, NAS Jacksonville has 17 water monitoring wells on the property and the results are disturbing.

Test results from all 17 wells revealed pollution levels far above EPA levels.

The recommended EPA level for the fire fighting chemical is 70 parts per trillion (ppt).

At Naval Air Station Jacksonville the levels ranged from 3,410 to 1,397,120 ppt.

When calculated, that is as much as 19,000 times above the EPA's allowable amount.

Maureen Sullivan, Assistant Secretary of Defense, in an interview with the Military Times addressed the issue of testing…..
MacDill AFB
MacDill Air Force Base ferry one step closer to fruition

By Janelle Irwin – Reporter, Tampa Bay Business Journal, Jun 20, 2018, 2:41pm

The Hillsborough County Commission approved Wednesday the next step in creating ferry service between south county and MacDill Air Force Base. The move launches the next phase of the ferry that will create a timeline for completion, a budget schedule and identify at least two possible sites for a ferry terminal somewhere in south county.

The service would provide alternative transportation for the 18,000 civilian and non-civilian employees at the base.

“The benefits are certainly great for the community and the military down there because they don’t really have any form of alternative transportation other than their car,” said Hillsborough County Commissioner Sandra Murman. “For them, mostly enlisted men live in south county because it’s affordable and to get on the [Lee Roy Selmon] Expressway is sometimes not economically available.”

Murman said fares on the ferry would be covered by the federal government.…

Cape Canaveral AFS
Trump wants a Space Force. Now what?

By: Valerie Insinna, 6-20-2018

WASHINGTON – On June 18, President Donald Trump ordered the Pentagon to begin establishing a new “Space Force,” a process that could add a sixth military service to the Defense Department.

But military service branches aren’t built overnight, and the department immediately went to work figuring out exactly how to stand up a space force.

“We understand the President’s guidance,” said Pentagon spokeswoman Dana White later that day. “Our policy board will begin working on this issue, which has implications for intelligence operations for the Air Force, Army, Marines and Navy. Working with Congress, this will be a deliberate process with a great deal of input from multiple stakeholders.”

Many questions have yet to be answered, including whether Trump can secure needed congressional support for the plan, the timeline to stand up a space force and whether it will fall under the Department of the Air Force or warrant the establishment of its own department and budget.

“This is a very big bureaucratic shift, lots of complex moving parts, lots of budget implications, doctrine implications, command relationship implications, funding implications, legal implications, all of those have to be worked out,” said Brian Weeden, director of program planning for space policy thinktank Secure World Foundation and a former Air Force officer working in space situational awareness.…
Patrick AFB

45th Force Support Squadron wins RAPIDS Site Excellence award

By Airman 1st Class Zoe Thacker, 45th Space Wing Public Affairs / Published June 26, 2018

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – The 45th Force Support Squadron was presented with a Site Excellence award May 17th, 2018 at Patrick Air Force Base. The 45th FSS proves hard work does pay off, as they have won several awards at the Group, Command and Department of Defense level in the past two years.

The award is presented to squadrons that exhibit exceptional service and support of the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System and Real-time Automated Personnel Identification System.

The squadron was judged based on the merit of their customer service, training, efficiencies, innovation and fraud reduction in the production of Uniformed Services identification and privilege cards from October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017.

“Something you always have to ask yourself is why something is done the way that it is. Then you ask yourself how it can be done better,” said Tech. Sgt. Dominique Barrett, Noncommissioned Officer in Charge of Customer Support at FSS. “There’s technology out there that can help diminish waiting times for things like ID cards – why not use it? Instead of having customers wait two to four hours in our office for an ID, we thought it would be effective to reform old ways to new and faster processes.”

A large contributing factor to the success of the 45th FSS obtaining this award was the implementation of a new online process for obtaining ID cards. The process eliminated the appointment system and reduced the total process time from 38 days to less than 3 days. Additionally, customer wait time, phone-calls and face-to-face appointments decreased from 34 minutes to only 9 minutes…..

Team Orlando

Orlando simulation firm creating dozens of jobs after winning shared $2.4B contract

By Matthew Richardson – Staff writer, Orlando Business Journal, Jun 25, 2018, 5:13pm

The founder and CEO of Orlando-based Engineering & Computer Simulations Inc. is preparing to hire dozens of new employees to handle an influx of work thanks to the biggest contract the company has ever been awarded.

Waymon Armstrong told Orlando Business Journal that he plans to hire 30+ workers this year after getting word that his company won a shared $2.4 billion contract from the U.S. Army on June 19.

"We are looking for project managers, administrative contract support, IT support and courseware developers," Armstrong said.

The firm currently has eight positions available.
ECS Inc. was one of eight firms selected to perform services on the contract and is one of three that are based in Orlando. The companies will provide and manage training and training assistance for operations such as security cooperation. Awarded companies will also provide maintenance on training aids and devices.

ECS, located at Central Florida Research Park — home to a cluster of tech and defense firms — expects to get word on services related to the contract as early as next week.

Homestead AFB

The life of migrant children at a South Florida shelter

By Jacob Sweet Miami Herald (TNS), Jun 22, 2018 Updated Jun 22, 2018

Several dozen boys, many of whom were wearing gray government-issued T-shirts and navy blue shorts, walked out of a building labeled “DINING HALL” after breakfast. Behind metal barricades, the boys formed a single-file line on the way to their next scheduled activity. Some smiled and waved, seemingly amused by all the people with pens and notepads looking at them.

A group of about 20 journalists watched the immigrant children as the reporters were ushered through the Homestead Temporary Shelter for Unaccompanied Children, a facility under such tight control that Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., and other government officials were turned away Tuesday.

After Nelson’s visit, he said “it’s clear this administration is hiding something.” Friday’s one-hour guided tour seemed to be an attempt to dispel that idea. Cellphones and audio or video recording equipment were prohibited — a “matter of security of privacy on minors in our shelters,” said Mark Weber, a representative of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which oversees the Homestead and other shelters.

On Friday, the Homestead facility housed 1,179 migrant children 13 to 17 years old, including 70 who had been separated from their families at the Mexican border, said program director Leslie Wood. The numbers change day by day as children arrive in buses from the border or leave for permanent housing, usually with a parent or family member, Wood said. As of Friday morning, there were 792 boys and 387 girls. About 70 had been separated from their families at the border, and they are placed with the other children, Wood and Weber said.

The facility, once part of Homestead Air Force Base, is surrounded by a fence, but without barbed wire and is patrolled by unarmed guards. When asked if she felt comfortable calling the area a detention facility, Wood said no…..

Defense Industry

SpaceX's Falcon Heavy rocket wins Air Force contract to launch classified mission from KSC

James Dean, Florida TodayPublished 6:42 p.m. ET June 21, 2018 | Updated 6:48 p.m. ET June 21, 2018
The Air Force on Thursday awarded SpaceX a $130 million contract to launch a classified mission from Kennedy Space Center on a Falcon Heavy rocket, giving the big rocket its first competitive win of a military launch contract.

The Falcon Heavy beat out a bid from United Launch Alliance for the mission labeled Air Force Space Command-52, or AFSPC-52, which is targeting liftoff from KSC's pad 39A in 2020.

United Launch Alliance's most powerful launcher, the Delta IV Heavy, has a price tag approaching $400 million.

“I want to thank the Air Force for certifying Falcon Heavy, awarding us this critically important mission, and for their trust and confidence in our company,” SpaceX President and Chief Operating Officer Gwynne Shotwell said in a statement. "SpaceX is pleased to continue offering the American taxpayer the most cost-effective, reliable launch services for vital national security space missions.”

Draken International Wins $280 Million USAF Nellis ADAIR II Contract

LAKELAND, FL, JUNE 3, 2018

Draken International has been awarded the $280 million Adversary Air (ADAIR) II contract to provide adversary air services at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada through December 2023. Adversary air, or “Red Air”, is training that simulates real-world threat scenarios. As the sole provider of adversary support for the USAF, Draken’s team of highly qualified pilots fly the company’s advanced fighter aircraft to simulate non-western tactics against USAF assets.

To support this contract, Draken will provide over 5,600 annual flight hours supporting combat readiness training. These aggressor missions include beyond-visual-range engagements, operational test support, dissimilar air combat maneuvers, offensive and defensive within-visual-range maneuvers, as well as advanced multi-ship tactics.

The Nellis ADAIR program, utilizing contract air services for Red Air training, began as an 800-hour proof-of-concept in the fall of 2015. The program has evolved considerably since that time and over the next five years, Draken will continue to expand its presence at Nellis AFB including daily flight schedules of 18-24 commercial ADAIR sorties supporting the USAF Weapons School, operational test missions, Red Flag exercises, Formal Training Unit syllabus rides from Luke AFB, as well as combat readiness training missions out of Hill AFB in Utah.

In addition to Luke, Hill and Nellis, Draken has also completed numerous successful deployments to Holloman AFB, Edwards AFB, MCAS Yuma, MCAS Cherry Point, MCAS Miramar, and NAS Patuxent River. The company has also supported training missions worldwide for our allied NATO partners, including operations in France and Leeuwarden Air Base in The Netherlands.

As the only commercial adversary operator with certified tactical fighters employing advanced radars and 4th generation capabilities, Draken’s A-4 Skyhawks equipped with APG-66 radars and L-159 Honey Badgers with GRIFO-L radars have proven to be highly effective adversaries for the USAF, ANG, USMC and international partners. The company recently added 22 Mirage F-1M/B and 12 Cheetahs to its fleet, furthering its commitment to expand capacity and capabilities. Both fleets of supersonic, radar equipped jets are extremely low-time, affording Draken the ability to provide the warfighter highly effective 4th generation adversary training for decades to come…..
DoD Budget

DOD Spending Bill includes Extra Funds for Testing Facilities

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jun 27, 2018 02:30 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=8a29e5f9e5

The Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee on Tuesday advanced a draft fiscal 2019 spending bill which includes $675.0 billion in base and overseas contingency operations funding, representing a $20.4 billion increase above the current year’s allocation. The bill provides $350 million above the president’s request for Navy facility sustainment, restoration and modernization, according to a committee summary. The panel also recommended $846 million in additional funding for test and evaluation infrastructure, including:

- $200 million for Army test ranges and facilities;
- $206 million for Navy test and evaluation infrastructure;
- $280 million for Air Force test and evaluation support; and
- $160 million for operational test and evaluation infrastructure, including funds to support expanded hypersonic and directed energy testing.

The full committee is scheduled to mark up the spending measure on Thursday.

Senate Appropriations Committee Defense Component Advances FY 2019 DoD Funding Bill

Nichols Martin, June 27, 2018

The defense component of the Senate Appropriations Committee has submitted a fiscal year 2019 funding bill that would support investments and programs on military and national security.

The committee’s chairman Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Ala., announced Tuesday that the FY 2019 Defense Department funding bill provides for $675 billion, $20.4 billion more than the budget enacted for FY 2018.

Of the proposed FY 2019 DoD budget, $607.1 billion is allotted for base funding, while $67.9 billion is for overseas contingency operations.

“During our review of the president’s budget, we conducted seven public hearings and two classified hearings to better understand the request and the needs of the armed services and intelligence community for the fiscal year beginning October 1st,” Shelby said.

“The subcommittee has worked in a bipartisan manner to produce a bill within an allocation that is consistent with the two-year budget deal passed earlier this year,” he added.

The defense subcommittee also identified resources for assets not included in the initial budget request, encompassing basic research, hypersonics, directed energy, artificial intelligence, microelectronics, missile defense, cybersecurity and test and evaluation infrastructure.
Other Of Interest

John Rutherford heads to Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee

A.G. GANCARSKI, 6-25-2018

U.S. Rep. John Rutherford, unopposed in the GOP primary, is nonetheless slated to face a Democrat and a host of NPAs in November.

Looking for a second term, the Jacksonville Republican will have a meaningful campaign talking point. Monday saw Appropriations Chair Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen put Rutherford on the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs subcommittee.

For Rutherford, this is a plum assignment. He spotlighted military spending in his news release about the budget bill earlier this year.

Rutherford has turned his attention to veterans’ medical issues, including a shortage of doctors in VA hospitals, and a need for job training options for vets also.

“I am honored to be joining the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs as it is great news for Northeast Florida,” Rutherford said. “In this role, I will be on the subcommittee that appropriates funding for the Department of Defense’s installations, which means that I will have a stronger voice in fighting for the First Coast’s military interests. This subcommittee also directs funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs…..

Rick Scott in Washington today for fundraising, military event

By Alex Leary, 6-28-2018

WASHINGTON – Gov. Rick Scott is in town Thursday for a busy day of fundraising and to speak at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's "military spouse employment summit."

The fundraisers for his Senate campaign include a breakfast, a lunch hosted by lobbyist Brian Ballard and dinner at the home of Dwight and Martha Schar.

Mr. Schar is founder of the home building giant NVR and part owner of the Washington Redskins. Admission to the event costs $25,000 and goes to Rick Scott Victory Fund, a joint committee with the National Republican Senatorial Committee.

The military spouse employment summit dovetails with a topic Scott has talked about before and he'll likely pitch Florida as a military friendly place to live…..
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #65 is on Thursday, 19 July 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EST at the Hampton Inn & Suites Miami South – Homestead, 2855 NE 9th Street, Homestead, FL 33033.

2. **Call In Number** –
   - Call-In Number: 800-501-8979
   - Access Code: 1869945

3. **Next Governor’s Base Commander Meeting July 23rd at USSOUTHCOM in Doral** – The Governor’s Base Commander meeting provides a great forum for Base Commanders to provide information and raise issues directly to the Governor. In some cases, the issues raised can be resolved at the local/community level. Bruce Grant and Terry McCaffrey will attend.

4. **Attachments:**
   - FY19 NDAA Summary
   - TPG End of Month Report

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**Terry**

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The Pentagon would carry out a pilot program relying on modeling and simulation to help improve its response to cyberattacks on critical infrastructure, under language in the Senate version of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill. The effort would aim to:

- assess defense critical infrastructure vulnerabilities and interdependencies to improve military resilience;
- determine the likely effectiveness of potential cyberattacks, and the countermeasures and tools used to respond;
- train personnel in incident response;
- conduct complex and large-scale exercises and test scenarios; and
- foster collaboration among the federal government, state and local government, military forces and private entities responsible for critical infrastructure.

The overarching objective of the pilot would be to develop risk analysis methodologies and apply advanced commercial simulation and modeling capabilities, based on hyperscale cloud computing technology and artificial intelligence/machine learning technology, for use by active and reserve component military forces, industry and civil government organizations, according to the committee report accompanying the defense policy measure.

Section 1630 also calls for the assistant secretary of defense for homeland defense and global security to submit recommendations regarding the establishment of a program of record for DOD for the further development and sustainment of advanced, large-scale modeling and simulation on modern cloud infrastructure of cyber warfare involving critical infrastructure. The recommendations would be due with the administration’s FY 2019 budget request.

In its Statement of Administration Policy on S. 2987 released last week, the White House objects to the provision, saying the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) — not DOD — is the lead federal agency responsible for critical infrastructure protection, supporting state and local cyber security, and leading the nation’s efforts to prepare for and respond to terrorism and other manmade disasters, such as cyberattacks.

H.R. 5515, the House-passed version of the authorization bill, includes a related provision authorizing DOD to provide technical personnel to DHS to enhance cooperation, collaboration and unity of government efforts to protect critical infrastructure from cyber incidents.
With long-standing questions remaining about the condition of the Pentagon’s vast real estate portfolio and whether it has adequate resources to sustain it going forward, the Senate Armed Services Committee directs the department to provide a report on various aspects of its installation management activities, including how it targets maintenance funds to the highest-priority facilities and its long-term plans for dealing with excess properties, according to the committee report accompanying the Senate version of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill.

“The committee believes it is critical that DOD make cost-effective decisions about how to manage this large facilities portfolio including excess facilities by appropriately targeting sustainment funds and disposing of or effectively reusing excess facilities where possible,” the report states. The panel notes the department can use existing authorities to dispose of some of its excess capacity. “Even in the absence of a Base Realignment and Closure round, DOD should effectively use all available and existing authorities to appropriately manage this facilities portfolio,” the report states.

The committee directs DOD’s assistant secretary for energy, installations and environment to submit the requested report with its fiscal 2020 budget request. The report should address:

- what progress the services have made since the planned end of the demolition program in 2013 in disposing of excess facilities and by what means other than BRAC;
- how the military services prioritize facilities for disposal and the services’ plans for disposing excess properties via non-BRAC authorities through the end of the current future years defense program;
- how DOD and the military services target facilities maintenance funds to ensure the highest priority facilities are properly maintained over excess facilities;
- the department’s long-term strategy for ensuring that excess property is disposed of through non-BRAC authorities and how facilities maintenance funds can be more effectively used; and
- what progress the services have made moving from leased space to excess space on installations and granting space to non-DOD tenants when it is consistent with the installation’s military mission.

In addition, the panel directs DOD to brief the congressional defense committees on the report’s findings by Jan. 30, 2019.
The Navy would be required to prepare a plan to provide greater public access to the National Naval Aviation Museum and Barrancas National Cemetery at Naval Air Station Pensacola, under an amendment added to the Senate version of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill before the chamber passed the measure last month. In February 2016 the installation began barring the general public from using its main gate off Navy Boulevard to bring the base in line with DOD security standards. The move forced most visitors to make a 10- to 15-minute drive to the west gate off Blue Angel Parkway, reported the Pensacola News Journal. “This amendment will help provide easier access for members of the public looking to visit this great museum, while at the same time providing the security necessary to keep all of our brave servicemen and women at NAS Pensacola safe,” Florida Sen. Bill Nelson (D), who offered the amendment, said in a written statement.

**Eglin AFB**

**AF Chief of Staff visits, talks with Team Eglin**

Story by Samuel King, Eglin Air Force Base, 07.03.2018

Surrounded by 50 state flags, a giant American flag, heavy humidity and almost 4,000 eyes, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David L. Goldfein took to the stage during an all-call and visit with Team Eglin here June 27-28.

The general addressed the state of the Air Force and the service’s ongoing effort to revitalize squadrons, strength joint leaders and teams, and advance multi-domain command and control.

He told the crowd of 1,800 Airmen and civilians these areas are vital to the current conflicts and the wars to come.

“You and I have, from this moment until the war begins, to get ready and every day counts,” said Goldfein. “We have to provide credible military options to our diplomats so they can negotiate a better peace.”

He praised Eglin’s efforts in the modernization field and with keeping the warfighter up to date on the battlefield.

“In the short time I’ve been here, I can say you are leading the effort when it comes to innovative thinking,” he said.

During his visit, he heard from all three wings and many other units on the latest progressions in test and training taking place here. He highlighted the 96th Security Forces Squadron and the Air Force Research Lab Commander’s Challenge team in his remarks at the call.

The defenders recently began using a tactical air control system to help with base defense and the AFRL team built a remote-piloted helicopter that can travel 30 miles and deliver resources……

**Eglin AFB in line for millions in military funding**

By Jim Thompson, Posted Jul 5, 2018 at 10:23 AM, Updated Jul 5, 2018 at 10:24 AM

EGLIN AFB – Military funding and policy bills that recently passed the U.S. Senate include more than $60 million in proposed funding for an F-35 fighter jet instructional facility and a dormitory for F-35 student pilots and maintenance personnel at Eglin Air Force Base.
The proposed outlay represents just part of the funding that would be coming to Eglin in connection with current defense spending bills, according to recent news releases from the office of Florida Republican Sen. Marco Rubio.

In all, according to the news releases on the National Defense Authorization Act and the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, the Senate version of the National Defense Authorization Act “provides an additional $100 million for the restoration and modernization of facilities at Eglin Air Force Base.”

The Senate defense appropriations bill also calls for an additional $10 million in funding for enhancing the Gulf Test and Training Range. Covering nearly 120,000 square miles in the eastern Gulf of Mexico, the range is used by a wide array of military units, including Eglin Air Force Base’s 33rd Fighter Wing and 96th Test Wing, and the Air Force Special Operations Command at Hurlburt Field.

“The Gulf Range Enhancement program is a current investment for enhanced capability supporting future mission use of the Eglin Gulf Test and Training Range,” Rubio’s office noted in the news release.

The range accommodates high-altitude supersonic air combat training, air-to-air missile testing, drone targeting, hypersonic weapons testing and space launches, but its technology has become outdated. Automated communications gear in the test range which provides data on the performance of munitions, other military equipment and military personnel has not been comprehensively updated since at least the early 1970s. Since then, development of communications and data collection equipment aboard aircraft and onboard munitions has outpaced the range’s telemetry capabilities. In some instances, the telemetry equipment does not recognize the munitions and equipment operating in the range.

The Senate version of the National Defense Authorization Act passed 85-10 with both Florida senators, Rubio and Democrat Bill Nelson, voting in favor of the measure. The bill is now headed to a conference committee comprising members of both the Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, who will work to resolve differences between the Senate and House versions of the bill. The bill will set funding for the U.S. military for the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1, with current proposed expenditures of more than $700 billion…..

**NAS Jacksonville**

**International drone association launches Jacksonville chapter**

By Will Robinson – Reporter, Jacksonville Business Journal, Jul 5, 2018, 2:36pm


The Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International, a nonprofit active in more than 60 countries, launches its Jacksonville chapter Thursday. The local chapter will focus on all forms of unmanned vehicles, including drones, cars, boats and submarines.

“Jacksonville’s proximity to the Atlantic Ocean and its location on the St. Johns River makes it ideally suited for collaboration between air, sea, and ground automation interests,” Brian Wynne, president and CEO of AUVSI, said in a statement. “Another important reason for starting a chapter in Jacksonville is the ongoing federal investment in cutting edge technology at Naval Station Mayport and Naval Air Station Jacksonville, which is creating opportunities for public-private partnerships.”

The Jacksonville Satellite Chapter is launching with an event at The Fire Academy of the South at 6 p.m. The chapter is intended to grow awareness and dialogue in the area about unmanned vehicles in defense, civil, commercial and other sectors. It will work with both military and commercial entities….
**MacDill AFB**

**Col. Stephen P. Snelson to lead 6th Air Mobility Wing at MacDill Air Force Base**

By: WFLA Web Staff, Posted: Jun 29, 2018 10:48 AM EDT, Updated: Jun 29, 2018 10:48 AM EDT


**MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (WFLA) – Col. April D. Vogel handed over command of the 6th Air Mobility Wing to Col. Stephen P. Snelson at MacDill Air Force Base on Friday morning.**

Snelson comes to MacDill from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington where he was the vice commander of the 62nd Airlift Wing. Snelson has a Master's Degree in Aeronautical Science and a Bachelor's Degree in Aerospace Engineering.

He is also a pilot with more than 3,000 flying hours in the T-37, T-1, KC-135, KC-10 and C-17 aircraft. Snelson will be available for brief questions following the change of command.

Vogel will continue her career with two roles: the Assistant Adjutant General-Air, Maryland Air National Guard and the Air National Guard Advisor to SAF/IA.

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**Cape Canaveral AFS**

**SpaceX completes cargo delivery, aims for next launch from Space Coast**

By Matthew Richardson – Staff writer, Orlando Business Journal, Jul 2, 2018, 4:02pm


The Hawthorne, Calif.-based rocket company, owned by billionaire Elon Musk, plans to launch its next Falcon 9 rocket from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station's Launch Complex 40 on July 22. The launch window will open at 1:50 a.m.

SpaceX will use its rocket to launch the Telstar 19 Vantage communications satellite for Telesat. The Telstar 19 Vantage satellite will provide high-throughput Ku-band and Ka-band communications services, supporting broadband applications over South America, the Caribbean, the North Atlantic and Canada. The Canada-based company is the fourth-largest satellite service provider in the world.

This launch will be the second for SpaceX in July, following a planned July 20 launch from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. Both of the launches will feature the Block 5 version of the Falcon 9 — a sturdier version of the booster that has only been used once so far……

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**Energy**
Pentagon Should Consider Establishing Office to Focus on Energy Resilience Projects, Senate Committee Says

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jul 05, 2018 03:40 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=bf18c776a3

DOD should work with the military services and defense agencies to study the viability of creating a central office dedicated to developing and implementing energy resilience projects, the Senate Armed Services Committee says in its committee report which accompanies the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill.

The committee says it is encouraged by the progress DOD has made to promote energy resilience at its installations with limited resources and personnel in light of the risk vulnerabilities to energy supplied to military installations pose to national security. “[However,] senior department officials continue to express concern to the committee on the ability of the department to keep pace with these threats and accelerate energy resilience project development due to resource constraints, the inability to retain and recruit qualified energy and technical professionals, and potential flexibility in existing authorities,” the report states. The report also emphasizes the committee’s support for the department’s reliance on third-party financing to pursue energy resilience by upgrading infrastructure, distribution systems, equipment, fuel and energy generation facilities.

The committee directs the department to consider in its study:

- a review of lessons learned from the services’ existing energy project execution offices;
- personnel skills, manning and resources needed to establish the office;
- the appropriate organizational reporting structure for such an office;
- strategy, mission and performance goals the office would pursue, including the scope of projects considered and funding strategy considerations;
- recruitment, retention and training strategy; and
- legislative authorities and other recommendations related to the establishment of an office to accelerate energy resilience project development.

The defense secretary is directed to brief the committee on the results of the review by March 1, 2019.

Defense Industry

Pentagon Drawing up Plan to Revive Civilian-Private Sector Competitions

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jul 03, 2018 03:15 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=444ce6f6b2

DOD is planning to submit a formal proposal to Congress over the next year to revise the A-76 process for conducting competitions between agency civilians and the private sector to determine which is more cost effective. Alternatively the department may propose carrying out a limited pilot program as way to resurrect civilian-versus-contractor competitions for activities it has determined are not inherently governmental in nature. Congress has imposed a moratorium on A-76 competitions each year for more than a decade.
The existing A-76 process, named for the Office of Management and Budget circular which defines how the competitions are performed, is “burdensome and ineffective” in many cases, Thomas Hessel, DOD’s deputy director for total force manpower and resources, told Federal News Radio. “What the department is really interested in is having a revised flexibility that allows us to do a workload analysis and a business case analysis and make the best choices with respect to how we meet our missions, without necessarily having to undergo a very time-consuming and costly four-year process of competing workload, which is a process that oftentimes doesn’t result in the savings that one would have anticipated,” Hessel said.

**Other Of Interest**

**Veterans and spouses will see eased licensing requirements under new Florida law**

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Published 12:45 p.m. CT June 29, 2018 | Updated 2:51 p.m. CT June 29, 2018


A Florida law that takes effect on Sunday will make it easier for veterans and their spouses to practice a variety of professions in Florida including dentistry, funeral services and education.

The law waives some professional licensing requirements and expedites others.

Florida Sen. Doug Broxson, R-Gulf Breeze, was a sponsor of the legislation that created the new law. Broxson said the changes are part of a series of steps taken by the Florida Legislature in recent years intended to help veterans and their families.

"Every year for about the last six years we have tried to add to our reputation as being the No. 1 state that is friendly to active-duty military and veterans," he said. "Most of (the new) changes are not enormous but they should help some people."

Changes in the new law include:

- Allowing a military spouse with an active dentist license in another state to qualify for expedited Florida licensing.
- Waiving renewal fees for military members, veterans and their spouses for professional licenses regulated by the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation.
- Waiving application, assessment and renewal fees for veterans and their spouses who apply to become mortgage loan originators.
- Requiring the state Board of Funeral, Cemetery and Consumer Services to recognize applicable military-issued credentials for purposes of obtaining embalmer, funeral director or direct disposer licenses.
- Waiving the initial Florida Teacher Certification Examination fees for veterans and their spouses.
- Allowing veterans who served as military officers for at least three years to have an expedited path to becoming a school principal. The bill allows districts to issue a three-year temporary certificate in educational leadership if the veterans earns a passing score on the Florida Educational Leadership Exam and is employed full time in a position in which a Florida Educators Certificate is required. This will allow the veteran to enter a principal training program....
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #65 is **NEXT Thursday, 19 July 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EST** (agenda attached) at the Hampton Inn & Suites Miami South – Homestead, 2855 NE 9th Street, Homestead, FL 33033. E-Books for the meeting are available on our website at [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/meetings/](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/meetings/).

2. **Call In Number** –
   - **Call-In Number:** 800-501-8979  
   - **Access Code:** 1869945

3. **MOU Between DOI and DOD on Endangered Species Act** – The purpose of this MOU which was signed June 25, 2018, is to establish a mutually beneficial partnership to develop and promote effective ecosystem and species conservation and recovery initiative that will reduce or eliminate the need for Federal protection and regulation under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and provide for increased flexibility for military mission activities. This recently signed (June 25th) memo seems to signal a shift in priority away from overly environmental-friendly concerns to the promotion of military readiness.

4. **2018 Florida Military Friendly Guide** – The new Military Friendly Guide has been published and mailed out directly from the publisher to many large installations. The remaining mailing and local distribution will be done over the next two weeks to provide broad circulation of this important information. By early next week the new guide will also be available on our website at [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/).

5. **Attachments:**
   - Agenda – TF Meeting #65, Homestead FL

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**FDSTF**

**Gov. Scott: More Than $1.4 Million Invested to Protect Military Installations, Support Communities**

On July 6, 2018, in News Releases, by Staff

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott announced that $1,469,000 has been awarded through the Florida Defense Support Task Force Grant Program to six projects to protect military installations across the state. This year, awards were given to the South Florida Progress Foundation, Polk County, Clay County Development Authority, Bay County, the Central Florida Planning Region and Gulf Coast State College. Florida’s military and defense industry contributes more than $84.9 billion in economic impact, and the industry supports more than 801,747 jobs in Florida, which is the second largest economic sector in the state.

Governor Scott said, “This week I had the opportunity to travel to Kuwait to visit Florida troops and to see firsthand the important work they are doing to protect our nation’s freedoms. We can never do enough to support our military and veterans and I am proud to award these important grants to an industry that contributes nearly $85 billion to our economy. Through this more than $1.4 million investment, we are able to not only protect our military installations, but also create jobs and economic growth in these communities that do so much for our men and women in the military.”

This grant funding will support community projects at Florida military installations that will diversify the local economy, provide support for local infrastructure projects and strengthen Florida’s bases ahead of any potential Department of Defense realignment or closure actions.

**BRAC**

**Third-Party Financing Could Enhance Resilience, Reduce Infrastructure Maintenance Backlog, Senate Committee Says**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jul 09, 2018 03:30 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=4c3f63d259

One of the ways the military services are improving their installations’ energy resilience is by leveraging private sector investment through energy savings performance contracts (ESPCs) and utility energy service contracts (UESCs). In its report accompanying the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill, the Senate Armed Services Committee says it supports the approach and “strongly encourages” DOD to leverage its facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization accounts, in combination with third-party funding sources, “to maximize energy infrastructure investments.” That tactic could help the
department reduce its massive infrastructure maintenance backlog as well as enhance installation resilience, the panel states.

The panel remains concerned, however, that DOD has failed to streamline the procurement processes used to enter ESPCs, UESCs and power purchase agreements. In turn, the committee directs the Pentagon to set “a department performance contracting goal along with a tracking system to identify and address project phase bottlenecks, with a timeline goal of 18 months from notice of opportunity to notice of intent to award.” The lawmakers also request DOD to brief the committee on its progress by March 1, 2019.

**NAS Pensacola**

**Coast Guard Cutter 'Dauntless' making NAS Pensacola its new home**

by Kristie Henderson, Monday, July 9th 2018  

**PENSACOLA, Fla. (WEAR) —** The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter "Dauntless", a 210' Medium Endurance Cutter, will be making NAS Pensacola its permanent port.  
The ship is expected to arrive on Tuesday. It's requires a crew of 76 Coast Guardsmen.  
The "Dauntless" will be joining the "Decisive", which made NAS Pensacola its home in June.

**Blue Angels pilot: Get ready for spectacular show at Pensacola Beach**

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Published 1:32 p.m. CT July 12, 2018 | Updated 5:03 p.m. CT July 12, 2018  

Halfway through the 2018 air show season, Marine Maj. Jeff Mullins said Thursday that he and the five other Blue Angels pilots are really starting to gel in their demonstration flights.  
“We are tightening up, getting closer,” he said, during an interview to promote the annual Pensacola Beach Air Show this week.

Mullins said the six F/A-18 Hornets routinely fly within 18 inches of each other, and the formations get tighter with every show.  
He predicted the tens of thousands of local fans gathered on the beach through Saturday will like what they see.  
Mullins, a native of Memphis, Tennessee, said the performances get better as the pilots become more comfortable with each other throughout the season……
**Hurlburt Field**

**JROTC cadets experience Team Hurlburt during Summer Leadership School**

Story by Airman 1st Class Rachel Yates, 07.12.2018


The SLS camp is offered to Junior ROTC programs in high schools across the country and is designed to educate and instill a sense of responsibility, self-discipline, and citizenship and promote community service in the cadets. More than 1,000 retired U.S. Air Force instructors accomplish this through classroom education and hands-on learning experiences.

“We want them, by the end of this week, to have a sense of what being a leader is really about,” said retired U.S. Air Force Col. Ken Rodriguez, director of SLS. “The leadership we're looking for is a selfless individual that has the ability to put the mission and his, or her, teammates first—that they can serve something greater than themselves.”

Cadets attended classes at the Airman Leadership School, participated in physical training sessions with the Special Tactics Training Squadron and received numerous hands-on learning experiences. Cadets also participated in leadership and team-building exercises to include a leadership reaction course with the STTS, self-aid buddy care, and land and water survival training.

The week wasn’t all work and no play for the cadets. They rappelled off a 40-foot tower, rode on combat rubber raiding crafts and flew on a C-145 Wolfhound from Duke Field, Florida……

**Eglin AFB**

**7th Group commander reflects on first year**

By Jim Thompson, Posted Jul 11, 2018 at 2:50 PM, Updated Jul 11, 2018 at 3:00 PM

http://www.nwfdailynews.com/news/20180711/7th-group-commander-reflects-on-first-year

EGLIN AFB – Eight years ago, the Army’s 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) moved from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to Eglin Air Force Base, bringing a major unit from another branch of the military service into what for years had been an Air Force-centered community.

That anomaly was perhaps more accentuated by the fact that Special Forces troops are, as a matter of both training and discipline, not particularly eager or motivated to talk much about what they do.

“One of our mottos is ‘the quiet professionals,’” Col. Patrick Colloton, who recently completed his first year as commander of the 2,500-troop 7th Group, said in an interview this week.

“Part of what we do, if we do it successfully, is not leaving a big footprint,” Colloton said. “So in some ways, we are our own worst enemy, because it’s not in our nature to self-advertise what we do. So we don’t have as strong a message as we could in terms of encouraging knowledge of the population in terms of what we do.”…..
Cape Canaveral AFS

Historic launch towers nearing demolition at Cape Canaveral

James Dean, Florida Today, Published 4:12 p.m. ET July 10, 2018 | Updated 4:50 p.m. ET July 10, 2018

With the push of a button early Thursday, twin towers at one of Cape Canaveral’s most storied launch sites are set to tumble to the ground, leveling landmarks that have touched the skyline since the early space program.

Around 7 a.m., Brig. Gen. Wayne Monteith, commander of the Air Force’s 45th Space Wing, will initiate detonations that will simultaneously bring down the mobile gantries and fixed towers at Launch Complex 17, just a few miles north of Port Canaveral.

The towers’ demolition, likely visible from some distance, comes nearly seven years after the complex last hosted a launch, when United Launch Alliance’s workhorse Delta II rocket flew from Florida for the final time with a pair of lunar probes.

“We have launched some super-exciting missions — Mars missions, all sorts of GPS missions, missions to all sorts of fun planets — so it is definitely a little emotional for me to see,” said Scott Messer, ULA’s Delta II program manager, of the launch complex’s demolition. “With 61 years of history and 325 launches, it’s been a pretty incredible piece of the space community for many years.”

The roughly $2 million demolition project has been planned for years while awaiting funding, and was postponed from last year…..

Energy

DOD’s Energy Resilience Strategy includes Focus on Industrial Control Systems

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jul 09, 2018 02:30 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=4c3f63d259

The Defense Department is preparing plans to protect facility-related control systems (FRCS) from cyberattacks as part of its effort to ensure critical missions can continue to operate during a variety of threats. Installation officials are working with the department’s chief information officer and principal cyber advisor “toward solutions and resources ensuring FRCS are defensible, survivable, and resilient to operate and sustain critical functions in a cyber-contested environment,” according to the written testimony Lucian Niemeyer, DOD’s assistant secretary for energy, installations and environment, submitted in April to the House Armed Services’ Readiness Subcommittee.

FCRS are vulnerable to cyberattacks, as has been made clear during past incidents involving malware, including one on Ukraine’s electric grid which cut power to critical facilities. At the same time, the services are updating their energy resilience policies, which require plans “to ensure available, reliable, high-quality, and cyber secure power to continuously accomplish our missions from our installations and facilities,” the testimony states.
Another component of the department’s energy resilience approach is scenario-based planning, such as installation reliability exercises which can be used to determine investments for resilient infrastructure. “This improves our installations’ security posture, increases our planning effectiveness, and ensures our ability to continue critical missions in the face of grid power disruptions that could occur due to weather events and/or direct physical or cyberattack,” Niemeyer’s testimony states. The department also is working with the departments of Energy and Homeland Security to “pinpoint the needs of critical defense assets and national infrastructure.”

**Defense Industry**

**With a new satellite factory in the U.S., Airbus eyes opportunities in military space**

by Sandra Erwin — July 6, 2018


WASHINGTON – A satellite assembly line built by Airbus will be up and running in Florida this fall, with full production projected to start later this year.

The plant, located on Florida’s space coast, will manufacture satellites for Airbus’ joint venture with broadband startup OneWeb, an effort that will require at least 900 spacecraft in low Earth orbit.

Airbus hopes the investment will position the company to win military contracts. The big selling point will be the speed of the assembly line, executives believe. The military is becoming more interested in LEO constellations of small satellites as a more resilient alternative to large, monolithic platforms in higher orbits. In a conflict, if U.S. satellites were targeted by lasers or electronic jammers, new ones could be quickly produced and launched.

A key opportunity for space industry players is the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency’s Blackjack program, described as an “architecture demonstration intending to show the high military utility of global LEO constellations and mesh networks of lower size, weight and cost.”

DARPA wants to buy commercial satellite buses and marry them with military sensors and payloads. This makes Blackjack an attractive project for mass manufacturers like Airbus and SpaceX (which also plans to produce and launch a huge LEO constellation) that can compete on price and response time.

The agency is expected to award $117.5 million in contracts over three phases to up to eight bus and payload suppliers. The first awards could come as early as August. At least two of the selected vendors will be bus manufacturers…..

**Coast Guard contract for three big ships could bring up to 3,500 jobs to Tampa**

By Janelle Irwin — Reporter, Tampa Bay Business Journal, Jul 10, 2018, 1:20pm


A New Orleans-based company plans to bring as many as 3,500 jobs to Tampa if it wins a contract from the United States Coast Guard.
Bollinger Shipyards is soliciting a contract to build up to three heavy polar icebreakers and three medium-sized breakers, which are ships used in icy water.

Bollinger Shipyards announced Monday it would establish its manufacturing base for the icebreaker program in Tampa if its bid is selected. The company anticipates hiring 1,000 skilled, full-time shipyard workers as early as 2020. The program would take at least ten years, the company said.

“Should we be awarded the contract for the heavies and the anticipated mediums constructed in Tampa, we could be busy here through 2035. Along with the supporting infrastructure of vendors, subcontractors and suppliers, we would expect that locating this program in Tampa will have the benefit of well over 3,500 quality, high paying, full-time jobs with solid benefits packages,” Bollinger President and CEO Ben Bordelon said.

The bidding process is an open competition. Interested vendors must submit technical proposals by Aug. 24 and price proposals by Sept. 14. The Coast Guard plans to award a contract for the project next year…

Harris Corp. grabs $1.5B contract to help U.S. monitor activity on Earth

By Matthew Richardson – Staff writer, Orlando Business Journal, Jul 10, 2018, 1:15pm

Melbourne-based defense and communications firm Harris Corp won a deal through the U.S. Department of Defense, creating a decade worth of work.

Harris Corp. (NYSE: HRS) won the $1.5 billion contract on July 10 and will provide the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency with geospatial data services for 10 years.

Harris will create, manage and disseminate high-quality geospatial-intelligence information for use by the U.S. intelligence community and military worldwide. Geospatial intelligence helps monitor activity on Earth such as geography images.

Harris has hundred of engineers at its Melbourne headquarters as well as its location in Palm Bay, and the company is still hiring. Harris has nearly 300 jobs in Brevard County listed on its career website, calling for various job titles such as advanced program engineers, manufacturing engineers, software engineers, business development managers and more.

Central Florida is a major player when it comes to defense contracts. The region snags about $4 billion in government contracts each year, which helps make Orlando the modeling, simulation and training capital of the world, according to the Orlando Economic Partnership.

DoD Budget

Lawmakers Begin Defense Bill Negotiations

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jul 12, 2018 03:15 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=b02eac04fd

At a press event ahead of the first official conference meeting to hash out differences between the House and Senate versions of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill, leaders of the House and Senate Armed Services committees on Wednesday reiterated their intention to wrap up talks by July 27, when the House begins its August recess. The lawmakers also paid tribute to Senate Armed Services Chairman John
McCain, who is at home in Arizona fighting brain cancer. They emphasized that McCain’s presence was felt in the substance and the spirit of the annual defense policy measure even though he would not be attending the discussions.

The two sides will need to settle a host of issues, including troop levels, a House plan to streamline defense support agencies by cutting duplicative activities and reorganizing others, and restrictions on Chinese telecommunications company ZTE, reported Defense News.

**Other Of Interest**

**Licensure reciprocity laws to be considered in future military basing decisions**

Samuel Blackstone Journal staff, Jul 9, 2018


U.S. Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson said the presence of state laws on reciprocity of professional licenses for military families would now be a consideration when evaluating future basing and mission decisions in the Army, Navy and Air Force.

The statement — in a keynote address to the Western Governors Association meeting in Rapid City last month — came four months after Wilson, Secretary of the Navy Richard Spencer and Secretary of the Army Mark Esper sent a letter to the National Governors Association in February encouraging states to consider licensure reciprocity legislation while noting that the quality of local schools near a base would also be a new factor considered in future basing and mission decisions.

Dated Feb. 23, the letter was signed just three days after the South Dakota House of Representatives rejected an interstate compact bill, House Bill 1319, that would have allowed individuals who had been licensed in any profession or occupation in one participating state to receive, upon request within 30 days, a temporary license from another state participating in the compact. For civilians, the temporary license would have lasted 18 months. For military spouses, it would last two years. The intent was to provide enough time for individuals to fulfill the new state’s licensing requirements without having to forgo work in the meantime.

But opposition ultimately stalled the effort, with professional associations lobbying to maintain control over their licensing processes. Concerns about the different standards for licenses/certifications across states and the vetting process to prevent possible abuses — say, a disgraced or troublesome dentist in North Dakota looking to escape disciplinary action by relocating to a new state — also led to the bill’s defeat. North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, and Colorado were the other states that would have potentially participated in the compact…..

**Army Taps Austin for Futures Command**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jul 13, 2018 03:35 am

https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=54744e06a5

The Army has selected Austin, Texas, as the headquarters site for its new Futures Command, reports Stars and Stripes. The city’s favorable business, academic and technology climate helped it beat out four other finalists — Boston, Minneapolis, Philadelphia and Raleigh, N.C. — said officials who spoke to the
Associated Press on condition of anonymity to discuss the selection before it was made public. The Army plans to realign its six modernization priorities — long-range precision fires, next-generation combat vehicle, future vertical lift, the network, air and missile defense, and soldier lethality — under the new organization, which is expected to have about 500 staff.
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #66 is Thursday, 16 August 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EST via Conference Call.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979  
   Access Code: 1869945

3. **New Ambassador to Florida Reserves Named** – LTC (ret) Roger Trout has been appointed as the new Ambassador to the US Reserves in Florida (see attached appointment letter). According to the US Army Reserve website, “Army Reserve Ambassador Roger Trout is a retired Army Reserve Lieutenant Colonel who commanded at the platoon, company and battalion levels. He also retired from the ExxonMobil Corporation, most recently having served as the Director of Financial Systems. He is active in his community, most notably within the Employer Support of ESGR, where he has served for more than twelve years and received numerous awards for training and he served on the ESGR Board of Directors. ARA Trout earned his bachelors degree in business administration from Delaware Valley University. He is married and has two sons and twelve grandchildren.” See more at [http://www.usar.army.mil/Featured/Ambassador-Program/Find-an-Ambassador/article-view/article/1452269/roger-l-trout](http://www.usar.army.mil/Featured/Ambassador-Program/Find-an-Ambassador/article-view/article/1452269/roger-l-trout)

4. **Florida Doing More for Military Spouse Employment** – According to a new release from the Florida Supreme Court, “The state Supreme Court on Thursday approved rules designed to help the spouses of military members practice law in Florida. The rules, proposed by The Florida Bar, are geared to help lawyers who are licensed in other states but whose military spouses are stationed in Florida.” This rule will continue to keep Florida as the most military friendly state in the nation. See article below in the CLIPs.

5. **Task Force Approves FY19-20 Grant Application Cycle** – The next grant application cycle for Task Force grants begins on Friday, August 3, 2018 and runs through Thursday, August 31, 2018. Our new application will be completed completely on-line; we will not accept prior versions of the application. Within budget constraints, the FDSTF may fund projects that can be leveraged to promote, preserve, or enhance military missions and installations in Florida.

6. **Governor’s Base Commanders Meeting Monday** – The next FL Governor Base Commanders meeting will be held at U.S. Army Garrison-Miami in Doral, FL on Monday 23 July 2018 from 0800 to 1100. Staff will attend and update all attendees on the FDA and FDSTF activities.

7. **Attachments:**
   - ARA Trout Notification Letter to Governor Scott

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*Terry McCaffrey*

Executive Director
Florida Defense Support Task Force
News Clips of Interest:

Oil Drilling / Gulf Range

As GOP Governor’s race tightens, Adam Putnam messages on veterans’ issues

A.G. GANCARSKI, 7-13-2018
http://floridapolitics.com/archives/268746-putnam-vets

Friday saw Agricultural Commissioner Adam Putnam, a Republican gubernatorial candidate, in Jacksonville pushing his “Florida Military and Veterans First Agenda.”

Among the planks to that agenda: expanding nursing home beds and offering veterans’ support hotlines; extending homestead exemptions to surviving spouses, and “protecting and growing” the military; and protecting the Joint Gulf Range and Jacksonville Range Complexes for training.

Putnam has a history of drawing strong crowds in Jacksonville, but Friday’s was not one of them. The event started late, and attendees were urged to sit close to the front.

Putnam, who seemed to be the presumptive Republican nominee for months, has a fight on his hands. He’s running against U.S. Rep. Ron DeSantis, who actually was a veteran and reminds audiences statewide that his opponent went from college to a career in politics. President Donald Trump backs DeSantis (in spite of Putnam’s boosterism on Twitter), and so does the Koch machine.

Meanwhile, more than one consultant polling the governor’s race says that the DeSantis swing in recent public polls is reflected in their internals.....

Cyber

Intel official: Cyber threat warnings ‘blinking red’

By: Deb Riechman, The Associated Press, 7-15-2018
WASHINGTON – Warning lights about cyber threats to U.S. national security are “blinking red” and the digital attempts to undermine America are occurring daily, not just at election time, the nation’s top intelligence official said Friday.

Russia has been the most aggressive foreign actor, but cyber threats also are coming from China, Iran and North Korea as well as criminal networks and individual hackers, said National Intelligence Director Dan Coats.

Targets include U.S. businesses, the federal government, the military, state and local governments, academic and financial institutions and critical infrastructure, he said.

"The Department of Homeland Security and the FBI, in coordination with international partners, have detected Russian government actors targeting government and businesses in the energy, nuclear, water, aviation and critical manufacturing sectors," Coats said.

He compared the cyber threat today with how U.S. officials said before 9/11 that intelligence channels were "blinking red" with warning signs that a terror attack was imminent.

NAS Whiting Field

Whiting Field celebrates 75 years

By Jim Thompson, Posted Jul 16, 2018 at 5:23 PM, Updated Jul 16, 2018 at 5:23 PM
http://www.srpressgazette.com/news/20180716/whiting-field-celebrates-75-years

MILTON – Whenever you see a Navy, Coast Guard or Marine helicopter overhead, there is one thing you know for sure — its pilot has trained at Whiting Field, the sprawling naval air station headquartered in Santa Rosa County that celebrated its 75th anniversary on Monday.

Regardless of what type of helicopter they end up flying, every one of those pilots gets their initial training at Whiting Field. And the same holds true for the majority of fixed-wing aircraft pilots. Whether they end up in fighter jets or transport aircraft or refueling tankers, 60 percent of those Navy, Marine and Coast Guard pilot also get their initial training here.

Currently, Whiting Field trains nearly 1,200 pilots each year in the basics of flying — 600 in fixed-wing aircraft, 500 in helicopters, and an additional 100 pilots in tilt-rotor aircraft.

“We are the busiest naval air station in the world,” said Capt. Paul Bowdich, commanding officer at NAS Whiting Field, as a cake was cut Monday to mark the facility’s birthday.

Hurlburt Field

25th IS introduces new commander during Change of Command

Story by Airman 1st Class Dennis Spain, 1st Special Operations Wing Public Affairs 07.02.2018

A change of command ceremony is a formal event in which the commander of a unit hands the reins to the next commander. The ceremony follows a step-by-step protocol that honors an age-long tradition.
however, a Hurlburt Field intelligence squadron added an unexpected surprise to the script that made this one unique.

Members of the 25th Intelligence Squadron welcomed a new commander during a change of command ceremony, July 2. One very important guest stole the show.

“I need to recognize someone whose selfless actions many years ago helped make today possible,” said Lt. Col. Matthew Norton, former commander of the 25th IS. “My father was fortunate enough to be rescued by an Air America pilot in Vietnam. That hero is in the audience today.”

That hero was Allen Cates, who contributed to saving Norton’s father’s life when his plane was shot down over Laos in 1972. Cates said he doesn’t need accolades or praise and that he was just doing his job. Norton felt otherwise.

“That job all those years ago created a ripple effect that you should be proud of,” Norton said. “If it wasn’t for you, I wouldn’t be here. I hope I’ve paid it forward with my career and time as commander.”

Norton’s leadership guided the 25th IS through its most deployed year in 25 years. He assisting during the generation of approximately 17,000 combat missions which lead to the elimination of nearly 4,000 enemy forces. During his tenure, the outbound commander earned the National Security Agency Director’s Trophy and led the squadron to earn the wing’s Squadron of the Year award. Norton was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal before passing the guidon to the new commander, Lt. Col. Jason Gerber, incoming commander of the 25th IS…..

Eglint AFB

Two men plead guilty to Eglin contracting scheme

By Jim Thompson, Posted Jul 13, 2018 at 5:51 PM, Updated Jul 13, 2018 at 5:51 PM


PENSACOLA – A former federal contracting officer for the 96th Test Wing Maintenance Group at Eglin Air Force Base and a Fort Walton Beach business owner have pleaded guilty in federal court to charges stemming from a contracting and kickback scheme.

The scheme, involving hundreds of thousands of dollars, operated from 2007 to 2014, according to court records.

The former contracting officer, 53-year-old Jerry T. Vertefeuille of Niceville, and 37-year-old Christopher A. Carter of Fort Walton Beach, owner of TCC Services Unlimited, entered their pleas recently in U.S. District Court in Pensacola. Both men pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit theft of honest services and wire fraud, and bribery of a public official. Additionally, Vertefeuille pleaded guilty to obtaining and disclosing procurement information.

According to a news release from the U.S. Attorney’s Office in Pensacola, Vertefeuille’s duties at Eglin included overseeing maintenance work and the initial approval of purchases and invoices. Vertefeuille helped Carter win a paint booth maintenance contract in 2007, and the contract was renewed multiple times until 2014.

According to the U.S. Attorney’s Office, Vertefeuille received kickbacks in exchange for both recommending the repeated renewal of the TCC Services contract and for approving fraudulent invoices from Carter…..
Tyndall AFB

Tyndall Air Force Base 325th Fighter Wing Receives New Commander

By: Kirsten Mitchell, Posted: Jul 13, 2018 08:40 PM EDT, Updated: Jul 13, 2018 08:40 PM EDT

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. - Tyndall Air Force Base is home to 325th Fighter Wing, the largest F-22 Fighter Wing in the country. Friday, they received a new commander, Colonel Brian Laidlaw.

Outgoing commander Colonel Michael Hernandez passed the flag to Colonel Brian Laidlaw signifying the change of commands. Laidlaw previously served as Hernandez's Vice Commander.

"He has taken this place in the right direction and I plan to continue the things he already started," said Laidlaw.

As wing commander he's responsible for the more than 23,000 airmen, civilians, contractors and families on the base.

"It's all about our training. We are going to increase our quality of life initiatives that were started under Colonel Hernandez and we are going to focus a lot on community partnerships,' said Laidlaw.

Tyndall Air Force Base was selected to house a highly anticipated MQ-9 Reaper Wing which is currently in the environmental study phase.

NS Mayport

New Littoral Combat Ship step closer to coming to Mayport

By Roxy Tyler - Web producer, Posted: 12:07 PM, July 13, 2018Updated: 12:35 PM, July 13, 2018

MARINETTE, Wis. - Lockheed Martin said Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) 13, the future USS Wichita, completed acceptance trials in the waters of Lake Michigan. LCS 13 is the seventh Freedom-variant LCS set for delivery to the U.S. Navy later this summer.

"LCS 13's accomplishment of passing the trials means the ship is a step closer to joining the fleet and conducting critical maritime operations for the Navy," said Joe DePietro, vice president, small combatants and ship systems at Lockheed Martin. "This ship is agile, powerful and lethal, and the industry team and I are looking forward to her delivery, commissioning and deployment."

The trials, conducted July 9-12, included a full-power run, maneuverability testing and air detect-to-engage demonstrations of the ship's combat system. Major systems and features were demonstrated, including aviation support and small boat launch handling and recovery.

The USS Wichita will be homeported in Mayport Naval Station. The next ship coming to the base is scheduled to be the USS Sioux City, followed by the USS Wichita.
The new ship will bring about 80 crew members with it to Mayport Naval Station and require dozens more Navy personnel to do maintenance work on the ship while docked.

**US Central Command**

**MARCENT welcomes new commander**

*Story by Master Sgt. Stephen Traynham, Marine Forces Central Command, 07.11.2018*


United States Marine Corps Forces Central Command held a change of command ceremony at the Vince Tolbert Building on MacDill Air Force Base, July 11.


Neller shared with those in attendance Mundy’s experience in the Central Command’s area of responsibility ranging from serving as a battalion commander and Marine Expeditionary Unit commander in Iraq, working on the CENTCOM Staff, and serving as the Deputy MARCENT Commander and 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade Commander in Bahrain.

“When we had to find somebody to replace Dave Beydler, it was who’s the best and most qualified player to do this. It was Sam Mundy,” Neller said.

In 2012, Neller became the first stand-alone commander of MARCENT, a feat Mundy paid homage to during the ceremony.....

**Cape Canaveral AFS**

**SpaceX continues its quest to Mars with this weekend's launch from Cape Canaveral**

*Emre Kelly, Florida Today, Published 6:41 p.m. ET July 19, 2018 | Updated 9:21 p.m. ET July 19, 2018*


SpaceX’s quest to drive down launch costs and increase access to space will continue in the early morning darkness of Sunday when an upgraded Falcon 9 rocket vaults a commercial communications satellite from Cape Canaveral, then flips around to perform an automated return landing on a ship in the Atlantic Ocean.

If schedules hold, the California company’s newest version of the nine-engine Falcon 9, known as Block 5, will take flight on its second-ever mission from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station’s Launch Complex 40 sometime during a launch window that opens at 1:50 a.m. and closes at 5:50 a.m.

On board: Telstar 19 VANTAGE, a communications spacecraft operated by Canada-based Telesat and built in California that will focus on the Americas with high-speed broadband and other services. Falcon 9 will launch the 15,600-pound satellite into a geostationary transfer orbit, meaning the spacecraft will use its own propulsion to reach its final, fixed position thousands of miles above the equator.
Launching a second Block 5 Falcon 9, which is the final version of the rocket, brings California-based SpaceX closer to its ultimate goal: transporting the people and equipment necessary to build a self-sustaining civilization on Mars. Company CEO Elon Musk believes rocket reusability – landing boosters, the most expensive parts of rockets that contain engines, and re-flying them – will ultimately pave the way to increase launch cadence, lower costs and bring SpaceX at least some of the revenue necessary for its red planet ambitions……

US Southern Command

Fuerzas Comando 2018 Officially Kicks Off in Panama

By Army Staff Sgt. Brian Ragin, July 17, 2018

PANAMA CITY, Panama - Despite the cloudy skies, spirits were high for approximately 100 anxious competitors. Hosted by the Ministry of Public Security, Panama this year, Fuerzas Comando, a multinational special operations competition sponsored by U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) and executed by Special Operations Command South kicked off its 14th iteration of the event July 17, 2018, with an opening ceremony.

Seventeen countries from the Caribbean, Central America, South America, to include the United States participated in the ceremony.

“It’s a great honor to be here,” said Col. Brian Greata, deputy commanding officer for SOCSOUTH. “This competition gives us the opportunity to establish and strengthen relations with special operations professionals in our region facing criminal and terrorist challenges.”

Fuerzas Comando is a competition held annually since 2004, this is the first time FC has been hosted in Panama. Through friendly competition, this exercise promotes interoperability, military-to-military relationships, increases training knowledge, and improves regional security.

“Together we will improve our ability to defeat our challenges,” Greata added.

The nine-day event schedule will test participants’ technical and tactical skills and will include a Distinguished Visitor Program…..

Defense Industry

Pentagon’s Manufacturing, Industrial Base Policy Office to Be Split under Reorganization

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jul 17, 2018 03:15 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=c1207741c8

DOD’s Manufacturing and Industrial Base Policy (MIBP) office will be split up between the two successor organizations to the department’s former acquisition, technology and logistics office, two senior officials revealed Monday at the Farnborough Airshow. The office’s manufacturing component, including the Manufacturing Technologies program, will move to office of the undersecretary for research and
engineering. The office’s remaining responsibilities — along with the office of Small Business Policy — will reside under the acquisition and sustainment undersecretary within a newly rechristened MIBP office, reported Defense News.

The reorganization plan for the acquisition and sustainment office, which Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan recently approved, is designed to support the Pentagon’s modernization objectives and encourage innovation, said Eric Chewning, deputy assistant secretary of defense for MIBP. “Given where we are right now in the world there’s a real need to get back to what I’ll call a real industrial policy capability within the Pentagon, to address the sorts of problems that we know we’re going to face going forward,” Chewning said.

**Lockheed Martin secures $450.7M contract to build warships**

By Matthew Richardson – Jul 17, 2018, 2:58pm EDT Updated Jul 18, 2018, 9:18am


The world's top defense contractor landed a work agreement to build warships, requiring several of its locations to have all hands on deck.

Bethesda, Md.-based Lockheed Martin Corp. (NYSE: LMT) won a $450.7 million contract from the U.S. Navy on July 16, according to the U.S. Department of Defense. The seven-year contract involves support of the construction of four Multi Mission Surface Combatant ships.

The Multi-Mission Surface Combatant is a lethal and highly maneuverable surface warship capable of littoral and open ocean operation. This contract involves foreign military sales to Saudi Arabia.

While a small part of the work will happen in Orlando — an area where Lockheed Martin has more than 7,000 employees — 20 other locations throughout the U.S. and overseas will get a piece of the contract, as well.

Central Florida is a major player when it comes to defense contracts. The region snags about $4 billion in government contracts each year, which helps make Orlando the modeling, simulation and training capital of the world, according to the Orlando Economic Partnership.

**Other Of Interest**

**Enterprise Florida Opens Pavilion at 2018 Farnborough International Airshow**

EFI Press Release, Monday, July 16, 2018


**FARNBOROUGH, United Kingdom (July 16, 2018)** – This morning, Enterprise Florida (EFI) opened the Florida Pavilion at the **2018 Farnborough International Airshow**. The Florida Pavilion is again the largest exhibit of any U.S. state at the event, showcasing 12 Florida-based aviation and aerospace businesses and organizations. The Farnborough Airshow is one of the world’s largest industry events and will be open through July 22.
Every two years, the Farnborough Airshow provides Enterprise Florida and the businesses and organizations exhibiting in the Florida Pavilion with a unique opportunity to demonstrate their competitive advantages in the aviation and aerospace industry.

In addition to hosting the Florida Pavilion, EFI leadership will meet with more than 50 industry-leading companies to discuss what makes Florida the best business state in the nation.

“Events like the Farnborough Airshow allow us not only to help small and medium-sized Florida businesses expand their international footprint, but also to meet with leadership and decision-makers for some of the world’s leading aviation and aerospace companies,” said Joe York, vice-chair of Enterprise Florida’s Board of Directors. “The Florida Pavilion demonstrates the state’s leadership in the industry in a way no other state can match.”

Florida is home to more than 2,200 aerospace and aviation companies employing nearly 100,000 skilled workers. Florida is a major hub for flight training; a leader in maintenance repair and overhaul (MRO) operations; and home to leading manufacturers of all types of aircraft and components. Florida’s manufacturing sector has more than 20,290 companies that employ more than 354,000 Floridians…..

Military Spending Is Up, but Aerospace and Defense Workers Are Scarce

By Christine Negroni, July 16, 2018

On a sunny Sunday in March, 29 new United States Air Force recruits took an oath to support and defend the Constitution.

This was not just any swearing-in because the man turning civilians into airmen was an Air Force Thunderbird pilot. When Maj. Eric Gorney finished the ceremony on the tarmac at Florida’s Orlando Melbourne International Airport, he climbed into an F-16 and along with five other Thunderbird pilots proceeded to dazzle the tens of thousands of spectators who minutes earlier had applauded the Air Force’s newest members.

At a time when all four branches of American’s armed forces are actively recruiting to meet new personnel goals, high-profile performance teams like the Thunderbirds and the Navy’s Blue Angels are powerful tools. Similar recruitment efforts are deployed around the world by the Snowbirds in Canada, the Red Arrows in Britain, and other teams as far-flung as Finland and Jordan. Maj. Ray Geoffroy, a spokesman for the Thunderbirds, said the team’s goal was to “recruit, retain and inspire” the next generation.

Not since the end of the Cold War has global military spending been as high as it is in 2018, according to Jane’s Defense Budgets. This leaves the aviation and defense industries in Europe, Asia and the Americas struggling to fill new positions created by increased military budgets. It’s a subject likely to be discussed at the Farnborough Air Show that starts Monday in Farnborough, England. The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics put the increased demand for aerospace and mechanical engineers over the next decade at 6 percent to 9 percent and software developers and information security analysis at 24 percent to 28 percent…..

New rules allow spouses of military to practice law in Florida
TALLAHASSEE – The state Supreme Court on Thursday approved rules designed to help the spouses of military members practice law in Florida.

The rules, proposed by The Florida Bar, are geared to help lawyers who are licensed in other states but whose military spouses are stationed in Florida.

They set up a process that includes allowing military spouses to practice law in Florida for up to five years without taking the Florida Bar exam. Requirements include graduating from an accredited law school, passing another state's Bar exam and being admitted to practice elsewhere.

“The new rules accommodate the unique mobility requirements of members of the U.S. Armed Services and their families,” the Supreme Court said. “Service members are frequently required to relocate to duty locations around the globe based on the needs of the particular service to which they belong, with little regard to how the relocation may affect the service member’s family.

“As a result, the assignment of a service member to a duty location in Florida may place the service member’s spouse in the untenable position of having to choose between giving up the practice of law to relocate with the service member and continuing to practice law in the jurisdiction where he or she is already licensed.”

The Supreme Court in December sent back an earlier version of the rules to the Bar to add more restrictions. The version approved Thursday reflects requested changes, including a requirement that the incoming lawyers be employed by or be in a “mentorship relationship” with Florida Bar members....
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #66 is Thursday, 16 August 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EST via Conference Call.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   **Call-In Number**: 800-501-8979  
   **Access Code**: 1869945

3. **Governor’s Base Commanders Meeting** – The Governor’s Base Commanders meeting was held at U.S. Army Garrison-Miami in Doral, FL on Monday 23 July 2018. This meeting was likely the last one for Governor Scott before he leaves office. Several persistent issues remain a concern for base commanders including protecting the Military Mission Line in the Eastern GOMEX (Eglin, Tyndall, NAS Panama City, NAS Key West), incompatible development / encroachment (HARB and MacDill), dependent school enrollment out of cycle with normal calendar (NAS Pensacola, NAS Jacksonville) and toll / excessive rent deposit relief (South Florida). Staff attended and updated all attendees on the FDA and FDSTF activities (slides attached).

4. **Governor Scott Issues Korean War Armistice Day Proclamation** – Gov. Rick Scott signed the annual Korean War Armistice Day Proclamation (attached), honoring the state’s Korean War veterans and commemorating the 65th anniversary of the end of the war. More than 139,000 Korean War veterans currently reside in Florida. More than 34,000 Americans were killed in action during the war, with approximately 103,000 wounded and more than 7,800 missing, including more than 150 Floridians.

5. **Congressman Matt Gaetz will host event highlighting NAS Whiting Field** – According to an article from weartv.com, “An upcoming Congressional Field Hearing scheduled July 30 will be hosted by Rep. Matt Gaetz. The hearing, called "Preserving the Mission: NAS Whiting Field", will be held in Milton. The event focus will be highlighting the mission of Whiting Field and why the base is vital to the national defense architecture.” Staff will attend the field hearing in Milton FL. See article below in the CLIPs.

6. **House Passes 2018 NDAA** – The house passed the defense bill with broad bi-partisan support on Thursday, July 26, 2018 with a vote of 359-54. According to Dan Cohen from ADC, “The Senate could approve the conference report for the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill as early as next Tuesday, putting the measure on pace for signing earlier than any time in the past 41 years.” See article below in the CLIPs.

7. **Military Communities Host Back to School Bash** – Several defense communities around the state will host back to school events on July 28, 2018 from 1000-1300 (flyer attached). The events will help military families by providing school supplies and education & recreation resources while having fun with games, crafts and food. Families can register at FLMilitaryB2SBash@eventbrite.com.

8. **2018 Sustaining Military Readiness Conference Announces Keynote Speakers** – The next ADC Conference focusing on Military Readiness is scheduled from August 13-16 at the Union Station Hotel in St. Louis. According to ADC, “the conference will host a diverse group of speakers who will offer unique perspectives on how DOD can strengthen military readiness through partnerships and planning.” The speaker lineup includes:
9. Task Force Approves FY19-20 Grant Application Cycle – The next grant application cycle for Task Force grants begins on Friday, August 3, 2018 and runs through Thursday, August 31, 2018. Our new application will be completed completely on-line; we will not accept prior versions of the application. Within budget constraints, the FDSTF may fund projects that can be leveraged to promote, preserve, or enhance military missions and installations in Florida.

10. Attachments:
   - FDA Base Commander Mtg Slide
   - FDSTF Base Commander Mtg Slide
   - 2018 Korean Armistice Day Proclamation
   - Military Back to School Bash Flyer

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News Clips of Interest:

FDSTF

Gov. Scott Announces 2018 Florida Military-Friendly Guide

Press Release, Office of the Governor, 7-24-2018

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott announced the release of the 2018 Florida Military-Friendly Guide. The annual guide, created by the Florida Defense Support Task Force, offers a summary of Florida’s laws, programs and services benefitting military service members and their families. It also highlights Florida’s low tax and financial advantages, educational benefits, professional licensure opportunities and fee waivers for service men, women and their families stationed in Florida. A digital copy of the 2018 Florida Military-Friendly Guide is available HERE.

Governor Scott said, “As a proud Navy veteran, and the son of a World War II veteran, I want to make sure our military and their families have access to the services they need. Florida is the most military and veteran friendly state in the nation, and since I took office, we’ve invested hundreds of millions in funding for services and benefits for our military and veterans. Our Florida Military-Friendly Guide is another great resource for our military members to learn more about these great benefits and everything Florida has to offer to those who serve.”

Florida is home to more than 1.5 million veterans, 20 major military installations and three unified commands. Since 2011, under the leadership of Governor Scott, Florida has invested hundreds of millions in funding to support active military, veterans and their families – including more than $180 million in this year’s budget. Governor Scott’s focus on serving those that serve our nation has also helped drive down the unemployment rate for veterans in Florida to a low 2.9 percent – nearly an entire percent lower than the national average and a decrease of more than six percent since 2010. To foster enhanced cooperation between state agencies and Florida’s military installations, Governor Scott holds regular meetings with Florida’s base commanders and heads of state agencies.

Representative Jay Trumbull of Panama City, Chair of the Florida Defense Support Task Force, said, “The Florida Military-Friendly Guide is a great resource for military service men, women and their families in the Sunshine State. Enterprise Florida and the Florida Defense Support Task Force will continue to support military members and their families, and work to maintain Florida’s status as the most military-friendly state in the nation.”

The defense industry provides an annual economic impact of $84.9 billion and accounts for more than 801,000 jobs in Florida. Defense continues to be the fourth largest contributor to the state economy behind agriculture and tourism. The Florida Military-Friendly Guide is distributed annually to Florida’s military bases and defense communities.
BRAC

Measure Retains New Authority for Closing Installations outside of BRAC

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jul 26, 2018 03:15 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=bf12b11d27

It’s no surprise that the final version of this year’s defense authorization bill doesn’t include congressional approval for a new BRAC round, as the Trump administration did not request one in February. The conference report for the fiscal 2019 measure, though, does include a new authority for closing or realigning installations outside of the normal BRAC process if the governor recommends downsizing the facility. The governor’s notice would need to include statements of support from local governments that would be affected as well as a detailed plan for reusing the property. As a result of those conditions, it’s not clear if the new authority will prove useful to the Pentagon, or even meet the House Armed Services Committee’s stated goal of shuttering small installations that have outlasted their usefulness.

If the Pentagon accepts a governor’s recommendation to close or realign an installation, it would need to inform Congress when it submits the annual budget. That report would need to include:

- the reasons the defense secretary believes “it is in the interest of the United States” to accept the governor’s recommendation;
- a plan describing the required work, cost and timing for all actions needed to carry out the realignment or closure, including new construction or renovation of existing facilities; and
- a certification that the savings generated by the action will exceed the implementation costs within five years after the move is completed, an estimate of the annual recurring savings and the amount of time needed for the savings to exceed the implementation costs.

DOD would need to wait 90 days after it informs Congress to begin carrying out the closure or realignment. Section 2702 also limits the department to spending $2 billion through FY 2029 for carrying out all closures and realignments for which it relies on the authority. The authority would terminate at the end of FY 2029.

The provision would apply to any size facility, despite the description in the committee’s summary of the conference report characterizing the language as applying to small installations.

NAS Pensacola

Major living shoreline project planned around Pensacola Naval Air Station

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Pensacola News Journal, Published 5:50 a.m. CT July 24, 2018

Escambia County is seeking input from boaters, fishermen, kayakers and others who use the water around Pensacola Naval Air Station for a major project to improve water quality through a living shoreline.

A 40-question survey from the county's Natural Resource Management Department asks residents about water quality, the environment and other issues related to the waterways around the base.
Brent Wipf, a project manager for the county, said the survey is part of a larger plan to build oyster reefs, plant sea grasses and make other changes to improve approximately 24,800 linear feet of shoreline along the eastern and southern sides of the base.

"We want to fully understand how the public utilizes these areas," he said.

Design of the living shoreline project is being funded with $217,000 in restitution funds paid by oil giant BP in the aftermath of the 2010 Gulf Coast oil spill.

Once the design is complete, the county will seek additional grant money to build the shoreline. Wipf said the project will help buffer the base and surrounding areas from storms and provide a protective nursery for small fish, crabs and other marine species. …..

Coast Guard expands its mission in Pensacola waters

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Pensacola News Journal, Published 1:18 p.m. CT July 25, 2018

When U.S. Coast Guard Cmdr. Ben Keffer introduces himself to people in the Pensacola area, they frequently ask whether he is a pilot.

"There is so much flight training in this area and that is usually the first assumption," said Keffer, commanding officer of the Coast Guard Cutter Cypress, a buoy tender based at Pensacola Naval Air Station.

Keffer, a featured speaker at Thursday night's Heroes Among Us speaker series in downtown Pensacola, hopes to clear up confusion about his agency's growing mission in the region during his presentation.

In addition to the Cypress, which has been stationed in Pensacola since 2011, the cutters Decisive and Dauntless moved to Pensacola NAS earlier this year.

While the Decisive and Dauntless focus on security and drug interdiction, the Cypress maintains buoys that are used in navigation and to collect weather data…..

NAS Whiting Field

Rep. Gaetz to host event highlighting NAS Whiting Field

by Kristie Henderson, Monday, July 23rd 2018

MILTON, Fla. (WEAR) – An upcoming Congressional Field Hearing scheduled July 30 will be hosted by Rep. Matt Gaetz.

The hearing, called "Preserving the Mission: NAS Whiting Field", will be held in Milton.

The event focus will be highlighting the mission of Whiting Field and why the base is vital to the national defense architecture.

Panel discussion topics will include the following:

- The importance of Whiting Field to our community
- A recent Whiting Field study and assessment
• Economic data regarding the impact of Whiting Field

Rep. Gaetz will also give a National Defense Authorization Act overview specifically relating to Whiting Field.

There will also be presentations by panel members, including the Florida Defense Support Task Force, the Haas Center, Commissioner Don Salter, and Capt. (ret) Keith Hoskin.

The public is invited to take part in the event.

The event will begin at 2 p.m. as the Santa Rosa County Commission Board Room at 6495 Caroline Street and is expected to last two hours.

**Triumph Board supports $8.5M for Whiting Aviation Park**

By Press Gazette contributor, Posted Jul 20, 2018 at 10:24 AM, Updated Jul 20, 2018 at 10:24 AM


MILTON – The Triumph Gulf Coast board of directors gave unanimous support of $8.5 million for infrastructure improvements to Whiting Aviation Park in Santa Rosa County on July 18.

“The Santa Rosa County Board of County Commissioners and our citizens wish to thank the Triumph Gulf Coast board of directors for their support of our request to help fund the creation of the Whiting Aviation Park. This project will create hundreds of new aviation-related jobs not only for our citizens but for employment throughout the region. As important, Whiting Aviation Park provides for sustained compatible development on a 267-acre parcel on the fence line of NAS Whiting Field, enhances military value and improves the overall efficiency of operations as maintenance of the many aircraft can be performed adjacent to the base, meaning less downtime for the aircraft,” said Commissioner Don Salter, District 3. “This has been one of our county’s number one economic development projects for many years and it would not have been possible without the support of the Triumph Gulf Coast board of directors.”

The next step for the Whiting project is agreement on a term sheet that will be brought back to the Triumph board for approval. The site development at Whiting Aviation Park is expected to create over 200 high-paying jobs. This project is built on the investment Santa Rosa County made to purchase 267-acres adjacent to NAS Whiting Field and an understanding with the Navy for “through the fence” accesses for private companies. The total project cost is $17,704,975 with Triumph contributing 48 percent of those costs.

Development of Whiting Aviation Park strengthens the region’s aviation cluster with Pensacola International Airport to the west and Crestview’s Bob Sikes Airport to the east. It enhances the region’s growing aviation industry by providing additional industrial space adjacent to an existing airfield, and it supports the regional strategic initiative of expanding the aerospace and defense industry cluster - an industry with a strong outlook for growth. These targeted investments in the aviation and aerospace cluster are expected to drive supply chain companies to co-locate in the region. Florida is currently second in the nation for aviation and aerospace establishments and added more than any other state in the southeast in 2017.....

**Hurlburt Field**
Hurlburt Field Air Commandos help save life after near drowning at Florida beach

Story by Airman 1st Class Edward Coddington, 07.20.2018

The sounds of chaos replaced the tranquil splashing of the Emerald Coast waves against the sugar white sand one Saturday afternoon in Destin, Florida.

A family rushed in panic toward the shoreline as a child was pulled from the waves, water rushing off his face – he was not breathing.

The clock was ticking and the actions two Hurlburt Field Air Commandos and their wives took would mean the difference between life and death.


“We were spending time, hanging out with our families, enjoying ourselves … then things turned around quickly,” said Snyder.

The commotion unfolded when a man came out of the water clutching a young boy in his arms, foam coming from the boy’s mouth and nose, and laid him on a towel near the Airmen and their families.

“Everyone just immediately reacted and everyone did their part,” said Wooten.

Wooten and Snyder’s spouses immediately began trying to resuscitate the boy. Soon thereafter, the boy regained consciousness enough to cough up water and yelled…..

Eglin AFB

Eglin squadron commander to lead Thunderbirds

By Jim Thompson, Posted Jul 23, 2018 at 1:24 PM, Updated Jul 23, 2018 at 1:24 PM

EGLIN AFB – The commander of the 28th Test and Evaluation Squadron has been named lead pilot for the 2019 season of the Thunderbirds, the Air Force’s precision flight demonstration team.

Lt. Col. John Caldwell will become Thunderbird No. 1, the squadron’s commander and leader, the flight team announced Friday on its website. As the double title implies, Caldwell will lead all Thunderbirds demonstration flights and will have an array of other duties. As Thunderbird No. 1, Caldwell also will command a force of more than 120 enlisted personnel and 11 commissioned officers assigned to the team.

Caldwell will replace Lt. Col. Kevin Walsh, a former F-16 weapons instructor who has been with the Thunderbirds for three years.

Caldwell, who was not immediately available for comment at Eglin Air Force Base on Friday, has experience piloting the F-16 flown by the Thunderbirds. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in 2012 for his rapid response to a 2011 enemy attack on American and allied forces in Afghanistan. The award citation noted that Caldwell placed his life at risk when he performed a strafing run into a dark valley, breaking up an enemy charge and then returning to drop a bomb that neutralized the ambush…..
MacDill AFB

Air Mobility Command announces next two KC-135 simulator relocations

By Air Mobility Command Public Affairs / Published July 26, 2018

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, Ill. (AFNS) -- The commander of Air Mobility Command selected Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington, and MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, as the relocation sites for the next two KC-135 Stratotanker pilot flight simulators.

KC-135 pilot flight simulators, also known as Operations Flight Trainers or OFTs, provide pilots a high-fidelity, full-motion environment, which enables realistic flying training and emergency procedure practice as well as networked distributed mission operations capability.

“We are preparing for future threat environments by creating the right mix of traditional tanker flying and highly realistic tanker simulation training across the mobility air forces,” said Gen. Carlton D. Everhart, AMC commander. “Optimizing simulator capacity and use at these locations provides the greatest operational benefits across the Total Force.”

As the command prepares to receive the KC-46A Pegasus, AMC plans to relocate a total of five KC-135 trainers in order to better serve the force.....

DoD Budget

Rep. Matt Gaetz Applauds Passage of NDAA Conference Report

By: David Huffman, Posted: Jul 26, 2018 11:16 PM EDT, Updated: Jul 26, 2018 11:16 PM EDT

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Congressman Matt Gaetz (FL-01) today issued the following statement applauding the House of Representatives for passing the FY19 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) conference report. During the development of this legislation in the House, Rep. Gaetz secured numerous provisions, including an amendment for SPACE-A travel benefits for veterans with service-related disabilities.

“Today, the House passed the Conference Report on the National Defense Authorization Act, a critically-important piece of legislation that funds the military of the United States.

Under the NDAA, the men and women who serve our great nation will receive their largest pay raise in nine years. Each Service receives a larger budget, addressing critical issues of military readiness, training, safety, and more.

The NDAA takes a clear-eyed look at the challenges and threats facing America and gives the Department of Defense the resources it needs to tackle them. It addresses the perils of Chinese technology theft, closes dangerous loopholes in foreign investments, and enhances our missile defense — all while curbing bureaucracy and increasing accountability to ensure that Americans’ tax dollars are well-spent.
This bill is a victory for Northwest Florida, with a $31.9 million increase in funding for test ranges like the Gulf Test Range, as well as construction of new buildings at Eglin AFB and a new air control tower at Whiting Field. The NDAA further cements Northwest Florida’s reputation as America’s premiere location for military training.

A strong military makes a strong nation, and with the passage of the NDAA, our military is continuing to be rebuilt after many years of hardship and neglect. I was proud to vote for the NDAA, and glad that so many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle supported it, too. I have every confidence that the Senate will pass it quickly. Our highest priority in Congress is to ensure the defense of America. By passing the NDAA, we have done just that,” Rep. Gaetz said.

Spanning the coast of the First Congressional District, the Gulf Test Range provides approximately 120,000 square miles of overwater airspace. It is used for high altitude, supersonic air combat training, as well as air-to-air missile testing, drone targeting, hypersonic weapons testing, and space launches. Additionally, the Air Force Special Operations Command, the 96th Test Wing, the 33rd Fighter Wing, and others all train on the Gulf Test Range.

### Following House Vote, Defense Bill on Track for Quick Passage

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jul 27, 2018 03:30 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=3e56fe5b2

The Senate could approve the conference report for the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill as early as next Tuesday, putting the measure on pace for signing earlier than any time in the past 41 years. On Thursday, the House easily cleared the annual defense policy bill, 359-54. The last time the bill was sent to the president before the start of the new fiscal year was 2009, reported Defense News.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on Thursday filed cloture on final approval of the bill, setting up debate in the chamber next week. H.R. 5515 authorizes a $639 billion base defense budget and $69 billion for the overseas contingency operations account.
Aug 3

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #66 is Thursday, 16 August 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EST via Conference Call.

2. **Call In Number** –
   **Call-In Number:** 800-501-8979        **Access Code:** 1869945

3. **Amy Gowder Named one of “7 Notable Women in Orlando Tech”** – Last month the Orlando Sentinel listed seven Notable Women in Orlando Tech and among them was Task Force member Amy Gowder. According to the article, “Last week, the video game giant Electronic Arts held a workshop for girls who want to pursue technology careers … One of the session’s goals was for the girls to interact with women who have been successful in technology careers. If they need more examples, they don’t need to look beyond Orlando.” For more, see the entire article below in the *CLIPs*.

4. **Congressman Matt Gaetz hosted event highlighting NAS Whiting Field** – Congressman Matt Gaetz hosted a Congressional Field Hearing on Monday, July 30 2018 in Milton FL focused on "Preserving the Mission: NAS Whiting Field". The event highlighted the mission of Whiting Field and why the base is vital to national defense. The meeting was well attended and included representation from the area including Senator Doug Broxson, Representative Jayer Williamson, members of the Santa Rosa County Commission, and concerned citizens. Staff attended the event and presented information of the State contribution of $5,494,321.20 in MBP, DIG, DRG and Task Force grants to NAS Whiting Field since 2004. See article in the *CLIPs*.

5. **2019 NDAA Passed Ahead of Schedule** – Congress completed the $717B NDAA earlier than expected this week. According to an article in *Military Times*, “The move marks the 58th consecutive year Congress has approved the military spending policy measure and the earliest that lawmakers have finished the work in 41 years. Typically, lawmakers labor until late fall before reaching agreement on the legislation.” The authorization was opposed by Florida Senator Marco Rubio even though it passed with a huge bi-partisan margin of 87-10. See articles below in the *CLIPs*.

6. **School Enrollment for Military Children** – At the last Governor’s Base Commanders meeting we discussed issues with service members ability to register their dependents for schools in high demand programs. An initiative was suggested to allow servicemembers the ability to register as soon as they receive orders rather than waiting for rental / closing documents to prove residency. This issue has been included in the 2018 slate for DoD - State Liaison Office. The attached document on “Best Practices for Remote Enrollment” is their current offering to states to support these efforts. Mr. Eric Sherman has been working with Florida Department of Education to support a way ahead for the Sunshine State.

7. **Task Force Approves FY19-20 Grant Application Cycle** – The next grant application cycle for Task Force grants begins on Friday, August 3, 2018 and runs through Thursday, August 31, 2018. Our new application will be completed completely on-line; we will not accept prior versions of the application. Within budget constraints, the FDSTF may fund projects that can be leveraged to promote, preserve, or enhance military missions and installations in Florida. The Task Force is using a new web-based system this year; previous
forms will not be accepted. Please go to https://www.tfaforms.com/rest/forms/view/4680176 to access the new application. Please contact Marcy Sanders (cced) if you have issues with the system.

8. Attachments:
   - Best Practices for Remote Enrollment
   - TPG July EOM Report

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**Terry**

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**FDSTF**

7 notable women in Orlando tech

Marco Santana, Contact Reporter, Orlando Sentinel, 7-17-2018

Last week, the video game giant Electronic Arts held a workshop for girls who want to pursue technology careers. You can read all about it here.

One of the session’s goals was for the girls to interact with women who have been successful in technology careers. If they need more examples, they don’t need to look beyond Orlando.

Here are seven women — and there are many more — who have succeeded in technology-based careers here in Central Florida.

**Angela Alban,** president and CEO of Simetri.

A member of the board of directors for Orlando-based National Center for Simulation, Alban’s company Simetri designs and creates realistic body parts that help first responders and front-line military medics train for their jobs.

**Lydia Chicles,** CEO of BOLD Technologies.

BOLD Technologies is a mobile app and web development firm in Winter Park. Chicles sits on the board of directors for the National Association of Women Business Owners.
Diane Court, executive director of Orlando Tech Association.

The organization has a goal of organizing Orlando’s tech community and startups. Court took over as its head in December 2016. She is helping lead an effort to connect aspects of Orlando’s technology community.

Amy Gowder, vice president of Lockheed Martin’s Training and Logistics Solutions.

Gowder is an Orlando-based MIT graduate responsible for the growth of Lockheed Martin’s sustainment programs, which include more than 5,400 employees around the world. She previously oversaw a procurement budget of about $10 billion annually for Lockheed’s aeronautics business. She sits on Enterprise Florida’s board of directors.

Suneera Madhani, CEO of startup FattMerchant.

Fattmerchant has been considered one of Central Florida’s more-successful startup companies, having built a financial payments service. The company early this year opened a second office in Atlanta.

Mansooreh Mollaghasemi, associate professor at University of Central Florida.

An expert on simulation modeling and analysis, Mollaghasemi’s research has been funded by major companies and agencies such as NASA, Lockheed Martin, The Boeing Company and Orlando International Airport. Her specialty is industrial engineering.

Paula York, director of Frostbite Engagement Services for Electronic Arts. York has been on Electronic Arts’ team more than a decade, helping the company develop one of its signature projects: the proprietary Frostbite game engine, which helps run some of the company’s more popular games such as FIFA, Dragon Age and Mass Effect.

Cyber

Cyber Command wants to partner with private sector to stop hacks

By: Justin Lynch, 7-31-2018


The head of the National Security Agency and Cyber Command is advocating for a more expansive partnership between the government and the private sector amid an array of cyberthreats.

Gen. Paul Nakasone, speaking July 31 during the Department of Homeland Security National Cybersecurity Summit in New York City, said that partnerships are America’s “advantage in cyberspace,”

"We have tremendous, exquisite, foreign intelligence reporting,” Nakasone said, but added he wanted to understand what the private sector and firms who make up America’s digital infrastructure were looking for “so we can really tailor the information.”

Information from Cyber Command and the NSA will be used in a new National Risk Management Center that hopes to share cyberthreats between the government and the private sector, according to a department spokeswoman.

"Resiliency begins with a dialogue,” Nakasone said.
The new center’s announcement comes after DHS said that Russia was continuing to attack America’s electric grid. Last week, Sen. Claire McCaskill D-Mo., said that Russian hackers tried unsuccessfully to infiltrate her office. On the same day that Nakasone spoke, Facebook said that it removed 32 accounts in an apparent influence campaign……

BRAC

Conference Agreement Requires More Detailed Analysis of Excess Capacity

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jul 30, 2018 03:00 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=a12302d854

DOD will need to prepare a more detailed analysis of its excess capacity than the last two it has completed since 2016, under language in the conference report to the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill. The department’s most recent analysis, from October 2017, estimated that 19 percent of its infrastructure is excess to its needs; it was based on the requirements to support the force structure from fiscal 2012. A March 2016 analysis, based on the needs of the force structure projected for FY 2019, estimated that 22 percent of the military’s infrastructure capacity was excess. Both of those estimates, though, relied on a parametric analysis which compared the target force structure and existing capacity to a 1989 baseline for various installation categories.

The new study, due by February 2020, calls for a different approach to estimate excess capacity. DOD first will need to prepare:

- a force structure plan for each service that is based on an assessment of probable threats to national security, and end strength levels and major military force units required under the FY 2018 defense authorization bill;
- a “categorical model” of installation capabilities needed to carry out the force structure plans based on the infrastructure, real property and facilities capabilities required and the current military requirements of the major military units.

The second part of Section 2821 calls for DOD to:

- assess the requirements needed to carry out the force structure plans compared to existing infrastructure, real property and facilities capabilities; and
- identify any deficit or surplus in infrastructure for each military department, and for locations within the continental United States.

The language would seem to require the Pentagon to identify specific bases with a deficit or surplus in capacity but outside of a BRAC round, defense officials are unlikely to take that step. Identifying installations with significant excess capacity almost certainly would trigger opposition to a new BRAC from lawmakers representing districts with bases cited in the study, Frederico Bartels, a policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation, said after the House Armed Services Committee approved its version of the measure in May. Such a step also could be expected to dampen the real estate market in communities outside bases with excess capacity, he said.

The Senate is expected to clear the conference report and send it to the president’s desk this week.

NAS Whiting Field
Rep. Gaetz hosts Congressional field hearing about protecting Whiting Field

by Lauren Wolfe, Tuesday, July 31st 2018

MILTON, Fla. (WEAR) — Whiting Field is one of the most important components of the Santa Rosa County economy. Congressman Matt Gaetz held a Congressional field hearing on Monday discussing efforts to protect the base from future rounds of base closures and realignments.

Congressman Gaetz said investing in Whiting Field is crucial for both the state and local economies.

Many officials attended the hearing, including Senator Doug Broxson, who agreed with Gaetz.

"Every base is as important as Whiting. Whiting is important to us, but if you were to take one of these bases out of the economy of any county in Florida it would have a tremendous impact," said Sen. Broxson.

Gaetz said settlement money from the Triumph Gulf Coast grant will help sustain the economy.

"Over $8 million from BP settlement money will go to enhance the mission at Whiting that's important because there's almost no job at Santa Rosa County that doesn't in some way see a benefit as a result of Whiting being here," said Gaetz.

Gaetz is not only advocating for money to support Whiting Field, but the surrounding areas as well.

"Investing $8 million in infrastructure around Whiting, we'll be able to bring more private sector jobs to support the military mission," said Gaetz.

Officials hope to keep the base a top priority.

"The State of Florida is doing a good job at making sure Whiting is protected and important," said Terry McCaffrey with the Florida Defense Support Task Force.

Gaetz said the air station is in dire need of new equipment…..

Hurlburt Field

Special Tactics airman to receive posthumous Medal of Honor

By Jim Thompson, Posted Aug 1, 2018 at 5:27 PM, Updated Aug 2, 2018 at 10:50 AM

HURLBURT FIELD – An Air Force Special Tactics airman who was part of the Air Force Special Operations Command will be posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor later this month in Washington, D.C.

President Donald Trump is scheduled to present the highest U.S. military honor to the widow and family of Tech. Sgt. John A. Chapman in an Aug. 22 ceremony at the White House. Chapman will be the 19th airman to receive the Medal of Honor.

Chapman died March 4, 2002, in the battle for Takur Ghar, a mountaintop in Afghanistan. He was initially awarded the Air Force Cross, but a review of Air Force Cross and Silver Star recipients ordered
by former Secretary of Defense Ash Carter, who served from February 2015 to January 2017, resulted in a decision to award Chapman the Medal of Honor.

His widow, Valerie Nessel, said recently that, were he still alive, Chapman wouldn’t want to be in the spotlight……

**MacDill AFB**

Hillsborough could get MacDill AFB passenger ferry

By: Amanda Ciavarri, Posted: Jul 30, 2018 10:00 AM EDT, Updated: Jul 31, 2018 09:01 AM EDT


TAMPA, Fla. (WFLA) - Plans are moving forward to bring a a passenger ferry route between south Hillsborough County and MacDill Air Force Base.

"One things we've always had going for us is the water, and it is time we start using it," said Steven Bernstein, Chair of Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce.

The ferry would be an option for service members and their families. Bernstein believes it would help cut down on congestion in the area, both at the access points to the base and on the Lee Roy Selmon Expressway.

"We look at this as a potential solution for congestion issues for our service members moving into and out of MacDill Air Force Base," said Bernstein.

"It would be designed to move service members and their families who work out of MacDill from points near or around Riverview/Apollo Beach area and to MacDill Air Force Base," said Bernstein.

The project doesn't have the green light, just yet, but Bernstein is hopeful it is coming soon.

"We are waiting on some final analysis that will give us, including the chamber, a better idea of where this fits in the city and county budgets," he said.

**Cape Canaveral AFS**

Canaveral Port Authority Completes Purchase of 9.61 Acres of Brevard County-Owned Land at Jetty Park

By Steve Linden, Port Canaveral Director of Communications and Public Affairs // July 28, 2018


BREVARD COUNTY • PORT CANAVERAL, FLORIDA – The Canaveral Port Authority (CPA) completed the purchase of 9.61 acres of Brevard County-owned land at Port Canaveral’s Jetty Park.

With the $862,950 purchase complete as approved unanimously by Port Authority Commissioners in May and accepted by the Brevard County Commission on July 10, the Port Authority now owns all 45 acres of Jetty Park, a popular beachfront public recreational park at the Port’s east end.

“We are delighted this agreement with Brevard County is completed and the Port can now look ahead at sustaining one of the region’s premier recreational destinations,” said Port CEO Captain John Murray.
“We are proud of Jetty Park and remain committed to continuing to welcome visitors from our surrounding community and all across Florida, the U.S. and the world.”

The Canaveral Port Authority owns and operates Jetty Park, which opened in 1966 and now includes campgrounds, fishing pier, pristine beach with full-time year-round lifeguards, adjacent public boat ramps, restaurants and other visitor amenities. The park has become a favorite location to watch rocket launches from nearby Kennedy Space Center and Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

**US Southern Command**

**Exercise PANAMAX 2018 Kicks off in Mayport**

By U.S. 4th Fleet Public Affairs, July 31, 2018

**July 31, 2018 —MAYPORT, Fla. (NNS) --** U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet (USNAVSO/FOURTHFLT) hosts the Combined Force Maritime Component Command (CFMCC) portion of the annual exercise PANAMAX from July 30 through Aug. 10.

Panamax, an annual multinational exercise, develops and sustains relationships that allow partner-nation security forces in the region to achieve common goals, increase cooperation, and improve understanding.

PANAMAX began in 2003 with three countries, Chile, Panama and the United States, and originally focused solely on the maritime security of the Panama Canal. Since that time, the exercise has grown to become the region's largest coalition Command Post Exercise, ensuring the defense of the Panama Canal, which is one of the most strategically and economically crucial pieces of infrastructure in the world.

Since inception, partner nations have continued to take increased leadership roles in the exercise. This year, Colombia is leading the Combined Force Land Component Command (CFLCC), Brazil is leading the CFMCC, and Argentina is leading the Combined Force Special Operations Component Command (CFSOCC).

The main focus of PANAMAX 2018 is exercising a variety of responses to fulfill requests from the government of Panama to protect and guarantee safe passage of traffic through the Panama Canal, ensure its neutrality, and respect national sovereignty. This exercise is designed to conduct stability operations under in support of a fictitious United Nations Security Council Resolution, providing interoperability training for the participating multinational staffs, and building participating nation capability to plan and conduct complex multinational operations……

**NAS Key West**

**Intergovernmental Cooperation Helps Enhance Communication, Maritime Domain Awareness**

https://newswise.com/articles/intergovernmental-cooperation-helps-enhance-communication-maritime-domain-awareness/

*Newswise* — Sometimes, being out of touch with the rest of the world can be a relaxing change – like when you are on a much anticipated vacation. But for law enforcement officers coordinating and
participating in a dangerous operations across air, land, and sea to stop drug trafficking, patchy cellphone services can prevent agents from completing their missions and put them in harm’s way even more! For the Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATFS), for example, reliable communications make it possible for agents to catch illegal drug and human traffickers.

JIATFS detects and monitors illegal trafficking in the air and on the water, and supports international and interagency operations that stop illegal drug trafficking. It operates in waters covering 42 million square miles of the western hemisphere, predominately with its 30 official partner nations, where cell service is all but non-existent. This makes effective, tactical-level communication through traditional means difficult, which can result in missed opportunities to stop and arrest illegal traffickers.

Recent tests integrating commercial and government capabilities is making tactical communications between international and interagency law enforcement operators safer and more reliable.

In early 2018, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate (S&T), JIATFS Innovation and Technology Directorate (J7), and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) joined forces to identify innovative capabilities that improve communication in maritime environments where cell coverage is lacking. This cooperative endeavor, the Mobile Maritime Command and Control (M2C2) Project, aimed to demonstrate how integrating commercial communication capabilities with existing government information capabilities could enhance awareness and improve near real-time communications in maritime domains with poor cell coverage.

“The technology is mature and available. We just need to integrate it all together,” explained the JIATFS Development and Integration Division Chief Jeff Stahl.

The M2C2 team scouted potential solutions from industry and government research and development programs, and used commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) tools and government-off-the-shelf applications in a recent proof-of-concept technology demonstration at Naval Air Station Key West, Florida…..

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**Energy**

**Lawmakers Reinforce Need to Improve Installations’ Energy Resilience**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Aug 02, 2018 03:45 am  
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156e255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=c397f12d99

Congress continued its focus on enhancing installations’ energy resilience by emphasizing several new priorities and goals for the military departments in the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill. The conference report directs DOD to include its energy security and resilience goals, along with a description of its progress meeting those goals, in an existing annual installation energy report. The report should include “the amount of critical energy load, together with the level of availability and reliability by fiscal year the Department of Defense deems necessary to achieve energy security and resilience,” according to section 312. The report should list awarded and planned energy resilience projects, including ones relying on alternative financing.

The provision provides DOD the authority to require the military departments “to perform mission assurance and readiness assessments of energy power systems for mission critical assets and supporting infrastructure, applying uniform mission standards established by the secretary of defense.” DOD also can establish metrics and standards for assessing energy resilience.
Defense Industry

Pentagon has sold the Defense Industry on Hypersonics

By: Ben Werner, July 28, 2018 2:54 PM • Updated: July 29, 2018 10:33 AM

Hypersonic missiles – weapons traveling more than five times the speed of sound toward targets on land, in the air and at sea — are suddenly being touted by defense contractors as a promising revenue source, industry analysts heard during the second quarter financial results season.

Hypersonic missiles were described as an exciting new business line for Northrop Grumman to consider, Kathy Warden, chief operating officer, told Wall Street analysts during a conference call. Warden, who was recently tapped to become chief executive when current CEO Wes Bush retires next year, was detailing the benefits of Northrop Grumman’s $9.2 billion purchase of aerospace and technology company Orbital ATK. The deal was finalized in June.

Now called Innovation Systems, the Orbital business line, Warden said, “Expands the Northrop Grumman portfolio into hypersonics. We have traditionally been counter hypersonics, but this expands us into weapons systems. This significantly expands our portfolio of offerings to our customers.”

By considering the hypersonics market, Warden wasn’t just hinting at a business opportunity for Northrop Grumman to pursue, but she was acknowledging having received the signal sent from Congress and the Pentagon to the defense industry – develop hypersonic weapons……

DoD Budget

Congress finalizes $717 billion defense budget authorization months ahead of schedule

By: Leo Shane III, 8-1-2018

WASHINGTON – Senators gave final approval to the annual defense authorization bill on Wednesday, sending the $717 billion budget package to the White House to become law in the next few weeks.

The move marks the 58th consecutive year Congress has approved the military spending policy measure and the earliest that lawmakers have finished the work in 41 years. Typically, lawmakers labor until late fall before reaching agreement on the legislation.

It sets the military pay raise at 2.6 percent starting next January, adds 15,600 more troops to services’ overall end strength, and boosts aircraft and ship purchases above what the White House had requested.

It also gives lawmakers a solid legislative victory to tout before voters in the lead-up to the November mid-term elections, and some parliamentary breathing room they hope can lead to progress on appropriations bills in the next few weeks.
A day earlier, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., announced that he had reached an agreement with Senate Democrats on bringing defense appropriations legislation to the Senate floor later this month, as part of a broader effort to wrap up fiscal 2019 military spending issues before the election....

Other Of Interest

Program Helps Guide Relocating Military Students through School Transition

Dan Cohen, Posted on Jul 31, 2018 03:00 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=6c1b9ee919

Joint Chiefs Chairman Marine Corps Gen. Joe Dunford and his wife Ellyn joined more than 100 military children last week in Washington, D.C., for a training seminar for the Military Child Education Coalition’s Student 2 Student (S2S) program, an initiative designed to provide additional support for civilian and military students relocating to a new school system. The Dunfords focused on leadership, civic responsibility and the challenges of military life, reported DOD News. … The S2S program has proven successful in helping military dependents moving to Fort Polk, La., transition to Leesville High School. Student mentors welcome relocating students at the beginning of the school year — and throughout the year — guiding them through the process of finding their lockers and classes, and obtaining books. “Our main mission is just to aid in transition,” said Chance McGlothlin, the high school’s academic advisor and S2S sponsor. “Forty percent of our students are military dependents, and with the transitions come additional obstacles, including making new friends and trying to figure out what they’re supposed to do each day. … [The mentor is] a student who can really relate to some of the things they have gone through, especially if the mentor is military dependent,” McGlothlin said, reports Fort Polk Progress.

Florida Poly students to participate in $280M U.S. Air Force project

By Janelle Irwin – Reporter, Tampa Bay Business Journal, Jul 31, 2018, 2:26pm

A company tapped by the U.S. Air Force is partnering with Florida Polytechnic University in Lakeland to help the company modernize its fleet of aircraft with more advanced software and improve its global supply chain logistics and warehousing techniques.

Draken International provides pilots flying military-grade jets to serve as the enemies in training exercises. The Air Force awarded the Lakeland-based company a $280 million contract to provide adversary air services at Nellis Air Force Base near Las Vegas through 2023 earlier this year.

Students and faculty are providing support in the areas of high-tech applied research, the school announced Tuesday. Florida Polytechnic students will be able to apply for internships with the company this summer and fall, according to the school.

Those opportunities are expected to continue indefinitely……
Rubio votes against defense spending bill amid China concerns

Miami Herald, @alextdaugherty, 8-1-2018

Sen. Marco Rubio joined a small minority of the most liberal and conservative members of the U.S. Senate to vote against a massive defense spending bill named after ailing Sen. John McCain on Wednesday after Republican leaders declined to punish Chinese telecom giant ZTE, a company that ran afoul of U.S. sanctions against North Korea and Iran.

Rubio voted against the yearly defense spending package along with nine other senators, eight of them Democrats including potential presidential hopefuls like Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders who will likely use their opposition to military spending as a campaign issue in a future Democratic primary.

It's the first time that Rubio has voted against a defense spending bill since joining the U.S. Senate. He missed a vote on the package in 2015 while running for president.

"We got a lot of good things in it that we fought for, but the ZTE, the threat that China poses in my mind, overrides everything," Rubio said. …

Senate passes measure to extend commissary, exchange privileges to more veterans

By NIKKI WENTLING | STARS AND STRIPES, Published: August 2, 2018

WASHINGTON – The Senate approved a measure Wednesday that will allow more veterans to shop at discounted, on-base stores.

All Purple Heart and Medal of Honor recipients, former prisoners of war and veterans with disabilities connected to their military service, as well as veteran caregivers, would be eligible to shop at commissaries, according to the legislation.

The measure was included in the $716 billion National Defense Authorization Act that the Senate approved by a vote of 87 to 10. The bill will now go to President Donald Trump for his signature…. 
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #66 is NEXT Thursday, 16 August 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EST via Conference Call (agenda attached). No closed session is planned. E-books for the meeting are available on our website at https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/EBook-FDSTF-Meeting-66.pdf

2. **Call In Number** –

   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979       Access Code: 1869945

3. **Governor Signs 2018 Florida Purple Heart Day Proclamation** – According to Mr. Steve Murray from the Florida Department of Military Affairs, “Gov. Rick Scott has signed the annual Florida Purple Heart Day Proclamation. The governor calls upon Floridians to pay special tribute to those members of the Armed Forces who have received the Purple Heart, while also honoring the families of the fallen. Tuesday, August 7, 2018 is Florida Purple Heart Day.” The Governor’s proclamation is attached.

4. **Navy Asks Florida for School Preference** – This week Commander of Navy Region Southeast, Rear Admiral Bolivar, sent a letter to Governor Scott (attached) requesting help to solve an issue for inbound PCS families in Florida. Due to compressed PCS timelines and residency rules for school registration, families are having a hard time getting their children into good schools near their new installation because they miss registration timelines. In the letter, ADM Bolivar asked that “Any guidance or assistance you can provide to ensure Florida military school children receive the required preferential treatment for school choice in every district within the State, regardless of capacity or arrival time, would be greatly appreciated.”

5. **Armed Forces Families Foundation** – The Armed Forces Families Foundation (AFFF), located in St. Petersburg, FL, was founded with the intent to provide and care for those who care for our freedom. All coordination and services are provided for by a dedicated group of passionate volunteers. The AFFF has raised millions of dollars and continues to grow. Over 40 projects have been completed across military bases and touchpoints across the Southeast, varying in scope from the purchase of computer tablets for military base schools, to the construction of brand new playgrounds and pavilions, to the remodeling of waiting rooms and recreational centers and more. More information at: http://www.armedforcesfamilies.org/.

6. **Task Force FY19-20 Grant Application Cycle** – The FY19-20 grant application cycle is open and runs through Thursday, August 31, 2018. Within budget constraints, the FDSTF may fund projects that can be leveraged to promote, preserve, or enhance military missions and installations in Florida. The Task Force is using a new web-based system this year; previous forms will not be accepted. Please go to
https://www.tfaforms.com/rest/forms/view/4680176 to access the new application. Please contact Marcy Sanders (cced) if you have issues with the new system.

7. Attachments:
   - 2018 Florida Purple Heart Day
   - Navy Asks Florida for School Preference

Terry McCaffrey
Executive Director
Florida Defense Support Task Force

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News Clips of Interest:

FDSTF

Oil Drilling / Gulf Range

Defense Bill Calls for Plan to Upgrade Training Ranges to Address Latest Threats

Dan Cohen, Posted on Aug 09, 2018 03:35 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=acc7cfd300

The compromise version of the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill directs DOD to develop and implement a comprehensive strategic plan for addressing shortcomings in the ability of the military’s training ranges to support readiness requirements needed to carry out the National Defense Strategy. Defense officials will need to include infrastructure projects which address training constraints in the strategic plan. The provision, section 2862, first requires DOD to evaluate:

- the adequacy of existing training ranges, including “the ability to train against near-peer or peer threats in a realistic 5th generation environment”; and
- the adequacy of current training enablers to meet current and anticipated demands of the armed forces.
The strategic plan should include:

- a priority list of location specific proposals and infrastructure projects required to address any limitations on existing resources, including “climatically induced impacts or shortfalls,” and achieve full-spectrum training against a more technologically advanced adversary;
- goals and milestones for tracking actions under the plan; and
- projected funding requirements for implementing the plan.

The undersecretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment, who would have lead responsibility for developing and overseeing implementation of the plan, will need to provide annual progress reports to Congress starting April 1, 2019, covering:

- progress made implementing the strategic plan;
- a description of additional actions taken to address limitations on training ranges and enablers; and
- assessments of individual ranges addressing the initial evaluations.

The undersecretary also will need to submit a report by April 1, 2020, with recommendations for improvements to the capabilities of training ranges and enablers.

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**Hurlburt Field**

**Residents fighting plans to widen Hwy. 98 between Mary Esther & Hurlburt Field**

by Randy Wood, 8-6-2018


**MARY ESTHER, Fla. (WEAR) –** Some people in Mary Esther are fighting plans to widen Highway 98 in Santa Rosa and Okaloosa counties. They believe it would spoil the area’s beauty and waste taxpayer dollars.

The two miles of Highway 98 between Mary Esther and Hurlburt Field is usually slow-going. The state has plans to widen a 24-and-a-half-mile stretch from Mary Esther to nearly the Garcon Point Bridge.

The road would go from four lanes to six.

Stephen Arrowsmith is one of the opponents of that idea.

"It will destroy a part of the city. We think it the most beautiful part of the median in the trees and the trees on both sides of the highway - these will all be removed. It will end up looking like Eglin Parkway does,” he said.

Opponents say aside from the loss of the trees. The project would still bottleneck traffic into four lanes in Fort Walton Beach and near the Hurlburt Field flyover…..

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**Eglin AFB**

**Eglin may get over $100 million in new defense bill**

By Jim Thompson, Posted Aug 3, 2018 at 3:34 PM, Updated Aug 3, 2018 at 3:34 PM

EGLIN AFB – A defense spending and policy bill now awaiting President Donald Trump’s signature includes more than $100 million in construction funding for the base.

Also locally, the $717 billion military spending plan for the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1 includes $31.9 million for enhancements to the Gulf Coast Test and Training Range, which is heavily used by Eglin Air Force Base and other military installations across Northwest Florida. The bill also calls for a $10 million outlay for construction of an air traffic control tower at Naval Air Station Whiting Field in Milton. NAS Whiting Field is the initial training location for most Navy, Marine and Coast Guard fixed-wing aircraft pilots, and all of the three services’ helicopter pilots.

The funding for Eglin will include $34.8 million for an academic center to train pilots of the F-35A, the Air Force version of the U.S. military’s next-generation stealth fighter jet. In a related allocation, Eglin will receive $28 million for a dormitory for F-35A student pilots.

The base also is scheduled to receive $38 million for construction of something called a “cyberspace test facility.” The funding will come just short of a year after the Air Force established the 96th Cyberspace Test Group at Eglin as part of the 96th Test Wing.

The group, the first and only one of its kind in the Air Force, is dedicated to assessing and addressing digital systems’ operation and security. The group’s work includes assessing the security of digital offensive and defensive systems, testing the security of data links and other digital aspects of weapons systems such as drones, and assessing the performance of computer software across the Air Force.

In another local development, the defense spending bill authorizes the transfer of 80 acres of Eglin land to the Air Force Enlisted Village, a nonprofit enterprise in Shalimar that houses 500 widows of enlisted Air Force personnel in independent-living apartments and an assisted-living and memory-care facilities. The Enlisted Village is an official Air Force charity.....

Tyndall AFB

Tyndall's Red Horse Squadron helps clean up local campus

By Stephanie Byrne | Posted: Mon 5:26 PM, Aug 06, 2018 | Updated: Tue 10:39 AM, Aug 07, 2018
http://www.wjhg.com/content/news/Tyddalls-Red-Horse-Squadron-helps-clean-up-local-campus-490192251.html

YOUNGSTOWN, Fla. (WJHG/WECP) - Local service members went the extra mile by hitting the school yard to clean up a Youngstown elementary school campus before the first day of school.

Monday's grassroots effort partnered Waller Elementary School's personnel and Tyndall Air Force Base's Red Horse Squadron.

"Just clearing the bushes, getting all of the debris out of the way. We want it to look pretty so when the kids come on the campus, they'll feel like they're just walking into their homes," Gina McNally, Assistant Administrator of Waller Elementary School, explained.

Waller's team couldn't do it alone, so they requested back up.

"With the help of my husband who's over at Red Horse right now as a civilian and we came up with the idea of having a campus clean up here at Waller Elementary," McNally said.

Tyndall Air Force Base's Red Horse Squadron helped take the reins in completing yard work for the school.
There's lots of different volunteer opportunities, but it's something where we can give back to the community and help children at the same time," United States Air Force Master Sergeant Chris Mueller said......

**FL National Guard / Camp Blanding**

**Korean War Vets Honored at Camp Blanding**

By KEVIN DERBY, August 7, 2018 - 10:00am

http://sunshinestatenews.com/story/korean-war-vets-honored-camp-blanding


Cho presented the “Ambassador for Peace” medal, which was made from barbed wire from the DMZ dividing North Korea and South Korea, to the veterans. Each of the gold-plated medals read “You will always be our hero.”

“It is an honor and a privilege to be here today as part of this ceremony,” Yoho said when he addressed the crowd. “There simply is not enough that we can do for our veterans and today is no exception. It is truly moving to have the Republic of Korea recognize the service and sacrifice of American service men and women who have helped realize the freedoms and liberties experienced today in S. Korea.

“One quick look at satellite images tell the story where one can see the difference between a thriving South Korea lit up at night against the stark darkness of North Korea and their oppressive regime. While today we are exceptionally hopeful for reunification on the Korean peninsula, we are ever mindful of the service of those who fought during the Korean War. Thank you for your service,” Yoho added....

**NS Mayport**

**USS Iwo Jima and USS New York return to Mayport after deployment**

Author: WTLV Staff, Published: 12:35 PM EDT August 7, 2018, Updated: 12:35 PM EDT August 7, 2018


More than 4500 sailors will be returning safety from two different ships.

More than 2000 of those sailors will be returning to Naval Station Mayport and the rest will be headed back to their homeport in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

The sailors were deployed for six months and they operated in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East conducting maritime security operations.

**MacDill AFB**

**Plans coming together for 2019 Warrior Games in Tampa**
TAMPA (FOX 13) - It's official: Tampa Bay will host the 2019 Warrior Games. More than 300 wounded or injured service members and veterans will compete. They'll arrive with their families and coaches in late June. The games will take place June 21 to 30, 2019.

The opening and closing ceremonies will be held at Amalie Arena. Jon Stewart will be the emcee. A major performer, such as Kelly Clarkson -- who has appeared at the games at least twice before -- will perform at the opening ceremonies.

Several sporting events will happen at Amalie Arena and Tampa Convention Center. Wheelchair tennis will be held at Julian B. Lane Park, swimming at the Long Center Pool in Clearwater, and adaptive golf at The Eagles Golf Club in Odessa. Other sites are still to be determined.

U.S. Special Operations Command is bringing the games to Tampa. The command is based at MacDill Air Force Base, but Col. Cary Harbaugh of SOCOM believes it will be better for spectators and competitors to hold the games in the community…..

Cape Canaveral AFS

Space Florida proposes launch, landing pads at KSC

James Dean, Florida Today, Published 4:46 p.m. ET Aug. 5, 2018

An experimental space plane and other small rockets could blast off from a new pad at Kennedy Space Center, and boosters could begin landing at the spaceport, under state proposals now under review by NASA.

Space Florida wants to develop Launch Complex 48 to support Boeing’s Phantom Express, the winner of a competition to demonstrate quick-turnaround launches for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency.

In addition, the state has proposed building three landing pads at KSC to provide more options for SpaceX or Blue Origin boosters returning from space, and possibly other reusable vehicles.

“We see a need,” said Jim Kuzma, senior vice president and general manager at Space Florida. “We’re continuing to assess anywhere where we think the infrastructure is going to be stressed as the launch cadence continues to increase.”…..

InDyne Inc. to lay off 134 workers after Air Force contract ends

By Ryan Lynch – Staff Writer, Orlando Business Journal, 8-6-2018

InDyne Inc. will lay off 134 people by the end of September due to the end of its contract with the U.S. Air Force's 45th Space Wing.
The company will make the layoffs Sept. 30. according to a notice filed with the state Aug. 1. The affected employees work at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Brevard County and at Jonathan Dickinson Missile Track Annex in Tequesta in Palm Beach County.

The infrastructure operations and maintenance services work done by InDyne will be taken over by a successor in a re-competition process by the Air Force. Current InDyne employees potentially may be hired by the new contractor.

Employees affected by the change include engineers and administrative staff. InDyne will work with Career Source Brevard to find jobs for those displaced by the end of the contract.

The Air Force’s next communications satellite arrives in Florida

By: Daniel Cebul, 8-6-2018

Lockheed Martin announced the successful delivery of its fourth Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF) satellite to Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida, according to an Aug. 6 press release.

The highly protected communication satellite, known as AEHF-4, is set to launch into orbit on an United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket in October.

As the prime contractor on the Air Force’s $15 billion AEHF program, Lockheed Martin is charged with building a jam-resistant system that protected communication between strategic commanders and tactical warfighters operating in all domains. Michael Cacheiro, the company’s vice president for protected communications said “four AEHF satellites in orbit means protected global connectivity for those who need it most, from the president to deployed soldiers ... Delivering this fourth satellite in orbit will be critical to the Air Force, as it will connect all four satellites on orbit, forming a geostationary ring to provide uninterrupted global communications.”

In the release, Cachiero said AEHF provides roughly 10 times more communications throughput than the Air Force’s legacy satellite system.

Lockheed Martin is currently under contract to deliver six AEHF satellites.

US Southern Command

7th Group places second in elite military competition

By Staff report, Posted Aug 5, 2018 at 11:00 AM

EGLIN AFB – Troops from the Army’s 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) placed second in Fuerzas Comando 2018, an annual competition between elite military and police forces.

The 7th Group’s 3rd Battalion comprised the American team. Team Colombia won 10-day event involving countries in the Americas and the Caribbean.

The grueling annual competition — which aims to promote cooperation and readiness among participating nations — measured physical fitness, marksmanship, aquatic skills and tactical ability.
At the start of Fuerzas Comando (or “Command Forces” in English), Army Col. Brian Greata, deputy commander of U.S. Special Operations Command South, urged participants from all 19 countries to “talk to each other, share ideas, cultivate camaraderie and establish trust and knowledge,” according to a news release from the event.

“Increasing our skills through competitions such as this, we improve our ability to face ... challenges,” Greata said in the release.

In addition to the U.S. and Colombian teams, Fuerzas Comando 2018 included military and police forces from Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador (which finished third), the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago.…..

**NAS Key West**

**Boater having a possible heart attack rescued by Navy off Key West**

BY GWEN FILOSA, August 09, 2018 03:45 PM, Updated August 09, 2018 06:16 PM

A Navy search-and-rescue crew on Thursday airlifted a man from a fishing vessel 63 miles northwest of Key West after he showed signs of a possible heart attack.

Naval Air Station Key West’s crew, flying on a MH-60S Seahawk, was in the air at 11 a.m. responding to the Coast Guard’s call for help, which went out at 10:51 a.m., according to Trice Denny, NAS spokeswoman.

The crew went to the boat, the Renee Lynn, where a medical technician evaluated the man, who was placed in a basket and raised to the helicopter.

The man was taken to Lower Keys Medical Center, arriving at noon, Denny said. His condition was not immediately available…..

**Energy**

**Defense Industry**

**White House Industrial Base Study Focuses On Near-Term Fixes**

By SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG JR. on August 01, 2018 at 10:36 AM

WASHINGTON: The defense industrial base study that President Trump ordered a year ago is nearing completion, a well-informed administration source told *Breaking Defense*. But the Executive Order 13806 study may come as a surprise: Instead of a sweeping agenda to restore America’s high-tech lead for future decades, the study will recommend near-term fixes to more mundane problems that could lose the US a war if one broke out tomorrow.
From aging facilities to imported supplies, the defense industrial base is full of potential chokepoints in the supply chain. A few examples:

- All the cannons on US Army armored vehicles come from a single aging facility, Watervliet Arsenal in New York — which was built in 1813.
- The US depends on imports for critical materials ranging from from beryllium to titanium sponge — many of which we buy from Russia, China, or the Central Asian “Stans.”
- Critical machine tooling is no longer made in the US but is imported primarily from Europe. While mostly friendly nations, few are unequivocal supporters of US military operations, so they might limit cooperation in a crisis where they disagreed with the US, as nations did in 2003 over Iraq.

These single points of failure already limit military modernization and potentially could disrupt operations in a crisis. That’s especially true if production needed to ramp up urgently for a major war, a subject the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Joseph Dunford, has publicly angsted about…..

**DoD Budget**

**DOD’s FY’20 Budget Request Will Fully Reflect Administration’s Priorities, DOD Official Says**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Aug 08, 2018 02:30 am

https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156e255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=b7b8d5eb87

The next budget request the Pentagon submits to Congress will have added significance as it will be the Trump administration’s first that will be fully shaped by the new National Defense Strategy, a senior official told Military Times. “’19 was certainly very much influenced by it, but this is going to now truly be all-encompassing. So we think the ’20 budget request is going to be incredibly important,” said Robert Hood, assistant secretary of defense for legislative affairs. Hood’s comments come as the military departments face an approaching deadline for sending their draft FY 2020 budgets to DOD.

Hood reiterated the department does not plan to ask for a significant boost in topline spending for FY 2020, following a historic jump in FY 2018. “If you look at ’18 and ’19 — two nice step-ups, in terms of funding. And the intent is there’s not going to be another big step up again,” he said.

**Other Of Interest**

**10 people rescued after boat runs out of gas off coast of Bimini**

By Amanda Batchelor & Nicole Perez, Posted: 5:51 PM, August 06, 2018Updated: 5:51 PM, August 06, 2018


MIAMI - The U.S. [Coast Guard](https://www.coastguard.gov) rescued 10 people Monday after their boat ran out of gas 9 miles west of Bimini.

Coast Guard officials said watchstanders at the [Coast Guard](https://www.coastguard.gov) 7th District command center received a notification about the 28-foot pleasure craft from a commercial salvage company.
"Pretty much, we were on our way to Bimini and we got lost," Sebastian Murguia told Local 10 News. We were adrift for over four hours, and we ran out of gas and no one was answering their radios. We had three radios. No answer, so we were kind of nervous. We called the Coast Guard and they came for us."

The cutter Paul Clark responded to the disabled boat and brought eight of the 10 people aboard and took them back to Miami.

The two others were taken aboard the cutter William Flores, which towed the boat to Fort Lauderdale. No injuries were reported.
Aug 16

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – The Task Force will conduct a Strategy Planning Workshop on **September 20, 2018 at the Hilton Garden Inn, 1297 Miracle Strip Parkway SE, Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548** beginning at 9:00am CST. The workshop will be a closed to the public under F.S. 288.985.

2. **Defense Support Initiative (DSI) Offshore Drilling Letter** – DSI published a letter (attached) that is leading an effort educate and advocate for continued restriction on oil exploration and drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico in order to stop encroachment on the military test and training range. According to DSI, “The DSI is spearheading an eastern Gulf community-wide advocacy effort. We are asking our community partners (such as Building Industry Association, Emerald Coast Association of Realtors, Chambers of Commerce, Tourist Development Council, etc.) to compose similar letters from their respective viewpoints. As is noted in the letter, this advocacy outreach pertains to prohibiting drilling in Federal waters east of the Military Mission Line. The DSI will also be partnering with community and business leaders on a separate Amendment 9 advocacy outreach effort in the near future.”

3. **Oil Industry Pushing to Gain Support for Off-shore Drilling in Florida** – The Oil Industry is campaigning for support for drilling in the Gulf of Mexico and off Florida’s Atlantic coast. According to an article in *Sunshine State News* on Aug 15, “The American Petroleum Institute (API) brought its “Explore Offshore” efforts to Florida on Wednesday, calling on expanding energy exploration efforts including in the eastern part of the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic seaboard. The national “Explore Offshore” campaign, which was launched in June, is led by former U.S. Veterans Affairs Sec. Jim Nicholson, who led the Republican National Committee (RNC), and former U.S. Sen. Jim Webb, D-Va., who ran for the Democratic presidential nomination in the 2016 election cycle.” In Florida, efforts are led by prior Lieutenant Governor Kottkamp. The article states “Noting that oil and natural gas make up most electricity use at the state and national levels, Explore Offshore insisted that energy exploration in the Gulf and off the coast of Florida could lead to more than 56,000 new jobs by 2035 and add $1 billion annually to the state revenue and $2.6 billion in private development.” The article does not discuss impact on military and defense test and training or the potential impact to the $85 billion and 800,000+ jobs that could be affected, especially in the Panhandle. Defense Support Initiative (DSI) has submitted a response to the article available on line. See article below in the *CLIPs*.

4. **President Trump Signed 2019 NDAA** – President Donald J. Trump signed the $717 Billion FY2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) on Monday, 13 Aug 2018, at Fort Drum, New York. According to a statement by Ben Werner from USNI News, “This measure continues to rebuild and repair our military while making needed reforms in the Pentagon. It takes important steps to confront the aggressive behavior of Russia, China, and others. Most of all, it helps ensure that our troops get what they need to carry out the missions they are assigned,” said a statement released by Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) chair of the House Armed Services Committee. “It is now essential that we follow this bill with matching appropriations before the beginning of the fiscal year.” See full article below in the *CLIP*.
5. **NDAA Creates Program to Incentivize Defense Industry Growth** – The DoD is begging a program that could support new defense focused industrial development around the country. According to Dan Cohen, “Under the new program, partners in a consortium designated a defense manufacturing community could apply for funding for investments in equipment and facility upgrades; workforce training, recruitment and retention; business incubators; advanced research and commercialization; supply chain development; and small business assistance.” See full article in the CLIPs.

6. **Attachments:**
   - DSI Offshore Drilling Letter

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**Oil Drilling / Gulf Range**

**Air Force Doubles Down on Hypersonic Weapons Development with 2nd Contract**

By Oriana Pawlyk, Military.com, 13 Aug 2018  

The U.S. Air Force has awarded a second contract to develop a new hypersonic weapon that would move five times the speed of sound.

The service on Monday awarded Lockheed Martin Corp. a contract -- not to exceed $480 million -- to begin designing a second hypersonic prototype, according to a release.

"We are going to go fast and leverage the best technology available to get hypersonic capability to the warfighter as soon as possible," said Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson.
Leaders from the Defense Department, Missile Defense Agency, Air Force, Navy and Army signed a memorandum June 28 to cooperate and help develop "hypersonic boost glide" technology, the release said.

"The joint team requires the right mix of agile capabilities to compete, deter and win across the spectrum of competition and conflict," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein. "We must push the boundaries of technology and own the high ground in this era of great power competition and beyond."

As part of a rapid prototyping scheme, the Air Force is working with Lockheed to develop the Air-Launched Rapid Response Weapon (ARRW, pronounced "Arrow"). The rapid prototyping effort, made possible through authorities in the fiscal 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, "will provide the critical design review, test and production readiness support" for the project, the release said.

The Air Force hopes to achieve a capable weapon by 2021, it added…..

**Explore Offshore Makes Their Case for More Energy Exploration off Florida Coasts**

By KEVIN DERBY, August 15, 2018 - 1:30pm

The American Petroleum Institute (API) brought its “Explore Offshore” efforts to Florida on Wednesday, calling on expanding energy exploration efforts including in the eastern part of the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic seaboard.

The national “Explore Offshore” campaign, which was launched in June, is led by former U.S. Veterans Affairs Sec. Jim Nicholson, who led the Republican National Committee (RNC), and former U.S. Sen. Jim Webb, D-Va., who ran for the Democratic presidential nomination in the 2016 election cycle.

Leading the “Explore Offshore” efforts in Florida are former Lt. Gov. Jeff Kottkamp and Dr. Miriam Ramirez who served in the Senate of Puerto Rico. Kottkamp served under then Gov. Charlie Crist who has opposed drilling in the Gulf, even calling for a special legislative session on the issue. Crist held that special session after the massive oil spill in the Gulf in 2010. However, while Crist started drifting to the left and that and other issues to run for the U.S. Senate in 2010 with no party affiliation and eventually join the Democrats, Kottkamp has remained a conservative Republican.

Nicholson was in Tallahassee on Wednesday and made the case for expanding energy exploration in the Sunshine State.

“Our American way of life and the freedoms we enjoy are undoubtedly linked to access to affordable, reliable energy,” Nicholson said. “At the same time, 94 percent of America’s offshore energy resources are completely off-limits to natural gas and oil development, disallowing hundreds of thousands of American jobs and abundant domestic energy supply, and keeping us reliant on foreign sources.

“As we plan ahead as a country, access to our offshore energy resources is a key part of the nation’s economic future and national security, and that is why I am pleased to chair the national Explore Offshore USA coalition,” Nicholson added. “Uniting supporters from Virginia to Florida, we will continue to work to ensure access to our offshore energy resources to support reliable, affordable energy, boost national security, and assure a strong United States economy.”…..
Oil industry targets Florida in new offshore drilling advocacy push

BY TIMOTHY CAMA - 08/15/18 03:04 PM EDT

The oil industry is undertaking a new public relations campaign to push for offshore drilling along Florida’s coast.

The American Petroleum Institute’s Explore Offshore program, launched in June to promote offshore drilling, held its first Florida event Wednesday.

The Trump administration’s January proposal to allow offshore oil and natural gas drilling all along the Atlantic, Pacific and Gulf coasts met strong opposition in many places, but it was especially widespread in Florida.

That quickly prompted Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to promise that no drilling would be allowed in the water near either side of Florida.

But the oil industry has nonetheless pushed for some compromise, including allowing some new drilling with a large margin around the state……

NAS Whiting Field

Whiting Field recognized for energy excellence

By Julie Ziegenhorn | Posted Aug 10, 2018 at 11:40 AM, Updated Aug 10, 2018 at 11:40 AM

MILTON – In an announcement Aug. 3, the Secretary of the Navy named Naval Air Station Whiting Field the recipient of the Department of the Navy Energy Excellence Award for 2018 in the Navy Small Shore category.

The annual Department of the Navy’s Energy Excellence Awards program promotes excellence in the areas of energy security, new technology, innovation, program management and efficiency across the department.

The Honorable Richard V. Spencer, secretary of the Navy said in a message Friday, “this year’s submissions reflect the hard work and dedication of leaders across the Department that recognize the importance of energy security and its influence on readiness, lethality, and modernization. Improving the energy resiliency and security of our operating forces and our installations remains a top priority, and I look forward to all your future accomplishments in support of this critical program. Bravo Zulu!”

The annual Secretary of the Navy energy awards recognize outstanding leadership in energy management, innovations in energy efficiency and energy conserving approaches to training, daily operations and maintenance.

Points for the awards are given based on operational efficiency, including fuel consumption, as well as awareness and training to increase commitment to the Navy’s energy conservation best practices. Additionally, innovation and new methods in managing energy conservation are considered.
NAS Whiting Field’s recognition was achieved through successful implementation of several initiatives resulting in a 19.95 percent energy intensity reduction, already exceeding the 2020 energy goals established by the Secretary of the Navy. This feat was made possible through completion of a year-long Utility Energy Service Contract in partnership with Gulf Power, establishing a culture of conservation onboard the installation through outreach projects, 5K runs, power demonstrations, and diligent oversight of daily utility consumption.....

Eglin AFB

CBA sponsoring reef-building competition at Eglin

By Jim Thompson, Posted Aug 11, 2018 at 10:38 AM, Updated Aug 11, 2018 at 10:38 AM

EGLIN AFB – The Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance is setting up a competition at Eglin Air Force Base as part the alliance’s continuing efforts to reduce shoreline erosion and create wildlife habitat in Choctawhatchee Bay.

The CBA’s latest project in that effort is construction of a 1,400-foot reef at Post’l Point, an Eglin AFB recreation area at the edge of Boggy Bayou. Because arranging access to the base for outside groups can be difficult, the CBA is trying to get the various military units and civilian contractors working at Eglin to sign up to build part of the reef.

“Reef building has become a very important part of our mission as the reef breakwaters reduce shoreline erosion and create critical wildlife habitat, especially for young oysters,” said Erika Zambello, the alliance’s communications and marketing director.

Also according to Zambello, the CBA has already “been working with Eglin to create reef breakwaters in sensitive cultural and environmental areas in Alaqua Bayou as well as Bay Flats.” The reefs, built with limestone rock and recycled oyster shells from local restaurants, “have already slowed or even reversed erosion,” Zambello said.

In one recent project, volunteers including local high school students, the Northwest Florida State College baseball team, church groups and members of AmeriCorps assisted CBA staff, in partnership with Eglin, in building a 1,700-foot reef in Alaqua Bayou. That reef was constructed with both recycled and fossilized oyster shells.....

NSA Panama City

New FSU program boosts engineers

By COLLIN BREAUX, Posted Aug 13, 2018 at 4:57 PM, Updated Aug 13, 2018 at 4:57 PM

PANAMA CITY – For engineers like Tinsley Ihaski, a new program at a local university is an opportunity to advance their careers.

Ihaski works at Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division (NSWC PCD), a Naval Support Activity Panama City tenant unit focused on scientific research, and is one of a handful students enrolled in Florida State University Panama City’s new systems engineering master program, which combines various engineering skills to design, operate and retire a system.
“It will do everything for my career,” Ihaski said.

The new program, which students attended an orientation for on Monday, aims to help base engineers hone their craft. The two-year program was created in response to the growing technical sector in Bay County and is a collaboration with the Navy.

Program coordinator and faculty member Daniel Georgiadis said the highest-ranking students were selected from a large applicant pool, with more students wanting to join during the spring semester. There are plans to offer the course online, and 10 to 20 students are expected to be enrolled each semester.…

**NS Mayport**

**2-month shutdown for Mayport ferry set for Sept. 4**

By Dan Scanlan, Posted Aug 12, 2018 at 2:55 PM


Twenty-four miles.

That’s what the detour will be between the St. Johns River Ferry landings in Mayport and North Jacksonville’s Heckscher Drive come Sept. 4 when JTA has to shut down the iconic ship’s operations for eight weeks of repairs.

This is the second time in two years that JTA has docked the venerable Jean Ribault for repairs. While shut down through October, all those commuters — from U.S. Navy personnel going to Naval Station Mayport from the Northside, or Southeast Georgia tourists looking to try some Mayport shrimp — have to take the long away around instead of the .9-mile ferry trip.

The Florida Highway Patrol is aware of the shutdown and the extra traffic it could bring to the detour routes like Interstates 95 and 295 on the city’s Northside, as well as McCormick and Mount Pleasant roads in Arlington. But Sgt. Dylan Bryan said drivers should just prepare, be aware and drive safely.

“It’s going to be a more extensive travel, and they should be anticipating extra travel time on those thoroughfares,” he said. “If work is completed early, it would reopen sooner.”

The St. Johns River Ferry connects the north and south ends of Florida A1A with daily service, carrying cars and passengers between Mayport Village and Fort George Island across the St. Johns River, with voyages every half hour. But the JTA-operated ferry will officially cease running the day after Labor Day and not operate again until Oct. 31.

That eight-week period is needed to replace the bridges at the ferry terminal as part of a continuing round of repairs anticipated to be completed in January, JTA said. Workers will also rehabilitate bulkheads and install ferry stopping mechanisms, paid for through a $3.35 million U.S. Department of Transportation ferry grant.…

**MacDill AFB**

**Final funding hurdle for Cross Bay Ferry heads to Hillsborough County this week**

By Janelle Irwin – Reporter, Tampa Bay Business Journal, Aug 13, 2018, 2:12pm

Hillsborough County Commissioners will vote Wednesday on the final funding piece needed to bring back the Cross Bay Ferry connecting downtown St. Petersburg and downtown Tampa. If approved, Hillsborough would pay $150,000 of the $600,000 interlocal agreement between Tampa and St. Pete and Pinellas and Hillsborough counties.

All of the other government partners have pledged their portions of the funding.

The ferry service is predominately a leisure amenity, but its success serves as a proof of concept for another ferry project in the works that would allow workers at MacDill Air Force Base to use a higher-speed ferry to get between the South Tampa base and southern Hillsborough County.

That commuter service could eventually be used in off hours to create permanent service on nights and weekends to connect residents and visitors to the bustling night life in St. Pete and the myriad arts and entertainment events in downtown Tampa at the Tampa Theater, Straz Center and Amalie Arena.

Next, three of the partner agencies will still have to sign off of the operating agreement with HMS Ferries. St. Pete City Council already approved the contract.

The service would run from November-April. The initial pilot ran during the same months from 2016-2017, but service last year didn’t happen because government partners did not reach a funding agreement.

**MacDill says its economic impact jumped 8 percent in three years**

Howard Altman, Published: August 15, 2018, Updated: August 15, 2018 at 05:58 PM

**TAMPA —** MacDill Air Force Base has long been a key driver of the Tampa Bay economy, spending billions on payroll, construction and retiree pensions.

But just how much of a powerhouse the base is depends on how you look at the numbers presented Wednesday by MacDill officials.

Thanks largely to a jump in the number of local jobs the base creates, officials say MacDill has increased its total economic impact on the region by eight percent over the last three years, to $3.18 billion in 2017,

Base officials got that number by combining total payroll, local expenditures and the value of local job creation.

But when you factor in the pensions of military retirees and surviving spouses living within 50 miles of MacDill, there is an overall drop of about $600 million between the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2014 and the one that ended last September.

The reason: The ranks of those retirees and surviving spouses has dropped by nearly half, from 73,000 in 2014 to nearly 38,000 last year. That cut the base’s overall economic impact from $4.7 billion in 2014 to $4.1 last year.

The base doesn’t include the retirees and surviving spouses in its economic impact methodology, but included the figures in its economic report to "highlight the tremendous impact they have on the local economy."
And none of the figures presented by MacDill include the billions spent every year on items like weapons, vehicles, drones and other military procurements by U.S. Special Operations Command and, to a lesser extent, U.S. Central Command, two unified combatant commands on base. Overall, defense spending brings about $7.5 billion in total direct spending to the seven-county Tampa Bay area, according to a study released in December by Enterprise Florida.

Cape Canaveral AFS
United Launch Alliance preps for the return of manned space missions from Cape Canaveral

By James Rogers | Fox News, 8-10-2018

CAPE CANAVERAL – Space company United Launch Alliance is busily preparing for the return of manned missions from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida.

“Human spaceflight can inspire the public and inspire scientists in a way that no other activities can,” ULA CEO Tory Bruno told Fox News. “It means so much to us to have human spaceflight from American soil returning Americans to space, I cannot begin to tell you what that means to myself and my team.”

United Launch Alliance is involved in NASA’s Commercial Crew program that will take American astronauts into space on missions launched from U.S. soil. Since the retirement of the space shuttle in 2011, the U.S. has been relying on Russian Soyuz rockets, launched from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, to get astronauts to the International Space Station.

NASA recently named the nine American astronauts that will crew the test flights and first missions of the Boeing CST-100 Starliner and SpaceX Crew Dragon spacecraft. The Starliner will launch atop a ULA Atlas V rocket from ULA’s Space Launch Complex 41 at Cape Canaveral.

Defense Industry
Metro Orlando firm wins $79.3M defense deal to build infrared system parts

By Matthew Richardson – Staff writer, Orlando Business Journal, Aug 13, 2018, 3:19pm

A local designer and maker of sensor systems landed a shared contract to produce spare parts for a system that helps pilots see at night or in harsh weather conditions.

Melbourne-based DRS Network & Imaging Systems LLC, along with Raytheon Co., in Texas, each won a $79.3 million contract from the Defense Logistics Agency on Aug. 10, according to the U.S. Department of Defense.

Work for the five-year contract involves making spare parts for the Forward Looking Infrared Block 1 B kit, which helps military and commercial aircraft sense objects ahead. All the work for this contract will take place in Florida and Texas.
Before this work agreement, the latest contract to come from Melbourne was Northrop Grumman Corp. (NYSE: NOC) landing a $30 million contract for its Advanced Hawkeye on Aug. 7.

Military contracts contribute to the local economy in the form of jobs and subcontractor opportunities, and Central Florida is a major player when it comes to defense contracts. The region snags about $4 billion in government contracts each year because the nation’s Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines simulation operations are based in Central Florida Research Park. That work helps make Orlando the modeling, simulation and training capital of the world, according to the Orlando Economic Partnership.

**Pentagon Would Target ‘Defense Manufacturing Communities’ under New Initiative**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Aug 16, 2018 04:00 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=d9cf3b28d3

Communities striving to cultivate defense manufacturing, either to offset a decline in their local manufacturing base over recent decades or to improve their capacity for advanced technologies considered critical to national security, would be eligible for financial and technical assistance, under a new program authorized in the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill. The statute is intended to strengthen the national security innovation base by helping communities rebuild their manufacturing capacity. It would serve as a complement to an existing program, Manufacturing USA, which is focused more on R&D and commercialization of new technologies with defense applications.

Under the new program, partners in a consortium designated a defense manufacturing community could apply for funding for investments in equipment and facility upgrades; workforce training, recruitment and retention; business incubators; advanced research and commercialization; supply chain development; and small business assistance. Investments, though, would need to complement support provided by the eight DOD-led Manufacturing USA institutes. Those institutes — each focused on a critical technology, such as robotics manufacturing — also combine federal funding with investments by industry, academia and state governments.

Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.) introduced the new initiative as an amendment to the defense policy bill as a way of advancing her Made in America Manufacturing Communities Act. As a stand-alone bill, that measure had been aimed at rebuilding the nation’s manufacturing base by offering designated communities a preference for receiving federal economic development funding. The version she offered during committee markup was revised to apply only to investments in manufacturing communities intended to enhance the defense industrial base.

Section 846 of the authorization bill calls for DOD to use a competitive process to designate eligible consortiums as defense manufacturing communities for a five-year period, with the option for renewing the designation for up to two additional two-year periods. Eligible consortiums would include partners from academia, industry, and state and local government, and support “efforts in geographical regions that have capabilities in key technologies or industrial base supply chains that are determined critical to national security.” Applicants would need to demonstrate how the investments they plan to address gaps in the defense industrial base complement efforts of the defense manufacturing institutes.

Before DOD can establish the Defense Manufacturing Community Support program, the initiative will need to attract funding in the FY 2019 defense spending bill. Gillibrand is expected to offer an amendment funding the program to the defense spending bill which is being debated on the Senate floor this week as part of a package with the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations title. Adding a new allocation to a spending bill on the floor is a tall order, though, and there is a good chance the new initiative won’t start before FY 2020.
President Donald Trump signed the Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) clearing the path for a host of Navy and Marine Corps programs and policy initiatives to take effect.

The FY 2019 NDAA sets the spending and policy priorities for the Department of Defense. A separate appropriations process will provide the money for the Pentagon’s now authorized $717 billion-worth of programs.

“This measure continues to rebuild and repair our military while making needed reforms in the Pentagon. It takes important steps to confront the aggressive behavior of Russia, China, and others. Most of all, it helps ensure that our troops get what they need to carry out the missions they are assigned,” said a statement released by Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) chair of the House Armed Services Committee. “It is now essential that we follow this bill with matching appropriations before the beginning of the fiscal year.”

Meanwhile, Sen. John McCain, (R-Ariz.), commended both parties in both chambers of Congress, and the President, for what turned out to be a fast NDAA debate and approval process, compared to past years, including the FY 2018 bill which was finally passed halfway through the fiscal year.

“I’m very proud that the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 has been signed into law,” McCain said in a statement. “Today’s bill signing completes the historically quick process by which the NDAA has become law, and will help deliver our service members the resources they need to rise to the challenges of a dangerous world. I thank my colleagues in Congress for working together to craft this legislation, which honors our men and women in uniform and lives up to the traditions of bipartisanship and collaboration that have come to define the NDAA process.”

The FY 2019 NDAA authorizes the following programs and policies:

- $24.1 billion for shipbuilding, fully funding construction of 13 new battle force ships and accelerates funding for several future ship classes. The NDAA also authorizes an additional Ford-class aircraft carrier, allowing the Navy to sign a two-carrier contract.
- The potential to add two Block-V Virginia-class submarines to the current negotiations to purchase 10 Virginia-class subs.
- $3.2 billion to pay for development and design work of the new Columbia-class submarine.
- $2.3 billion to purchase 20 short takeoff and vertical landing F-35B Lightning II Joint Strike Fighters — the variant used by the Marine Corps.
- $1.1 billion to purchase nine F-35C fighters, the arrested landing variants used by the Navy.
- Mandated reforms to the surface warfare community, which are designed to correct some of the factors believed to have contributed to the death of 17 sailors in two separate collisions involving guided-missile destroyers and merchant ships in 2017.
- Changes to the way the Navy and other service branches can recruit and promote officers.
• Production of several munition lines, including Long Range Anti-Ship Missile (LRASM), Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile Extended Range (JASSM-ER), the MK-48 torpedo, and the Harpoon missiles.
• A policy barring China’s navy from participating in future Rim of the Pacific naval exercises, unless a waiver is granted by the Secretary of Defense. China’s invitation to the 2018 RIMPAC was revoked earlier this year because of the nation’s aggressive actions in the South China Sea.

Other Of Interest

Finding Home: Military Relocation and Retirement on the First Coast

Jennifer Melville, August 9, 2018

It’s moving season.
Each summer, approximately 200,000 military families relocate from their current duty station to their next set of orders. May 15-August 31 is peak PCS (Permanent Change of Station) season, with 65% of military moves occurring during this timeframe.

The local impact is huge. Northeast Florida’s military presence is the third largest in the country, with area military installations like Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Naval Station Mayport, Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Naval Aviation Depot Jacksonville, Marine Corps Support Facility Blount Island, and Camp Blanding Joint Training Center. Each year, thousands of military families relocate to our area.

With an average of 221 sunny days annually, Jacksonville is a great place to call home. Not only is the cost of living affordable, but there’s also easy access to beautiful beaches, world-class restaurants and entertainment, recreational activities for the entire family, and plenty of employment opportunities for spouses or second-careers for retirees. Not to mention it’s only a few hours north of Orlando’s theme parks and a day-trip from Southern destinations like Savannah, Atlanta, and Charleston.

Many decide to stay in the area after retiring from the military. According to the City of Jacksonville, approximately 3,000 military personnel decide to stay in NE Florida after leaving or retiring from the service each year. The positive impact on the local economy is huge. These are people with often high levels of training and a strong work ethic……

Gaetz backs Space Force: ‘We have no choice’

By Jim Thompson, Posted Aug 10, 2018 at 4:48 PM, Updated Aug 10, 2018 at 4:48 PM
http://www.nwfdailynews.com/news/20180810/gaetz-backs-space-force-we-have-no-choice

FORT WALTON BEACH – Creating a Space Force as a sixth branch of America’s military “could be very exciting for Northwest Florida,” says Rep. Matt Gaetz, who represents the area in Congress.

With Eglin Air Force Base already hosting part of the military space mission with the 20th Space Control Squadron, Gaetz said this area is likely to attract some of the federal dollars that would support the Space Force announced earlier this week by Vice President Mike Pence.

Creation of the Space Force ultimately will require congressional action.
“We need to be advocates for the Space Force,” Gaetz said. “Space has advanced substantially as a warfighting domain.”

The 20th Space Control Squadron, which operates a massive radar array at Eglin, in addition to other space surveillance equipment elsewhere, can find, track and target objects in Earth’s orbit. The squadron can track an object the size of a basketball as far as 25,000 miles away.

Military contractors to Northwest Florida. The area is located between Huntsville, Alabama, and Cape Canaveral, Florida, where much of the current work on space hardware is occurring, he added.....

**Defense Bill Calls for DOD to Step up Support for Communities Grappling with Contamination**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Aug 13, 2018 02:45 am

DOD should expedite and streamline cleanups of sites with contaminated groundwater resulting from defense activities that are directly impacting civilian access to drinking water, according to a “sense of Congress” included in the conference report to the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill. The provision, section 317, calls for the department and the military services “to reduce the financial burden on state and local government who are bearing significant costs of cleanup,” as well as to “continue to engage with and help allay local community concerns about the safety of the drinking water.”

While addressing the presence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in local drinking water supplies stemming from the military’s past use of firefighting foam has become a top environmental priority for DOD over the past several years, the language does not single out that class of contaminants. A separate provision of the conference report requires the department to outline its plans for cleaning up on- and off-base drinking water supplies contaminated with PFAS after the Environmental Protection Agency establishes a regulatory standard for those chemicals.

Section 317 also calls for the department to “seek opportunities to accelerate environmental restoration efforts where feasible, to include programming additional resources for response actions, investing in technology solutions that may expedite response actions, improving contracting procedures, increasing contracting capacity, and seeking opportunities for partnerships and other cooperative approaches.” The conferees direct the assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment to brief the House and Senate Armed Services committees on initiatives being pursued to accelerate environmental restoration efforts within 120 days after the bill is enacted. The briefing was included in the legislative language in the original House provision but the conferees moved it to the measure’s joint explanatory statement.

**Veterans Florida announces new entrepreneurship program partners**

Special to the Democrat, Published 3:15 p.m. ET Aug. 9, 2018

Veterans Florida has selected the newest group of Network Partner Organizations to participate in their Entrepreneurship Program.
The program offers online and in-person instruction to provide veterans with the knowledge necessary to open and operate their own business.

This year Veterans Florida will be partnering with Florida Atlantic University, Florida Gulf Coast University, University of Central Florida, Action Zone, Tallahassee Community College and University of West Florida.

“We are very excited to launch our fourth year of the entrepreneurship program with a new group of network partners,” said Bobby Carbonell, Veterans Florida’s executive director.

“Entrepreneurship is an extremely valuable employment option for veterans and the courses and instruction provided through this program have proven extremely effective for those who participate,” he adds. "In just the past few years we’ve seen more than 100 veterans successfully start their own business and generate nearly $22 million in revenue for the state. Being able to support themselves and their families is a big deal to our veterans and we’re proud to be able to assist with this endeavor.”

Nearly one in four active duty service members and veterans want to own and operate their own business. To aid in their efforts, the Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program was created to provide cost-effective, online or in-person instruction. The program offers three different pathways designed to match each individual’s level of knowledge and busy schedule…..

Putnam has a plan for Florida’s $80 billion economic driver

By Admiral Robert Natter (Ret.), Posted Aug 15, 2018 at 4:34 PM, Updated Aug 15, 2018 at 4:34 PM

Florida is home to 20 military installations, three combatant commands, two deep water Navy ports, multiple joint training facilities with access to Air, Land and Sea ranges, and is uniquely positioned to train the United States’ fighting forces.

Our nation’s military presence in Florida also delivers annually an $80 billion economic impact to our state.

Adam Putnam, our Republican candidate for Governor, has long supported this presence and recently announced his “Florida Military and Veterans First Agenda.” His plan details how he will ensure Florida’s military installations and all the active and reserve military personnel that staff these bases have the resources and protections needed to maintain our nation’s essential military readiness.

I met Adam Putnam while I was on active duty working to realign training for the Atlantic Fleet. As it turned out, we did a lot of that realignment in Florida.

After I retired, I worked on the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) effort for the state of Florida. The national goal of the BRAC process aimed for a 20 percent reduction in our military bases throughout the United States. Thanks to the leadership of Adam Putnam and some other State leaders, Florida saw a net increase in our military presence and accompanying jobs.

Our state’s military bases are a critical economic driver, are important for Florida businesses and jobs, and are recession proof. However, that doesn’t mean Florida is immune to shifting needs and the potential BRAC process that is on the horizon. That’s an important reason I trust and support Adam Putnam for our next Governor.

Adam will work to protect Florida’s military and defense presence, and is committed to protecting and growing our state’s military footprint…. 
Aug 24

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – The Task Force will conduct a Strategy Planning Workshop on **September 20, 2018 at the Hilton Garden Inn, 1297 Miracle Strip Parkway SE, Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548** beginning at 9:00am CST. The workshop will be a closed to the public under F.S. 288.985.

2. **New Leadership Announced for all Three Florida Combatant Commands** – According to new releases, all three current commanders are planning to retire. The nominee for USCENTCOM will be USMC Lt. Gen. Kenneth McKenzie Jr. and the nominee for USSOCOM is Army Lt. Gen. Richard Clarke. According to Military Times, “Both Clarke and McKenzie are currently assigned to the Joint Staff; Clarke as director for strategic plans and policy and McKenzie as staff director.” The nominee for USSOUTHCOM is current military advisor to Sec of Defense Jim Mattis, VADM Craig Faller. If confirmed, all would be promoted to Four Star rank prior to taking command. See articles below in the *CLIPS*.

3. **Tim Jones Steps up to be FDA Vice Chair** – Congratulations to Tim Jones from Tampa who has volunteered to be the Vice Chair of the Florida Defense Alliance. Tim is currently serving as the President of the Tampa Bay Defense Alliance and has been extremely active and involved in supporting FDA activities over the past few years. Tim brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to his new position.

4. **Florida Named Freest State in the Nation** – The Cato Institute “Freedom in the 50 States” study done every two years calls Florida the most free place to live in the nation. The study leans largely on the economy and tax policy where Florida ranks best. The areas that were pointed out as needing to improve include: **Fiscal**, Trim spending on sanitation and sewerage, public parks, parking lots, public utilities, and air transportation, which are all higher as a share of income than the national average. Use the proceeds to cut general and utility sales taxes; **Regulatory**, Reform the occupational licensing system to free residents who are currently stymied by those barriers to entry and opportunity. Candidates for deregulation include farm labor contractors, interior designers, medical and clinical laboratory technologists, pharmacy technicians, dispensing opticians, funeral attendants, and bill and account collectors; and **Personal**, Enact the following criminal justice reforms: (a) close the loophole allowing for seizure of cash and monetary instruments without an arrest, and close the equitable sharing end-run around state forfeiture law; and (b) end driver’s license suspensions for non-driving-related drug convictions, as most of the country has done, and provide “safety valves” from mandatory minimum sentences. See the full study at [https://www.freedominthe50states.org/](https://www.freedominthe50states.org/)

5. **Attachments:**
   - 2019 NDAA

*Terry*

Terry McCaffrey
Executive Director
LETTER TO THE EDITOR: We must not allow drilling

Drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico threatens our national security. Most are unaware that this area is a military range essential to our military’s success and critically important to delivering the required capabilities to our men and women deployed overseas. The Eastern Gulf Test and Training Range (EGTTR) connects test and training capabilities from Northwest Florida to Key West. Eglin Air Force Base utilizes the range as well as other military branches, installations, government agencies, and private companies.

The risk of drilling in the eastern Gulf needs to be understood. Proponents of drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico (EGOMEX) cite a potential impact of 56,000 jobs and $2.6 billion in annual revenue. The 2017 Florida Defense Factbook cites Eglin AFB’s annual economic impact as over $9 billion annually and over 72,000 jobs. This does not include the large technologically based defense industry workforce. Florida’s military economic impact is over 801,747 jobs and $84.9 billion. This existing economic benefit would be at risk, not to mention our national security, if drilling and related activities were allowed in the EGOMEX.

The Military Mission Line (MML) is a federal moratorium protecting the EGTTR by banning drilling leases in the eastern Gulf. This moratorium expires in 2022, and it needs to be extended. Drilling structures and activities east of the MML would be incompatible with military activities, negatively impact our military’s readiness and compromise our nation’s military superiority.

In 2017, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense stated, “The DoD cannot overstate the vital importance of maintaining this moratorium.” A May 2018 Pentagon report, Preserving Military Readiness in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico, states, “The EGOMEX is an irreplaceable national asset. No other area offers the DoD a comparable combination of air space, water space, and existing infrastructure to support military activities.”

Energy independence should not cost us our nation’s security. As a national asset, it is critically important to preserve the EGTTR — an area of highest military importance requiring the MML to be permanently sustained to protect our nation’s security.
It’s important that we all contact our legislators to make this happen.

HOLLYWOOD DENOUNCES OFFSHORE DRILLING AND SEISMIC AIRGUN BLASTING

Posted by Robin Kerr Drulard | Aug 18, 2018

Over 42,000 businesses and 500,000 fishing families have formed a strategic alliance rejecting offshore drilling and exploration, citing threats to marine life, coastal communities and local economies. In addition, the Department of Defense, U.S. Airforce, Florida Defense Support Task Force and NASA have also raised concerns that expanded offshore oil and gas development would threaten their ability to perform critical training and testing activities.

In a recent press release, Hollywood Mayor Josh Levy agreed. “Blasting and drilling pose a risk of contaminating the ocean, and that is a risk we are not willing to take. The oceans are too precious a resource for us, environmentally, economically and existentially,” he said.

“We commend the city of Hollywood for rejecting dangerous offshore drilling and seismic airgun blasting,” said Uden, speaking for Oceana. “Giving the oil industry unfettered access to our nation’s oceans is a recipe for disaster.”

“In Florida alone, healthy oceans provide over 608,000 jobs and over $37 billion in annual GDP, mainly through fishing, tourism and recreation,” added Uden. “Oil spills do not respect state boundaries and Floridians will continue to stand up against expanded offshore drilling until the plug is pulled on this radical plan.”

NAS Whiting Field

TH-57 lands on Creek Indian Tribal Grounds

By Ramon Rios | Posted Aug 16, 2018 at 5:20 PM, Updated Aug 17, 2018 at 8:39 AM

MILTON – A TH-57 helicopter from NAS Whiting Field made a precautionary landing on the Santa Rosa County Creek Indian Tribal Grounds Thursday morning. The helicopter landed just inside the property’s gate at 4750 Willard Norris Road.

“It was a precautionary landing, just to be on the safe side,” Whiting Field public affairs officer Julie Ziegenhorn said.

Ziegenhorn did confirm the aircraft was from Whiting Field and there were no injuries. Whiting crews would truck the TH-57 back to the base she said.

“We put safety first, for the pilot and the community,” Ziegenhorn said. Ziegenhorn not have information on what caused the landing or squadron information.

The property’s caretaker, Standing Wolf, said he did not see the landing. “I was in the back on the phone,” Wolf said…..
Whiting Aviation Park hopes to lure high paying defense contractors to Santa Rosa County

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Pensacola News Journal, Published 5:26 a.m. CT Aug. 21, 2018

Back in 2002, Santa Rosa County Commissioner Don Salter had an interesting meeting with the then-commander of Whiting Field Naval Air Station.

"We had just finished acquiring 267 acres adjacent to the base, and he suggested we try and construct an aviation park along the fence line with base," Salter recalled.

The commander's goal was to lure businesses that could repair and provide parts for the hundreds of training aircraft used by the base.

"Instead of being sent to Mississippi or Louisiana or even as far away as St. Louis, they could just send them through the gate to the aviation park," Salter explained.

The commander also suggested allowing the private companies limited access to one of the base's runways, a move that would expedite the repair work and benefit the base by reducing the time aircraft were out for repairs.

The concept made a lot a sense, but turning that concept into reality has taken 16 years of hard work and political lobbying by Santa Rosa County leaders. It also involved many meetings with Pentagon leaders to get the go-ahead for the unique plan to let private companies use the Whiting runway…..

Whiting Field earns Department of Energy Award

By Press Gazette contributor, Posted Aug 22, 2018 at 11:03 AM, Updated Aug 22, 2018 at 11:03 AM

MILTON – The Department of Energy recognized NAS Whiting Field of Milton this week for its contributions to energy efficiency, conservation and renewable energy technologies.

Selected earlier this month as the Department of the Navy’s small shore installation Energy Excellence award winner for 2018, NAS Whiting Field’s recent Utility Energy Savings Contract was also selected by the Department of Energy as a Federal Energy and Management Program award for 2018. The project was one of only nine selected throughout the entire federal government, and the only Department of Navy project recognized.

“It’s great to see the team recognized for their hard work. The government and our industry partners, Gulf Power and Siemens, really worked well together to both increase energy efficiency and significantly modernize our HVAC systems. It was a long but ultimately rewarding process,” Whiting Deputy Public Works Officer Wes Hamill said.

The Federal Energy and Water Management Awards is a DOE program that recognizes individuals, groups and agencies for their outstanding contributions in the areas of energy efficiency, water conservation and use of advanced and renewable energy technologies at federal facilities. With more than 350,000 energy-utilizing buildings, the federal government is the nation’s largest energy consumer.

Completed in late 2017, Whiting Field’s UESC project will result in more than $500,000 in annual energy savings and operational cost avoidance through the installation of energy and water conservation upgrades in 58 facilities…..
Hurlburt Field

Air Force Academy football uniforms instill pride at Hurlburt

By Jim Thompson, Posted Aug 18, 2018 at 10:37 AM, Updated Aug 18, 2018 at 10:37 AM

HURLBURT FIELD – This year’s alternate Air Force Academy football uniforms are creating a stir in the sports world, excitement that has spread to Air Force Special Operations Command headquarters.

That’s because this year’s alternate gear, worn for special games, features the AC-130 gunship, workhorse of Air Force Special Operations missions.

The gray and white uniforms, with black helmets, come in versions representing three models of the venerable gunship — the AC-130U Spooky, AC-130J Ghostrider and AC-130W Stinger II. Helmets will feature artistic renderings of the aircraft, along with symbols associated with each version, such as the skeletal figure with fire coming from its fingers that denotes a “Spooky.”

“We’re thrilled that the Air Force Academy is highlighting (in our humble opinion) one of the coolest, deadliest aircraft in the Air Force inventory, the AC-130,” the public affairs office at Hurlburt Field’s 1st Special Operations Wing said in a statement…..

Hurlburt Field airman to be awarded Medal of Honor

by Randy Wood, Monday, August 20th 2018

OKALOOSA COUNTY, Fla. (WEAR) – This week, a Hurlburt Field airman who gave his life on the battlefield will be recognized for his sacrifice.

Air Force Tech Sgt. John Chapman will posthumously receive the Medal of Honor.

The Destin/Fort Walton Beach Airport was a sea of red, white, and blue - a fitting send-off to a family who lost so much - and their American hero, who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Tech Sgt. Chapman took the kind of actions legends are made of.

Air Force video of his March 2002 battle in Afghanistan shows Chapman and his Reconnaissance team. They bravely engaged the enemy in the rescue of a Navy Petty Officer, who'd fallen from the chopper they were on, landing on an enemy-infested mountain top.

Despite being wounded in the rescue, Chapman continued to fight, ultimately losing his life. People who showed up to see his family depart say that show of valor is just who he was.

Chapman becomes the first airman since the Vietnam era to receive the Medal of Honor…..

Eglin AFB

Hypersonic missile development coming to Eglin
EGLIN AFB – The Air Force Armament Directorate at Eglin Air Force Base is managing two fast-track programs, which could total more than $1.4 billion, to design and build prototypes of hypersonic missiles capable of traveling up to five times the speed of sound — more than a mile per second.

The work is being done under contracts with Lockheed Martin, a Bethesda, Maryland-based defense contractor. One of the contracts sets a 2021 deadline for U.S. hypersonic missile capability.

The latest contract, awarded Monday, calls for Lockheed Martin to design and develop an “air-launched rapid response weapon” (ARRW) by Nov. 30, 2021. The contract carries a not-to-exceed cost of $480 million, with work slated for Lockheed Martin’s Missiles and Fire Control division in Orlando.

Monday’s contract follows a $928 million contract awarded in April to Lockheed Martin’s Space Systems division in Huntsville, Alabama. That contract calls for design and development of “a hypersonic, conventional, air-launched, stand-off weapon (HCSW).”

Stand-off weapons can be fired at a sufficient distance to avoid return fire. The HCSW already has acquired the nickname “Hacksaw,” based on its acronym.

Lockheed Martin officials offered limited comment on the contracts….

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F-35 landing gear collapses after in-flight emergency

WASHINGTON – After a mid-air emergency forced an F-35A fighter jet to return to Eglin Air Force Base, the plane’s nose landing gear collapsed, leaving the fifth-generation fighter face down on the runway.

The incident happened around 12:50 p.m. Wednesday. Fire crews responded immediately, and the pilot suffered no injuries, according to the Air Force. The plane is assigned to the 58th Fighter Squadron, and the service has launched an investigation into the incident.

Photos captured by local news outlets show the plane sitting safely on the runway, with its nose down on the ground. What damage may have resulted from the incident, and the costs associated with repairing it, is unclear; the service did not share details on the initial incident which required the plane to return to base early.

It’s not the first time the F-35 has had an issue with its front landing gear.

In 2017, Navy pilots using the F-35C model — a variation of the fighter jet designed for operations on a carrier — complained the jet would bob up and down on its nose gear when being launched from a catapult.

The issue was bad enough that pilots said they could not read instruments while trying to take flight. A number of pilots also said they experienced pain from the motion. The department worked with Lockheed Martin on a fix for the issue.
Navy base tests mine detectors

By COLLIN BREAUX, Posted Aug 17, 2018 at 6:33 PM

NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY PANAMA CITY – The local Navy base recently tested technology that keeps service members safe.

Engineers with Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division (NSWC PCD), a Naval Support Activity Panama City tenant unit that does scientific research, tested sonar systems that find underwater mines. The “government acceptance testing” was done in June, and the systems are now used in Navy operations based in Norfolk, Virginia.

“Mine warfare is one of the things that is very important and usually overlooked because mines are cheap for the enemy to build and put in the water,” NSWC PCD project engineer Brett Thach said. “Our systems help find and clear paths for the ships to be able to come through safely.”

The mine detectors have two mounted slender devices that are about 12 feet long and weigh roughly 700 pounds. They can go deep underwater, though how deep is classified. The testing at NSWC PCD took several weeks and involved towing the systems from helicopters, which are “intended platform” for the technology…..

Tyndall AFB

F-22s, Typhoons train over Spain

Story by Senior Airman Preston Cherry, 52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs 08.17.2018
https://www.dvidshub.net/news/289242/f-22s-typhoons-train-over-spain


The squadron of F-22s, along with Airmen and associated equipment, are part of a Flying Training Deployment forward deploying from Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, to operating locations within NATO member nations to maximize training opportunities, strengthen alliances and deter regional aggression.

The training involved F-22s receiving in-air refueling from a U.S. Air Force KC-135 Stratotanker assigned to the 100th Air Refueling Wing, RAF Mildenhall, England. After refueling and entering Albacete airspace, the F-22s trained with Spanish Eurofighter Typhoon aircraft by practicing various dogfighting scenarios and maneuvers.

“It was very good training,” said Capt. Antonio Juarez, 142nd Squadron Spanish Eurofighter Typhoon pilot. “It was the first time we trained with this platform, and it’s good for us to fly with different squadrons and aircraft to see the movements in the air.”

Following training, the aircraft landed at Los Llanos Air Base where the pilots from both aircraft spoke to media about the training. Afterwards, Spanish air force pilots and military personnel from NATO allied nations attended a brief held by the U.S. Air Force on the capabilities of the F-22…..

NS Mayport
Mayport Naval Station will be the home port of the USS Minneapolis-St. Paul starting July 31.
The Minneapolis-St. Paul is a littoral combat ship, the Navy’s newest class of warship.

NAS Jacksonville

Navy offers testing, information to Jacksonville residents concerned about well water contamination

It’s a process playing out around 40 Navy and Marine Corps installations: testing drinking water from privately owned wells for traces of harmful chemicals found in the foam that was used for years to extinguish aircraft fires.

With it has come an information campaign like the one on display Thursday night at the Courtyard by Marriott in Orange Park. The hotel is just down the road from Naval Air Station Jacksonville, where the aqueous film forming foam was used regularly from the mid-1960s until the late ’90s in the training of firefighters.

Letters and postcards went out from the base over the last two weeks to about 3,000 homes in the area to make residents aware of possible contamination of their drinking well water. Only 24 wells were identified initially as potential health risks, said Adrienne Wilson, the restoration project manager. But she said the agencies wanted to make sure anyone who lives near the base was aware of the Thursday open house.

The 51 people who walked through the doors got the chance to speak to representatives from the Navy, the Florida Department of Health, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the City of Jacksonville and JEA. Even the commanding officer of the installation was there.

US Central Command

New CENTCOM, SOCOM leadership named

Two seasoned Iraq and Afghanistan generals have been named to the top posts at U.S. Central Command and U.S. Special Operations Command, U.S. officials confirmed to Military Times.
Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Kenneth McKenzie Jr. has been selected to serve as CENTCOM commander and Army Lt. Gen. Richard Clarke has been selected to lead U.S. Special Operations Command.

McKenzie and Clarke will respectively replace current CENTCOM commander Army Gen. Joseph Votel and current SOCOM commander Army Gen. Raymond “Tony” Thomas after both retire next year.

The changes at CENTCOM and SOCOM would be the latest in a string of regular shifts among the military’s top leadership. Last week the Pentagon announced that current military senior adviser to Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, Navy Vice Adm. Craig Faller, was nominated to lead U.S. Southern Command.

In April, Adm. Phil Davidson was tapped to replace Adm. Harry Harris as commander of the newly renamed U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. Earlier this week, the Wall Street Journal reported that Air Force Gen. Tod Wolters is under consideration to become the next U.S. European Command and North Atlantic Treaty Organization supreme allied commander, Europe, to replace Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti, who is retiring……

Patrick AFB
Brig. Gen. Doug Schiess returns to Brevard, assumes command of Air Force's 45th Space Wing

Rick Neale, Florida Today, Published 8:22 a.m. ET Aug. 23, 2018 | Updated 1:36 p.m. ET Aug. 23, 2018

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE – Six years ago, then-Col. Doug Schiess reported to Cape Canaveral Air Force Station to oversee Eastern Range missile launch operations.

Thursday, he returned to Brevard County as a brigadier general — to lead the entire 45th Space Wing.

Schiess assumed command from retiring Brig. Gen. Wayne Monteith during a ceremony at the Patrick Air Force Base auditorium.

"It's awesome. My wife Debbie and I, like I said during the ceremony, feel like we've won the lottery being able to come back and be a part of this community and part of this awesome wing," Schiess said minutes later, addressing the media in the Patrick AFB chapel.

"I'm going to obviously continue on the successes of Gen. Monteith, and to continue as we drive to 48 launches a year. Making sure that we do everything we can to work with our partners — ULA and SpaceX and other companies that are coming along — to be able to provide capabilities to the warfighter and to our nation through space," Schiess said.

Schiess — whose last name rhymes with chess — formerly commanded the 45th Operations Group from 2012-14. In that capacity, he oversaw the Eastern Range's military, commercial, NASA, and ballistic missile launch operations.

He previously led the 21st Space Wing at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado. After that assignment, he deployed to Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar in support of operations Enduring Freedom, Resolute Support and Inherent Resolve. Most recently, he served as senior military assistant to the Under Secretary of the Air Force at the Pentagon…..
US Southern Command

Navy admiral, Mattis aide to be nominated to head US Southern Command

By: Aaron Mehta and Robert Burns, The Associated Press, 8-16-2018

WASHINGTON and SANTIAGO, Chile – Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Thursday that his senior military assistant, Navy Vice Adm. Craig Faller, will be nominated to serve as the next head of U.S. Southern Command.

Mattis made the statement to members of a Chilean government delegation before attending a signing ceremony for an agreement on cyber cooperation with Chilean Defense Minister Alberto Espina.

The nomination was expected to be publicly announced later Thursday in Washington, and still requires confirmation by the Senate. If confirmed, Faller would become a four-star admiral, a rapid rise for someone who had only two-stars in January of last year.

Faller studied engineering at the Naval Academy and worked in nuclear specialties early in his career. Later, as a commanding officer, he deployed repeatedly the Middle East, leading combat forces supporting U.S. military operations in the Persian Gulf, and in Iraq and Afghanistan. Before taking the job with Mattis, he worked as the Navy’s point man for legislative affairs.

Mattis selected Faller as his military assistant just days after being sworn in as secretary, continuing an existing relationship between the two. While assigned to Central Command, Faller was investigated by the Navy Inspector General over allegations he breached military ethics rules when, as a carrier strike group commander in 2011, he was offered and accepted a luxury hotel suite in Malaysia.

Mattis’s Visit Forges Chilean-U.S. Cybersecurity Agreement

Felipe Lagos/Diálogo | 22 August 2018

As part of his first official tour in South America, U.S. Secretary of Defense James N. Mattis visited Chile August 16, 2018, to meet Chilean President Sebastián Piñera and Chilean Minister of Defense Alberto Espina. Following a meeting addressing security issues, science and technology development, military exercises, and disaster assistance, Mattis and Espina signed a cybersecurity cooperation agreement.

The agreement, signed in a ceremony at the presidential palace of La Moneda in Santiago, guarantees closer mutual support to counter cybercrime threats. In June 2018, Banco de Chile reported the loss of $10 million due to a cyberattack. That same month, the Chilean government’s Cybersecurity Interministerial Committee held its first meeting, where authorities discussed operational and legislative measures to strengthen this field.

“The joint statement that we signed today will enhance our defense cooperation specifically in cyber operations and protection of Chile’s cyberdomain,” Mattis said. “This agreement recognizes the threat to all our democracies that we now face in that contested domain.”
The agreement establishes cooperation between Chile and the United States on three main points: to maintain a safe and reliable Internet network, protect the critical infrastructure of both countries, and promote norms on the responsible use of cyberspace. According to Minister Espina, the agreement will take effect in the coming months..

Hospital ship to support humanitarian mission in Latin America

Story by Raymond Sarracino, U.S. Southern Command 08.22.2018

MIAMI – The U.S. Navy hospital ship USNS COMFORT (T-AH 20) will deploy to Central America and South America in late September to begin a two-month humanitarian mission with stops in Colombia and the region.

During the deployment, military medical personnel will work alongside our partners to provide needed medical assistance, according to the needs defined by each stop.

The USNS COMFORT support in Colombia was requested by the Colombian government to relieve the pressure of increased population flows from Venezuela on their national health system.

"This mission is a symbol of what can be accomplished when partners work together to aid people in need," said U.S. Navy Adm. Kurt Tidd, commander of U.S. Southern Command, which will oversee the deployment. "Because this mission is humanitarian in nature, it will focus on the people we're assisting, on the nations we're partnering with, and on the region we're supporting together."

This marks the sixth hospital ship deployment to the region since 2007 and reflects the United States’ steadfast commitment of friendship and solidarity with the Americas.

NAS Key West

Key West mayoral candidates promise housing solutions

BY GWEN FILOSA, gfilosa@flkeysnews.com, August 23, 2018 03:12 PM

Key West voters will select a new mayor for the first time in nine years, as Mayor Craig Cates is term-limited.

Seven candidates are campaigning to succeed him on an island where the most pressing issues start with a lack of workforce housing in a city that relies on tourism as its economic engine, and also include street conditions, traffic congestion and a parking crunch.

The primary is Aug. 28 and a runoff is very likely. If so, the top two finishers will face off in the Nov. 6 general election.

Three have dominated the campaign trail: Teri Johnston, the former city commissioner, George Bellenger, who owns Key West Eco Tours and retired minister Randy Becker.
Current City Commissioner Margaret Romero, who ran several times against Cates - who never lost a race and has been mayor since he defeated an incumbent in 2009 - is among the top three fundraisers, having sunk $6,500 of her own money into her campaign. But Johnston easily leads the pack with $82,000 raised and having spent more than $76,000.

Bellenger has raised $27,000 and spent about $16,000 while Romero has raised more than $9,500 and spent about $8,500.

Becker has raised about $8,200 - $5,000 of it his own money - and spent about $6,200.

Three candidates say housing is the city’s number one problem.

Johnston said, “Housing (whether rental or purchase), a livable wage and available child and health care. Housing: Right now all “new” development in Key West is required to provide 30% affordable housing. However, we do not require this same 30% affordable housing component when we ‘re-develop,’ which is about 95% of all of our development in Key West. This has been a gaping loophole for years that must be closed immediately.”

Becker said, “If we don’t have available, affordable housing for our workers, our seniors, our families, we can’t function as a community. We can use city owned land to leverage private development which will ensure the housing will be kept affordable forever. We can explore appropriate models of rent control/rent stabilization. We can create programs of recognition and support for landlords who provide affordable housing.”

Bellenger said, “Lack of affordable/workforce housing is the underlining crisis of our time. As mayor I would consider any and all housing initiatives. I would immediately host a round table with a seat for all interested parties including developers. I would insist on any future public/private partnership involving tax credits or free land be deeded affordable for the life of the project.”

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**DoD Budget**

**Senators Add Community Infrastructure Money to Defense Spending Package**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Aug 24, 2018 03:31 am  
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=d6e159572c

The Senate on Thursday approved an amendment to a two-bill spending package allocating $20 million to the new authority allowing DOD to provide funding to state and local governments for off-base infrastructure projects, bringing the opportunity for communities to obtain funding under the Defense Community Infrastructure Pilot Program in the new fiscal year one step closer. By Thursday evening, the chamber approved the underlying $857 billion minibus made up of the defense and Labor-HHS-Education appropriations measures.

The Senate’s approval of the fiscal 2019 defense spending bill in August positions Congress to possibly avoid starting the new fiscal year with a series of continuing resolutions to fund the Pentagon. The path to working out a compromise spending bill with the House that could be sent to the president is uncertain, however. The House passed its FY 2019 defense spending bill in June, but its Labor-HHS-Education measure has not been debated on the floor. One option is for the chambers to hash out a conference report for the defense bill by itself, but that’s not the first choice of Senate Appropriations Chairman Richard Shelby (R-Ala.). “We’d like to go to conference as soon as we can with the House with the bills coupled together,” Shelby said, reported CQ.
The chairman of the House Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee also indicated he would like to see the two spending bills move together as a way to gain House Republicans’ support for a large domestic spending measure. Attaching the two, though, likely would complicate the path toward a House-Senate compromise, slowing enactment of the defense title. The good news is there are five weeks before the new fiscal year gets under way.

At this point, passage of the Senate amendment funding the defense community infrastructure initiative represents a significant achievement for ADC, with much of the credit going to Sen. Jerry Moran (R-Kan.), co-chair of the Senate Defense Communities Caucus, and the association’s Federal Outreach Advisory Committee.

The provision was included in a package of non-controversial amendments that passed by unanimous consent. Another provision, offered by Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), would allocate $45 million to clean PFOA and PFOS contamination at military bases.

The defense spending bill would provide about $675 billion for military and intelligence programs, including almost $68 billion for the overseas contingency operations account, matching the topline in the House version. Still, there are considerable differences in funding for individual programs between the two versions that need to be reconciled.

**Other Of Interest**

**Report: Air Force General May Be Next Head of Joint Chiefs**

By Oriana Pawlyk, Military.com, 20 Aug 2018


Two U.S. Air Force generals are being considered to become the military's next top general with the anticipated retirement of Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford next year, according to a new Wall Street Journal report.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen David Goldfein and U.S. Strategic Command's Air Force Gen. John Hyten are among those being considered by the White House to be next chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff, Journal reported Sunday.

Goldfein, Hyten and Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Milley are also under consideration to become the next vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the Journal said, citing U.S. officials. The position is currently held by Air Force Gen. Paul Selva.

A White House spokesperson declined to comment to Military.com about the reported moves on Monday. A Defense Department spokesman declined to confirm the moves, but noted that the military routinely makes senior command changes…..

**US Coast Guard busts 3 illegal charter operations in Miami over weekend**

By Amanda Batchelor - Posted: 2:06 PM, August 20, 2018Updated: 2:06 PM, August 20, 2018

MIAMI - The U.S. Coast Guard shut down three illegal charter boat operations over the weekend in Miami, Coast Guard officials announced Monday in a news release.

According to the press release, Coast Guard officials stopped a 147-foot yacht called Golden Touch II on Sunday near Nixon Beach after noticing some safety issues, including that it was carrying more paying passengers than it was certified to carry.

Authorities said crew members boarded the yacht, which had 47 people aboard, and discovered several violations, including that it did not have a valid certificate of inspection, failure to have a drug and alcohol program and failure to have a valid stability letter.

"Tragically people have lost their lives on illegal charters, as was seen in the case of the vessel Jaguar in the Tampa Bay area and in the case of the Miami Vice yacht in Miami," said Capt. Ladonn Allen, chief of Coast Guard 7th District prevention department. "The unsafe atmospheres that these types of companies and unlicensed captains, who knowingly engage in illegal activity, create on their boats show a complete disregard for passenger safety and have been responsible for multiple deaths in Florida alone. We cannot stress enough to anyone looking to charter a boat to verify the captain’s license and safety of the vessel."

Coast Guard officials said the owner and operator of the yacht faces up to a maximum fine of more than $41,000 for the illegal passenger-for-hire operation.

Details about the other two busts were not immediately released……
Aug 31

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – The Task Force will conduct a Strategy Planning Workshop on **September 20, 2018 at the Hilton Garden Inn, 1297 Miracle Strip Parkway SE, Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548** beginning at 9:00am CST. The workshop will be closed to the public under F.S. 288.985.

2. **New Task Force Member Appointed** – The Speaker of the House has appointed Col Jim Heald, USAF (Ret) to fill a vacancy (Bio and appointment letter attached). Col Heald is from the Eglin AFB area and will be a great asset to the Task Force. His term runs from 27 Aug 2018 – 26 Aug 2022. Please welcome him when you get a chance.

3. **Two Conferences this Fall Showcase Orlando’s Simulation Industry** – There will be two conferences focused on Simulation Industry taking place this fall in the Orlando area. The first is the **Florida Simulation Summit** hosted by Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs and the National Center for Simulation on Thursday, September 6, 2018 - 08:00 to 17:00 at the Orange County Convention Center. According to the website, “Now in its fourth year, the Florida Simulation Summit builds upon the work of the Modeling, Simulation and Training (MS&T) Blue Ribbon Commission that I convened in 2013, and it continues to showcase the strong progress, synergy and development of the MS&T industry in Central Florida and statewide. This year’s Simulation Summit highlights Digital Twin Technology and the Internet of Things with a focus on virtual system simulations.” For information and registration, go to [https://www.simulationinformation.com/events/florida-simulation-summit-2018](https://www.simulationinformation.com/events/florida-simulation-summit-2018). The second conference will be the **Synthetic & Simulation Training Conference** in Orlando November 7-9, 2018 that will take place at the Marriott Orlando, Downtown. According to their website, “The Synthetic and Simulation Training summit will discuss the current and future direction and utilization of virtual training & simulation technologies throughout the Military, Academia, Commercial Aviation, and Gaming sectors to ultimately allow military leaders the ability to plan, prepare, execute, and assess training events through minimal time, money, and people.” For more information and to register for this conference, go to [https://synthetictraining.iqpc.com/](https://synthetictraining.iqpc.com/)

4. **Task Force FY19-20 Grant Application Cycle Extended** – The FY19-20 grant application cycle is open and now runs through Friday, September 7, 2018 due to a few growing pains with the on-line application system. Within budget constraints, the FDSTF may fund projects that can be leveraged to promote, preserve, or enhance military missions and installations in Florida. The Task Force is using a new web-based system this year; previous forms will not be accepted. Please go to [https://www.tfaforms.com/rest/forms/view/4680176](https://www.tfaforms.com/rest/forms/view/4680176) to access the new application. Please contact Marcy Sanders (cced) if you have issues with the new system.

5. **Attachments:**
   - Col Heald Appointment Letter
   - Col Heald Bio
   - TPG Monthly Report
   - Dept of Interior Off Shore Oil Management
Cyber

New document lays out American military’s early cyber struggles

By: Justin Lynch, 8-27-2018

Cyber leaders at the Department of Defense in 2014 were struggling with staff shortages, blurry lines of authority and a lack of resources, according to a Pentagon report obtained by Fifth Domain.

The 54-page document, written by the Inspector General’s office in Dec. 2014, was obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request that took four years to complete. It is so heavily redacted that even the full title of the document is redacted.

But the few sections of the report which are available and untouched give an insight into the early struggles of America’s cyber excursion.

In 2014, the Pentagon was two years into a reorganization of its cyber operations. The report said that more resources were needed to plan and integrate cyberspace operations in the military’s different combatant command structures, which include Central Command, Pacific Command and Special Operations Command.

The report also said that officials from the commands did not communicate fully with each other when it came to cyberactivity. “Not regularly sharing information or providing timely guidance and decisions decreased the combatant commanders ability to effectively plan and prioritize cyberspace operations,” the Inspector General’s report read……
Inhofe Armed Services Leadership to Depart Drastically From McCain’s

With John McCain’s death Saturday, the Senate Armed Services gavel will almost certainly pass to James M. Inhofe of Oklahoma, marking a significant change in leadership style and priorities for the powerful panel.

While the boisterous McCain was a hard-charging critic of both the Pentagon and the commander in chief, the more subdued Inhofe is, in many ways, the opposite.

During his time as the Armed Services Committee’s ranking member from 2013 to 2015, the Oklahoma Republican rarely raised his voice, a marked contrast to McCain’s sometimes fiery outbursts from the committee’s podium or Senate floor.

And while McCain was a persistent and vocal critic of the Trump administration, including Defense Secretary James Mattis, Inhofe often defers to Mattis on major military issues and has lauded President Donald Trump’s foreign policy decisions.

“I do disagree on a few things with McCain,” Inhofe told reporters at a November breakfast after McCain had said he worked better with former Defense Secretary Ash Carter, who served under President Barack Obama, than current Defense Secretary James Mattis.

“Mattis, he’s a godsend,” Inhofe said.

Beyond Mattis, Inhofe’s relationship with the president has also been far warmer than McCain’s famously fraught relationship with Trump.

Before Trump won the presidency, he invited Inhofe to Trump Tower in New York to discuss military issues. Since Trump assumed office, Inhofe has praised Trump’s decision to move the U.S. embassy in Israel to Jerusalem and has praised Trump’s nuclear talks with North Korea.

Substantial differences

Inhofe and McCain were also of different minds on policy issues affecting the military and its vast bureaucracy.

During Senate debate last year on the fiscal 2018 defense authorization act, McCain offered an amendment that would have created a new Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) commission to review all military installations. The proposal could have potentially started a new controversial BRAC round, but the amendment ultimately failed.

Inhofe, who isn’t altogether against the BRAC process, opposed starting a new round when the Trump administration and the Republican-controlled Congress were in the nascent stages of a military build-up.

NAS Whiting Field

Pensacola NAS to help Milton's static T-28 aircraft remain in city
The T-28 static aircraft outside of Milton High School will continue to "soar" at its Stewart Street location, thanks to new repair costs that are more than 50 percent lower than previously estimated.

In June, the City Council heard that it might cost close to $80,000 to fix the landmark aircraft that's been outside the high school since 1976. Because of that, the council considered the possibility of taking down the display.

But now the city is instead looking at a bill between $20,000 and $30,000 with two options for repairs, based on an offer from Pensacola Naval Air Station personnel to do the work, according to Milton Interim City Manager Randy Jorgenson.

"That's good news, folks," Jorgenson told the council when the item was discussed at a Committee of the Whole meeting on Thursday evening at City Hall. "I said to the guys at NAS, we might have to buy them pizza, but we'll take care of them and whatever they want."....

**Eglin AFB**

**Air Force probes F-35 mishap at Eglin**

By WENDY VICTORA, Posted Aug 24, 2018 at 4:19 PM, Updated Aug 24, 2018 at 5:15 PM


EGLIN AFB – The F-35 involved in a mishap Wednesday afternoon has been grounded until an investigation and damage assessment can be completed by the Air Force Safety Investigation Board.

The investigations can take up to 30 days, according to Lena Lopez, a spokeswoman for the 33rd Fighter Wing at Eglin Air Force Base.

The pilot reported an in-flight emergency before landing the F-35A Lightning II just before 1 p.m. Wednesday. After the plane was parked, the front landing gear collapsed.

The incident occurred within view of motorists passing by on State Road 85. The plane has since been removed from the runway, Lopez said.

In an unrelated incident, an F-35 hit a bird during a training mission Wednesday. The plane wasn’t damaged and the pilot wasn’t injured, Lopez said. The strike was discovered after the mission was completed and the plane had landed.

“The maintenance team conducted a thorough inspection and determined that the aircraft did not sustain any damages,” Lopez said. “During that time, they collected samples (of the bird) that they will send out to have analyzed so that they can find out what breed and species it was.”

The samples are sent to the Smithsonian Institution, she said. The information is used to help the Smithsonian track migration of that species.
AFCEC's Airfield Pavement Evaluation Team wins One Air Force Award

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (AFNS) -- The Air Force Civil Engineer Center’s Airfield Pavement Evaluation Team received the General Mark A. Welsh III One Air Force Award for demonstrating improved effectiveness, operational readiness and mission accomplishment through integrated solutions.

This Air Force-level award recognizes mission success achieved by a team of two or more Total Force components. Active-duty, Guard, Reserve, Civil Air Patrol, or Department of Defense civilians from major commands and direct reporting units can be considered for this award.

“This Total Force team is one of a kind in our Air Force and their skills are required worldwide,” said Col. John Tryon, director of AFCEC operations. “Because of that, they are some of the busiest folks in the military, and every day they directly support the warfighters at the tip of the sword and their ability to fly, fight and win.”

A primary subordinate unit of Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center, the AFCEC APE Team is located at Tyndall Air Force Base but provides service for pavement evaluation around the world. They are responsible for tracking the status and assessing the lifecycle repair times for 2.2 billion square feet of pavement valued at $20 billion across the Air Force…...

Littoral Combat Ships 11 (Sioux City) and 13 (Wichita) Delivered to U.S. Navy

MARINETTE, Wis., Aug. 23, 2018 – Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) and Fincantieri Marinette Marine (FMM) delivered the future USS Sioux City, Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) 11, and future USS Wichita, LCS 13, to the U.S. Navy.

LCS 11 is the sixth Freedom-variant LCS designed and built by the Lockheed Martin-led industry team and will be commissioned at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, on Nov. 17. LCS 11 will be the first combat ship ever commissioned at the Naval Academy.

LCS 13 is the seventh Freedom-variant LCS designed and built by the Lockheed Martin-led industry team, and will be commissioned this winter.

"We look forward to the day the future USS Sioux City and USS Wichita join the fleet. LCS is a highly affordable, increasingly lethal and versatile ship," said Joe DePietro, vice president of Lockheed Martin's Small Combatants and Ship Systems. "LCS is a growing component in the U.S. Navy surface force, designed to fulfill critical missions around the world now and in the future."
LCS 11 and LCS 13 will be homeported at Naval Station Mayport, Florida, alongside USS Milwaukee (LCS 5), USS Detroit (LCS 7) and USS Little Rock (LCS 9)…..

**Coast Guard, Border Patrol Arrest 7 in Two Separate Drug Interdictions**

By Source staff, August 30, 2018

A U.S. Customs and Border Protection agent accounts for 27 packages of cocaine that were transferred by the Coast Guard Cutter Yellowfin, along with four suspected smugglers, Dominican nationals, to federal authorities Wednesday in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Yellowfin transferred four suspected smugglers and approximately $1 million of cocaine to Border Patrol agents in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, Thursday, following the interdiction of a go-fast vessel Sunday just off Loiza, Puerto Rico.

In a separate case, Caribbean Border Interagency Group law enforcement authorities apprehended three other suspected smugglers and seized approximately $1 million of cocaine following the interdiction of a go-fast vessel Monday off Mona Island, Puerto Rico.

According to a news release issued Thursday by the U.S. Coast Guard, the interdiction were the result of ongoing multi-agency law enforcement efforts in support of Operation Unified Resolve…..

**MacDill AFB**

**KC-135 Damaged in Tropical Storm Won't Fly until October, Air Force Says**

By Oriana Pawlyk, Military.com 27 Aug 2018

A **KC-135 Stratotanker** damaged by Tropical Storm Maria in the Pacific last month will be out of commission until at least October, officials told Military.com.

The storm, which rolled over Guam on July 4 and 5 before being upgraded to a typhoon later that week, affected Air Mobility Command tankers stationed at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam.

"One aircraft sustained 20 feet of damage to its right outward wing leading edge, which required a specialized heavy maintenance team to repair," AMC spokesman Maj. Bryon McGarry told Military.com Aug. 24 in a statement. "The affected aircraft is anticipated to return to duty in October."

Photos surfaced last month on the popular but unaffiliated Facebook group Air Force Amn/Nco/Snco of tankers sprawled out across the runways after the storm hit…..
US Special Operations Command
SOCOM seeking technologies for war in a post-cyberpunk era

By: Kelsey Atherton, 8-27-2018

The great trick of computers is that they enable people to be more than human. In a new request for information, the U.S. Special Operations Command is looking for a range of computer and computer-enabled technologies, all designed to make Special Operators function in some way more than human. These technologies range from sensors to nano-drones to biomedical performance enhancements.

Taken together, the list of desired capabilities is a preview of what may be possible in the near-future to shape the intimate fights on the edges of wars. Miniature robot scouts, hyperaware data collection and monitoring riding along low-bandwidth nodes, tailorable hyperspectral imaging sensors, biometric tracking resistance, and go-pills without adverse effects are all on asking, and that’s just a handful of the dozens of capabilities sought…..

Cape Canaveral AFS
Blue Origin: How Brevard County got an $8 million bill and plans to pay it

Emre Kelly and Wayne T. Price, 4:58 p.m. ET Aug. 24, 2018 | Updated 12:09 p.m. ET Aug. 25, 2018

It was an inspired gambit.

In 2015, state officials began formulating a plan to entice Blue Origin, an up-and-coming rocket manufacturer funded by one of the wealthiest individuals in the world, to build a massive factory on the outskirts of Kennedy Space Center and launch its rockets nearby.

A year later, Blue Origin signed a deal: It would lease Cape Canaveral Air Force Station's Launch Complex 36 and build a factory at Exploration Park just outside KSC's gates on land owned by NASA but managed by the state. Clinching the agreement was an $8 million incentive package from Brevard County.

The Space Coast had secured a major victory that promised hundreds of jobs, hundreds of millions of dollars in investments and the prestige that comes with a deal for rocket manufacturing – something not historically done here. That the agreement was with the rocket company belonging to billionaire Jeff Bezos of Amazon made it that much more sexy.

The effort, however, was not easy, and there were moments when it seemed the Space Coast could lose out to less conventional competitors. North Carolina was interested in attracting Blue Origin and offered substantially more money than Florida. Officials there even planned to create license plates that included "First in Flight Again" as a tagline, a spin of its current plates that tout the Wright brothers' first successful flight…..
SpaceX confirms its next Space Coast launch will happen no earlier than Sept. 8

Chabeli Herrera Contact Reporter, Orlando Sentinel, Aug 27, 2018, 5:25p.m.

After delays, SpaceX has finally set a date for its next Space Coast launch.

The Elon Musk-led private company will launch the Telstar 18 VANTAGE satellite, developed by Canadian telecommunications company Telesat, no earlier than Sept. 8, SpaceX said Monday.

The company had originally announced that it would launch the satellite no earlier than August, but the launch date has been pushed back several times, according to Spaceflight Now. The most recent date put SpaceX launching this weekend, but Spaceflight Now reported last week that the date had again been delayed to no earlier than Sept. 9.

SpaceX did not comment last week on the delay, but has now confirmed it’s targeting early September.

The launch is scheduled to take place at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station’s launch pad 40 with the satellite riding on a Falcon 9 rocket.

US Southern Command

Argentina hosts 2018 South American Defense Conference

By Jose Ruiz, U.S. Southern Command Public Affairs, Aug. 29, 2018 —

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina -- Military and civilian leaders from 11 nations met Aug. 28-29 in Buenos Aires, Argentina to take part in the 2018 South American Defense Conference (SOUTHDEC).

This year marks the first time Argentina has hosted the South America-focused conference, a forum for dialogue among the region’s chiefs of defense, facilitating the exchange of ideas, experiences, and perspectives on security and defense issues, and promoting cooperative approaches to regional security.

The two-day conference included presentations, moderated roundtables, bilateral and multilateral meetings, and plenary sessions.


Joining Argentina and the U.S. were leaders and officials from Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, and Spain, who is taking part in SOUTHDEC for the first time.

The participating nations chose “South American Contributions to Global Peace” as this year’s theme.

“This opportunity will allow us to consolidate the much-needed military ties between our countries with the aim of addressing and identifying common and integral solutions to the challenges associated with global peace,” Sosa said, as he welcomed the delegations.
US Southern Command Begins Joint Military Exercises in Colombia

Published 30 August 2018

In Colombia, 13 countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Costa Rica, Canada, and England will participate this Thursday in the 58th edition of the United States Southern Command-sponsored joint military exercises known as "Unitas."

The exercises first took place in Venezuela, in 1960, in the context of the Cold War and U.S. anti-communism. This year, it will take place in Cartagena, between August 30 and September 11.

Although the event presents itself as promoting “hemispheric solidarity,” some countries are concerned about the increasing U.S. presence in Latin America.

Venezuela is not part of Unitas 2018 and the military exercises to take place in neighboring Colombia are seen as a threat to the South American country and peace in the region.

Earlier this month Bolivian President Evo Morales, warned that U.S. military presence in the region “does not guarantee dignity or sovereignty.”

The exercises take place on the backdrop of increasing threats by the U.S. government against the elected government of Nicolas Maduro in Venezuela. These threats range from economic sanctions to openly calling for a military coup…..

NAS Key West

Attorney General Jeff Sessions Delivers Remarks to the Joint Interagency Task Force South

Posted by: Brady Kenyon in US News, August 30, 2018

**Washington, DC** – United States Attorney General Jeff Sessions delivered his remarks Wednesday to the Joint Interagency Task Force South which is a multiservice, multiagency task force based at the Naval Air Station Key West in Florida.

During his address Sessions praised the performance of the task force in their fight to keep deadly drugs out of communities.

“This Department of Justice values your partnership in the fight to keep deadly drugs out of our communities,” said Sessions.

Sessions also highlighted the major emphasizes the Trump administration has placed on building law enforcement relationships and partnerships in America and around the world.

“Under President Donald Trump, this Department has placed a special emphasis on building law enforcement relationships and partnerships in America and around the world.” “We know all too well that drugs are killing record numbers of Americans—and almost all of them come from overseas.”
“The day I was sworn in as Attorney General, President Trump ordered me to focus on dismantling transnational criminal organizations. And every single day this Department has been faithful to that order.”

“Under President Trump, the Department of Justice has achieved historic results in the fight against international drug trafficking. These results benefit not only the American people—but the people of your countries, too.”

**Defense Industry**

**Tech and Manufacturing Driving Growth in Southern U.S. Markets**

By Mike Sheridan, August 27, 2018


From her 25th-floor office in downtown Austin, Texas, Carey Gunn Venditti, a partner in the real estate practice group at international law firm DLA Piper, stops talking about the vitality of the city’s economy and glances out the window at the construction cranes dotting the skyline.

“Today, I count eight cranes working on both office and residential high-rise projects,” she says. “That’s proof that Austin real estate remains strong. Unless there is an unforeseen event affecting the national or global economy, we expect this trend to continue.”

Austin is but one of the cities in states in the U.S. South—Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, the Carolinas, and Tennessee—that are experiencing expanding economies and increasing development. Technology, tourism, education, medical, and manufacturing are among the industries driving the real estate sector in the region.

Technology has become integral to the South’s economic well-being and is becoming a factor in real estate development in areas that had not been known for high tech. Tampa Bay anchors the tech corridor in central Florida and is gaining a global reputation as a hub for innovative research and development in life sciences, manufacturing, and defense and security, says Bradford L. Johnson, senior managing director at the Tampa Bay office of New York City–based Integra Realty Resources (IRR), which provides real estate valuation, counseling, and advisory services.

“Tampa’s MacDill Air Force Base hosts U.S. Central Command and U.S. Special Operations Command as well as 38 additional mission partners,” Johnson says. “A $14 billion military industry has developed in Tampa with specialized security, cyber security, intelligence, information technology, simulation training, and advanced manufacturing firms, making Tampa a top market for defense contractors.”

**DoD Budget**

**Bill would give $45M for nationwide PFAS testing**

By Garret Ellison, Updated Aug 24; Posted Aug 24


**WASHINGTON, DC** – New bipartisan legislation in Congress would accelerate nationwide testing for PFAS contamination sources and quicken cleanup at military bases.
The bill package is helmed by Michigan Democrat Sen. Debbie Stabenow and includes Republican co-sponsors from Florida and South Dakota, two states with active military bases where PFAS contamination is being investigated.

**Senate Bill 3382**, or the PFAS Detection Act, is co-sponsored by Sen. Mike Rounds, R-S.D. It authorizes $45 million for the U.S. Geological Survey to test for PFAS contamination near drinking water sources around the country and develop advanced methods for finding "as many compounds as possible" at lower concentrations.

Sampling areas specified in the bill include "estuaries, lakes, streams, springs, wells, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and soil" near "known or suspected" contamination.

**Senate Bill 3381**, or the PFAS Accountability Act, is backed by Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla. It would help expedite cleanup at contaminated federal facilities and enable states to recover costs associated with addressing the polluted sites.


**Senate passes $675 billion defense budget bill, with hopes of avoiding funding lapse next month**

By: Leo Shane III, 8-24-2018

WASHINGTON – Senators on Thursday advanced an $857 billion appropriations measure that includes full defense funding for fiscal 2019 and raises hopes that Congress may be able to avoid a government shutdown or short-term budget extension for Pentagon programs this fall.

The measure, which passed 85-7, includes money for the departments of defense, health and human services, labor and education. The so-called “minibus” of appropriations bills was touted by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., as making America “stronger overseas and right here at home.”

Of the total, $675 billion would be set aside for military spending next year, including nearly $68 billion in overseas contingency funds. The levels are in line with the recently adopted defense authorization bill and the budget deal reached by Democrats and Republicans last spring.

“The funds meet many of the requirements of our military commanders, equipping and training units to meet and to overcome the most dangerous of emerging global threats,” McConnell said before the vote. “As ever, we are to provide adequate training, weaponry and skills so that Americans always prevail on the battlefield.”

Earlier in the week, McConnell predicted that passing the defense minibus would “put us on a pathway to avoid an omnibus or any kind of drama associated with the end of the fiscal year.”

Lawmakers have until Sept. 30 to either pass new appropriations for federal agencies, pass a temporary budget extension into the fall, or trigger a partial government shutdown……
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – The Task Force will conduct a Strategy Planning Workshop on **September 20, 2018 at the Hilton Garden Inn, 1297 Miracle Strip Parkway SE, Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548** beginning at 9:00am CST. The workshop will be closed to the public under F.S. 288.985.

2. **Advocacy Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Released** – The Task Force’s current Advocacy contract expires in February 2019. In order to get the best competition for our next contract, the Task Force has released a Request for Qualifications (DTFRFQ19-001-attached) to determine what companies may be qualified to support its needs. Responses are due by October 15, 2018. Once we have an opportunity to review, the Task Force plans to begin solicitation in November 2018, conduct selected vendor presentations in January 2019, and potentially begin a new contract in March 2019. The RFQ document and other information is hosted on MyFlorida Marketplace and our website at [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/funding-contracts/](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/funding-contracts/)

3. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Call for Innovators** – ADC is asking for innovators to bring ideas to be highlighted at the next Installation Innovation Forum in March 2019 in Miami. According to Matt Borron from ADC, “The future of military installations and defense communities will be defined by partnerships and technology. We’ve already begun to see this evolution play out across the country as bases turn to an ever broadening scope of industry and community services and capabilities. Each year we see new projects push the boundaries on what types of partnerships and technological innovations are possible. This is the focus of ADC’s popular annual event, Installation Innovation Forum. Next March, 600+ community, industry and military leaders from across the country will gather in Miami for the largest professional development event of its kind focus on sharing best practices. A centerpiece of this event will be our Innovators Program, a platform for highlighting the nation’s most innovative projects and emerging ideas that are redefining how we manage our military installations and collaborate with communities. This year’s program will focus on three categories of projects:

   - **Today’s Innovations** - Projects underway or recently implemented that offer ideas that can be replicated today
   - **Strategy-driven Innovations** – With DoD’s focus on the new National Defense Strategy, ADC is looking for emerging innovation projects from conceptual to actual that integrate that advance ideas in the NDS.
   - **Innovations of the Future** – We want to look beyond what is happening today to what will be happening 5, 10, 20 years downline. What are the future innovations that will define our bases in the years ahead.

ADC is accepting initial project nominations through Sept. 28. This short online submission form will get you on our list for consideration and review. Those projects selected will be part of extensive outreach at IIF, as well as in a new ADC publication.” If you are interested in making a submission that highlights Florida, go to [https://installationinnovation.org/innovators-nomination-form/](https://installationinnovation.org/innovators-nomination-form/)
4. Senator Inhofe Takes Over as SASC Chair – Senator James Inhofe from Oklahoma took over as Chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) on Wednesday, Sept 5, 2018 following the passing of Sen John McCain who had held the position for many years. Inhofe has been the Acting Chair in Sen McCain’s absence and has more than 30 years as a member of the House Armed Services Committee and the SASC, so the transition should be smooth. See more information below in the CLIPs.

5. New OPED says Offshore Energy Development “Shouldn’t Be a Victim of Theatrics” – In an article in the Sunshine State News, Mr. Barney Bishop makes the case that opposing offshore oil exploration or drilling is unfounded and often subject to “theatrics” and “fear mongering”. The article encourages individuals to join a coalition called the “Explore Offshore” that he states is “an organization of supporters who appreciate energy’s importance to our economy and national security”. The article does not mention the Gulf Range or the economic and national security that could be at risk if oil drilling east of the Military Mission Line (MML) were conducted. These types of offshore exploration and drilling have been called “incompatible” with military missions in the eastern Gulf of Mexico; not due to fear mongering nor environmental concerns, but due to the safe testing and training operations conducted in the range. See the article below in the CLIPs.

6. Task Force FY19-20 Grant Application Ends Today – The FY19-20 grant application cycle closes today, September 7, 2018. Within budget constraints, the FDSTF may fund projects that can be leveraged to promote, preserve, or enhance military missions and installations in Florida. The Task Force is using a new web-based system this year; previous forms will not be accepted. Please go to https://www.tfaforms.com/rest/forms/view/4680176 to access the new application. Please contact Marcy Sanders (cced) if you have issues with the new system.

7. Attachments:
   - Advocacy RFQ

Terry
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News Clips of Interest:

Oil Drilling / Gulf Range

Safe Offshore Energy Development Shouldn't Be a Victim of Theatrics

By BARNEY BISHOP, September 5, 2018 - 5:15pm

Chances are, you’ve noticed it’s election season. It seems everywhere we look another politician is inserting his or her opinion on the latest hot topic, whether it’s education, public safety and, of course, the environment. Offshore development continues to be a “hot potato” issue -- it seems no one wants to touch it, at least not publicly.

I’ve seen an interesting trend in which candidates, whether Republican or Democrat, are quick to denounce offshore development yet fail to touch on the policy aspect. Instead, it’s all about emotion. Politicians seem to buy right into the scare tactics used by radical environmentalists and forego scientific reason at the expense of our energy supply and economy.

I’m a proud blue-dog Democrat, so I can tell you offshore development is not a partisan issue. For me, the cornerstone of offshore development, or any safe form of energy development, is about affordable energy, which literally keeps our lights on. Not to mention offshore also keeps our friends, families and neighbors employed, our economy flourishing and our country secure. These are all talking points politicians typically love, so why is offshore different? It’s simple: fear mongering.

Those who push anti-drilling messages spread an alarmist rhetoric while avoiding rational policy discussions. You’d be surprised at the sheer volume of people who decry expansion of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) program but would not be able to explain what offshore actually does or what it really looks like. All offshore development means is companies extract oil deposits under the ocean floor. And, the oil reservoirs are identified by seismic surveys before development even begins.

These surveys have been proven safe for marine animals, as previously stated by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management’s chief environmental officer…..

Eglin AFB

Eglin-based Armament Directorate expands interest in hypersonics

By Jim Thompson, Posted Sep 4, 2018 at 4:56 PM, Updated Sep 4, 2018 at 5:13 PM

EGLIN AFB – Barely two weeks after the Air Force awarded a nearly half-billion-dollar contract for design and construction of a hypersonic missile — under a program to be managed by the Air Force
Armament Directorate at Eglin Air Force Base — the directorate has issued an even broader call for development of hypersonic weapons.

Hypersonic weapons, which can travel at up to five times the speed of sound, and can be launched from aircraft, present a couple of advantages over existing weapons. Their speed allows them to quickly penetrate deeply into enemy territory, and also means there is little time for enemies to defend against them.

In a solicitation to potential contractors issued Aug. 30, the Armament Directorate, whose mission is “to equip warfighters by acquiring and supporting war-winning capabilities,” notes it is “currently conducting market research on hypersonic weapon rapid development, production, and sustainment.”

The announcement, basically a request for interested vendors to outline their qualifications in the hypersonic weapons realm, goes on to hint strongly at the possibility of multiple contract awards based on those responses.

The solicitation comes on the heels of the Air Force’s Aug. 13 award of a “not-to-exceed” $480 million contract to Bethesda, Maryland-based defense contractor Lockheed Martin. The contract, managed by the Armament Directorate, calls for the fast-tracked design and development of an “air-launched rapid response weapon” (ARRW) by Nov. 30, 2021. Work will be done at Lockheed Martin’s Missiles and Fire Control division in Orlando.

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**First Invisible Wounds Center Opens at Eglin Air Force Base**

By Ilka Cole, Air Force News, 6 Sep 2018


**EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla.** – The 96th Medical Group held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of the Air Force's first Invisible Wounds Center here Aug. 30.

More than 120 people attended the event and toured the new facility, including Air Force Surgeon General Lt. Gen. Dorothy A. Hogg, Air Force Brig. Gen. Evan C. Dertien, the 96th Test Wing commander, and members of the local community.

Hogg thanked everyone who helped to stand up the center and reaffirmed the Air Force's commitment to providing "trusted care" to service members.

"Standing up this facility is just the first step of many in our commitment to care for our warriors with invisible wounds," she said. "We owe these brave men and women the very best treatment possible. Today, we make good on that commitment."

The center will serve as a regional treatment center for post-traumatic stress, traumatic brain injury, associated pain conditions and psychological injuries……

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**NSA Panama City**

**County accepts grant for new military tech center**

By COLLIN BREAUX, Posted Sep 5, 2018 at 9:35 PM, Updated Sep 5, 2018 at 9:35 PM

**PANAMA CITY** – Bay County commissioners accepted a $95,000 grant for a new military technology center during their regular meeting Wednesday.

The grant is from the Florida Defense Support Task Force and was obtained through efforts by the Bay Defense Alliance (BDA). The grant will go toward a feasibility study on an Expeditionary Innovation Center (Ex-Cell for short) near Naval Support Activity Panama City and support the base’s science lab Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division.

The “neutral facility” will be outside the base fence, to better collaborate with local universities and modeled after similar military tech innovation hubs in Fort Walton Beach and Tampa.

“Since we’re a defense community, we have this unique opportunity to support military members and their families here, as well as the missions of both of our bases,” BDA President Tom Neubauer said. “And this grant is one of many. I think the county has helped us with over $6.5 million dollars in defense grants over the last 15 years supporting both Naval Support Activity Panama City and Tyndall Air Force Base.”

Students and innovators can “deliver projects to the warfighter,” Neubauer said. An exact location and opening date hasn’t been set. A website and collaboration events for the Ex-Cell also is planned later on, according to public documents…..

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**MacDill AFB**

* 'Monster' alligator spotted on MacDill Air Force Base

Mary Stringini, Julie Salomone, 5:22 PM, Aug 31, 2018, 6:59 AM, Sep 3, 2018


**TAMPA, Fla.** — A massive alligator was spotted on MacDill Air Force Base in South Tampa Friday morning.

U.S. Marine Corps Gunnery Sergeant Jake Sherrock took the video on his phone, but made sure to keep his distance.

“That is a monster. An absolute monster,” Sherrock said in the video. “This is like a freaking dinosaur, man.”

The large gator which golfers estimate to be roughly 12-feet long, slowly made its way across the Bay Palms Golf Course.

Sherrock has served in the United States Marine Corps for 18 years. He has been stationed at MacDill Air Force Base for the past two years. He said it's the first time seeing a gator in Florida.....

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**US Special Operations Command**

* General Atomics Integrating and Testing MQ-9 and MQ-1C Unmanned Aerial Systems for SOCOM

AFCEA, September 5, 2018

https://www.afcea.org/content/general-atomics-integrating-and-testing-mq-9-and-mq-1c-unmanned-aerial-systems-socom
General Atomics Aeronautical Systems Inc. (GA-ASI), Poway, California, was awarded a $50,000 minimum, $15,000,000 maximum, sole source Indefinite-delivery/indefinite quantity contract (H92403-18-D-0006) with firm-fixed-price and cost-plus-fixed-fee contract line items for integration and testing support for Medium Altitude, Long Endurance Tactical (MALET) MQ-9 and MQ-1C Special Operations Forces peculiar (SOF-p) modifications; procurement of GA-ASI developed and produced aircraft modification kits; and analysis and studies to inform future decisions on potential MALET MQ-9 and MQ-1C SOF-p modifications. Fiscal year 2018 operations and maintenance funds in the amount of $482,441 are being obligated at time of award. The work will be performed in Poway, and is expected to be completed by September 2023. U.S. Special Operations Command, Tampa, Florida, is the contracting activity.

Cape Canaveral AFS

‘Never Been Busier’: New Space Race Brings Boom Times Back to ‘Space Coast’

US, 23:09 02.09.2018

According to a Saturday report by Stars and Stripes, since the US shuttle program, carried out by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), ended seven years ago, the region's unemployment rate has gone from 12 percent to 3.9 percent thanks to new, diverse companies contributing to a revitalized space race.

Many businesses selling space shirts on Brevard County's Space Coast are thriving.

"We've never been busier," said Merritt Island Space Shirts president Brenda Mulberry stated, adding that the store had more than doubled its business since the end of the shuttle program seven years ago.

Although the end of the shuttle program initially resulted in the loss of over 9,000 jobs, employment is now on the rise, as the Kennedy Space Center diversifies its economy, becoming the prime region where US spacecraft are assembled.

For example, Brazilian aerospace giant Embraer added nearly 1,000 jobs in the region over the past few years, while US aerospace and defense company Northrop Grumman introduced an additional 3,000.

The introduction of Tesla founder Elon Musk's SpaceX and Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos's Blue Origins has driven down unemployment significantly in the area……..

Navy prepares to commission future USS Indiana submarine this month

By Todd Corillo, Posted 10:07 Am, September 3, 2018, Updated At 06:35pm, September 3, 2018
HTTPS://WTKR.COM/2018/09/03/NAVY-PREPARES-TO-COMMISSION-FUTURE- USS-INDIANA-SUBMARINE-THIS-MONTH/

NORFOLK, Va. - The Navy is getting ready to commission the newest fast-attack submarine into the fleet later this month.

The future USS Indiana (SSN 789) will be commissioned at the Navy Port at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Port Canaveral, Florida on September 29.
The Indiana will be the 16th Virginia-class submarine to join the fleet.

Diane Donald, wife of retired Admiral Kirkland Donald, is sponsoring the submarine. It is the third Navy vessel bearing the Indiana name, but the first submarine to do so.

The Indiana was delivered to the Navy by Newport News Shipbuilding on June 25th. The submarine was built as part of a teaming agreement with General Dynamics Electric Boat.

Construction on the Indiana started back in September 2012.

The Indiana is expected to be stationed in Groton, Connecticut upon commissioning.

**Patrick AFB**

**Reserve Citizen Airmen Honored By Melbourne Chamber of Commerce In 10th Annual Valor Awards**

By Maj. Cathleen Snow, 920th Public Affairs // September 2, 2018


BREVARD COUNTY • MELBOURNE, FLORIDA – Ten Reserve Citizen Airmen were honored with Valor Awards, one posthumously, by the Melbourne, Florida Chamber of Commerce during their 10th annual Valor Awards on August 22, along with police, firefighters and other first responders throughout the area.

“It’s an extraordinary night full of energy and emotion; honoring the bravest men and women among us,” said Florida Governor Rick Scott while addressing the roomful of more than 300 attendees.

The Valor Awards are meant to acknowledge those in public safety and military service who go above and beyond what they’re asked to do. Each of the recipients was nominated by their commanders for extraordinary job performance……

**Avon Park**

**SOCom is asking to see all kinds of drones, some for delivering blood to the battlefield**

Howard Altman, Times staff writer, Published: September 4, 2018


On a far-flung battlefield, 100 miles from the nearest treatment center, a Navy corpsman signals for a small drone to bring life-saving blood to a wounded commando.

Meanwhile, a tiny drone shaped like a bug spies on enemy leaders. Another small drone swoops in to broadcast messages, in local languages and dialects, explaining why Navy SEALS are there. Elsewhere, swarms of drones, aided by artificial intelligence, challenge enemy forces jamming signals.

Welcome to the future of special operations warfare.
These technologies aren’t yet in the hands of the military’s commandos, but officials at U.S. Special Operations Command are eager to deliver them. That’s why the command, headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base, is seeking help from academics, industry and individuals who may have designed drones that can meet its needs.

In a request for information issued last month, SOCom asked that they showcase their wares in November during a demonstration at the Avon Park Air Force Range straddling Polk and Highlands counties. Commandos will observe plans and, when possible, drone systems in action. Later, the command might collaborate on further development……

US Southern Command

No One’s Supplanting US Military Influence in Latin America

BY JUAN GABRIEL TOKATLIAN
PROFESSOR, DI TELLA UNIVERSITY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2018

Many U.S. and Latin American experts who analyze inter-American military relations tend to repeat two inaccuracies. First, they confuse diplomatic statements and military realities. Second, they reckon that the military policies of China, Russia, Iran, and India towards Latin America are generating a disturbing imbalance that is detrimental to Washington.

The former tendency is exemplified by an emphasis on then-Secretary of State John Kerry’s 2013 speech announcing the end of the Monroe Doctrine. In practice, however, the Defense Department and especially U.S. Southern Command, have reaffirmed their supremacy in Latin America.

The latter tendency requires a bit more unpacking. There is no doubt that China’s economic growth is being accompanied by an incipient military projection beyond its regional area of influence, including attempts to boost arms exports to Latin America. Yet Beijing’s effective military impact upon Latin America in the region remains low — with the exception of its arms exports to Venezuela. Russia is the region’s largest foreign arms supplier: since 2013, according to SIPRI, Moscow has supplied 27 percent of the region’s imported weapons, more than the United States (15 percent) and France (10 percent) combined. Meanwhile, military ties between Iran and Latin America annoy Washington, but Tehran lacks the capability to ensure its standing or hinder U.S. preeminence in the region. And as for the limited defense ties between India and Latin America, Indian specialist Sanjay Badri-Maharaj says it is a farce to talk about them.

In short, the U.S. military preponderance in the region persists and it is rock-solid……

DoD Budget

CR, or Worse, Remains Distinct Possibility for Pentagon

Dan Cohen, Posted on Sep 04, 2018 03:00 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156e255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=064478f8f4
A final defense spending bill for fiscal 2019 is tantalizingly close, with House and Senate lawmakers expected to go conference shortly on the two-bill package the Senate passed last month, yet the probability that DOD avoids the need to operate under a continuing resolution (CR) after Oct. 1 is only 50-50, according to Washington insiders. Hampering the chances for Congress to complete and approve a conference report for the defense and labor-HHS-education appropriations ‘minibus’ is the lack of time on the congressional calendar before the end of the month, reports CQ. House and Senate negotiators appear poised to hash out a compromise defense bill quickly despite a number of differences in spending allocations, but reaching a deal over the labor-HHS-education title will be more challenging, especially since the House never cleared its own version of that measure.

The prospect for the military construction-VA spending title to become law before the Oct. 1 start of the new fiscal year is brighter, with lawmakers appearing very close to approving a conference agreement for a three-bill spending package made up of the milcon, energy-water and legislative branch titles.

Looming over Congress’ goal of advancing next year’s spending bills in a series of minibuses — in an effort to avoid a massive, end-of-the-year omnibus — are President Trump’s prior threats to force a government shutdown over funding for a U.S.-Mexico border wall. More recently, he has backed away from that stance, but the prospect of a shutdown remains a wildcard which could alter plans for multiple full-year spending bills, or even a CR, to become law.

One budget expert told CQ he believes there is a 60 percent chance Trump carries out his threat. “What’s the downside for him in vetoing a CR over funding for the wall and looking adamant to his base on immigration?” said Stan Collender. “He looks tough, and it may be his last chance to get the border wall,” Collender said.

If Congress ends up relying on a stopgap spending measure to keep the government open after Oct. 1, it likely would last through much of 2018 and be followed by another, even longer, one.

Adam Smith expects future defense budgets to dip below $716 billion

By: Aaron Mehta, 9-6-2018

WASHINGTON – When Congress delivered a $716 billion defense budget to the Pentagon, defense leaders made it clear it was a welcome boost — but some questioned if the number would be enough to do everything the department foresees as necessary.

Now the ranking Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee — who is poised to take over the HASC should November elections go blue — is warning that tightened belts are on the horizon.

Asked specifically if $716 billion is the right number for defense and whether future budgets will stay at that level, Rep. Adam Smith, D-Wash, said flatly: “No and no.”

“I think the number’s too high, and it certainly not going to be there in the future,” Smith said at the second annual Defense News Conference.

The congressman argued that the debt and deficit situation facing the country requires balancing out how the government is spending, particularly after the Trump administration’s tax cuts made it “even more difficult to get our budget under control.”
But drawing down the defense budget has to be part of a broader look at U.S. strategy, something that Smith said requires a realistic look at America’s military strategy. He pointed to the idea that 355 ships are vital for the Navy as an example of flawed logic, because “capability matters.”

Other Of Interest

Inhofe takes over as new Senate Armed Services chairman

By: Joe Gould, 9-5-2018

WASHINGTON – Sen. Jim Inhofe has been the face of the Senate Armed Services Committee for the last nine months. Now he will officially lead it.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell announced the 83-year-old Inhofe, R-Okla., as the new chairman of the committee on Wednesday, formally recognizing him as the chamber’s top voice on military and defense policy issues.

Inhofe has led the panel as acting chairman since its previous chairman, Sen. John McCain, who died last month, went home last year to receive treatment for brain cancer.

During that time, Inhofe wielded significant influence over the annual defense authorization bill process, although he frequently noted that McCain was still acting as the senior committee leader from afar.

A land developer before he was elected to the House in 1986, Inhofe served eight years on the House Armed Services Committee and the last 23 on the Senate counterpart, including as its ranking member from 2013 to 2015.

Mattis to Remove Pentagon CMO over Performance

Dan Cohen, Posted on Sep 07, 2018 03:55 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156e255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=100f12165f

The White House is looking for a replacement for John Gibson II, the Pentagon’s first-ever chief management officer (CMO), for a “lack of performance,” according to defense officials. Gibson, whose primary duty is reforming DOD’s business operations including real property management, remains in his job for now but his responsibilities have been scaled back, reports the Wall Street Journal. He was informed by Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan more than a month ago that leaders weren’t satisfied with the results of his work.

Gibson’s expected departure suggests the department’s initiative to find savings within its massive bureaucracy and apply them to modernization needs — one of Defense Secretary Jim Mattis’ top priorities — is “foundering,” one official told the paper. “All of Mattis’ modernization ambitions lie in the money that Shanahan and Gibson were going to harvest out of the institution in savings and efficiencies,” the official said. “Without it, Mattis is truly in trouble.”
Sep 14

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – The Task Force will conduct a Strategy Planning Workshop **NEXT WEEK** on **Thursday, September 20, 2018** at the Hilton Garden Inn, 1297 Miracle Strip Parkway SE, Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548 beginning at 9:00am CST. The workshop will be closed to the public under F.S. 288.985.

2. **Governor Scott Signs Proclamation** – Governor Rick Scott has signed a proclamation designating the week of September 9-15, 2018 as Florida Veteran Suicide Prevention Week. See attached.

3. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Base Redevelopment Forum Next Month** – According to ADC’s daily news feed, “This year’s Base Redevelopment Forum, scheduled for Oct. 8-10 in Portland, Maine, will provide an in-depth look at how the military services and communities are tackling PFAS issues and collaborating to move forward.” If you would like to attend, register at [https://baseredevelopment.org/](https://baseredevelopment.org/)

4. **Advocacy Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Released** – The Task Force’s current Advocacy contract expires in February 2019. In order to get the best competition for our next contract, the Task Force has released a Request for Qualifications (DTFRFQ19-001 - attached) to determine what companies may be qualified to support its needs. Responses are due by October 15, 2018. Once we have an opportunity to review, the Task Force plans to begin solicitation in November 2018, conduct selected vendor presentations in January 2019, and potentially begin a new contract in March 2019. The RFQ document and other information is hosted on MyFlorida Marketplace and our website at [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/funding-contracts/](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/funding-contracts/)

5. **Attachments:**
   - Gov Scott Proclamation

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**Terry**

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**Cyber**

**Trump: ‘You and your cyber are going to get me in a war’**

By: Justin Lynch, 9-11-2018


*Fear,* the new book by journalist Bob Woodward about the Trump administration, describes how U.S. officials consider the use of cyberattacks and weigh them with other types of military action.

The book, which was officially released Sept. 11, highlights how both the Obama and Trump administrations used cyberattacks as a response to activity in another domains. It also sheds light on how the United States relies on cyberspace to deter actions.

Woodward describes how the Obama administration used cyberattacks as one method to deter a North Korean nuclear launch. From the onset of the Obama administration, the book describes how U.S. intelligence officials targeted the “command, control, telemetry and guidance systems, before or during a North Korean missile test launch.” In 2017, the New York Times reported Obama ordered the Department of Defense to ratchet up their cyber and electronic strikes against North Korea as a way to sabotage the country’s missile program……

**BRAC**

**In the Early Days of BRAC, Sen. McCain Understood the Burdens Associated with Redeveloping Former Bases**

By Barry Steinberg, Posted on Sep 10, 2018 02:58 am, In “On Base” w/ Dan Cohen

https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=9975f11826

We recently honored and buried Sen. John McCain. The accolades bestowed upon him were rich and well deserved. His commitment to fairness and the proper role of government in that regard merit no further comment than that a grateful nation has lost a valued and iconic public servant.

The military base closure community is particularly indebted to Sen. McCain. He, unlike many of his colleagues, understood the domestic implications of warfighting and the toll that training activities and industrial operations at military bases have on our physical environment. In response to those consequences and the implications for redevelopment of former military bases, Sen. McCain sponsored and forcefully advocated for passage of section 330 of the 1993 National Defense Authorization Act, a provision of law that indemnifies owners, tenants and others in control of property closed pursuant to a
base closure law for the environmental losses, costs, expenses and liabilities incurred as a result of military activities while the property was used by the Department of Defense (DOD). Without this protection, defense communities and developers were concerned the transfer and reuse of closed bases would be plagued by legal issues, environmental risk and costly delay.

Unsurprisingly, DOD forcefully opposed the legislation, arguing that an open-ended indemnity obligation posed a risk to its budget……

**Base Redevelopment Forum to Take Close Look at PFAS Contamination**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Sep 10, 2018 02:00 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=9975f11826

Questions surrounding the presence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the drinking water supplies used by BRAC communities have become an overriding concern over the past several years, forcing redevelopment projects to take on a variety of new responsibilities. This year’s **Base Redevelopment Forum**, scheduled for Oct. 8-10 in Portland, Maine, will provide an in-depth look at how the military services and communities are tackling PFAS issues and collaborating to move forward.

The Forum, first held in Portland five years ago, has become the nation’s leading conference addressing the issues, challenges and opportunities associated with the reuse and redevelopment of former and realigned military installations. The event’s themes extend beyond BRAC, though, with a broader focus on advancing economic revitalization through community-driven redevelopment. The Forum will explore critical issues and important financial incentives that directly impact BRAC communities, including opportunity zones, energy islanding and affordable/workforce housing.

Interactive discussion sessions will be supplemented with a tour of Brunswick Landing, the successful reuse of the former Naval Air Station Brunswick. With the backdrop of the beautiful Maine coast filled with fall colors, join this unique forum to share experiences, network with colleagues, and participate in engaging discussions. Early registration ends — and the hotel block closes — Friday, Sept. 14, so register today!

**Conference Agreement Adds Funds for BRAC Cleanup, Other Priorities**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Sep 13, 2018 06:00 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=b4b1ee28d2

Funding for cleanup and ongoing operations and maintenance at installations closed during past base closure rounds would jump $32 million from current year spending to $342 million next year, under the conference agreement for the fiscal 2019 military construction-Veterans Affairs spending bill released Monday. The compromise allocation represents a $74.5 million increase over the administration’s budget request, which conferees said should be used to accelerate remediation at closed bases. The conference report directs $60.5 million of the additional funds to go toward cleaning up Navy BRAC sites. It directs $14 million to be spent on identifying, mitigating and cleaning up PFOA and PFOS, two contaminants found in the drinking water supplies used by a number of BRAC communities. The Navy and DOD need to submit a spending plan for the extra funds within 30 days after the spending measure, part of a three-bill minibus, is enacted, the report says.
The conferees also highlighted the need for “the department to dedicate funds to demolish BRAC facilities and turn the land over to the local community as quickly as possible,” and noted they are concerned DOD does not have “an adequate plan” for demolishing BRAC sites. They cited the example of Ontario Air National Guard Station, which was shuttered in 1997 and now is home to Ontario International Airport. “Yet the old site has sat largely unchanged for 20 years due to the environmental hazards of demolition,” they stated.

NAS Pensacola

L-3 Awarded $203 Million To Provide Support Services For US Navy’s T-45 Trainers

Our Bureau, 08:13 AM, September 11, 2018
http://www.defenseworld.net/news/23326/L_3_Awarded___203_Million_to_Provide_Support_Services_for_US_Navy___s_T-45_Trainers#.W5kS_85KjIU

The US Navy has awarded a $203 million worth contract to L-3 Communications Vertex Aerospace LLC for T-45 advanced jet trainer services.

The awarded contract is to “exercise an option for organizational, intermediate, and depot level maintenance, logistics, and engineering support for Navy T-45 aircraft, aircraft systems, and related support equipment for flight and test and evaluation operations,” the Department of defense announced Monday.

The T-45 Goshawk is a tandem-seat training jet capable of aircraft carrier operations. It is a U.S. Navy version of the British Aerospace Hawk and is used by both the Navy and Marine Corps for pilot training. Variants of the aircraft have been in use since 1991.

Work will be performed at the Naval Air Station (NAS) Kingsville, Texas; NAS Meridian, Mississippi; NAS Pensacola, Florida; and NAS Patuxent River, Maryland, and is expected to be completed in September 2019.

NAS Pensacola receives evacuated military aircraft ahead of Hurricane Florence

by Ly’Nita Carter, Tuesday, September 11th 2018

PENSACOLA, FLA. (WEAR-TV) – As Hurricane Florence draws closer to the east coast, officials in the impacted area are implementing evacuation plans for both residents and air crafts.

According to a statement issued from spokesperson, Pat Nichols of Naval Air Station Pensacola, 60 planes are expected to fly into Northwest Florida.

NAS Pensacola can expect to receive 46 F-18’s and a combination of 15 E-2’s and C-2’s airplanes to arrive at NAS Pensacola over the next few days.

The planes are flying in from Oceana, South Carolina, Beaufort, South Carolina, Naval Air Station Patuxent River, which is also known as NAS Pax River and Norfolk, Virginia.

NAS Pensacola has currently received six planes from the evacuated areas.
NAS Whiting Field

Repairs are underway

By Kevin Boyer | Posted Sep 7, 2018 at 8:56 AM, Updated Sep 7, 2018 at 8:56 AM

MILTON – City Council provided an update to the T28 plane repair progress which shows a positive outlook for the city.

Council said that through working with Naval Air Station Pensacola and NAS Whiting Field, the estimated cost for the repair of the plane has gone down by half of proposed costs to make necessary repairs. The original repair estimates were $80,000.

City Manager Randy Jorgenson said the estimated man hours needed to complete all repairs would be around 750 hours. Jorgenson also said that 12-15 individuals have volunteered their time to assist.

Some repairs have already been done, according to council, including the repair to a default in the base holding the plane. Council said that the plane will be able to stay in place during all repairs.

The city of Milton conducted a survey for the fate of the T28 plane in front of Milton High School. After an overwhelming response to keep the plane, the city began making preparations to repair it based on the requirements of the Navy. These repairs include clearing corrosion and mold from the plane and fixing the base of the plane.

Eglin AFB

Jets from Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort arrived Tuesday

By Jim Thompson, Posted Sep 11, 2018 at 6:44 PM, Updated Sep 11, 2018 at 6:44 PM

EGLIN AFB – Seventeen fighter jets from a Marine Corps air base in South Carolina will ride out Hurricane Florence here.

The aircraft — 13 F-35B stealth fighter jets, two British-built MK-58 Hawker Hunter fighter jets, and two Israeli-built F-21 Kfir fighter jets — arrived at Eglin Air Force Base from Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort on Tuesday, according to Eglin public affairs spokeswoman Jasmine Porterfield.

MCAS Beaufort is a short distance inland from coastal South Carolina, between Charleston and Savannah, Georgia.

The jets will be accommodated on the flight line of the 33rd Fighter Wing, according to Porterfield. The evacuation to Eglin is a particularly good fit for the F-35s from MCAS Beaufort because the 33rd Fighter Wing is the graduate flight and maintenance wing for the F-35.

More aircraft could be evacuated to Eglin from other military bases as Hurricane Florence advances toward the East Coast, Porterfield said….

NSA Panama City
New innovation center to be built near Navy base

By Megan Bell | Posted: Wed 6:46 PM, Sep 05, 2018 | Updated: Wed 7:02 PM, Sep 05, 2018

BAY COUNTY, Fla. (WJHG/WECP) – A new innovation center is set to pop up near the Navy base off Thomas drive.

At Tuesday morning's Bay County Commission meeting, the board accepted a $95,000 grant from the Florida Defense Support Task Force for the creation and support of the new center.

It'll be called the Expeditionary Innovation Center, also known as Ex-Cell, and it's set to assist the Navy base and students at Florida State Panama City.

"It's part of the defense's push to use rapid innovation technology to assure that the military is able to deliver tools to the war-fighter much more quickly," Bay Defense Alliance President Tom Neubauer said.

This grant is one of many.

More than $6.5 million in grants have been received over the last 15 years to support the Naval Support Activity Panama City and Tyndall Air Force Base.

Tyndall AFB

9/11 remembered in Tyndall Air Force Base ceremony

By COLLIN BREAUX, Posted Sep 11, 2018 at 2:20 PM, Updated Sep 11, 2018 at 2:21 PM

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE – On Sept. 11, 2001, Don Arias had his last conversation with his younger brother Adam.

Adam Arias worked in New York in the financial industry and died in the terrorist attacks. Don Arias, who’s also from New York and now works as a spokesman at Tyndall Air Force Base, called his brother on the phone when he heard about the attacks.

“He was a lighthearted, determined guy. He was smart and he was very talented,” Arias said. “I remember that morning. On Sept. 11, the enemies of freedom attacked our country. I think back to that morning a lot, particularly on that anniversary. I think back to that morning when our lives were changed forever. ... I was here at Tyndall Air Force Base participating in a NORAD exercise.”

Arias, a former New York firefighter, spoke about his memories and personal connection to Sept. 11 during a remembrance ceremony held Tuesday at Tyndall held for the 17th anniversary. While Arias wasn’t able to personally find Adam when he went back home to search for his brother and cover the aftermath, Adam’s remains were returned to his family 10 days later and put to rest.

Adam “told me the terrible sights he saw from his window, of men and women jumping to their deaths, of your fellow Americans making that terrible decision of whether they’re going to jump or burn,” Arias said. “A tragic human drama unfolded in front of my brother’s eyes. Over the phone I could hear the commotion of people in the background lined up on windows and all too human responses of, ‘Oh my God.’ His last words to me were, ‘I got to go.’ I heard the urgency in my brother’s voice.”

In addition to Arias’ remarks, there was also a ceremonial bell ringing, bagpipe performance and table displaying first responder equipment. 325th Fighter Wing Cmdr. Brian Laidlaw said Sept. 11 was a tragic day, though also brought out the best in Americans.....
Crew Aboard Mayport-Based USS New York Will Observe Sept. 11 Anniversary

Seventeen years ago on September 11, 2001, America watched in horror as two hijacked commercial airliners slammed into the World Trade towers in New York City, an act of terrorism that killed nearly 3,000 people and injured many thousands more.

9-11 remembrances are planned around the country, including here on the First Coast. One of them will be aboard the USS New York, which is homeported at Naval Station Mayport.

Command Master Chief Benjamin Hodges said most Navy ships have a mini-museum that honors the vessel’s namesake. But that’s not the case with the USS New York, which has a much more extensive reminder of its namesake.

“The entire ship from the stern up to the bow and every space in between is covered in memorabilia and memories that have been donated to the ship over the years,” said Hodges.

Hodges said that includes the seven-and-a-half tons of World Trade Center steel in the ship’s bow.

Tyonek to deliver maintenance support for US Navy aircraft at FRCSE

Tyonek Global Services has secured a new contract award with the US Navy to provide aviation maintenance support to all of the service’s aircraft types.

Under the deal, the company will be responsible for providing the navy with depot level maintenance at the service’s Fleet Readiness Center Southeast (FRCSE).

Valued at $21m, the contract work will include upgrade, conversion, in-service repairs, disassembly and other DLM services.

Tyonek Global Services president Steve Adlich said: “This award demonstrates Tyonek’s ability to consistently provide superior DLM performance and cost-effective execution for our US Navy customer.

“Tyonek is proud of our partnership with the US Navy and our shared commitment to aviation fleet readiness.”

The company will offer employment to more than 340 skilled workers to repair and maintain aircraft, aircraft engines, as well as associated components and materials at the US Navy’s maintenance depots.
US Central Command

CENTCOM hosts Joint Senior Enlisted Leaders Conference

Story by Thomas Gagnier, U.S. Central Command Public Affairs, 09.10.2018

Senior enlisted leaders from U.S. Central Command, five National Guard units, and eight regional partner nations gathered for the CENTCOM Joint Senior Enlisted Leaders Conference Sept. 4 – 7 in Tampa, Fla.

The conference was an opportunity for senior enlisted leaders to gain a better understanding of the region and explore ways to empower and develop their non-commissioned officer (NCO) ranks while building a network of multi-national senior enlisted professionals.

“This forum is all about building relationships that enable all of us access to NCO training and development,” said U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Edison Rebuck, Office of Security Cooperation Iraq.

During the four day event, representatives from each of U.S. Central Command’s component commands and senior enlisted leaders from Afghanistan, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, all had the opportunity to share their respective insights on NCO development, as well as answer questions from their counterparts.

U.S. Army Gen. Joseph Votel, commander, U.S. Central Command, addressed the attendees via teleconference and spoke about CENTCOM’s concept of ‘command and feedback’ that is driven by a cycle of continuous communication up and down the chain of command.

“The idea here is to make sure that people at the lower end of the chain of command have the same awareness and alignment, and are acting the same as the people at the top end of the chain of command, said Votel. “We continuously communicate things like our understanding of the situation, the threats and risks to our forces, and then the commander’s intent.”

The value of efficient communications throughout the ranks was a theme throughout the conference….

US Special Operations Command

Special operations boom years may be coming to a close

Sean D. Naylor, National Security Correspondent, Yahoo News, September 13, 2018

Congress and the Pentagon want to rein in and reorient America’s vaunted special operations forces, perhaps relegating them to the supporting roles they played before the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

For the past 17 years, special operations forces have been at the forefront of America’s military campaigns in Afghanistan, the Middle East and Africa. They took the lead in toppling the Taliban after the Sept. 11 attacks, reversing the gains of al-Qaeda in Iraq, and capturing or killing thousands of militants, from Anwar al-Awlaki in Yemen to Osama bin Laden in Pakistan. During that period, their strength has grown from about 45,000 personnel in 2001 to roughly 70,000, and they are now leading the fight against the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq.
Yet they’ve also suffered setbacks recently, including reports of drug use, the ambush of a special forces team in Niger that raised questions about the scope of missions in that country, and the investigation of two Navy SEALs in connection with the death of a Special Forces soldier in Mali.

Now, Congress and the Pentagon are trying to bring more oversight to special operations forces while reorienting them away from combating militants and toward fighting more traditional nation-states.

Congress made its view clear in this year’s defense authorization bill, which President Trump signed into law on Aug. 13. The Pentagon’s 14-page unclassified summary of this year’s National Defense Strategy does not mention special operations, and says that “inter-state strategic competition, not terrorism, is now the primary concern in U.S. national security.”

Cape Canaveral AFS

SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket delivers Canadian satellite from Cape Canaveral, lands booster

SpaceX early Monday completed the second in a pair of successful summer launches for Canadian satellite operator Telesat, the latest example of the company returning commercial launches to Florida.

A new Falcon 9 rocket roared from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station’s Launch Complex 40 at 12:45 a.m., after more than an hour’s delay because of rain and lightning.

A trail of fire from nine Merlin main engines cut through clouds and darkness on an eastward arc over the Atlantic Ocean, as the rumble from 1.7 million pounds of thrust rippled across the Space Coast, awakening some residents.

Thirty-two minutes later, the more than 15,000-pound Telstar 18 Vantage satellite was safely in orbit, on the heels of Telstar 19 Vantage, which launched July 22 on another Falcon 9.

Less than nine minutes after the liftoff, the rocket’s first stage landed on the deck of SpaceX’s “Of Course I Still Love You” drone ship floating 400 miles offshore — the 29th successful landing by a Falcon booster....

Team Orlando

Central Florida acts as hub for special technology training for Navy, military

ORLANDO, Fla. – Orlando's Central Florida research center is home to the Navy's main center for simulation and training systems technologies and is an integral part of the U.S. armed forces.
At the Naval Air Warfare Center Training Systems Division facility, 1,300 engineers, scientists and support personnel help develop training programs for the Army, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard, as well as many federal, state and local agencies.

One of those systems is a 3D high simulator that sailor students can train on. With the use of both hands on a touch screen and by sliding one, two or three fingers, students learn how to prepare for a mission, including preparing to launch a torpedo.

"They learn everything from tube loading to unloading, indexing, level changing, launching, both in horizontal and vertical launch. This is so real that they're using it in the fleet for different certifications in mission setups." Todd Estes, command master chief and assistant program manager, said.

The 3D program, called the Multipurpose Reconfigurable Training System, simulates different scenes, one of which virtually places junior sailors inside a Virginia class submarine.

"These applications, just like on your home computer, you can go from Outlook to Excel to a game and back to PowerPoint. We can jump from one application to another," said David Thomas, the project manager for the 3D simulator.

The training also includes using virtual reality goggles that make a person feel as if they are inside a torpedo room…..

**US Southern Command**

**SOUTHCOM Builds Family and Community Health Unit in El Salvador**

Lorena Baires/Diálogo | 12 September 2018

U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) handed over the keys of the new Family and Community Health Unit to the people of Zacatecoluca municipality in El Salvador, July 27, 2018. The new unit will expand maternal-child health services in the region. The facility is the latest project of the humanitarian aid military exercise Beyond the Horizon 2018.

“‘We delivered a public health project earlier than scheduled. In the span of 90 days, service members of the United States, El Salvador, and Peru showed we can do great work [together],’” said U.S. Army Colonel Israel Romero, commander of the humanitarian mission’s Combined Joint Task Force Hope in El Salvador. “We provided a service to the community; we are sowing seeds for the next generation.”

On May 31st, construction of the new facility began next to the Dr. Carlos Alberto Galeano Peripheral Health Center. “We couldn’t expand the center since it was built, yet demand increases every year,” said Dr. Mauricio Linares, director of the center. “Now we have the opportunity to provide better preventive and curative care, thanks to SOUTHCOM.”…..

**Defense Industry**

**Skyborne Technology Opens Gulf County, Florida, Manufacturing Center**

Area Development News Desk, 09/10/2018
Skyborne Technology, Inc., a designer and developer of manned and unmanned next generation aviation systems, opened its new manufacturing facility in Gulf County, Florida.

The company is a next generation manufacturer and developer of manned, unmanned aircraft and sea systems worldwide with offices in Central America, South America and the United States.

Skyborne said it chose the area specifically to have access to employ manned and unmanned aircraft pilots, skilled manufacturing labor for composites, aircraft aluminum and high bulletproof fabrics.

As part of opening of the new manufacturing facility, Skyborne Technology will unveil their Airship and Drone technology to begin testing their aviation products for target markets such as Agriculture Assessment, Communications, Education, Defense, Border Security, Health, Natural Disasters, Policing and Traffic Control…..

**DoD Budget**

**FY’19 Milcon Minibus Lined up for Floor Vote This Week**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Sep 10, 2018 01:40 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=9975f11826

Negotiations over the conference report for a fiscal 2019 spending package covering the military construction-Veterans Affairs, energy-water and legislative branch spending bills appear to be completed, with conferees prepared to sign a final deal imminently. On Friday, House Majority leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) said the “minibus” would be on the House floor this week. It is still not clear, though, when the text of the conference report will be released, reports CQ. Congressional leaders are aiming to clear two other spending packages prior to the Oct. 1 start of the new fiscal year as well, including a two-bill minibus covering the defense and labor-HHS-education titles.

**Milcon Funding Edges Up, under FY’19 Minibus**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Sep 13, 2018 06:05 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=b4b1ee28d2

Spending on military construction and family housing programs would reach $10.3 billion next year, a $241 million increase over the current year’s allocation, under the conference report for a fiscal 2019 spending package covering the military construction-Veterans Affairs, energy-water and legislative branch appropriations bills. The funding level falls $130.6 million below the Pentagon’s budget request, however.

The bill provides $100 million in milcon funds — $50 million to the Air Force, and $50 million to the Navy and Marine Corps — to alleviate shortfalls in funding for access control points, air traffic control towers, fire stations and anti-terrorism/force protection projects, the conferees stated. “There has been much concern on both sides of the aisle that these types of military construction projects continually fall short of securing funding in a fiscal year due to higher priorities within the services,” according to the
report. The services will need to submit a spending plan for the extra funds within 30 days after the bill is enacted, the report says.

Separately, the conference agreement provides $193.4 million for the Energy Resilience and Conservation Investment Program (ERCIP), which represents a $43.4 million increase over the budget request. The extra funds are intended to fund the top six unfunded requirements under the program, according to the report. The conference report includes an additional $5 million for the defense-wide planning and design account specifically for ERCIP.

A listing of the 167 construction projects worldwide funded in the measure is included in the conference report.

**Pentagon set to win first on-time budget since 2008**

By: Joe Gould, 9-13-18


**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Congress is poised to pass the defense budget on time for the first time in a decade.

A bipartisan group of House and Senate lawmakers formally announced a deal Thursday for a $674 billion defense appropriations bill, packaged with funding for the departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Labor and other government agencies, or Labor-HHS.

A joint conference committee finished reconciling the two chambers' bills, teeing up a compromise report to pass before the start of the fiscal year, Oct. 1. If successful, it would avert a partial government shutdown.

“The Defense and Labor-HHS bills account for the lion's share of discretionary spending, said Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Richard Shelby, R-Ala. “Pairing these two bills was the lynchpin of our strategy to pass appropriations bills in the Senate. One, the top priority for Republicans; the other, the top priority for Democrats. Both important to all Americans.”

The bill contains a rescission of $3.8 billion in 2018 funds the Pentagon asked for last year but could not be spent…..

**Other Of Interest**

**Community Adjustment Assistance Expanded to Deal with Threats to Installation Resilience**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Sep 14, 2018 04:33 am

[https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=96efc0a0ea](https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=96efc0a0ea)

DOD’s Office of Economic Adjustment will have the authority to offer grants to states and local governments for assistance to address threats to military installation resilience which could hinder base operations, under language in the fiscal 2019 defense authorization bill. Section 2805 defines installation resilience as the capability of an installation to adapt to and recover from extreme weather events, or unanticipated changes in environmental conditions which could affect the installation or community
resources such as transportation needed to “maintain, improve or rapidly reestablish installation mission assurance and mission essential functions.”

The provision and dozens of others in the newly enacted authorization bill affecting defense communities are summarized in a new ADC report, *FY 2019 National Defense Authorization Act in Review*. The report covers new statutes involving mission support and partnerships, facilities and installation management, real estate authorities, encroachment, energy and water resilience, and environmental contamination. The report is split into two sections. The first is a compilation of *On Base* stories covering changes most critical to defense communities, including:

- a new authority allowing DOD to provide funding to state and local governments for off-base infrastructure projects;
- a new authority for closing or realigning installations outside of the normal BRAC process;
- a requirement for DOD to prepare a more detailed analysis of its excess capacity than the two assessments it has completed since 2016;
- a requirement for DOD to cut spending by defense support agencies on civilian resources management, logistics management, services contracting and real estate management by 25 percent by Jan. 1, 2020; and
- a requirement for DOD to outline its plans for cleaning up on- and off-base drinking water supplies contaminated with PFAS after the Environmental Protection Agency establishes a regulatory standard for that class of chemicals.

The second section includes shorter summaries of a wide range of provisions, some of which were not published in *On Base*. Download the report from the [ADC website](http://adc.org).
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #68 is Thursday, 18 October 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EST via Conference Call.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   **Call-In Number:** 800-501-8979
   **Access Code:** 1869945

3. **Senate Passes Defense Appropriations Bill** – Senators on Tuesday voted 93-7 to pass a sweeping $854 billion spending bill that includes funding for the Departments of Defense, Health and Human Services, Labor and Education, which make up the lion’s share of total government spending. For more, see article in the *CLIPs*.


5. **Funding for New Infrastructure Authority Left out of Conference Agreement** – According to an ADC article published on Monday, “ADC’s effort to secure a new authority allowing DOD to provide funding to state and local governments for off-base infrastructure projects quickly gained momentum this year, with the House and Senate Armed Services committees each including language establishing a Defense Community Infrastructure Program in their versions of the defense authorization bill. And after the Senate last month approved an amendment allocating $20 million for the new initiative during consideration of the fiscal 2019 defense spending bill, the possibility that defense communities could obtain infrastructure funding in the coming year appeared favorable. But, alas, plans to take advantage of the new authority will need to be pushed back until at least FY 2020, after conferees negotiating the final version of a two-bill spending package covering the defense and labor-HHS-education titles dropped the $20 million allocation from the conference agreement reached Thursday.”

6. **Advocacy Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Released** – The Task Force’s current Advocacy contract expires in February 2019. In order to get the best competition for our next contract, the Task Force has released a Request for Qualifications (DTFRFQ19-001 - attached) to determine what companies may be qualified to support its needs. Responses are due by October 15, 2018. Once we have an opportunity to review, the Task Force plans to begin solicitation in November 2018, conduct selected vender presentations in January 2019, and potentially begin a new contract in March 2019. The RFQ document and other information is hosted on MyFlorida Marketplace and our website at [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/funding-contracts/](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/funding-contracts/)

7. **Attachments:**
   - None

_Terry_

Terry McCaffrey
**News Clips of Interest:**

**Space**

**New Pentagon memo lays out action plan to establish Space Force by 2020**

by Sandra Erwin — September 13, 2018


WASHINGTON — Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan this week issued a detailed plan for how the Pentagon will move forward to create a Space Force as the sixth branch of the armed forces by fiscal year 2020.

The plan, laid out in a Sept. 10 memo titled “Space Reorganization and Management Tasks,” includes actions that the Pentagon will pursue using executive branch authorities — standing up a unified command for space, a Space Development Agency and Space Operations Forces. These proposals were presented to Congress in a report on Aug. 9. The establishment of the Space Force as a military branch must be approved by Congress and written into legislation. Shanahan’s Sept. 10 memo, a copy of which was obtained by SpaceNews, explains the steps DoD will take to develop a legislative proposal.

The memo makes it clear that the space reorganization is being led from the top down. Shanahan is overseeing the entire effort, but the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the undersecretary of defense for policy also have significant roles. The Air Force, which owns 90 percent of the military’s space programs and functions, only will have a limited support role in shaping the transition to a future Space Force.

The changes directed by Shanahan only apply to DoD and not to the intelligence community, even though organizations like the National Reconnaissance Office and the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency have key responsibilities in national security space. “Only DoD space functions would move into the Space Force,” the memo says. “National security space components outside of the DoD should not be included in the legislative or budget proposal, but will be considered in an interagency process.”

The Director of National Intelligence is cc’ed in the memo....
Air Force secretary: Space Force will cost $13B in new expenses

By: Valerie Insinna, 9-17-2018


NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – Creating a Space Force will cost a total of $13 billion over the next five years, including an initial $3 billion cost to stand up the service, the Air Force estimates.

In a Sept. 14 memo obtained by Defense News and signed by Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson, the service laid out its proposal to transition its space functions to a sixth branch of the military known as the Space Force.

Notably, the Air Force’s Space Force proposal pushes back on a previous proposal, put forth by Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan, in several key ways, including advocating for increased integration with the National Reconnaissance Office and objecting to the White House’s plan to install an assistant secretary of defense for space to help guide the transition.

In an exclusive Sept. 17 interview with Defense News, Wilson said her intention was not to hit back at the Office of the Secretary of Defense, but to provide an alternative way to execute President Donald Trump’s direction to create a Space Force……

NAS Pensacola

Pensacola Naval Hospital opens new center for women's health

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Pensacola News Journal, Published 5:35 a.m. CT Sept. 19, 2018


As part of the Navy's ongoing effort to improve health care for its female sailors and dependent family members, Pensacola Naval Hospital has a new Comprehensive Women's Health Center.

The center, which opened in July, offers a range of gynecological services including contraception, infertility, childbirth classes and breastfeeding classes.

The hospital opened the center after closing its labor and delivery department earlier this year. In announcing the closure, the Navy said labor and delivery services were widely available in the surrounding community and it no longer made sense for the military to provide the service in Pensacola……

NAS Whiting Field

200 new jobs expected at Whiting expansion
PANAMA CITY – The Triumph Gulf Coast board of directors has agreed to move forward with a grant agreement for $8.5 million in site development for Whiting Aviation Park in Santa Rosa County, one of several projects in the Panhandle to receive millions of dollars for economic development.

The Whiting Aviation Park project is expected to create more than 200 high-paying jobs, according to a news release from Triumph Gulf Coast. It is built on the investment of Santa Rosa County to purchase 267 acres adjacent to NAS Whiting Field and a Memorandum of Understanding with The Department of the Navy for “through the fence” accesses for private companies.

The total project cost is more than $17.7 million.

Development of Whiting Aviation Park strengthens the region’s aviation cluster from Pensacola to the west and Bob Sikes Airport in Crestview to the east by providing additional industrial space adjacent to an existing airfield, the news release said. The proposal supports the regional strategic initiative to expand the aerospace and defense industry cluster, an industry with a strong outlook for growth.

Targeted investments in the aviation and aerospace cluster are expected to drive supply chain companies to locate in the region. Florida is currently No. 2 in the nation for aviation and aerospace businesses, and added more than any other state in the Southeast in 2017.....

Blackwater River State Forest expands by 800 acres

By special to the Daily News, Posted Sep 14, 2018 at 4:46 PM, Updated Sep 14, 2018 at 4:46 PM

MILTON – Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam announced Friday that the Blackwater River State Forest will expand by 800 acres from the acquisition of the Florida Forever Project Area Wolfe Creek Forest, thanks to funding from the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Navy.

The Florida Forest Service partnered with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Santa Rosa County, Naval Air Station Whiting Field and the Trust for Public Land to secure the acquisition through the Forest Legacy Program.

“Florida’s state forests are vital ecological and economic resources for our state, and we must continue to prioritize the protection of Florida’s unique natural spaces,” Putnam said in a statement. “This addition to Blackwater River State Forest will enhance natural resources and provide more recreational activities for Floridians.”

The acquisition is home to a number of rare and endangered species, and serves as a major wildlife corridor with frontage on Big Coldwater Creek. The land will also act as a buffer for NAS Whiting Field and is crucial for protecting military training missions.

The Florida Forest Service will manage the tract as part of the Blackwater River State Forest — Florida’s largest state forest with more than 211,000 acres.....

Frasca Named Sub for Navy TH-57 Aircrew Training Contract

SOURCE: FRASCA INTERNATIONAL, SEP 17, 2018
Frasca International, Inc. (Frasca) has been named sub-contractor for the Navy TH-57 Aircrew Training Services (ATS) Contract. The prime contract, which was awarded by the Naval Air Warfare Center Training Systems Division (NAWCTSD) to FlightSafety Services Corporation includes contract instructional services (CIS), contractor operations & maintenance services (COMS) and Flight Simulation Training Devices (FSTDs) for CNATRA.

As sub-contractor, Frasca will provide ten FSTDs as part of the ground based training systems (GBTS) for the TH-57 helicopter which will be used for initial rotary wing training at NAS Whiting Field. The Frasca built training systems will include seven Level 7 TH-57 FTDs and three Level 6 TH-57 FTDs.

The level 7 FTDs will feature Frasca's Motion Cueing System (FMCS™) which was designed specifically for rotorcraft simulation, and a 240° x 70° field of view visual display which includes chin bubble coverage for hovering and advanced helicopter maneuvers.

The Level 6 FTDs will feature a 180° x 40° field of view display system and a vibration system. All ten devices will include a Frasca debrief station for after action review (AAR) and to enhance the aviators learning and training experience. There will also be one remote central control station where personnel can act as an instructor or ATC controller for any or all of the FTDs.....

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**Hurlburt Field**

**Air Force Special Operations pivots strategy toward major power warfare**

By Kris Osborn | Warrior Maven, 9-20-18


Attacking enemy fighters in close-air-support aircraft, using ground-based laser designators to “paint” targets for aircraft and training friendly forces for the rigors of high-casualty close-in combat -- are all U.S. Air Force Special Operations Force skills tested and refined during the last decade and a half of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Drawing upon these Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs), Air Force Special Operations Command is accelerating a strategic shift from its recent counterinsurgency focus to preparing for “high-end” combat - or major force-on-force warfare against a technologically advanced enemy.

“I would tell you there is definitely strategic value for Special Operations in the high-end fight. With our mentality, we think outside of the box and about how to present dilemmas for the enemy,” Lt. Gen Marshall Webb, Commander - Air Force Special Operations Command, said Sept. 17 at the Air Force Association Convention.

Webb emphasized that the Command’s counterterrorism focus will not diminish in coming years but likely increase as existing threats persist and new ones emerge. At the same time, he made it clear that AFSOC is “laser focused on the high-end” and currently adapting its well-established TTPs to support major power warfare.....

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**Eglin AFB**
Twists In Hypersonic Weapon Effort Hint At How Badly Pentagon Wants It Soon

GILLIAN RICH, 9/19/2018

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – The Air Force is pushing Lockheed Martin (LMT) to develop a new hypersonic weapon by the end of 2020 as China and Russia work on fielding their own superfast weapons.

In April, the Pentagon awarded Lockheed the Hypersonic Conventional Strike Weapon (HCSW) contract. Last week, a HCSW team from Lockheed and its government counterpart from Eglin Air Force Base met to discuss a rapid approach to meeting a late-2020 target for initial operational capability.

"What (are) the basics we need to fly sooner rather than later?" recalled Johnny Walker, a business development manager of hypersonics at Lockheed, when asked about the HCSW timeline. "We agreed on a path forward."

Walker said it was early in the contract, and there is plenty of wiggle room on dates. But in a possible sign of how much the Pentagon is pushing to field a hypersonic weapon, previous targets for achieving initial operational capability were reportedly 2021 and 2022…..

NAS Jacksonville

Navy drone damaged in California mishap

By: Mark D. Faram, 9-13-18

A drone landed on its belly after a Wednesday test flight went wrong at Naval Base Ventura County in California, officials say.

The incident occurred at 2:45 pm Wednesday at Point Mugu when an MQ-4C Triton from Florida-based Naval Air Station Jacksonville’s Unmanned Patrol Squadron 19 experienced an unspecified mechanical glitch during the flight, according to a Navy press release.

“As a precautionary measure, the pilots shut down the engine and attempted to safely land the aircraft on the runway,” the release said. “The aircraft’s landing gear did not deploy and the aircraft landed on the runway with its landing gear retracted.”

The release didn’t dish on more details or provide a damage estimate for the drone.

Officials reported no injuries to personnel and have launched a probe to find the cause of the crash…..

Fleet Readiness Center Southeast Sailors mark end of era with last P-3 engine test run

Story by Clifford Davis, Fleet Readiness Center Southeast 09.13.2018
JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – Though it may lack the pizzazz of the GTO’s 389 from The Beach Boys’ famous song, the T-56 turbo-prop engine that powered the venerable P-3 Orion for decades was a stalwart of the U.S. Navy for more than half a century.

As the P-3 gives way to the new P-8A Poseidon, Fleet Readiness Center Southeast Detachment Jacksonville marked a milestone Sept. 11 as the unit tested its last T-56 engine.

“With a four-engine plane, you can imagine how many engines we were running in its heyday,” said Chief Aviation Machinist’s Mate Danger Escobar. “We received the test cells in 2002 and, in the last 16 years, we’ve run more than 640 engines.”

At the test cell, Sailors in their 20s gave the safety brief and went through the paces of turning up the engine. As the T-56 roared to life in its test stand on a point just off the St. Johns River, the propeller began to turn. In moments, it was blowing with such force that tree limbs 50 yards behind it bent as though a hurricane was afoot….

Navy Pauses Operations of MQ-4C Triton Squadron After Crash-Landing This Week

By: Megan Eckstein, September 14, 2018 2:05 PM

The Navy’s Unmanned Patrol Squadron (VUP) 19 is temporarily standing down operations while it investigates the crash of an MQ-4C Triton in California this week.

A Triton conducting operational testing out of Naval Base Ventura County in California on Wednesday “had an issue during flight and the decision was made to bring it back to base. While heading in for landing, the engine was shut down but the landing gear did not extend. The aircraft landed on its belly on the runway. No one was hurt and there was no collateral damage,” Cmdr. Dave Hecht, a spokesman for Naval Air Force Atlantic, told USNI News today.

The incident is still under investigation, with the Navy still looking into the cause of the malfunctions and the cost estimate of the damage to the aircraft. Hecht did say that the cost was expected to be more than $2 million, marking this incident as a Class A aviation mishap.

While the investigation goes on, VUP-19 – which has a dual-site command structure at both Naval Base Ventura County and Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Fla. – will cease flying for an indefinitely amount of time.

VUP-19 stood up at NAS Jacksonville in October 2016 and was the first squadron in the Navy to consist solely of unmanned aircraft. The squadron falls under Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 11 and is collocated in Jacksonville with the wing’s P-8A Poseidons, a manned airplane that also conducts maritime surveillance. The Tritons and Poseidons were identified as a natural pairing for manned/unmanned teaming and have already proven their ability to pass information from the unmanned plane to the operators aboard the manned P-8s….

Cape Canaveral AFS

Jeff Bezos says he will invest $1 billion next year in Blue Origin's New Glenn rocket program
Jeff Bezos will invest “just over $1 billion” next year in Blue Origin’s New Glenn rocket program, and the company will fly people to space “this coming year,” the Amazon.com Inc. chief executive said Wednesday.

Speaking during a keynote address at the Air Force Assn.’s Air, Space and Cyber Conference in National Harbor, Md., Bezos said a “big team of people” is working on the rocket’s development. The Kent, Wash., company has said the rocket will be available in two- and three-stage versions, and has already netted several commercial satellite launch orders.

The rocket’s BE-4 engine test program is also “going very well,” Bezos said. The engine, which will be propelled by liquefied natural gas and liquid oxygen, is being considered for use in the first stage of the next generation Vulcan Centaur rocket under development by a joint venture of Lockheed Martin Corp. and Boeing Co. known as United Launch Alliance.

Analysts have said New Glenn could compete with the likes of Hawthorne-based SpaceX and ULA for national security launch contracts, as well as commercial orders.

Blue Origin opened a 650,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in Florida and has been constructing its launch pad at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. The two represent a total investment of about $1 billion, Bezos said Wednesday…..

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**Patrick AFB**

**Patrick Air Force Base deploys airmen to Georgia for Hurricane Florence relief**

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (FOX 35) - POSTED: SEP 13 2018 10:24PM EDT


The Patrick Air Force Base says that a group of about 140 Reserve Citizen Airmen from the 920th Rescue Wing were deployed to Georgia to exercise their hurricane relief capabilities. If the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) or Air Combat Command gives the order to provide disaster relief following Hurricane Florence's devastating effects to the east coast, the 920th will be ready to help.

“We train constantly for situations like this. Our Airmen our highly specialized and have the ability to utilize their expert combat life-saving skills and aircraft to provide relief and rescue,’ said Col. Kurt Matthews, 920 RQW commander, who flew disaster relief missions during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 which led to 1,043 lives saved.

Last September, Patrick Air Force Base says that the wing deployed to Texas and flew disaster relief missions in response to the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey. They saved 235 people, 21 dogs, and 5 cats.

On Wednesday, Wing Airmen launched four HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters and two combat-search-and-rescue King HC-130P/N aerial refueling aircraft to Moody Air Force Base, Georgia to train for relief operations, confirmed the Patrick Air Force Base. A C-17 Globemaster transported the rest of the rescue equipment and personnel from Patrick to Moody AFB on Thursday…..
US Southern Command

Southcom Lends Helping Hand Through Humanitarian Assistance Programs

By Army Staff Sgt. Vito T. Bryant, Sept. 19, 2018
https://dod.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1639677/southcom-lends-helping-hand-through-humanitarian-assistance-programs/

WASHINGTON – U.S. Southern Command’s humanitarian assistance program conducts Defense Department-approved activities within its area of responsibility in conjunction with partner nations to alleviate human suffering, disease, hunger and privation, particularly in regions where those needs may pose major challenges to the civilian populace.

By leveraging the combined capabilities of U.S. government agencies, partner-nation military and civilian counterparts, and international organizations, the program enables local governments to strengthen regional security and stability.

Civil affairs officers play a vital role in Southcom’s humanitarian assistance program.

“We are like the connective tissue between the DoD and interagency partners that are responding to a major catastrophic event,” said Army Col. J. Frank Melgarejo Jr., civil affairs planning detachment chief. “We use our specialized skill sets in order to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the response.”

While disaster response is a critical part of the humanitarian assistance mission, the hope is it will become less necessary…..

Defense Industry

Lockheed Martin Space lands $7.2B deal to keep building Air Force GPS satellites

By Matthew Richardson and Greg Avery, Sep 17, 2018, 1:35pm

The mystery since spring wasn't whether the U.S. Air Force would keep Lockheed Martin Space Systems Co. building its new generation of global position satellites, but how much it would spend.

Now we know.

U.S. Air Force on Friday committed to paying the Colorado-based aerospace company up to $7.2 billion to build the next 22 GPS III satellites for the military. The work agreement will impact Florida's Space Coast, too, as the area is a prime location for launch services.

“The world is dependent on GPS, from getting directions to getting cash from an ATM machine or trading on the stock exchange,” said Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson, in a prepared statement. “These satellites will provide greater accuracy and improved anti-jamming capabilities, making them more resilient.”

The fixed-price contract works out to an average cost of $327.2 million per satellite. Lockheed Martin Space is the prime contractor building the first 10 GPS III satellites for the Air Force.
The first GPS III satellite was brought to Cape Canaveral in August for final testing and preparation for launch into orbit by rocket company SpaceX by the end of this year. As more GPS IIIs are built, more testing of the device will take place on Florida's Space Coast, along with launch work agreements for either SpaceX or United Launch Alliance — both of which have hundreds of workers in Cape Canaveral, too.

F-35, HELIOS: Harris Corp, Lockheed Martin get more than $500M in local defense work

By Matthew Richardson – Sep 17, 2018, 5:23pm EDT Updated a day ago

Melbourne-based global defense firm Harris Corp. is one of nine firms competing for services on a contract valued at a half-billion dollars.

Harris Corp. (NYSE: HRS) and several other companies were awarded a $500 million contract by the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency on Sept. 14 to perform services on a program called HELIOS.

The location of the work for the 10-year contract will be depend upon which of the nine companies win services. Harris Corp. is the only company that is local for this contract. Lockheed Martin Corp. (NYSE: LMT) and Northrop Grumman Corp. (NYSE: NOC ) are both part of the work agreement, as well.

Meanwhile, Lockheed Martin won another contract with the U.S. Navy valued at $88 million. The work agreement involves low-rate initial production of the F-35 Lightning II aircraft under order Lot 11.

Nearly half of the work for this F-35 deal will take place in Orlando where Lockheed Martin has more than 7,000 employees. Work also will take place in California, Texas, Connecticut, Ohio, Australia and Italy.

So far, Lockheed Martin has built and delivered more than 300 F-35s since 2011 and plans to build nearly 100 more this year.....

DoD Budget

As deadline nears, Senate approves $674 billion defense budget bill

By: Leo Shane III and Joe Gould, 9-18-18

WASHINGTON – With the fiscal year winding down, Senate lawmakers on Tuesday advanced a multi-agency appropriations deal that would prevent a government shutdown and give the Defense Department its full-year budget on schedule for the first time in a decade.

The measure, which provides for more than $606 billion in base defense spending and nearly $68 billion more in overseas contingency funds, is in line with White House requests and spending targets outlined in the annual defense authorization bill approved earlier this summer.
“After subjecting America’s all-volunteer armed forces to years of belt tightening, this legislation will build on our recent progress in rebuilding the readiness of our military and investing more in the men and women who wear the uniform,” Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said before the Senate vote.

The funding total — approved by a 93-7 vote — amounts to an increase of more than 3 percent for military spending in fiscal 2019, but as important as the boost is the timing of the measure.

In recent years, Congress has struggled to pass any appropriations measures before the start of the new fiscal year, relying instead on a series of budget extensions to avoid partial government shutdowns…..

**Other Of Interest**

**Will Army Futures Command work? House lawmakers skeptical, but hopeful**

By: Jen Judson, 9-15-18


WASHINGTON – Setting up a brand-new four-star command to try to improve the way the U.S. Army develops and acquires capabilities for future operations is a big deal. Pair that with the service’s relatively abysmal track record in fielding new weapons and there’s bound to be skepticism in the service’s drastic plan to fix a broken system.

Army leadership got mixed reactions from lawmakers during a Sept. 13 House Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee hearing that ranged from deep skepticism to hope.

The new Army Futures Command would put all modernization tasks that “generate a war-fighting capability under one roof,” Under Secretary Ryan McCarthy said at the hearing. “These tasks include war-fighting concepts, requirements, experimentation, and fielding of materiel and non-materiel solutions.”

The command was officially activated last month in Austin, Texas. The Army envisions the command as nimble, agile and better able to communicate and work with academia, entrepreneurs and innovators……

**Clearwater Coast Guard crew helps rescue 28 from burning boat**

Author: Tim Chong. Published: 2:52 PM EDT September 15, 2018, Updated: 3:43 PM EDT September 15, 2018


Dramatic video shows a U.S. Coast Guard crew from Clearwater helping rescue 28 people from a burning fishing boat off the coast of Colombia.

On Thursday, Coast Guard 7th District Miami got a report from the Jamaican Defense Force, reporting a 131-foot fishing boat was on fire. A HC-130 Hercules airplane crew was dispatched from Clearwater to assist.
The Hercules crew found the boat 46 miles off the Colombian coast.

An oil tanker was able to go to the scene and pick up the 28 people off the boat and take them to shore.
Sep 28

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #68 is Thursday, 18 October 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EST via Conference Call.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   **Call-In Number:** 800-501-8979  
   **Access Code:** 1869945

3. **Oil Industry Advocate Says Military Provides Hidden Subsidy** – In a new article over the weekend, author David Roberts makes the case that there is hidden cost of subsidizing oil through military action in oil producing nation. Mr Roberts says “Defending the oil supply costs a lot of money”. His conclusions are based on a new report from “Securing America’s Future Energy” or SAFE, who advocate for domestic energy production. Ten years ago, SAFE made the case that drilling in the Gulf of Mexico would not affect the US military missions. Now SAFE is making the case that most US military global missions are conducted to protect the oil market and thus account for “approximately $81 billion per year, or approximately 16 percent of recent DoD base budgets. If one spreads this out over 19.8 Mbd of petroleum consumed in the U.S. in 2017, the implicit oil subsidy is roughly 28 cents per gallon. If the OCO fund is included this cost would be approximately 32 cents per gallon. If the long-term, full economic costs of fighting Middle East wars are included, the figure would likely exceed $4 trillion and more than $0.70 per gallon.” See the article below in the CLIPS and the report from SAFE attached.

4. **Camp Blanding Buffered by Land Deal** – According to an article in the Florida Times Union on September 23rd, “The North Florida Land Trust obtained two property easements for conservation totaling 2,551 acres for slightly more than $8 million in southern Clay County — marking the nonprofit’s largest conservation easement acquisition to date. The two tracts — which measure about 4.2 square miles — will be protected from high density development as well as serve as a buffer to the adjacent Camp Blanding Joint Training Center, which is Florida’s largest National Guard installation. Jim McCarthy, land trust president, said the organization paid a total $8,097,000 for the two easements. The money came through the Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program, he said.” See two articles below in the CLIPS.

5. **Florida Cyber Conference to be held in Tampa** – According to Ms. Kate Whitaker, Communications & Marketing Manager of Cyber Florida, “Cyber Florida invites you to share this valuable, low-cost event with the businesses in your community. Though space is filling up, there are still seats available. Florida Cyber Conference 2018 is a nonprofit event held each year by Cyber Florida for the benefit of Florida's businesses, citizens, and cybersecurity industry. This year, we are hosting an added-value workshop for small and medium-sized businesses, and we hope you will share this opportunity with your network.” The conference will be held October 10-11 2018 at the Tampa Convention Center. For more information and to register, go to [https://focybercon.com/register/](https://focybercon.com/register/)

6. **ADC Opens Award Nomination Window** – According to Dan Cohen in ADC’s *On Base* daily news briefs, “ADC has opened the nomination period for the 2019 Great American Defense Communities (GADC) program, an initiative that recognizes the unique contributions communities that host military installations make to improve quality of life for service members and their families. Since the program was launched in 2016, it has shined a
light on the regions and individuals that are making an exceptional commitment to improving the lives of military members and veterans. The 2019 GADC application can be found on the ADC website. Nominations are due Oct. 26. Email rsvp@defensecommunities.org for instructions on joining a webinar on Oct. 3 at 3 p.m. for a walkthrough of the program and nomination process. Communities are selected following a competitive nomination process based on community building and integration, support and collaboration, educational and employment opportunities, and family support. The initiative, now entering its fourth year, is sponsored by USAA. The 2019 class will be announced in November.”

7. **ADC Extends Deadline for Innovators** – Dan Cohen from ADC’s On Base newsletter “has announced that has extended the deadline to Oct. 5 for submitting nominations to participate in the 2019 Innovators program. We will be highlighting up to six innovative projects at the 2019 Installation Innovation Forum that demonstrate state-of-the-art approaches defense communities are using to support installations and military families, sustain military missions and promote defense-based economic development.” For more information or to apply, go to https://installationinnovation.org/innovators-nomination-form/

8. **Attachments:**
   - Military Costs of Defending Global Oil

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**Oil Drilling / Gulf Range**

**Putting a dollar value on one of oil’s biggest subsidies: military protection**

By David Roberts@drvoxdavid@vox.com  Sep 21, 2018, 5:10pm EDT  

One of the pretenses of right-wing energy policy is that conservatives support a “level playing field,” upon which energy sources can compete without subsidies. Let the market decide!
As I have written many times, this is a juvenile notion. Markets are powerful tools for directing private capital and innovation, useful in the right circumstances. But the idea that there ever has been, or ever can be, an open, unbiased, “free” market for energy sources is a fantasy that should stay in the college library with the Ayn Rand novels. It is analytically inert; it does nothing to illuminate whether current markets are working or help us decide how best to use markets to serve our greater goals.

The fundamental reason the “free market” ideal is unhelpful in energy is that it’s impossible to ever truly settle what is and isn’t a market-distorting subsidy. Some subsidies, like explicit cash grants or tax breaks, are easy enough to identify, but beyond that there is a whole complex world of implicit subsidies.

If an energy source has negative impacts that are not incorporated in its market price (negative “externalities,” in the jargon), that means other people are paying for those impacts. The source is implicitly subsidized.

Here’s the thing: Every energy source and energy industry has both positive and negative externalities. Deciding which ones “distort markets,” which ones count as implicit subsidies (or implicit taxes) virtually always comes down to a subjective judgment.

And the implicit subsidies dwarf the explicit subsidies, so arguing about the latter while unable to agree on the former is uniquely pointless…..

Democrats poke holes in DeSantis drilling stance

By BRUCE RITCHIE, 09/24/2018 05:06 AM EDT

TALLAHASSEE – Democrats and environmental advocates are taking aim at Republican gubernatorial nominee Ron DeSantis' assertion that he has a "proven track record" in supporting measures to ban oil drilling off Florida's coast, saying his record doesn't support the claim.

Oil drilling has emerged as a flash point this campaign season in Florida after the Trump administration's early 2018 proposal to open up most federal waters to oil drilling. Top members of both parties in Florida say they are against oil drilling.

DeSantis, who touted his endorsement from Trump during the Republican primary, co-sponsored federal legislation this year to extend a temporary drilling ban in federal waters off the Gulf Coast from 2022 to 2027. And he signed a letter in January along with another 22 members of Florida's congressional delegation stating opposition to the Trump administration's moves to allow drilling in federal waters off Florida.

But Rep. Kathy Castor (D-Fla.), vice ranking member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, says DeSantis has been "largely absent" in the Washington fight against drilling. That's because he hasn't joined in opposing other drilling measures, such as a proposal to relax drilling rig safety rules, Castor said……

NAS Pensacola

Child psychologist part of new pediatric clinic at Pensacola Naval Hospital

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Pensacola News Journal, Published 7:00 a.m. CT Sept. 23, 2018
Child psychologist Susan Patton played a quick game of Jenga with one of her young patients Thursday afternoon to help him feel comfortable in her office at Pensacola Naval Hospital.

The game, which involves stacking small wooden blocks until they fall down, is fun for the kids she counsels and allows them to forget they are in a clinical setting, said Patton, who has decades of experience working with children from military families.

Starting Oct. 1, Patton and the youngsters she helps will have their own space inside the hospital's recently opened pediatric clinic. She is looking forward to the move. . .

Tyndall AFB

Combat Archer: Evaluating the Whole Weapon System

Story by Staff Sgt. Shane Hughes, 180th Fighter Wing Ohio National Guard 09.21.2018
https://www.dvidshub.net/news/293997/combat-archer-evaluating-whole-weapon-system

The sound of fighter jets roared above the pristine, sandy beaches of the Florida coastline. High above the sun-kissed tourists, F-16 Fighting Falcons chased after bright orange drones, following them out over the Gulf of Mexico where a pilot targeted them and fired a missile, ending any chance of the drone ever returning.

More than 150 Airmen from the 180th Fighter Wing, Ohio Air National Guard, participated in Combat Archer, a two-week air-to-air Weapons System Evaluation Program to prepare and evaluate operational fighter squadrons' readiness for combat operations, at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida from Sept. 10 – 21.

The exercise evaluated the performance of the whole weapon system from the Airmen who load missiles to the pilots who fire them, determining the reliability and capability of the 180FW to engage targets in combat by firing live missiles at subscale drones which take on the role of enemy aircraft.

“Combat Archer’s objective is to evaluate the missile and weapons system throughout the whole deployment of the weapon,” said Maj. Seth Carmody, a maintenance officer assigned to the 180FW.

“That includes breaking out the missiles, loading them onto the aircraft and deploying the missiles to shoot down drones.”

The opportunity to load and fire live missiles is something Airmen don’t get to experience during routine training. Participating in Combat Archer is one of the few times most Airmen will get to work with live missiles outside of combat related deployments. . .

FL National Guard / Camp Blanding

Land deal in Clay County prevents development near Camp Blanding

By Scott Johnson, Roxy Tyler, Posted: 3:36 PM, September 23, 2018Updated: 3:37 PM, September 23, 2018
JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – A major land deal in Clay County will keep any housing developments from going in across the road from Camp Blanding.

Around 2500 acres of land have been acquired by the North Florida Land Trust, a nonprofit organization that promotes conservation efforts in the region.

This will now be protected land that will serve as a buffer between the National Guard base and any future development nearby.

“These conservation easement acquisitions mean we have been able to keep thousands of acres free from high-intensity development in perpetuity,” said Jim McCarthy, president of North Florida Land Trust.

The land is also within the Ocala to Osceola wildlife Conservation Corridor. The Land Trust describes the corridor as "a critical wildlife corridor that stretches from the Ocala National Forest to the Osceola National Forest." It provides critical habitat for black bears and other indigenous species.

The land trust used funding provided by the Army National Guard to purchase the land.

The North Florida Land Trust obtained two property easements for conservation totaling 2,551 acres for slightly more than $8 million in southern Clay County — marking the nonprofit’s largest conservation easement acquisition to date.

The two tracts — which measure about 4.2 square miles — will be protected from high density development as well as serve as a buffer to the adjacent Camp Blanding Joint Training Center, which is Florida’s largest National Guard installation.

Jim McCarthy, land trust president, said the organization paid a total $8,097,000 for the two easements. The money came through the Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program, he said.

“Each easement is unique and these two were more expensive than the norm. We were competing with strong residential development pressures, the property was zoned to allow as many as 250 residential units,” McCarthy said. “In addition, the solar industry had a keen interest in the property because of its proximity to high voltage power lines. This was a big win for us.”

Conservation easement agreements allow the landowner to continue to own and use the property but permanently limits how the land can be used to protect its conservation values. Bear Bay Timber Company owns 2,057 acres while the McArthur Family Trust owns the remaining 494 acres.

The land trust works closely with Camp Blanding to identify lands that are both prime for conservation and important to protect the military base from the threat of encroaching development…….

NAS Jacksonville
Navy taps Northrop Grumman for crucial electronic components for MQ-4C Triton maritime search radar

By John Keller, September 24, 2018


PATUXENT RIVER NAS, Md. – Northrop Grumman Corp. will provide crucial electronic components for the U.S. Navy's maritime search radar aboard the MQ-4C Triton long-range ocean patrol unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) under terms of a $64.8 million order announced Friday.

Officials of the Naval Air Systems Command at Patuxent River Naval Air Station, Md., are asking the Northrop Grumman Mission Systems segment in Linthicum Heights, Md., to provide components for the Triton UAV's Multi-Function Active Sensor (MFAS).

The MFAS is the Triton's maritime search radar that provides the UAV with a 360-degree view of a large geographic area while providing all-weather coverage for detecting, classifying, tracking, and identifying points of interest. MFAS is separate from the Triton's air-to-air radar.

The Triton performs maritime surveillance missions as long as 24 hours at altitudes of more than 10 miles to enable coverage out to 2,000 nautical miles. The UAV's suite of sensors can detect and classify different types of ships automatically.

The Triton is a crucial component of the Navy's 21st century strategy for conducting surveillance of surface ship and submarine traffic in the vast Pacific and other oceans around the globe. The MQ-4C Triton UAV works together with the Navy's P-8A Poseidon manned maritime patrol aircraft.....

MacDill AFB

Tampa's Cross-Bay Ferry may connect to MacDill Air Force Base

Ray Roa, Sep 20, 2018 2 Pm

HTTPS://WWW.CLTAMPA.COM/MUSIC/LOCAL/ARTICLE/21023356/TAMPAS-CROSSBAY-FERRY-MAY-CONNECT-TO-MACDILL-AIR-FORCE-BASE

As we pointed out last month, the Cross-Bay Ferry is coming back to Tampa Bay. But now it may connect to MacDill Air Force Base, too.

TBRJ says that the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners voted 7-0 to approve an eighth modification to the Tampa Bay Passenger Ferry Interim Public Private Partnership Agreement.

Included in the modification is a task to create a ferry route between south Hillsborough County and MacDill Air Force Base with a possible connection to downtown Tampa.

That's pretty interesting for the 15,000 or so people who work and/or live on the base (and makes for an easy way to get to Lightning games), but it leaves the rest of us still wondering where the heck we're all gonna park when we board the ferry in St. Petersburg (near the Vinoy Marina) or downtown Tampa (there are metered spots in garages about a half-mile away and a few near Bayshore Drive NE).
The ferry operator is expected to make at least 32 one-way trips per week, with seven-day service, and TBO expects adult ticket prices to cap out at $8 (the maximum cost for the first run was $10) with discounts for seniors, students, and active and retired military members. Children age 4 or younger will be able to ride for free.

**Cape Canaveral AFS**

**SUB SUPPORTER: Navigation Test Support Ship USNS Waters Currently Berthed at Port Canaveral**

By Space Coast Daily // September 26, 2018


**BREVARD COUNTY • PORT CANAVERAL, FLORIDA** – Navigation test support ship USNS Waters currently is berthed at Port Canaveral.

Originally an oceanographic survey ship, the 457-foot-long Waters supports the Navy’s Strategic Systems Programs Office by aiding with submarine weapons and navigation system testing.

In 2011, it was homeported in Port Canaveral, Florida.

Waters is operated by Military Sealift Command to provide an operating platform and services for unique U.S. military and federal government missions.

Special missions ships work for several different U.S. Navy customers, including Naval Sea Systems Command, Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command and the Oceanographer of the Navy.

Waters was originally an oceanographic survey ship, built by the Avondale Shipyards and delivered to the US Navy in 1993…..

**Patrick AFB**

**Air Force Association recognizes Florida Reserve wing with unit award**

920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs / Published September 19, 2018


**NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. (AFNS)** – Reserve Airmen from the 920th Rescue Wing were awarded with the Air Force Association Unit Award Sept. 18, during the opening and awards ceremony at the annual Air, Space and Cyber Conference in National Harbor.

The wing was recognized for its outstanding effort in rescuing two German citizens whose sailboat caught fire and sunk 500 miles off the East Coast of Cape Canaveral, Florida, in July 2017. After being alerted to the incident, the wing immediately employed a rescue plan that utilized approximately 80 Airmen to
execute a long-range over water rescue operation resulting in saving the lives of both men and transporting them to an Orlando, Florida, hospital for further care.

The theme for this year's AFA conference is "Multi-Domain Operations: Leveraging the Full Spectrum," and takes place from Sept. 17-19. The professional development symposium is touted as the nation's premier event for defense and aerospace professionals from around the world, bringing together senior leaders and experts from government, industry and academia.

It includes engaging speakers and panels focused on airpower, space and cyber developments to the technology exposition featuring the latest technology, equipment and solutions for tomorrow's problems.

The 920th RQW is a combat-search-and-rescue unit at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, comprised of 2,000 Air Force reservists spread out to three geographically separated units, one at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona; Portland Airport, Oregon and Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia. The wing’s motto is, "These things we do, that others may live."

**Patrick AFB airmen return home from Hurricane Florence deployment in South Carolina**

Rick Neale, Florida Today
Published 5:31 p.m. ET Sept. 21, 2018

After historic Hurricanes Katrina and Harvey roared ashore, the Air Force Reserve's 920th Rescue Wing saved nearly 1,300 stranded people from flood-stricken neighborhoods.

The reservists deployed for action last week after Hurricane Florence dumped record-breaking rainfall on North Carolina, moving from Patrick Air Force Base to Joint Base Charleston.

However, the military did not assign the airmen any rescue missions after this natural disaster. And the wing returned home Thursday.

"The Alaska Air National Guard and the New York Air National Guard were working out of (Naval Air Station) Oceana up north. They ended up conducting some rescue missions, some hoist missions with their helicopters," Maj. Cathleen Snow said.

"But there was no need for those types of missions where we were operating out of," Snow said.

NAS Oceana is located in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

**DoD Budget**

**House Passes FY’19 Defense Spending Package, Sending it to White House**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Sep 27, 2018 02:30 am
[https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156e255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=6698d412ac](https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156e255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=6698d412ac)

The Pentagon is on the cusp of receiving a full-year spending measure for fiscal 2019 after the House on Wednesday easily adopted the conference report for a two-bill spending package covering the defense and labor-HHS-education titles. The legislation, which provides $606.5 billion for the base defense budget and $67.9 billion in overseas contingency funds, now goes to President Trump for his signature. Earlier in
the day Trump said he would sign the minibus, after threatening to veto it last week because the package
doesn’t include $5 billion he is seeking to construct a border wall. “We’re going to keep the government
open,” he told reporters Wednesday.

The FY 2019 defense spending bill is in line with the administration’s request and spending targets
outlined in the authorization bill signed into law last month. The measure funds a 2.6 percent pay raise for
troops starting in January and increases end strength by 16,400 spread across active-duty and reserve
forces, reports Military Times. The legislation also includes a continuing resolution funding agencies
through Dec. 7 that have yet to receive FY 2019 allocations.

Other of Interest

Mattis, in VMI speech, outlines U.S. defense strategy, importance of alliances

By Alison Graham, 9-25-2018
importance/article_395da1c2-d4c8-5249-b2a8-ae83b292394f.html

LEXINGTON – Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis, in a speech Tuesday to Virginia Military Institute
cadets, outlined his work to create a defense strategy to help strengthen the country against terrorism,
nuclear war and cyberattacks.

Mattis retired as a Marine Corps general and commander of the U.S. Central Command in 2013. He told
cadets the United States was emerging from an era with no clear military direction.

“I was shocked when I came in,” said Mattis, who took office in 2016. “I said bring me the strategy. They
said, ‘We don’t have one.’ That was my first indication there may be a problem.”

Mattis said he has written a national defense strategy with three major focus areas.

First, he said, the Defense Department plans to make the military more lethal. Armed forces that have lost
sight of their purpose end up getting beat, he said. He wants other countries to dislike the idea of having
to confront our military on the battlefield.

Second, Mattis said, he wants to strengthen and broaden the country’s alliances, like the North Atlantic
Treaty Organization.

President Donald Trump attended NATO’s annual summit in July and shocked members when he called
them “delinquent” on their military spending and insisted they increase it. His remarks alarmed some who
worried Trump may be trying to tear down the alliance or potentially leave it…..
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #68 is Thursday, 18 October 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EST via Conference Call.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   **Call-In Number:** 800-501-8979  
   **Access Code:** 1869945

3. **OEA Releases Report on Defense Spending by State** – The Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) just released their annual report on defense spending by state. This report reflects data from FY2016. By high-lighting states’ reliance on military installations and contractors, the report can be used “to assess potential exposure to fluctuations in defense spending and to target assistance to create more resilient communities and companies,” according to its executive summary. The listing for each state shows the top defense contractors and ranks the top 10 counties by contract spending, personnel spending, and number of active-duty and civilian personnel. See article below in the CLIPs or go to the report at: [http://oea.gov/resource/defense-spending-state-fiscal-year-2016](http://oea.gov/resource/defense-spending-state-fiscal-year-2016).

4. **President Trump Signs Defense Appropriations Bill** – Last Friday, September 28, 2018, President Trump signed the defense appropriations bill that House lawmakers overwhelmingly passed. It is a $684 billion defense appropriations measure that ends any last-minute drama about a possible government shutdown. The defense appropriations bill has more than $606 billion in base defense spending and nearly $68 billion more in overseas contingency funds, in line with White House requests and spending targets outlined in the annual defense authorization bill approved earlier this summer. The measure funds a 2.6 percent pay raise for troops starting next January and a boost in military end strength of 16,400 spread across the active-duty and reserve forces. Operation and maintenance spending totals $243.2 billion of the defense total, and research and development efforts another $96.1 billion. Defense health and military family programs would receive $34.4 billion.

5. **New Study Finds Defense Industrial Base in Bad Shape** – In a new industrial base report that is expected to be released today, the White House warns that the US defense industry is not doing well due to low and inconsistent budgets over the last decade which caused several companies to move into other business sectors or to close. According an article in *Defense News*, “A combination of Chinese influence and budgetary uncertainty means America’s defense industrial base is decaying at the lower levels, with some vital suppliers facing “domestic extinction,” a new study from the Trump administration is warning — and direct investment from the administration appears to be the solution.” Additionally, “The report identifies five macro issues facing the defense industrial base:

   - Sequestration and uncertainty in U.S government spending, which create instability and drives small firms away from defense work
   - A decline of U.S. manufacturing capability and capacity, leaving weaknesses throughout the supply chain
   - Antiquated U.S. government business practices, which the report warns leads to contracting delays and discourages innovation
Industrial policies of competitor nations, both due to “collateral damage of globalization” and specific targeting by great powers like China, and diminished U.S. STEM and trade skills, which are creating gaps in the workforce.”

See article below in the CLIPs.

6. Attachments:
- ADC Summary of FY19 NDAA
- TPG September End of Month Report
- TPG Bi-weekly Conference Call Memo

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News Clips of Interest:

Cyber

Smart sensor group gets $30M in defense funds to build cybersecurity center

By Matthew Richardson, Sep 27, 2018, 2:42pm EDT Updated Sep 28, 2018, 9:59am

A large Osceola County-based research and development center will put a greater focus on cybersecurity, thanks to landing part of the United States defense budget.

Out of $684 billion approved by Congress on Sept. 26 for the 2019 U.S. defense budget, $30 million is intended for Bridg, a Kissimmee-based group that operates and manages the 109,000-square-foot Florida Advanced Manufacturing Research Center that builds and studies smart sensors.

With the $30 million, which still has to go through the proper channels before any of the money is disbursed, Bridg will establish a Microelectronics Cybersecurity Center and develop trusted microelectronic devices in a secure environment to support the U.S. Department of Defense.
U.S. Reps. Darren Soto and Stephanie Murphy both agreed in a joint statement that cybersecurity is an important factor in many defense activities, like GPS, radar, command and control, and communications.…. 

**U.S. warns of new hacking spree from group linked to China**

Christopher Bing, OCTOBER 3, 2018 / 8:37 PM / UPDATED 10-4-18 / 6:30 AM

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The U.S. government on Wednesday warned that a hacking group widely known as cloudfopper, which Western cybersecurity firms have linked to the Chinese government, has launched attacks on technology service providers in a campaign to steal data from their clients.

The Department of Homeland issued a technical alert for cloudfopper, which it said was engaged in cyber espionage and theft of intellectual property, after experts with two prominent U.S. cybersecurity companies warned earlier this week that Chinese hacking activity has surged amid the escalating trade war between Washington and Beijing.

Chinese authorities have repeatedly denied claims by Western cyber security firms that it supports hacking.

Homeland Security released the information to support U.S. companies in responding to attacks by the group, which is targeting information technology, energy, healthcare, communications and manufacturing firms…. 

**NAS Whiting Field**

**NAS Whiting Field holds Bells Across America Gold Star Event**

By NAS Whiting Field Public Affairs Office, Posted Sep 28, 2018 at 10:23 AM, Updated Sep 28, 2018 at 10:23 AM

MILTON – NAS Whiting Field held its third annual Bells Across America Gold Star event Sept. 27 to honor fallen service members in a ceremony at the NAS Whiting Field Chapel. Lauren Anzaldo, Fleet and Family Support Center acting director, organized the event to remember and support Gold Star family members who have lost loved ones in service to their country.

The ceremony recognized fallen service members from all branches of the military who lost their lives while serving on active duty. Petty Officer 1st Class Anthony Kirby read aloud 60 service members’ names with a bell tolling for each lost service member.

“The greatest love is to lay down your life for your friends,” said Lt. Cmdr. Michael Griggs, Chaplain, NAS Whiting Field, in his invocation remarks, symbolizing the ultimate sacrifice these service members made during their military service.

Cmdr. Jim Brownlee, Executive Officer, NAS Whiting Field, emphasized the importance of not only remembering the service member lost, but also recognizing the family members who sacrificed so much for our nation.
Bells Across America is a nation-wide event sponsored by the United States Navy Gold Star Program. The program is a comprehensive Navy Survivor assistance program designed for families of service members who died while on active duty. The program was launched on Oct. 1, 2014 and provides a level of long-term assistance and support not previously available. The mission of the Navy Gold Star Program is to deliver survivor assistance programs and services.

For additional information on the Survivor’s Link newsletter, visit www.navygoldstar.com/additional-resources/navy-gold-star-newsletter. For more information about NAS Whiting Field’s support for the Gold Star Program, please contact the Fleet and Family Support Center at 850-623-7177.

Corry Station

IWTC Corry Station to Kick Off New Iteration of Saturday Scholars

Courtesy Story, Center for Information Warfare Training 09.27.2018

PENSACOLA, Fla. – Information Warfare Training Command (IWTC) Corry Station will kick off another iteration of the Saturday Scholars Program during orientation in the Corry Station Chiefs Mess, Saturday, Oct. 6 at 9 a.m.

Corry Station has the longest running Saturday Scholars Program in the U.S., now at 35 years. Every session of the program typically draws between 40-60 staff and students and a different elementary school is chosen each time. The students range from grades 3-5, and each student is assigned their own mentor. This iteration’s school is Montclair Elementary School, part of the Escambia County School District.

“The students at these schools receive exposure to people that have different experiences and open their eyes to a whole new world of possibilities that they might not have otherwise known about,” said Chief Information Systems Technician Bill Kelley, IWTC Corry Station's Saturday Scholars coordinator. “The mentors truly care about these students and dedicate 3-4 hours every Saturday for 6 weeks to ensure that the student has the best experience possible.”

Every Saturday starts off with the mentor having breakfast at the school. Once the kids arrive, they will play games like kickball, put puzzles together and math relay races throughout the morning. The biggest weekend of the 6-week program is a trip to the National Naval Aviation Museum…..

Eglin AFB

More F-35 Joint Strike Fighters May Soon Be Headed to Eglin Air Force Base

By Oriana Pawlyk, Military.com 3 Oct 2018

The U.S. Air Force is weighing the addition of another F-35 Joint Strike Fighter squadron at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, possibly as soon as 2020, Military.com has learned.
The plus-up would give additional resources to the busiest Air Force F-35 training wing, providing pilots necessary, enhanced equipment currently lacking in the pipeline, according to the head of the training wing.

"There are ongoing discussions to increase the aircraft at the 33rd Fighter Wing, to put additional aircraft and missions [here]," said Col. Paul Moga, commander of the fighter wing, which is part of Air Education and Training Command.

The hope is the wing will receive 24 jets with the latest software, Block 3F, in addition to upgrading the current fleet of fighters at the base, he said.

The boost would not only give incoming pilots much newer stealth aircraft to train with, but also offer other improvements, due to the more advanced software and newer planes.

"The reliability, the sustainability, the maintainability, and a lot of the maintenance practices for troubleshooting [all of that] gets significantly better ...and we'll see a clear and quantifiable increase in all of our performance and maintenance metrics," Moga said in an interview Friday…..

Tyndall AFB

Combat Support Wing exercise showcases agile lethality

Story by Veronica Kemeny, 09.28.2018
https://www.dvidshub.net/news/294933/combat-support-wing-exercise-showcases-agile-lethality

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – More than 150 Airmen from seven major commands participated in a Combat Support Wing proof-of-concept exercise Sept. 05-19 that tested a small team’s capability to conduct agile downrange operations.

The exercise, conducted at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, with forward deployments to Moody Air Force Base, Georgia, and Avon Park Air Force Range, Florida, served to validate an innovative way to deliver airpower lethality more effectively and efficiently anywhere in the world.

The CSW exercise kicked off with Airmen stepping out of their comfort zone to learn core skills from Air Force specialty codes other than their own, including flightline maintenance and operations, security, communications, and other agile combat support functions.

“Two years ago, the Combat Air Forces came to us with an idea: If we are in the Pacific or Europe, or operating in a hostile or denied environment, how would we be able to leverage the support forces to refuel and rearm jets? That was the challenge,” said Brig. Gen. Brian Bruckbauer, director of expeditionary support at the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center, who served as exercise commander.

According to Bruckbauer, in 2017 at AFIMSC’s inaugural Installation and Mission Support Weapons and Tactics Conference, a team of officers and NCOs proposed a concept that focused on multifunctional training that included Airmen learning different specialties to rapidly deploy, minimizing the number of personnel put in harm’s way, increasing the lethality of that small unit, and creating redundancies to bolster mission success…..
**NS Mayport**

**Crew of Coast Guard Cutter Valiant returns to Mayport after counter-drug patrol**

by WJXT News4Jax, Posted: 6:05 PM, October 03, 2018 Updated: 6:05 PM, October 03, 2018


**JACKSONVILLE, Fla.** - The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Valiant has returned to Naval Station Mayport after a six-week counter-drug patrol in the Caribbean Sea, officials said.

The Valiant is a multi-mission 210-foot Medium-Endurance Cutter, according to the U.S. Coast Guard. Missions include search and rescue, maritime law enforcement, marine environmental protection, homeland security and national defense operations.

Officials said the crew patrolled more than 7,000 nautical miles in the Caribbean in support of Joint Interagency Task Force South.

The crew worked closely with partner nations, including the Netherlands. After careful preparation and coordination, officials said Valiant joined forces with the HNLMS Friesland, a Royal Netherlands Navy offshore patrol vessel and the Coast Guard Cutter Richard Dixon to ensure the safe and expeditious transfer of four suspected drug smugglers to U.S. law enforcement officials.

The Valiant crew contributed to an interagency operation, which will support the dismantling of a transnational criminal organization, officials said……

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**Cape Canaveral AFS**

**USS Indiana submarine commissioned during Navy ceremony at Port Canaveral**

Rick Neale, Florida Today, Published 3:36 p.m. ET Sept. 29, 2018 | Updated 4:16 p.m. ET Sept. 29, 2018


**PORT CANAVERAL** — America's rival nations seek to seize our tactical advantage in the undersea domain, warns Adm. Frank Caldwell, director of the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program.

That's why Navy officials tout the newly built USS Indiana's addition to their fleet as "the most modern and sophisticated attack submarine in the world."

"Soon, Indiana will deploy her stealth, endurance and her flexibility to travel silently under the oceans, protecting our nation. She will be undetected, collecting intelligence, preparing for battle," Caldwell said during Saturday's USS Indiana commissioning ceremony.

"And if necessary, striking from the deep — swiftly, without notice — to defend our nation," Caldwell said.

The battle-ready Indiana (SSN 789) was commissioned during a gala ceremony before about 5,500 ticketed guests at Trident Wharf at the Naval Ordnance Test Unit, located at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station…..
US Southern Command

SOUTHCOM, Interagency team deliver military supplies to Colombia

BARRANQUILLA, Colombia – The U.S. Army Vessel (USA) NEW ORLEANS, LCU 2031 of the 824th Transportation Company (Heavy Boat), U.S. Army, delivered a load of munitions from Sunny Point, N.C. to Barranquilla, Colombia for the Colombian Air Force in late August.

The successful delivery and distribution of this Foreign Military Sales (FMS) cargo was the result of careful coordination by U.S. Southern Command’s J-43 Mobility Division, SCJ-35 Global Force Management, SCJ-5 Engagement directorate, U.S. Army Forces Southern Command, Joint Munitions Command (JMC), U.S. Transportation Command, FORCENCOM, U.S. Army Reserve Command, (U.S.) Security Cooperation Office - Colombia, the Colombian Air Force, and other organizations which were engaged in ensuring a safe and efficient delivery.

The USAV “NEW ORLEANS” is a Landing Craft-Utility Vessel (LCU), which is manned by a crew of 17 U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers.

The cargo was consolidated at McAllister Army Depot in Oklahoma from five locations in the U.S., then shipped via truck to Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point, N.C. (MOTSU).

The LCU was loaded with 10 containers of munitions cargo prior to departing for the 8-day voyage to Barranquilla, Colombia.

Defense Industry

OEA Report Shows What States, Counties Are Attracting Defense Dollars

Defense spending on contracts and payroll accounted for 8.5 percent of Virginia’s gross domestic product, making it the top ranked state by that metric in fiscal 2016. Virginia was followed by Hawaii (7.6 percent), Alaska (5.5 percent), Maryland (5.2 percent) and Alabama (5.2 percent) in the ranking of states by defense spending as a portion of their economies. On average, defense spending accounted for 2.2 percent of all states’ GDP in FY 2016. Virginia also ranked highly in absolute terms for attracting defense dollars, coming in second, with $42.7 billion, behind California, at $48.8 billion; Texas came in third for total defense spending with $33.3 billion.

Almost 60 percent of total defense spending, $378.5 billion, went to 10 states.

Those rankings are included in the latest analysis of defense spending by state prepared by the Office of Economic Adjustment. By highlighting states’ reliance on military installations and contractors, the report can be used “to assess potential exposure to fluctuations in defense spending and to target assistance to create more resilient communities and companies,” according to its executive summary. The listing for
each state shows the top defense contractors and ranks the top 10 counties by contract spending, personnel spending, and number of active-duty and civilian personnel.

Two states, California and Connecticut, account for half of the top 10 counties for attracting defense contract spending:

- Fairfax County, Va. — $9.9 billion
- San Diego County, Calif. — $8.4 billion
- Los Angeles County, Calif. — $6.2 billion
- Madison County, Ala. — $5.4 billion
- Santa Clara County, Calif. — $5.3 billion
- Louis County, Mo. — $5.2 billion
- King County, Wash. — $5.1 billion
- New London County, Conn. — $4.8 billion
- Fairfield County, Conn. — $4.4 billion
- Orange County, Fla. — $4.0 billion

Lockheed's super fast Hellfire missile, Northrop Grumman and more score big military work here

By Matthew Richardson – Staff writer, Orlando Business Journal, Oct 2, 2018, 5:19pm

More work is being loaded up for Lockheed Martin Corp.'s (NYSE: LMT) powerful Hellfire missile — and all the services are being performed in Orlando.

The Bethesda, Md.-based defense giant got a $631.7 million contract with the U.S. Army on Oct. 1, according to the U.S. Department of Defense. Work for the three-year contract will take place at Lockheed Martin's Missile & Fire Control facility in southwest Orlando, which has more than 5,000 employees.

The company will procure a variety of Hellfire II missile variants in containers for foreign military sales in the Netherlands and Japan.

The Hellfire missile is described as an air-to-surface and surface-to-surface missile that can travel at 1.3 mach speed, or nearly 1,000 miles per hour. The missile also weighs a little more than 100 pounds.

Lockheed Martin's Hellfire missile is known to grab big contracts. Earlier this year, the defense giant's local office got an $80.2 million contract to increase Hellfire production up to 11,000 missiles per year....

White House warns of ‘domestic extinction’ of suppliers in industrial base report - and DoD is ready to help with cash

By: Aaron Mehta, 10-4-2018
WASHINGTON – A combination of Chinese influence and budgetary uncertainty means America’s defense industrial base is **decaying at the lower levels**, with some vital suppliers facing “domestic extinction,” a new study from the Trump administration is warning — and direct investment from the administration appears to be the solution.

The study, the result of an executive order issued by president Donald Trump last July, also warns that if the situation is not remedied, the Pentagon faces “limited capabilities, insecurity of supply, lack of R&D, program delays, and an inability to surge in times of crisis.”

The language seems dire, but much of the 140-page report appears to contain little new for those who have paid attention to defense industrial issues over the last several years. Many of the concerns outlined in the report echo that of a Defense Department internal study, released earlier this year, which warned long-term trends, including demographics and sole-source suppliers going out of business, were set to create major hurdles for the department.

The report has been long coming. Trump ordered its creation in **July of 2017**, with Peter Navarro, his trade czar and a well-known China hawk, as the coordinating point man. At the time, Navarro said the study was being driven by concerns that “we cannot retain a preeminent military without a healthy, growing economy and a resilient industrial base.”

By May 2018, the Pentagon had **sent its conclusions** into the White House for coordination which set industry expectations of a release shortly thereafter. However, the release dated **continued to be pushed back**, due largely to other news overtaking the White House…..

### DoD Budget

**Trump signs defense spending plan, with one more swipe at Democrats**

By: Leo Shane III, 9-29-2018


WASHINGTON – President Donald Trump finalized an $854 billion **spending bill** on Friday that fully funds the military for fiscal 2019 and prevents a government shutdown next week, accomplishments that congressional leaders have called important and laudable.

But Trump’s signature came with one final attack on Democrats over the spending measure, lamenting lawmakers’ decision not to include extra money in the appropriations package for his planned wall along the southern U.S. border.

“Unfortunately, the radical Democrats refuse to support border security and want drugs and crime to pour into our country,” he said in a statement after signing the bill.

The comments came just a week after Trump took to social media to blast “this ridiculous Spending Bill,” raising fears of a presidential veto on Capitol Hill. Instead, Trump largely praised the measure on Friday, calling it “important legislation to rebuild our military” and promote other domestic priorities.

The appropriations measure includes $674 billion in defense funding for fiscal 2019, and marks the first time in a decade Congress has finalized the spending measure before the start of the new fiscal year…..
Dunford Pleased DOD Enters Fiscal 2019 With Budget

By Jim Garamone, Oct. 1, 2018

MADRID – For the first time in a long time, the Defense Department entered the fiscal year with a budget, and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said troops should be extremely pleased with the development.

“What the troops have seen is a commitment from the executive and legislative branches of government to give them the wherewithal to do their jobs,” Marine Corps Gen. Joe Dunford said during an interview with reporters traveling with him.

President Donald J. Trump signed the appropriations bill on Friday meaning the Defense Department starts fiscal year 2019 with money in the bank. The president signed the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act in August. Both bills must be passed before DOD can operate.

Defense leaders had made the case for the budget through “identifying the challenges we face and also the demonstrated performance of our men and women in uniform every day,” Dunford said. Congress understood that the U.S. military needs these capabilities, “and we can be entrusted to make good use of them.”

His message to Congress and the American people this year is for an appropriate, sustained level of funding. “It took us years to get into this problem and you don’t spend money efficiently, you don’t spend money as good steward, if you lurch from year to year,” he said. “You can’t plan a program and develop capabilities over time.”

Predictability will allow the department to build effective partnerships with industry. This will allow companies to deliver capabilities on time and on cost......

Other Of Interest

Cooper hails State defense economic program

By Eddie Fitzgerald, Posted Sep 4, 2018 at 2:33 PM, Updated Sep 4, 2018 at 2:33 PM

N.C. Gov. Roy Cooper visited Lenoir County Tuesday, bringing a gift for a new state initiative that is helping the defense business industry and rural economic development.

Organizers of the North Carolina Defense Industry Diversification Initiative, or NC DIDI, a pilot program started a year ago met at the Global TransPark Tuesday to hear about the progress of the program and learned from Cooper the state has awarded an additional $3 million for the NCDIDI.

Larry Hall, cabinet secretary for the North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, said NC DIDI was a response from the state to understand and support the needs of North Carolina’s defense businesses. It seeks to ensure that the defense supply chain remains robust, so that it is able to quickly absorb sudden high demands from Department of Defense agencies, he said.

Cooper sought to make North Carolina the most military, veteran friendly state in the United States, when he took office and not just talk about it and part of that was by making the defense industry a part of the community, Hall said.
Last year, the NCDIDI program used a $2-million grant it initially received, in part, to do a comprehensive study of defense firms and manufactures across the state and to seek 10 companies in the military supply chain to be part of Commercialization Pilot Project.

North Carolina has six military bases with an annual economic impact of $66 billion and in the past the state has not known enough about the defense business industry to help the state grow, Hall said.....

**China conducts further tests with hypersonic vehicles**

Andrew Tate, London - IHS Jane's Defence Weekly, 02 October 2018

https://www.janes.com/article/83514/china-conducts-further-tests-with-hypersonic-vehicles

China carried out atmospheric tests with three hypersonic vehicle models at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre on 21 September, with state-owned television channel CCTV 7 reporting a week later that the tests were completed successfully.

The three test vehicles were lofted to a high altitude beneath a balloon before being released and free-falling back to Earth at speeds in excess of Mach 1.

The vehicle models reflected different aerodynamic configurations: one with a delta form and single vertical tail fin; another with twin tail fins and the third with the vehicle body underslung beneath the wing.

The scale models, which were about 2 m long with a wingspan of about 1.5 m, were designated D18-1S, D18-2S, and D18-3S. They are believed to have been developed by the Institute of Mechanics of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The test vehicles are unlikely to have achieved hypersonic speeds, but reports in Chinese media outlets suggest that the tests were intended to gather comparative data on the vehicles’ performance at speeds around the sound barrier.

China has an extensive research and development (R&D) programme for the development hypersonic vehicles. Flight tests on an unpowered hypersonic glide vehicle (HGV), known alternatively as DF-ZF or WU-14, commenced in 2014, with at least 7 tests conducted to date. The DF-ZF HGV is assessed to be capable of attaining speeds in the region of Mach 5 to Mach 10.....
Task Force members,

1. **Delayed Update** – Sorry for the update being delayed this week, our office was closed due to Hurricane Michael. By now you have all likely heard that Tyndall AFB was ground zero for landfall and was very heavily damaged, categorized as “catastrophic”. NSA Panama City was also heavily damaged, categorized as “severe”. Many Task Force members checked in on us here in Tallahassee and I want to report that all of us here are fine. As of today, I have not been in touch with Chair Trumbull, but I have heard from Tom Neubauer and can report he is already working to support Tyndall AFB, as all of you would expect. See several articles below in the CLIPs.

2. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #68 is **THIS Thursday, 18 October 2018, beginning at 9:00AM EST** via Conference Call (agenda attached). With both the Chair and Vice Chair being from Panama City, please stand by for more information, however, we will be up on the call. Electronic meeting books available on our website at [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/meetings/](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/meetings/).

3. **Call In Number** –
   - Call-In Number: 800-501-8979
   - Access Code: 1869945

4. **2019 Legislative Committee Schedule** – The Florida Legislature released the committee schedule leading up to the 2019 legislative session (attached) last week. The first committee week is scheduled for December 11-14, 2018; the remainder will occur after the New Year and do not conflict with Task Force events (except the February Task Force conference call).

5. **DOD Issues Flyer on Dependent School Enrollment Issue** – DoD has found that family PCS move timing can cause issues for dependents enrolling in schools around the country. According to a DoD flyer (attached) that outlines the issue, “About 185 thousand military children move between schools annually, and as a result, may potentially miss their registration date. As a result, they may have to shift their planned courses of study, which may require them to take courses in summer school, or even force them to graduate later than their peers.” Both the FDA and the Task Force are looking at potential legislation for next session that could support military families better in Florida.

6. **Attachments:**
   - Task Force Meeting #68
   - FL Legislature 2019 Committee Mtg Schedule
   - Advanced Enrollment – DoD issue flyer
   - Key West Resolution Against Oil Drilling

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News Clips of Interest:

NAS Pensacola

Navy Units in Florida are Bracing for Hurricane Michael

By: Ben Werner, October 9, 2018 1:17 PM

THE PENTAGON – The Navy is in the process of securing aircraft stationed on the Florida panhandle as the Department of Defense monitors Hurricane Michael’s track into the Gulf of Mexico, officials told USNI News on Tuesday.

Naval Air Station Pensacola and Naval Air Station Whiting Field are both located on the Florida Panhandle and are within the area the National Hurricane Center expects Hurricane Michael to make landfall on Wednesday. As of 10 a.m. Tuesday, Michael had sustained winds of 110 mph, according to the National Hurricane Center.

“The Navy is in the process of tying down, hangering, or evacuating aircraft,” Cmdr. Dave Hecht, a spokesman for Naval Air Forces Atlantic, told USNI News.

NAS Pensacola plans to send all non-essential personnel home at 2 p.m. Tuesday. Other base activities and will be shut-down throughout the day. The base will remain closed Wednesday but expects to be fully open on Thursday, according to a message on the base Facebook page.

Both NAS Pensacola and NAS Whiting Field are primarily home to training aircraft. Whiting Field is home to Training Air Wing Five where more than 60 percent of all primary flight training occurs. Also, every Navy, Coast Guard, and Marine Corps helicopter pilot receives initial rotary training at Whiting Field, according to the base….

Eglin AFB

Aircraft are being relocated to Barksdale Air force Base due to Hurricane Michael

By: Zyneria Byrd, Posted: Oct 09, 2018 06:21 PM CDT, Updated: Oct 09, 2018 06:21 PM CDT
BARKSDALE AIRFORCE BASE, La - As Hurricane Michael is making way toward landfall, military aircraft is being relocated to Barksdale Air Force Base.

Barksdale is being a good neighbor providing space for extra aircraft and this isn't first time they've stepped up to lend a hand.

The last time they provided space for aircraft and personnel from South Carolina before Hurricane Florence made landfall.

They had 2.1 billion dollars worth of aircraft and an extra 200 military personnel.

Tuesday, Barksdale received F-35's from Eglin Airforce Base and T-1's from Naval Air Station Pensacola.

Captian Andrew Caulk chief of public affairs for BAFB says,"our team here does an amazing job and we have a very robust response team that helps take care each of those pieces that when units come in they feel welcomed they like this is a home away from home."

The aircraft that came in today are used for training purposes at the two bases.

More aircraft will arrive Wednesday morning and the next coming day's along with air force personnel who will stay on base and in Bossier.

NSA Panama City

Naval Support Activity Panama City Orders Evacuation

By: Brady Calhoun, Posted: Oct 09, 2018 12:04 PM EDT, Updated: Oct 09, 2018 12:08 PM EDT

Panama City, Fla. - NSA Panama City Commanding Officer has ordered a mandatory evacuation of the installation to be completed by 4:00 p.m. (CDT) today.

Evacuations are authorized for all service members, civilian employees, their dependents and Reservists on active duty.

The safe haven location is Gulfport, MS or within 150 miles of Gulfport.

Daily muster is required on NFAAS https://navyfamily.navy.mil and with your supervisor. If you are unable to contact your supervisor call the NSA muster team at 850-774-7976.

Tenant command personnel will refer to their command leadership for evacuation orders including safe haven information and effective times.

Tyndall AFB

Tyndall Evacuates Personnel as Bases Brace for Hurricane Michael

By Oriana Pawlyk, Military.com 10-9-2018
U.S. Air Force bases located in Florida's panhandle are readying for Hurricane Michael, with some installations ordering mandatory personnel evacuations ahead of the Category 2 storm.

Tyndall Air Force Base on Monday ordered the evacuation of all on-and-off-base personnel ahead of the hurricane, which is set to make landfall Wednesday afternoon, according to the National Hurricane Center.

"It's important to know that this order applies to all Tyndall assigned military personnel regardless if they live on base or not," Col. Jefferson Hawkins, vice commander of the 325th Fighter Wing, said in a release. "People are our most important resource, and we're committed to protecting them."

Wind gusts could reach between 90 and 110 miles per hour, and the storm has the potential to increase to a Category 3, NHC officials have said. Water levels are also expected to rise.

Tyndall airmen and civilians, including those in base housing, must be off the installation by 3 p.m. Tuesday, officials said. Personnel may use their government-issued credit cards "for any expenses incurred during this evacuation," the release said, adding they will be reimbursed for any travel expenses of at least 100 miles, but no more than 500 miles, from the base.

Aircraft have been moved from Tyndall to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, as a precaution. The base houses F-22 Raptors, T-38 Talons and QF-16s -- F-16 Fighting Falcons converted into unmanned aircraft. Officials did not specify how many aircraft had been moved.....

Michael blasted Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida — a key to homeland security

WASHINGTON — Hurricane Michael smashed through Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida — a key part of the network of bases protecting the continental United States — causing widespread damage that crews were only beginning to assess Thursday.

At landfall Wednesday, the Category 4 storm's winds of more than 150 mph peeled off roofs, tore down trees and power lines and caused "significant structural damage" to buildings on the base, according to the Air Force. The base had been evacuated on Monday, but a small team remained behind. No injuries were reported.

Damage assessments are being made from the air, according to an Air Force statement released Thursday. Power has been cut off to the base, which also lacks water and sewer service. The Air Force is clearing a route to the base to provide security, drinkable water, bathrooms and communication equipment....

Tyndall Air Force Base a 'Complete Loss’ Amid Questions About Stealth Fighters

By Dave Philipps, Oct. 11, 2018
Sitting in the ruined airplane hangars of Tyndall Air Force Base, which was shredded on Wednesday when Hurricane Michael swept across the Florida Panhandle, may be some of the Air Force’s most advanced — and most expensive — stealth fighter jets.

Tyndall is home to 55 F-22 stealth fighters, which cost a dizzying $339 million each. Before the storm, the Air Force sent at least 33 of the fighters to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio.

Air Force officials have not disclosed the whereabouts of the remaining 22 planes, other than to say that a number of aircraft were left at the base because of maintenance or safety reasons.

An Air Force spokeswoman, Maj. Malinda Singleton, would not confirm that any of the aircraft left behind were F-22s….

Tyndall sustains ‘direct hit,’ ‘extensive damage’ from hurricane

By: Stephen Losey, 10-12-2018

Hurricane Michael slammed into Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida as a Category 4 storm on Wednesday, causing extensive damage and leaving the base closed until further notice.

Tyndall said in a release Wednesday evening that the “catastrophic” storm delivered a direct hit to the base, bringing down trees and power lines, ripping roofs off buildings and causing significant structural damage. Michael’s winds topped 150 miles per hour. Tyndall is near Panama City, Florida, which bore the brunt of the storm.

No injuries have so far been reported, the base said, but the condition of Tyndall’s runway is not yet known.

Air Force spokeswoman Erika Yepsen said in an email Thursday afternoon that Tyndall currently has no power, water or sewer service. The Air Force is working on aerial surveillance of Tyndall to assess the damage, clearing a route to the base, and providing security, potable water, latrines and communication equipment.

Yepsen said all personnel assigned to ride out the storm at Tyndall are accounted for and uninjured. But other airman who are assigned to Tyndall should not plan to return at this time, she said…..

Tyndall AFB Update: Officials Grapple with Next Steps; Florida Lawmakers Insist on Full and Rapid Recovery for Base; And More

Dan Cohen, Posted on Oct 15, 2018 03:10 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=2ef8dbbd08

Air Force officials on Friday remained uncertain how long Tyndall AFB would remain closed, after Hurricane Michael’s 150 mph winds swept through the installation last week leaving nearly every building damaged. “One hundred percent of the housing for that base is uninhabitable,” Air Force Gen. Joseph Lengyel, chief of the National Guard Bureau, told reporters in Washington. Tyndall and the surrounding region will require assistance for at least weeks, Lengyel said, with establishing
communications beyond the Florida Panhandle one of the base’s first priorities. It also is not clear where the 3,600 airmen and families who live at Tyndall will be assigned, reported Federal News Network. “The initial concern right now is for the families and the people who were displaced from that,” he said. “I don’t think they can live on Tyndall, plus the schools and the rest, so there’s a lot to do with how they begin to mitigate the disaster that happened there.” … Two days after Hurricane Michael flattened Tyndall AFB, Florida Sens. Marco Rubio (R) and Bill Nelson (D) and Rep. Neal Dunn (R) urged the Air Force’s senior leaders to expedite the effort to repair and restore operations at the installation. “Each of us stand ready to work with the Air Force to rebuild Tyndall AFB and advocate for the resources needed to do so,” states the Oct. 12 letter to Secretary Heather Wilson and Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein. “As the Air Force conducts its damage assessment, we request consistent, immediate, and detailed communication of the funding and support needed to repair infrastructure, restore operations and provide for local service members, civilians and their families,” the lawmakers say. The letter also highlights Tyndall’s primary missions — the Air Force’s training wing for the F-22 Raptor, and the air operations center for NORAD and U.S. Northern Command. … Meanwhile, the cleanup effort began Friday when an engineering unit arrived at Tyndall from Hurlburt Field located 100 miles to the west. The Red Horse Squadron was outfitted with heavy construction equipment, reported Stars and Stripes. On Thursday evening, Air Force special tactics airmen from Hurlburt reopened Tyndall’s airfield to allow aircraft to deliver emergency supplies to the area. The first air delivery arrived just after 7 p.m., according to a news release. … The Air Force acknowledged that several aircraft not evacuated from Tyndall for maintenance or safety reasons may have been damaged, as all of the hangars at the base suffered severe damage. “We anticipate the aircraft parked inside may be damaged as well, but we won’t know the extent until our crews can safely enter those hangars and make an assessment,” said Air Combat Command spokeswoman Erica Vega. Many of the planes left behind were F-22s, according to a defense official. Photos of the catastrophic damage left in the wake of Hurricane Michael, along with a video of an aerial assessment, can be found on this Stars and Stripes link.

Tyndall Air Force Base commander: I'm working to get you back

WJHG, Posted: Sat 7:36 PM, Oct 13, 2018 | Updated: Sun 7:04 PM, Oct 14, 2018

BAY COUNTY, Fla. (WJHG) -- Tyndall Commander Col Brian Laidlaw said he is working as quick as he can to get the Tyndall Air Force Base safe enough for its 11,000 assigned personnel to return.

"I know you have a lot of questions. I have a lot of questions too, I assure you," he said.

Laidlaw said the question he's receiving the most is about when people can return to look at the damage to their homes and dorms. He asked for them to monitor their sources of information for the latest updates.

Two of those sources are https://www.tyndall.af.mil/Hurricane/and the Tyndall Air Force Base Facebook page. You also can call 210-565-0102 for assistance.

He said the base is getting as much help as it requested as fast as it can handle it. Teams from throughout the country arrived with extra people and equipment to restore the base…..

FL National Guard / Camp Blanding

From Governor Scott’s Hurricane Update (10-12-2018):
At Governor Scott's direction, the Florida National Guard has authorized the activation of up to 3,500 Soldiers and Airmen to assist with response efforts, with an emphasis on high water and search and rescue operations.

Through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), the Florida National Guard has coordinated for 17 aviation assets from 9 other states, including 6 CH-47 Chinook helicopters from the New York, Mississippi, Minnesota and Ohio National Guards to augment our aviation capabilities, as well as 11 UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters were also coordinated through the New York, Wisconsin, Colorado, Louisiana, Kansas and Arkansas National Guards.

The Florida National Guard currently has Soldiers and Airmen on orders, and has been tasked with missions, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Communications support packages have been dispatched to Holmes, Liberty, Jackson and Gadsden counties, with new missions expected to Franklin, Gulf and Washington today.
- Currently staffing 7 shelters (3 in Bay County, 4 in Holmes County) and 11 county Emergency Operations Centers.
- Supporting a total of 6 Points of Distribution (PODs) throughout Wakulla (1), Gadsden (1) and Leon (4) counties, with an additional 15 PODs expected today.
- Operating at the State Logistics Readiness Center (SLRC) in Orlando and various Logistics Staging Areas (LSAs) to ensure that we are able to get supplies quickly to those who need them.
- Supporting Mobile Distribution Convoys, and continuing to conduct reconnaissance, search and rescue, and route clearance missions.
- Our aviation assets are actively conducting missions sets including reconnaissance, search and rescue, Governor support, and an air bridge operation to deliver life-saving supplies to affected areas.
- The 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat team conducted a security mission in support of a Coast Guard helicopter that was experiencing mechanical issues.

The Florida National Guard has more than 1,000 high water vehicles, 13 helicopters and 16 boats.

The Florida National Guard is actively engaged in a multi-agency effort to conduct humanitarian and security missions in the Florida Panhandle. Our Soldiers and Airmen are providing critical capabilities to include road clearance, communication systems, and the delivery and distribution of life-saving supplies.

**NAS Jacksonville**

**Sailors welcomed by families in emotional NAS Jax homecoming**

By Crystal Moyer - Traffic/reporter, Posted: 5:25 PM, October 09, 2018 Updated: 11:30 PM, October 09, 2018


**JACKSONVILLE, Fla.** - Hundreds of families were reunited with their loved ones Tuesday at Naval Air Station Jacksonville as two squadrons returned from a months-long deployment overseas.
It was a homecoming that was six months in the making for many families, who were at the base watching and waiting for members of Patrol Squadron 45 to fly in aboard P-8 Poseidon aircraft.

US Navy proposing major show of force to warn China

Test of wells around NAS Jax show water safe to drink

Dozens of sailors stepped off the plane and into the arms of their loved ones. Brian Conlan was greeted with hugs, kisses and tears when he saw his wife and two sons for the first time in half a year.

“I’m extremely grateful to live in this country,” he said. “I’m extremely grateful to have a wonderful family.”

“Just incredibly blessed and glad that the last six-and-a-half months are over and he’s home,” said Conlan’s wife, Sarah.

Patrol Squadron 45 flew back from Japan, where the nearly 300-member squadron was helping with military and counter-narcotics operations along the Pacific Ocean.

A few hours later, they were joined by sailors from Patrol Squadron 10, which had been on a six-month assignment in support of U.S. European Command….

Patrick AFB

920th Rescue Wing Prepares to Launch Search-and-Rescue Missions in Response to Hurricane Michael

By Space Coast Daily // October 11, 2018

BREVARD COUNTY • PATRICK AIRFORCE BASE, FLORIDA – Air Force Reservists with the 920th Rescue Wing started preparing to launch search-and-rescue missions in response to Hurricane Michael.

The Air Force Reserve unit, which specializes in combat search and rescue, allocated aircraft, supplies and personnel in anticipation of Hurricane relief.

The 920th RQW will remain on standby until called into action in the aftermath of the storm. Its assets include HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters and HC-130N fixed-wing aerial refueling aircraft.

“We’re ready to respond,” said Col. Michael LoForti, 920th Operations Group commander.

“Thanks to all of our dedicated Reserve Citizen Airmen, we’ve generated aircraft, equipment and personnel in a very short amount of time in response to Hurricane Michael.”

Given its rescue capabilities, the Reserve unit is often tasked with humanitarian efforts after natural disasters, most recently responding to Florence in September and Hurricanes Irma and Harvey in 2017…..

Defense Industry

Lockheed Martin (LMT) Secures $390.8M Contract for JASSM
Lockheed Martin Corp. LMT has received production contract for the 16th lot of Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile ("JASSM") from the U.S. Air Force.

The contract is valued at $390.8 million and was awarded by the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida.

Per the contract, Lockheed Martin will produce 360 JASSM-extended range, three foreign military sales ("FMS") separation text vehicles, one FMS flight test vehicle-live fire as well as tooling and test equipment.

The work is scheduled to be completed by Oct 31, 2021 and will be executed in Orlando……
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #69 will be Thursday, 15 November 2108, beginning at 9:00AM EST at the Courtyard by Marriott, 3435 N. Atlantic Avenue, Cocoa Beach, FL 32931.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   **Call-In Number:** 800-501-8979  
   **Access Code:** 1869945

3. **Task Force Members to Visit Tyndall AFB Next Week** – Tyndall AFB took a direct hit from Hurricane Michael last week with winds of 150+ mph; the powerful Category 4 hurricane damaged almost every building on the base. Tyndall’s damage has been called “catastrophic”. The Florida National Guard has almost 4,000 members mobilized to assist in the broader recovery effort. The TF charter is to make recommendations to preserve, protect and enhance Florida’s military installations. As such, the damage to Tyndall AFB due to Hurricane Michael is a huge concern as Panama City’s military installations provide enormous contribution to national defense as well as contribute 22,700 jobs and $2.5 billion in economic impact to Bay County. Staff is making arrangements for available Task Force members to travel to Tyndall on Friday, 26 October 2018 to see how we can support. **All Task force members who would like to attend are asked to get back to Terry or Michelle by COB Monday, 22 Oct 2018.** Details are still being developed, but initial plans include all members east or south of Tallahassee marshaling in Tallahassee for transportation to Tyndall. Due to evacuees and support crews lodging in Tallahassee, hotels may not be possible. Staff will continue to try and secure lodging for members who need it once we know who will be attending. We will designate a meeting location in or near Panama City to join all members coming from Panama City and locations west of Panama City. The initial plan will be to meet with 1st Air Force and 325th Fighter Wing leadership, view the damage to the base infrastructure, and determine what the state and TF can do to support a full recovery and rebuild of Tyndall AFB.

4. **Governor Scott / Florida Congressional Members Ask to Rebuild Tyndall** – Early this week members of the Florida Congressional Delegation sent letters to the President Trump as well as the Air Force Secretary and Chief of Staff requesting that the administration commit to rebuilding Tyndall AFB following a direct hit from Hurricane Michael. On Thursday, Oct 18th, Governor Scott visited Tyndall and witnessed the damage on the base. Following his visit, Governor Scott noted the resolve and commitment of the Airman and the community and wrote to the President and Congress requesting they commit to fully rebuild Tyndall AFB. John Patrick Walsh from the Florida Washington Office stated that, “I know many of us were shocked to see the post-landfall images of Tyndall AFB and appreciate the important role it plays in our state. Today, Governor Scott sent a letter to President Trump requesting direct and immediate action to return Tyndall AFB to full operation. We would appreciate your support in this endeavor and thank those of you who have already raised this issue to DoD and Congress.” See all four attached letters from the Governor and the CODEL supporting full rebuild of Tyndall.
5. **Task Force Releases Request for Proposals (RFP) for Advocacy** – The Task Force’s current Advocacy contract expires in February 2019. We received three replies to our RFQ from qualified firms who are asked to now provide proposals in addition to any other proposals. The Task Force releases the RFP (DTF-RFP19-001 - attached) to select one company to support its needs. Proposals are due by November 9, 2018. Once we have an opportunity to review, the Task Force plans to notify selected firms to make in-person presentations in January 2019 and begin a new contract in March 2019. The RFP document and other information is hosted on MyFlorida Marketplace and our website at https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/funding-contracts/

6. **Gulf Coast Businesses Oppose Gulf Drilling** – According to a press release, “The Florida Gulf Coast Business Coalition (FGCBC) will publicly launch its alliance against the expansion of dirty and dangerous offshore oil drilling off Florida’s Gulf Coast. The press conference will be held at Tradewinds Islands Grand Resort in St. Pete Beach, Florida on Tuesday, October 16, 2018 at 10:30 am. Representing more than 2,000 businesses, chambers and associations, the FGCBC works to ensure offshore drilling does not come one mile closer to Florida’s coast and opposes any new drilling in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico. Representing more than 2,000 businesses, chambers and associations, the FGCBC hopes to ensure offshore drilling does not come one mile closer to Florida’s coast and opposes any new drilling in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico. Current efforts to expand offshore drilling threatens over 304,000 jobs and roughly $17.5 billion in GDP from Florida’s Gulf Coast fishing, tourism and recreation sectors. Numerous chambers of commerce, businesses and elected officials will be in attendance at the event.” See more in the CLIPs.

7. **DoD State Liaison Office Releases 2019 Key Issues** – DoD has issued their list of 10 state focus issues supporting service members and families (attached) and available at www.USA4MilitaryFamilies.dod.mil. In addition, Mr. Eric Sherman provided the Florida Status of the issues (also attached). According to the DoD State Liaison Office (DSLO), Florida has some work to do on five areas. Both the FDA and the Task Force are looking at potential legislation for next session in several of the listed areas that could support military families better in Florida.

8. **Semi-Annual FDA Meeting Set for November 14, 2018 in Cocoa Beach** – Please sign up with Michelle Griggs if you plan to attend the upcoming FDA meeting in Cocoa Beach. FDA has developed a great agenda and it looks to be a most engaging and lively meeting.

9. **Attachments:**
   - FL Delegation Letter to President Trump Supporting Tyndall Rebuild
   - FL Delegation Letter to SecAF Wilson Supporting Tyndall Rebuild
   - Governor Scott Letter to President Trump Requesting Tyndall Rebuild
   - Governor Scott Letter to SASC & HASC Requesting Tyndall Rebuild
   - Defense Support Liaison Office (DSLO) Key Issues for 2019
   - DSLO 2019 Issues - Florida Status
   - Task Force RFP for Advocacy
   - Primer on Working with State Legislatures
   - TPG Bi-weekly Conference Call

Terry
TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Political efforts are increasing to support the quick rebuilding of hurricane-damaged Tyndall Air Force Base and to keep the federal government from abandoning the economic engine in Northwest Florida.

Members of the Florida Defense Support Task Force, a legislatively mandated panel within the economic-development agency Enterprise Florida, expressed a need Thursday to expand support from the state’s congressional and legislative delegations.

Despite Pentagon officials on Monday saying they intend to rebuild the base, where pilots train to fly the F-22 stealth fighter, concerns linger that the 29,000-acre facility in southeastern Bay County could face downsizing or closure. The base employs about 11,000 military and civilian personnel.

Tom Neubauer, task force vice chairman, said during a conference-call meeting that efforts are underway to add to a show of support that was sent last week to Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson and Pentagon Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein by U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., and U.S. Rep. Neal Dunn, a Panama City Republican whose district includes the base.

“We’re just trying to get that put together now in the form of a formal declaration from all of our delegation across the state,” Neubauer said.

Neubauer noted that President Donald Trump flew over the base Monday as he toured damage from Hurricane Michael, which made landfall Oct. 10 in nearby Mexico Beach with maximum sustained winds of 155 mph. Tyndall evacuated all but 93 airmen assigned to survey the damage and help reopen the base.

“(Trump) did not specifically say, ‘Hey, we’re going to rebuild the base,’ ” Neubauer said. “But we’d sure like to hear that.”
State Sen. Doug Broxson, a Gulf Breeze Republican and member of the Defense Support Task Force, said he’s given a tour of the base to incoming Senate President Bill Galvano, R-Bradenton, and has invited the rest of the Senate for similar visits.

Broxson also suggested the task force quickly hold an emergency meeting to tour the damage at Tyndall. “We need to show that we’re proactive here in preventing any disruption of our military commitment,” Broxson said. “I don’t think we need to be staying overnight, because there is no place to stay. But we certainly need to let people understand the significance of what we’re going through.”

The concern for state officials is Tyndall could follow the path of Homestead Air Force Base, which was heavily damaged by Hurricane Andrew in 1992 and subsequently became an Air Force Reserve base.

The New York Times reported Thursday that the wreckage at Tyndall “shows how climate change may be putting billions of dollars worth of sophisticated aircraft at risk during storms like Hurricane Michael.”

Structural engineers from Lockheed Martin were sent to inspect an undisclosed number of F-22 Raptor stealth fighters --- each valued up to $339 million --- that were left at Tyndall during the storm, according to a tweet from the contractor. The planes had been left at the base for maintenance and safety reasons.

The Air Force announced Wednesday that it is committed to returning critical personnel to Tyndall. The gates were first opened Wednesday to military members, civilian employees and dependents for the first of five days of limited access to evaluate personal property.

The task force meeting was held Thursday as Gov. Rick Scott toured the damage at the base and tweeted his support to “assist them with anything needed to recover.”

Neubauer said the advisories he’s gotten is that restoration of the base “could be double digits in terms of months.”

A year ago, the Pentagon put a $3.4 billion value on the facilities at Tyndall and projected its annual economic impact --- combining payroll, expenditures and jobs created --- at $596 million.

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Oil Drilling / Gulf Range

Gulf Coast Business Leaders to Launch Coalition to Protect Coast from Offshore Drilling

Press release | 10/15/2018
http://www.protectthegulfcoast.org/

St. Pete Beach, Florida – The Florida Gulf Coast Business Coalition (FGCBC) will publicly launch its alliance against the expansion of dirty and dangerous offshore oil drilling off Florida’s Gulf Coast. The press conference will be held at Tradewinds Islands Grand Resort in St. Pete Beach, Florida on Tuesday, October 16, 2018 at 10:30 am.

Representing more than 2,000 businesses, chambers and associations, the FGCBC works to ensure offshore drilling does not come one mile closer to Florida’s coast and opposes any new drilling in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico.

Current efforts to expand offshore drilling threatens over 304,000 jobs and roughly $17.5 billion in GDP from Florida’s Gulf Coast fishing, tourism and recreation sectors. Numerous chambers of commerce, businesses and elected officials will be in attendance at the event.

- SPEAKERS:
• **Robin Miller**, President and CEO Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber of Commerce
• **David Yates**, CEO Clearwater Marine Aquarium
• **Rep. Charlie Crist**, U.S. Representative (D-FL 13)
  (more to be announced...)

• **WHEN:** Tuesday, October 16, 2018 at 10:30 am
• **WHERE:** Tradewinds Islands Grand Resort, 5500 Gulf Blvd, St. Pete Beach, FL 33706. Event to be held on resort beachfront.

**BACKGROUND:**

Earlier this year, the Trump administration announced its plans to open nearly all U.S. waters to offshore drilling activities. In a new draft five-year program (2019-2024) for oil and gas development on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), the Department of the Interior (DOI) outlined its plans to expand future oil and gas leasing to nearly all U.S. waters, the largest number of potential offshore lease sales ever proposed.

The Florida Gulf Coast Business Coalition seeks to serve as a business voice to protect the Gulf Coast of Florida. The group was formed because offshore drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico is fundamentally at odds with our coastal economy and way of life, our thriving businesses that are reliant upon healthy ocean ecosystems, and is incompatible with the military mission in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico. The FG CBC recognizes the importance of a unified business voice in protecting our coastal economies.

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**Cyber**

**Watchdog exposes Pentagon's cyber struggles**

BY JACQUELINE THOMSEN, October 14, 2018 - 08:00 AM EDT

Defense experts are seizing on a stunning federal report highlighting cyber vulnerabilities in U.S. weapons systems, calling it an embarrassing wake-up call for the Pentagon.

A Government Accountability Office (GAO) report released this week found that nearly all of the weapons systems it tested had extensive cyber flaws. The report warned that the Department of Defense (DOD) "likely has an entire generation of systems that were designed and built without adequately considering cybersecurity."

Experts said the alarming report was shining a light on the Pentagon's systematic failure to consider cyber threats in building the country's most powerful weapons.

"Military members' lives could depend on the weapon system working as it's supposed to," said Bob Taylor, former Pentagon acting general counsel during the Obama administration. "But if it contains a vulnerability that could be triggered by an adversary, it may not carry out a function that you're counting on it having."

"And that could be a matter of life and death," he added.

The report contains a number of startling examples of how hackers are able to penetrate weapons systems. Testers were able to disrupt systems, change and download data. They also found that they could shut down parts of a system by simply scanning for cyber flaws. In one case, they were able to entirely take
over a weapons system in just one day. One team of hackers was even able to send a message asking that users insert at least two quarters in order to continue using a system.

NAS Pensacola

Naval Air Station Pensacola welcomes Hurricane Michael evacuees from Panama City base

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Published 1:40 p.m. CT Oct. 16, 2018 | Updated 4:36 p.m. CT Oct. 16, 2018


With water out, roofs torn off buildings and trees down at a Panama City Navy base, Naval Air Station Pensacola is preparing to welcome sailors, civilian employees and their families from the hurricane-damaged region.

Navy Region Southeast has designated the Pensacola base as a remote work site and safe haven for the Panama City base personnel and their families.

Jay Cope, a spokesman for the Navy's Jacksonville-based regional office, said Tuesday it was uncertain how long operations at Naval Support Activity Panama City might be disrupted because of Hurricane Michael.

"They are still assessing damage and clearing roadways. Electrical power has been restored and they are working on restoring water," he said.

Cope said he did not know how many sailors and civilian employees might report to Pensacola. Some families had previously evacuated to Naval Construction Battalion Command at Gulfport, Mississippi. The Navy has since ordered them to relocate closer to their home base.

Under the safe designation, the sailors and their families must be within 150 miles of Naval Air Station Pensacola.

Officials have said more specific orders are up to individual commanders.

Hurlburt Field

AFSOC Hosts MOH Celebration Events

ShadowSpear, 10-16-2018


This event will provide all Air Commandos, past, present and future, the opportunity to honor and exalt the heraldry, bravery and legacy of Chapman.

Media agencies, outlets and representatives are invited to attend the following events:
Eglin AFB

Eglin squadron to test ‘Space Fence’

By Jim Thompson, Posted Oct 14, 2018 at 8:56 AM, Updated Oct 14, 2018 at 8:56 AM

EGLIN AFB – Test squadrons here will do the developmental testing and evaluation of the new Space Fence, a radar installation which prime contractor Lockheed Martin says will dramatically improve the tracking of objects in orbit around the Earth.

According to Lockheed Martin, the initial radar installation on Kwajalein — a remote atoll in the Pacific Ocean’s Marshall Islands — will allow the Air Force to see 200,000 objects in orbit. That is 10 times more than the 20,000 objects — dead satellites, spent rocket boosters and stray pieces of space hardware — currently being tracked by the Air Force.

In addition to the Kwajalein radar, there is an option to install a second Space Fence radar in Australia.

Broadly speaking, current U.S. military space surveillance equipment can track objects the size of a basketball. Space Fence will allow the tracking of objects the size of a golf ball, or even a marble, according to Lockheed Martin.

Additionally, according to Lockheed Martin, the Space Fence “will significantly improve the timeliness with which operators can detect space events, which could present potential threats to GPS satellites or the International Space Station.”

The Public Affairs office at Eglin Air Force Base referred questions about the base’s role in testing the Space Fence to Hanscom Air Force Base in Massachusetts and the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, which helps oversee management of Air Force weapons systems.

According to a Live Cycle Management Center spokesman, Eglin’s 96th Cyberspace Test Group, the Air Force’s first and only group dedicated to assessing and addressing digital systems’ operation and security, has been supporting Space Fence testing for some time. The group’s 45th Test Squadron is the lead development test organization for Space Fence, and the group’s 47th Test Squadron will have a cybersecurity testing role in the program….
The Pentagon has lifted a suspension on flights for most of Lockheed Martin Corp.’s F-35s after the jet’s first crash prompted inspections of the fleet.

“After completing inspections, more than 80 percent of operational F-35s have been cleared and returned to flight operations,” the Defense Department’s F-35 program office said Monday in a statement. “All U.S. services and international partners have resumed flying with their cleared aircraft.”

Flights had been suspended last week for inspections of a fuel line that investigators believe may have contributed to the crash of an F-35B, the Marine Corps model of the plane, near Beaufort, South Carolina, on Sept. 28.

Replacement fuel lines are available for about half of the remaining planes and others “are expected to be cleared for flight over the coming weeks,” according to the statement.

The 33rd Wing at Eglin Air Force Base currently has 33 F-35s on the flight line. In addition to training F-35 pilots, the 33rd Fighter Wing also trains maintenance personnel for the aircraft.

More than 320 F-35s are already operating from 15 bases worldwide, although the Pentagon and Lockheed continue to wrestle with resolving more than 900 deficiencies, including flaws in the plane’s complex software. The F-35 is the costliest U.S. weapons system....

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**NSA Panama City**

**NAS Pensacola Designated as the New Remote Safe Haven**

Story Number: NNS181014-03Release Date: 10/14/2018 2:31:00 PM

**JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (NNS) –** Commander, Navy Region Southeast, Rear Adm. Bette Bolivar has designated the area within 150 miles of Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida, as the new remote safe haven for Naval Support Activity Panama City personnel and families who evacuated due to Hurricane Michael. The new safe haven becomes effective Friday, Oct. 19.

By that date, installation personnel and families who are currently staying at a safe haven within 150 miles of Naval Construction Battalion Command Gulfport, Mississippi must ensure they are within the new safe haven area. The purpose of the move is to offer access to a greater number of temporary quarters, a larger Fleet and Family Support Center staff and more robust facilities that are available on board NAS Pensacola. This order only applies to CNIC claimancy personnel, and does not apply to NSA Panama City tenant command personnel who should follow the direction of their chain of command.

“We will make every effort to provide accommodations to house our Hurricane Michael impacted team members and their families,” Bolivar said. “Our Fleet and Family Support Centers and other support personnel are ready to assist you.”
The change in safe haven moves NSA Panama City families closer to the installation as base personnel continue work to restore essentials services and to ensure facilities and housing are safe for their eventual return. Personnel are reminded not to return to the installation until contacted to do so by a supervisor.

For updates on NSA Panama City, visit the installation’s Facebook page at www.facebook.com/NSAPC, or Navy Region Southeast’s Facebook page at www.facebook.com/NavyRegionSE.

**Tyndall AFB**

**Trump Gets Bird's-eye View of Tyndall, Devastated Florida Communities**

By Deb Riechmann and Darlene Superville, The Associated Press, 15 Oct 2018


**PANAMA CITY, Fla.** – President Donald Trump got a bird's-eye view Monday of Florida communities left in ruins by Hurricane Michael, including houses without roofs, a toppled water tower and 18-wheel trucks scattered in a parking lot during a nearly hour-long helicopter tour of portions of the Panhandle.

Trump initially saw uprooted trees and houses with blue tarps covering damaged roofs after his helicopter lifted from Eglin Air Force Base near Valparaiso. But the severity of the damage worsened significantly as Trump approached Mexico Beach, a town of about 1,000 people that was nearly wiped off the map in a direct hit from the hurricane and its 155 mph (250 kph) winds last week.

Many of the houses in Mexico Beach had no roofs. In some cases, only the foundations were left standing. The water tower lay on its side and 18-wheelers were scattered in a parking lot like a child's toys.

Trump also saw Tyndall Air Force Base, which was heavily damaged by the storm.

Reporters trailed the president in a separate helicopter.

Trump landed at an airport near Panama City, where power poles bowed toward the ground, pieces of metal roofing were scattered in brush land and pine trees had been uprooted or were snapped off halfway up their straight trunks. On the drive toward Panama City, he and first lady Melania Trump could see houses smashed by trees, bent billboards and a demolished trailer park. Power crews were working to restore power…..

**Tyndall AFB Update: Senator Pledges to Restore Base; Air Force Leadership Assesses Damage; Air Defense Mission Moves to Langley AFB**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Oct 16, 2018 03:30 am

[https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=6da260d279](https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=6da260d279)

Florida Sen. Bill Nelson (D) on Monday vowed that Tyndall AFB would reopen, after the installation sustained catastrophic damage when Hurricane Michael, a Category 4 storm, made landfall last week on the Florida Panhandle just miles away. Nelson countered speculation that Tyndall would not be restored to its previous role but, instead, realigned as was the case for South Florida’s Homestead AFB after it was
decimated by Hurricane Andrew in 1992. “I think that fear is unfounded,” Nelson said, reported the Orlando Sentinel. “As a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I can say that Tyndall will be rebuilt, and it will be an example of a modern U.S. Air Force base. That is because it is critically located right next to one of our greatest national assets, the Air Force Eastern Gulf Test and Training Range, which is the largest testing and training range for the United States military in the world.” … On Sunday Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson, Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth Wright surveyed the damage at Tyndall. In response to a question as to whether the installation might be a total loss, Wilson said the situation could improve in as little as two weeks, reported Stars and Stripes. After the initial shock wears off, “I think people will really start to see the future and not just focus on the present,” she said. As of Sunday, the base still had no power or water. … The Air Force Northern Command Air Operations Center, which is responsible for air security and defense for the continental United States, is being shifted from Tyndall to Langley AFB, Va., reports Stars and Stripes. The air operations center suffered only minor damage from Michael and now is hosting the 325th Fighter Wing and various recovery teams. The First Air Force will consolidate its Air Forces Northern and North American Aerospace Defense Command missions at Langley, where they are likely to remain through the end of the year.

**Tyndall AFB Update: Chief Engineer Sees Long Road Ahead; Personnel Will Be Allowed to Visit Homes; NSA Panama City Workers Told to Report to NAS Pensacola**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Oct 17, 2018 03:45 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e02d33ce307ef7&id=39507df278

The Air Force is considering transferring some airmen and their families elsewhere while Tyndall AFB is rebuilt, a spokesman said. “We’re going to have to make some serious decisions on which families come back to that base or not,” said Brig. Gen. Edward Thomas, director of public affairs. Meanwhile, the service’s director of civil engineers compared the storm’s devastation to Hurricane Katrina’s impact in 2005 on Keesler AFB in Biloxi, Miss. Keesler, located about 230 miles west of Tyndall, took nearly five years to make a full recovery, reported the Washington Post. “You can imagine what kind of effort lays ahead of us,” said Brig. Gen. John Allen Jr. … Tyndall AFB military and civilian personnel, who remain under a mandated evacuation order, are being allowed to inspect their homes and dorms and retrieve their belongings on a limited basis starting today and ending Sunday. Access will be restricted to housing areas and dorms, according to the message to Team Tyndall. Officials warned that the base and the local area remain dangerous. “We are still cleaning roads, power lines and debris. This has been a major undertaking but we are getting better each day. We continue working a long-term plan of action but we simply aren’t there yet, as we are concentrating on the short-term, day-to-day recovery actions,” they said. … Civilian and military employees of Naval Support Activity Panama City who evacuated due to Hurricane Michael have been directed to report to Naval Air Station Pensacola next Monday. The support activity sustained significant damage during the storm, and the lack of utilities and essential community services, such as schools and hospitals, is expected to prevent most employees from returning for an extended period of time, according to a Navy press release.
Many Families Will Never Return to Tyndall After Hurricane, Officials Say

Military.com | By Richard Sisk, 17 Oct 2018

Many of the 11,000 airmen and family members at Tyndall Air Force Base in the Florida Panhandle will face a permanent change of station (PCS) during the years it is expected to take the base to recover from the "catastrophic damage" of Hurricane Michael, Air Force officials said Tuesday.

The officials also continued to decline to state how many F-22 Raptors left at Tyndall during the storm were damaged. However, Brig. Gen. Ed Thomas, an Air Force spokesman, said, "We expect they'll all be fixable, they'll all be flyable. They generally look to be in good shape."

The same cannot be said for base housing. Thomas said all 867 homes sustained damage, most of them with roofs torn off.

"It's fair to say it will be years to make Tyndall look like what it did before the hurricane hit," Brig. Gen. John Allen, director of civil engineering for the Air Force, said in a briefing with defense reporters at the Pentagon.

He added, "I would be surprised if you saw a large construction effort at temporary housing" to bring back displaced families.

Beginning Wednesday, and continuing through Oct. 21, Tyndall families who evacuated before Hurricane Michael came ashore as a Category 4 storm will be allowed back onto the base to survey the damage to their homes and take away valuables, the officials said.

The families can go back to their housing between the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., but will not be allowed to remain, for safety reasons, Thomas said…..

MacDill AFB

MacDill AFB teams helping Panhandle colleagues

By: Lloyd Sowers, FOX 13 News, POSTED: OCT 15 2018 04:09PM EDT
HTTP://WWW.FOX13NEWS.COM/NEWS/LOCAL-NEWS/MACDILL-AFB-TEAMS-HELPING-PANHANDLE-COLLEAGUES

TAMPA (FOX 13) - Nearly three dozen service members from MacDill Air Force Base are helping restore communications in the Panama City area. At the same time, MacDill is opening its doors to personnel from Tyndall Air Force Base in the Panhandle, which sustained heavy storm damage.

“We can connect you with base resources like child care, counseling, medical services, finance assistance, and more,” said Lt. Allison Mills, a public affairs officer at MacDill.

Mills is among those deployed with members of the 920th Joint Communications Support Squadron. They took satellite uplinks, radios, and other equipment.

Airmen from the 290th Joint Communications Support Squadron work around the clock to provide communication services Oct. 13, 2018, aiding Hurricane Michael recovery efforts. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Caleb Nunez)
So far, they have helped reconnect important communications systems in several counties, including the Bay County Emergency Operations Center.

**Cape Canaveral AFS**

**ULA sends powerful Air Force satellite into orbit in early morning Space Coast launch**

Chabeli Herrera Contact Reporter, Orlando Sentinel, 10-16-2018

A United Launch Alliance rocket lit up the night during a successful early morning launch from the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station Wednesday.

On board: the fourth Air Force satellite in a $15 billion project to bring highly-secure communications to parts of the planet.

An Atlas V rocket took off from Launch Complex 41 at 12:15 a.m., the opening of ULA’s two-hour launch window. The launch went off smoothly thanks in part to favorable weather going into Wednesday evening.

“Bird is away,” tweeted Tory Bruno, president and CEO of ULA, as the powerful Atlas V and its five rocket boosters took off.

The payload that hitched a ride was the Air Force’s Advanced Extremely High Frequency 4 satellite, or AEHF, built by Lockheed Martin. The military communications satellite will provide “vastly improved global, survivable, protected communications capabilities for strategic command and tactical warfighters,” ULA said. It will service the military forces of the U.S., Canada, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom…..

**Patrick AFB**

**45th Space Wing gears up for surge in launch activity**

by Sandra Erwin — October 15, 2018

CAPE CANAVERAL AIR FORCE STATION, Fla. – The launch early Wednesday of a U.S. Air Force $1.8 billion communications satellite will be Brig. Gen. Douglas Schiess’ first mission as launch decision authority.

Schiess was sworn in Aug. 23 as commander of the 45th Space Wing and director of the Eastern Range, headquartered at Patrick Air Force Base. Since then, SpaceX launched a commercial satellite from the range, but the Advanced EHF satellite known as AEHF-4 aboard a United Launch Alliance Atlas 5 rocket will be his first national security mission as the commander of the world’s busiest spaceport. The wing is responsible to ensure public safety during every launch from Cape Canaveral or Kennedy Space Center.

“It’s good to be back here,” Schiess told SpaceNews on Monday.
Schiess was the commander of the 45th Operations Group at Cape Canaveral from 2012 to 2014. Later he served as director of space forces at U.S. Air Forces Central Command in Qatar, as commander of the 21st Space Wing at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado, and most recently as senior military assistant to the undersecretary of the Air Force at the Pentagon.

Space is his passion, Schiess said. “As a captain I worked at Vandenberg Air Force Base launching Delta 2 rockets.”

The 45th Space Wing made headlines when Schiess’ predecessor Brig. Gen. Wayne Monteith started what he called the “drive to 48,” or 48 launches per year. Schiess said he plans to pick up where Monteith left off. “We’re at 20 launches, and we have five on the schedule for the rest of the year,” he said. “We’re hoping for 24 so we can say we got half way to the drive to 48.”

It has been a steep climb. “Twenty-three is the most we’ve had in a long time,” he said. “Twenty-four would be great.”

With more commercial activity and new launch vehicles entering the national security market, the range has to operate faster and more efficiently, said Schiess. “Air Force Space Commander Gen. Jay Raymond is pushing us to look at ways to be more responsive.” Broadly speaking, “space is becoming more and more important, it’s being talked about at the highest levels.”

### Defense Industry

**Harris, L3 Technologies agree to largest defense merger in history in $33.5 billion deal**

Dave Berman, Florida Today, Published 2:44 p.m. ET Oct. 14, 2018 | Updated 8:17 p.m. ET Oct. 14, 2018

Harris Director of Public Relations Jim Burke said the deal is likely to mean a strengthening of the company's operations and staff levels in Brevard County.

Harris currently employs about 6,600 people in Brevard, while L3 has about 100.

Burke said the deal also will expand career opportunities for current Harris employees.

L3 Harris Technologies will be the sixth-largest U.S. defense company, based on revenue, with about $16 billion in annual revenues and more than 48,000 employees worldwide. It also will be one of the world's 10 largest defense companies.
DoD Budget

Trump: DOD's budget will 'probably be' $700B next year

By Tony Bertuca, October 17, 2018 at 12:51 PM
https://insidedefense.com/insider/trump-dods-budget-will-probably-be-700b-next-year

President Trump said today the Defense Department's budget in fiscal year 2020 will "probably be $700 billion," a potential cut of approximately 2.3 percent, though he said other departments will be asked to make 5 percent cuts.

"We know what the new budget is for the Defense Department; it will probably be $700 billion," he said during a televised cabinet meeting. "That's a very substantial number, but it's defense."

Prior to his cabinet meeting statement about defense, the president told reporters he was going to ask "every secretary" in his cabinet to cut 5 percent of their budgets and gave no indication DOD would be exempt.

The total U.S. defense budget is $716 billion for FY-19 and was $700 billion in FY-18 as part of a bipartisan deal to lift statutory spending caps.

Trump said the two-year deal that helped "rebuild" the military required higher non-defense spending he does not support, resulting in large omnibus spending bills.

"I had to give the Democrats -- I call it 'waste money,' things that I would never have approved, but we had to do that in order to get the votes because we don't have enough Republican votes," Trump said. "We're going to be asking for a 5 percent cut from every secretary today."

Trump's statements come as the the federal deficit, driven by non-discretionary spending on social programs and a massive, GOP-backed tax cut, soared to a six-year high of $779 billion at the end of FY-18.

Meanwhile, Trump's comments stoked confusion among defense analysts, who said they're not exactly sure what Trump is referencing, noting that a $700 billion topline for just DOD would be consistent with the department's projections, while a total defense topline -- which includes other non-DOD spending, like nuclear weapons work at the Energy Department -- would be a decrease in overall spending.....

Other of Interest

Who Will Replace Mattis?

BY LARA SELIGMAN | OCTOBER 15, 2018, 10:33 AM

Rumors have circulated for months that U.S. President Donald Trump is souring on Defense Secretary James Mattis and wants to replace him with someone more in line with his own hawkish views. In an interview with 60 Minutes that aired on Sunday, Trump gave the clearest signal yet that the retired U.S. Marine Corps general and former head of U.S. Central Command could be the next member of his cabinet to get the ax.
Trump hinted during the interview that he could soon be “changing things around” and indicated that he was not satisfied with certain members of his administration.

“I have people now on standby that will be phenomenal,” Trump told CBS News correspondent Lesley Stahl. “There are some people that I’m not happy with.”

When pressed, Trump would not say with certainty that Mattis would soon depart. But he didn’t deny it either. Then he twisted the knife:

“I think he’s sort of a Democrat, if you want to know the truth. … He may leave.”

The Defense Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment. But the defense secretary has increasingly been squeezed out of important policy decisions—by John Bolton, the newly emboldened national security advisor, and Trump favorite Mike Pompeo, his secretary of state.

Mattis is traveling to Vietnam this week, a rare second visit this year to that country, as the United States tries to counter China’s military assertiveness.

Given Mattis’s popularity with key segments of Trump’s base, the administration will likely set him up for a graceful exit, rather than an embarrassing firing. But a number of names are already being floated as his replacement.

Sen. Tom Cotton, the 41-year-old Arkansas Republican who chairs the Senate Armed Services Committee’s subcommittee on airland, was on Trump’s shortlist for defense secretary back in 2016, before the president ultimately settled on Mattis. The two-time combat veteran won a seat in the House of Representatives in 2012 as part of the Tea Party movement and is well known for his hawkish views—he is on record supporting waterboarding and regime change in Iran.

Among the downsides of a Cotton appointment: The Republican Party would have to give up an important chairmanship and seat in the Senate.

The president also has his eye on David McCormick, a West Point grad, combat veteran, and co-CEO of the global macro investment firm Bridgewater Associates, according to one administration source. McCormick, who served as undersecretary of the treasury for international affairs in the George W. Bush administration, is deeply entrenched in Trumpland, running in the same social circles as first daughter Ivanka Trump and her husband, Jared Kushner, the source said. He is also the fiancé of Dina Powell, Trump’s former deputy national security advisor for strategy and one of the leading candidates to replace U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley.

Other possible contenders for the job are retired four-star Army Gen. Jack Keane, who was reportedly tapped for the job before Mattis but declined due to family issues, and former Missouri Sen. Jim Talent. Talent was also on the 2016 shortlist.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, the hawkish Republican from South Carolina, could also be in the running, but Graham is also said to be a contender to replace Jeff Sessions as attorney general.

Dan Coats, Trump’s director of national intelligence, is also a leading candidate, according to the administration source.

Mattis may not make it easy for the president to get rid of him. Several officials familiar with Mattis’s thinking indicated that he wouldn’t leave voluntarily.

“People kept saying to me: ‘When is Mattis going to quit?’ The answer is ‘never,’” said Barbara Leaf, who served as U.S. ambassador to the United Arab Emirates until this March. “He will stay through to the end of the administration because that’s who he is.”
Oct 26

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #69 will be Thursday, 15 November 2108, beginning at 9:00AM EST at the Courtyard by Marriott, 3435 N. Atlantic Avenue, Cocoa Beach, FL 32931. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting.

2. **Call In Number** –
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979  
   Access Code: 1869945

3. **Vice President Pence Visits Tyndall AFB and Commits to Rebuild** – According to a press release from Governor Scott’s office on Wednesday afternoon, “Vice President Mike Pence and Second Lady Karen Pence will join Governor Rick Scott tomorrow at Tyndall Air Force Base to survey damage. Last week, Governor Scott wrote a letter to President Trump requesting resources be made available to rebuild Tyndall.” Congressman Neal Dunn also attended the visit. Shortly after the visit, Vice President Pence comments noted “We’ll take back the information from the briefing today, but President Trump sent me here with two messages. Number one was to congratulate Colonel Laidlaw and the 325th on the way they responded to Hurricane Michael. And number two, to say to all the men of the 325th and all the families in this region affected by this place: We will rebuild Tyndall Air Force Base.” (See full transcript attached). The letter from Governor Scott was sent last week, but is attached.

4. **Task Force Members Visit Tyndall AFB** – Several Task Force members travel to Tyndall AFB today to see how we can support. Task Force members will be joined by Congressman Neal Dunn as well as Florida Senators Gainer and Montford. Although the devastation in the area is huge, Task Force members are encouraged to hear stories of the will of the people and the amount of capability still inherent at the base. Focus in the short term should be on how to get power and basic services back up so people can return to work and school. We are also encouraged to hear that 1st Air Force and the 601 Air Operations Center (AOC) was not badly damaged and could be back up and running fairly quickly. The Task Force will offer to entertain out of cycle emergent Grant requests for Tyndall and the Panama City area that will support the timely recovery and rebuilding of the base. Staff will send a supplemental update on Monday with results of the visit. For all the latest news on Tyndall, see multiple articles below in the CLIPs.

5. **Seven Florida Universities make “Best for Vets” List** – Military Times released its “Best for Vets” college lists and two Florida 4-Year Universities are in the top 20: University of South Florida made #2 and Florida State University comes in at #20. The next highest rated Florida school is University of West Florida coming in at #48. To see the whole list, go to [https://charts.militarytimes.com/chart/9](https://charts.militarytimes.com/chart/9)

6. **ADC Announces Deadline for Award Packages is TODAY** – According to Dan Cohen from ADC’s “On Base”, “Your last opportunity to apply to join the 2019 class of Great American Defense Communities (GADC) is this Friday, Oct. 26! The 2019 GADC application can be found on the ADC website. The initiative recognizes the unique contributions communities that host military installations make to improve quality of life for service members and their families. The 2019 class will be announced in November.” To
apply, got to https://www.defensecommunities.org/about-the-great-american-defense-communities-program/.

7. **Task Force Released Request for Proposals (RFP) for Advocacy** – The Task Force’s current Advocacy contract expires in February 2019. We received three replies to our RFQ from qualified firms who are asked to now provide proposals in addition to any other proposals. The Task Force released the RFP (DTFRFP19-001) to select one company to support its needs. Proposals are due by November 9, 2018. Once we have an opportunity to review, the Task Force plans to notify selected firms to make in-person presentations in January 2019 and begin a new contract in March 2019. The RFP document and other information is hosted on MyFlorida Marketplace and our website at https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/funding-contracts/

8. **Semi-Annual FDA Meeting Set for November 14, 2018 in Cocoa Beach** – Please sign up with Michelle Griggs if you plan to attend the upcoming FDA meeting in Cocoa Beach. FDA has developed a great agenda and it looks to be a most engaging and lively meeting.

9. **Attachments:**
   - VP Pence Remarks at Tyndall AFB
   - Gov Scott Letter to President Trump

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**NAS Pensacola**

**Blue Angels homecoming shows Nov. 2-3 at NAS Pensacola**

By Mullet Wrapper on October 24, 2018
http://mulletwrapper.net/blue-angels-homecoming-shows-nov-2-3-at-nas-pensacola/
The 2018 NAS Pensacola Blue Angels Homecoming Air Show will be held Nov. 2-3 onboard NAS Pensacola. Gates open at 8 a.m., the show starts at 9:30 a.m., and the Blue Angels take off from Sherman Field between 1:30 p.m. and 2 p.m., after demonstrations from 11 other aerial professionals. Admission and parking are free, and preferred paid seating options are available at naspensacolaairshow.com.

**NAS Whiting Field**

**Aviation students explore military helicopters at NAS Whiting Field**

By: Katarina Luketich, Posted: Oct 24, 2018 11:44 AM CDT, Updated: Oct 24, 2018 08:48 PM CDT


MILTON, Fla. (WRKG) – This week, aviation students at NAS Whiting Field are getting their first look at the military helicopters they may one day fly. It’s called the Gulf Coast Fleet Fly In at NAS Whiting Field.

“It allows them to make an informed decision of what aircraft they’re going to try to select,” said Lt. Ryan McGuckin.

Dozens of aviation students got to suit up, ride in different helicopters, and speak with current pilots to get some advice.

“I’ll just tell them exactly what we do, the deployments that I’ve been on, my experiences in my squadron and why I love flying it,” said Capt. Joseph Hawkinson, a pilot with the U.S. Marine Corps.

NAS Whiting Field plays a significant role in training the men and women who fly these military aircraft. Anyone who is going to fly a helicopter for the Marines, Navy, or the Coast Guard goes through training at Whiting Field. They train there for several months before moving on to learn how to pilot the helicopters they’ll actually fly.

Students say seeing the helicopters in person during the Fly In has been a big motivator.

“It’s a lot different to see them flying around. I think it gets everyone excited and kind of keep the goal in mind of what we’re here for, to try to finish up,” said Jack Roccato.

**Corry Station**

**NAVFOR Commander Visits CIWT and IWTC Corry Station, Observes and Discusses IW Training**

Story by Glenn Sircy, Center for Information Warfare Training, 10.17.2018

PENSACOLA, Fla. – Vice Adm. Brian Brown, commander, Naval Information Forces (NAVIFOR), visited the Center for Information Warfare Training (CIWT) and Information Warfare Training Command (IWTC) Corry Station, Oct. 17.

NAVIFOR is CIWT’s requirements sponsor and their mission is to provide combat-ready information warfare forces to operational commanders, ashore and afloat, that are forward deployable, fully trained, properly manned, capably equipped, always ready, well-maintained and combat sustainable.

This was Brown’s first visit to CIWT and IWTC Corry Station since taking command in June.

During the visit, Brown met with CIWT leadership and staff, commanding officers and senior enlisted leaders of CIWT’s four major subordinate commands, and students to discuss current and future endeavors in training Sailors to support the Navy’s information warfare mission area.

Brown was candid with the group about the current state and future of information warfare while providing a top-down overview of the community.

“Information warfare is front and center in our strategies and our operations,” shared Brown. “The fleet doesn’t run without the expertise of everyone in this room. I’m proud to be a part of the evolution of it, and I’m looking forward to seeing it move forward.”

Hurlburt Field

Medal of Honor recipient to be remembered at Hurlburt Field

By Jim Thompson, Posted Oct 22, 2018 at 4:19 PM, Updated Oct 22, 2018 at 4:19 PM

HURLBURT FIELD – Master Sgt. John A. Chapman, the Air Force Special Tactics combat controller awarded a posthumous Medal of Honor earlier this year, will be further honored this week with a portrait dedication and the renaming of a building at Hurlburt Field, headquarters of Air Force Special Operations Command.

Those honors, set for Thursday at Hurlburt Field, will be part of three days of observances honoring Chapman and Special Tactics personnel. The events won’t be open to the public, but will be available to Department of Defense cardholders and their escorted guests.

Live feeds, videos and photos of the weekend’s events will be available on the Air Force Special Operations Command’s Facebook page at Facebook.com/AfsocOfficial.

President Donald Trump presented Chapman’s Medal of Honor to his widow, Valerie Nessel, and the couple’s two daughters in an Aug. 22 ceremony at the White House. Chapman was honored for his actions on March 4, 2002 on Takur Ghar, a mountaintop in Afghanistan, in a battle with al-Qaida militants.

Chapman was part of a joint special operations team whose helicopter was struck by enemy fire, throwing Navy SEAL Petty Officer 1st Class Neil Roberts onto enemy-infested terrain. The helicopter crashed a couple of miles away, but Chapman and Roberts’ other teammates soon returned for Roberts in a second helicopter…..
U.S. Navy R&D Center Closed by Hurricane Michael

BY MAREX 2018-10-17 21:13:00
HTTPS://WWW.MARITIME-EXECUTIVE.COM/ARTICLE/U-S-NAVY-R-D-CENTER-CLOSED-BY-HURRICANE-MICHAEL

Hurricane Michael took a heavy toll on the USAF's Tyndall Air Force Base at Panama City, Florida, as has been well-publicized in the media. But damage to the U.S. Navy's surface warfare research center at Panama City could also have serious implications. It was the only Navy installation to evacuate in advance of the storm, and it is still closed to all but the most essential personnel.

In a notice to servicemembers on Sunday, the command said that most servicemembers and employees will be on administrative leave until further notice, and the site will not reopen until electricity and water service have been restored. The timeline for a full reopening is not yet known.

Navy Contingency Engineering Response Team (CERT) members are inspecting the base to determine the extent of the damage, and NSA Panama City reported Monday that it is making progress towards recovery. Seabees are removing downed trees and debris; sailors with on-base housing are rotating through to retrieve their belongings and check on their homes; and work on water service restoration continues.

NSA Panama City is home to some of the Navy's key research, development and testing work for mine warfare, special operations warfare, diving systems and unmanned systems. It is central to the development of the Littoral Combat Ship's long-delayed Mine Countermeasure Mission Package program, which faced initial challenges fielding an unmanned vessel platform that can be deployed and maintained aboard an LCS. The service canceled testing for its first platform, the Lockheed-built Remote Multi Mission Vehicle, due to reliability issues.....

Tyndall AFB

Rick Scott asks for 'immediate action' to rebuild Tyndall Air Force Base after Hurricane Michael

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Published 9:33 a.m. CT Oct. 19, 2018 | Updated 11:39 a.m. CT Oct. 19, 2018

A day after touring hard-hit Tyndall Air Force Base, Gov. Rick Scott is urging President Donald Trump to commit to rebuilding the major fighter pilot training command devastated by Hurricane Michael.

"I want to make sure it can fulfill its military mission. I am asking for immediate action to rebuild Tyndall so it can become fully operational," the governor said in a phone interview Friday morning with the Pensacola News Journal.

In a formal letter to Trump and the chairmen of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, Scott said the base has a nearly $600 million annual economic impact and employs 26,000 Floridians and 3,400 active-duty airmen.

The base is vital to national security and to the regional economy, he said.....
Congressman Neal Dunn debunks rumors regarding Tyndall Air Force Base

By: Web Staff, Posted: Oct 19, 2018 09:06 PM EDT, Updated: Oct 19, 2018 09:06 PM EDT

PANAMA CITY, Fla. (WMBB) – Congressman Neal Dunn joined the News 13 team to discuss rumors regarding Tyndall Air Force Base.

“The most important thing we can do here today is debunk some rumors,” Dunn said.

“Tyndall is not closing. The missions are not moving. There are numerous, really important people coming through the tab who are absolutely telling us…. Everybody is trying to save this base. And we will save it. We’re going to rebuild it and it will be better than ever.”

Dunn said the same goes for the hospitals in the area.

“It will be normal business as usual very, very quickly.”

Dunn said it’s also important who people who are discovering they are not able to make it in their homes, they can still go to a shelter.

A bus from the police station headquarters on 77 and 23rd up to the Boeman shelter and vice versa runs once an hour from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Pets are welcome at that shelter.

Tyndall AFB Sets Up A Store On Wheels

By: Chelsie Taddonio, Posted: Oct 21, 2018 05:51 PM EDT, Updated: Oct 21, 2018 05:51 PM EDT

PANAMA CITY, Fla. - The military does what it can to make sure those serving are taken care of. One way they are doing that on Tyndall Air Force Base is by bringing in a convenience store on wheels to provide basic comforts for anyone working on base.

This is necessary because the exchange on base was damaged from Hurricane Michael. Capt. Conrad Ballard, explains the mission of the mobile unit, "The intent behind the mobile field exchange or MFE, is to go where you go. The 53 foot container primarily has snacks, toiletries, and supplies for the soldiers to have on the ground."

The mobile exchange was sent to Eglin Air Force Base before Hurricane Michael hit so it would be ready to come to Tyndall after the storm.

1st Lt. Mitchell England was at the mobile store to buy shower shoes he forgot to pack because he was given short notice to come to base. "I was evacuated in Houston Texas with my fiance, and then they gave me a phonecall, said hey you gotta be here in 36 hours, so I packed everything I could in my bag and forgot some sandals so I had to go pick up some sandals from the BX."

There is currently one mobile field exchange at Tyndall Air Force Base. It will stay until one of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) shops on base are repaired…..
Tyndall AFB Update: Task Force Builds Support for Rebuilding Commitment; Governor Urges Trump to Take Immediate Action; A Dozen Coastal Air Bases in Storm-Prone Southern States Leaves Fleets Vulnerable

Dan Cohen, Posted on Oct 22, 2018 02:55 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=21f754b46b

In an effort to ensure there is no doubt regarding Florida’s resolve to rebuild Tyndall AFB in the wake of the devastation left behind by Hurricane Michael, the Florida Defense Support Task Force is putting together a formal declaration of support from the state’s entire congressional delegation, according to a conference call held Thursday. “We need to show that we’re proactive here in preventing any disruption of our military commitment,” said state Sen. Doug Broxson (R), a task force member. “We certainly need to let people understand the significance of what we’re going through,” Broxson said, reported the News Herald. … On Friday, Gov. Rick Scott (R) said he has requested President Trump pledge to restore Tyndall without delay. “I want to make sure it can fulfill its military mission. I am asking for immediate action to rebuild Tyndall so it can become fully operational,” Scott told the Pensacola News Journal. …

With scientists predicting that hurricanes will become more frequent and intense due to climate change, and with more than a dozen military airfields located along the coast from Texas to Virginia, the Pentagon likely will need to consider mitigation strategies to protect its considerable investment in aircraft. Many of the 17 F-22 stealth fighter jets officials left behind at Tyndall prior to Michael’s landfall due to maintenance issues are damaged, although it is not yet clear to what extent. “Tyndall is going to get whacked again sooner or later,” David Titley, director of the Center for Solutions to Weather and Climate Risk at Penn State, told the New York Times. “But how often? That’s the crux. If the damage becomes more frequent, the military will have to adapt and invest.” One approach is spending the extra dollars needed to harden hangars with steel and concrete to withstand winds that surpass the Category 5 threshold, as the Air Force has done at Andersen AFB on Guam.

99 percent of Tyndall buildings damaged

By Jim Thompson, Posted Oct 22, 2018 at 12:36 PM, Updated Oct 22, 2018 at 2:34 PM

TYNDALL AFB – Hundreds of Air Force personnel from across the service — including Eglin Air Force Base and Hurlburt Field — are now at Tyndall Air Force Base to help the facility, decimated nearly two weeks ago by a direct hit from Hurricane Michael, recover from the storm.

“They’re working hard, day and night, to make this base better today than it was yesterday,” said Col. Brian Laidlaw, commander of Tyndall’s 325th Fighter Wing, during a Saturday news conference on the base.

But beyond the day-to-day work of military and civilian crews to restore electrical, water and sewerage service, there are no real answers yet to questions about the base’s long-term future, Laidlaw admitted.

“Unfortunately, we do not have an estimated date for when we think this facility can be operational again,” Laidlaw said.
Tyndall Air Force Base releases schedule for base personnel to return

By: Ken McVay, Posted: Oct 23, 2018 01:26 PM EDT, Updated: Oct 23, 2018 01:30 PM EDT

Col. Brian S. Laidlaw, the base commander of the 325th Fighter Wing at Tyndall Air Force Base, is letting Air Force personnel know about re-entry to the base as well as other updates.

He posted the following information to the Tyndall Air Force Base Facebook page:

I would like to pass my sincerest appreciation for your patience during this trying time. We are pushing to move as fast as possible while ensuring we maintain a safe and secure environment for you and your families.

Some of you did not have a chance to gather your Household Goods or for your private insurance adjusters or Air Force Claims Service Center representative to accompany you during your initial base housing assessment.

I want each of you to have increased opportunities to move forward and have more time to develop a plan for your property. Therefore, our team will open up portions of the base beginning Wednesday, October 24th, 2018 to Friday, November 2nd, 2018.

Marco Rubio highlights need to restore fighter jets at Tyndall

DANNY MCAULIFFE, 10-23-2018

Several expensive fighter jets stationed at Tyndall Air Force Base were sheltered on site instead of being moved to a different location while Hurricane Michael crept toward Florida’s Panhandle.

That’s cause for concern to Republican U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, who noted that at least 17 of the 55 F-22 Raptors at the Panama City facility — almost one third — were designated non-mission capable, or NMC, and consequently unable to be relocated ahead of the storm.

“While the damage assessment of these remaining aircraft is still underway, the facts are clear that any damage sustained could have been avoided if the NMC rate for the F-22 was lower,” Rubio wrote in a Monday letter addressed to Heather Wilson, Secretary of the Air Force. “This concerning figure highlights the dismal state of readiness across our fifth-generation fleet.”

At stake, according to Rubio: “The threat from near-peer competitors continues to evolve and grow … This aircraft is vital to the U.S. military’s ability to defeat high-end adversaries.”
Officials Allowing Personnel who Reside Off-Base to Return to Panhandle

Dan Cohen, Posted on Oct 24, 2018 03:00 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=3c00ac086b

Tyndall officials lifted the evacuation order for active-duty military and civilian personnel who live off-base, provided the municipality where they reside doesn’t have any outstanding restrictions in place. Personnel who return to their permanent residences, however, will no longer be eligible for safe haven allowances, according to a press release. “This is a personal choice,” it states. The base’s evacuation order remains in effect and it is not open for regular operations. Separately, about 600 airmen are living on Tyndall, working on recovery efforts, reports the 325th Fighter Wing.

Tyndall AFB Update: Some Operations on Track to Resume by Jan. 1; Base Commander Upbeat following Latest Damage Assessment; Pence Delivers Encouraging Message; Tent City Sprouts Up

Dan Cohen, Posted on Oct 26, 2018 05:15 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=6c4605def0

Several of Tyndall’s primary missions could be operating by the beginning of the new year, Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson said Thursday during a visit with Vice President Mike Pence to observe recovery operations. The “schoolhouse,” where F-22 pilots from across the country train on flight simulators, should be up and running by Jan. 1. And many of the 325th Fighter Wing’s F-22s will be returning for training to Eglin AFB, located about 80 miles west of Tyndall. “We can’t fly aircraft out of Tyndall at the moment,” Wilson said, reported Military.com. “But by Thanksgiving, we will have F-22s in the skies over the Panhandle.” Wilson also said the Air Force Northern Command Air Operations Center, which is staffed by 800 airmen, would return from Langley AFB, Va. “We want to get back to initial operating capability by the first of January,” she said. … Col. Brian Laidlaw, commander of the 325th Fighter Wing, said he was encouraged by the results of an ongoing building assessment. To date, personnel have surveyed 503 buildings, about half the base’s total. No more than 30 percent of those buildings are a total loss and many critical areas did not receive as much damage as initially believed, reported the News Herald. “Today we have come so much further than I could have ever imagined when I came out of that ride out shelter that night,” Laidlaw said. … Pence, meanwhile, affirmed the administration’s support for restoring Tyndall. “President Trump and I are committed to providing the resources necessary to rebuild Tyndall Air Force Base so that it can continue to be a vital and critical part of our national defense,” Pence said. Wilson said the Air Force has committed $100 million to recovery efforts so far. … In the two weeks since Hurricane Michael made landfall just miles from Tyndall, hundreds of civil engineering airmen have successfully restored basic necessities to the installation. A total of 1,000 support personnel from Tyndall and other installations are working to repair base infrastructure and build bare-bones facilities, reports the 325th Fighter Wing Public Affairs.

NAS Jacksonville
NAS Jacksonville Air Show announces Blue Angel flying times

The 2018 Naval Station Jacksonville Air Show released the times the Blue Angels will be flying this month.

The Blue Angels will be headlining the event. They will fly Saturday at 12:30 p.m. and again at 3 p.m. after conducting a flyover to kickoff the Florida-Georgia game.

On Sunday, they will perform at 3 p.m.

MacDill AFB

MacDill AFB providing relief to military families impacted by Hurricane Michael

Dozens of families from Tyndall Air Force Base near Panama City were displaced when Hurricane Michael hit two weeks ago.

TAMPA, Fla. – Dozens of military families displaced after Hurricane Michael severely damaged Tyndall Air Force Base near Panama City will receive help from MacDill AFB in Tampa.

At a special meeting Wednesday evening, military evacuees were updated on benefits they’d receive and were reassured they’d be taken care of in their time of need.

To help with their temporary transition, eligible single-person families from Tyndall will receive $750 grants and families will get $1,500.

Parents were also informed on schooling options for their children. A representative from Hillsborough County Schools said students K-8 could attend the school on the military base, and older students will be taken in at Robinson High School.

Parents who have additional questions about education options should contact Hillsborough County Schools….

Cape Canaveral AFS

SpaceX lines up five launches to close out 2018

by Michael Baylor October 22, 2018

SpaceX’s launch manifest for the remainder of 2018 is beginning to take shape. The company has five launches remaining on its schedule for the year. Executing all of them would take SpaceX’s 2018 launch total to 22 – surpassing the launch provider’s previous record of 18 launches in a single year.

The next mission on SpaceX’s manifest is Es’hail 2. Scheduled for no earlier than November 14th, a Falcon 9 will launch the communications spacecraft from Pad 39A at Kennedy Space Center for the Qatar Satellite Company.

The Mitsubishi built satellite has already arrived in Florida after shipment from Japan.

Es’hail 2 will be placed into a Geostationary Transfer Orbit (GTO) – before utilizing its onboard thrusters to reach its final destination.

The launch will be the first from Pad 39A since Bangabandhu-1 on May 11th of this year. Since then, the launch complex has been undergoing renovations to support NASA’s Commercial Crew Program.

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**Patrick AFB**

**Patrick AFB opens arms to Tyndall AFB Airmen**

By Airman 1st Class Zoe Thacker, 45th Space Wing Public Affairs / Published October 19, 2018


**PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla.** – The 45th Space Wing held a modified Emergency Family Assistance Center on Oct. 17, 2018, at the Airman & Family Readiness Center for Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla. Airmen displaced due to Hurricane Michael.

The EFAC provided a forum to connect with various Patrick AFB agency representatives for Tyndall families who relocated to Patrick.

Those who relocated to areas like Daytona Beach, Jacksonville and Palm Beach, were given a link to a live webinar to listen in and ask questions during the EFAC if they were unable to attend in person.

“This is a family,” said Brig. Gen. Doug Schiess, 45th Space Wing commander. “The Patrick AFB team are experts and we want to make sure you’re getting the assistance you need and deserve.”

Airmen from finance, medical, lodging, legal, military personnel flight and the Chapel provided information for assistance and support. The Airman & Family Readiness Center also has information packets with detailed information for families here or those planning to come to the Patrick area. To reach the AFRC, call 321-494-5676.

“Our Air Force families are resilient and we stand ready to continue to provide them the support and resources that they need to move forward,” said Master Sgt. Angela Chenoweth, NCO in charge of Airman & Family Readiness.

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**DoD Budget**

**Budget watchdog questions Navy’s plan for 355-ship fleet**

By: Geoff Ziezulewicz, 10-24-2018
A federal financial watchdog is questioning whether the Pentagon will ever reach its ambitious goal of a 355-ship Navy.

This month’s report from the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office analyzed the sea service’s strategy of extending the life of current ships while buying more new vessels to hit 355 over the next three decades.

The Navy’s latest shipbuilding plan was submitted to Congress in February, its first since 2017. Currently sitting at 285 battle force ships, the Navy plans to buy 301 new vessels between 2019 and 2048.

“If the Navy adheres to the schedule for retiring ships outlined in the 2019 plan, it would not meet its goal of 355 ships at any time over the next 30 years,” the report states.

As part of its race to 355, the service announced it also wants to extend the life of its destroyers to 45 years—an extra five to 10 years of service—while boosting the service lives of seven attack submarines from 33 years to 43 years, the report states.

Those life extensions could get the Navy to 355 by 2034, the CBO notes, “but would fall short of the Navy’s specific goals for some types of ships.”

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Other Of Interest

**Coast Guard seizes cocaine, marijuana haul worth more than $47M**

By Elizabeth Zwirz | Fox News, 10-19-2018

A seized drug haul believed to worth upward of $47 million arrived at Coast Guard Base Miami Beach on Tuesday, officials announced.

Roughly 3,516 pounds of cocaine and 50 pounds of marijuana were brought ashore by the crew aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Bernard C. Webber, a news release from the Coast Guard’s 7th District said.

Officials obtained the drugs from “three suspected smuggling vessels” near the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Aruba, the news release said.

The seizures were made by three Coast Guard vessels and took place on Sept. 30, Oct. 4 and Oct. 10. The latter one alone yielded 2,700 pounds of cocaine, the news release said.

Photos provided by the Coast Guard showed “bales of cocaine” as they were being unloaded from the vessel.....

**Ohio Leaders Call for Coordinated Effort to Promote Defense Industry**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Oct 22, 2018 02:52 am

https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156e255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=21f754b46b
The defense industry has a $13.7 billion economic impact in Ohio, accounting for 66,400 jobs across seven installations and hundreds of contractors located throughout the state, but without a statewide advocate for the industry, that business could be in jeopardy, according to speakers at last week’s Ohio Defense Forum in Columbus. “We need to get past the regionalism and look at the ways we can have a strategic plan and overall goals and objectives for our state, so we can have more access, more jobs … and increased national security,” said Rep. Mike Turner (R). “Other states are organized and operate as a team.”

A number of cities, counties and regional groups are promoting local defense assets, but a statewide advocate could leverage resources already being expended to produce greater benefits for Ohio, reports Columbus Business First. “The state of Ohio has no collective plan. We need to come together to make sure we keep the infrastructure and have a plan to grow it,” said James Dignan, CEO of the Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber.

A newly formed state panel is working to strengthen Ohio’s defense presence. Last year, the Ohio Military Facilities Commission awarded $5 million to projects benefitting Air National Guard bases in Mansfield and Toledo.

**Space Force policy memo being drafted to establish new military branch**

by Sandra Erwin — October 22, 2018


**WASHINGTON** – Vice President Mike Pence on Tuesday will hold a meeting of the National Space Council at the National Defense University to discuss the next steps toward creating a Space Force as a new branch of the U.S. military.

During the last meeting of the council on June 18, Trump ordered the Pentagon to set up a Space Force but the president has not yet issued an official policy directive that lays out the steps ahead.

The policy would be Space Policy Directive-4 — the fourth since President Trump activated the National Space Council in June 2017 by executive order.

Trump has yet to sign the SPD-4 that would direct the establishment of a Space Force. A White House spokesperson declined to comment on whether the president has approved the policy directive or when he will sign it.

According to a draft of the policy directive, the Defense Department would have to submit a legislative proposal to the White House Office of Management and Budget by Dec. 1 recommending that a Space Force be formed as a separate branch of the armed forces. DoD also would submit a budget request for the new service to be included in the president’s budget blueprint for fiscal year 2020. A draft of SPD-4 labeled “pre-decisional” was reviewed by SpaceNews.

The draft says it is “imperative that the United States adapt its organization, policies, doctrine and capabilities to protect our interests” in space. It directs DoD to “take actions under existing authority to marshal its space resources into a Space Force” and craft a legislative proposal to establish a Department of the Space Force…..
Task Force members,

Five Task Force members and staff were joined by Congressman Neal Dunn, Senator George Gainer and several members of the local community to meet with base officials and survey the damage at Tyndall AFB caused by Hurricane Michael (picture attached). Although the devastation in the area is huge, Task Force members were encouraged to see the tenacity of the people working to restore the base. The Wing Commander, Col Brian Laidlaw noted that about 30% of the bases facilities are a total loss, but that after engineering review, the base has fared better than initially thought. Power has been restored to most of the base and missions, especially at 1st Air Force, will be back on line before the end of the year according to Brig Gen Francis Ekman. Living in base lodging that survived the hurricane as well as a tent city and eating out of a temporary contracted chow hall, more than 1200 airman are already back on base cleaning up and helping ensure Tyndall will be better than ever as it is restored and rebuilt into a base focused on the future missions that it is already doing. The Task Force offered to entertain out of cycle emergent Grant requests for Tyndall and the Panama City area that will support the timely recovery and rebuilding of the base. The visit included a press event covered by three local press agents. For all the latest news on Tyndall, see multiple articles below in the from over the weekend.

Florida Defense Support Task Force Visits Tyndall Air Force Base

EFI PRESS RELEASE, 10-26-2018

Bay County, Fla. (October 26, 2018) – Today, the Florida Defense Support Task Force (FDSTF) visited Tyndall Air Force Base (AFB) to determine what the Task Force can do to support recovery efforts following Hurricane Michael.

Governor Scott visited Tyndall AFB with Vice President Mike Pence yesterday, where Vice President Pence announced the administration’s commitment to reconstruct Tyndall AFB. Last week, Governor Scott sent a letter to President Trump after visiting Tyndall AFB requesting immediate action to dedicate resources, manpower and funding to return Tyndall AFB to full operations as soon as possible. Governor Scott’s letter to President Trump is HERE.

“Tyndall is home to many great Air Force programs and this is an opportunity for us to plan for the future and build a base that fulfills the future needs of our airmen – whether that be state of the art drone ready simulation buildings, or hangers that are equipped with up to date technology,” said U.S. Representative Neal Dunn. “Thank you to the Florida Defense Alliance and the Florida Defense Support Task Force for their continued efforts to protect and enhance our military assets in Florida. We will rebuild and we will come back better than ever.”

Representative Jay Trumbull of Panama City, Chair of the Florida Defense Support Task Force, said “The military members and families of Tyndall Air Force Base are part of our extended family in Bay County. We share their pain in the damage done to the base and stand by them as we rebuild it together.”
Kellie Jo Kilberg, Chair of the Florida Defense Alliance, said “From the beginning, the Bay County community has been an outstanding partner with Tyndall Air Force Base. It has warmly embraced the service members and their families and will continue to support them during the difficult period of rebuilding. I want to thank Governor Scott for always standing with Florida’s military, missions, installations and families.”

Tyndall Air Force Base includes advanced training for pilots, air traffic and weapon controllers. Key organizations at Tyndall AFB include 1st Air Force, 601st Air Operations Center, 53rd Weapons Evaluation Group and the 325th Fighter Wing/F-22 Training and Operations.

Senator Doug Broxson, Member of the Florida Defense Support Task Force, said “Tyndall Air Force Base is not only important for the nation’s defense, it is critical for the lives of thousands of Floridians. It is a tremendous asset to our state and we must support the rebuilding effort with everything we have.”

Tom Neubauer, President of the Bay Defense Alliance and member of the FDSTF, said “Military and civilians employed at Tyndall AFB are essential to the Bay County community. The Bay Defense Alliance will continue to partner with the Florida Defense Support Task Force and Florida Defense Alliance to help with rebuilding efforts.”

Retired Col. Bruce Grant, VP of Military and Defense Programs for Enterprise Florida, Inc., said “Tyndall Air Force Base is an indispensable asset to our nation’s security. With an annual economic impact of $2 billion and 20,000+ jobs, Tyndall AFB is also a major economic driver for both the local and state economy. Thank you to Governor Scott for his support of a full recovery and rebuild of Tyndall AFB.”

The defense industry provides an annual economic impact of $84.9 billion and accounts for more than 801,000 jobs in Florida. Defense is the second largest contributor to the state economy behind tourism.

Florida Defense Support Task Force Surveys Damage Ahead of Tyndall Recovery Efforts

By: Erin Morgan, Posted: Oct 26, 2018 07:34 PM EDT, Updated: Oct 26, 2018 07:34 PM EDT

PANAMA CITY, Fla. - A day after Vice President Mike Pence visited Tyndall Air Force Base to announce that it will be rebuilt, members of the Florida Defense Task Force visited the base to survey the damage and see how they can assist with recovery efforts.

Congressman Neal Dunn, Sen. George Gainer and Rep. Jay Trumbull, who is also the chairman of the Florida Defense Task Force, were all apart of the tour.

"When this is all over and we look at it, we're going to have a bigger stronger Air Force base," Sen. Gainer said.

Around 35 percent of the buildings at Tyndall Air Force Base were damaged during Hurricane Michael, and many in the community feared that the base would never rebuild.

"We were so scared that they were going to close the base, and I think all those fears are in the rearview mirror now," Sen. Gainer said.

Congressman Dunn explained that a lot of eyes are on the base on the national level.

"The news that came from that visit was immense, it was we are going to rebuild Tyndall, all of Tyndall, all the missions, nothing goes away," he said. "The President is committed to it. So that means we're
going to have a brand new Tyndall, and the Tyndall we're going to build is the one we need not the one we had."

Rep. Trumbull said the Florida Defense Support Task Force will be working to provide the resources that are needed for the recovery process.

"It runs the spectrum from housing to hangars, so there's going to be a lot of work here. But it's important to make sure that we get missions back in place as soon as possible," he said.

Congressman Dunn said that he is hopeful boots will be back on the ground by January 1.

"First Air Force headquarters is doing an annual drill for NORAD and they're doing it from here on base, running through satellite connections, and they'll be standing up that full mission before the end of the year," he said. "And we'll have F-22 training squadron doing all their simulators before Thanksgiving."

But while the base works to rebuild, Trumbull said many of the 11,000 airmen and women who were stationed at Tyndall before the storm will be relocated to other missions.

"In the time to get people back to work right now they are repositioning some folks, so they might get some new missions, but we will have new people when our missions kick back up in the future. So we are not going to miss a beat, and the airmen and women won't miss a beat."

One of the areas that Trumbull said they plan to focus on during the rebuilding process is finding suitable housing for the new airmen and women that will come to the base.

Florida Defense Task Force assesses damage at Tyndall AFB

By Gail Levy | Posted: Fri 5:40 PM, Oct 26, 2018

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (WJHG/WECP) - All eyes are on Tyndall Air Force Base to see what the next move is to get it fully functioning as soon as possible.

Friday, the Florida Defense Task Force toured Tyndall to determine what the Task Force can do to support Hurricane Michael recovery efforts.

One of their goals is to make sure all the connections are made between local, state, and federal agencies to help the base return to completing missions.

But the Chairman of the Florida Defense Alliance, Kellie Jo Kilberg, told us helping the families are a priority.

"If they live off base, is their home there? What do they need in support for that? Looking at the support of getting their kids back in school, and just really looking at what are the resources out there that we can bring to the table," said Kilberg.

Officials also mentioned Tyndall has made a lot of progress over these past two weeks and the airfield is back open.

The Florida Defense Support Task Force tours Tyndall to decide how to support base after Hurricane Michael

By GENEVIEVE SMITH, Posted Oct 28, 2018 at 7:00 AM
PANAMA CITY — On Friday morning, members of the Florida Defense Support Task Force toured Tyndall Air Force Base to survey the damage caused by Hurricane Michael more than two weeks ago.

Although the Air Force Base sustained considerable damage, officials say Tyndall should be up and running by this coming January.

“What was great was to see the resources that have come to this base,” said Jay Trumbull, state representative and chair for the Florida Defense Support Task Force. “This place is going to be back up and operational in no time.”

Trumbull says although there is a significant need at Tyndall, the need will be met with significant structural rebuild.

“We are an integral part of homeland security and the safety of our country,” he said. “To be able to preserve that is something that’s really incredible.”

The task force covers installations all over the state of Florida to offer support on a state level as quickly and as positively as possible.

“We are going to rebuild Tyndall, all of Tyndall, all the missions. Nothing goes away,” said Representative Neal Dunn. “That means we’re going to have a brand new Tyndall.”

Dunn says Tyndall is his number one priority in Bay County, followed by improved communications. Once construction is complete, the base will be updated to the needs of the 21st century.

“It’s going to be the Tyndall we need, not the Tyndall we had,” he said.

Dunn says conditions on the base have already greatly improved with the addition of places to eat, sleep, and get fuel. He says a commissary will soon be up and running.

**Terry**

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Florida Defense Support Task Force

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Task Force members,

1. Next Meeting – Task Force meeting #69 will be Thursday, 15 November 2108, beginning at 9:00AM EST at the Courtyard by Marriott, 3435 N. Atlantic Avenue, Cocoa Beach, FL 32931. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting.

2. Florida Needs to do More to Protect the Gulf Range – This week an ocean advocacy group has asked Floridians to get more vocal about stopping oil drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico (see article below in the CLIPs). As usual, the focus of the group is on environmental reasons rather than national security, even though the national security rationale is what has maintained the environment since passage of the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA). According to the article in the Herald Tribune, “The oil industry is really interested in the eastern Gulf of Mexico,” Loryn Baughman, Oceana’s communications associate, said. In 2006, current U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Florida, and former Sen. Mel Martinez, R-Florida, successfully sponsored a federal moratorium on drilling within 125 miles of the state’s Gulf coast that expires in 2022. Even if that ban is extended, drilling elsewhere in the Gulf threatens west Florida — just as the Deepwater Horizon oil spill did in 2010, Oceana contends.” It should be noted that without the Gulf Range, it is unlikely that the decision to rebuild Tyndall AFB would have been made the same way. According to an article in Defense News (also below in the CLIPs), “Retired Air Force Lt. Gen. David Deptula, the dean of the Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies, said the estimated cost of rebuilding is $2.5 billion, but Tyndall must be rebuilt and retain the F-22, in part, because of the post’s closeness to the Gulf Test Range, which accommodates high-altitude supersonic air combat training. The question of F-22 unit sizes ought to be considered separately, he said. “It makes sense to rebuild it,” Deptula said of Tyndall. “Other than its proximity to testing ranges, it makes sense for mission, economic and political purposes.”” Rebuilding Tyndall without extending the GOMESA moratorium does not make much sense.

3. Task Force Released Request for Proposals (RFP) for Advocacy – The Task Force’s current Advocacy contract expires in February 2019. We received three replies to our RFQ from qualified firms who are asked to now provide proposals in addition to any other proposals. The Task Force released the RFP (DTFRFP19-001) to select one company to support its needs. Proposals are due by next Friday, November 9, 2018. Once we have an opportunity to review, the Task Force plans to notify selected firms to make in-person presentations in January 2019 and begin a new contract in March 2019. The RFP document and other information is hosted on MyFlorida Marketplace and our website at https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/funding-contracts/

4. Semi-Annual FDA Meeting Set for November 14, 2018 in Cocoa Beach – Please sign up with Michelle Griggs if you plan to attend the upcoming FDA meeting in Cocoa Beach. FDA has developed a great agenda and it looks to be a most engaging and lively meeting.
5. Attachments:
   - TPG October End of Month Report

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News Clips of Interest:

FDSTF

Hurricanes Michael, Florence leave serious recovery challenges

Michelle R. Matisons, Monday, October 29, 2018
http://exclusive.multibriefs.com/content/hurricanes-michael-florence-leave-serious-recovery-challenges/civil-government

In the weeks since Hurricanes Florence and Michael swept through the Florida Panhandle, Georgia, the Carolinas, and elsewhere, communities have started to assess damages and plan large-scale recovery efforts. This is difficult since both hurricanes have caused record levels of damage.

The most recent Hurricane Michael death toll is at 45 people, while Florence caused 53 deaths.

Overall damage reports are now available. Hurricane Michael caused $158 million in damaged crops, and the timber industry has endured $1.3 billion in damages.

In didn’t help matters that Hurricane Florence had already done a significant amount of damage, which was only exacerbated by Michael afterwards. In North Carolina alone, an overall estimate of $12.7 billion is the current estimate.

Businesses suffered $3.9 billion in damages, housing suffered $3.4 billion, and “agriculture’s $2.4 billion in losses includes $117.7 million in damages to farm buildings, equipment and infrastructure.”

This is just to give you an idea of the financial impact for communities in the hurricane zones. On the ground, these early financial estimates may increase as assessment capabilities improve.

The Florida Panhandle began its arduous recovery efforts — which proves to be an uphill battle, to say the least. After people began to fix power lines and cell towers, clear roads, clean up yards, and prepare
schools for reopening, some areas received more rain, which caused setbacks. Power and cellphone service has returned to some areas, while other areas are still waiting for lights to go back on.

Now that normalcy is returning, officials are beginning to wrangle over practices and procedures used in the aftermath of the massive hurricanes. Mexico Beach, Florida is a small coastal community that was all but wiped out.

We now see evidence of disagreements about how to proceed. Does the city allow remaining residents to live there while cleanup is occurring?

An outside engineering company, Atkins Engineering, is aiding in recovery: “They have arranged for the Army Corps of Engineers to dredge the canal, the Florida Department of Transportation to lead the debris removal and will be vetting volunteers and contractors once the removal phase is complete and the recovery phase begins in the coming days.”

Debates about how to proceed with recovery are also occurring at nearby Tyndall Air Force Base, where 35 percent of the base’s infrastructure was damaged. Vice President Mike Pence visited the base Oct. 25, announcing the intention to rebuild.

The Florida Defense Support Task Force toured the base last Friday, and announced that since it was such an important part of Homeland Security and national defense, the goal is to get it running again as soon as possible. The ability to eat, sleep, and attain fuel is now available on the base, which helps the overall recovery effort……

Oil Drilling / Gulf Range

Ocean advocacy group urges Floridians to oppose offshore drilling

By Dale White, Staff Writer, Posted Oct 26, 2018 at 12:39 PM, Updated Oct 26, 2018 at 12:49 PM

An international organization that advocates for protecting the oceans from pollution and other harm wants Florida’s voters, businesses and local governments to become more vocal in opposing offshore oil drilling.

Earlier this year, the Trump administration announced plans to expand future oil and gas leasing in U.S. waters. The U.S. Department of the Interior indicated that Florida waters will be exempt but did not say which specific areas.

Representatives of Oceana — an international organization founded by The Pew Charitable Trusts, Oak Foundation, Marisla Foundation and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund — recently met with media outlets from Tallahassee to Naples, including the Herald-Tribune, about its ongoing efforts to counter those plans.

“We want to let people know we exist,” Hunter Miller, Oceana’s Florida Gulf Coast campaign organizer, said. “We keep our hands on the pulse of this issue very closely.”

“The oil industry is really interested in the eastern Gulf of Mexico,” Loryn Baughman, Oceana’s communications associate, said.

Even if that ban is extended, drilling elsewhere in the Gulf threatens west Florida — just as the Deepwater Horizon oil spill did in 2010, Oceana contends.....

Cyber

Pentagon’s big audit will inspect for cybersecurity flaws, comptroller says

By: Joe Gould, 10-29-2018

WASHINGTON – Pentagon Comptroller David Norquist warned government contractors Monday that the first agencywide financial audit might reveal “a laundry list” of cybersecurity problems.

Auditors will examine the massive agency’s business systems and cybersecurity procedures to determine whether a hacker can breach them, Norquist told an industry audience at the Vision Federal Market Forecast Conference.

“If you fielded one of those systems that is vulnerable to cyber intrusions, that is filled with errors in the way it is set up, we need to talk,” Norquist said, "because you’re one of the reasons we’re not passing the audit, and we need you to fix it.”

The audit will bring tough conversations and business opportunities for innovators, Norquist said.

“You can be part of the group that helps us come up with solutions, you can help your clients and your government organizations fix those problems so they’re not hanging around, getting beaten up,” he said.

Pentagon officials have acknowledged for years that the department, the military services and defense contractors are under persistent cyber probes and attacks, including from state actors seeking to steal data to gain an economic or technological advantage.....

NAS Pensacola

Blue Angels heading home to Pensacola Naval Air Station for final show of season

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Pensacola News Journal, Published 6:00 a.m. CT Oct. 29, 2018

Retired Navy Capt. George Dom flew dozens of air shows during his tenure as commander of the U.S. Navy Blue Angels, but the end-of-season homecoming show at Naval Air Station Pensacola was always a little special.

"A show season is a lifetime for each team," said Dom, who served as boss for the 1997 and 1998 teams. "Each season, the team goes through so many experiences and challenges. Seeing it end, it is very emotional."
The Blue Angels will mark the end of the team's 72nd season Nov. 2 and 3 with the annual homecoming show at Naval Air Station Pensacola. On Nov. 2, Dom and other members of the 1998 team will have a special celebration to mark the 20th anniversary of their team's final show.

Dozens of former Blue Angels team members from decades past always attend the homecoming shows.

**NAS Whiting Field**

**Whiting Field flight students get their first look at the aircraft they hope to fly**

Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Published 2:29 p.m. CT Oct. 24, 2018 | Updated 5:48 p.m. CT Oct. 24, 2018


Marine Capt. Joseph Hawkinson has carried everything from Amazon.com packages to bags of rice on his CH-53E Super Stallion Helicopter.

But Wednesday morning, his cargo included dozens of eager flight students from Naval Air Station Whiting Field.

Hawkinson and his New River, North Carolina-based crew were among dozens of Navy and Marine Corps flight crews from around the country taking part in Whiting's annual Fleet Fly-In.

The event gives students a close-up look at some of the aircraft they might fly after graduating from flight school and allows them to question men and women like Hawkinson who are already flying the aircraft in the Navy's fleet.

**Hurlburt Field**

**MSgt. John Chapman honored with aircraft dedication**

Story by Staff Sgt. Victor J. Caputo, 1st Special Operations Wing Public Affairs 10.27.2018


HURLBURT FIELD, Fla. – The name John Chapman is already well known in the Air Force community, and it will now fly across the globe on the side of an iconic aircraft.

A Boeing C-32 was dedicated to U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. John Chapman, a Special Tactics combat controller who was posthumously presented the Medal of Honor, during a ceremony at Hurlburt Field, Florida, Oct. 26, 2018.

“Our nation continues to be the land of the free because of brave men like John Chapman,” Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson said. “The dedication of this aircraft is just one way we continue to honor John’s legacy.”

The aircraft dedication came during a multi-day celebration of Chapman’s life and legacy at Hurlburt Field. Several members of the Chapman family were in attendance, including his widow, Valerie Nessel, and his mother, Terry Chapman.
"It was an honor to be here with the Chapman family, to be part of this special tribute to John and his heroic sacrifice for our Nation," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David L. Goldfein. "The naming of this aircraft will serve to remind those traveling on board 'Chappy' of the caliber of people who have served as Airmen."

The C-32 is used to provide safe, comfortable and reliable transportation for our nation’s leaders to locations around the world. It is often referred to by the distinctive call sign “Air Force Two” when the vice president, one of the aircraft’s primary customers, is on board. It is also used by the first lady and members of the presidential Cabinet and Congress.

Chapman’s selfless actions during the Battle of Takur Ghar in Afghanistan in 2002 originally earned him an Air Force Cross medal, but a recent review of Air Force Cross and Silver Star medals led to Chapman becoming the first Airman since the Vietnam War, and the first Special Tactics Airman ever, to be awarded the Medal of Honor……

Eglin AFB

Eglin testing could disrupt GPS systems

By Staff report, Posted Oct 26, 2018 at 12:53 PM, Updated Oct 26, 2018 at 1:47 PM

EGLIN AFB – People may experience aircraft noise and unavailability of Global Positioning System-equipped items early next month when the 53rd Weapons Evaluation Group conducts operations in the Gulf of Mexico.

Ground-based navigation and electronic devices or smartphone apps that rely on GPS may be affected near Eglin Air Force Base from Nov. 5-9 while tests are being conducted from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Normal GPS reliability will resume after testing is completed each day.

Each day during the test period, fighter aircraft will release munitions over the Gulf about 20 nautical miles south of Destin. The tests will be conducted within a cleared range safety area, which includes boat surveillance. Notices to mariners will be issued prior to the missions, and fliers will be handed out at local marinas…..

NSA Panama City

Hurricane Michael causes limited damage to Navy base

By Ed Offley | Special to the News Herald, Posted Oct 29, 2018 at 5:00 PM

NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY – For the past eighteen days after Hurricane Michael, Commander Jay Sego and his staff have worked nonstop assessing the storm damage that brought operations at this 657-acre research and development facility to a halt.

After obtaining a muster of 100 percent of the command’s 2,800 military and civilian employees, inspecting each of the base’s 221 buildings for wind damage, surveying its water lines for leaks, and
counting each of the hundreds of felled trees needing removal, Sego told reporters on Monday there was one final list to review: the many blessings that the base and its people can count.

Unlike Tyndall Air Force Base, which sustained major damage to most of its physical infrastructure, NSA-PC avoided the brunt of the storm, Sego said. None of the forty-nine houses on base sustained serious damage, and the hurricane’s wind direction resulted in few breaches in the base perimeter fence due to downed trees. Nevertheless, a number of buildings received moderate to severe damage and will require substantial repairs over the months ahead, he said.

Sego said it is too early to provide a monetary estimate for the structural damage and economic impact from three weeks of inactivity.

With the help of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 11 based in Gulfport, Mississippi, the base’s road network has been cleared of felled trees, and a detailed inspection of the base water system has identified areas needing repair. Likewise, electricity, telephone service and computer network capabilities are returning to normal, Sego said. Families living on base – who were forced to evacuate along with the rest of the workers – began returning over the weekend.

Commanders of various tenant organizations at the base voiced similar assessments of how the storm disrupted their operations, although the specific impact did vary from one unit to another.

While the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center has been able to bring back its 190-man training staff and the 200 students enrolled in current diving classes, Commander Sam Brasfield said the school will not be able to resume its full training schedule until January.

Likewise, Captain Aaron Peters said the Naval Surface Warfare Center staff was able to shift some of its research and development work to an adjunct facility in south Florida, but will see unavoidable delays in work while repairs proceed on the twelve buildings in his command that were damaged…..

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**Naval Support Activity Panama City recovering after Hurricane Michael**

By Jordan McCool | Posted: Mon 2:43 PM, Oct 29, 2018

**PANAMA CITY, Fla (WJHG/WECP) -** Sunday afternoon personnel and their families were welcomed back to Naval Support Activity Panama City.

The base sustained building damage ranging from moderate to severe, down trees, and the loss of basic utilities.

An emergency family assistance center is open until Friday for all military and civilian personnel. The center has resources to assist in financial services, legal support, housing referrals, insurance claims, and counseling.

According to officials, dive training won't start back up until at least January as the base recovers.

"There's still many challenges remaining as we recover. We have teammates that have lost homes, the base has sustained damage to buildings. It's going to take time for us to repair, but we are fortunate that we will continue all of our primary missions here on the installation," Naval Support Activity Commander Jay Sego said.

In the process of trying to rebuild the base and their own homes, personnel have been out in the community helping countless residents.
The ‘Can Do’ Spirit in the Wake of Disaster

Story by MC1 Collin Turner, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 11, 10-30-2018

GULFPORT, Miss. – Seabees assigned to the 54-man U.S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11 detachment that deployed from Gulfport, Mississippi to Naval Support Activity Panama City, Florida to provide much needed support following Hurricane Michael were a prime example of the ‘Can Do’ nature of Seabee spirit.

Air Force Captain Chad Colocar, the officer in charge of NMCB-11s Air Detachment, led the task-tailored response package in their relief efforts.

“I am honored and at the same time excited to lead Seabees for this mission,” said Colocar. “It is not every day that Seabees get to take part in hurricane relief efforts, and for many of them this may be their first time.”

The detachment of Seabees were prepared to respond within a 48-hour window, and convoyed more than 250 miles to the Florida installation with 18 pieces of rolling Civil Engineering Support Equipment (CESE), two 924G loaders, an excavator, as well as various other supplies and equipment they would need for the task at hand.

Upon arrival, the ‘Bees’ as they are commonly known, got right to work providing initial damage assessment in conjunction with the base Public Works Officer. Priority tasking was determined and the ‘Bees quickly went to work removing trees and other debris from vital access and perimeter roads that line the base.

“Getting this base back up and running is a top priority, without this base the contractors coming to assist the local community won't have a place to base their operations,” said Ensign Brett Renaker, assistant officer-in-charge.....

Tyndall AFB

AFPC supporting Tyndall recovery

By Kat Bailey, Air Force’s Personnel Center Public Affairs / Published October 26, 2018
https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/1674536/afpc-supporting-tyndall-recovery/

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas (AFNS) -- The Air Force’s Personnel Center is supporting Headquarters Air Force, Air Combat Command and the 325th Fighter Wing as they continue the recovery efforts at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, in the aftermath of Hurricane Michael.

“We understand recovery will be a long process for many of our Airmen and their families and our priority is to do everything we can to help,” said AFPC commander Maj. Gen. Andrew Toth. “Tyndall Airmen, uniformed and civilian, have a lot on their plates. We’re an Air Force family and we’ll get through this together.”

AFPC continues to work closely with ACC on a three-phased reassignment action plan for military members that can adapt to future decisions about the status of Tyndall AFB mission sets. Phase 1 is currently ongoing as AFPC processes orders diverting some Airmen previously identified as inbound to Tyndall AFB, and orders for those previously identified as outbound from Tyndall AFB.
“We must remain agile, innovative and responsive to Tyndall(AFB)’s needs when we move into Phases 2 and 3 after Headquarters Air Force and ACC make decisions about the future of Tyndall (AFB) missions,” Toth said. “We’ll support the 325th Fighter Wing commander’s manpower decisions based on those requirements.”

“It’s important to understand that we’ll take into account the needs of our Airmen and their families in all phases of the process,” Toth added.

Currently, AFPC has a 16-member team in place at Eglin AFB, Florida, to provide local support for Tyndall AFB Airmen and their families, comprised of military assignment and civilian personnel specialists, Airman and Family Readiness experts, Exceptional Family Member Program professionals, Military Family Life Consultants and School Liaison Officers…..

**Commander provides update brief to Air Force leadership**

By Tech. Sgt. Rachelle Blake, 325th Fighter Wing Public Affairs / Published October 28, 2018
https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/1674746/commander-provides-update-brief-to-air-force-leadership/

**TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (AFNS) --** Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. David L. Goldfein and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright visited Tyndall Air Force Base Oct. 27, for the second time since Hurricane Michael caused catastrophic damage.

Since Vice President Mike Pence announced plans to rebuild Tyndall AFB earlier this week, the base has been actively strategizing a way forward.

After taking time to recognize Airmen from around the base for their efforts to support the post-storm recovery, Goldfein and Wright received an update brief from Col. Brain Laidlaw, 325th Fighter Wing commander.

Laidlaw led with information on Task Force Harp, which is focused on the base's most important asset, its people.

"We are now leaning forward and squadron commanders are looking down their rosters, person by person, trying to figure out what works best for each situation," he said.

The status of Task Force Phoenix came next, which is responsible for infrastructure.

Laidlaw said their job is to save what they can and, from there, build the base that is needed.

To support that mission, 1,200 people have been brought in so far.

"Every single one of these people were sent here for a reason and they have been doing amazing work," said Laidlaw. "We are taking people in as fast as we can feed them and as fast as we can find a place for them to live and every single one of them is doing exactly what we asked them to do."

In addition, he announced the base now has power and they are carefully and systematically turning on various circuits. The sewer is fully operational to include the waste water and treatment plant.

Of the 704 buildings, not including housing, more than 300 have been inspected and at least 37 percent are fixable.

"If you would have asked me two weeks ago how many of our buildings we thought would be operational, I would not have told you 37 percent," Laidlaw said. "That is a good news story."

His said he is in awe of what his team has been accomplishing.
"This has been a proud two weeks to be in the Air Force," said Laidlaw. "As traumatic as this has been for our community, the 1,200 people we have on this base are getting the opportunity to do exactly what we have trained them to do. We have the right people, right here."

Goldfein said he was impressed with the actions taken before the storm to ensure the safety of the Airmen and families there.

"You all saved lives," he said. "In 48 hours you evacuated 11,000 people off the base and 100 miles away and not a single injury. That is a record. I don't think that has happened in the history of this kind of storm."

Politicos are pushing to rebuild Tyndall, but should the Air Force bother?

By: Joe Gould and Valerie Insinna, 10-29-2018

WASHINGTON – The Trump administration has vowed to rebuild Tyndall Air Base, the hurricane-ravaged home of the Air Force’s F-22 Raptor training fleet, though it seems the Air Force faces a long road ahead, and the journey could be fraught with budgetary and political battles.

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence visited the post Oct. 25 to announce the White House’s intent to restore the post, where — according to at least one lawmaker — 17 of the post’s 55 F-22s used to train pilots for high-end air superiority missions were damaged when the post was struck by Hurricane Michael earlier this month.

“President [Donald] Trump and I are committed to providing the resources necessary to rebuild Tyndall Air Force Base so that it can continue to be a vital and critical part of our national defense,” Pence said.

That decision is welcome news to the Air Force and Florida lawmakers like Sen. Marco Rubio who have lobbied the Trump administration to make Tyndall great again. The post not only plays a key role in the air defense of the United States; it impacts $2.5 billion in the local economy and 20,000 jobs in the surrounding Bay County, Florida, area, according to Gov. Rick Scott.

Hurricane Michael, the third-most intense Atlantic hurricane to make landfall in the U.S., hit Oct. 10, forcing the evacuation of the post’s 11,000 personnel, destroying facilities and disrupting its operations. The post’s 325th Fighter Wing provides training for all F-22A Raptor pilots, and its 601st Air Operations Center provides aerospace warning and control for North American Aerospace Defense Command defensive counter-air activities……

Hurlburt, Eglin assisting with Tyndall hurricane recovery

By Jim Thompson, Posted Oct 29, 2018 at 5:58 PM, Updated Oct 29, 2018 at 6:13 PM

TYNDALL AFB – “We will rebuild Tyndall Air Force Base.”

With those words, Vice President Mike Pence solidified a federal commitment to getting Tyndall AFB back up and running following a direct hit earlier this month from Hurricane Michael. Tyndall houses the
325th Fighter Wing, and its missions include pilot training for the F-22 fighter jet and monitoring the skies above the United States as part of homeland security.

In other remarks following a Thursday tour of the base, Pence called Tyndall “a vital and critical part of our national defense.”

Those remarks were echoed in a Monday letter from the entire Florida congressional delegation to Defense Secretary James Mattis urging that operations at Tyndall be restored.

In part, the letter states Tyndall “serves a critical role in protecting and promoting U.S. national security interests and it is vital that we rapidly repair infrastructure and restore operations in the wake of the storm.”

“We are committed to its full recovery,” the letter to Mattis continues, “and we look forward to working with you to achieve that goal.”

For now, efforts to re-establish Tyndall — where buildings and infrastructure were all but destroyed — will rely heavily on area Air Force installations.

In the immediate aftermath of the storm, the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron at Hurlburt Field opened a runway and began bringing air traffic into the base. Since then, a Hurlburt engineering squadron has been involved heavily in recovery efforts. Its work has included roof repair and the assembly of a tent city to house hundreds of personnel arriving at Tyndall for recovery work.

As of Saturday, 1,200 people were working at Tyndall, according to a 325th Fighter Wing news release. Eglin AFB also has a major role in Tyndall’s recovery. Following Pence’s remarks, Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson said the F-22s and T-38 training jets stationed at Tyndall now will be staged at Eglin.

Florida Education Officials and Local Bookstores Partner to Help Hurricane-Impacted Schools Purchase New Books

Targeted News Service, 10-29-2018

TALLAHASSEE, Florida, Oct. 29 – The Florida Department of Education issued the following news:

The Florida Department of Education, Florida Education Foundation (FEF) and independent booksellers across the state have joined together to host Re-book to Re-build: Hurricane Relief Fundraiser. A portion of sale proceeds on November 3 and 4 at participating bookstores will fund grants that will enable schools impacted by Hurricane Michael to re-stock their libraries and classrooms.

First Lady Ann Scott said, "For the past 8 years, I've had the privilege to promote literacy at Florida schools. Reading has always been important to our family, and I truly believe that a strong foundation of literacy is important for students to achieve their dreams and career goals. Since Hurricane Michael made landfall, my husband, Rick, has worked hard to get communities back on their feet. The Re-book to Re-build program is a wonderful opportunity to help impacted schools receive the resources necessary for students to succeed."

Commissioner of Education Pam Stewart said, "Soon, all school districts will have reopened following Hurricane Michael, but many students' schedules have been adjusted and school locations have changed. Florida educators at every level are working tirelessly to ensure a smooth return for students
after having experienced unimaginable destruction, and these grants will be a great help. I am grateful to the participating booksellers, not only for their financial contributions, but for showing our students what it means to care for one another."

Floridians are encouraged to visit one of the participating booksellers on Saturday, November 3 or Sunday, November 4, 2018. A percentage of sale proceeds will be invested in local literacy grants for school districts and educators to purchase books for schools impacted by Hurricane Michael. Those who are unable to visit one of the following locations can give a tax-deductible gift to the Florida Education Foundation.…

Tyndall Air Force Base officials going ‘person by person’ to find out how to help evacuees

By: Stephen Losey, 10-30-2018

Squadron commanders at Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida are starting to go through their rosters “person by person” as they try to figure out how to help those who were forced to evacuate by Hurricane Michael.

Tyndall commander Col. Brian Laidlaw, who is also commander of the 325th Fighter Wing, told Chief of Staff Gen. Dave Goldfein and Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth Wright during their visit to Tyndall Saturday that Task Force Harp — which is focused on Tyndall’s personnel and is one of several task forces set up to handle various aspects of the base’s recovery — is working on figuring out each person’s situation and what they need.

“We are now leaning forward, and squadron commanders are looking down their rosters, person by person, trying to figure out what works best for each situation,” Laidlaw said, according to an Air Force release posted Sunday.

About 11,000 personnel and their families were ordered to leave before the Category 4 storm devastated large portions of Tyndall. Many of them are at nearby Eglin Air Force Base and Hurlburt Field, but others have moved elsewhere in the country.

The Air Force Personnel Center also said in a Friday release that it and Air Combat Command are now in the first phase of a three-phase reassignment plan for Tyndall personnel. As part of Phase 1, AFPC is processing orders to divert airmen who were previously scheduled to transfer into Tyndall, and processing orders for those who were already scheduled to move away from Tyndall…..

Limited damage to Tyndall’s F-22s

By Jim Thompson, Posted Nov 1, 2018 at 3:29 PM, Updated Nov 1, 2018 at 3:30 PM
https://www.nwfdailynews.com/news/20181101/limited-damage-to-tyndalls-f-22s

TYNDALL AFB – All of the F-22 Raptor stealth fighter jets left behind when Hurricane Michael hit Tyndall Air Force Base last month will be flown off the base for repairs, according to Deputy Secretary of Defense Patrick Shanahan.

Shanahan said the last of the aircraft will be flown off the base, under their own power, through the weekend. All of the F-22s are expected to be in new locations by Monday night.
“That’s fantastic news,” Shanahan said.

Shanahan’s comments came during a Thursday video conference call with a half-dozen reporters from around the country, part of a new Pentagon outreach effort.

News that the F-22s are leaving Tyndall justifies the optimism expressed previously by Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein and Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright about the condition of the aircraft that could not evacuate the base due to maintenance or safety issues.....

**FL National Guard / Camp Blanding**

**North Florida Land Trust Has Acquired Thousands of Acres in Critical Wildlife Corridor**

North Florida Land Trust Press Release, 10-31-2018

Jacksonville, FL, October 31, 2018 – (PR.com) – North Florida Land Trust has acquired another important piece of property within a critical wildlife corridor surrounding Camp Blanding. The land conservation organization took possession of 2,300 acres located near Lawtey that connects Camp Blanding to Jennings State Forest. It is located within the Ocala to Osceola (O2O) wildlife corridor; a critical wildlife corridor that stretches from the Ocala National Forest to the Osceola National Forest.

“This is our largest upland acquisition to date and important to protect for both its ecosystem benefits and for the buffer it provides for Camp Blanding,” said Jim McCarthy, president of NFLT. “We have been working in partnership with Camp Blanding for a number of years to protect lands that provide crucial habitat for plants and wildlife and allow critical training for active and reserve troops and emergency responders. Since 2016, we have protected nearly 6,000 acres in partnership with the military.”

The 2,300 acres is comprised mostly of pine stands of various ages, hardwood forests and scattered mature pines along with excellent native groundcover. It is home to a variety of species including the threatened gopher tortoise, quail and other ground nesting birds. It also contains Boggy Branch, one of the headwater tributaries of the Black Creek watershed. NFLT will manage the property for forestry and wildlife, and practices such as prescribed burns will benefit populations of fire-dependent species like the gopher tortoise and Bachman’s sparrow.

NFLT has been focused on preserving land within the O2O corridor, which provides an important habitat for the Florida Black Bear and numerous endangered species including the red-cockaded woodpecker, indigo snakes and gopher tortoises. The organization is leading the O2O Wildlife Corridor Partnership, which is comprised of public and private organizations focused on improving land management and conservation within the O2O. The 80,000-acre Camp Blanding Joint Training Center is central to the O2O landscape and partnership.

NFLT worked closely with the St. Johns River Water Management District and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of State Lands on this transaction. Funding for the project came through the Army Compatible Use Buffer program and a Florida Defense Support Task Force Grant of $385,000 via the Clay County Development Authority.

**NS Mayport**
AHEAD OF OFFICIAL HOMEPORTING, FUTURE USS THOMAS HUDNER VISITS NAVAL STATION MAYPORT

By: Stephanie Brown @SBrownReports, October 30, 2018 2:43 PM

Jacksonville, FL – For the first time, Naval Station Mayport’s soon-to-be newest ship is visiting the base. The future USS Thomas Hudner pulled up to the pier Tuesday, where dozens of family members were waiting to reunite with their Sailors- many of whom they hadn’t seen in months. The ship is the Navy’s newest Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, and she will be formally commissioned December 1st. She will then call Naval Station Mayport her homeport.

“I have 308 of the Navy’s finest sons and daughters on board this mighty warship,” says USS Thomas Hudner’s Commanding Officer Commander Nathan Scherry.

While the ship was initially intended for Norfolk, Scherry says he and the crew are ready for what Mayport has in store.

“I know that the Jacksonville community will welcome Thomas Hudner and the 308 families that we have in to the community,” he says.

Mayport’s Commanding Officer Captain David Yoder says not only are they ready to welcome the ship and Sailors, but they’re excited about what that means for the future of the base.

“Naval Station Mayport, for a long time, there were some questions about what the future was going to look like,” Yoder says.

A few years ago, the base was at a historically low level of ships. The Navy moved the Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group- consisting of the USS Iwo Jima, USS New York, USS Fort McHenry, and hundreds of Sailors- to Mayport, in order to start growing the base again and to keep local shipbuilding industry and other support systems viable.

Mayport was then declared as the homeport for one of the variants of the Littoral Combat Ships. Currently, the USS Little Rock, USS Milwaukee, and USS Detroit homeport at Mayport. The USS Sioux City is expected in late November, and the LCS Witchita will come after her commissioning in January……

Destroyer Hudner will be 18th ship at Naval Station Mayport

By Steve Patterson, Posted Oct 30, 2018 at 6:15 PM, Updated Oct 30, 2018 at 11:12 PM

Naval Station Mayport’s newest ship arrived Tuesday weeks ahead of being commissioned, continuing force movements that could reinvigorate a base whose future seemed unclear when its last aircraft carrier left.

“We’re on the way to running out of room,” Capt. David Yoder, the base’s commanding officer, told reporters as the ship that will become the destroyer USS Thomas Hudner prepared for a three-week stay.
The ship will formally enter service Dec. 1 at a commissioning ceremony in Boston.
The vessel, built at the Bath Iron Works shipyard in Maine, traveled the East Coast this month before stopping in Mayport for the 308-person crew to have time with their families, said Cmdr. Nathan Scherry, its commanding officer.
The Hudner is expected to spend a lot of its first year in service in exercises designed to test the ship’s and crew’s performance. It’s scheduled to start routine deployments in 2021, Scherry said.
The ship’s permanent assignment to Mayport will bring to 18 the number of vessels homeported there. Mayport’s basin can handle 34 ships, but that would require ships to essentially double park, docking side by side if they were all in port at once.

Homestead AFB
Thunderbirds to fly at Homestead air show this weekend
Jennifer Jhon, Contact Reporter, South Florida Parenting, 10-30-2018

The Thunderbirds are returning to South Florida this weekend for the 2018 Wings Over Homestead Air and Space Show.
The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds F-16 demonstration team will tear through the skies over Homestead Air Reserve Base during this free, two-day event.
The U.S. Army parachute team, The Golden Knights, will also perform at the show along with a variety of aircraft, including biplanes, supersonic jets and rocket cars.
Classic and vintage aircraft will be available for viewing, along with military vehicles. Food, drinks and memorabilia will also be for sale.
The Wings Over Homestead Show is 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days at the base about 25 miles south of Miami at 360 Coral Sea Blvd., in Homestead. No entry is allowed after 3 p.m.
For more information, visit wingsoverhomesteadarb.com.

US Southern Command
US Hospital Ship USNS Comfort Helps Thousands of Ecuadoreans
Julia Pelcastre/Diálogo | 30 October 2018

The U.S. Navy hospital ship (USNS) Comfort (T-AH 20) brought medical assistance to the people of Esmeraldas in northwest Ecuador, October 22-26, 2018. U.S. service members in close collaboration with the Ecuadorian Navy and the Ministry of Public Health provided the humanitarian aid to improve living conditions of thousands of Latin Americans.
The USNS Comfort made its first stop in Ecuador as part of Enduring Promise 2018, a U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM)-sponsored 11-week humanitarian aid mission to four countries of Central and South America. The objective of the mission is to help alleviate local medical care challenges due to an increase in cross-border migrants, as well as to bring humanitarian assistance to communities in need. Enduring Promise also includes social activities and work to refurbish local schools.

“It’s an important milestone in the process of renewing bilateral relations with the United States,” Ecuadorean Navy Rear Admiral John Merlo León, commander of North Operations, told Diálogo. “The visit [of the USNS Comfort] fulfilled a humanitarian role, bringing specialized medical care to relieve the work of the public health system in the Esmeraldas area.”

More than 900 U.S. medical specialists, nurses, and military technicians cared for 8,000 children and adults during the five-day mission. Health professionals from Ecuadorean military hospitals assisted with the mission. The USNS Comfort team provided free services in preventive medicine, pediatrics, dentistry, optometry, physiotherapy, and dermatology at the Ecuadorean Port Authority and the Luis Vargas Torres Technical University…..

**Defense Industry**

**FWB tech park could be in store for a facelift**

By TONY JUDNICH, Posted Oct 28, 2018 at 1:11 PM, Updated Oct 28, 2018 at 1:11 PM


FORT WALTON BEACH – Setting up a Community Redevelopment Agency or business improvement district at the Fort Walton Beach Commerce & Technology Park could generate money to help pay for improvements to the park, says City Manager Michael Beedie.

The potential CRA money or possible money from fees from a new business improvement district could help pay for making more buildings at the park ADA-compliant, he said.

Such funding also could go toward building dorms for some of the park’s highly skilled workforce, as well as to making streetscape improvements and building new sidewalks, Beedie said.

He said those and other possible park upgrades also could receive funding from Triumph Gulf Coast dollars, as well as revenue from the potential Okaloosa County half-cent sales tax, which voters will be asked to approve on Nov. 6.

The park is home to about 70 businesses of all sizes, ranging from Fortune 100 companies such as Boeing and Lockheed Martin to local-based businesses like Props Craft Brewery and Fort Walton Machining.

But, “When you have an aging asset and you’re not tuned into competitive realities, a great jewel can pass you by if you don’t try to chart a new path,” Nathan Sparks, executive director of the Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County, said of the overall park.

Beedie and Sparks said much of the park’s long-term future will be guided by its ongoing master plan, a draft version of which will be presented to the City Council on Nov. 13. Beedie anticipates the plan will be finalized by the end of this calendar year.

According to city information, the master planning process takes into consideration the evolving nature of technology, demographic changes within the region, changes in the attitudes and desires in the local natural resource base, and the opportunity to continue to grow the presence of the defense industry and add alternative, research and development, and educational industries…..
DoD Budget

It’s official: DoD told to take cut with FY20 budget

By: Aaron Mehta, 10-27-2018

WASHINGTON – The Pentagon has officially been told the national security top line for fiscal 2020 will be $700 billion, representing the first cut to defense spending under the Trump administration.

Deputy Secretary of Defense Patrick Shanahan told reporters at the Military Reporters & Editors Conference on Friday that Office of Management and Budget head Mick Mulvaney directly told him the Department of Defense must aim for the $700 billion figure, first floated by President Donald Trump at a Cabinet meeting last week.

Notably, Shanahan indicated this will not be a one-year blip, but rather part of a flattening of budgets, saying “when you look at the $700 billion, it’s not just for one year drop down, [or] a phase, it’s a drop and then held constant over the” future years defense program, a five year projection included in every budget.

Asked whether this impacts the department’s plan to shift roughly $50 billion from the Overseas Contingency Operations wartime funding account into the base budget, Shanahan said that no decision has been made. Critics of OCO have argued the DoD pushes items that should be in the base budget into the wartime fund in order to circumvent the sequestration-related budget caps.

The change comes with just weeks left in the DoD’s budget planning process, where the department had been working under the assumption it would have a $733 billion budget top line…..

DOD spent $22.1 billion on military intelligence in FY-18

By John Liang, October 30, 2018 at 11:45 AM
https://insidedefense.com/insider/dod-spent-221-billion-military-intelligence-fy-18

The Defense Department said today its fiscal year 2018 Military Intelligence Program topline budget was $22.1 billion, $3.7 billion higher than the previous fiscal year.

The total MIP budget included both the base budget and Overseas Contingency Operations appropriations, according to a DOD statement.

"The department has determined that releasing this topline figure does not jeopardize any classified activities within the MIP. No other MIP budget figures or program details will be released, as they remain classified for national security reasons," the statement reads.

DOD said last year its FY-17 MIP budget topline was $18.4 billion.

Other Of Interest

Pentagon Stands up New Sustainment Office
DOD has started the process of merging the office responsible for energy and installations with the office responsible for logistics and materiel readiness following the Senate’s confirmation earlier this month of Robert McMahon for the newly created position of assistant secretary of defense (ASD) for sustainment. McMahon, who had been ASD for logistics and materiel readiness, was sworn into his new post Oct. 17. At this point, the department is still carrying out the merger and it has not established a firm date for the office of the ASD for sustainment to be formally established, spokesman Lt. Col. Michael Andrews told On Base. It’s not clear how long the office of the ASD for energy, installations and environment office will remain in place.

The creation of the sustainment office is one of the organizational changes triggered by the Feb. 1 split of DOD’s undersecretary for acquisition, technology and logistics office into two smaller organizations. The new sustainment office will maintain four of the five deputy ASD posts that report to the ASD for energy, installations and environment, but it eliminates the top ASD position from the organization chart, according to a memo issued this summer.
Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – Task Force meeting #69 will be **NEXT Thursday, 15 November 2108, beginning at 9:00AM EST** at the Courtyard by Marriott, 3435 N. Atlantic Avenue, Cocoa Beach, FL 32931. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting (Agenda attached). Meeting e-books are available on our website at [https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/meetings/](https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/meetings/).

2. **Call In Number** –
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979  
   Access Code: 1869945

3. **Task Force Members Win Reelection** – Congratulations to Representatives Trumbull and Raschein who both secured victories in the November 6th election. Both have been valuable members from critical defense communities that have been hit by major hurricanes and both have been instrumental in efforts to keep their missions and bases here in Florida. We will miss Representative Clay Ingram who will be leaving the Task Force and the Florida House this year due to term limits. Staff would like to thank Rep Ingram for his four years of leadership and service on the Task Force; his contributions to the military and defense communities across Florida was outstanding.

4. **More States Target Defense Industry Growth** – Indiana now joins Texas, Virginia, Missouri, Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia in developing systems to pursue additional defense industry into their state. According to Dan Cohen in *On Base*, “The Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce has formed the West Central Indiana Defense Network, a six-county network aiming to increase the share of defense contracts landed by companies in the Wabash Valley. The new group — made up of leaders in government, business and economic development — will focus on community and government engagement, education and research, and support for military personnel and veterans.” He also noted that “Separately, state and local officials unveiled a digital portal designed to bridge the gap between DOD’s technology requirements and Indiana’s defense industry marketplace” with a Grant for $2.7 million from the DoD’s Office of Economic Adjustment. Florida is in the process of applying for a similar grant and selecting a vendor to develop a portal but is behind several other states who are already working to enhance defense industry. In addition, the Trump Administration has published a report on the strength of defense industry (attached). See articles below in the CLIPs.

5. **HASC and SASC Have Turnover after Midterms** – Both the HASC and SASC will change due to midterm election. The SASC will have three likely changes with one impacting Florida as Senator Nelson’s loss to Rick Scott will move remove a seat for Florida on the committee. Changes in the HASC are larger as the Democrats take control of the house and with it new leadership as well as members in the committee. According to Dan Cohen in *On Base*, “The House Armed Services Committee faces significant turnover in the 116th Congress, with a handful of Republican members losing their races in Tuesday’s midterm, and more than a dozen members retiring or seeking higher office.” See articles below in the CLIPs.
6. **Florida Issues a Veterans Day Proclamation** – Governor Scott along with members of his Cabinet issued a resolution honoring Florida’s veterans (attached).

7. **Semi-Annual FDA Meeting Set for November 14, 2018 in Cocoa Beach** – Please sign up with Michelle Griggs if you plan to attend the upcoming FDA meeting in Cocoa Beach. FDA has developed a great agenda and it looks to be a most engaging and lively meeting.

8. **Attachments:**
   - Meeting #69 agenda
   - Defense Industry Study
   - Florida Veterans Day Resolution

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**NAS Whiting Field**

**Whiting Field captain speaks at Milton Rotary Club**

By Press Gazette contributor, Posted Nov 6, 2018 at 2:14 PM, Updated Nov 6, 2018 at 2:14 PM  

**MILTON** – Captain Paul Bowdich the Commanding Officer of NAS Whiting Field recently joined a Milton Rotary Club meeting. Bowdich spoke of all the great things happening at Whiting Field, club representative Tracy Allen said in an email.

The base was awarded the Excellence Award for small installations in 2015, 2016 and 2018. Their mission is to produce the military’s best trained “Aviation Warfighter.” Whiting Field has three separate, fully operational airfields and their footprint covers two states and five counties.

Whiting is the busiest naval air station in the world with over 1.1 million flight operations last year with over 131, 970 flight hours in 2017. The base has an economic impact in Santa Rosa County of $1.43
Eglin AFB

Deputy defense secretary addresses F-35s, hypersonic missiles

By Jim Thompson, Posted Nov 4, 2018 at 8:19 AM, Updated Nov 4, 2018 at 8:19 AM

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In a wide-ranging video conference call with a small group of reporters from across the country, Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan addressed two issues with implications for Eglin Air Force Base — the F-35 fifth-generation fighter jet, and the push to develop a hypersonic weapon for the U.S. military.

Eglin is one of two bases — the other is Arizona’s Luke AFB — where pilots of the Joint Strike Fighter are trained.

Additionally, the Eglin-based Air Force Armament Directorate is managing two fast-track programs, which could total more than $1.4 billion, to design and build prototypes of hypersonic missiles capable of traveling up to five times the speed of sound — more than a mile per second.

The work is being done under contracts with Lockheed Martin, a Bethesda, Maryland-based defense contractor. One of the contracts sets a 2021 deadline for U.S. hypersonic missile capability.

In the Thursday conference call, Shanahan said he is “comfortable” with the quick timeline for developing a hypersonic missile capability for the U.S. military.

“I’m not concerned about the aggressiveness of it,” Shanahan said. “It’s aggressive, but not unrealistic.”

The push for American hypersonic weapons development comes as both Russia and China, identified as primary U.S. defense challenges in the DoD’s 2018 National Defense Strategy, are entering the hypersonic weapons sphere.

Earlier this year, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced his country had already deployed one hypersonic missile, and China announced the successful test of a hypersonic weapon.....

NSA Panama City

Naval Support Activity Panama City Announces All Clear

My Panhandle.com, Posted: Nov 01, 2018 02:37 PM EDT, Updated: Nov 01, 2018 02:43 PM EDT

Panama City Beach, Fla. – The Naval Support Activity commanding officer, Cmdr. Jay Sego, has ordered an all clear for the installation Thursday.

Personnel who remain dislocated should contact their supervisor directly for additional information.
"Routine business resumes onboard however, we need your help in keeping traffic to a minimum and maintain a safe and secure environment. Safety is paramount due to continued tree removal, debris hauling and building repairs," officials wrote in a news release. "This is exasperated by recovery workers who are not familiar with crosswalk locations and speed-limits. Please be aware of your surroundings as trees and branches still present a threat to health and safety."

Front gate traffic flow:
The right lane is for commercial vehicles and contractors while the left lane is for all other traffic.

Facilities open on base:
Child Development Center, Children & Youth Center, Tickets and Travel, Fitness Center, Liberty Locker, Galley, Navy Exchange, Navy Federal Credit Union, Visitor Control Center and ID, Fleet and Family Support Center, and Emergency Family Assistance Center.

Facilities open off base:
Navy Branch Health Clinic Panama City.

The following remain closed until further notice:
Navy Gateway Inns & Suites, C-Street Grill, Main Deck, Auto Skills, Marina and RV parks.

For updates on NSA Panama City, visit the installation’s Facebook page at www.facebook.com/NSAPC.

**Tyndall AFB**

**Air Force announces return of units to Tyndall AFB**

By Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs / Published November 02, 2018

ARLINGTON, Va. (AFNS) -- The Air Force announced the return of several key Tyndall Air Force Base missions, as the base begins its long-term recovery following Hurricane Michael.

“We will rebuild Tyndall Air Force Base,” said Vice President Mike Pence while at the north Florida base Oct. 25.

A number of important missions will resume at Tyndall AFB in the next few months and others will shift to other locations for the time being. All but approximately 500 Airmen will return to the Florida panhandle within 1 to 3 months.

“We are focused on taking care of our Airmen and their families and ensuring the resumption of operations. These decisions were important first steps to provide stability and certainty,” said Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson. “We’re working hard to return their lives to normalcy as quickly as possible.”

Decisions include:

Units that will resume operations at Tyndall AFB:

- The 601st Air Force Operations Center will resume operations no later than January 1, 2019.
- The 337th Air Control Squadron will resume air battle manager training at a reduced rate by January 1, 2019. A full production rate is expected no later than summer 2019.
- Air Force Medical Agency Support team will continue their mission of medical facility oversight.
- Air Force Office of Special Investigations will continue their mission from usable facilities.
- 53rd Air-to-Air Weapons Evaluation Group will remain at Tyndall AFB.
• The Air Force Legal Operations Agency will continue their mission from a usable facility at Tyndall AFB.
• Air Force recruiters will continue their mission from local area offices in the Panama City, Florida, area.
• The 823rd Red Horse Squadron, Detachment 1, will continue their mission at Tyndall AFB.
• The Air Force Civil Engineer Center will continue their mission at Tyndall AFB.

Units to be located at Eglin AFB, Florida, with reachback to Tyndall AFB:

• The 43rd and 2nd Fighter Squadrons’ F-22 Fighter Training and T-38 Adversary Training Units will relocate operations to Eglin AFB. Academic and simulator facilities at Tyndall AFB will be used to support training requirements, as well as Tyndall AFB’s surviving low observable maintenance facilities.
• The 372nd Training Squadron, Detachment 4, will relocate with the F-22 Fighter Training Units to Eglin AFB.

Units with insufficient infrastructure to resume operations at Tyndall AFB at this time:

• Personnel and F-22s from the 95th Fighter Squadron will relocate to Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia; Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska; and JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.
• The Noncommissioned Officer Academy will temporarily disperse across four locations: McGhee-Tyson Air National Guard Base, Tennessee; Maxwell AFB - Gunter Annex, Alabama; Keesler AFB, Mississippi; and Sheppard AFB, Texas.

The Air Force is taking great care to ensure Airmen and their families are supported when they return to the base. Officials are working to identify specific Airmen required to remain at Tyndall AFB for mission needs or to assist with the longer-term recovery of the base……

Stealth fighters go to other bases after Hurricane Michael

By Jim Turner, Posted: 5:07 PM, November 02, 2018Updated: 5:07 PM, November 02, 2018

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – A number of key missions at hurricane-ravaged Tyndall Air Force Base will resume operations by the start of the year, but the F-22 stealth fighters and related personnel were not on an Air Force list posted Friday.

Instead, different aspects of the F-22 programs that have been at Tyndall will be spread across the country, from Eglin Air Force Base outside Fort Walton Beach to Virginia, Hawaii and Alaska, according to an Air Force news release.

“By the winter holidays and in many cases well before, we expect all our airmen -- military and civilians - - to have certainty about their options, so that everyone is either on a path or already settled,” Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David L. Goldfein said in the release.

Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson raised the possibility that the F-22 aircraft may never return to Tyndall.

Military.com reported that Wilson was asked during a conference call with reporters Friday about whether the 55 F-22s operating from Tyndall will return. She replied, “That has not been determined.”

State lawmakers and regional officials have expressed concern that the base, where pilots have trained to fly F-22s, would be downsized or closed after it took a direct hit Oct. 10 from Hurricane Michael.
U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., sent out a news release Friday saying he will continue to press for the return of the base to its “pre-Hurricane Michael strength.”

“Wilson assured me today that we will rebuild Tyndall,” Nelson said in a statement. "Tyndall is critical to our national security and will take a long-term commitment to fully restore the base."

The base has employed about 11,000 military and civilian personnel. A Pentagon study in 2017 put a $3.4 billion value on the facilities and projected the base’s annual economic impact -- combining payroll, expenditures and jobs created -- at $596 million..

Most Tyndall AFB Missions Should Resume in Next Three Months

By FLORIDA DAILY, 11.05.18
https://www.floridadaily.com/most-tyndall-afb-missions-should-resume-in-next-three-months/

Despite being hit hard by Hurricane Michael last month, Tyndall Air Force Base on the Florida Panhandle should be mostly operational in the next one to three months.

U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., spoke with U.S. Air Force Sec. Heather Wilson last week and offered an update on Friday, noting that the Air Force will resume nine of the 14 missions at Tyndall over the course of the next three months.

Three other missions will be temporarily relocated to Eglin AFB, with support from Tyndall,” Nelson’s office noted, noting the senator, who is facing a tough challenge from Gov. Rick Scott in Tuesday, “will continue to press the Air Force to return the other missions as well, so that Tyndall will be at its pre-Hurricane Michael strength.”

Nelson weighed in on Friday after speaking with Wilson on the phone.

“Secretary Wilson assured me today that we will rebuild Tyndall,” Nelson said. “Tyndall is critical to our national security and will take a long-term commitment to fully restore the base.”

Wilson said on Friday all but 500 airmen based in Tyndall will be back there within the next three months.

“We are focused on taking care of our airmen and their families and ensuring the resumption of operations. These decisions were important first steps to provide stability and certainty,” Wilson said on Friday. “We’re working hard to return their lives to normalcy as quickly as possible.”

Air Combat Command proud of Tyndall progress

By Tech. Sgt. Rachelle Blake, 325th Fighter Wing Public Affairs / Published November 08, 2018

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (AFNS) – The commander of Air Combat Command and command chief visited Tyndall Air Force Base Nov. 7 for the second time since Hurricane Michael caused catastrophic damage four weeks ago.

Nearly 2,000 military members are currently working alongside civilians and contractors to recover and reconstitute.

“The progress we have made in the last couple weeks has been encouraging and has exceeded any expectations that we had,” said Col. Brian Laidlaw, 325th Fighter Wing commander.
Gen. Mike Holmes, ACC commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Frank Batten, ACC command chief, spent a majority of their time with the service members and thanking them for their hard work and perseverance.

“The recovery efforts, these things you have done, these three task force teams, the mission support group, the medical group and the commander’s action team – I don’t think you could have done it any better,” Holmes said. “I really don’t.”

Since a number of missions, to include the 601st Air Force Operations Center, the 337th Air Control Squadron, the Air Force Medical Agency Support team, Air Force Office of Special Investigations, the 53rd Air-to-Air Weapons Evaluation Group, the Air Force Legal Operations Agency, the 823rd RED HORSE Squadron, Detachment 1, and the Air Force Civil Engineer Center, will remain at Tyndall AFB, recovery efforts have shifted…..

**NS Mayport**

Navy sets date for pressing USS Wichita into service

BY JERRY SIEBENMARK, November 02, 2018 02:41 PM, Updated November 02, 2018 02:31 PM

The third Navy ship to bear the city of Wichita’s name will soon be pressed into active duty.

The littoral combat ship USS Wichita will be commissioned at a ceremony on Jan. 12 at Naval Station Mayport, Fla., near Jacksonville.

The ship is the 13th of the Navy’s Freedom class of littoral combat ships, which are the Navy’s fastest and most adaptable ships.

At 387 feet long, 57 feet wide and a top speed of more than 45 knots — or nearly 52 miles per hour — littoral ships can conduct minesweeping operations, anti-submarine and drug trafficking surveillance and humanitarian operations.

The USS Wichita also is equipped with a launching pad for two MH-60 Seahawk helicopters.

It will be the third Navy ship to carry Wichita’s name. The first USS Wichita was a heavy cruiser commissioned in 1939; it earned 13 battle stars during World War II. The second was a replenishment oiler commissioned in 1968 that earned four battle stars in Vietnam during its 24 years of service.

The January commissioning of the third USS Wichita will be free and open to the public. Reservations and tickets are required to attend, and can be ordered at usswichita.org.

**NAS Jacksonville**

Blue Angels Fly High above the City in Annual Flight Demonstration

Lifestyle, November 2, 2018

Since 1946, the Blue Angels have represented the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps to audiences throughout the U.S. with their high-flying aerobatic jet performances. The team proudly claims to “showcase the excitement and power of naval aviation.”
Last weekend, the Angels showcased their talent and capabilities at the NAS Jax Air Show, held at Naval Air Station Jacksonville. In fact, the local air show is the birthplace of the Blue Angels. The team is second oldest formal flying aerobatic team in the world, after the French Patrouille de France, which was formed in 1931.

Spectators witnessed thrills and exploits from a variety of military and civilian aircraft. The grand finale was the Navy’s flight demonstration team. Spectators also had the opportunity to enjoy on ground military and civilian aircraft displays, shop at novelty, food and beverage booths, or head to the free kid’s zone for games and activities for all ages.

**MacDill AFB**

**Tampa Bay Defense Alliance elects new officers**

By Crystal Owens – Reporter, Tampa Bay Business Journal, 11-7-2018

The Tampa Bay Defense Alliance, a nonprofit group that works with businesses and the military to support the defense community in the Tampa Bay area, recently elected new officers to its board of directors.

The nonprofit elected Tim Jones, CEO and president of Cybrix Group Inc., to be president after serving as an interim since April. Jones took over as interim when the alliance’s board voted to remove former president Lisa Monnet under controversial circumstances.

Monnet says she resigned in March, a little over two years after she was named president. Jones told the Tampa Bay Business Journal in June that he asked for a forensic financial analysis for the period from Jan. 1, 2016 to the present — roughly the time that Monnet was president of the alliance.

At the time, the leadership change resulted in the cancellation of a $135,000 state grant, Jones said, although the organization was able to pick up other state funding.

In addition to Jones, the board recently elected retired U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Michael Jones as its vice president, Edward Springer as treasurer and retired U.S. Navy Capt. Jim Philpitt as secretary.

**MacDill hosts NAS Pensacola flight training squadron**

Story by Senior Airman Adam Shanks, 6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs, 11.07.2018

Since the end of October 2018, the skies above MacDill Air Force Base, Florida roar a little louder than normal.

On any given day, the Tampa Bay community can look to the skies to see the robust KC-135 Stratotanker fly overhead en route to fuel warfighters around the world.

However, their buzz is currently drowned out by the U.S. Navy's visiting fleet of training jets.

Members of the Navy’s Training Squadron 86, also known as the VT-86 Sabrehawks, journeyed to MacDill to complete pilot training in lieu of the U.S Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels’ homecoming at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida.
“Instead of crowding the airspace above Pensacola, we’ve temporarily moved to Tampa to continue our blocks of training,” said Lt. Brandon Brown, an instructor pilot and officer in charge of the VT-86 detachment at MacDill.

Students with the Sabrehawks learn to fly the T-45C Goshawk, a carrier-capable trainer with a maximum speed of 645 mph. Once their six to eight month training is complete, the students move on to pilot the F/A-18F Super Hornet, the U.S. Marine Corps F/A-18D Hornet or the EA-18G Growler.

**Patrick AFB**

**SPACE COMMANDER PUSHES WING TO 48 LAUNCHES PER YEAR**

by Brendan Byrne, Friday, November 2, 2018

http://www.wmfe.org/space-commander-pushes-wing-to-48-launches-per-year/93035

Air Force leaders want to launch 48 rockets per year from Florida’s Space Coast. Upgrades to the 45th Space Wing at Patrick Air Force Base have helped them get nearly halfway there.

It’s called the “Drive to 48” and would mean the 45th Space Wing would support about one launch per week, with two scheduled breaks for range maintenance that would last about two weeks.

The Space Wing is responsible for launch safety as well as providing weather information to mission controllers for launches from both Cape Canaveral and the Kennedy Space Center.

45th Space Wing Commander Brigadier General Douglas Shiess says launches are ramping up on the space coast this year, getting his team closer to 48. “We’re really hoping to get to 24, 25, 26, so we can say we’re halfway to 48. But most of our schedule looking out to 2019 is around 30.”

The 45th Space Wing has upgraded its safety technology, as well as weather prediction systems, to help support more launches. Shiess, who took command of the Wing in August 2018, said it’s more than just upgrades on base.

“It’s a culture of we want to be as fast as we can so that we can be good customers with our commercial folks which are launching for their business, but then the next day their launching for us, in our national security space.”

One of the busiest launch years was 2016, tallying 23. So far this year, that number is at 21.

**Defense Industry**

**Many Weaknesses in Defense Base Could Be Resolved Quickly, DOD Says**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Nov 06, 2018 03:30 am

https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=403a3eecb2

About one-third of the 300 deficiencies faced by the nation’s defense industrial base — covering a mix of sole-source suppliers, suppliers that already have left the marketplace and foreign-owned suppliers — can be addressed over the next year, Eric Chewning, deputy assistant secretary of defense for industrial policy, said Friday at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Another third could be addressed over the next
several years, and some of the weaknesses may never be resolved, Chewning said. An interagency study of the defense base completed last month at the request of President Trump identified about 300 gaps and vulnerabilities, reported Defense News.

The primary risk resulting from weaknesses in the lower tiers of the supply chain is that “if you have to surge production of that weapon system, you’re not going to be able to do that. Or if that widget goes out of business, you have to stop producing that F-35 or at least have delays,” Peter Navarro, the president’s trade policy adviser, said at the event.

Lockheed Helping to Produce Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile

AFSEA, November 6, 2018
https://www.afcea.org/content/lockheed-helping-produce-joint-air-surface-standoff-missile

Lockheed Martin Corp., Orlando, Florida, has been awarded a $350,000,000 increase to an indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity contract for Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM) production support. Contractor will provide lifecycle support for all efforts related to JASSM, Long Range Anti-Ship Missile, JASSM-Extended Range, and any JASSM variant in the areas of system upgrades, integration, production, sustainment, management and logistical support. Work will be performed in Orlando, Florida, and is expected to be completed by April 17, 2022. This award is the result of sole-source acquisition. No funds are being obligated at the time of award. Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, is the contracting activity (FA8682-17-D-0002).

DoD Budget

Special Committee Appears to Settle on Modest Change to Budget Process

Dan Cohen, Posted on Nov 05, 2018 02:31 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=e33abbbfdb

A special congressional committee established in February to look at ways to reform the budget and appropriations process appears to have agreed on only one concrete change, shifting the annual budget resolution to a biennial one. The 16-member Joint Select Committee on Budget and Appropriations Process Reform considered a variety of more far-reaching proposals during months of hearings and meetings, but none garnered the support of a majority of the committee, reported CQ. The committee, equally split between the two parties, is expected to mark up a compromise bill next week that, if approved, would then go to the House and Senate for debate. During markup members likely will propose amendments covering more sweeping reforms, such as eliminating the need for Congress to raise the debt limit and shifting the start of the fiscal year from Oct. 1 to Jan. 1.

Other Of Interest
In Indiana: Region around Terre Haute Targets Defense Business; Database to Support Growth of State’s Defense Industry

Dan Cohen, Posted on Nov 06, 2018 02:20 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=403a3eech2

The Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce has formed the West Central Indiana Defense Network, a six-county network aiming to increase the share of defense contracts landed by companies in the Wabash Valley. The new group — made up of leaders in government, business and economic development — will focus on community and government engagement, education and research, and support for military personnel and veterans, reports CNHI News Indiana. Officials will market the region’s assets, including its transportation network, education and health care resources, workforce and the Indiana Air National Guard’s 181st Intelligence Wing; in addition, the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Crane Division is located nearby. … Separately, state and local officials unveiled a digital portal designed to bridge the gap between DOD’s technology requirements and Indiana’s defense industry marketplace. “[The platform] brings the best practices of today’s leading industry innovation clusters and digital marketplaces to disruptively scale the process of identification, production, deployment, operation and sustainment of optimized solutions to national defense requirements,” Danielle Chrysler, director of the Indiana Office of Defense Development, said at a press conference last week. Development of the database was funded through a $2.7 million grant from DOD’s Office of Economic Adjustment, reported WBIW.

Democrats’ Setback in Senate Takes Chunk out of SASC Membership

Dan Cohen, Posted on Nov 08, 2018 03:21 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=a7d6c6ef2e

Democrats could lose up to three members from the Senate Armed Services Committee as a result of the midterm elections. Two Democratic members lost their races on Tuesday — Joe Donnelly (Ind.) and Claire McCaskill (Mo.). A third, Florida Sen. Bill Nelson, trailed Gov. Rick Scott by only 30,000 votes as of Wednesday in his re-election race, and it could go to a recount. The Strategic Forces subcommittee will need a new ranking member to replace Donnelly. Nelson is the top Democrat on the Cybersecurity panel, so a second leadership position could be available as well.

With the GOP retaining control of the Senate, Jim Inhofe (Okla.) will remain chairman in the 116th Congress. There were some changes recently on the Republican side, however, following the death of John McCain in August. Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska) became chairman of the Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee, after Inhofe was officially approved by the Senate to replace McCain as full committee chairman. Also, Jon Kyl was sworn in to fill McCain’s Senate seat, although he is expected to serve only until January.

HASC to Experience Substantial Turnover in New Congress; Top Readiness Post Open

Dan Cohen, Posted on Nov 08, 2018 03:30 am
The House Armed Services Committee faces significant turnover in the 116th Congress, with a handful of Republican members losing their races in Tuesday’s midterms, and more than a dozen members retiring or seeking higher office. In addition to the leadership change at the top — with the gavel passing from Chairman Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) to Adam Smith (D-Wash.) — the Democrats will need to fill several subcommittee chairmanships. One opening is on the Readiness Subcommittee, as Madeleine Bordallo (D-Guam), the panel’s ranking member, lost in August to a primary challenger. The other is on Tactical Air and Land Forces as its ranking member, Niki Tsongas (D-Mass.), is retiring. But other panels could see new Democratic leaders as well if their chairmen opt to take one of the new vacancies.

On the Republican side, one of the subcommittee leadership positions will be open after Mike Coffman (Colo.), chairman of Military Personnel, lost Tuesday to his Democratic challenger. The other panel chairmen are expected to become the ranking members in the new Congress. Two other committee Republicans lost their races Tuesday — Steve Russell (Oklahoma) and Steve Knight (Calif.).

Turnover on House Armed Services could be even greater, as some remaining members depart for other committees and the Democrats gain additional seats now that they will be in the majority, reports Defense News.
Nov 16

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – There will be no meeting in December. Task Force meeting #70 will be Thursday, 17 January 2019, beginning at 9:00AM ET at the Embassy Suites Miami International Airport, 3974 NW South River Drive, Miami, FL 33142. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting that will include in-person interviews of potential advocacy firms.

2. **Call In Number** –
   - Call-In Number: 800-501-8979
   - Access Code: 1869945

3. **Great Meeting in Cocoa Beach** – Thanks for all the support for the meetings in Cocoa Beach, awesome visit for FDA and the Task Force. One important task completed at the meeting was the approval of the Prioritized Tiers for the Military Base Protection non-conservation land program. The Task Force considered 20 properties submitted by 13 installations. The letters to the Governor and to DEO are attached.

4. **Tech Expo to be Held at Patrick AFB** – According to a press release (see below in the CLIPs), “The second annual Patrick Tech Expo will take place on Wednesday, Dec. 5 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at The Tides Club, located at 1001 N. Hwy, A1A, Bldg 967.” For pre-registration go to https://fdaexpo.com/register.php?id=254#.W-7bVDhKjIV. For more information, contact Jade Ruiz at 660-624-0869 or jade@fdaexpo.com.

5. **Attachments:**
   - None

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**News Clips of Interest:**

**Corry Station**
IWTC Corry Station Honors the 100th Anniversary of the End of World War I

PENSACOLA, Fla. – Information Warfare Training Command (IWTC) Corry Station staff and students participated in a bell-ringing ceremony to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I, Nov. 11.

On Nov. 11, 1918, 100 years ago, the armistice that was signed between Germany and the Allied nations went into effect, marking the end of World War I.

The tolling of bells is a traditional expression of honor and remembrance.

Information Systems Technician (IT) 1st Class Sopheareth Sao, an IT “A” School instructor, began the ceremony by welcoming those in attendance.

“Thank you for joining us on this solemn day of remembrance to honor those who lost their lives during World War I,” shared Sao.

At 11:00 a.m., Information Systems Technician 1st Class Dustin Wilkins, an IT “A” School instructor, tolled the bell 21 times to remember the 116,516 Americans lost and the over 200,000 wounded during the Great War.....

Tyndall AFB

All F-22s Have Now Left Tyndall, Air Force Secretary Says

By Oriana Pawlyk, 15 Nov 2018

All the F-22 Raptors that were left behind at Tyndall Air Force Base during Hurricane Michael have moved on to the bases where they will be housed until the Air Force determines their final future destination, the service's top civilian said Thursday.

"All of the F-22s have been flown out now,” Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson said during the annual Defense One summit in Washington, D.C. "All of the damage to them was minor ... They were repaired and flown out."

The Air Force in recent weeks announced it would relocate its Tyndall F-22 stealth fighter fleet, dividing the aircraft between Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia; Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska; and Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

Eglin Air Force Base in Florida -- roughly 60 miles away from Tyndall in Florida's panhandle -- has also accepted some of Tyndall's F-22s and T-38 Talon trainers. The Raptor schoolhouse for pilots in training has also been relocated to Eglin.....

NS Mayport
More than 300 sailors return from deployment on USS Farragut

By: Elizabeth Pace, Action News Jax, Updated: Nov 11, 2018 - 3:00 PM

United States Naval Ship USS Farragut (DDG99) returned to Naval Station Mayport on Saturday morning, following a nearly seven-month deployment to the Navy’s 6th Fleet area of operation across the Atlantic.

More than 300 sailors manned the rail as the ship pulled in, me by hundreds of family and friends.

USS Farragut deployed near Normandy, Denmark, Scotland and England.

U.S Navy to commission its newest Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS Sioux City

in Maritime Security, News, Nov 15, 2018

The U.S. Navy will commission its newest Freedom-variant littoral combat ship (LCS), the future USS Sioux City (LCS 11), during a 9 a.m. ceremony Saturday, Nov. 17, at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

Future U.S. Navy USS Sioux City (LCS 11) already arrived at the United States Naval Academy for its 9 a.m. ET commissioning this Saturday.

According to a news release put out by the U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Senator Joni Ernst of Iowa will deliver the commissioning ceremony’s principal address.

Mary Winnefeld, the wife of former vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, retired Adm. James “Sandy” Winnefeld, is the ship’s sponsor. The ceremony will be highlighted by a time-honored Navy tradition when Mrs. Winnefeld gives the first order to “man our ship and bring her to life!”

“This ship is named in honor of Sioux City, Iowa, but represents more than one city,” said Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer. “USS Sioux City represents an investment in readiness and lethality, and is a testament to the increased capabilities made possible by a true partnership between the Department of the Navy and our industrial base.”

The future USS Sioux City, designated LCS 11, is the 13th LCS to enter the fleet and the sixth of the Freedom-variant design. The future USS Sioux City is the first naval vessel to be named in honor of Sioux City, Iowa. The fourth-largest city in the state, Sioux City was founded in 1854 at the navigational head of the Missouri River and takes its name from one of a group of North American Indian tribes that make up the Great Sioux Nation.

MacDill AFB

Tampa Bay Celebrates ADC Honor at NFL Game
Representatives from the Tampa Bay Defense Alliance, the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce and MacDill AFB celebrated being named to the 2018 class of Great American Defense Communities (GADC) on Veterans Day at the NFL game between the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the Washington Redskins. ADC President Bill Parry and a representative from USAA presented the GADC banner to the community leaders at halftime. Halftime also featured an enlistment ceremony for 200 inductees from all branches conducted by Gen. Joseph Votel, the head of U.S. Central Command. Tampa Bay is one of five communities that make up the 2018 class of GADC, a program recognizing the unique contributions made by communities that host military installations to improve quality of life for service members and their families.

Sunday’s celebration was held in conjunction with the NFL’s Salute to Service initiative, which included a variety of military appreciation tributes at the game.

**Patrick AFB**

**Patrick Air Force Base 2018 Technology Expo Set Dec. 5 at The Tides Club**

By Space Coast Daily // November 16, 2018


BREVARD COUNTY • PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA – The second annual Patrick Tech Expo will take place on Wednesday, Dec. 5 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at The Tides Club, located at 1001 N. Hwy, A1A, Bldg 967.

The Patrick Tech Expo will be filled with the latest technologies, information, and opportunities to speak one-on-one with companies.

Stop in and get questions answered, network with dozens of vendors, and discover new advances to products and programs. Don’t miss the opportunity to engage with companies first-hand and under one roof.

Refreshments will also be served.

This event is free and open to all Department of Defense and base personnel; state, local and federal government employees; as well as those interested in technology…..

**Energy**

**Utilities Privatization Supports Army Effort to Improve Installation Resilience**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Nov 13, 2018 03:21 am

https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=c3aa750c4b
Washington, D.C. — The Army’s utility privatization program has produced enormous financial benefits, as well as improved reliability and reduced consumption for utilities that have been transferred to the private sector, Curt Wexel, utilities privatization program manager for the Army’s assistant chief of staff for installation management, told the DOD Energy & Water Forum Friday. For the 152 utility systems that have been privatized, the service estimates the net present value of its savings, compared to continued Army ownership, is $3.4 billion. On average, the service experiences a 29 percent cost avoidance for each utility system that is privatized. Other benefits include improved reliability, a 16 percent net reduction in water use and a 35 percent net reduction in natural gas consumption.

To date, the Army has privatized 43 percent of the utilities across its U.S. installations, covering electric, gas, water and wastewater systems.

The Army considers utilities privatization one of its primary tools for enhancing the resilience of its installations. The service has invested more than $1 billion in energy resilience projects, with $490 million allocated to utilities privatization. Given the investment required to transfer assets to the private sector, the service can only privatize utilities when it is cost effective, Wexel said. Officials focus on the most critical missions, he said. “We can’t afford to do UP [utilities privatization] everywhere.”

‘Pivot to Resilience’ Changes Focus of Installation Energy Investments

Dan Cohen, Posted on Nov 15, 2018 04:00 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=3386735a4c

Washington, D.C. — Energy efficiency and conservation projects have taken a back seat to investments aimed at enhancing energy resilience across DOD. “I would suggest we’re in a pivot to resilience,” Jack Surash, acting deputy assistant secretary of the Army for energy and sustainability, told the DOD Energy & Water Forum last week. The Army is still interested in pursuing energy projects intended to save money and reduce consumption, Surash said, but now the service’s top priority is resilience.

The change in philosophy means the service’s energy managers now are focusing on identifying their installations’ critical missions and the energy systems supporting them. Officials are assessing the condition of electrical panels and feeds, transformers and other components, and considering potential backup power sources and means of distribution. “We’re very concerned about risk,” Surash said, noting that wasn’t the case five or six years ago.

One of the first challenges to enhancing an installation’s energy resilience is identifying all of the facilities that support its critical missions. That’s not easy, he said. After officials find those facilities, they can begin to consider investments to address the possibility of a disruption; for example, installing a second feed. One source of funding for projects aimed at enhancing resilience is the rechristened Energy Resilience and Conservation Investment Program; it previously was the Energy Conservation Investment Program.

One new focus for Army energy managers is incorporating requirements to achieve both energy and water resilience in installation master plans. In the past, the energy component of those plans primarily focused on energy efficiency projects, Surash said. Those plans, scheduled to come out at different times over the next three years for all Army installations, also will address cybersecurity requirements, he said.

Defense Budget
Inhofe to Oppose Possible Cut in Defense Spending

Dan Cohen, Posted on Nov 15, 2018 03:00 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=3386735a4c

Senate Armed Services Chairman Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) on Wednesday said he would oppose a budget request that trims defense spending by 2.2 percent to $700 billion in fiscal 2020, a figure top administration officials have said President Trump is planning to propose. Inhofe said $733 billion, the spending level for national security originally proposed by the administration, “should be considered a floor, not a ceiling, for funding our troops.” The chairman’s remarks signal a possible showdown with the House Armed Services Committee next year. Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.), who is expected to lead the panel in the 116th Congress, has said current defense spending is unsustainable due to the nation’s rising debt levels, reports the Washington Examiner.

Inhofe pointed to a new report which concluded the U.S. military has failed to keep pace with its adversaries. “In particular, I am troubled by the commission’s unequivocal assessment that the National Defense Strategy is not adequately resourced, and that our nation is ‘very near the point of strategic insolvency,’” he said. “I agree with the commission’s report that there must be ‘greater urgency and seriousness in funding national defense’ in order to ensure we can undertake essential nuclear and conventional modernization while rectifying readiness shortfalls.”

Services Look outside Their Gates to Finance Energy Resilience Projects

Dan Cohen, Posted on Nov 16, 2018 04:14 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=1b1586a815

Washington, D.C. — In an effort to enhance its energy resilience, the Navy surveyed its 71 installations and uncovered 754 gaps — systems or components which need to be strengthened to improve energy efficiency, reliability and resiliency. Now the service is left with a budget exercise which boils down to, “How many gaps are we going to tackle this year,” John Kliem, executive director of the Navy’s Resilient Energy Program Office, told the DOD Energy & Water Forum last week. The Navy clearly doesn’t have the funding to address all of those potential weak spots, as military construction funding for energy resilience projects is limited.

The Navy’s best bet to finance its catalog of energy resilience requirements is to look for other people’s money through a variety of partnerships, Kliem said. At Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake, for example, the service entered into an energy savings performance contract to address the installation’s water supply.

Kliem also underscored the partnership Naval Submarine Base New London entered into with the state of Connecticut and local government to install two 3.7-megawatt natural gas fuel cells on land leased from the base. The Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Cooperative will receive the electricity generated by the fuel cells through a power purchase agreement. During power outages, the fuel cells will deliver power to a base microgrid to sustain its operations. Funding for the microgrid was provided by the state through multiple programs.

“We can leverage appropriated funds in a 10-to-1 manner by doing partnerships” such as the one at New London,” Kliem said. “[That’s] a great model.”
Other Of Interest

Here’s what the Pentagon thinks the actual cost of a Space Force will be

By: Aaron Mehta and Valerie Insinna, 11-15-2018

WASHINGTON – Since a U.S. Air Force estimate emerged in September, putting the cost of President Donald Trump’s desired Space Force at $13 billion, Pentagon officials have been pledging that the “official” cost estimate from the department will be much smaller.

Now we know by how much.

Speaking to reporters Thursday, Deputy Secretary of Defense Patrick Shanahan said his team’s initial estimate for the Space Force will be in the “single digits” of billions of dollars, and “could be” lower than $5 billion.

The difference in cost is significant, not just for the dollar value but as part of the broader fight over the future of the Pentagon’s space architecture.

The $13 billion figure sent waves of sticker shock through the defense community and led to accusations that the Air Force — which has been reluctant to embrace the idea of a Space Force — was hyping up costs to kill the idea.

During the Defense One conference on Thursday, Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson was asked about Shanahan’s estimate and pointedly defended the figure put forward by the Air Force, saying that the $13 billion sum is needed to realize the scope of Trump’s direction to the Pentagon….

U.S. Superiority ‘No Longer Assured,’ Panel Warns

Dan Cohen, Posted on Nov 15, 2018 03:42 am

The United States is not guaranteed to prevail in its next conflict, given the gains achieved by the nation’s adversaries in upgrading their military capabilities while the U.S. military was held back as it contended with stringent spending constraints, according to a report released Wednesday by the National Defense Strategy Commission. “If the United States had to fight Russia in a Baltic contingency or China in a war over Taiwan,” the authors wrote, “Americans could face a decisive military defeat.” That risk would rise even further if the nation faced conflicts on multiple fronts, reported Defense News.

The bipartisan commission is composed of 12 experts selected by congressional leadership. It is co-chaired by Eric Edelman, a former ambassador and undersecretary of defense for policy from 2005-2009, and Gary Roughead, who served as chief of naval operations from 2007 to 2011.

The panel recommends 3 to 5 percent real growth annually in defense spending, matching the requirement expressed by Defense Secretary Jim Mattis last year, reported CQ. “The United States must begin responding more effectively to the operational challenges posed by our competitors and force those competitors to respond to challenges of our making,” the report states.
“America’s military superiority has eroded to a dangerous degree,” it concludes. Unless action is taken, “the consequences will be grave and lasting.”
Nov 30

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – There will be no meeting in December. Task Force meeting #70 will be Thursday, 17 January 2019, beginning at 9:00AM ET at the Embassy Suites Miami International Airport, 3974 NW South River Drive, Miami, FL 33142. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting that will include in-person interviews of potential advocacy firms.

2. **Call In Number** –

   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979 Access Code: 1869945

3. **The National Defense Strategy Commission Publishes Report** – The National Defense Strategy Commission published its report entitled “Providing for the Common Defense” this month. The report assesses the state of national defense programs. According to the executive summary opening paragraph, “The security and wellbeing of the United States are at greater risk than at any time in decades. America’s military superiority—the hard-power backbone of its global influence and national security—has eroded to a dangerous degree. Rivals and adversaries are challenging the United States on many fronts and in many domains. America’s ability to defend its allies, its partners, and its own vital interests is increasingly in doubt. If the nation does not act promptly to remedy these circumstances, the consequences will be grave and lasting.” See TPG assessment in their attached report and see entire report at https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/5115592-Providing-for-the-Common-Defens

4. **Military Base Protection Non Conservation Lands** – On November 15, 2018, the Florida Defense Support Task Force approved a list (letter to Governor attached) of non-conservation lands to be considered for acquisition by the state of Florida. Over the summer, Base Commanders submitted properties to DEO they consider to be encroachment threats. Florida Law gives the Task Force the duty of prioritizing this list and then to submit it back to DEO for final submission to the State Board of Administration. For 2018, this list includes:

   **Tier 1**
   - MacDill AFB – Florida Rock Property (14.7 acres in Clear Zone)
   - Bugg Spring – Spring Creek Run (54 acres in Exclusion Zone 2)
   - Pensacola Naval Air Station – Cook Property (37.32 acres in Accident Potential Zone 1)
   - Key West Naval Air Station – Alfred Sears Trust Property (124 acres in Accident Potential Zone 1)
   - Homestead ARB – Homestead Park of Commerce, Homestead Housing Authority (105.5 acres in Accident Potential Zone 2)

   **Tier 2**
   - Eglin AFB – Valparaiso Lots in Clear Zone (6 acres / 18 homes in Clear Zone)
   - MacDill AFB – ZONS Property (5.9 acres in Clear Zone)
- Blount Island – Parcel adjacent to main Entry Control Point (4.24 acres)
- Key West NAS – Enhanced Island (4 acres in Accident Potential Zone 1)
- MacDill AFB – 3C Self Storage (incompatible development in Clear Zone)

5. **Enterprise Florida Inc. Board Meeting Features Task Force Member** – EFI held its November Board Meeting in Orlando on Nov 28, 2018. Our own Mr. Tom Neubauer provided a presentation (slides attached) on Bay County and Tyndall AFB recovery efforts following Hurricane Michael. Of note, Mr. Neubauer noted that local businesses and home owners would not have returned or rebuilt if Tyndall and its missions were not going to be restored. DoD programs support 31.1% of Bay County’s economic impact.

6. **Air Force Association to Host Air Warfare Symposium in Orlando** – The AFA Air Warfare Symposium will take place at the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel and Conference Center from February 27-March 1 2019. According to AFA’s website, “AFA's Air Warfare Symposium is a premier event for the aerospace and defense industry geared toward the professional development of Air Force officers, enlisted members, civilians, retirees, and veterans. The symposium brings together the top leadership of the Air Force as well as leaders in industry, academia, and government officials to discuss the issues and challenges facing our Air Force today and in the future.” As the Task Force begins to focus on defense industry in Florida, this is a great opportunity to meet with business development leaders from major aerospace companies visiting the state who are looking to garner new or additional business with the Department of Defense. For more information about the symposium and to see a list of companies who will provide exhibits, go to [https://www.afa.org/events/calendar/2019/02/27/air-warfare-symposium](https://www.afa.org/events/calendar/2019/02/27/air-warfare-symposium).

7. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Installation Innovation Forum** – The Installation Innovation Forum will be held from March 4-6, 2019 at the Hyatt Regency in Miami. There will be a panel highlighting military and defense successes in Florida. More information at: [https://installationinnovation.org/](https://installationinnovation.org/)

8. **Attachments:**
- Task Force MBP Priority – Letter to Governor Scott
- Bay Defense Alliance EFI Presentation on Tyndall AFB
- TPG End of Month Report

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EGLIN AFB – The Air Force has released an initial environmental assessment of four sites along the Gulf Coast that could be used to monitor exercises at the Eglin Gulf Test and Training Range (EGTTR).

The assessment covers four coastal sites — Carrabelle, in the eastern Panhandle; Anclote and Venice along central Florida’s Gulf coast, and Saddlebunch Key in the Florida Keys. The sites would be used to measure the performance of weapons systems and other equipment in the Test Range, a roughly 120,000-square-mile area in the eastern Gulf of Mexico used for military weapons testing and high-altitude supersonic air combat training.

Chosen from 14 sites, the proposed four sites are needed, according to the assessment, to keep pace with emerging weapons technologies. According to the document, “emerging long-range weapons are outgrowing the capabilities of current ranges such as the EGTTR, which were built to World War II-era specifications. Munitions have become more accurate, are able to fly longer ranges, and can change their flight paths autonomously.”

U.S. Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., explained recently that telemetry equipment on the range — automated communications gear which provides data on performance of munitions, military equipment and personnel — has not been comprehensively updated since at least the early 1970s, although some sporadic improvements have been made.

Three of the proposed sites are used or owned by the military. The proposed Carrabelle site, on the Carrabelle River, already houses an Air Force tracking site with two communications towers. The Venice site, 60 miles north of St. Petersburg, is owned by the Coast Guard, and hosts antennas and other communications equipment. The Saddlebunch Key site, 10 miles northeast of Key West, is owned by Naval Air Station Key West and was formerly an “antenna farm,” which had housed antennas and other communications gear.

The Venice site has a particular environmental concern. The assessment notes the tract “is adjacent to a sea turtle nesting beach, (and) lighting would be installed in accordance with guidelines to prevent disorientation to sea turtles.”

The Anclote site, near the city of Holiday, is within 200 feet of the Gulf of Mexico, and is currently owned by Duke Energy, according to the assessment……
HURBILT FIELD – One of three military personnel killed in Afghanistan on Tuesday was an airman in a unit attached to the Air Force Special Operations Command.

Staff Sgt. Dylan Elchin, 25, a Special Tactics combat controller with the 26th Special Tactics Squadron, was deployed in support of OPERATION Freedom’s Sentinel, according to a news release from AFSOC, based at Hurlburt Field.

“Our Special Tactics, Air Force Special Operations, and joint family suffered a heartbreaking loss this week. Staff Sgt Dylan Elchin was one of three SOF members killed in an IED explosion in Afghanistan,” the news release said. “To the family, friends, and joint teammates grieving this immeasurable loss, our hearts are grieving with you. Our fallen will be forever missed but never forgotten.”

Elchin deployed to Afghanistan in August and was embedded with an Army Special Operations Force Operational Detachment-Alpha team, the release said. His role was to advise the ground force commander, direct close air support and deliver weapons on enemy targets.

Elchin died when a vehicle he was riding in hit an improvised explosive device in the Ghazni Province, AFSOC said……

**Eglin AFB**

**First hurricane-evacuated F-22s return to Florida**

By: Stephen Losey, Nov 22, 2018

Six F-22 Raptors, which were evacuated days before Hurricane Michael ravaged Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida, returned to the state on Tuesday.

Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson said in a tweet Wednesday that the Raptors arrived at nearby Eglin Air Force Base to begin F-22 schoolhouse operations. Wilson included a short video of the advanced fighter jets taxiing along the runway at Eglin.

Wilson earlier this month outlined a plan to return some airmen and duties to Tyndall, and temporarily relocate others. The 43rd and 2nd Fighter squadrons' F-22 fighter training units are temporarily moving to Eglin, as is the 372nd Training Squadron, Detachment 4.

But other F-22s and airmen, with the 95th Fighter Squadron, are not coming back to Florida for now — and it’s unclear when, or if, that might change.

Tyndall commander Col. Brian Laidlaw, head of the 325th Fighter Wing, also said in a Monday letter to airmen that base residents must take their property out of lots and storage areas, within 45 days so Tyndall can move forward with its recovery plan……

**Air Force Contemplating Moving up to 800 Personnel to Eglin AFB**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Nov 27, 2018 03:30 am

https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307cf7&id=94487e8ed9
About 525 personnel, primarily pilots and maintainers, attached to three units previously assigned to Tyndall AFB will be reporting to work at Eglin AFB, located about 70 miles west on the Florida Panhandle, over the next four months. The personnel are assigned to the 43rd Fighter Squadron, which trains F-22 pilots; the 372nd Training Squadron’s Detachment 4, which provides F-22 maintenance training; and the 2nd Fighter Squadron, which flies the T-38 Talon and provides air-to-air combat training. But officials are contemplating moving a total of 800 personnel through next summer to Eglin as part of the transition triggered after Hurricane Michael devastated Tyndall last month. The three units are expected to remain at Eglin for the foreseeable future.

It’s not yet clear what the ultimate impact will be for Eglin’s host community, reports the Panama City News Herald. Some of the personnel moving to Eglin may opt to remain in the Panama City area, Eglin spokesman Andy Bourland said. Installation officials are talking to local school districts and real estate agents about the potential impacts resulting from hundreds of additional families moving to the area.

Last week, six F-22 Raptors from Tyndall AFB’s 325th Fighter Wing arrived at Eglin, the first of 31 of Tyndall’s stealth fighters expected to move there.

Tyndall AFB

Tyndall AFB to resume battle-management training in January

By Rachel Cohen, November 20, 2018 at 2:45 PM
https://insidedefense.com/insider/tyndall-afb-resume-battle-management-training-january

Air battle-management students will return to their classes at Tyndall Air Force Base, FL, at the beginning of January, nearly three months after they were displaced by Hurricane Michael.

According to Jennifer Gonzalez, a spokeswoman for Air Education and Training Command, the 337th Air Control Squadron will begin training students Jan. 3. The squadron offers a nine-month undergraduate pathway to careers with the E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System and E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System battle-management jets, as well as courses for international air weapons controllers and theater air operations.

Eighty-three students are currently enrolled in Tyndall AFB’s airborne command-and-control program, Gonzalez said.

After the Category 4 storm plowed through the base in mid-October, most ABM instructors were able to return to the area and start controlling missions in early November. Gonzalez said the squadron's primary facilities are functional and "steadily improving" but did not provide further details about the damage by press time (Nov. 20).

"The instructor cadre has successfully controlled missions since Nov. 8," she said Nov. 15. "However, the students and some instructors are still in evacuation status. The senior class received waivers to graduate prior to accomplishing a small number of events. The next class to graduate [will] accomplish some additional training to regain currency and proficiency prior to resuming the syllabus."

Future groups are expected to graduate on time as the squadron launches a new syllabus in February 2019……
Tyndall Air Force Base planes moving after Hurricane Michael

New Haven Register, Updated 9:52 am EST, Sunday, November 25, 2018

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (AP) — More than six weeks after Hurricane Michael hit Florida's Panhandle, a half-dozen F-22 Raptor stealth fighter jets have arrived at Eglin Air Force Base as units of the 325th Fighter Wing are beginning their operational transition.

The Category 4 hurricane heavily damaged Tyndall Air Force Base Oct. 10. Tyndall was evacuated before the storm, while Eglin, which is about 70 miles (112 kilometers) to the west, was spared damage.

Eglin spokesman Andy Bourland tells the News Herald that 31 F-22s from Tyndall will be coming to Eglin.

The newspaper reports some missions are returning to Tyndall within the next couple of months, but the 43rd Fighter Squadron, the 2nd Fighter Squadron and Detachment 4 of the 372nd Training Squadron are moving to Eglin for the foreseeable future.

Tyndall Air Power Base shall be rebuilt in entirety

BY MARTA SUBAT ON NOVEMBER 24, 2018

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Vice President Mike Pence is promising that an Air Force base in the Florida Panhandle that was devastated by Hurricane Michael will be rebuilt in its entirety.

Pence spoke Thursday at a rally in Jacksonville, Florida, for the state’s Republican gubernatorial candidate, Ron DeSantis.

Earlier in the day, Pence toured Tyndall Air Force Base.

Pence said he was humbled after seeing the massive devastation from the Category 4 hurricane that made landfall two weeks ago.

The air base suffered catastrophic damage with roofs torn from airplane hangars and cars tossed around.

The base is home to the nation’s 325th Fighter Wing. More than 3,600 men and women are stationed there.

The Air Force evacuated the base in advance of the storm’s arrival.

Slowly approaching normal: Tyndall base exchange to reopen

By WENDY VICTORA, Posted Nov 27, 2018 at 10:31 AM, Updated Nov 27, 2018 at 10:31 AM

TYNDALL AFB — The Tyndall Exchange is reopening at 7 a.m. Wednesday, seven weeks after Hurricane Michael tore apart the base.
A Mobile Field Exchange opened up shortly after the storm and has been busy ever since, according to Chris Ward, senior public affairs manager for the Army and Air Force Base Exchange.

“We felt the need to get it open as soon as possible,” he said. “This is a bigger, better option.”

The front of the exchange is still boarded up, but shoppers can enter through the food court on the side. Ward said the store will have the usual selection, except there will be fewer clothing items than in the past.

The mobile exchange will close Wednesday.

### Tyndall Elementary School to Open Monday, December 10th

By: Kirsten Mitchell, Posted: Nov 28, 2018 12:56 PM EST, Updated: Nov 28, 2018 06:25 PM EST  

**TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla.** – On Wednesday, Bay District officials announced the reopening of Tyndall Elementary School.

They will open on Monday, December 10th.

However due to transportation constraints, the the district will not provide busing for students going to Tyndall. For now the school will be drop off and pick up only. District officials need parents to register their child at Tyndall if they plan to attend so the district knows how many students are returning and how many new students joining. The Tyndall students attending Callaway Elementary School the past few weeks should have been sent home with registration papers. If you plan to go to Tyndall, head over to the school to pre-register. Tyndall is open from 9am to noon everyday.

"The base is coming back and they are rebuilding and we think reopening the school is a very important step in that partnership of support that we are coming back at Tyndall as well," said Bay District Communications Director Sharon Michalik.

District officials have considered turning Tyndall into a K-8th grade school in the future to provide more options for base families, but they say it would only be possible if they receive additional funding.

### Tyndall rises to host first training exercise since Hurricane Michael

By: Kyle Rempfer, 11-29-2018  

Tyndall Air Force Base appears to be coming back to life, as the airmen assigned there prepare for a major live-fire training exercise next month.

The base on the Florida Panhandle was devastated when Hurricane Michael tore through it Oct. 10, damaging F-22 Raptors, QF-16 full-scale aerial targets, hangers, runways and just about every other building on the installation.

But from Dec. 3-14, the base’s 53rd Weapons Evaluation Group will conduct its first post-hurricane Combat Archer exercise, officials announced Tuesday.
Combat Archer is a training operation that evaluates operational fighter squadrons' readiness for combat operations. The program tests all phases of the real-world mission, from weapons loading to air-to-air combat.

It’s “an end-to-end kill-chain evaluation of man, weapon and machine combat in a realistic environment,” according to the Air Force.

F-22s from the 27th Fighter Squadron out of Langley AFB, Virginia, and two F-35s from the 58th Fighter Squadron at Eglin AFB, Florida, will participate in the training. The F-22s and F-35s will be flying out of Eglin AFB, but performing live fire in the warning areas south of Tyndall AFB.....

**NS Mayport**

**USS Sioux City Arrives Home For First Time At Naval Station Mayport**

By ABUKAR ADAN • NOV 21, 2018


The USS Sioux City arrived Wednesday at its new home base, Naval Station Mayport.

With the latest arrival, 19 ships are now based at the naval station.

A 75 person crew runs the United State’s sixth Freedom-variant littoral combat ship, which was commissioned at the Naval Academy in Annapolis.

“We are the first ship of the line to be commissioned at the naval academy,” said Sioux City Commander James Malone. “It’s absolutely phenomenal to be a part of that and to be called the captain of these magnificent sailors is an honor beyond belief.”

The ship officially entered into Navy service Saturday before sailing to Mayport, but Malone says it likely won’t be fully ready until late next year.

It still has to undergo additional testing on its combat systems and other parts.....

**U.S. Navy to commission guided-missile destroyer Thomas Hudner**


WASHINGTON, Nov. 28 (Xinhua) – The U.S. Navy announced Wednesday that it will commission its newest guided-missile destroyer, the future USS Thomas Hudner, later this week.

The commissioning ceremony is scheduled to occur at Flynn Cruiseport in Boston, state of Massachusetts, on Saturday. Massachusetts Govonor Charlie Baker will deliver the principal address.

The ship is named after former naval aviator Thomas J. Hudner Jr., whom former U.S. President Harry S. Truman awarded the Medal of Honor in 1951. Hudner died in 2017 at the age of 93.

The future USS Thomas Hudner, the first U.S. Navy ship to bear that name, will be the 66th Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, capable of engaging in air, surface and subsurface battles simultaneously.
USS Thomas Hudner will be homeported at Naval Station Mayport, state of Florida.

**US Southern Command**

**At US Southern Command, Mattis says military alliances help stability in Western Hemisphere**


**MIA** – Defense Secretary James Mattis said Monday that the U.S. military brings stability to most of Latin America through its operations run across the hemisphere by the Miami-based Southern Command.

Mattis spoke Monday at a ceremony appointing Navy Adm. Craig Faller as new leader of the command that oversees U.S. military operations in Latin America and the Caribbean. It is also responsible for security of the Panama Canal and the naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

In brief remarks, Mattis said the Western Hemisphere is not as chaotic and prone to conflict as much of the world because of strong U.S. military alliances and cooperation with most of the 31 nations in the region.

"There is more in this hemisphere that binds us together than drives us apart," Mattis said. "Our hemisphere's military forces can be stabilizing forces."

Mattis singled out Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua as countries in the Southern Command where democracy is either under threat or nonexistent……

**New Admiral Takes Helm of US Southern Command**

Carla Babb, Voice of America | 27 November 2018


U.S. Navy Admiral Craig Faller has taken charge of U.S. Southern Command, which oversees military operations in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Speaking at the change of command ceremony November 26 near Miami, Florida, Faller said that “like good neighbors,” all nations in the Americas “benefit from a strong neighborhood watch.”

He said the threats in the region were both “real and imminent,” from great-power competition to violent extremism.

Faller took command from Navy Adm. Kurt Tidd, who led U.S. Southern Command since January 2016……

**Energy**

**DoD joins NATO partners to discuss future of military energy resilience**
VILNIUS, Lithuania – As part of Innovative Energy Solutions for Military Application (IESMA) 2018, a collaborative symposium led by the NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence, international experts from the energy and defense communities came together to discuss leading developments in energy resilience and security. Over 500 participants, including many distinguished military and governmental leaders representing NATO member and partner nations, attended the biennial event held in Vilnius, Lithuania from November 14 to 16.

The event provided a forum for participating nations to discuss the future of innovative energy capabilities, and exchange best practices on how to increase combat capability through efficient operations and cutting-edge technology. Senior defense and industry representatives spoke on a number of topics, including secure energy logistics, infrastructure and storage, energy management, next generation power systems, optimized mission planning, and alternative fuels, among others.

Leaders from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Air Force and Navy represented United States interests aligned with the National Defense Strategy, and collaborated with participating nations on how to move forward to integrate smart energy solutions across the Alliance.

“We are in the midst of revolutionary changes that make energy even more critical,” said Lucian Niemeyer, a Strategic Advisor on energy programs for the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment. “As our forces require more power, and energy is increasingly a target, energy resilience and security will have an increasingly direct relationship on warfighter capabilities.”

News Report Questions Whether Pentagon Really is Embracing Energy Resilience

The military’s push to ensure its installations are energy resilient has slowed, according to a McClatchy DC Bureau story which makes its case primarily by pointing out that only a small portion of the solar arrays built on installations over the past decade are connected to microgrids. But while there is no overarching mandate to install microgrids at all installations, efforts to provide bases an “islanding” capability are advancing, the story states.

“I would say things have slowed, but the program has broadened,” said Katherine Hammack, who led the Army’s effort to adopt renewable energy as its installations chief under President Obama. “I don’t see it as a negative. I’m glad that the Trump administration is encouraging the strategy to continue,” she said. Hammack told McClatchy that DOD has solicited bids for microgrids on “many” projects, including one to build and operate a system for Joint Forces Training Base Los Alamitos, Calif., which would help power the facility in the event of a nearby earthquake.

And despite its overstated headline, the story provides other evidence that the services are moving to enhance the energy resiliency of their installations. The Southern Co., which has built 14 solar farms with generating capacity exceeding 400 megawatts at installations in Georgia, Florida, Alabama and Mississippi, now is pursuing opportunities to develop microgrids for the military following its acquisition of PowerSecure. Company officials are “in discussions with senior leadership of the military” about microgrid projects, said Rebecca Gray, the utility’s DOD liaison.
Additional evidence can be found in a new report produced by ADC in partnership with Converge Strategies. It features four case studies of how installations — in conjunction with either state or local investment, or significant participation by local authorities — have deployed a mix of distributed energy resources in combination with a microgrid to enhance their energy resilience.

**Defense Industry**

**Florida's once-struggling Space Coast booms from aerospace, defense firms**

By Ray Downs, UPDATED NOV. 22, 2018 AT 8:07 AM


CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. Nov. 21 (UPI) – The economy of Florida's Space Coast is getting a boost from space and defense companies that are bringing back high-paying tech jobs to an area hit hard by the 2008 recession and the 2011 retirement of NASA's space shuttle program.

Hundreds of people came out to NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral on Thursday to watch SpaceX launch a Es'hail-2 satellite rocket into space. The crowd consisted of tourists from around the United States and other countries sitting in metal bleachers surrounding a grassy area with dozens of field-tripping school kids in bright, neon-colored t-shirts waiting for the rocket to launch.

The SpaceX launch went off without a hitch, and the crowd's attention focused on the giant trail of smoke in the Cape Canaveral sky. Moments later, after the rocket disappeared into the clouds, the crowd's attention turned to a large screen set-up next to the bleachers that showed a live camera feed from the rocket as it entered geostationary transfer orbit.....

**Military contractor Harris expands tactical radio operations in Sunrise**

Marcia Heroux Pounds, Contact Reporter, South Florida Sun Sentinel, November 21, 2018, 5:35 PM

A group of dislocated engineers found new employment at Harris Corp. in Sunrise four years ago. Now one of them is leading and expanding the company’s operations at the site.

In 2014, about 30 General Dynamics C4 Systems workers in Sunrise were hired by Harris Corp., which decided to open operations in the region. General Dynamics was getting ready to shutter its Sunrise location, as part of a consolidation move at the time.

One of those engineers, Suniti Nayar, rose to become Harris’ director of engineering and has helped grow the operation to 90 employees in response to increasing demand for tactical radios.

Melbourne-based Harris is a provider of communications, electronic systems and space and intelligence systems that had $6.2 billion in fiscal 2018 sales. It is poised to become even larger through a merger with New York-based L3 Technologies, which provides communications equipment for the military.
Nayar said Harris plans to hire more than 20 employees, both college graduates and experienced professionals, as software engineers, test engineers and software developers….

DoD Budget

Looming budget crunch puts DoD space strategy in jeopardy

by Sandra Erwin — November 25, 2018


WASHINGTON – A two-year period of rising defense spending is coming to an end as the Trump administration moves to slice billions of dollars from military budgets. What this means for space-focused investments — such as missile-tracking satellites, technologies to protect U.S. satellites from adversaries and, notably, the establishment of a new military branch — is still unknown. But analysts and former government officials predict these efforts are all at risk, especially with House Democrats preparing to challenge the president on defense priorities.

The White House has directed the Pentagon to lower the projected national defense funding top line for fiscal year 2020 from $733 billion to $700 billion. Defense Secretary James Mattis told reporters on Wednesday that he expects a “give and take during the budget process.” The target is “somewhere between 733 and 700, and we’re working out all the puts and takes of what that means.”

Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan is expected to meet with White House officials this week to show them “what a $700 billion budget looks like” compared to a $733 billion budget. A $33 billion gap opens the door to many possible trades. Shanahan said funding for space, cyber warfare, hypersonic weapons and other modernization efforts will be shielded from cuts, but DoD has not revealed what military programs could be targeted to pay for space and other initiatives favored by the administration.

Space modernization is central to the Pentagon’s strategy to stay ahead of China and Russia as these nations invest in capabilities to challenge the United States in outer space. It would be a mistake for the Pentagon to not stick with this strategy even if funding is reduced, said Jim Miller, who served as undersecretary of defense for policy during the Obama administration……

Lawmakers Point to Report’s Conclusion to Bolster Case for Higher Defense Spending

Dan Cohen, Posted on Nov 28, 2018 03:30 am

https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=244283a262

Defense hawks in Congress are using the overriding takeaway from the recent report by the National Defense Strategy Commission — the U.S. military is at risk of losing its next major conflict — as their opening argument in an effort to sustain the growth in defense spending over the past two years. “We got ourselves into this mess and we’ve got to get ourselves out of this mess,” Senate Armed Services Chair Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) said at hearing Tuesday on the report. Gary Roughead, who served as chief of naval operations from 2007 to 2011 and was a co-chair of the commission, said “it will take money to” achieve the National Defense Strategy. Roughead echoed Inhofe’s belief that a $733 billion topline for national security spending in fiscal 2020 would be a good “floor.” The administration is planning to request $700
billion for national security in FY 2020, a change from its initial plan to propose a $733 billion budget and a $16 billion cut from the current allocation.

In its report, the commission recommends 3 to 5 percent real growth annually in defense spending, matching the requirement expressed by Defense Secretary Jim Mattis last year. Sen. Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.), a member of the commission before he was picked to take John McCain’s Senate seat, said the panel’s report could prove useful if the GOP finds itself fighting Democrats to raise defense spending. “My hope is that the bipartisan nature of this commission will enable Democrats who are in doubt to come to the right conclusions, and that the intelligent Democratic members of the commission can perhaps persuade members who don’t have the facts on the need to do this,” Kyl told Defense News earlier this month.

Inhofe Sets out Priorities for FY‘20 NDAA

Dan Cohen, Posted on Nov 29, 2018 05:35 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=fee9893201

One clear consequence of the Democrats regaining control of the House next year will be a contentious battle between the two chambers over the fiscal 2020 defense authorization bill. On Tuesday, Senate Armed Services Chair Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) outlined his priorities for the measure, signaling disagreement over the size of the defense budget and other policy issues with Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.), who is expected to lead the House Armed Services Committee during the 116th Congress. Inhofe took aim at Smith’s call for a smaller nuclear arsenal and, instead, pointed to the nation’s nuclear triad as “the most important area of modernization,” reported Defense News.

Inhofe also said he is aiming to use the annual defense policy bill to develop a bigger, stronger military. He wants to speed up the acquisition of Navy ships to help meet the service’s goal of building a 355-ship fleet by 2040, triple the size of the military’s F-35 fighter jet fleet by 2024 and accelerate DOD’s plans for fielding the new B-21 Raider stealth bomber to complete five squadrons. For the Navy, he said would like to authorize procurement of an additional destroyer, increase production rates for the Navy’s new frigate class of ships and shorten the amount of time needed to deliver aircraft carriers, reported CQ.

With President Trump expected to propose a cut in defense spending from $716 billion in FY 2019 to $700 billion in FY 2020, Inhofe likely will face an uphill battle to reach a $733 billion topline next year. That’s the figure the Pentagon had been planning to request before the president changed course.

Inhofe wants his committee to complete work on the authorization bill by late spring, with a conference report sent to the president by early October. He wants the committee to report out the bill early enough to set topline spending ahead of appropriators, who may not be considering a $733 billion budget for national security.

Space

Trump going for full-blown Space Force, White House memo reveals

By JACQUELINE KLIMAS, 11/29/2018 02:49 PM EST
President Donald Trump plans to go ahead with asking Congress to establish a Space Force as an independent branch of the military, according to a draft presidential directive obtained by POLITICO — committing to the biggest restructuring of the U.S. military in seven decades despite bipartisan skepticism on Capitol Hill.

The draft, produced after months of internal review, outlines much-awaited details for what would be the first new military service since 1947. It indicates that Trump, who has championed the standalone Space Force, is still interested in pursuing an entirely new branch, despite criticism of the proposal on Capitol Hill and even initial opposition within the Pentagon.

The White House directive provides no estimate of what the Space Force would cost, although previous estimates have ranged from less than $5 billion to as high as $13 billion over five years.

Under the proposal, the Department of the Space Force would be headed by a civilian secretary — just like the Army, Navy and Air Force — and either a four-star general or admiral. The latter person would also serve as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, according to the draft directive dated Nov. 19.....

Retired 45th Space Wing commander Monteith to lead FAA's commercial space office

James Dean, Florida Today, Published 7:57 p.m. ET Nov. 29, 2018 | Updated 8:03 p.m. ET Nov. 29, 2018

Retirement didn't last long for Brig. Gen. Wayne Monteith, who left the Air Force this summer after three years leading the 45th Space Wing.

Effective Jan. 20, Monteith will take the helm of the Federal Aviation Administration's Office of Commercial Space Transportation as its associate administrator, U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao announced Thursday.

The office is responsible for promoting commercial space operations, including the licensing of spaceports and of launches and re-entries of commercial rockets and spacecraft. That job is expected to get busier in the coming years.

“The commercial space sector is growing exponentially every year, and the FAA is committed to keeping pace with it,” said Dan Elwell, the agency's acting administrator. “I’m pleased to welcome Gen. Monteith to our team, and I look forward to working with him to ensure we remain on the cutting edge of this burgeoning industry.”

During his tenure at Cape Canaveral Air Force Base and Patrick Air Force Base, Monteith was a vocal champion of innovations led by the likes of SpaceX, which dramatically increased its launch pace in recent years.....
Dec 7

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – There will be no meeting in December. Task Force meeting #70 will be Thursday, 17 January 2019, beginning at 9:00AM ET at the Embassy Suites Miami International Airport, 3974 NW South River Drive, Miami, FL 33142. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting that will include in-person interviews of potential advocacy firms.

2. **Call In Number** –
   
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979            Access Code: 1869945

3. **Governor Scott Signs Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day Proclamation** – We should never forget what President Roosevelt said on this day 77 years ago: “Today, December 7, 1941; a day that will live in infamy.” Florida honors those who gave their lives in defense of freedom that day. Proclamation attached.

4. **Oil Lobby Hits Capitol Hill; Pushing to Drill East of Military Mission Line** – The eastern Gulf of Mexico and the Gulf Range Complex is under assault by the oil lobby who claim revenue increases due to potential oil production without regard to potential loss of revenue and national security if it impacts military testing. According to an article released this week, the “American Petroleum Institute’s (API) “Explore Offshore” campaign, which includes expanding energy exploration efforts including in the eastern part of the Gulf of Mexico and in the Atlantic, came to Capitol Hill last week. The national “Explore Offshore” campaign is led by former U.S. Veterans Affairs Sec. Jim Nicholson, who led the Republican National Committee (RNC), and former U.S. Sen. Jim Webb, D-Va., who ran for the Democratic presidential nomination in the 2016 election cycle. Those national chairs were part of a briefing on Capitol Hill and were joined by state chairs, including former Florida Lt. Gov. Jeff Kottkamp. API released reports on drilling in the Atlantic and the Eastern Gulf which “estimate that offshore-related activities could generate additional non-bonus and royalty revenue such as personal and corporate income tax, property tax and sales taxes” including $2.5 billion in tax revenues for the Sunshine State.” See article in the CLIPs or go to http://sunshinestatenews.com/story/apis-explore-offshore-campaign-heads-capitol-hill.

5. **Governor Scott Appoints Pete Antonacci as Supervisor of Elections in Broward County – Mike Grissom to head EFI** – Last week Governor Scott removed the Broward County Supervisor of Elections and replaced her with EFI President and CEO, Peter Antonacci. The change took effect immediately. Mike Grissom has been selected as the interim President and CEO at EFI, a position he is very well ready to take on. In other moves, Cissy Proctor has resigned as the head of the Department of Economic Opportunity but a replacement has not yet been named. See the article on EFI leadership assignment in the CLIPs.
6. **Governor Scott Recognizes Task Force Member and two others with Governor’s Medal of Merit** – Governor Scott honored Maj Gen Michael Calhoun for his career of exemplary service with the Florida National Guard on Tuesday, December 4th. According to a press release from the Governor’s office, “during a Florida Cabinet meeting, Governor Rick Scott recognized Florida veterans Lieutenant Colonel Glenn Sutphin, Major General Michael Calhoun and Colonel Charles Mohr with the Governor’s Medal of Merit.” See full press release below in the CLIPs.

7. **Prior Task Force Member Honored in the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame** – Along with 19 other deserving veterans, Judge T. Patt Maney was inducted into the Veterans Hall of Fame with the 2018 class. According to an article in the *North West Florida Daily News*, “The Hall of Fame honors veterans who “through their works and lives during or after military service, have made a significant contribution to the State of Florida.” Nominations for the Hall of Fame are reviewed by a panel of state appointees and nominees are forwarded to the governor and the state Cabinet for final action.” The list of 2018 inductees includes: Mark W. Erdrich, USA Veteran (The Villages); Lt. Gen. Gordon E. Fornell, USAF, Retired (Niceville); CMSgt. Carl Hunsinger, USAF, Retired (Palmetto); Luis E. Lalama, USA Veteran (Miami); BG T. Patt Maney, USA, Retired (Shalimar); John R. Marks III, USAF Veteran (Tallahassee), RADM Carlton J. McLeod, USN, Retired (Hernando); MAJ Charles E. Merkel Jr., USA, Retired (Freeport); Marlin S. Muller, USA Veteran (Hollywood), Aaron G. Newman, USN Veteran (Orange Park); Stephen O’Connell, USAF Veteran (Tallahassee), CAPT David J. Quirk, USN, Retired (Penney Farms); CAPT William H. Reuter IV, USN, Retired (Orlando); MSgt. Jose A. Rosa Jr., USAF, Retired (Daytona Beach); David L. Rose, USA Veteran (Daytona Beach); CMSgt. John Schmidt Jr., USAF, Retired (Tallahassee); COL John M. Thomson, USA, Retired (Coral Gables); Jessie D. Turner, USA Veteran (Crawfordville); George W. Wanberg, USMC Veteran (Howey-in-the-Hills); LCDR Herlena O’Neal Washington, USN, Retired (Jacksonville). See article on three Northwest Florida local inductees below in the CLIPs.

8. **Air Force Association (AFA) to Host Air Warfare Symposium in Orlando** – The annual AFA Air Warfare Symposium will take place at the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel and Conference Center from February 27-March 1 2019. According to AFA’s website, “AFA’s Air Warfare Symposium is a premier event for the aerospace and defense industry geared toward the professional development of Air Force officers, enlisted members, civilians, retirees, and veterans. The symposium brings together the top leadership of the Air Force as well as leaders in industry, academia, and government officials to discuss the issues and challenges facing our Air Force today and in the future.” As the Task Force begins to focus on defense industry in Florida, this is a great opportunity to meet with business development leaders from major aerospace companies visiting the state who are looking to garner new or additional business with the Department of Defense. For more information about the symposium and to see a list of companies who will provide exhibits, go to [https://www.afa.org/events/calendar/2019/02/27/air-warfare-symposium](https://www.afa.org/events/calendar/2019/02/27/air-warfare-symposium).

9. **Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Installation Innovation Forum** – The Installation Innovation Forum will be held from March 4-6, 2019 at the Hyatt Regency in Miami. There will be a panel highlighting military and defense successes in Florida. More information at: [https://installationinnovation.org/](https://installationinnovation.org/)
10. **Florida Legislature holds First Committee Meetings Next Week** – December 11-14 will be the first committee meetings for the 2019 Florida Legislative Session. Committee assignments and meeting schedules are still being finalized. As the session gets closer, bills are beginning to be filed. Staff will be monitoring bill filling and key committees.

11. **Military / Veteran Related Bills Filed** – 2019 Session begins on March 5, 2019 and bills are being filed. To review or track House Bills (HB), go to [www.myfloridahouse.gov](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov); for Senate Bills (SB), go to [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov). For both sites, insert the bill number at the top of the page if you would like current status throughout session. Bills filed so far are below and the current summary of all related bills filed to date is attached.

- **HB 51 - Property Tax Exemptions** (Sirois)
  Property Tax Exemptions: Increases property tax exemption for residents who are widows, widowers, blind, or totally and permanently disabled. Effective Date: upon becoming a law

- **SB 0108 - Regulation of Concealed Weapons Licenses** (Book)
  Regulation of Concealed Weapons Licenses; Transferring the concealed weapons licensing program of the Division of Licensing of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to the Department of Law Enforcement by a type two transfer; creating the Concealed Weapons Licensing Program in the Department of Law Enforcement; redesignating the Department of Law Enforcement as the entity responsible for regulating, and collecting payments and fees from, concealed weapons licensing, etc. Effective Date: 1/1/2020

12. **Attachments:**
- AF Magazine Article on Tyndall AFB post Hurricane Michael
- Military and Veterans Bills Filed to Date
- Pearl Harbor Day Proclamation

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Local veterans to be inducted into Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame

TALLAHASSEE – Three local veterans will be among the inductees into the Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame when the Class of 2018 is announced Tuesday.

The Hall of Fame honors veterans who “through their works and lives during or after military service, have made a significant contribution to the State of Florida.” Nominations for the Hall of Fame are reviewed by a panel of state appointees and nominees are forwarded to the governor and the state Cabinet for final action.

Locally, this year’s class will include retired Army Maj. Charles E. Merkel Jr., who will be honored, in part, for his humanitarian work during his military service.

Merkel, who holds a doctoral degree in history from Florida State University, performed his last active government service as historian for the 53rd Wing at Eglin Air Force Base. From late 2009 through early 2010, those duties took Merkel to Afghanistan as part of the 451st Air Expeditionary Wing. While there, he launched a campaign with school districts, church groups and individuals in the United States to collect school supplies and helped distribute them to children. He was awarded an Exemplary Civilian Service Medal, a Global War on Terrorism Medal, and a special award from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

In 2013, Merkel was deployed to Southwest Asia as part of the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing. He received another Exemplary Civilian Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal and the Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon.

Merkel spent more than 20 years on active duty with the Army in a variety of assignments. He piloted UH-1H helicopters in Vietnam, where during off-duty hours he worked to support both a Christian and Buddhist orphanage by collecting school supplies and clothing and distributing them to the children.

Merkel subsequently went to Korea, where he served with the 2nd Infantry Division. While there, he was elected as honorary mayor of Kwang Am-Ri, and honored by People to People International for his work with orphanages, Sunday schools and the Korean people.

Merkel’s military decorations include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star with one oak leaf cluster, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with 11 oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal with four oak leaf clusters, and an Army Achievement Medal.

Also being inducted Tuesday into the Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame is retired Army Brig. Gen. Patt Maney, a wounded warrior who is also a retired Okaloosa County court judge.

Maney, a pioneer in Mental Health Court and Veterans Treatment Court, was honored by the Florida Legislature in 2012 when the Veterans Treatment Court Act was named after him.

In 2007, Maney started an annual community-based Stand Down for Homeless Veterans. He led successful efforts for the VA to establish a Vet Center in Okaloosa County.
Judge Maney acquired a UH-1 “Huey” helicopter to recognize the service of Vietnam veterans including a local Medal of Honor recipient. He also located and acquired the bell from the World War II Liberty Ship USS Okaloosa for the county. Both are now displayed at the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport.

Maney served almost 37 years in the Army Reserve, including over eight years of active duty with service in Panama, Haiti, Bosnia and Afghanistan. In Bosnia, he served at the Office of the High Representative, an international peace implementation organization. In Afghanistan, he was a senior advisor for the U.S. ambassador, and an advisor to various Afghan government ministries.

While in Afghanistan, Maney was wounded in an IED blast and spent almost 20 months at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. Among his major military awards are the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart. He also holds the Department of State Meritorious Honor Award, the Secretary of Defense Outstanding Public Service Award and the Afghan Ghazi Mir Batcha Kahn Superior Medal.

Maney served six years on the Florida Supreme Court’s Task Force on Mental Health and Substance Abuse and now is on the Florida Steering Committee on Problem Solving Courts. He has recently been appointed to the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority and the Southern Regional Education Board.

On Monday, Maney was sworn in as northern Florida’s new civilian aide to the Secretary of the Army in a Pentagon ceremony.

Also in the 2018 Hall of Fame class is retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Gordon “Gordy” Fornell. Fornell, who accumulated more than 7,000 flight hours in more than 50 types of aircraft, holds a number of military awards including the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with 11 oak leaf cluster and the Air Force Commendation Medal. Fornell’s military service included time as commander of the Armament Division at Eglin Air Force Base.

Fornell, of Niceville, retired from military service in 1993 and now serves as chairman of the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority and the Air Force Armament Museum Foundation. He is also vice chairman of the Fisher House of the Emerald Coast board and is active with the Niceville-Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee, Emerald Coast Military Affairs Council, Enterprise Florida and the Defense Support Initiative of the Okaloosa County Economic Development Council.

Fornell has led numerous visits by local representatives to Washington, D.C., advocating for the interests of military personnel, families and veterans in Northwest Florida. He is the founder of the Gate-to-Gate Run at Eglin Air Force Base, a 33-year Memorial Day weekend tradition.

Gov. Scott Recognizes Three Veterans with the Governor’s Medal of Merit

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, during a Florida Cabinet meeting, Governor Rick Scott recognized Florida veterans Lieutenant Colonel Glenn Sutphin, Major General Michael Calhoun and Colonel Charles Mohr with the Governor’s Medal of Merit.

About the Medal of Merit Recipients:

Lieutenant Colonel Glenn Sutphin entered active duty service as an enlisted soldier in 1969, received his commission as a Field Artillery Officer, and finished his military service in the Florida National Guard. The colonel, who is qualified in five branches of the Army, led soldiers in seven operational deployments during his 30 years in uniform before retiring in 1999. His personal awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, three Meritorious Service Medals, three Army Commendation Medals, an Army
Achievement Medal and four Humanitarian Service Medals. He is a recipient of several National Guard decorations, including the Florida Cross, the Florida National Guard’s highest award. On August 2, 2016, he was appointed by Governor Scott as Executive Director of the Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs.

Colonel Charles Mohr is an Army Veteran who enlisted in the Florida Army National Guard in January 1949. He advanced to the rank of Master Sergeant prior to his discharge on 14 March 1954, when he accepted his commission as a Second Lieutenant, Infantry Officer. He retired at the rank of Colonel in 1986. His military awards include the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with two hours glasses, Reserve Components Achievement Medal with three bronze clusters, NCO Professional Development Medal with numeral one, Army Service Ribbon, Reserve Component Overseas Training Ribbon with numeral three, Florida Cross, Florida Distinguished Service Medal with silver cluster, Florida Commendation Medal with silver cluster, Florida State Active Duty Ribbon, Florida Recruiting Ribbon and the Florida Meritorious Service Ribbon with silver cluster. Now, Colonel Mohr is a tireless advocate for veterans through the Tallahassee Lions Club, the Florida National Guard State Family Readiness Advisory Team and the Military Officers Association of America.

Major General Michael A. Calhoun assumed duties as the Adjutant General of Florida on March 29, 2015. He previously served as the Assistant Adjutant General-Army and as the Director of the Joint Staff (DJS) for the Florida National Guard. Following graduation from Florida A&M University, General Calhoun enlisted as a Private in the Florida National Guard in August 1977. After a six-year break in service, he received a direct commission and appointment to 1st Lieutenant in the Medical Service Corps on July 22, 1989. His follow-on assignments include Chief of Pharmacy Services, 131st Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH); Executive Officer, 131st MASH; Logistics Officer, 50th Area Support Group (ASG); Director, Host Nations Support, 50th ASG and Director, Support Operations, 50th ASG. General Calhoun deployed with the 50th ASG in 2003 as Director of Host Nations Support during Operation Iraqi Freedom and served as Deputy Commander, Task Force (FL) in Mississippi during Hurricane Katrina.

Mike Grissom Named Interim President and CEO of Enterprise Florida

By SUNSHINE STATE NEWS, December 5, 2018 - 2:00pm

The Executive Committee of Enterprise Florida’s Board of Directors announced on Wednesday that Mike Grissom will be the interim President and CEO of Enterprise Florida, Inc. (EFI).

Grissom joined EFI in 2015 as vice president of external affairs and rose to become executive vice president. Before that, he was executive director of the Republican Party of Florida (RPOF) and as a senior director at the Florida Chamber of Commerce. According to EFI, in his new post, Grissom “will maintain his role in leading EFI’s legislative and external affairs efforts.”

Joe York, the vice chairman of the Enterprise Florida Board of Directors, weighed in on the promotion.

“Enterprise Florida’s Executive Committee is proud to select Mike Grissom as EFI’s interim president and CEO. Mike has demonstrated great leadership during his tenure at EFI and I look forward to working with him as we continue our efforts to expand and diversify the state’s economy,” York said.
“I am honored to serve as Enterprise Florida’s interim president and CEO, and am grateful to the Executive Committee for their vote of confidence,” said Grissom. “I am excited to lead EFI as we work with our Board of Directors and stakeholders statewide to make Florida the leader in job creation.”

**Oil Drilling / Gulf Range**

**API's 'Explore Offshore' Campaign Heads to Capitol Hill**

By KEVIN DERBY, December 3, 2018 - 6:00am

The American Petroleum Institute’s (API) “Explore Offshore” campaign, which includes expanding energy exploration efforts including in the eastern part of the Gulf of Mexico and in the Atlantic, came to Capitol Hill last week.

The national “Explore Offshore” campaign is led by former U.S. Veterans Affairs Sec. Jim Nicholson, who led the Republican National Committee (RNC), and former U.S. Sen. Jim Webb, D-Va., who ran for the Democratic presidential nomination in the 2016 election cycle. Those national chairs were part of a briefing on Capitol Hill and were joined by state chairs, including former Florida Lt. Gov. Jeff Kottkamp.

API released reports on drilling in the Atlantic and the Eastern Gulf which “estimate that offshore-related activities could generate additional non-bonus and royalty revenue such as personal and corporate income tax, property tax and sales taxes” including $2.5 billion in tax revenues for the Sunshine State.

“I am a strong believer that our national security and economic health depends on a vibrant, all of the above energy policy,” Webb, who briefly ran for the Democratic presidential nomination in the 2016 election cycle, said. “When I was in the Senate I offered legislation which received bipartisan support, to open up oil exploration along the Atlantic seaboard, using our advanced modern technology and improved safety techniques. We now are the world’s leading producer and refiner of natural gas and oil. This economic boost also allows us to advance our national security priorities throughout the world, and to stand firmly against potential adversaries whose economies are based disproportionately on energy wealth.

“Energy independence requires long-term planning, and taking advantage of the resources at hand,” Webb added. “It’s basic common sense for us to be able to use American technology and know-how in order to explore the areas along America’s Outer Continental Shelf to see what’s out there and to have a discussion about where some of these areas might be opened up for oil production.”

**Air Force munitions releases scheduled for Gulf of Mexico**

By Staff reports, Posted Dec 3, 2018 at 4:49 PM, Updated Dec 3, 2018 at 4:49 PM

**EGLIN AFB** – The Air Force will conduct air-to-ground munitions releases in the Gulf of Mexico on Tuesday and Wednesday morning, according to a Monday news release from the 96th Test Wing.

The munitions releases are scheduled from 8 a.m.-noon Tuesday and Wednesday in an area of the Gulf approximately 75 miles south of Destin, according to the 96th Test Wing’s announcement.
All vessels are required to remain clear of the active hazard area during the times that testing is scheduled. Advisories and a local notice to mariners will be broadcast on Channel 16 and on HF upper sideband 2182 kHz by the Eglin Joint Test and Training Operations Control Center.

The Tuesday and Wednesday missions are part of the work of the Eglin Joint Test and Training Operations Control Center. For more information, contact JTTOCC at 850-882-7343 or Billy Childress at 850-882-7343.

In addition to the restrictions in the affected part of the Gulf of Mexico, State Roads 85 and 123 will be closed for two hours Tuesday evening for scheduled 96th Test Wing testing on the Eglin range complex. The two roads will be closed from 6:30-8:30 p.m, and should not be closed for longer than an hour after the mission begins. The back-up date for the mission, should it be needed, is Dec. 6 at the same times. For more information and updates on road closures, visit the base website at www.eglin.af.mil.

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**BRAC**

**From BRAC to OBRACC: base closures deemed necessary**

By Jeffrey Marchesseault, November 30, 2018


Guam – Did someone say BRAC is back? Domestic Base Realignment and Closure recommendations have been back on congressional radar at least since last year when the Pentagon told President Trump and lawmakers it needs to reduce its footprint to become operationally more efficient and save $2 billion by closing excess bases in the US by 2021. Now it seems the powers that be are under pressure to close bases overseas, as well.

A so-called “rare trans-partisan coalition” is calling for saving billions of dollars and making American safer by closing US military bases abroad, too.

Military experts from across the ideological spectrum reportedly gathered for a public event releasing an open letter to the President, House, and Senate at the Russell Senate Office Building in Washington, DC on Thursday afternoon.

The Overseas Base Realignment and Closure Coalition, or OBRACC for short, is arguing for closure of bases and eighty-sixing obsolete and counterproductive Cold War policies that keep vast numbers of troops stationed in hundreds of bases around the globe. OBRACC insists America must chart a different course.

OBRACC says overseas military bases increase military tension, support dictators, entangle the US in foreign wars, cause violent blowback, promote terrorism, damage America’s reputation, strain US families, and cost taxpayers too many billions…..

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**NAS Pensacola**

**President George H.W. Bush leaves lasting impact on NAS Pensacola**
PENSACOLA, FLA. (WEAR-TV) – President George H.W. Bush will have a lasting impact on Naval aviation.

Not only was he the first, but the only naval aviator to become President.

The National Museum of Naval Aviation in Pensacola has many items from his time in the Navy.

President Bush made history early. When he was 18, he postponed college, enlisted and became the youngest aviator in the U.S. Navy at that time.

Now in the atrium of the museum, you can see a plane he flew while in training in Minneapolis.

Museum director, Sterling Gilliam, said, "He flew that actual Stearman, you can see the log book with his initials documenting the flights."

The items they have documenting his career are both big and small. They have a performance review from one of his flight instructors.

Historian Hill Goodspeed said, "It's very cool to see. It's interesting to look at, of course this officer didn't know what he was going to become. It shows his qualities shining through early in life and he displayed throughout his life."

Bush's Naval career was short. His plane was shot down in WW2 in the Pacific in 1944.

The museum now has a piece of a life raft from that day. He and many others were rescued by submarine.

One of the rescued sailors tore off a piece from a life raft and got all sailors to sign it, Bush being one of them……

Eglin AFB

Scientists confirm existence of 'mythical' salamander along Gulf Coast

NOEL KIRKPATRICK, December 6, 2018, 2:55 p.m.

Science can move slowly, especially when it comes to proving a creature actually exists.

But that's just what scientists have done with the reticulated siren (Siren reticulata), a 2- to 3-foot-long salamander that has lurked in the waters of Florida and Alabama for decades without anyone being able to get their hands on it.

"It was basically this mythical beast," David Steen, a wildlife ecologist at the Georgia Sea Turtle Center and co-author of a paper that described the species, told National Geographic.

Passion project

Steen wasn't kidding about S. reticulata's stature. Locals had long referred to it as a leopard eel due to its spotted dorsal area, and Robert Mount's 1975 book "The Reptiles and Amphibians of Alabama" refers to
an unnamed siren salamander that no one could prove actually existed. For more than a decade, people simply stopped looking for the creature.

Steen's interest in the creature was piqued in 2007 while he was a graduate student at Auburn University. His advisor had pointed out a large specimen jar to him and explained that, despite its label as a greater siren (Siren lacertina), it likely was a whole other species just waiting to be described. After that, Steen decided to go salamander hunting.

He and fellow Auburn graduate student Sean Graham — now a vertebrate zoologist at Sul Ross State University in Texas — began visiting areas where the elusive leopard eel had been spotted. They did this on their own time, without any funding. Using traps, Steen managed to capture one in 2009 at Eglin Air Force Base in western Florida. Steen was silent for a long moment after discovering the creature, according to his interview with National Geographic..

Tyndall AFB

Sen. Marco Rubio on Federal Funding, Rebuilding Tyndall & Opening Recovery Assistance Center

BAY COUNTY, Fla. – As the national news dies down after Hurricane Michael many in the Panhandle feel forgotten.

While progress has been made, weeks after Hurricane Michael the area still struggles to rebuild. Senator Marco Rubio is pushing for a disaster relief package to pass by the end of the year. As far as how much money the area could see, that's still being determined based on state damage assessments.

"I just don't want these local governments and communities to wait until next year to see reimbursements because it will impact their ability to provide services," said Sen. Marco Rubio (R) Florida.

Rubio announced the opening a Recovery Assistance Center at Bay High School for several days next week to be a one stop shop for insurance, FEMA, and other resources.

"We've invited the relevant agencies to have people there so rather than have people call a 1-800 number or go online, and are on hold for hours, we bring the assistance to the community," said Sen. Rubio.

A lot of people are concerned for the future of Tyndall Air Force Base. Sen. Rubio wants the base to rebuild fully…..

Task Force Phoenix cleans up Tyndall Air Force Base

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (Tyndall) - After Hurricane Michael caused major damage to Tyndall Air Force Base last month, officials worked quickly to get critical missions back up and running as soon as possible.

A special initiative called "Task Force Phoenix" is a large part of the recovery process for Tyndall.
The detonation and explosive disposal of ammunition that was damaged when a building collapsed on it during Hurricane Michael is not typically what's thought of as hurricane clean-up. But on Tyndall Air Force Base after the major storm's wrath, it was a safety necessity.

"It was a Navy asset so we collaborated with them and we determined that it was not safe to ship and now we've taken care of it appropriately," SMSgt Rob Brown, Superintendent with the 325th Civil Engineer Squadron EOD Flight, said.

"We were able to safely extract those munitions without anything accidentally going off, without anybody being injured, and then disposed of them," Col. Pat Miller, Task Force Phoenix Commander with Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center, said.

Working with the Air Force Civil Engineer Center and several other groups, this wasn't the only advantage of the partnership.

"This is our first blast event since Hurricane Michael and it was really good for us to be able to support the base and then also to exercise our equipment," Brian Skibba, a Civil Engineer Research Laboratory Manager with Air Force Civil Engineer Center said.

One of reasons that Tyndall missions like these are recovering and operational despite the massive physical toll Hurricane Michael took on the base, is because of the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center's support of Task Force Phoenix called in just a few days after the storm……

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**Tyndall AFB to Host First Training Exercises Post Hurricane Michael**

My Panhandle, Posted: Dec 01, 2018 09:40 PM EST, Updated: Dec 01, 2018 09:40 PM EST

**BAY COUNTY, Fla. –** Tyndall Air Force base will soon host its first training exercise since Hurricane Michael.

On December 10th, we'll start to see more Tyndall personnel returning to the base as they continue to rebuild and recover from the storm.

According to the Air Force times, assigned airmen will be preparing for a major live fire training exercise that will take place next month.

That exercise will be one of the first live drills since the storm devastated the base. Officials also announcing that December 3rd through the 14th the base's 53rd weapons evaluation group will conduct its first post-hurricane combat archer exercise.

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**Tyndall Pharmacy Reopening**

By: David Huffman, Posted: Dec 03, 2018 10:30 PM EST, Updated: Dec 03, 2018 10:30 PM EST

**TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. -** The Tyndall Pharmacy will be reopening. They will have a soft opening December 3rd through the 7th to work through new processes. The Pharmacy will expand service on December 10th.
During the soft opening, they will be able to help Tyndall Recovery Personal. On December 10th, they will be open to all Department of Defense card holders on and off the base.

The Pharmacy is located inside the main clinic in building number 1465, and will be open from 8 A.M. to 3 P.M.

New and refills - in-person only. The refill phone line and e-scripts program are not working. Members can bring paper prescriptions from an off-base provider or they can bring their current bottle/package to the pharmacy to get the prescription filled. If a member is given a new prescription from a Tyndall provider, they will not have to bring anything to the pharmacy.

The pharmacy will be rebuilding their stock levels and have only about a third of their staff currently, so expect long lines and wait time, also plan for 4 days for refills to be available. If an existing prescription needs to be transferred to the pharmacy from somewhere else, it may take longer than 4 days to get it filled.

Tyndall Air Force Base resuming operations after Hurricane Michael

By COLLIN BREAUX, News Herald Reporter, Posted Dec 5, 2018 at 1:53 PM, Updated Dec 5, 2018 at 3:01 PM

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE – As airmen prepare to return to Tyndall Air Force Base next week, base officials are working to get Tyndall up and running again after Hurricane Michael.

And it turns out a good number of facilities are still usable.

“The base is actually doing really well. We’ve got a lot of assets that the community doesn’t have, which is unfortunate for the community,” said 325th Fighter Wing Vice Cmdr. Jefferson Hawkins. “About 90 percent of the debris removal is complete. After uncovering the facilities and taking a real good look at them, about 50 percent of them are actually in the green. Almost all of them are going to need some level of roof repair. We only ended up with about 20 percent that we actually need to consider demolishing.”

Engineering teams are assessing buildings in the green, and some are expected to soon be fully “up and running,” said Hawkins.

“In the yellow portion of that 30 percent, we’re sending a couple of teams out to look at what the monetary portion will be to recover those,” said Hawkins. “And the Air Force has a rule where if it’s over a certain percentage of the building cost itself, then it’s not (feasible) for us to go ahead and recover those buildings.”

After an initial assessment of what Tyndall can restore, then the process starts over the next year or so of developing plans for what buildings Tyndall needs to rebuild and “how we want those facilities laid out,” said Hawkins. The long-term building, engineering and construction process will be three to five years, said Hawkins.

Lingering examples of the storm’s aftermath are visible around base. Large debris piles contain fence posts, wreckage is still on the floor of the base chapel and service members working on base live in high-end tent cities. Housing is a big concern, and some dorms have been recovered.

Currently the simulation and academic building to practice flying F-22s and base commissary is open and running. Fuel capacities for civilians and military members to get gas are also available. Tenant units are expected to be up and running by the end of the year or right after.
A majority of airmen are scheduled to return to Tyndall Air Force Base on Dec. 10 to “work at full capacity,” said Hawkins. Some of the first training exercises are already underway at the base, with plans to resume more functions early next year.

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**FL National Guard / Camp Blanding**

**Camp Blanding Commander Speaks to Clay Leaders**

Clay Today, Posted Friday, November 30, 2018 9:57 am

[Link](http://www.claytodayonline.com/stories/camp-blanding-commander-speaks-to-clay-leaders,14453)

Commander Colonel Frank A. Zenko from Camp Blanding Joint Training Center spoke to a group of Clay County Leaders at the 4th quarter luncheon for the Clay County Economic Development. Zenco outlined the benefits of Camp Blanding and the millions of dollars represented by the more than 450,000 incoming individuals that visit to the camp during a calendar year for training of several various natures.

“The economic value to Clay County Businesses is tremendous” said JJ Harris, ED President. We are proud of our partnership with Camp Blanding and what the future holds for years to come for our County.

Colonel Frank Zenko assumed command of Camp Blanding Joint Training Center (CBJTC) in July 2018. CBJTC is a premier training venue providing resources to enhance joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multi-national training in support of the nation, state and local communities.

He previously served as the Deputy Chief of Staff Logistics for the Florida Army National Guard.

COL Zenko was commissioned from Marion Military Institute in 1988 and joined the Florida Army National Guard in Tallahassee, FL while pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Finance from Florida State University. His career commenced with the completion of Ordnance Officer Basic Course and subsequent assignment as a platoon leader in the 708th Maintenance Company, Quincy, FL.

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**NS Mayport**

**USS Thomas Hudner Heads to Mayport**

By KEVIN DERBY, December 4, 2018 - 12:30pm

[Link](http://sunshinestatenews.com/story/uss-thomas-hudner-heads-mayport)

This week, the Navy commissioned the USS Thomas Hudner (DDG 116) in Boston as it readies to head to the First Coast with Mayport prepared to be its homeport.

The Thomas Hunder is commanded by Cmdr. Nathan Scherry and is the 66th Arleigh Burke-class destroyer and the 36th DDG 51 class destroyer built by General Dynamics Bath Iron Works (BIW).

“Arleigh Burke (DDG 51 class) class destroyers are highly-capable, multi-mission ships that conduct a variety of operations, from peacetime presence to national security. These DDGs provide a wide range of warfighting capabilities in multi-threat air, surface, and subsurface environments. The ship's Integrated Air and Missile Defense radar will provide increased computing power and radar upgrades that improve detection and reaction capabilities against modern air warfare threats, as well as ballistic missile defense. The Aegis Combat System will enable the ship to link radars with other ships and aircraft to provide a composite picture of the battle space, and effectively increase the theater space. New ships in this class, such as Thomas Hudner, have anti-ballistic missile capabilities as well. The DDG’s all-steel construction provides a survivable platform,” the Navy noted about the new destroyer.
The Arleigh Burke class usually has a crew of 276 sailors.

MacDill AFB
Skies around MacDill will be busier and louder, officials warn


TAMPA (FOX 13) – MacDill Air Force Base is hosting some noisy guests this holiday season: A bunch of warthogs from up north.

Specifically, MacDill is hosting several A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft from the Indiana Air National Guard. The iconic planes, which provide close air support for ground troops, are more commonly called by their nickname ‘Warthogs.’

The South Tampa base is home to KC-135 Stratotankers used for refueling, but the loud A-10s will add another level of noise around the area, base officials warned Friday.

“Due to our location and air refueling capability, MacDill Air Force Base provides an ideal spot for visiting units to hone their skills,” Lt. Allison Mills offered.

The exercises will begin December 3 and are scheduled to last about two weeks.

MacDill Airman wins AMC dental NCO of the year

Story by Senior Airman Adam Shanks, 6th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs, 12.04.2018

A 6th Dental Squadron NCO at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, won the Air Mobility Command Dental NCO of the Year award.

Over the course of the year, Tech. Sgt. Aza Pierce, NCO in charge of the dental instrument processing center (DIPC), tallied up multiple impressive accomplishments.

One of her leading achievements was as co-lead of the 6th DS’ process improvement team, where her five member team instituted lean practices that remedied $1 million and approximately 2,000 hours in missed dental appointments over the 2017 fiscal year.

“T I arrived at MacDill right before Hurricane Irma in 2017, and afterwards we began cracking down on why appointments were being [missed],” said Pierce. "After many hours of hard work, and patient feedback on how to improve the dental appointment system, the process was benchmarked by AMC." 

As the NCO in charge of the DIPC, Pierce spends the majority of her time sorting, sanitizing and accounting for thousands of dental instruments used in the dental clinic. Each day, she can easily work with 200 to 300 instruments…..
Proposed MacDill passenger ferry service afloat again after Hillsborough commissioners reverse decision

By Christopher O'Donnell, Published December 5, Updated December 6

TAMPA – New commission, new decision.

Less than one month after Hillsborough County commissioners scrapped a proposed MacDill passenger ferry project, the new Democratic majority commission has breathed new life into the project.

Commissioners voted 5-1 Wednesday to reverse a November decision that terminated the county's public private partnership agreement with ferry company HMS Global Maritime and the South Swell development group. Commissioner Les Miller, a long-time skeptic of the project, was the lone nay vote.

The vote doesn't guarantee the proposed service will be built between southern Hillsborough and MacDill Air Force Base, but it restarts the next step in the process: a $774,000 contract with a consultant to conduct a ridership survey and a study on where to build a ferry terminal…..

US Central Command

Senate hearings today for Trump’s nominees to head top MacDill commands

By Howard Altman, Published 12-4-2018

TAMPA – Changes in leadership are coming to MacDill Air Force Base and the next step in the process takes place in Washington on Tuesday morning.

That’s when the Senate Armed Services Committee is scheduled to hold confirmation hearings for two men nominated to receive a fourth star and head major commands headquartered at MacDill.


Central Command oversees U.S. military operations in the Middle East along with Southwest and Central Asia. Special Operations Command synchronizes the global war on terror and is responsible for providing fully trained and equipped commando forces — Navy SEALs and special boat crews, Army Green Berets, Rangers and Delta Force, Marine Raiders and Air Force special operators…..

US Special Operations Command

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Cape Canaveral AFS

Despite successful cargo launch, SpaceX rocket crashes into ocean a few miles off Florida coast

Posted By Joey Roulette on Wed, Dec 5, 2018 at 3:29 pm

SpaceX's 16th cargo resupply mission to the International Space Station was a success on Wednesday, but the Falcon 9 rocket in-use failed its attempt to return on land, instead plunking into the Atlantic Ocean about two miles off the Cape Canaveral coast.

SpaceX chief executive Elon Musk tweeted video footage from the rocket's on-board camera showing the 230-foot-tall first stage booster spiraling through the atmosphere and attempting to emergency-land on the ocean surface rather than Landing Zone 1, the on-ground rocket pad it was intended to stick.

Engines stabilized rocket spin just in time, enabling an intact landing in water! Ships en route to rescue Falcon.

“As much as we are disappointed in this landing, it shows the system overall knows how to recover from certain malfunctions,” Hans Koenigsmann, vice president of Build and Flight Reliability at SpaceX, said during a news conference after the launch. “The vehicle kept well away from where it could pose the slightest risk to public property.”

The failure was caused by a hydraulic malfunction with the booster's grin fins, the square-shaped honeycombs jutting out of its sides used to stabilize the rocket's reentry to Earth. The booster was still communicating with mission control even as it was bobbing in the water on its side roughly two miles off the Cape Canaveral coast, Musk said.

Patrick AFB
All-new Falcon 9 rocket tested in Florida as SpaceX preps for back-to-back launches

Stephen Clark, December 1, 2018

The Falcon 9 rocket slated to launch SpaceX’s 16th operational resupply mission to the space station stands at pad 40 at Cape Canaveral on Thursday. Credit: Steven Young/Spaceflight Now

An all-new SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket fired its engines Friday night on launch pad 40 at Cape Canaveral, the opening act in a busy weekend of SpaceX launch preps leading up to a pair of blastoffs Sunday and Tuesday from California’s Central Coast and Florida’s Space Coast, respectively.

The two-stage Falcon 9 launcher test-fired at pad 40 Friday night is set to blast off Tuesday at 1:38 p.m. EST (1838 GMT) with an automated Dragon supply ship heading to the space station. The Dragon cargo craft will haul several tons of supplies and experiments to the station, including NASA-funded payloads to be affixed outside the research complex to study Earth’s forests and demonstrate in-orbit satellite refueling techniques.

A weather forecast issued by the U.S. Air Force’s 45th Weather Squadron at nearby Patrick Air Force Base suggests rain showers, thunderstorms and clouds might be a problem for Tuesday’s instantaneous launch opportunity. There is a 60 percent probability that weather conditions at Cape Canaveral will prevent liftoff, with the major concerns involving the thick cloud, cumulus cloud, and flight through precipitation launch rules…….

920th Rescue Wing Gives 60 Civilian Employers a Lift, Inducts 5 Honorary Commanders

By Senior Airman Brandon Kalloo Sanes, 920th Rescue Wing // December 5, 2018

BREVARD COUNTY • PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA – The 920th Rescue Wing hosted 60 community leaders for the advent of rides aboard its Air Force combat-search-and-rescue aircraft during a special day recognizing civilian employers of Reserve Citizen Airmen and five community leaders who were inducted as honorary commanders, Dec. 1.

Both occasions were combined during the December unit training assembly to bolster relations between community leaders, civilian employers and service members.

“Our honorary commanders help us reach out into the community and build long lasting relationships,” said Col. Michael LoForti, 920th Operations Group commander.

“This is a great opportunity for the wing and the local community to connect in a way that they can’t on a daily basis, and helps employers understand what their employees do during drill training weekends.”

Wing Commander Col. Kurt Matthews kicked off with a mission brief outlining the unit’s history and combat-search-and-rescue capabilities. The induction ceremony followed, formally recognizing five community influencers as honorary commanders, affirming their roles within the Air Force Reserve family…..
Avon Park

A squadron of A-10C Thunderbolt II jets, known as Warthogs, will begin a two-week training exercise Monday

By Howard Altman, Published November 30, Updated November 30

TAMPA – MacDill Air Force Base will be even noisier than usual starting Dec. 3. That’s because a squadron of A10-C Thunderbolt II close support jets are coming for a training exercise called Guardian Blitz that is expected to last about two weeks, according to Air Force 2nd Lt. Allison Mills, a spokeswoman for the 6th Air Mobility Wing, the base host unit.

The jets are from the 163rd Fighter Squadron, 122nd Fighter Wing of the Indiana Air National Guard.

“Increased noise is expected in the local area resulting from A10-C Warthogs participating in the exercise,” Mills said in a news release. “Due to our location and air refueling capability, MacDill Air Force Base provides an ideal spot for visiting units to hone their skills.”

The jets, also known as “Warthogs” are beloved by troops under fire for their ability to fly in low and slow and rip up the enemy with the 30 mm cannon around which the jets are built.

The squadron performed a similar training exercise earlier this year, flying training missions to the Avon Park Air Force Range in February to work with troops on the ground who help call in airstrikes. They also trained on mid-air refueling, which is a MacDill specialty. The base is home to 24 Eisenhower-era KC-135 aerial refueling jets, shared by the 6th Air Mobility Wing and the 927th Air Refueling Wing.

NAS Key West

A Chinese man illegally photographed the Navy base in Key West, feds say

BY GWEN FILOSA, December 03, 2018 12:32 PM, Updated December 03, 2018 02:55 PM

A 20-year-old man from China walked onto restricted Navy property in Key West this year and took photos of various buildings, federal prosecutors say.

Zhao Qianli was arrested Sept. 26 by Key West police for trespassing and later was sentenced to 60 days in jail. He told officers that day he was lost and only “a dishwasher from New Jersey.”

But now he faces federal charges, filed last week, of photographing defense installations and entering military, naval or Coast Guard property. He remains in federal custody on $250,000 bond.

Zhao faces up to one year in prison if convicted of the photographing charge and up to six months if convicted of trespassing. His attorney, Hongwei Shang of Miami, didn’t immediately return a call for comment Monday…..
**Defense Industry**

Industry Optimistic About Military Training, Simulation Market

By Yasmin Tadjdeh, 11/29/2018


**ORLANDO, Fla. —** With the U.S. military putting a premium on warfighter readiness, members of industry said they are optimistic about future defense-related training opportunities, particularly in regard to the development of virtual and augmented reality systems.

On the show floor of the National Training and Simulation Association’s annual Interservice/Industry Training Simulation and Education Conference — which drew more than 16,000 participants — hundreds of companies exhibited new technologies that they say will give warfighters the edge on future battlefields.

Much of this technology included virtual reality platforms that immerse users in simulated environments and augmented reality systems that can overlay graphics onto the real world, often by utilizing heads up displays or tablets.

Corey Hendricks, chief engineer for global training solutions at Raytheon’s intelligence, information and services division, said AR and VR technologies will be key going forward, particularly as the military training market changes.

“You have a more dynamic military that's being deployed farther away, [with] less time at home and then you have an evolving threat on multiple continents,” he said. “There are a lot of challenges that the military is facing and they have less time and less training dollars to go and make sure that they're ready to go fight these dynamic fights.”

Technology like AR and VR are two ways Raytheon is getting at providing the military with lighter, more agile and flexible platforms, he said. The company has previously combined the two technologies with mobile systems to create an integrated and collaborative training environment, he noted. For example, it uses such platforms for naval training with the V-22 Osprey, he said…..

**Leonardo DRS is latest defense contractor making major expansion in Brevard**

Wayne T. Price, Florida Today, Published 9:38 a.m. ET Dec. 3, 2018 | Updated 3:35 p.m. ET Dec. 3, 2018


Leonardo DRS Inc. is undergoing a major expansion on the Space Coast, adding 40,000 square feet and hiring at least 100 workers, many of them engineers, over the next year.

The defense contractor's expansion at its Babcock Street location in Melbourne is further evidence of U.S. and global military and aerospace spending fueling the Space Coast economy.

The expansion work at Leonardo DRS, which has three business units in Brevard County, is scheduled for completion next summer. M.H. Williams Construction Group is the project contractor.
The site is a center of excellence for network and electro-optical engineering, including a best-in-class manufacturing facility.

"We have been growing and this is our fourth straight year of growth," said Bill Guyan, vice president and general manager of the company's land electronics business segment. "We filled out the building we're in and as we project forward we see that growth continuing."

"We’ve had a long working history with Leonardo DRS, and we congratulate them on their continued success," said Lynda Weatherman, president and CEO of the Economic Development Commission of Florida’s Space Coast. “Their growth not only illustrates the development of the aerospace and defense industry, but it reflects the overall strength of our local industrial base."

Leonardo DRS is a multibillion dollar defense company and is a wholly-owned U.S. subsidiary of Leonardo S.p.A, an Italian conglomerated with headquarters in Rome.....

DoD Budget

New HASC Chairman Pledges a Defense Budget that’s “Good Enough”

Tom McCuin / Dec 3, 2018

2018 was a good year for the Department of Defense. For the first time in two decades, Congress delivered both the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) and the Defense Appropriations Act before the beginning of the new fiscal year. Congress also lifted the Budget Control Act limits for the last two years, meaning the Pentagon was freed from the worries that a portion its budget would be automatically sequestered.

In November, voters handed control of the House of Representatives to the Democrats, while Republicans increased their majority in the Senate. This is the second time we’ve seen a divided Congress since the beginning of the current conflict. On May 24, 2001, Republican Sen. Jim Jeffords of Vermont switched his party to Independent and caucused with the Democrats, leaving Congress split until Republicans retook the Senate in the 2002 midterm elections. Again in the 2013-2014 sessions, Democrats held the Senate while Republicans held the House.

While this is clearly bad news for the president’s overall agenda, it is especially bad news for the DoD, which is now dealing with a new round of budget uncertainty this split is bringing.....

Trump meets with Mattis and Republican lawmakers amid fears of defense budget cut

BY CNN WIRES, POSTED 7:39 PM, DECEMBER 4, 2018, UPDATED AT 07:38PM, DECEMBER 4, 2018

A day after President Donald Trump appeared to call the current Defense Department budget “crazy,” Secretary of Defense James Mattis and key Republican lawmakers who oppose any defense budget cuts met with the President to discuss military funding.
“I am certain that, at some time in the future, President Xi and I, together with President Putin of Russia, will start talking about a meaningful halt to what has become a major and uncontrollable Arms Race. The U.S. spent 716 Billion Dollars this year. Crazy!” Trump tweeted Monday.

Mattis attended the Tuesday White House meeting along with the chairmen of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Sen. Jim Inhofe, R-Oklahoma, and the House Armed Services Committee, Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, according to defense officials and congressional staffers.

The meeting comes as the Trump administration has floated a 5% cut to the Defense Department, reducing the defense budget from the $716 billion allocated in 2019 to $700 billion in 2020 as part of a federal government-wide effort to reduce the deficit.

Defense officials were planning on a $733 billion budget for 2020 prior to the proposed cuts…..

**Other Of Interest**

**Is Northeast Florida a good place for veterans to retire?**

by: Mark Basch, Contributing Writer, NOV. 30, 201805:10 AM EST  
[https://www.jaxdailyrecord.com/article/is-northeast-florida-a-good-place-for-veterans-to-retire](https://www.jaxdailyrecord.com/article/is-northeast-florida-a-good-place-for-veterans-to-retire)

Everyone knows Jacksonville is a military town.

In addition to the active duty personnel in the U.S. Navy, a large number of retiring servicemen and servicewomen are deciding that they liked their time here so much that they want to settle down in Northeast Florida.

But how does Jacksonville compare with other cities as a home for veterans? It depends who you ask.

Two companies this month assessed data on veterans’ resources in the 100 largest U.S. cities and came up with different rankings for the best cities.

Veterans United Home Loans, a mortgage lender which focuses on VA loans, ranked Jacksonville as the eighth best community for veterans…..

**Experts: No need to panic over losing Congressional influence over billions in defense spending**

By Howard Altman, Published November 30, 2018  

In October, after Hurricane Michael devastated Tyndall Air Force Base in the Florida Panhandle, U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson vowed the base would be rebuilt.

Given his committee assignment, the statement had some heft.

The Florida Senator is a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, one of the four legislative committees charged with overseeing defense spending, which in Florida represents about $80 billion a year, including more than $17 billion in the Tampa Bay region.
But Nelson lost his seat to Gov. Rick Scott. And Tom Rooney, a Republican whose 17th House district includes a sliver of Hillsborough County, is retiring. That means at the moment, there are no local legislators who will sit on the House or Senate Armed Services committees or the Defense subcommittees of the House and Senate Appropriations committees…..

**Former NAS Pensacola commander tapped for Ron DeSantis transition team**

Former Naval Air Station Pensacola commander and Gulf Power Western District General Manager Keith Hoskins will serve on Governor-elect Ron DeSantis’ transition team.

Hoskins will be one of 45 members serving on the Transition Advisory Committee on the Economy that will be chaired by former Florida House Speaker Will Weatherford.

"Any opportunity for me to be in a role where I can support Northwest Florida, support the state of Florida, I'm all in," Hoskins said. "So, I'm very happy and very blessed to have this opportunity."

Hoskins, a former Blue Angel pilot, was base commander of NAS Pensacola for three years until he retired from the U.S. Navy in 2016. He went to work for Gulf Power after leaving the Navy and also serves as president of the economic development organization First Place Partners…..

**David Smith riding new wave of veteran-advocates in the Florida Legislature**

Republican state Rep. David Smith will be heading to Tallahassee with a broad platform of ambitions covering education, the economy and the environment, but the retired U.S. Marine Corps colonel gets particularly excited about prospects he sees to improve the lot for Florida’s military veterans.

Smith was elected Nov. 6 to succeed Jason Brodeur in representing House District 28 in east Seminole County. Riding in with him in this class are state Reps. Anthony Sabatini of Howie-in-the-Hills, Elizabeth Fetterhoff of Deland, Tommy Gregory of Sarasota, and Spencer Roach of North Fort Myers, all military veterans, joining returning lawmakers such as Paul Renner of Palm Coast.

They have restarted a veterans’ caucus in the Florida House, Smith said.

“I think there is going to be new excitement to address issues for veterans,” Smith said. “The one thing I’m committed to is systemic solutions. I don’t want band-aid solutions or give-away programs. They don’t work and they’re insulting to veterans.”

Specifically, Smith is looking at creating a state contracting set-aside preference for veteran-owned businesses, much as currently exists for women- and minority-owned businesses. There are plenty of models out there, including a federal program, state programs in Texas, California, and North Carolina, and a patchwork of local programs…..
Dec 14

Task Force members,

1. **Next Meeting** – There will be no meeting in December. Task Force meeting #70 will be Thursday, 17 January 2019, beginning at 9:00AM ET at the Embassy Suites Miami International Airport, 3974 NW South River Drive, Miami, FL 33142. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting that will include in-person interviews of potential advocacy firms.

2. **Call In Number** –
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979  Access Code: 1869945

3. **USAF Announces F-35s to Tyndall** – Over the weekend articles came out stating that the USAF announced last Friday that it will move three F-35 squadrons to Tyndall AFB beginning in 2023. Currently, the information on return of F-22 units is unclear. It appears that the operational F-22s will not return as they complement and round out other operational units in Alaska, Virginia and Hawaii. It is possible that the F-22 training units will return and that Tyndall will become a master 5th generation training base, but that is uncertain. It is clear, however, that access to the Gulf Range played a big part in the decision to rebuild Tyndall and to announce the F-35 move. See articles below in the CLIPs.

4. **Is an “Under the Radar” BRAC Happening in Florida Now?** – The Task Force has often discussed the “Under the Radar” BRAC where the services are making major weapons system moves without BRAC under their own authority. Three examples are in the news this week with the announcement of three F-35 Squadrons moving to Tyndall as the base rebuilds, operational F-22s not returning, and the Navy’s decision to move their F-35 program out of Eglin and to NAS Lemoore in California following the Marines departure last year. These types of moves are extremely important to Florida’s defense sector and need to be monitored closely. Moves of aircraft to Florida also underscores the need to ensure the moratorium on drilling east of the Military Mission Line is extended indefinitely and highlights the importance of FDA and community involvement at all times rather than episodically when the rumor of a BRAC is on the horizon. See articles below in the CLIPs.

5. **Florida Governor Highlights Importance of Tyndall AFB to State** – Governor Scott was on hand Monday, December 10, 2018 for the reopening of Tyndall AFB Elementary School. The Governor’s office noted actions to support a full rebuilding of Tyndall from Governor Scott that include:
   - On October 18th, Governor Scott visited Tyndall AFB and received a briefing about the damage from Hurricane Michael. Following the visit, Governor Scott wrote a letter to President Donald Trump requesting that he direct immediate action to dedicate resources, manpower and funding to return Tyndall AFB to full operations as soon as possible. To see the letter, click [HERE](#).
   - On October 19th, Governor Scott spoke to President Trump regarding his support of rebuilding Tyndall AFB.
   - On October 25th, Governor Scott was joined by Vice President Mike Pence and Second Lady Karen Pence to survey damage at Tyndall AFB.
• On November 30th, Department of Defense Secretary James Mattis returned Governor Scott’s letter regarding Tyndall AFB, and specifically reiterated that President Trump’s administration continues to support fully rebuilding the base.
• On December 6th, Governor Scott spoke with Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson regarding the importance of rebuilding Tyndall. The next day, Secretary Wilson announced that Tyndall AFB will be the future home of three squadrons of F-35s.

6. Governor Elect DeSantis Makes Appointments – Governor Elect DeSantis transition team has announced his picks to lead Enterprise Florida Inc. and the Department of Economic Opportunity. According to Jim Turner from the News Service of Florida, “DeSantis’ transition team on Thursday announced Lawson’s appointment as executive director of the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. Also, it said the governor-elect will recommend Port Tampa Bay Chief of Staff Jamal Sowell as the next president and CEO of Enterprise Florida, the state’s business-recruitment agency.” Both Lawson and Sowell (Bio attached) are veterans with service in the US Marine Corps.

7. Former Task Force Member Selected as Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army – In a press release from the Army, it was announced that “The Honorable Dr. Mark T. Esper, Secretary of the Army, selected retired Brig. Gen. Thomas P. "Patt" Maney to represent Florida (North), and selected retired Brig. Gen. Mabry E. "Bud" Martin to represent North Carolina (West).” See article below in the CLIPs.

8. Military / Veteran Related Bills Filed – 2019 Session begins on March 5, 2019 and bills are being filed. To review or track House Bills (HB), go to www.myfloridahouse.gov; for Senate Bills (SB), go to www.flsenate.gov. For both sites, insert the bill number at the top of the page if you would like current status throughout session. Bills filed so far are below and the current summary of all related bills filed to date is attached.
• HB 0097 Monuments and Memorials (Hill) – Monuments and Memorials: Designates act "Soldiers' and Heroes' Monuments and Memorials Protection Act"; defines "remembrance"; prohibits damage to or removal of certain remembrances; prohibits removal or other specified activities concerning remembrances on public property; grants certain persons standing for enforcement. Effective Date: July 1, 2019

9. Attachments:
• Jamal Sowell Bio

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News Clips of Interest:

FDSTF

New Civilian Aides to the Secretary of the Army appointed

By Army Public Affairs, December 10, 2018
https://www.army.mil/article/214847/new_civilian_aides_to_the_secretary_of_the_army_appointed

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Army appointed its newest Civilian Aides to the Secretary of the Army (CASA) Dec. 3 during an investment ceremony here in the Pentagon.

The Honorable Dr. Mark T. Esper, Secretary of the Army, selected retired Brig. Gen. Thomas P. "Patt" Maney to represent Florida (North), and selected retired Brig. Gen. Mabry E. "Bud" Martin to represent North Carolina (West).

"It is my distinct privilege to invest Bud and Patt into the CASA program," Esper said. "Their background in the military and in the business and public sectors have proven them to be accomplished leaders. I have no doubt each will do great things for our Army family."

CASAs are a vital part of the Army, promoting good relations between the Army and the public and advising the Secretary about regional issues.

Each state, the District of Columbia and the five U.S. territories have one or more CASAs appointed to provide a vital link between the Army and the communities for which they serve. CASAs are usually business or civic leaders who possess a keen interest in the welfare of the Army and their communities.

CASAs serve a two-year term without compensation. Terms may be extended to a total of 10 years of service. The secretary may recognize a civilian aide as a CASA Emeritus after 10 years of service with distinguished service…..

Cyber

Behind the White House’s plan to be more aggressive in cyberspace

By: Justin Lynch, December 6 at 12:10 PM

The warnings came from Donald Trump’s predecessor, top spies and Kim Jong Un himself.

So when the North Korean leader promised to tame Trump with “fire,” in September 2017, White House leaders considered how to slow the Asian country’s march to developing a nuclear weapon.

During a meeting in late 2017, Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis presented a military strategy and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson presented a diplomatic answer. But when it came time to discuss
intelligence and hacking options for the National Security Agency and U.S. Cyber Command, some on Trump’s team were frustrated with the answer. They argued the NSA couldn’t digitally deter Kim.

For nearly a year, White House leaders had debated the rules for how America should operate in cyberspace. After brazen hacks by the Chinese and Russian governments that targeted millions of Americans and the 2016 presidential election respectively, senior officials believed they needed to stop the raid on American bits and bytes.

Administration leaders broadly fell into two camps. The first blamed Obama-era rules to operate in cyberspace as too timid and the reason America did not have digital options to deter North Korea’s nuclear program. Unleashing viruses that could upend North Korea’s rockets would require a wide swath of consensus across U.S. government agencies, which all but stifled many hacking plans....

NAS Pensacola

Pensacola Prepares To Host USS Tripoli Commissioning Ceremony

By SANDRA AVERHART • DEC 6, 2018

The commissioning ceremony for the U.S. Navy’s newest aviation-centric Amphibious Assault Ship, USS Tripoli, will be held in Pensacola next year.

A local group is now working to plan the commissioning activities and raise the funds to pay for them.

The future USS Tripoli (LHA 7) is the third U.S. Navy vessel to be named in honor of the historic land-sea military operation against Derna during the 1805 war between the U.S. and the Barbery state of Tripoli. The battle was made famous in the official hymn of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Tripoli is also a member of the first class of ships designed to support the new F-35B Lightning II....

Eglin AFB

Tyndall AFB F-35 basing proposal won’t affect Eglin AFB

By Jim Thompson, Posted Dec 8, 2018 at 9:36 AM, Updated Dec 8, 2018 at 9:41 AM

EGLIN AFB – A proposal to bring as many as three F-35 stealth fighter jet squadrons to Tyndall Air Force beginning in 2023 will not affect the F-35 pilot and maintenance missions at Eglin Air Force base, an Air Force spokeswoman said late Friday afternoon.

“They would continue the mission that they’ve been conducting,” spokeswoman Ann Stefanek said in an interview shortly after Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson announced the proposal to bring the F-35 squadrons, which could comprise as many as 72 of the fifth-generation multiple-role fighter jets, to Tyndall AFB.

Wilson’s proposal comes as Tyndall AFB, which was all but destroyed by October’s Category 4 Hurricane Michael, is continuing to rebuild. As part of that process, 31 F-22 Raptor fighter jets from
Tyndall are being moved to Eglin, 60 miles west of Tyndall, as Raptor training operations are moved to Eglin for an as yet undetermined period of time.

Before the hurricane, Tyndall AFB was home to the 325th Fighter Wing, comprised of two F-22 squadrons — an operational squadron and the training squadron now working out of Eglin AFB.

According to Wilson’s Friday announcement, the F-22s wouldn’t be returning to Tyndall under the proposal to bring the three F-35 squadrons to the Panama City base. The Air Force would conduct a formal process to determine the best location for the F-22 training squadron currently displaced to Eglin AFB, according to a news release including Wilson’s announcement.

Implementing the proposal to bring the F-35 squadrons to Tyndall would require Congress to approve supplemental funding for rebuilding Tyndall AFB, Wilson noted in her statement…..

**Navy F-35 unit at Eglin to be deactivated**

By Jim Thompson, Posted Dec 10, 2018 at 4:23 PM, Updated Dec 10, 2018 at 4:23 PM


EGLIN AFB – The Navy’s F-35C squadron at Eglin Air Force Base is being deactivated, as its personnel and aircraft are slated to be combined with a second squadron at a Naval Air Station in California.

The move is being made at the request of the commanders of the U.S. Pacific Fleet and the Naval Air Force, according to a Navy announcement.

The squadron, VFA-101, better known as the “Grim Reapers,” has been at Eglin since 2011, where it has trained pilots and maintenance personnel for the F-35C. The F-35C is the “carrier variant” of the F-35 Lightning II stealth fighter jet, designed specifically for operating from aircraft carriers.

The transition of the Grim Reapers from Eglin to Naval Air Station Lemoore, about 35 miles south of Fresno in California’s Central Valley, is scheduled to be completed by July 1 of next year, according to an announcement from the Pentagon office of the Chief of Naval Operations. The move is designed to consolidate the Navy’s F-35C pilot and maintenance training operations, according to the announcement.

According to a Dec. 8 story on the Navy Times website, the consolidation of VFA-101 and the VFA-125 “Rough Raiders” is coming as the Navy works to establish its first operational F-35C squadron. Current plans call for that squadron’s initial deployment to come in 2021, aboard the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson…..

**Array of light: solar panels at Eglin perform almost as anticipated**

By Jim Thompson, Posted Dec 11, 2018 at 5:02 PM, Updated Dec 11, 2018 at 5:09 PM


EGLIN AFB – The solar power array operating since the summer of 2017 is performing close to its projected capacity of 30 megawatts, and erosion problems that had plagued the 236-acre site off College Boulevard West have been addressed, a Gulf Power official said Tuesday during a media tour marking the facility’s first full year of operation.

The solar array, built and operated by California-based Coronal Energy, has Gulf Power as its sole customer. Gulf Power is using its association with Coronal Energy as a learning experience, with the
possibility of one day venturing into solar power on its own, according to Melvin Young, generation asset manager with Gulf Power.

“We’re learning a lot,” Gulf Power spokesman Jeff Rogers added during the tour on Eglin Air Force Base property.

Gulf Power serves more than 460,000 customers in eight Northwest Florida counties. In addition to solar power generation, the utility has access to wind energy generated in Oklahoma, and closer to home, is involved in landfill gas-to-energy production in Escambia County.

Gulf Power’s continuing focus on alternatives to coal- and gas-generated power is, Rogers said, “expected to continue to put downward pressure on prices.” He pronounced Gulf Power’s foray into solar power “very successful.”

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Tyndall AFB

F-35 squadrons could come to Tyndall Air Force Base

By COLLIN BREAUX, News Herald Reporter, Posted Dec 7, 2018 at 12:07 PM, Updated Dec 7, 2018 at 1:28 PM

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE – Three squadrons of F-35 fighter jets could come to Tyndall Air Force Base, according to federal and state officials.

Each squadron contains 24 planes, equaling a total of 72 jets coming to Tyndall. The number of new airmen coming in is currently unknown but is expected to be “in excess” of 2,000, Rep. Neal Dunn said. The F-35s are expected to come to Tyndall by 2023.

“That’s some great news. It’s an impressive number,” said Dunn, who has advocated for Tyndall before and after Hurricane Michael. “It’s great for our community. It’s vitally important to national security.”

F-35s are a fifth-generation fighter aircraft and “more capable electronically” than other aircraft, Dunn said. The F-35 combines “advanced stealth with fighter speed and agility, fully fused sensor information, network-enabled operations and advanced sustainment,” according to the aircraft’s website.

As for the F-22s previously housed at Tyndall, the combat portion will no longer operate out of Tyndall and instead will be dispersed to three other squadrons, Dunn said. The Air Force will go through a “formal process” of deciding whether to leave the F-22 training portion at Eglin Air Force Base or bring them back to Tyndall, said Dunn, who added the training portion belongs in the Gulf Test Range in Florida..

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Will the MQ-9 Reaper wing come to Tyndall? That isn’t known

By COLLIN BREAUX, Posted Dec 9, 2018 at 11:19 AM, Updated Dec 9, 2018 at 11:22 AM

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE – How Hurricane Michael has affected the MQ-9 Reaper drone wing’s expected arrival to Tyndall Air Force Base is currently unknown.

Tyndall Public Affairs directed a request for comment on the Reaper wing to Air Combat Command, which oversees Tyndall.
“The Air Force is currently conducting an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to analyze the impacts of the proposed new MQ-9 Wing,” Leah Garton, Chief of Media Operations for Air Combat Command Public Affairs, wrote in an email. “However, a final basing decision has not been made. The Air Force will make its final basing decision for the proposed MQ-9 Wing following completion of the EIS process and other regulatory and planning processes. The EIS was initiated in September 2016 and is ongoing. We anticipate a delay in the EIS process due to Hurricane Michael, and do not currently have an estimated completion date.”

The wing was expected to bring in 1,600 airmen by 2020, 24 aircraft starting in 2022 and have an annual impact of $650 million to $870 million for the local economy. Tyndall was named the “preferred alternative” for the wing by the Secretary of the Air Force, and Vandenberg Air Force Base is the “reasonable alternative.”

325th Fighter Wing Vice Cmdr. Jefferson Hawkins said officials at Tyndall have “always been agnostic” as to whether the wing would come to Tyndall. Tyndall officials and others in the defense community have previously spoken about the expected benefits from the influx of airmen and their families should the Reaper wing come to Tyndall…..

### NS Mayport

**Future USS Billings completes acceptance trials**

LISA DAIGLE, ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITOR, DEC 11, 2018

MARINETTE, Wis. Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) 15, the future USS Billings, has completed acceptance trials in the waters of Lake Michigan, its last significant milestone before delivery to the U.S. Navy during 2019. LCS 15 is the eighth Freedom-variant LCS designed and built by the Lockheed Martin-led industry team. The LCS is a highly maneuverable, lethal, and adaptable ship, according to Lockheed Martin officials, and is designed to support focused missions including mine countermeasures, antisubmarine warfare, and surface-warfare missions; the Freedom-variant LCS integrates new technology and capability to affordably support current and future mission capability from deep water to the littorals.

The recent trials included a full-power run, maneuverability testing, and surface and air detect-to-engage demonstrations of the ship's combat system; along with demonstrations of major systems and features, including aviation support, small boat launch handling and recovery, and machinery control and automation.

Once the ship is delivered, it will be stationed at Naval Station Mayport in Jacksonville, Florida.

### Over 4,500 Sailors and Marines to deploy before the holidays

Author: Erin Patterson, Published: 6:02 PM EST December 13, 2018, Updated: 6:02 PM EST December 13, 2018

NORFOLK, Va. (WVEC) – More than 4,500 Sailors and Marines serving in the Kearsarge Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) and 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) will deploy, December 17.
The Navy-Marine Corps team will perform a scheduled seven-month deployment in support of maritime security operations, crisis response and theater security cooperation, while also providing a forward naval presence in Europe and the Middle East.

The Kearsarge ARG consists of the amphibious assault ship USS Kearsarge (LHD 3), the amphibious transport dock ship USS Arlington (LPD 24), the dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43), Fleet Surgical Team (FST) 2 and FST 8, Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 26, Tactical Air Control Squadron 21, components of Naval Beach Group 2 and the embarked staff of Amphibious Squadron 6.

The 22nd MEU is comprised of approximately 2,500 Marines and Sailors and includes a command element, ground combat element, aviation combat element, and logistics combat element.

Kearsarge and Arlington are homeported at Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia, and Fort McHenry is homeported at Naval Station Mayport, Florida. The 22nd MEU is stationed in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina……

Cape Canaveral AFS

Lockheed Martin prepares GPS III satellite for SpaceX launch

By Stephen Carlson, DEFENSE NEWS DEC. 12, 2018 / 5:10 PM

Dec. 12 (UPI) – The U.S. Air Force's first GPS III satellite has been encapsulated for its planned Dec. 18 launch from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla., on a SpaceX Falcon 9 satellite-delivery vehicle.

The GPS III Space Vehicle 01 has undergone pre-launch processing, fueling and other services in Titusville, Fla. The GPS III SV01 was loaded in its launch cartridge in anticipation of its coming launch.

"The world is dependent on GPS. More than four billion military, commercial and civilian users connect with signals generated by GPS satellites every day," Lockheed Martin's Vice President for Navigation Systems Johnathon Caldwell said in a statement.

"The launch of GPS III SV01 will be the first step in modernizing the Air Force's GPS constellation with the most powerful and resilient GPS satellites ever designed and built," Caldwell said…..

Patrick AFB

Authorities say about 4,000 gallons of wastewater spilled along private marina at Patrick Air Force Base

J.D. Gallop, Florida Today, Published 4:01 p.m. ET Dec. 10, 2018 | Updated 4:11 p.m. ET Dec. 10, 2018
Patrick Air Force Base officials reported that a valve failure resulted in about 4,000 gallons of sewage spilling along the grounds of the private marina that sits off the Banana River.

The accidental discharge took place about 9 a.m. Monday and has been cleaned up, officials report. Air force authorities say a faulty air relief valve near the marina caused the spill. The leak was stopped and the valve repaired while work crews applied a disinfectant to the impacted area.

The impact was believed to have little to no impact on the marina waters or the Indian River Lagoon. Maintenance checks were also being carried out on other nearby valves, officials reported.

Authorities reported that the wastewater spilled onto the ground on Jupiter Street after a valve failure at the Manatee Cove Marina initially sprayed the material onto the ground. Reports show that 1,000 to 4,000 gallons then spilled onto the surface water of the marina basin. The marina is overseen by Patrick Air Force Base.....

Energy
Gulf Power Harnesses Solar Energy with 1.5 Million Solar Panels in The Panhandle

By: Peyton LoCicero, Posted: Dec 12, 2018 04:59 PM EST, Updated: Dec 12, 2018 04:59 PM EST

OKALOOSA COUNTY, Fla. – Clean, renewable energy is said to be the way of the future and, parts of Northwest Florida are already on board.

This year marks a milestone for Gulf Power's solar fields being fully operational.

There are nearly 370,000 thousand of these solar panels right here at this field and total of 1.5 million in Northwest Florida.

"We are out here at Eglin. This actually produces about 30 mega watts of power which can power about almost about 4500 home annually," explained Rick DelaHaya, Gulf Power, Media Relations.

The solar field built on the Eglin Air Force Base Reserve, is just one of the three solar fields run by Gulf Power. When they first "flipped the switch" in 2017, the goal was for all three fields to produce 120 mega watts to power 18,000 homes annually.

"...and they have reached that capacity all three fields so we are really excited that we have..are able to deliver on what our expectations were," shared Kimberly Blair, Gulf Power, Media Relations.

Here's how they works: As the sun shines, the rays hit these solar panels. The solar panels collect the sun's energy then, send it to the inverter and the inverter, converts the D.C. or direct current energy to A.C. or alternating currents. Next, it gets sent to the sub station. At the sub station, the energy is ramped it and put onto the grid in order to the homes.....

Defense Industry
Orlando's Riptide Software wins $103.2M U.S. Army simulation contract
A local fast-growing, top-earning software company won a deal to update a simulation program for the U.S. Army.

The U.S. Army awarded Riptide Software Inc. a $103.2 million contract, according to the U.S. Department of Defense. Work for the six-year contract involves improvements on the One Semi-automated Forces system, or OneSAF.

OneSAF is a computer-generated forces simulation that helps map out real-world battlefield scenarios. Tasking Oviedo-based Riptide Software to work on the system is a good fit, as the company has plenty of experience working on simulation programs for the military. The company creates state-of-the-art military training systems through software and integrated hardware design, development, manufacturing and sustainment of advanced technology systems using live, virtual and constructive simulations.

Riptide has 125 employees and a 2017 revenue of $23 million. Riptide was also an "Ultimate Newcomer" on Orlando Business Journal's 2018 Golden 100 list of Central Florida's top privately-held firms, coming in at No. 74 as a first-timer on this list. It's also the region's fifth-largest modeling, simulation and training company......

Harris Corporation-L3 Technology Plans $125 Million Florida Expansion

Harris Corporation plans to invest more than $125 million in internal research and development in Florida this fiscal year. The company’s Sunshine State presence will be bolstered by its recently announced plans to merge with L3 Technologies.

The combined company, L3 Harris Technologies, will be headquartered in Melbourne, Florida, creating opportunities for additional employment and investment growth in the state.

According to company officials, its Florida-based R&D activities primarily will take place at the company’s Central Florida locations and focus on areas such as electronic warfare, robotics, avionics and smallsats.

The region will receive over a third of the company’s overall $300 million-plus annual internal R&D budget, representing an industry-leading 5 percent of company revenue. The total excludes customer-funded R&D.

The internal R&D will support the company’s nearly 7,000 employment base in Florida, including over 3,300 engineers and scientists, as well as generate new high-paying positions, company officials said. The company pays an average salary of $95,000 in Florida and has about 375 openings in the state, primarily in engineering......
DoD Budget

Trump reverses course, tells Pentagon to boost budget request to $750 billion

By WESLEY MORGAN, 12/09/2018 01:39 PM EST

President Donald Trump has told Defense Secretary Jim Mattis to submit a $750 billion budget proposal for fiscal 2020, in a reversal from his pledge to trim defense spending, two people familiar with the budget negotiations have told POLITICO.

The $750 billion figure emerged from a meeting Tuesday at the White House among Trump, Mattis and the Republican chairmen of the House and Senate Armed Services committees, both people said.

“It’s 750. Secretary Mattis secured that over lunch with the president,” an administration official said of the meeting, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss a figure that has not yet been announced. Mattis was joined by Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) and Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Texas). “That’s the top line.”

That would dwarf the $733 billion budget proposal Mattis and other top military leaders have been fighting to preserve and would represent a stunning about-face for a president who recently called the fiscal 2019 top line of $716 billion for defense spending “crazy.” In October, Trump said the defense figure for 2020 would be $700 billion, a roughly 5 percent cut in line with decreases planned for other agencies.....

Sen. Rubio supports congressional funding to rebuild Tyndall AFB

by Auriette Lindsey, Friday, December 7th 2018

BAY COUNTY, Fla. – U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Florida) supports an Air Force request for funding to rebuild and refit Tyndall Air Force Base to receive the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.

The base took a direct hit from Hurricane Michael and needs substantial reconstruction. The Air Force says it makes sense to use recovery funds to tailor Tyndall's facilities to accommodate the F-35's unique needs.

Sen. Rubio issued a statement today saying, "After working closely with the U.S. Air Force to ensure Tyndall Air Force Base is fully rebuilt, the Air Force is asking Congress for the funds necessary to rebuild and receive the F-35 fighter jet. This announcement is great news not only for national security, but also for the people of Florida."

The F-35s could be based at Tyndall in the next five years.

Sen. Rubio says Tyndall's access to 130,000 square miles of airspace over the Gulf of Mexico provides a capability unmatched anywhere else in the world. It will allow the F-35s to be utilized to their maximum potential....
Democrats Skeptical of White House Plan to Boost Defense Spending

Dan Cohen, Posted on Dec 12, 2018 03:40 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=338e9323be

Increasing defense spending by almost 5 percent to $750 billion in fiscal 2020 likely is not realistic, Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.), ranking member on the House Armed Services Committee, said following news reports that President Trump has reversed course and now plans to boost his budget request for national security. “It seems hard for me to imagine that we’re going to be able to get to a $750 billion defense budget in a fiscally responsible way that balances out … all the priorities of the country,” Smith, who is expected to lead the committee next year, told Politico. “But I will wait to see that argument,” he said. The Pentagon had begun crafting a $700 billion proposal at Trump’s request, which would have represented a 2 percent cut from this year’s $716 billion allocation for DOD and other components of national security.

Sen. Jack Reed (D-R.I.), ranking member on the Senate Armed Services Committee, said the higher budget request doesn’t help resolve the question as to how Congress will deal with the statutory spending cap for FY 2020. “It’s not a coherent, comprehensive approach to the budget problems,” Reed said, reported Defense News. “It’s a number here, a number there. It doesn’t deal with the underlying issue, which is sequestration, how do you relieve it for defense and nondefense, how do you fund the State Department if you’re only funding DOD and nothing else,” he said.

On Capitol Hill: Democrats Warn Pentagon against Using Milcon Funds for Border Wall along Bombing Range; Smith Set to Lead House Armed Services

Dan Cohen, Posted on Dec 13, 2018 03:00 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0e2d33ce307ef7&id=0a109161ed

Four Democratic senators are questioning the military’s effort to study the possibility of constructing a new border barrier system along a 31-mile section of the Barry M. Goldwater Range in southwest Arizona. The Navy recently began studies on building barriers along the range, despite its inability to provide Congress “with a clear justification or a compelling argument for diverting as much as $450 million in future funding to this project,” according to the letter to Defense Secretary Jim Mattis from Jack Reed (R.I.), ranking member on the Armed Services Committee; Dick Durbin (Ill.), vice chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee; Patrick Leahy (Vt.), vice chairman of the Appropriations Committee; and Brian Schatz (Hawaii), ranking member of the Military Construction Appropriations Subcommittee. “We believe the Department of Defense lacks any authorization or appropriations needed to move this project into any stage of construction during fiscal year 2019. Nowhere in the department’s 2019 budget plans was there any proposal to spend nearly half a billion taxpayer dollars to increase security at a bombing range that is already protected by a barrier,” the lawmakers said. … Rep. Adam Smith (Wash.) is one step closer to taking the gavel for the House Armed Services Committee in the 116th Congress, after earning the recommendation of the Democratic Steering & Policy Committee this week. Smith now waits for approval by the Democratic Caucus.
**Other Of Interest**

**Billionaire plans to open Tampa mental health clinic for veterans, family members**

By Howard Altman, 12-10-2018


**TAMPA** – A controversial billionaire wants to bring a mental health clinic to Tampa that will treat veterans and their families at little or no cost.

The clinic, part of the Cohen Veterans Network, is funded by hedge fund tycoon Steven A. Cohen. Backed by his $275 million commitment, the idea is to fill gaps in the Department of Veterans Affairs mental and behavioral health care programs, including providing services to veterans with less than honorable discharges who can only obtain VA care under certain circumstances, as well as their family members, who are not covered by the VA.

Tampa would be the 12th such clinic in the non-profit organization.

Expected to open in March in east Hillsborough and treat about 500 patients in its first year, the clinic will initially be funded with about $8 million in seed money. Clinic leaders are expected to raise half of the operating costs by the six-year mark…..

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**Coast Guard intercepts 11 migrants and 2 suspected smugglers on boat near Miami**

By Howard Cohen Miami Herald (TNS), 12-13-2018


**MIAMI** – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Robert Yered captured 11 migrants and two suspected smugglers aboard an unlit vessel about 12 miles east of Miami in Government Cut on Saturday night.

They will all be returned to their countries of origin.

According to a Coast Guard release issued Wednesday, the cutter crew saw a 26-foot boat and interdicted seven Haitians, three Bahamians, two Ecuadorians and one Bolivian and put them in the custody of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection on Sunday.

They did not identify the suspected smugglers.

“These migrant smuggling operations and ventures seek to exploiting our maritime border and the short distances between Caribbean nations like the Bahamas and the United States,” said Cmdr. Luis Rodriguez, Coast Guard 7th District response duty officer, in the release.

Rodriguez said this case is a clear example of Coast Guard and interagency and allied networks’ mission.

“What those attempting to enter the country illegally by sea will be returned to their country of origin, and this case is no exception,” he said.

The Robert Yered is a 154-foot sentinel class cutter based in Miami, according to the Coast Guard…..
Task Force members,

This will be the final update for 2018…

1. Next Meeting – Task Force meeting #70 will be Thursday, 17 January 2019, beginning at 9:00AM ET at the Embassy Suites Miami International Airport, 3974 NW South River Drive, Miami, FL 33142. We are planning a Command brief from USSOUTHCOM at the meeting and will not be doing a tour. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting that will include in-person interviews of potential advocacy firms.

2. Call In Number –
   Call-In Number: 800-501-8979   Access Code: 1869945

3. Space Command Announced – Vice President Pence visited the Space Coast on Tuesday and announced the creation of Space Command. The announcement could be a stepping stone to the separate Space Force. According to an article in Defense News on Thursday, “After months of deliberating how to stand up a Space Force, a sixth branch of the military proposed by President Donald Trump, Pentagon leaders have decided to funnel the new organization under the Department of the Air Force, Defense News has learned.” The command will re-establish US Space that was closed to make room for USNORTHCOM after 9-11. As of today, Space Command will likely fall under the US Air Force. See articles below in the CLIPs.

4. New Reaper Squadron Activates at Hurlburt – The USAF’s newest Drone Squadron activated on December 18, 2018 at Hurlburt Field, FL. According to the Northwest Florida Daily News, “The first active-duty MQ-9 Reaper drone squadron at the base was activated Tuesday morning. The “Lucky Dicers” formed at Hurlburt Field immediately after the Tuesday deactivation of the 27th Special Operations Group’s Detachment 1, which had been handling remote piloting duties for the MQ-9 Reaper. The new 65th Special Operations Squadron, part of the Hurlburt-based 1st Special Operations Group, will comprise more than 100 airmen and dozens of civilians who will remotely pilot drones in use around the world. None of the Reapers to be piloted by the new squadron will be based at Hurlburt.” See article below in the CLIPs.

5. SecDef Mattis Resigns – On Thursday Secretary of Defense James Mattis submitted his resignation letter to President Trump. He noted that he will stay until the end of February to ensure a smooth transition. See article below in the CLIPs.

6. Military / Veteran Related Bills Filed – 2019 Session begins on March 5, 2019 and bills are being filed. To review or track House Bills (HB), go to www.myfloridahouse.gov; for Senate Bills (SB), go to www.flsenate.gov. For both sites, insert the bill number at the top of the page if you would like current status throughout session. Bills filed so far are below and the current summary of all related bills filed to date is attached.
   ▪ None
WILMINGTON — Having worked in the mining industry around the world, I know firsthand both the potential benefits and almost certain liabilities that mining activities can have on local and regional communities. The oil industry is no exception and is particularly known for making glowing promises of jobs and other economic development opportunities to local and regional civic leaders only to have these spurious vows fail to materialize into any meaningful benefit. Our own community of Wilmington understands all too well what happens when we place our civic trust in corporations who promise they will do no harm, when in fact they are knowingly poisoning our air and water supplies.

After spending years in this industry, I have learned that the inherent risks to the environment and general populace from mining operations – as small as a sand mine and as large as an oil drilling initiative – far outweigh any purported direct or indirect economic benefits that may have been promised. With the exclusion of any future royalty payments for oil and gas extracted from their coastal waters, the only real benefits will flow to the already heavily subsidized oil and gas industry.

In its recent authorization to allow seismic air gun blasting in the Atlantic Ocean from New Jersey to Florida, the Trump Administration has willfully ignored the critical 2017 decision by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management that concluded “… the value of obtaining the geophysical and geological information from new air gun seismic surveys in the Atlantic does not outweigh the potential risks of those surveys …” It has also willfully ignored comments made by every East Coast governor save one, Republican and Democrat alike, who have publicly opposed seismic testing and oil exploration off their
coasts; it ignored the years of scientific assessment and hundreds of thousands of public comments that led to the original moratorium on any offshore oil exploration in the Atlantic. And it ignored me, along with representatives of 42,000 other businesses along the East Coast who have publicly opposed oil exploration in the Atlantic.

The opposition to offshore oil exploration is widespread and includes more than 500,000 fishing families from Florida to Maine, along with the Pacific, North Pacific, New England, South Atlantic, and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils. And even NASA, the Department of Defense, and the Florida Defense Support Task Force have expressed significant concerns that expanded offshore oil and gas development may threaten their ability to perform critical activities or in respect to the DoD, even safely protect the security interests of the United States……

NAS Pensacola

Wreaths Across America returns to Barrancas National Cemetery

by Al Showers, Saturday, December 15th 2018


PENSACOLA, Fla. (WEAR) – Nearly a million military veterans were honored and remembered on Saturday.

It was the annual National Wreaths Across America observance.

Volunteers placed colorful holiday wreaths on the headstones at more than 1,600 cemeteries in the nation and here at home.

A sea of white headstones at Barrancas National Cemetery at NAS Pensacola are now decorated for the holidays.

“It’s a beautiful sight,” said Pensacola local Willie Brooks….

Hurlburt Field

‘Lucky Dicers’ drone squadron activated at Hurlburt

By Jim Thompson, Posted Dec 18, 2018 at 3:33 PM, Updated Dec 18, 2018 at 3:33 PM


HURLBURT FIELD – The first active-duty MQ-9 Reaper drone squadron at the base was activated Tuesday morning.

The “Lucky Dicers” formed at Hurlburt Field immediately after the Tuesday deactivation of the 27th Special Operations Group’s Detachment 1, which had been handling remote piloting duties for the MQ-9 Reaper.

The new 65th Special Operations Squadron, part of the Hurlburt-based 1st Special Operations Group, will comprise more than 100 airmen and dozens of civilians who will remotely pilot drones in use around the world. None of the Reapers to be piloted by the new squadron will be based at Hurlburt.
Operation of remotely piloted aircraft is something new for the 1st Special Operations Group, commander Col. James V. Mott II said.

“We're witnessing history in the making,” Mott said at the Tuesday ceremony to activate the 65th SOS....

Eglin AFB

Air Force Enlisted Village Expanding

By JENNIE MCKEON • DEC 15, 2018
http://www.wuwf.org/post/air-force-enlisted-village-expanding

The Air Force Enlisted Village (AFEV) has been serving retired enlisted Air Force members and their spouses for 50 years.

The facility, which is located in Shalimar between two major Air Force bases — Eglin Air Force Base and Hurlburt Field — houses around 500 residents. That number will grow with a new expansion slated to open in 2020.

On Tuesday morning, AFEV held a groundbreaking ceremony for Bob Hope Village 6, a residential community featuring 63 apartments and a clubhouse. The last expansion was in 2015 when the facility opened Bob Hope Village 5.

With Florida being the third-largest veteran population in the U.S., there is a steady demand for units at AFEV, said CEO Brooke McLean.

“It's a big step for us,” he said. “The first phase is 63 units, but we'll have space for 80 more units when we fill up. We didn’t want to over-extend ourselves.”

The new building was made possible through grants and donations as well as bank financing.....

New species of salamander — reticulated siren — joins list of weird Panhandle critters

Linda Barry, Southern Perspective, Published 10:00 a.m. CT Dec. 15, 2018

Florida Panhandle and South Alabama sirens have been officially recognized. Nope, we haven’t found alluring and aquatic women who lure ocean travelers to their deaths. These sirens are amphibians, and they’re not nearly as pretty, not to us anyway.

Sirens are salamanders without hind legs. Why someone named them “sirens” is beyond me, because they look suspiciously like eels. Reticulated sirens can grow up to two feet long. This makes them one of the largest amphibians anywhere.

The reticulation comes from the leopard-like spots they sport. Then, after throwing in the prominent gills and horny beak instead of teeth, we’ve got a winner here. Seriously. Even the first runner-up should simply be proud to represent the scientific family Sirenidae.

Put another notch in Florida Panhandle’s belt of weird things. Of course, we’re bound to find new critters in this region. Out of the 15,000 to 18,000 new species that the Atlas Obscura website reported to be
discovered each year, the numbers dictate that even just a few of them must live somewhere around here.

**Tyndall AFB**

**Bay County happy F-35s likely coming to Tyndall Air Force Base after Hurricane Michael**

By COLLIN BREAUX, Posted Dec 16, 2018 at 10:35 AM, Updated Dec 16, 2018 at 10:35 AM


**EAST BAY** – The mayors of small towns in eastern Bay County bordering Tyndall Air Force Base say they’re happy about the F-35 squadrons likely arriving.

Callaway, Springfield and Parker have lost residents and seen structural damage from Hurricane Michael. The military is a significant part of the region’s population and culture, so Tyndall bouncing back is welcome news for area leaders.

“Being this close, it will affect our housing and redevelopment after our storm damage,” said Springfield Mayor Ralph Hammond.

Estimates are 93 percent of homes in Springfield had “some sort of damage” and approximately 300 residents are “moving out and gone” based on water turnoffs, Hammond said earlier this month. The Air Force recommends Congress use supplemental funding to rebuild Tyndall and prepare to receive three F-35 fighter squadrons, which could bring in 72 total aircraft by 2023 and more than 2,000 airmen.

The incoming squadrons means higher-paying jobs, and “anything new” will help the area, said Hammond, who expects Springfield and eastern Bay to be recovered by the time the F-35s come in.

**Florida Lawmakers Urge Congress to Support Request for $2B to Begin Rebuilding Tyndall AFB**

Dan Cohen, Posted on Dec 18, 2018 03:50 am

[https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=31453549ab](https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=31453549ab)

Florida’s two senators and the congressman representing the area neighboring Tyndall AFB last week asked House and Senate appropriators to support the Air Force’s request for $2 billion to repair buildings that can be saved after Hurricane Michael swept through the installation in October and begin the planning necessary to rebuild other facilities. “We urge you to support the amount requested by the Air Force to fulfill immediate requirements to the sum of $2 billion,” Sens. Marco Rubio (R) and Bill Nelson (D) and Rep. Neal Dunn (R) wrote the chairman and ranking members of both chambers’ Appropriations committees.

“Half of this urgent need would allow Tyndall to salvage what buildings can be saved, make repairs, and begin the planning and design necessary to follow the military construction requirements to ensure Congress can adequately justify the funding. The other half of this amount would cover costs relating to personnel reassignments as the recovery progress continues, and the cost of sending the F-22 Raptors to other locations to ensure the Air Force mission is not impacted. This funding is needed now,” the delegation stated.
The letter highlighted the Air Force’s long-term plan to replace Tyndall’s operational F-22 unit with three F-35 squadrons starting in 2023. “Basing F-35s at Tyndall in the wake of hurricane damage allows the Air Force to use recovery funds to rebuild the base in a tailored way to accommodate the unique needs of the F-35,” the lawmakers wrote.

**US Special Operations Command**

**SOCOM ranks high on best places to work in federal government list**

By Crystal Owens – Reporter, Tampa Bay Business Journal, 12-17-2018


The U.S. Special Operations Command in Tampa is ranked No. 33 out of 415 agencies as one of the best places to work in the federal government.

The list, published annually by the nonprofit, nonpartisan Partnership for Public Services and global management consulting firm Boston Consulting Group, ranked the command as part of its agency subcomponent list.

Also on that list is U.S. Central Command, also located on MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, which ranked No. 277 out of 415 agencies. The Department of the Air Force ranked No. 15 out of 17 on the list’s large agency category.

MacDill Air Force Base, a key economic driver in the Tampa Bay area, is home to more than 19,000 military members and nearly 3,000 civilian employees. It has $8 billion in assets and contributes more than $3 billion annually to the area’s economy, according to an August report from the base.

The Office of General Counsel, Federal Energy and the Office of the Inspector General, Tennessee Valley Authority tied for the top spot on the nonprofit agency’s subcomponent list.

The report says the federal government continues to lag behind the private sector when it comes to employee engagement. According to data provided by employee research firm Mercer | Sirota, the 2018 employee engagement score for private sector employees is 77.1 out of 100. This year’s government-wide Best Places to Work score is 62.2, a 0.6 point decline from the modified 2017 government-wide score….

**Cape Canaveral AFS**

**Air Force Set to Launch First Next-Generation GPS Satellite**

By Dan Elliott, The Associated Press | 17 Dec 2018


DENVER – After months of delays, the U.S. Air Force is about to launch the first of a new generation of GPS satellites, designed to be more accurate, secure and versatile.

But some of their most highly touted features will not be fully available until 2022 or later because of problems in a companion program to develop a new ground control system for the satellites, government auditors said.
The satellite is scheduled to lift off Tuesday from Cape Canaveral, Florida, aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket. It's the first of 32 planned GPS III satellites that will replace older ones now in orbit. Lockheed Martin is building the new satellites outside Denver.

GPS is best-known for its widespread civilian applications, from navigation to time-stamping bank transactions. The Air Force estimates that 4 billion people worldwide use the system.

But it was developed by the U.S. military, which still designs, launches and operates the system. The Air Force controls a constellation of 31 GPS satellites from a high-security complex at Schriever Air Force Base outside Colorado Springs.

Compared with their predecessors, GPS III satellites will have a stronger military signal that's harder to jam — an improvement that became more urgent after Norway accused Russia of disrupting GPS signals during a NATO military exercise this fall.....

Mike Pence to announce new U.S. Space Command in Florida

By Associated Press, 12-18-2018

President Donald Trump plans to sign an executive order before the end of the year creating a U.S. Space Command as a major military command.

Vice President Mike Pence will make the announcement Tuesday at the Kennedy Space Center, in Cape Canaveral, Florida, two U.S. officials said, and Trump could sign the order as soon as Tuesday.

The move is separate from Trump's goal of creating a "Space Force" as an independent armed service branch, but could be a step in that direction.

The U.S. Air Force's existing Space Command would be a key component of the new joint entity, raising space to the same status as U.S. Cyber Command.

According to U.S. officials, Pence will be at the Pentagon on Tuesday and will meet with the Joint Chiefs. Space Command is expected to be among the issues discussed. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to speak publicly.

The move would actually recreate a U.S. Space Command, which existed from 1985 to 2002. It was disbanded in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks so that U.S. Northern Command could be established, focusing on defense of the homeland.

Although Space Command went away, its functions did not. They were absorbed by U.S. Strategic Command, and the Air Force retained its lead role in space through Air Force Space Command.....

Patrick AFB

SecAF visits 45th Space Wing

By Airman 1st Class Dalton Williams, 45th Space Wing Public Affairs Office / Published December 20, 2018
https://www.patrick.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/1718922/secaf-visits-45th-space-wing/
US Southern Command

U.S. Southern Command hosts 2nd Humanitarian Assistance Disaster Relief workshop

Story by Raymond Sarracino, U.S. Southern Command, 12.17.2018

MIAMI – More than 70 delegates representing 17 nations met here Dec. 11-13 to focus on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief issues affecting Latin America and the Caribbean.

The workshop, hosted by Chile at U.S. Southern Command, focused on disaster response coordination through communication and coordination both internally and with regional and international partners such as the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America, Conference of the Armed Forces of Central American, and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies were among the many organizations and agencies that participated in the three-day workshop.

Participants explored means of leveraging the military capabilities within the region and creating ways for civil and military authorities to share information on which nation’s capabilities are available to assist.

Chilean Gen. (ret.) Rodolfo Gonzalez Palaneck, who was one of the principal leaders of the workshop, said: “We’re here to mitigate the disaster risk in the region. It’s imperative that we understand the resources available in the region and utilize coordination between civil and military assets to ensure that the right resources are available when and where they’re needed.”…..

NAS Key West

Blue Angels fly to Key West to gear up for a big air show next year

BY GWEN FILOSA, DECEMBER 17, 2018 07:36 PM, UPDATED 2 HOURS 37 MINUTES AGO

Lt. Cary Rickoff and Lt. Commander Adam Kerrick took one of the U.S. Navy’s Blue Angels jets from Fort Lauderdale to Key West on Monday.

The two-seat F/A-18B Hornet made it in 15 minutes.

“It’s awesome,” said Kerrick, of the ride. “You just hear the air rushing by. When you’re up high you can’t really tell how fast you’re going. When you come down low you get a sense of that rush of the ground coming at you.”

“It’s like flying a little snappy sports car,” Rickoff said. “It’s a blast every day.”

The jet is about as old as Kerrick is.
“Our maintainers are really top-notch,” said Kerrick, 36, a Philadelphia native. “They take really good care of these awesome aircraft. They do such a great job on these really old jets that are nearing the end of their life expectancy.”

The pilots came from Pensacola to Naval Air Station Key West on Monday to finalize the details for an air show this spring.

The Blue Angels flight demonstration squadron and other military and civilian aerial performances will light up the skies of the Florida Keys on Saturday and Sunday, March 30 and 31, 2019, at the Naval Air Station Key West’s “Southernmost Air Spectacular” air show at Boca Chica Field.

There is no admission charge and parking is free. Gates open at 9 a.m. and the show begins at 10 a.m. The Blue Angels take the air at 2:30 p.m.

Energy

Incentives Used to Promote Renewable Energy Development Could Benefit Small Reactors, Report Concludes

Dan Cohen, Posted on Dec 21, 2018 02:21 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156e255f5c0e2d33ce307ef7&id=b9725047bf

Federal incentives to encourage private sector investment in the deployment of small modular reactors could generate a higher payoff than the government effort over the past decade to promote the use of renewable energy, according to a new Department of Energy report. Examination of Federal Financial Assistance in the Renewable Energy Market, co-authored by Kutak Rock and Scully Capital, estimates that $10 billion in incentives would be needed to deploy 6 gigawatts of small modular reactor capacity by 2035. The cost of such an investment on a per kilowatt hour basis would be only one-third as expensive as the federal government’s initiative to stimulate the development of solar plants and wind farms. From 2005-2015 the government provided $51.2 billion in mandates, tax incentives, loans and research grants to stimulate solar and wind production. About 90 percent of that investment came in the form of subsidies, which included investment and production tax credits. As a result, solar capacity grew by nearly 78,000 megawatts and wind capacity added more than 446,000 megawatts over that period.

DoD Budget

The military could save hundreds of billions — by capping pay, scrapping aircraft, slashing benefits, experts say

By: Leo Shane III, 12-17-2018
WASHINGTON — Analysts from the Congressional Budget Office say the government could trim hundreds of billions from the federal deficit by enacting a host of already discussed military and veterans program reforms.

The problem is that those reforms include some of the most controversial and politically unpopular policies of the last few years, things like limiting military pay raises, ending a host of military equipment purchases, and cutting back on veterans benefits.

The document released last week — CBO’s annual “options for reducing the deficit” report — lists more than 120 ideas to reduce federal spending or boost federal revenues over the next 10 years. Authors said the goal is to “reflect a range of possibilities” of moves that lawmakers could make in dealing with government debt and escalating federal programming costs.…..

Other Of Interest

Trump’s new Space Force to reside under Department of the Air Force

By: Valerie Insinna, 12-20-2018

WASHINGTON – After months of deliberating how to stand up a Space Force, a sixth branch of the military proposed by President Donald Trump, Pentagon leaders have decided to funnel the new organization under the Department of the Air Force, Defense News has learned.

“There is established a United States Space Force as an armed force within the Department of the Air Force,” states a draft of the legislative proposal due to be put forward alongside the fiscal year 2020 budget early next year, which was viewed by Defense News on Dec. 20.

The new service will be overseen by the newly created undersecretary of the Air Force for the Space Force and a Space Force chief of staff, who will sit on the Joint Chiefs.

Although the version of the proposal seen by Defense News is still in draft form and thus subject to change, an administration official with knowledge of discussions said that there is alignment across the Defense Department on keeping the Space Force within the Department of the Air Force.

The document has been circulating among top Pentagon and service leaders, with the intent to hand it off to the Office of Management and Budget next, said one Defense Department official who was not authorized to speak on the record.

Mattis to Depart Pentagon in February

Dan Cohen, Posted on Dec 21, 2018 03:23 am
https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=28cebe069c&u=8156c255f5e0c2d33ce307ef7&id=b9725047bf

President Trump will need to find a new defense secretary after his first Pentagon chief Jim Mattis submitted his resignation Thursday in response to the president’s abrupt announcement the previous day that he would pull U.S. troops out of Syria. The table had been set for Mattis’ departure in recent months, though, as he found himself on the losing end in number of policy disputes with the president, reported
the Washington Post. Most recently, Trump rejected Mattis’ recommendation to name Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein the next chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Instead, Trump tapped Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Milley. Mattis touched on his policy difference with the president in his resignation letter, saying his decision would allow the president to find “a secretary of defense whose views are better aligned with yours.” He said he would step down Feb. 28, 2019, to provide sufficient time for the Senate to confirm a successor. The February date also is intended to ensure a new defense secretary is in place well before Milley becomes Joint Chiefs chairman in September.